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The unclarity of the notion ‘object’ in the Tractatus

by

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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature

Summary

The aim of this thesis is to look freshly at one of the oldest objections to the *Tractatus* - that no examples are given of Tractarian objects and it is not clear what they are. The thesis will argue that although there is a serious point to the objection - despite the official response which is made to it, but in line with Wittgenstein's later views - it does not undermine the value of the work as a whole, but can instead be seen as helping the work's fundamental purpose.

Chapter One: The aim of this Chapter is to lay out the theoretical role of objects in the *Tractatus*. It will argue that this depends on the Bild theory of language, and the demands which that places on the world. Objects are (i) what names refer to; (ii) the constituents of atomic facts; (iii) the substance of the world; (iv) however they are required to be for atomic facts to be logically independent of each other.

Chapter Two: The aim of this Chapter is to spell out the crucial ways in which the nature of objects is left undetermined by their theoretical role as specified in Chapter One. In particular it will be argued that it is indeterminate whether the objects include universals - qualities and relations (against both realist and nominalist interpreters, but in line with Ramsey's view of the text) - and what the relation is between the objects of the *Tractatus* and the objects which we might think we experience.

Chapter Three: The aim of this Chapter is to show that the indeterminacies identified in Chapter Two create serious problems for the *Tractatus*. In particular, it becomes impossible even in principle either (i) to identify the objects after further analysis, or (ii) to verify or falsify the theory of the *Tractatus*. It also looks as if it is impossible either (iii) for words ever to be correlated with objects (since we can never know, or have

known, which the objects are) or (iv) for sentences to be compared with reality to see whether they are true or false.

Chapter Four: The aim of this Chapter is to argue that despite these problems, the indeterminacies in the notion of ‘objects’ does not undermine the project of the *Tractatus* as a whole, but in fact furthers it. This depends on interpreting the central purpose of the *Tractatus* as being mystical. This Chapter will present the interpretation of the central purpose of the book, and will explain how maintaining these indeterminacies, precisely by making the *Tractatus* empty or problematic as a theory, furthers the work’s mystical purpose.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations, listed alphabetically, are sometimes used to refer to Wittgenstein's works.

- BB* (2003) *The Blue and Brown Books*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- BLF* (1979) Letters to Ludwig Ficker, in C.G. Luckhardt (ed.), *Wittgenstein: Sources and Perspectives*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- CV* (1984) *Culture and Value*, edited by G.H. von Wright, translated by Peter Winch, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- LRKM* (1974) *Letters to Russell, Keynes and Moore*, G.H. von Wright (ed.), Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- NB* (1992) *Notebooks 1914-1916*, G.H. von Wright & G.E.M. Anscombe (eds.), Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publishers.
- NL* Notes on Logic, printed as Appendix I of *NB*.
- NM* Notes Dictated to G.E. Moore in Norway, printed as Appendix II of *NB*.
- NWLR* Extracts from Wittgenstein's letters to Russell, 1912-20, printed as Appendix III of *NB*.
- LE* (1965) A lecture on Ethics.
- LO* (1973) *Letters to C.K. Ogden*, G.H. von Wright (ed.), Oxford: Blackwell.
- PG* (2004) *Philosophical Grammar*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- PI* (2004) *Philosophical Investigations*, translated by G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- PO* (1993) *Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951*, James Klagge & Alfred Normann (eds.), Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company.
- PR* (1998) *Philosophical Remarks*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- RLF* (1966) 'Some Remarks on Logical Form', in *Essays on Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, Copi and Beard (eds.), London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, pp.31-37.
- RPP* (1980) *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, Vol.I, G.E.M. Anscombe and G.H. von Wright (eds.), translated by G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford: Basil Blackwell Oxford.
- TLP* (2004) *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, translated by D.F. Pears & B.F.

McGuinness, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

WLC 32 (1980) *Wittgenstein's Lectures Cambridge 1930-32*, from the notes of John King and Desmond Lee, D. Lee (eds.), Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

WLC 35 (1979) *Wittgenstein's Lectures Cambridge 1932-35*, from the notes of Alice Ambrose and Margaret Macdonald, A. Ambrose (eds.), Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

WVC (1983) *Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, Conversations recorded by Friedrich Waismann, B. McGuinness (eds.), translated by J. Schulte and B. McGuinness, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the main constituent of the Bild ‘theory’ of sentences in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* (here I keep the German term ‘Bild’ instead of using the translated English notion ‘picture’ for reasons that I will explain later) — the German term ‘Gegenstand’ which is translated in English as ‘object’. One of the things that attracts the *Tractatus*’ readers is that while there is use of the notion ‘object’, a notion on which the whole architecture of terminology of the *Tractatus* is based, the notion is not specified in this work. This is encouraged by the fact that the *Tractatus* not only refuses to give examples of objects but does not allow any possibility for them to be given. This impossibility creates a sense of a mystery since we are not allowed to know what objects are, only some of their properties. The theoretical role of objects which primarily seems to be to promise an ontological frame for a theory of language is not clarified. As a result of this neither the corresponding requirements of language are clarified. This thesis focuses on the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ and examines more deeply this unsolved difficulty that arises. In their effort to escape from or sidestep the problem of objects, many commentators have stated that the notion of the *Tractatus* is obscure. However, this is not obvious. It must be demonstrated by shedding light on the specific issue at hand here. This project examines two crucial questions about the difficulties over the nature of objects: (a) Is there a fundamental asymmetry between different kinds of things or expressions in the *Tractatus*? and (b) Are there objects in experience? Through this discussion since the notion of ‘object’ remains indeterminate I hold as a central worry whether Wittgenstein held an unstable position on purpose about the notion ‘object’. When the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ is explained in a deeper way the issue that arises is what the importance of this unspecificity is. Particularly, it seems that the *Tractatus* does not offer us a theory of language which

can show us a specific kind of analysis to reach the form of sentences – in the true form of language. Additionally, the *Tractatus* does not contribute to the clarification of the relations between elements of language and elements of the world. In other words, it remains unclear how the elements of language have meaning because there is no possibility to attribute objects a meaning. Finally, what I will show through this thesis is that despite the unclarity of the notion ‘object’, *Tractatus*’s work as a whole is not undermined since it continues to function in a very specific way. To become familiarised with this way, we need a *special kind feeling* which I explain in this project to have as a core the idea that the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ (that encourages the paradox) helps the sense of mysticism. The steps this thesis follows are:

Chapter One explains the theoretical role of objects and fundamentally the role of being a counter part to the role of the technical term ‘name’ in the *Tractatus*. The role of the notion ‘object’ constitutes a requirement of the Bild theory of sentences since every theory of language needs an ontological frame to which it refers. The notion ‘object’ in the *Tractatus* constitutes the necessary constituent of this ontological frame. By examining the role of objects we can understand that since no examples of objects are given and that we are not allowed to know what these things are the *Tractatus* does not require to firstly specify the notion ‘object’ and secondly the rest of the terminology. The rest of the terminology has to do (a) with the whole ontological frame which is based on the notion ‘object’ (reality, logical space, world and atomic fact) that composes the structure of the world – a world with specific characteristics and (b) with the corresponding notions of language (name and atomic sentence) since in each ontological part of the *Tractatus* there are the corresponding requirements of language.

Thus, this Chapter shows that the theoretical role of objects in the *Tractatus* remains unclarified.

It is famous that the role of objects leaves them unclear creating a substantial difficulty but this is not enough to be said superficially. The indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ should be proved more deeply. Chapter Two aims to argue that the notion of ‘object’ is left indeterminate in two crucial respects: (a) whether objects include universals, that is to say, properties and relations. This question has to do with a fundamental question whether there is any fundamental asymmetry between different kinds of expressions? and (b) what is the relation between the Tractarian objects and objects which we can experience? The objects we can experience we can think of in the real world to be sense-data. By examining the two above respects although the indeterminacy of the notion of ‘object’ is not liable to any resolution Wittgenstein seems not to worry about that.

The third Chapter explains what is the importance of the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’. In other words, why it is a substantial problem for objects to be indetermined. This is explained through two crucial respects: (a) *Tractatus*’s sentences project a radical unfalsified ability and as a result the *Tractatus* does not offer a theory but a ghost of a theory. The proposed analysis from a theory which would lead us to objects cannot be done. There is no conception how this analysis could be done. Thus, we cannot know the form of sentences before a theory, therefore, we cannot know objects before a theory and (b) the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ does not allow any correlations between elements of language and elements of reality. As a result of this, it is not clear how language could be meaningful. So, the unspecificity of the notion

‘object’ leaves us with the difficulty that we do not know how to build a theory of language through the *Tractatus*.

The fourth Chapter gives a final account on the *Tractatus* which elucidates whether the unspecificity of what is meant by ‘object’ in the *Tractatus* undermines the project of the work as a whole. Having in mind that the *Tractatus* does not offer a theory, but an illusion of a theory the question that arises is whether this work has some value. It is natural to think that the paradoxical *Tractatus* will have some value if it succeeds to communicate truths. Therefore the crucial question is whether the *Tractatus* succeeds to communicate truths. This thesis approaches the topic through three positions: (a) the ‘traditional view’, (b) the ‘resolute reading view’ and (c) my view (a view beyond the ‘traditional’ and ‘resolute reading’ views) that is differentiated from the previous two and which gives a possible resolution of the difficulty of the paradox encouraging the thought of a movement from the idea of a ‘theory’ towards mysticism – a kind of mysticism which mainly has to do with Schopenhauerian and Kantian influences. The indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ on a first level encourages the paradox and on a second level this paradox creates space for mysticism. Through this approach, the unclarity of the notion ‘object’ in the *Tractatus* is elucidated.

CHAPTER 1

THE ROLE OF OBJECTS IN THE BILD THEORY OF SENTENCES

1. Introduction

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein discusses the relationship between language and the world and formulates the so-called Bild theory of the sentence.¹ This theory claims that elements of language, namely names, correspond to fragments of reality, namely objects. To do this, it is necessary for Wittgenstein to create a conception of the structure of the world. The *Tractatus* begins its first three remarks with the term ‘Die Welt’ (The world) (1, 1.1 and 1.11). The notion ‘object’ comes after the notion ‘world’ and ‘fact’. Particularly, the first reference to the notion ‘object’ (Gegenstand) is in remark 2.01 but after the introduction of the notions ‘world’ (*TLP* 1) and ‘fact’ (*TLP* 1.1). It seems that Wittgenstein wants to prepare us from the beginning that to understand what objects are, the core of the ontological frame of the *Tractatus*, we need to understand their role in relation with the world as a whole. The main body of the *Tractatus* begins with the following mysterious statement:

The world is all that is the case. (*TLP* 1)²

The above remark states an acceptance that there is a world. This statement constitutes a promise (not a definition) in the sense to explain what the world is. What is not promised but given by the specific statement is the opportunity for the reader of the *Tractatus* to reflect on the nature of the world. At first sight, this statement lacks sense

¹ It would not be an exaggeration to claim that the relation between language and reality is the only issue which Wittgenstein is concerned with throughout his philosophical research. Here, I keep the German term ‘Bild’ of the translated term ‘picture’ for reasons I will explain below. Moreover, I translate the German term ‘Satz’ as ‘sentence’ instead of ‘proposition’, as Pears and McGuinness and Ogden do. I will discuss this later.

² The majority of quotations from the *Tractatus* that are used in this project are taken from the translation by Pears and McGuinness (whenever Ogden’s translation is used it will be clearly indicated).

or formal coherence for it to be fully understood even if someone made a conscious effort to conceive of it in a specifically meaningful way. The mood of this statement is revealed step by step through the *Tractatus* as we will see below. In this part it is useful to say that the ontological conception of Wittgenstein does not come up through empirical observations but by thinking about language. So, surprisingly, the *Tractatus* gives priority to the theory of language over a theory of the world. Perhaps the ontological part of the *Tractatus* (TLP 1- 2.063) was written last because we do not encounter any related ideas in the whole of his *Notebooks*. With this in mind, it seems that it is only after working out the philosophy of language that Wittgenstein realizes that it commits him to a certain conception of the structure of the world. As he states: “To give the essence of a sentence means to give the essence of all description, and thus the essence of the world” (TLP 5.4711). Although, perhaps the ontological part of the *Tractatus* was written last, from the first pages it gives emphasis to the terms ‘configuration’ and ‘combination’ (TLP 2.01, 2.0231, 2.0271 and 2.0272), a part of the terminology that attempts to compose the ontological frame.

This Chapter examines the role of objects being a counter part to the role of the technical term ‘name’ in the Bild theory of sentences by giving the necessary explanations to the following points:

- (a) The world as necessity in the *Tractatus*
- (b) The ontology of the *Tractatus*
- (c) The substance of the world in the *Tractatus*
- (d) The Bild theory of sentences – the inspiration and the steps towards the theory
- (e) The notion ‘object’ as a requirement of the Bild theory of sentences

We will therefore come to understand (or at least accept) the necessity of the notion ‘object’ in the Bild theory of sentences, whilst at the same time demonstrating the complexity of this term.

1.1 The world as necessity in the Tractatus

The ‘Bild’ theory of the sentence makes the following key assertion:

A sentence is a Bild of reality.
A sentence is a model [Modell] of reality as we imagine it. (*TLP* 4.01)

The above assertion demands a conception of the structure of the world. This is because the possibility of making Bilder of reality depends, among other things, on at least one world. If the world did not exist, it would be impossible to talk about Bilder of reality. Therefore, it would be impossible for fragments of a Bild to correspond to fragments of the world in some way. In other words, since ‘a sentence is a Bild of reality’ (*TLP* 4.01), if the world did not exist, then there would not be sentences (Bilder) that would refer to the world. Basically, there would not be sentences at all since it is very hard to imagine sentences that do not refer to the world (*TLP* 2.022). In order for there to be sentences (Bilder), there must be at least one world in existence.

1.2 The ontology of the Tractatus

In stating that ‘the world is all that is the case’ (*TLP* 1), the term ‘world’ is not clarified and Wittgenstein refrains from saying much about this. What we therefore have to make clear is the phrase ‘all that is the case’. By taking into consideration the next remark 1.1, ‘the world is the totality of facts³, not of things’,⁴ we can say: ‘all that is the case’ (the

³ In their translations, Pears and McGuinness as well as Ogden use the term ‘fact’ to mean ‘Tatsache’.

⁴ According to Ogden’s translation in sentence 2.01, Wittgenstein uses the term ‘object’ (‘Gegenstand’) by explaining the term ‘Gegenstand’ in brackets with two terms ‘Sachen’ and ‘Dingen’ (‘entities’ and

world) is the totality of facts (Tatsachen) (see also *TLP* 2), not of objects. Therefore, facts are different from objects and facts have objects as constituents. Here, two terms are introduced, ‘object’ and ‘fact’ both of which depend completely on Wittgenstein’s theory of language, particularly on the terms ‘name’ and ‘sentence’ correspondingly. Wittgenstein states:

A name means an object. The object is its meaning. ('A' is the same sign as 'A'). (*TLP* 3.203)

In a sentence a name is the representative of an object. (*TLP* 3.22)

By shedding light on the terms ‘name’ and ‘sentence’, it becomes easier to show how the notion of the ‘object’ in the *Tractatus* has its place there simply for the role it plays in the ‘Bild’ theory of sentences.

According to Wittgenstein, the totality (Gesamtheit) of facts (Tatsachen) in logical space is the world (*TLP* 1.13). Facts are in logical space, the space of all possibilities, rather than being constitutive of it. It is difficult to ascertain what he means exactly by logical space since *TLP* 1 and 1.1 identify the world with the totality of facts, and facts (as previously stated) exist in logical space as opposed to functioning in some constitutive way. Logical space includes all possible facts. The *Tractatus* refers to possible facts (not actual facts) but also implies actual facts. Actual facts are only some of the possible facts in logical space. It is a possible fact that Wittgenstein was born in Paris but both actual and possible facts are part of the space of possibilities. ‘All that is the case’ – the totality of facts – is nothing other than the existence of states of affairs

‘things’). Pears and McGuinness translate only the term ‘Dingen’ as ‘things’. In this project I will refer to ‘things’ and ‘entities’ as ‘objects’.

(atomic facts) (Sachverhalte) (*TLP* 2 and 2.04).⁵ A fact is constituted by atomic facts. Thus, facts that do not consist of a combination (Verbindung) of other facts are called ‘Sachverhalte’ (atomic facts), whereas facts which consist of two or more facts (Sachverhalte) are called ‘Tatsachen’ (facts). Whatever complexity is found in the world can be perceived as a ‘Tatsache’. Wittgenstein in 19.8.19 wrote to Russell:

Sachverhalt is what corresponds to an Elementarsatz [elementary sentence] if it is true. Tatsache is what corresponds to the logical product of elementary props when this product is true. (*NWLR* p.130)⁶

With the above words, Wittgenstein states the relationship between atomic facts and atomic sentences. An atomic fact consists of objects (*TLP* 2.01 and 2.0272), and an atomic fact therefore depends on objects.⁷ Particularly, Wittgenstein states:

Things are independent in so far as they can occur in all possible situations, but this form of independence is a form of connexion⁸ with states of affairs, a form of dependence. (It is impossible for words to appear in two different roles: by themselves, and in sentences). (*TLP* 2.0122)

What is an object?

We do not know.⁹

In the *Notebooks* it is stated that:

Our difficulty was that we keep on speaking of simple objects and were unable to mention a single one. (*NB* p.68, 21.6.15)

In the *Tractatus*, by terms of language, Wittgenstein states:

⁵ In their translation, Pears and McGuinness, to render the term ‘Sachverhalt’ in English, use the term ‘state of affairs’, while Ogden also uses the term ‘atomic fact’. Although Pears’ and McGuinness’ translation is closer to the sense of the German term, ‘Sachverhalt’ means an etymological arrangement of things, and Wittgenstein approves of Ogden’s translation. Perhaps, he considers that it is better to stress the indivisibility of ‘Sachverhalt’, by keeping the atomic character of the term in this way.

⁶ Russell in the *Tractatus*’ Introduction says that we cannot strictly speaking define facts but we can explain them by saying that facts are that which make sentences (Sätze) either true or false (wahr oder falsch) (*TLP* p. xiii-xiv).

⁷ Russell, by formulating the logical atomism, starts with the notion of ‘simple’ to reach the notion of ‘complex’. While *Tractatus* starts with the notion of the ‘world’ he continues with the notion ‘facts’ and ‘atomic facts’ to reach the crucial notion ‘object’.

⁸ The German term is ‘Zusammenhang’ which etymologically means a hanging together.

⁹ Wittgenstein worries about the term ‘object’ before beginning to write the *Tractatus*, particularly in the *Notebooks* since he dedicates many pages to the examination of the specific term. Specifically, he introduces the notion from the beginning of his *Notebooks* (*NB* p.3, 3.9.14) and he focuses more systematically, especially on pages 45-72.

If I cannot say a priori what elementary sentences there are, then the attempt to do so must lead to obvious nonsense. (*TLP* 5.5571)

According to the *Tractatus*, what we need to know in order to know an object is not its external but its internal qualities (*TLP* 2.01231). If I know the internal qualities of an object then I also know ‘all possibilities of its occurrence in atomic facts. (Every such possibility cannot subsequently be found’ (*TLP* 2.0123). The external (material) qualities (that are shown in atomic sentences) are contingent, (it is a material property of an object that stands in a specific relation with another object) while internal qualities are essential - they are possible combinations of objects in all possible worlds (*TLP* 4.123 and 4.1221). The internal (formal) quality of an object is its possibility to combine with other objects in some determinative way (it is a formal property of an object to be possible for it to stand in a specific relation with another object). This idea is expressed as follows: a property is internal if it is unthinkable that its object does not possess it (*TLP* 4.123). That is to say, if an object *a* has the internal property to have the possibility of having a relation *R* to *b*, *a* could in no case lose this property. A generalization of sentence 2.0123 is followed by sentence 2.0124:

If all objects are given, then at the same time all *possible* states of affairs are also given.¹⁰

If we limit ourselves to the idea that we do not know what objects are, this does not get us very far. It is important to insist on a clarifying answer that will emerge gradually. An atomic fact depends on unclarified elements. So, the task that presents itself here is to deal with the term ‘object’ in the proper way. What is the proper way? We have to think about the properties of an object that are given in the *Tractatus* to it.

¹⁰ The remark *TLP* 2.0124 as well as *TLP* 5.524 refer to the term ‘gegeben’ (given), a term that can mislead somebody to the idea that objects are sense-data. All these remarks are not affirmations but assumptions. I will explain below why objects should not be conceived to be sense-data.

Since ‘the world is the totality of facts’ (*TLP* 1.1) and a fact is constituted by atomic facts (*TLP* 2), the world itself consists of atomic facts. The reason why Wittgenstein does not state this in remark 1.2 (he simply states that the world is divided into facts) is presumably because he has not introduced the term ‘atomic fact’ yet. By taking into consideration the notion that an atomic fact is a combination of objects (*TLP* 2.01), we are led to the idea that the world is constituted of atomic facts that are combinations of objects. Why does Wittgenstein assert in 1.1 that the world is not the totality of objects? What he seems to believe is that (a) the totality of facts or atomic facts is not equal to the totality of objects and (b) the world is something more than the totality of objects. In terms of Wittgenstein’s theory of language, we can say that (a) the totality of sentences (or atomic sentences) is not equal to the totality of names and (b) language is something more than the totality of names.¹¹

If Wittgenstein was asserting that the world is the totality of objects, what remains to be clarified is the way in which objects are connected with each other. This would necessarily lead Wittgenstein to take a position on whether objects include relations and qualities. However, Wittgenstein chooses to keep the specific issue open. That is to say, he does not finally clarify whether objects include relations and qualities, as we will see in the Second Chapter. What the *Tractatus* implies is that for an object to include relations and qualities it has to be part of an atomic fact. In other words, an object includes relations and qualities only when it is combined with at least one other object (*TLP* 2.0121). How is the combination of objects managed?

In the atomic fact objects hang [hängen] one in another, like the links of a chain [Kette]. (*TLP* 2.03)¹²

¹¹ Russell does not miss this point since in the *Tractatus*’ introduction among others he states: “The world is not described by merely naming all the objects in it; it is necessary also to know the atomic facts of which these objects are constituents” (*TLP* xiv).

¹² Here Ogden’s translation is used.

At this stage, what we have to keep in mind is that objects are combined in atomic facts and this combination does not need any external agent to be achieved.¹³ Moreover, in no case can an object occur in isolation but only as a part of an atomic fact (*TLP* 2.011), in other words, it is impossible for an object to be excluded from all atomic facts. In terms of language this idea transforms as follows:

Only sentences have sense; only in the nexus of a sentence does a name have meaning. (*TLP* 3.3)

A name, for example, occurs in a sentence only within the nexus of an atomic sentence (*TLP* 4.23). In no case can an object occur in the world as an entity in isolation. This is expressed in the remark 2.0121, as follows:

If I can think of an object in the context of an atomic fact, I cannot think of it apart from the *possibility* of this context.¹⁴

The impossibility of the accidental is explained as follows:

In logic nothing is accidental: if a thing *can* occur in an atomic fact the possibility of that atomic fact must already be prejudged in the thing. (*TLP* 2.012)¹⁵

Objects contain the possibility of all atomic facts (*TLP* 2.014).¹⁶ As Wittgenstein states:

It is essential to things that they should be possible constituents of states of affairs. (*TLP* 2.011)

Logic deals with every possibility and all possibilities are its facts. (*TLP* 2.0121)

¹³ At the beginning of the *Notebooks*, Wittgenstein leaves the implication that there is a bearer (someone) who will do the correlations between the elements of a Bild and the elements of reality. Particularly, he says: ‘By my correlating the components of the picture with objects, it comes to represent a situation and to be right or wrong’ (*NB* p.33, 26.11.14). Moreover, at two other places (*NB* p.52-53, 30.5.15 and p.60, 15.6.15) he refers to the correlation ‘I’ between names and objects. Later, in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein distances himself from the idea of the necessity of the bearer.

¹⁴ Here Ogden’s translation is used.

¹⁵ Here Ogden’s translation is used.

¹⁶ It seems that Wittgenstein uses the term ‘situation’ (*Sachlage*) as an equivalent of the term ‘state of affairs’ or ‘atomic fact’ (*Sachverhalt*). As a result of this in 2.014 he states that “Objects contain the possibility of all situations”. See also 2.202 and 2.203. Wittgenstein was not happy with this translation. What he said to Ogden when he translated *Tractatus* proves this: “The word “*Sachlage*” has been translated “state of affairs”. Now I don’t like this translation but don’t know what to suggest in its place. I have thought of the latin “*status rerum*” (?) would this be better?” (*LO* p.21).

The world includes all possible combinations of objects, that is to say, the limits of what is possible (of any possible world). The possibility of all combinations of objects in the world is nothing but the form of the world. Wittgenstein asserts: “If all objects are given, then at the same time all *possible* states of affairs are also given” (*TLP* 2.0124). By taking into consideration that the form of an object is the possibility of its occurring in atomic facts or the possible ways it can be combined with other objects in atomic facts (*TLP* 2.0141), then remark 2.0124 can be transformed in the following way: if all forms of objects are given, then at the same time, all possible forms of atomic facts are given too. This means that if all forms of objects are given, at the same time the form of the world is also given. Wittgenstein considers that the world includes the limits of the empirical world (or of the sensible world), with actual facts being only some of the possible facts.

Wittgenstein somewhat awkwardly claims that although it is impossible to imagine objects without logical space, it is possible to imagine logical space as empty. Specifically, he states:

Each thing is, as it were, in a space of possible states of affairs. This space I can imagine empty, but I cannot imagine the thing without the space. (*TLP* 2.013)

The sentence 2.013 is a reminiscent of Kant in the sense that it evokes the transcendental character of space and time, or the so-called ‘Transcendental Aesthetic’ which underpins his *Critique of Pure Reason*. Kant states:

One can never represent that there is no space, although one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it. (Kant 1998 p.158)

Both Kant and Wittgenstein consider that the existence of space is a necessity. While Kant asserts that we can think of space without objects, without space disappearing,

Wittgenstein, by using the term ‘empty logical space’, cannot mean a logical space empty of objects, but a space without atomic facts (this does not mean that there would not be actual facts but these (actual facts) would not be atomic facts).¹⁷ The *Tractatus* does not support the idea that it would be possible for a space of possible atomic facts to exist without objects. Logical space would cease to constitute the space of all possibilities if the objects which are the basic constituents of atomic facts did not exist. Therefore, in no case can we imagine Tractarian logical space without the fundamental constituents of all possibilities, namely objects.

1.3 The substance of the world in the Tractatus

Wittgenstein states:

Objects make up the substance of the world. (*TLP* 2.021)

Wittgenstein’s above comment constitutes an acceptance, among others, that the world has substance. Here, two questions arise:

- (a) What is the substance of the world according to the *Tractatus*?
- (b) Why must this world have substance according to the *Tractatus*?

Concerning the first above question, the remark that claims that the substance of the world is made up of objects (*TLP* 2.021), I am led to pose the crucial question again:

What are objects?

Thinking about the properties that are given about objects in the *Tractatus* we can understand that these things must not be confused with the objects to which we refer in our *ordinary language* (*gewöhnliche Sätze*) such as chairs, tables, cars or the objects

¹⁷ This idea is expressed in M. Morris’ work (Morris 2008 p.38).

which we can encounter in the experienced world and used by Frege and Russell as examples of objects.¹⁸ In the history of philosophy we very often encounter the tendency to reference the world in indivisible entities.¹⁹ What differentiates things in the case of the *Tractatus* is that it introduces the notion of ‘object’ in a very abstract way in comparison with the physical atomism of ancient philosophers such as Leucippus, Democritus, Anaxagoras, Epicurus and others. This is imposed since the objects of *Tractatus* do not compose the substance of the physical world as ancient philosophers support but they compose that substance in which all logical possible worlds would be referenced.²⁰ Particularly, Wittgenstein states:

It is obvious that an imagined world, however different it may be from the real one, must have *something* – a form – in common with it. (*TLP* 2.022)

Therefore, the substance of the world has to be common in every possible world through a common form which defines every possibility. Wittgenstein states:

The substance of the world can only determine a form, and not any material properties. For it is only by means of sentences that material properties are represented—only by configuration of objects that they are produced. (*TLP* 2.0231)

At this point I have to say that since I have not given a complete account about what objects are, the constituents of substance, the notion of ‘substance’ remains also unclarified. This reveals to a certain degree the complexity of the notion ‘object’, something that the whole thesis deals with.

¹⁸ According to Waismann’s recorded conversations, Wittgenstein states: “When Frege and Russell spoke of objects they always had in mind things that are, in language, represented by nouns, that is, say, bodies like chairs and tables” (*WVC* p.41).

¹⁹ Wittgenstein in the *Notebooks* poses the question about whether there is something indivisible or not, as follows: “Does the visual image of a *minimum visible* actually appear to us indivisible? What has extension is divisible. Are there parts in our visual image that have no extension? E.g., the images of the fixed stars?” (*NB* p.51).

²⁰ Max Black states characteristically: “By the ‘world’ he [Wittgenstein] does not mean the physical cosmos, but something vaster and philosophically more interesting [...] Wittgenstein is trying out a new way of looking at the world, which forces him to twist and bend language to the expression of his thoughts” (Black 1964 pp.385-86).

Let us turn to the question why must the world have substance according to the *Tractatus*? According to the *Tractatus*, the world must have substance so that the sense of all sentences are independent of the truth of any of them. The sense of an atomic sentence can never depend on the truth of another atomic sentence (*TLP* 2.0211 and 4.211). In other words, from the truth of an atomic sentence ‘p’, one cannot logically infer the truth or falsity of an atomic sentence ‘q’ (*TLP* 2.062 and 5.1314-5.135). So, the molecular sentence $p \& q$ can be neither a tautology nor a contradiction (*TLP* 4.211 and 6.3751). According to the *Tractatus*, substance is that which is independent of what is the case (*TLP* 2.024), in other words the possibilities are independent of what is the case. Wittgenstein states:

If the world had no substance, then whether a sentence had sense would depend on whether another sentence was true. (*TLP* 2.0211)

However, for Wittgenstein, the world does indeed have substance and objects consist of substance which cannot be composite (*TLP* 2.021). Objects are connected among them and create atomic facts which are independent of each other (*TLP* 1.21, 2.061 and 2.062) and atomic sentences which describe possible atomic facts are also independent of one another. This is encouraged because of the main characteristic of the notion of ‘objects’ (beyond their simplicity), that we do not know what the properties of objects are. If the *Tractatus* asserted that objects had some specific properties, perhaps this would limit the set of their possible combinations. Thus, Wittgenstein adopts the idea of the independence of atomic sentences, an affirmation that concerns him in the case of colours. In sentences 6.375 and 6.3751, he admits that it is logically impossible that two colours be located at the same time at the same place, something that arises by the logical structure of colour.²¹ Therefore, the statements “A is red all over” and “A is yellow all over” (where A refers to a point in the visual field at a given time) constitute

²¹ This idea is repeated in *PR* p.105.

a contradiction.²² Stating that “A is red all over” excludes the statement that “A is yellow all over”, something that shows that these two statements are not independent between them. The truth of the first statement has as a logical consequence the falsity of the second statement. So, these statements cannot be conceived to be atomic sentences (*TLP* 4.221); hence, they need more analysis²³ (the words “red” and “yellow” are not names of simples). Therefore, the statements the “A is red all over” and “A is yellow all over” do not correspond with atomic facts. In the 1929 text entitled *Some Remarks on Logical Form*,²⁴ Wittgenstein admits that atomic sentences are not independent of one another but at the same time through his words, he tries to explain this contradiction by saying that the colour “red” constitutes “all gradations of red” and none of “yellow” and *vice versa* (*RLF* p.34). This concerns an effort which would show that statements of degree of a property could be analyzed in terms of truth functions. Knowing the problems of this position, concerning the independence of sense, Wittgenstein considers that they can be solved through symbolism but he never proposes an alternative to them. This constitutes the main reason for the fall of ‘Logical Atomism’²⁵ which adopted the notion that atomic sentences are logically independent as a main idea. In “Some Remarks on Logical Form”, Wittgenstein eventually admits that atomic sentences ‘exclude’ and do not ‘contradict’ one another (*RLF* p.35). This is because the form of the sentence contains the forms of entities to which it refers. Therefore, it is possible for two entities to conflict in this logical form and as a result, one excludes the other and there is no contradiction (*RLF* p.36). In *The Blue and Brown Books*, Wittgenstein again states that two colours cannot be in the same place simultaneously, adding ‘this is a

²² This is not an *a priori* truth, but a logical truth.

²³ In 1930 Wittgenstein explains this point to Desmond Lee (*WLC* 32 p.119).

²⁴ Wittgenstein would have read his remarks of logical form to the *Aristotelian Society and Mind Association Joint Session* in July in 1929 but he never did (*PR* Editor’s note p.349). He referred to this essay as ‘weak’ in one of his letters to the editor of *Mind* (see comment by G.E.M. Anscombe *RLF* p.31).

²⁵ Russell in his work entitled *Logic and Knowledge* refers to the notion ‘logical atomism’ as follows: “The reason that I call my doctrine logical atomism is because the atoms that I wish to arrive at as the sort of last residue in analysis are logical atoms and not physical atoms” (Russell 2007a p.179).

grammatical rule and states a logical impossibility' (*BB* p.56). What I have to say here is that no analysis looks as if it will avoid reduplicating the problem and this was what the whole discussion of *RLF* was trying to show.

Moreover, Wittgenstein claims that if the world did not have substance, then 'in that case we could not sketch any Bild of the world (true or false)' (*TLP* 2.0212). As I will explain below the crucial statement of the Bild theory of sentence is that 'A sentence is a Bild of reality. A sentence is a model of reality as we imagine it' (*TLP* 4.01). Therefore, in terms of language if the world did not have substance, then in that case we could not formulate sentences (true or false) for the world. Taking into consideration that the *Tractatus* moves from general considerations of representation to more specific considerations of representation of language, the question why must the world have substance can be transformed as follows: Why do sentences of the world necessarily depend upon a world of substance? Having in mind that objects make up the substance of the world (*TLP* 2.021), this question will lead us to a crucial question: Why does the Bild theory of sentences require objects? In other words why the role of the notion 'object' constitutes a requirement of the Bild theory of sentence. This question pushes us to examine how the Bild theory of sentences in the *Tractatus* is being built by clarifying the role of objects in a deeper way.

1.4 The Bild theory of sentences – the inspiration and the steps towards the theory

Before I examine what the Bild theory of sentences claims, consideration of two more important points will help us to understand this 'theory', especially the way in which the notion of the 'object' is involved in it. The first concerns what inspired Wittgenstein to formulate the Bild theory of sentences; the second concerns the steps that he followed to

formulate this ‘theory’, which is primarily based on the idea that ‘a sentence is a Bild of reality [Wirklichkeit]’ (*TLP* 4.01). Moreover, it is worth mentioning at this point that the German term ‘Bild’ in the *Tractatus* is translated by Pears and McGuinness as well as Ogden as ‘picture’. By taking into consideration that the term ‘Bild’ covers not only paintings, a form of two-dimensional pictorial representations, but also three-dimensional pictorial representations namely models, it is more preferable to keep the German term ‘Bild’ instead of the English term ‘picture’. In this way we do not ignore the three-dimensional pictorial representations since the Bild theory of sentences acquires a more generalised representational character. Wittgenstein in the remark 2.12 states that ‘a Bild is a model of reality’ by using the German term ‘Modell’, a representational means with a three-dimensional character to introduce the idea of the Bild theory of sentences. Therefore, instead of referring to the ‘Picture theory of language’ or to the ‘Model theory of language’, we will refer to it as the ‘Bild theory of language’.

1.4a Wittgenstein’s inspiration for the Bild theory of sentences

In 1931 Wittgenstein states to Waismann that:

I have inherited this concept of a picture from two sides: first from a drawn picture, second from the picture [model] of a mathematician, which already is a general concept. For a mathematician talks of picturing [Abbildung] in cases where a painter would no longer use this expression. (WVC p.185)

Reflecting on this quotation, which comes from a later period in his philosophical career (a period where the inspiration behind the *Tractatus* might well have been obscured or forgotten), I must note with regard to the first side that his ‘theory’ does not arise from a drawn picture. The first side is understood in terms of the second.

In referring to a mathematician, Wittgenstein specifically means Heinrich Hertz,²⁶ who wrote about the representation of physical theories:

We form for ourselves images or symbols of external objects;²⁷ and the form which we give them is such that the necessary consequences of the images in thought are always the images of the necessary consequence in nature of the things pictured. In order that this requirement may be satisfied, there must be a certain conformity between nature and our thought. (Hertz 2003 introduction p.1)

What I should note here is that Wittgenstein does not seem to generalize the theory of models proposed by the physicist Hertz to adopt a general idea and then create his ‘theory’. Rather, it seems that Wittgenstein believes that ‘Bilder’ function in the way he mentions. We cannot affirm that the way in which he conceives the concepts ‘Bild’ and ‘object’ are the same as the way in which Hertz conceives them, although we can recognise some loose analogies (similarities) between their work through the following passage:

The relation of a dynamical model to the system of which it is regarded as the model, is precisely the same as the relation of the images which our mind forms of things to the things themselves. For if we regard the condition of the model as the representation of the condition of the system, then the consequents of this representation, which according to the laws of this representation must appear, are also the representation of the consequents which must proceed from the original object according

²⁶ Wittgenstein was aware of Hertz’s work and in the *Tractatus* he refers to his name twice (*TLP* 4.04 and 6.361).

²⁷ A similar idea is expressed in *TLP* 2.1. According to the translation of Pears and McGuinness “We picture facts to ourselves” (attention here: we do not picture objects to ourselves); according to the translation of Ogden “We make to ourselves Bilder of facts” (attention here: we do not make to ourselves Bilder of objects). The translation of Pears and McGuinness seems to emphasise the way in which we picture a fact directly; it is not a process which is composed structurally following developing stages until its completion. Facts are there (in logical space) and we ‘transfer’ them by picturing them to ourselves. Ogden appears to be closer to the German text since his translation states that a Bild is not something which rises directly to us as a whole. A Bild is essentially something which we *make* bit by bit (thus *understanding* the whole arrangement of the fact), a process which aims to connect these bits in such a way as to constitute the final Bild (which will represent the certain fact or not). Perhaps we could say that Ogden perceives a Bild as something which is made through its pieces (these pieces can be nothing else but the elements which correspond with objects) (*TLP* 2.13), while Pears and McGuinness seem to perceive a Bild as something which has arisen through the Bild itself. Moreover, we encounter a similar idea with the remark 2.1 in Kant’s work *Critique of Pure Reason* in which he says: “By means of outer sense (a property of our mind) we represent to ourselves objects as outside us, and all as in space” (Kant 1998 p.174).

to the laws of this original object. The agreement between mind and nature may therefore be likened to the agreement between two systems which are models of one another, and we can even account for this agreement by assuming that the mind is capable of making actual dynamical models of things, and of working with them. (Hertz 2003 p.428)

While Hertz claims that models serve as representations of their relevant systems, a relation between pictures of the mind, or thoughts, and things of nature, or empirical objects ('material particles' or 'material points'), Wittgenstein considers that thought which is expressed through language serves as a representation of reality. More particularly, atomic sentences represent atomic facts, combinations of objects.

Apart from Hertz's influence on Wittgenstein, George Henrik von Wright, one of Wittgenstein's biographers, recounts the following story with regard to Wittgenstein's inspiration of the Bild theory of sentences:

It was in the autumn of 1914, on the Eastern Front. Wittgenstein was reading in a magazine about a lawsuit in Paris concerning an automobile accident. At the trial, a miniature model of the accident was presented before the court. The model here served as a sentence, that is, as a description of a possible state of affairs. It had this function owing to a correspondence between the parts of the model (the miniature houses, cars, people) and things (houses, cars, people) in reality. It now occurred to Wittgenstein that one might reverse the analogy and say that a sentence serves as a model or picture, by virtue of a similar correspondence between its parts and the world. (Wright 1982 pp.7-8)

According to Wright, the car model showed Wittgenstein correspondence between parts of language and parts of the world. However, Wittgenstein did not need this car model to conceive of the correspondence between its parts and things in the empirical world to use it for the Bild theory of sentences. What the car model might have shown to Wittgenstein?

1.4b From the car model to the Bild theory and finally to the Bild theory of sentences

What the car model might have showed Wittgenstein was the notion of *form*. It is natural to think that Wittgenstein did not need to know the story of the car accident for thinking the correlations between the elements of the world and the elements of language. What the car model probably pushed him to think was the idea of form – the idea of possibilities. The possible ways in which elements of the model (Elemente des Bildes) could be arranged (the form of the model) were the same as the possible ways in which elements of a part of the empirical world could be arranged (the form of a part of the empirical world). This means that a specific form includes the possibility of a set of relations due to various combinations among its elements but it does not include the possibility of another set of relations due to the non-availability of some other elements. Let us take a model which does not include a specific thing, for example a glass. Since the specific glass does not constitute a part of the model, the elements of the specific model cannot create any combination which will include the specific glass (it is important to remember that we should not conceive of a glass as to constitute a Wittgensteinian object). A form is determined by its elements.

By returning to the car model, we can say that the elements of the model and some empirical objects of reality have similar possibilities of arrangement. In other words, the range of possibilities for the arrangement of the elements of the model is the same as the range of possibilities for the arrangement of elements of a part of the empirical world. Thus, the empirical fact (the car accident) and its relevant model have a sameness of form. This presupposes the following:

(M1) The elements of the model and the objects of its relevant part of the empirical world are distinct from each other.

(M2) There are the proper correlations between the elements of the model and the empirical objects of its relevant part of the empirical world.

(M3) The range of ways in which the elements of the model could have been arranged is the same as the range of ways in which the correlated objects in the world could have been arranged.²⁸

Therefore, the idea of a common form (a common range of possibilities of combination) between a car model and a part of the empirical world (an idea that has as requirements (M1), (M2) and (M3)) requires certain kinds of elements, namely those of the model and some of the empirical world.

The idea of the sameness of form is transferred firstly from the case of *Bilder* to the case of sentences and then it is generalised to become the form of reality.²⁹ In other words the idea of form in *Tractatus* is related to two notions: firstly, the ‘grammatical notion’ or the notion of the ‘logico-syntactical rule’. This means that there is a grammatical order of names, atomic sentences and sentences. Secondly, the ‘ontological’ notion, that is to say, there is an ‘ontological order’ of objects, atomic facts and facts - all objects combine into atomic facts whose totality is the world divisible into facts. This must be clarified.

²⁸ Here, I hold M2 and M3 as they are presented in M. Morris’ work Morris 2008 p.122).

²⁹ In July 1932, Wittgenstein, among others, says to Waismann “I thought that there was a connection between language and reality” (WVC 32 p.210).

Taking into consideration remarks 2.0122, 2.02 and 2.021 (that are related to the distinctiveness of Tractarian objects) and 2.13 – 2.14 and 2.15 (that are related to the correlations between the distinct elements of a Bild and the distinct elements of an atomic fact (Tractarian objects)) as well as 2.014 and 2.0271 (that are related to the possibility of all situations), the (M1), (M2) and (M3) in terms of a Bild are transformed as follows:

(B1) The elements of a Bild and the objects of its relevant atomic fact must be distinct from each other.³⁰

(B2) There must be proper correlations between the elements of a Bild and objects of its relevant atomic fact.

(B3) The range of ways in which the elements of a Bild could have been arranged is the same as the range of ways in which the correlated objects in an atomic fact could have been arranged.³¹

(B1), (B2) and (B3) are required for a common form between a Bild and an atomic fact. Here, the notion of ‘form’ requires particular elements, the elements of the Bild and the Tractarian objects which, as we will see below, cannot be conceived of as empirical objects; in other words, they are not the basic elements of experience. Thus, the idea of

³⁰ Here, I have to clarify two terms: firstly, by the term ‘distinct’ I mean what Wittgenstein means by the term ‘independent’ in remark 2.0122: “Things are independent in so far as they can occur in all possible situations”. Secondly, by the term ‘from each other’ we do not mean that the elements of a Bild are distinct from one another. What I mean is that it is the elements of a Bild which are distinct from objects.

³¹ Here, I hold and B3 as a reflexion of M2 and M3 as they are presented in M. Morris’ work (Morris 2008 p.122).

a common form between a Bild and its relevant atomic fact arises. This must be clarified further.

It is essential for Wittgenstein that Bilder and facts can have the same form. He formulates this as follows:

A Bild is a fact. (*TLP* 2.141)

Since the ontological part of the *Tractatus* has been given, which affirms that an atomic fact consists of objects (*TLP* 2.01) and he has formulated remark 2.141, the obvious thought is that, a Bild also consists of distinct elements that are correlated to the elements of its relevant atomic fact (*TLP* 2.13). The fact as Bild (*TLP* 2.1) is the fact which stands in its correlative relation to a fact of reality (since the fact is depicted as a Bild, it (the Bild) depicts a fact of reality) (*TLP* 2.141). A Bild becomes a Bild due to its distinct elements that are correlated to the objects of a fact of reality ((B1) and (B2)). For a representation (or depiction)³² there should be a kind of stipulation that such and such are the elements of the Bild which are correlated with objects of an atomic fact of reality. It is a question of an element-element relation which represents a possible relation of object-object (B2). What correlates a Bild with reality, namely the ‘pictorial relationship’ (*TLP* 2.1514), is found in the Bild itself (*TLP* 2.1513). Beyond this correlative relation or pictorial relationship, there are no Bilder. The Bild reaches reality (*TLP* 2.1511), and it is ‘laid against reality like a measure’ (*TLP* 2.1512) with ‘graduating lines’ (*TLP* 2.15121). Thus, Wittgenstein states:

³² In the *Tractatus* the term ‘represent’ (darstellen) is usually used for the relation between a Bild and its sense (see *TLP* 2.173, 2.22, 2.221 and 4.031), whereas the term ‘depict’ (abbilden) is usually used for the relation between a Bild and some actual fact (see *TLP* 2.19 and 2.201). Wittgenstein does not use these terms in a completely uniform way.

These correlations are, as it were, the feelers of the Bild's elements, with which the Bild touches reality. (*TLP* 2.1515)³³

How do we have to think of these feelers of the Bild's elements for a Bild to touch reality? There must be a relation of projection (Projektion) between the elements of a Bild and the elements of an atomic fact. In other words, there must be rules of projection connecting the elements of an atomic fact with those of the elements of its relevant Bild. One such example is the rule that connects a musical score with an actual performance of it:

There is a general rule by means of which the musician can obtain the symphony from the score, and which makes it possible to derive the symphony from the groove on the gramophone record, and, using the first rule, to derive the score again. That is what constitutes the inner similarity between these things which seem to be constructed in such entirely different ways. And that rule is the law of projection which projects the symphony into the language of musical notation. It is the rule for translating this language into the language of gramophone records. (*TLP* 4.0141)³⁴

Therefore, there must be a fixed structural relation between the objects of the fact and the elements of the Bild. In sentence 2.161, Wittgenstein is in a position to state that there must be *something identical* (identische) between the Bild and the represented fact, so that a Bild functions as a Bild of the corresponding fact.

However, what is the identical something?

³³ By taking into consideration the sentences *TLP* 2.04, 2.06 and 2.063, the term 'reality' presents confusion. While the first two sentences (*TLP* 2.04 and 2.06) inform us that the limits of reality are beyond the limits of the world (reality includes both the positive facts – existing atomic facts and the negative facts – non existing atomic facts while the world includes only existing atomic facts), in sentence 2.063 an identification of these limits is stated: 'The sum-total of reality is the world'. The word 'sum-total' (gesamt) does not allow us to think of any case in which reality might be wider than the world. The above confusion creates more difficulties in clarifying the term 'world' (a term that appears very often in the *Tractatus*) and 'reality' in addition to the difficulties that we have to face concerning the term 'object'. What I can say at this point is that Wittgenstein's conception of the structure of the world is not clear enough. While three terms are introduced to determine the ontological space, 'world', 'reality' and 'logical space', none of them is clarified. Although, the latter is not clarified, it does not conflict as the other two terms do.

³⁴ See *TLP* 3.11 and 3.13.

The common something, between an imagined world and an actual world, which Wittgenstein uses to affirm remark 2.022, comes to play an affirmative role in terms of Bilder and reality. Wittgenstein states:

What a Bild must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it – correctly or incorrectly – in the way it does, is its pictorial form (Form der Abbildung). (*TLP* 2.17)

Thus, the common identity that must exist between the Bild and the fact in the Bild is what Wittgenstein calls ‘Form der Abbildung’.³⁵ By saying that there is something identical, he does not mean that a third ‘something’ exists between a Bild and a fact. There is a common pictorial form which is a property of them both. Pictorial form is defined as the possibility of the structure of a Bild, the possible ways in which the elements of a Bild can be arranged ((B3) see *TLP* 2.033 and 2.032). It is concerned with the possibility that a Bild might have the structure which it now has or in other words, the possibility that the elements of a Bild could be formed in the way in which they are arranged. As Wittgenstein states:

The fact that the elements of a Bild are related to one another in a determinate way represents that things are related to one another in the same way.

Let us call this connection of its elements the structure of the Bild, and let us call the possibility of this structure the pictorial form of the Bild. (*TLP* 2.15)

Here I have to make an important clarification about the notion ‘structure’. Ramsey, in his review on the *Tractatus*, stresses that there is an ambiguity in the above remark (*TLP* 2.15). The ambiguity arises from the phrase ‘this connection’. By saying ‘let us

³⁵ In the translation of Pears and McGuinness, this term is translated as ‘pictorial form’, while in the translation of Ogden the term is translated as ‘representational form’. Ogden conceives the terms of Wittgenstein’s ‘Form der Abbildung’ and ‘Form der Darstellung’ to mean the same thing (representational form), while Pears and McGuinness translate the term ‘Form der Abbildung’ as ‘pictorial form’ and the term ‘Form der Darstellung’ as ‘representational form’. We have to admit that it is not clear whether Wittgenstein uses the terms ‘Form der Abbildung’ and ‘Form der Darstellung’ in a different way. Probably, although he uses two different terms, he means the same thing. So, in this work I will take these terms to mean the *same* thing.

call this connection of its elements the structure of the Bild', Wittgenstein means 'this connection', only the connection (configuration), by excluding its elements or he means the connection by including its elements (Ramsey 1966 p.11). According to Ramsey, if Wittgenstein by the term 'structure' means the configuration of elements but not the elements themselves, then it becomes complicated to understand what he means by the term 'structure' in the remark *TLP* 4.1211:

If two sentences contradict one another then their structure shows it.

While it seems strange for two structures to contradict only because of the configuration of their elements (that is to say, in this case, we ignore which are the elements of the two structures), having in mind the remarks *TLP* 2.15 and 2.151, Wittgenstein encourages the idea that two structures can be the same even if their elements are different since he states that the structure of the Bild is the same as the structure which the Bild represents. But this thesis will conceive the term 'structure' to mean both elements and their configuration (the determinate ways in which they are related to one another). Going back to the notion 'form' Wittgenstein states:

Pictorial form is the possibility that things are related to one another in the same way as the elements of the Bild. (*TLP* 2.151)

Different kinds of Bilder (a spatial Bild or a coloured Bild) have different kinds of pictorial form (*TLP* 2.171) and the notion *logical form* is introduced as the most general kind of through the following statement:

What any picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it – correctly or incorrectly – in any way at all, is logical form, i.e. the form of reality" (Form der Wirklichkeit). (*TLP* 2.18)

By making the strange statement that ‘a logical Bild of facts is a thought’ (*TLP* 3),³⁶ he seems to imply that the opposite happens too; that is to say, a thought is a logical Bild of a fact.³⁷ This is compatible with the idea that ‘the totality of true thoughts is a Bild of the world’ (*TLP* 3.01). If we accept the implication that all thoughts are logical Bilder (this is rather careless on Wittgenstein’s part), then it means that thoughts are facts (*TLP* 2.141) and they have a logical form, namely the form of reality (Form der Wirklichkeit) (*TLP* 2.18).³⁸ Thus, the constituents of thoughts (pieces of mental Bilder or mental pictorial elements)³⁹ can be arranged in the same way as objects can be related to one another in reality. If the elements of thought can be arranged in a certain way, the objects to which they correspond can also be arranged in this way. Hence, thought is possible since thought itself contains the possibility of the state which is thought. Whatever is thinkable is also possible (*TLP* 3.02). What is implied here for thought, or the notion that thoughts are Bilder (facts) as well as the notion that thoughts have the form of reality is formulated straightforwardly in the case of sentences. Before he does so, Wittgenstein identifies thoughts with sentences.⁴⁰ A sentence (Satz) expresses a

³⁶ It seems that Wittgenstein offers two different versions of the term ‘logical Bild’ by creating confusion. In 2.181, he states that ‘a Bild whose pictorial form is logical form is called a logical Bild’. This concerns a limited conception of the term ‘logical Bild’ which says that logical Bilder are the only Bilder whose pictorial form is logical form. In 2.182, he states that ‘every Bild is at the same time a logical one’. So, whichever Bild has logical form is a logical Bild, meaning that all Bilder are logical Bilder.

³⁷ According to Shwayder, the result of Wittgenstein’s theory is not so much the incorporation of the expression of thought into the production of Bilder but the opposite (*TLP* 2.182) (Shwayder 1966 p.305). Shwayder asserts that the central issue is the Bild and not thought. Moreover, Shwayder implies that the Bild precedes thought. According to Wittgenstein, however, “a logical Bild of facts is a thought” (*TLP* 3). It is therefore clear that we cannot make any distinction between a Bild and a thought because they are inseparable; they are one and the same thing (as opposed to two different things, as Shwayder claims).

³⁸ Later he changed his mind by stating: “What gives us the idea that there is a kind of agreement between thought and reality? Instead of ‘agreement’ here one might say with clear conscience ‘pictorial character’. But is this pictorial character an agreement? In the *Tractatus Logico – Philosophicus* I said something like: it is an agreement in form. But that is an error” (*PG* p.212). His concerns about the agreement between thought and reality are also expressed in *PG* p.163.

³⁹ Wittgenstein’s reply to Russell’s question ‘what is thought’ in 19.8.19 was the following: “I don’t know *what* the constituents of a thought are, but I know *that* it must have such constituents which correspond to the words of language. Again the kind of relation of the constituents of the thought and of the pictured fact is irrelevant. It would be a matter of psychology to find out” (*NWLR* p.130).

⁴⁰ It is likely that Wittgenstein was not concerned with the relation between sentences and thought while considering the car accident that took place in Paris in the autumn of 1914. In *Notebooks*, he does not make any reference to thought except in one case in September 1916: “Now it is becoming clear why I

thought (Gedanke) (*TLP* 3.1, 3.5 and 4) or the means through which thought is projected in writing (or visually) to make sense (the term ‘sense’ is a problematic term as Wittgenstein uses it, as we will see later). These sentences lead to the central striking claim of the Bild theory of sentences that ‘a sentence is a Bild of reality’ (*TLP* 4.01).⁴¹ The idea of the sameness of form is transformed into the case of sentences and it is then generalised to become the form of reality. (B1), (B2) and (B3) are transformed in terms of sentences (Sätze)⁴² in the following way:

Concerning the distinctiveness of the elements of a sentence the following are stated:

It is only in so far as a sentence is logically articulated that it is a Bild of a situation. (*TLP* 4.032)

In the sentence there must be exactly as many things distinguishable as there are in the state of affairs, which it represents. (*TLP* 4.04)⁴³

thought that thinking and language were the same. For thinking is a kind of language. For a thought too is, of course, a logical picture of the sentence, and therefore it just is a kind of sentence” (*NB* p.82, 12.9.16). It seems that Wittgenstein develops an idea about how a thought is related to a sentence between 1917 and 1918 when the *Tractatus* coheres with its final version: “Thus the aim of the book is to draw a limit to thought, or rather-not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts” (*TLP* Preface p.3). By using the phrase ‘the expression of thoughts’, Wittgenstein means nothing else but language.

⁴¹ In the sentence 4.01, Wittgenstein does not compare Bilder with sentences. He states in a clear way that a sentence is a Bild of reality. This idea is repeated in 4.012, 4.021, 4.03, and 5.156. The remark 4.01 seems to arise at first from the idea ‘that sentence is a logical portrayal of its meaning is obvious to the uncaptive eye’ and is reformulated by the idea ‘The sentence is a measure of the world’ (*NB* p.5, 20.9.14 and p.41, 3.4.15). At the same time, I have to say that in the *Notebooks*, he seems to separate sentences from Bilder by stating: “It can be said that, while we are not certain of being able to turn all situations into Bilder on paper, still we are certain that we can portray all *logical* properties of situations in a two-dimensional script” (*NB* p.7, 29.9.14). It seems that this thought was formulated before he created his complete view on the Bild theory of sentences. Later, Wittgenstein conceives the term ‘sentence’ in a different way. Particularly, in *Philosophical Remarks*, he writes: ‘If you think of sentences as instructions for making Bilder, their pictorial nature becomes even clearer’ (*PR* p.57). Here, Wittgenstein does not conceive a sentence as a Bild itself as he does in *Tractatus*, but a sentence helps to construct a Bild. In *Philosophical Grammar*, by distancing himself from the Bild theory of sentence, he compares literal pictures with sentences. He adopts the idea that understanding a sentence is the understanding of its picture (*PG* p.42).

⁴² In everyday German, the term ‘Satz’ can mean either ‘sentence’ or ‘proposition’. Sentences belong to some language with syntactical rules while propositions do not belong to any language and they do not obey to any syntactical rules. Propositions are the ideas or thoughts which sentences can use to express. In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein uses both senses and sometimes this is quite confusing. Particularly, in the remark *TLP* 4.06 he refers to ‘proposition’ and in the remarks *TLP* 4.25 and 4.26 he refers to ‘elementary proposition’ (Elementarsatz) (a proposition can be either true or false). In remark 3.141, he refers to a sentence. The German term ‘Satz’ is translated by Pears and McGuinness as well as Ogden as ‘proposition’ but I will use the term ‘sentence’ since, as we will see later, the remarks of the *Tractatus* are remarks of a special kind without having sense (*TLP* 6.54), while the term ‘Satz’ means the sense of a sentence. Moreover, a ‘Satz’ has a fixed correlation with the world, while a sentence does not necessarily have this and the remarks of the *Tractatus* belong to the second case.

⁴³ Ogden’s translation.

In terms of sentences, (B1) is therefore transformed as follows:

(S1) The elements of an atomic sentence (names) and the elements of its relevant atomic fact of reality (objects) must be distinct.

At this point I will avoid discussing whether predicates are also elements of atomic sentences in the same way as names. This is one of the most crucial issues that I will discuss in more detail in the Second Chapter.

Concerning the correlations between the distinct elements of an atomic sentence (names) and the distinct elements of its atomic fact (objects), it is stated that:

One name stands for one thing, another for another thing, and they are combined with one another. In this way the whole group-like a tableau vivant-presents a state of affairs. (*TLP* 4.0311)

The above idea is formulated in the *Notebooks* as follows:

In the sentence, something has something else as its proxy. (*NB* p.37, 25.12.14)

Here, the term ‘something’ implies objects and the term ‘something else’ implies names which are proxies for them. Thus, the above sentence of the *Notebooks* could be formulated as follows: in the sentence, objects have names as their proxy (here, emphasis is given to the notion of the ‘grammatical form’ in a sentence and not the ontological form. A sentence is a grammatical form that shows an ontological form since ‘a sentence shows how things stand if it is true’ (*TLP* 4.022)).⁴⁴ Thus, (B2) is transformed as follows:

⁴⁴ See also *NB* p.31, 20-21.11.14 and pp.33-34, 26.11.14.

(S2) There must be the proper correlations between the elements of an atomic sentence (names) and elements of its relevant atomic fact of reality (objects).

With respect to the possibilities of arrangement of both the elements of an atomic sentence (names) and the elements of its relevant atomic fact of reality (objects), it is claimed that:

In the sentence there must be exactly as many things distinguishable as there are in the state of affairs, which it represents.

They must both possess the same logical (mathematical) multiplicity (cf. Hertz's Mechanics, on Dynamic Models). (*TLP* 4.04)⁴⁵

Here, the idea of the 'same logical (mathematical) multiplicity' encloses the idea of the possibilities of arrangement of both the elements of an atomic sentence (names) and the elements of its relevant atomic fact of reality (objects). Moreover, the idea of multiplicity is expressed in a loose way as:

The essence of a sentential sign⁴⁶ is very clearly seen if we imagine one composed of spatial objects (such as tables, chairs, and books) instead of written signs.

Then the spatial arrangement of these things will express the sense of the sentence. (*TLP* 3.1431)

Although it seems obvious that a sentential sign does not consist of spatial things such as tables, chairs and books (a sentential sign is constituted by its elements (words) (*TLP* 3.14)), Wittgenstein encourages us to 'imagine' it as consisting of physical objects to understand that a sentential sign ('this is obscured by the usual form of expression in writing of print' (*TLP* 3.143)) is a fact. In this way, remark 3.1431 encourages us to think that just as we can imagine possible ways in which spatial objects can be

⁴⁵ Ogden's translation.

⁴⁶ The German term for 'sentential sign' is 'Satzzeichen', translated by Pears and McGuinness as well as Ogden as 'propositional sign'.

arranged, so can we imagine possible ways in which their signs can be arranged in a sentential sign (a sentence is a sentential sign (*TLP* 3.12)).⁴⁷

In accordance with this, (B3) is transformed in terms of sentences as follows:

(S3) The range of ways in which the elements of a sentence could have been arranged is the same as the range of ways in which the correlated objects of reality could have been arranged.⁴⁸

Thus, (S1), (S2) and (S3) are required for a common form between an atomic sentence and an atomic fact.⁴⁹

Keeping in mind the statement ‘a Bild is a model of reality’ (*TLP* 2.12) which constitutes a key statement on representation, leading on to the crucial statement 4.01, (S1), (S2) and (S3) are a reflexion of (B1), (B2) and (B3), and (S1), (S2), (S3), (B1), (B2) and (B3) are a reflexion of (M1), (M2) and (M3). Essentially, (M1), (M2), (M3), (B1), (B2), (B3), (S1), (S2) and (S3) require the introduction of a notion that must play the following role:

(N1) It must have a special kind of distinctiveness.

⁴⁷ The strange point here is that Wittgenstein, while he uses the German term ‘Gegenständen’, gives examples of physical objects in brackets (table, chairs, and books). It seems that the verb ‘imagine’ in the passage becomes less specific in Wittgenstein’s terms. Since he cannot give any examples of necessary existences he refers to empirical objects by using the term ‘Gegenständen’, which causes further confusion.

⁴⁸ Here, I hold S3 as it is presented in M. Morris’ work (Morris 2008 p.152).

⁴⁹ In his Preface to the *Tractatus*, Russell states that Wittgenstein deals with the question of what relation a fact (a sentence) should have with another fact in order to function as a symbol of the other. In order for a sentence to state a certain fact, something common should exist between the structure of the sentence and the structure of the fact (*TLP* p. x-xi). This is perhaps Wittgenstein’s most fundamental thesis.

(N2) It must be correlated to other items in a proper way.

(N3) It must be able to be arranged otherwise.

According to the *Tractatus*, the role of this notion is played by *objects*. Therefore, (N1), (N2) and (N3) are transformed as follows:

(O1) Each object is distinct from the relevant name.

(O2) Each object (beyond their correlations that give atomic facts) is potentially correlated to a name.

(O3) Each object has a range of possibility of occurring in atomic facts.⁵⁰

What we have to take from here is that (O1), (O2) and (O3) require that there must be objects.⁵¹

1.5 The notion ‘object’ as a requirement of the Bild theory of sentences

The idea of form inspired by the car model as a starting point (as we have seen) goes on to claim that language and reality are identified through a common logical form, a fixed

⁵⁰ In Wittgensteinian terms, this is the form of the object (*TLP* 2.0141).

⁵¹ This idea is also expressed in the *Notebooks* since Wittgenstein seems to consider that he has a transcendental argument to think that there should be examples of objects: “But it also seems certain that we do not infer the existence of simple objects from the existence of particular simple objects, but rather know them—by description, as it were – as the end—product of analysis, by means of a process that leads to them (*NB* p.50, 23.5.15)”. Moreover, he states: “It does not go against our feeling, that *we* cannot analyse SENTENCES so far as to mention the elements by name; no, we feel that the WORLD must consist of elements” (*NB* p.62, 17.6.15). These passages will lead *Tractatus* to the *a priori* logical character of atomic sentences (*TLP* 5.5562). This idea is unsuccessful (unhelpful) since it is quite ambitious to say that *everyone* who understands sentences in their analysed form must know the *a priori* logical character of atomic sentences.

form. This demands a notion with the specific characteristics (N1), (N2) and (N3). However, (N1), (N2) and (N3) presuppose that there must be this notion, namely ‘objects’, so that (N1), (N2) and (N3) are transformed with the terms of the object as (O1), (O2) and (O3). This will become clearer by explaining the necessity of objects in the Bild theory of sentences better.

1.5a Logical form requires elements - unalterable elements

The Bild theory of sentences claims that an atomic sentence represents an atomic fact if there is a common logical form between them.⁵² In other words, an atomic sentence represents an atomic fact if the possible ways in which the elements of the atomic sentence (names) could be combined are the same as the possible ways in which the elements of the atomic fact (objects) could be combined. For an atomic sentence and an atomic fact to have a common form, it is required that both the atomic sentence and the atomic fact have a fixed form. This presupposes that both the elements of the atomic sentence and the elements of the atomic fact are unalterable. In other words, the Bild theory of sentences requires that the elements of language (names) and the elements of reality (objects) have to be invariable.

Were objects alterable, their form would be contingent. Therefore, their combinations (atomic facts) could not be fixed (here I say they could not be fixed but they are contingent in the sense that objects can be combined with different ways). As a result of

⁵² Here, I have to make clear that as long as I refer to Wittgenstein’s Bild theory of sentences I refer to only atomic sentences (declarative sentences) and not to sentences in the usual form, namely the sentences of ordinary language. Bearing in mind that sentences that are Bilder assert atomic facts and the sentences that assert atomic facts are atomic sentences, we can infer that atomic sentences are Bilder (*TLP* 4.0311 and 4.21). We cannot affirm that ordinary sentences are Bilder since they cannot reveal their form. What they do is this: some of their expressions seem to be elements of analysed sentences (*TLP* 4.0031). Indeed, Wittgenstein states that “[...] a sentence states something only in so far as it is a Bild [...]” (*TLP* 4.03), but ordinary sentences are not Bilder. Thus, sentences cannot be conceived as Bilder until they can be analysed in relation to atomic sentences (*TLP* 4.21).

this, the *logical form* of the world (that is given by the totality of forms of all atomic facts) and that which is logically possible would change (*TLP* 2.012). The world by having substance, at the same time it has a fixed form since the notion ‘substance’ as it is given in the *Tractatus* ‘is what subsists independently of what is the case’ (*TLP* 2.024). It is something that remains fixed and does not change. This is in accordance with the property of objects, of things that make up substance, to be fixed (*TLP* 2.023, 2.026 and 2.027). Therefore, fixed things, namely, objects make up something that is fixed, that is, the substance of the world. This leads Wittgenstein to say:

Only if there are objects can there be a fixed form of the world. (*TLP* 2.026)⁵³

However, Wittgenstein states:

It is obvious that an imagined world, however different it may be from the real one, must have *something* – a form – in common with it. (*TLP* 2.022)

Therefore, the world, or any possible world, shares a common form with the real world, the actual world. All possible worlds have the same objects even if we do not know exactly what kind of entities the objects are. Therefore, there are different worlds because of different correlations of objects. The common form between an imagined world and the actual world is a certain fixed form because objects themselves are characterised by invariability (only their combinations alter, *TLP* 2.0271) and it is logically impossible to destroy them (*TLP* 2.023, 2.026 and 2.027).⁵⁴ If the form of the world was not characterised by something fixed, it would mean that it would be possible for other objects to stand for it. In this case, it would be impossible for a correspondence between names and other possible objects. Therefore, there would be no atomic sentence that is related to these objects. Thus, Wittgenstein states in the *Notebooks*:

⁵³ Ogden’s translation.

⁵⁴ A similar idea is formulated in *PI* I: §59.

The demand for simple things is the demand for definiteness of sense.
(NB p.63, 18.6.15)

If there is a final sense and a sentence expressing it completely, then
there are also names for simple objects.
That is the correct designation. (NB p.64, 18.6.15)

In the *Tractatus*, the above idea is formulated as follows:

The requirement that simple signs be possible is the requirement that
sense be determinate. (TLP 3.23)

Were names alterable, their form would be contingent; therefore, their combinations
(atomic sentences) could not be fixed.⁵⁵ As a result of this, the *logical form* of language
(that is given by the totality of forms of all atomic sentences) and that which is logically
possible would change (TLP 2.012). Thus, the correspondence among names and
objects would be impossible. Moreover, I have to say that Wittgenstein's Bild theory of
the sentence avoids the consequence that any object can correspond to any name or that
an object is able to correspond to more than one name (TLP 3.203 and 3.22).⁵⁶

Here, we have to admit that the mystery that is created does not concern the relation
between names and objects, that is to say, that objects stand for names, but that objects
are necessary elements. Wittgenstein states:

Even if the world is infinitely complex, so that every fact consists of
infinitely many states of affairs and every state of affairs is composed of
infinitely many objects, there would still have to be objects and states of
affairs. (TLP 4.2211)⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Indeed, it would be odd for formless sentences (their elements could have all possible combinations) to be able to describe a formless world (its elements could have all possible combinations). It is difficult to define what sentences these would be and how this world would be because the only way for a sentence not to have the form it has is to have no elements whatsoever.

⁵⁶ This idea is reminiscent of Russell: "In a logically perfect language the words in a proposition would correspond one by one with the components of the correspondent fact with the exception of such words as 'or', 'not', 'if', 'then', which have a different function. In a logically perfect language, there will be one word and no more for every simple object and everything that is not simple will be expressed by a combination of words, by combination derived, of course, from the words for the simple things that enter in, one word for each simple component. A language of that sort will be completely analytic, and will show at a glance the logical structure of the facts asserted or denied" (Russell 1998 p.58).

⁵⁷ The argument for the necessity of objects is formulated in the *Notebooks* as follows: "It seems that the

Therefore, according to the *Tractatus*, objects are an *a priori* necessity in ontology for the possibility of atomic facts as well as for the possibility of sense.

1.5b The Bild theory of sentences does not only apply to true sentences but to false ones as well

As we have already seen, the Bild theory of sentences requires that for an atomic sentence to represent an atomic fact there must be a common logical form. This does not mean that there must be a correspondence between an atomic sentence (Bild) as a whole and an atomic fact but there must be a correspondence between the elements of an atomic sentence (names) with the elements of its atomic fact (objects) (S2).⁵⁸

Wittgenstein states:

It is clear, however, that ‘A believes that p’, ‘A has the thought p’, and ‘A says p’ are of the form ‘“p” says p’: and this does not involve a correlation of a fact with an object, but rather the correlation of facts by means of the correlation of their objects. (*TLP* 5.542)

This is compatible (in a sense) with the idea that when we translate a sentence from one language to another, the translation operates on a word by word basis (the constituents of a sentence) and not sentence by sentence (*TLP* 4.025). In this way, Wittgenstein distances himself from Russell’s early idea that a meaningful sentence has to be

idea of the SIMPLE is already to be found contained in that of the complex and in the idea of analysis, and in such a way that we come to this idea quite apart from any examples of simple objects, or of sentences which mention them, and we realize the existence of the simple object-*a priori*-as a logical necessity” (*NB* p.60, 14.6.15).

⁵⁸ If indeed there were a correspondence between language and world it would make it impossible to say something meaningful in cases where a form of correspondence between language and world cannot be found (an example of this would be symbolic meaning in literature). In addition, names would be subject to a lot of restrictions because of the required correspondence with their relevant objects. As a result, the possible number of combinations would be fewer than all the sentences we can express in language. If we adopt the idea of correspondence, we also face the problem of translation. It is not obvious that sentences 4.025 and 3.343 in the *Tractatus* properly address translation because there are words that cannot be translated (for example idioms) from one language to another. Also, the idea that we can understand the sense of a sentence we have not encountered before by knowing only the referential meanings of its constituents (*TLP* 4.02 and 4.026) is not clarified. This presupposes that we know that the specific sentence we examine occurs as an isomorphic representation of its relevant fact. But as we will see later, the doctrine of isomorphism is flawed.

correlated with existential entities in the world. If the Bild theory of sentences affirmed that there is a correspondence between an atomic sentence and an atomic fact, then this would mean that the theory would refer only to true sentences and not to false sentences. This is because no false atomic sentence would correspond to a case in the world. This would mean that only true atomic sentences could have a sense of something which would be a mistake. By introducing the notion of 'object', this difficulty vanishes in Wittgenstein's 'theory'.

1.5c Limited possible combinations of objects, not finite possible combinations of objects

By introducing the term 'object', Wittgenstein affirms that the form of every possible world determines what is logically possible. The limits of every possible world or the limits of every possible form of the world are determined by all the possible ways in which objects can be arranged: that is to say, by the forms of all objects, by giving all possible configurations of atomic facts, and all atomic sentences that are facts (*TLP* 1, 2, 2.01, 2.014, 2.0141, 3.12 and 3.14). The question that arises is whether the combinations of objects are limited (all combinations are given by a limited whole which, although limited it could change) or finite (all combinations constitute the whole which could not change).

The *Tractatus* does not impose a specific range of possibilities of the combinations of signs. As Wittgenstein affirms:

In logical syntax the meaning of a sign should never play a role. It must be possible to establish logical syntax without mentioning the *meaning* of a sign: *only* the description of expressions may be presupposed. (*TLP* 3.33)

In no case can it be affirmed that the totality of configurations of objects is a finite system with finite limits that can be defined *a priori*. Language and reality are not finite systems with fixed limits.⁵⁹ Thus, Wittgenstein asserts that ‘it is nonsensical to speak of the *total number of objects*’ (*TLP* 4.1272).⁶⁰ This is achieved because of the conception of the special notion of ‘object’. Moreover, he states:

The contemplation of the world sub specie aeterni is its contemplation as a limited whole.

The feeling of the world as a limited whole is the mystical feeling. (*TLP* 6.45)⁶¹

The above idea is expressed in Russell’s introduction to the *Tractatus* as follows:

It is impossible to say anything about the world as a whole, and that whatever can be said has to be about bounded portions of the world.
(Introduction of *TLP* p.xix)

Therefore, the sign ‘world’ cannot refer to the form of its symbol, since the symbol has to have a specific form to state something. However, as I have already mentioned, according to the *Tractatus*, ‘it is nonsensical to speak of the *total number of objects*’; therefore, it is also nonsensical to speak of the total number of atomic facts as well as facts that compose the world (*TLP* 1.1). As a result of this, it is nonsensical to speak for the form of the whole that is composed by all forms of atomic facts. Thus, the sign ‘world’ cannot refer to the form of the whole. Beyond this, the notion ‘world’ as a whole cannot be given in experience; therefore, the notion ‘world’ as a whole is a pseudo-concept.

⁵⁹ This idea is expressed in a clear way in §23 of *Philosophical Investigations* where Wittgenstein poses the question of how many kinds of sentences there are. He affirms that there are countless kinds of the use of “symbols”, “words” and “sentences”. He perceives this multiplicity as something unfixed where new types of language can arise and others can be forgotten.

⁶⁰ The same idea is expressed in *Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle* as follows: ‘the question about the number of objects is without sense’ (*WVC* p.43). Because of this idea Wittgenstein considers that something is impossible to be said about the world as a whole.

⁶¹ Ogden’s translation.

What I have to keep from the First Chapter of this thesis is that while the *Tractatus* appears from the beginning to have a mood to introduce an ontological frame which is useful to develop a theory and to clarify the relationships between language and the world, finally, the terms of this ontological frame as in ‘atomic fact’, ‘world’, ‘logical space’, ‘reality’ which have the same character are not clarified because of the dark role of the notion of ‘object’. As a result of this, the terms ‘name’ and ‘atomic sentence’ are also not clarified. In the next Chapter, I will examine serious difficulties which arise because of the unclear role of the nature of objects in the *Tractatus*, something that will shed more light.

CHAPTER 2

DIFFICULTIES OVER THE NATURE OF OBJECTS

2. Introduction

It is famous that the role of objects in the *Tractatus* leaves them unclear and as a result encourages a kind of indeterminacy of the notion of ‘object’ with regard to what kinds of objects are included. A lot of commentators restrict their attention to the theoretical role of objects; they are led by the fact that we do not have and cannot have examples of objects. We also do not know and cannot know what objects are. This Chapter does not aim to be restricted in simply stating the indeterminacy of the role of the notion of ‘object’ but to give a deeper explanation on this issue. Particularly, this Chapter aims to argue that the notion of ‘object’ is left indeterminate in two crucial respects: (a) whether objects include universals, that is to say, properties and relations and (b) what is the relation between the Tractarian objects and objects which we can experience. The objects we can experience we can think of them either as things in the real world or as sense-data. Explaining the two above respects we can understand that we are not allowed to give any resolution to the issue of the indeterminacy of the notion of ‘object’. Wittgenstein seems to desire to keep a neutral position on purpose, a position that Ramsey adopted but also there are some indications out of the *Tractatus* which confirm that Wittgenstein had some opinions on this issue.

2.1 Do objects include universals?

There is a disagreement among commentators as to how the *Tractatus* should be read, especially with regard to the issue of whether it has to be conceived from a Realist point of view (which, roughly speaking, contends that objects include universals and *not* only

particulars)⁶² or from a Nominalist point of view (which, roughly speaking, contends that objects include *only* particulars).⁶³ Sometimes this question occurs in the following terms: are there universals,⁶⁴ that is to say properties (such as redness – if redness is a universal then every red thing is an instance of it) and relations (such as betweenness) which exist (independently of knowledge, experience and language) in the sense of being things (or objects as the Realists believe)?⁶⁵ Or are there only particulars (roughly speaking, concrete unique material particles, entities that exist in space and time) which are familiar through experience? Wittgenstein, for example, can be conceived of as a particular in this Nominalist sense – there is only one Wittgenstein, the pupil of Russell (in no case is it implied that Wittgenstein is an object). Nominalists claim that language only *seems* to refer to universals and as a result of this, they deny (a) the existence of universals and (b) the existence of abstract objects – objects that do not exist in space and time.⁶⁶ They affirm that there are *only* particulars or concrete objects.⁶⁷ Although the disagreement between realists and nominalists about the *Tractatus* focuses on

⁶² The Realist view is mainly supported by Ramsey (1923), Stenius (1960), Allaire (1966) and Hacker (1975a) as well as Hintikka and Hintikka (1986).

⁶³ The Nominalist view is mainly supported by Copi (1966), Ishiguro (1969), Carruthers (1989), Anscombe (1996) and Ricketts (1996) as well as Fogelin (2004).

⁶⁴ The noun ‘universal’ is contrastive with ‘individual’ and the adjective ‘universal’ is contrastive with ‘particular’.

⁶⁵ Traditionally, this issue is related to problem of one over many. How can different particular things be the same kind of thing? Can my car, my chair and my pen all be blue? The main point here is to determine the ‘essence’ which all blue things share. This problem is posed by Plato the first time and reformulated by Russell, as follows: ‘Let us consider, say, such a notion as *justice*. If we ask ourselves what justice is, it is natural to proceed by considering this, that, and the other just act, with a view to discovering what they have in common. They must all, in some sense, partake of a common nature, which will be found in whatever is just and in nothing else. This common nature, in virtue of which they are all just, will be justice itself, the pure essence the admixture of which with facts of ordinary life produces the multiplicity of just acts [...] The ‘idea’ *justice* is not identical with anything that is just: it is something other than particular things, which particular things partake of. Not being particular, it cannot itself exist in the world of sense (Russell 2001 p.52). By taking into consideration the notion ‘common nature’, as Russell uses it for the notion ‘universals’, we can think of it (the notion ‘common nature’) by using the notions ‘properties and relations’ as a lot of commentators do.

⁶⁶ Universals are not necessarily conceived as abstract and particulars are not necessarily conceived as concrete. For example, numbers are supported to be particulars, yet abstract objects. Therefore, it is supported that there are particulars which are abstract.

⁶⁷ Wittgenstein in his later work states his disagreement with Nominalists by saying that “Nominalists make the mistake of interpreting all words as *names*, and so of not really describing their use, but only, so to speak, giving a paper draft on such a description” (*PI* I:§383).

whether objects include universals, that is to say, properties and relations the fundamental question in this disagreement is whether there is an asymmetry between different kinds of objects in the world. In terms of language the question transforms to whether there is an asymmetry between different kinds of names. This would imply that there is a distinction between singular terms and something else – some other kind of expression.⁶⁸ This thesis does not aim to adopt either the realist position or the nominalist one.⁶⁹ What it aims for is to project and argue in favour of Ramsey's view that Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* remains neutral on purpose about whether objects include properties and relations.

2.1a Do objects include properties and relations?

Traditionally, there has been developed a discussion with regard to the above question supported by nominalists and realists. Both claim that there are some particular passages in the *Tractatus* that encourage their position correspondingly. Here, I will present some of their positions so that I am led to claim that the indeterminacy of the notion 'object' does not allow the clarification of this issue.

With regard to the nominalists' case some of their positions are the following: Copi in his work entitled 'Objects, Properties, and Relations in the *Tractatus*' encourages the idea that objects do not include properties and relations. First of all, according to Copi objects cannot include relations since *all* objects are represented by names (*TLP* 3.22, 3.221, 3.203 and 4.0312), while relations must be represented by relations and not by

⁶⁸ This goes back to Frege and then to Aristotle and to the Sophist of Plato.

⁶⁹ In the *Philosophical Investigations* the two types of objects, both particulars and universals (the terms are used in their loose sense) are apparent. The type of particulars appears through examples such as bits of wood, molecules, atoms, colour-patches and the type of universals appears through examples such as colours and type letters (See *PI* I §47-48 and §58).

names. Therefore, a distinction arises between objects and relations (Copi 1966 p.181) in the sense that objects do not include relations. Despite the fact that Copi's assertion that names always oppose to predicates, Wittgenstein seems to assert that in remark 4.22 atomic sentences could be constituted only by names, something that does not encourage Copi's view. Secondly, Copi encourages the idea that objects cannot be forms of formal (logical) properties. This is because 'objects can be represented (*TLP* 3.22, 3.221, 3.203 and 4.0312) whereas formal properties cannot be represented' (Copi 1966 pp.182-183). Particularly, Wittgenstein states:

In order to be able to represent logical form, we should have to be able to station ourselves with sentences somewhere outside logic, that is to say outside the world. (*TLP* 4.12)

Thirdly, Copi claims that objects are not material properties since the material properties are 'first formed by the configuration of the objects'. Particularly, he states:

The substance of the world can only determine a form and not any material properties. For these are first presented by the sentences – first formed by the configuration of the objects. (*TLP* 2.0231)⁷⁰

According to Copi, if Wittgenstein considered objects to be material properties then he would claim "material properties to be first formed by the configuration of material properties, themselves first formed by the configuration of material properties, and so on" (Copi 1966 p.183). Fourthly, according to Copi, objects are not properties because of the case of colours (see Ch.1 pp.26-28). Particularly, if a sentence claims a given point in the visual field to be red and another sentence claims another given point in the visual field to be blue then these sentences must not contradict (*TLP* 2.061, 4.21 and 4.211) since they would be atomic sentences and they would have as their elements colours, namely, red and blue as objects. Because of the logical structure of colour (*TLP* 6.3751) colour predications are not atomic sentences (Copi 1966 p.183).

⁷⁰ Ogden's translation.

According to Copi, Wittgenstein's objects are particulars absolutely bare, that is to say, they do not have formal or material properties. They have internal properties (2.01231) or forms (2.0141). Wittgenstein in some of his remarks refers to external and internal properties (*TLP* 2.01231, 2.0233 and 4.023). It seems that he considers objects to be bare particulars which do not have material properties. Copi reinforces his view with two additional key points: firstly, by saying that objects are colourless (*TLP* 2.0232), Wittgenstein leaves the implication that he denies not only the property of colour but all qualities or material properties of objects (Copi 1966 p.184) and secondly, atomic facts can be described (3.144, 3.24 and 4.023) but objects can only be named (3.221). If an object had a property then it would be a fact and it could be described. Since objects cannot be described it follows that they do not have properties (Copi 1966 pp.184-185).

Anscombe also supports a nominalistic view (Anscombe 1996 p.109) perceiving objects to be bare particulars and their combinations to be properties (Anscombe 1996 p.109).

Particularly, among others, she states:

Wittgenstein does not speak of 'concepts' or 'universals' as a kind of thing that is to be found in the world: it is quite clear that for him there is nothing but objects in configuration. (Anscombe 1996 p.99)

Red is a material property, and therefore formed by a configuration of objects. (Anscombe 1996 p.111)

Beyond Copi's and Anscombe's positions which support a nominalistic view I need to say that it is a strange move to refer to the simplicity of objects whilst referring to properties of objects at the same time (*TLP* 2.01231, 2.0233, 4.023 and 4.123). Of course, to surpass this difficulty, Wittgenstein leaves the implication that for an object to have properties it must be a part of an atomic fact. In fact, it is very hard to imagine a single thing that neither has formal nor material properties (an absolutely bare thing) –

although that does not necessarily mean that an object must be composed of them (a propertied thing).⁷¹ Therefore, if I will preserve something from here is the simplicity of objects, not the possession of properties in these.

With regard to the realist views, which oppose to nominalist views, some of those views are the following: According to Stenius, although Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* concerning terminology does not make any distinction between the categories of ‘objects’ and ‘predicates’, this does not follow that he does not make any distinction among the contents of these categories (Stenius 1960 p.63). The idea of an atomic fact as a combination of objects (*TLP* 4.2211) is tied to the idea that an atomic sentence is constituted by names (*TLP* 4.22) not only names of individual objects but also names of predicates (for example properties and relations) (Stenius 1960 p.63). Thus, Stenius states:

Wittgenstein counts as ‘things’⁷² not only individual objects but also predicates with different numbers of places.

By following Stenius’ steps, Hintikka and Hintikka reject that Wittgenstein when referring to names he means all singular terms and excludes predicates (Hintikka & Hintikka 1986 p.31). Hintikka and Hintikka claim that the remark ‘Relations and properties, etc., are objects too’ (*NB* p.61, 21.6.15) was written when Wittgenstein had written a big number of remarks of *Notebooks* which he later incorporated in the *Tractatus*, implying that the specific remark can be perceived to have the same spirit with the *Tractatus*’ spirit. After six days (*NB* p.69, 22.6.15) speaking about complex

⁷¹ Copi writes: “With the possible exception of Parmenides, I know of no historical philosopher who discussed absolutely bare particulars. In the *Timaeus* Plato’s receptacle is bare but not absolutely bare: although ‘formless’ or ‘devoid of any particular form’ has the capacity of receiving form” (Copi 1966 p.184).

⁷² Stenius accepts that the terms Ding, Sache and Gegenstand mean the same and he uses the corresponding English term ‘thing’ (Stenius 1960 p.61).

entities ‘Socrates’ and the property of ‘mortality’ Wittgenstein states that ‘here they just function as simple objects’. The following remark is an indirect evidence:

A name designating an object thereby stands in a relation to it which is wholly determined by the logical kind of the object and which signalizes that logical kind. (*NB* p.70, 22.6.15)

Therefore, objects do not all belong to the same ‘logical kind’ (Hintikka & Hintikka 1986 p.31). According to Hintikka and Hintikka, we take two additional indirect evidence from Wittgenstein’s ‘Notes dictated to G.E. Moore in Norway’ and from the *Tractatus*. Particularly, with regard to the first case Wittgenstein states the ‘difference between things, facts, properties, relations’ (Appendix II to *Notebooks* 1914-1916 p.109). With regard to the second case Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* perceives objects to include properties, relations and functions. Particularly he states:

The arguments of functions are readily confused with the affixes of names ... For example, when Russell writes ‘+_c’, the ‘_c’ is an affix which indicates that the sign as a whole is the addition-sign for cardinal numbers. But the use of this sign is the result of arbitrary convention and it would be quite possible to choose a simple sign instead of ‘+_c’ [...] ([...] An affix is always part of a description of the object to whose name we attach it [...]). (*TLP* 5.02)

Hintikka and Hintikka claim that with the above remark Wittgenstein implies ‘in two different ways the symbol for addition is a name and hence stands for an object’: (a) it can have an index that is a characteristic of names and (b) it is an equivalent with a simple sign – name (Hintikka & Hintikka 1986 p.33). Hintikka and Hintikka connect those two terms of Wittgenstein’s by following Desmond Lee’s words:

Objects also include relations; a sentence is not two things connected by a relation. “Thing” and “relation” are on the same level. The objects hang as it were in a chain. (*WLC* 32 p.120)

An additional implication about the fact that objects include properties and relations is Waismann’s following quote:

Our ordinary language is enough to show that the symbolism which represents a table must be of a completely different nature from that of sentential functions. For ordinary language treats words for objects in a completely different way from words for properties and relations. (WVC p.254)

Hintikka and Hintikka very correctly recognize that the biggest part of their evidence of many other commentators that objects include properties and relations is doctrinal rather than exegetical since *Tractatus* itself does not give direct textual evidence on the specific issue (Hintikka & Hintikka 1986 p.34).

Allaire in his article ‘The ‘Tractatus’: Nominalistic or Realistic?’ mentions three non-textual reasons which encourage the idea that the *Tractatus* is not nominalistic but ‘subdued’ realistic: (a) a bit before and after the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein supports a realistic position, (b) in his later writings he suggests that the *Tractatus* is realistic and (c) the nominalistic position of Anscombe and Copi is nonsense (Allaire 1966 p.326).

Concerning the first reason, Allaire claims that Wittgenstein a bit before the *Tractatus* supports a realistic position. This is given at least through two passages of *Notebooks*:

Could one then manage without names? Surely not. Names are necessary for an assertion that *this* thing possesses *that* property and so on. (NB p.53)

Relations and properties [...] are objects. (NB p.61)

According to Allaire, Wittgenstein a bit after the *Tractatus* continues to hold a realistic position. Specifically, in 1929 in ‘Some Remarks on Logical Form’ Wittgenstein states:

I only wish to point out the direction in which, I believe, the analysis of visual phenomena is to be looked for, and that in this analysis we meet with logical forms quite different from those which ordinary language leads us to expect. The occurrence of numbers in the forms of atomic sentences is [...] an [...] unavoidable feature of the representation [...] Numbers will have to enter these forms when-as we should say in ordinary language—we are dealing with properties which admit of graduation, i.e. properties such as the length of an interval, the pitch of a

tone, the brightness of redness of a shade of colour, etc. It is a characteristic of these properties that one degree of them excludes any other. One shade of colour cannot simultaneously have two different degrees of brightness. (*RLF* p.34)

Moreover, he states:

One might think — and I thought so not long ago [here he probably refers to the *Tractatus*] — that a statement expressing the degree of a quality could be analyzed into a logical product of single statements of quality and a completing supplementary statement [...] I maintain that the statement which attributes a degree to a quality cannot further be analysed. (*RLF* p.35)

Allaire considers that the above passages which support both before and after a realism ‘need no comment, only emphasis’.

Regarding the second reason, later in the *Blue Book* Wittgenstein continues to encourage the idea that properties constitute constituents of atomic facts. Particularly, he states:

Talking of the fact as a “complex of objects” springs from this confusion (cf. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*). Supposing we asked: “How can one *imagine* what does not exist?” The answer seems to be: “If we do, we imagine non-existent combinations of existing elements”. A centaur doesn’t exist, but a man’s head and torso and arms and a horse’s legs do exist. “But can’t we imagine an object utterly different from any one which exist?”— We should be inclined to answer: “No; the elements, individuals, must exist. If redness, roundness and sweetness did not exist, we could not imagine them”. (*BB* p.31)

With regard to the third reason, Allaire examines some of Copi’s and Anscombe’s arguments in order to explain that both make the same mistake to take the *Tractatus* as nominalistic. Firstly, although Anscombe uses comment 2.0231 to support a nominalistic position Allaire claims that the specific remark does not indicate whether Wittgenstein holds a realistic or nominalistic position. Particularly, Allaire claims that if we exclude the connection there is between objects and facts that ‘the kind an entity determines the facts in which it can occur’, there is no logical connection between an

object and the facts to which it occurs. In other words, there is no connection between the kind an entity and to the properties it has. At this point Allaire claims that remark 2.0231 encourages an important distinction between material and formal properties. Particularly, he states that formal properties do not depend from being in configurations but they determine the configurations in which they could appear. They are internal to objects. While material properties (external properties) of an entity depend from the entities which constitute it (they are determined from their configurations) but the material properties are not determined by the formal properties since ‘the substance of the world can only determine a form and not any material properties’. Secondly, Anscombe gives an argument by making a distinction between Frege and Wittgenstein. In specific, she states:

What, then, has become of Frege’s ‘concepts’ in Wittgenstein’s theory? They seem to have disappeared entirely, actually, however, instead of making concepts or universals into a kind of objects [...] Wittgenstein made the gulf between concepts and objects much greater than Frege ever made it [...] In respect of having argument places, concepts go over entirely into logical forms. In the ‘completely analysed sentence’ [...] the Fregean ‘concept’, the thing with holes in it, has become simply the logical form. (Anscombe 1996 pp.108-109)

Anscombe considers that Wittgenstein by introducing the notion ‘logical form’ marginalizes the Fregean concept holding only names. While for Frege atomic sentences would consist by names and functions for Wittgenstein atomic sentences would consist only by names. According to Anscombe, since Wittgenstein denies that functions occur in atomic sentences he therefore denies the Fregean notion concept (for example the colour ‘red’) which would occur in atomic facts. What needs to be pointed out here is that Frege defines objects as that which was referred to by a name, something with which Wittgenstein agrees. At this point Wittgenstein disagrees with Frege’s view that names are only a subclass of the fundamental expressions. A lot of discussion fails to see this point. We should be confined to a discussion that both

Wittgenstein and Frege use object to mean whatever a name refers to but what needs to be said is that Wittgenstein does not accept Frege's account of name but requires us to analyse language. Frege thinks that anything could be an object while Wittgenstein does not think that everything are things, objects have a different role (see Ch.1). Allaire characterizes Anscombe's argument as naïve claiming that even if we accept that only names occur in atomic sentences it does not mean that properties are not constituents of atomic facts; in other words it does not mean that some names could not refer to properties (Allaire 1966 pp.331-332). Wittgenstein states:

A speck in the visual field, though it need not be red, must have some colour: it is, so to speak, surrounded by colour-space. Notes must have *some* pitch, objects of the sense of touch *some* degree of hardness, and so on. (*TLP* 2.0131)

According to Allaire, the above passage distinguishes kinds – categories⁷³ of particulars encouraging the idea that some particulars must have certain properties (Allaire 1966 p.333). By taking into consideration Allaire's position here in combination with Wittgenstein's statement that space, time and colour are forms of objects (*TLP* 2.0251)⁷⁴ it seems that the objects of a category can occur in states of affairs but they cannot occur in states of affairs where objects of a different logical form occur. This is because all objects do not have the same logical form.⁷⁵ Roughly speaking, something analogous happens in the case in which a colour cannot have the musical pitch of 'Sol'. It is apparent that a specific colour cannot have a property of a pitch. Therefore, it seems that different sorts of objects have different sorts of properties. In this way, the idea that objects have properties and relations is encouraged. The possibility or impossibility of

⁷³ This idea is supported among others by P. Carruthers, *Tractarian Semantics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp.204-205 and J. and M. Hintikka, *Investigating Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p.40).

⁷⁴ The timeness or timelessness of objects is also something that is not clarified. While the remark 2.0251 holds among others that time is a form of objects (here it is implied that their combinations are timeless), at the same time their inalterability imposes the idea that objects must be out of time.

⁷⁵ This idea is also encouraged by remark *TLP* 2.0233.

an object combining with another object is a logical feature that objects possess. Therefore, if we conceive of objects as not having properties and relations, it is very difficult to understand the various categories of objects. It seems that Wittgenstein creates an idea for the specific issue from the time of *Notebooks* (NB p.70, 22.6.15).

Allaire by commenting on Copi's nominalistic position mentions that Copi rightly concludes from remark 6.3751 that colour predications are not simple but he makes a mistake to conclude that from this there results that objects are not properties. Allaire supports that by concluding that 'this is red' is not an atomic sentence this encourages the realistic position. Particularly, this specific comment implies that 'red' is not simple in the sense that it is not a configuration of particulars but it is analyzable in other simpler properties (Allaire 1966 pp.338-339).

Beyond the realist and nominalist claims there needs to be mentioned that there are some additional indications outside *Tractatus* (we have already mentioned some of those that Hintikka and Hintikka and well as Allaire mention) which encourage the idea that Wittgenstein accepted that objects could include universals. In the *Philosophical Investigations* there seems to be encouraged the idea that Tractarian objects have properties and relations. Here, I have to clarify that this assertion does not result because we think that Wittgenstein uses the notion 'Gegenstand' in the *Philosophical Investigations* as in the *Tractatus*, but because some of the remarks of the *Philosophical Investigations* which are mentioned in the notion 'Gegenstand' seem (loosely speaking) to hold the odour of the Tractarian spirit. In particular:

(a) Wittgenstein states that names in language mean colours. In particular, he claims that ‘the primary elements are the coloured squares’ (*PI* I:§48).⁷⁶ Here, it seems that he introduces the notion of ‘properties’ as examples of primary elements or objects (at the same time I have to admit that a difficulty arises about how we have to deal with the word ‘squares’). Loosely speaking, the notions ‘primary elements’ and ‘coloured’ (that is a property) lead us to think the notion of ‘Tractarian object’. This is reinforced by the following remark:

A property is internal if it is unthinkable that its object should not possess it.

(This shade of blue and that one stand eo ipso, in the internal relation of lighter to darker. It is unthinkable that *these* two objects should not stand in this relation.)

(Here the shifting use⁷⁷ of the word ‘object’ corresponds to the shifting use of the words ‘property’ and ‘relation’). (*TLP* 4.123)

By focusing on the first brackets of the above quotation, we can discern the implication that colours are objects. Therefore, in the case in which we perceive colours as objects, this should be done through a ‘shifting use’ of the notion ‘object’.

(b) In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein, by talking about the indestructibility of objects, refers to colour (a property). Particularly, he states:

If it is supposed to be always possible for us to remember it [the colour], it must be in itself indestructible. (*PI* I:§56)

⁷⁶ The Part I of *Philosophical Investigations* was complete by 1945 while part II of the same work was written between 1947- 49.

⁷⁷ It seems that the notion of the ‘shifting use’ of object is a notion on which Wittgenstein reflected before writing the *Tractatus* and this is supported by the following quotation in the *Notebooks*: “It would now seem as if in a certain sense all names were *genuine names* [...] all objects were in a certain sense simple objects” (*NB* p.61, 16.6.15). What I have to stress here is the phrase ‘in a certain sense’ which establishes a relative nature of objects. Moreover, in the *Notebooks* Wittgenstein states: ‘Relations and properties, etc. are *objects* too’ (*NB* p.61, 16.6.15). Here, the use of ‘etc.’ is essentially as if the notion of the ‘shifting use’ is repeated. Specifically, by focusing on ‘etc.’ what we can think is that many other things except properties and relations could be conceived as ‘genuine object’ or as ‘genuine name’. Furthermore, by making reference to Socrates and to the property of mortality, Wittgenstein says ‘they just function as simple objects’ (*NB* p.69, 21.6.15). Here the crucial notion is ‘function’ which distances us from the idea that Socrates and the property of mortality are genuine objects and as a result, the ‘shifting use’ is restated.

Something red can be destroyed, but red cannot be destroyed, and that is why the meaning of the word 'red' is independent of the existence of a red thing. (*PI* I:§57)

In the *Tractatus*, he also conceives of objects to be unalterable. Specifically, he states:

Objects, the unalterable, and the subsistent are one and the same. (*TLP* 2.027)

The characteristic of indestructibility is a characteristic which induces us to think again of the notion of 'property'. The idea that red cannot be destroyed seems to depend on red being a quality.

(c) Wittgenstein claims:

I want to restrict the term 'name' to what cannot occur in the combination 'X exists'. –Thus one cannot say 'Red exists', because if there were no red it could not be spoken of at all. (*PI* I:§58)

The above remark reminds us of the remark that 'a name means an object' (*TLP* 3.203) as well as Wittgenstein's choice to refer to Tractarian objects using the term 'bestehen' and not the term 'existieren' (exist) (*TLP* 2.0121)).⁷⁸ In the remark *PI* I:§58, it seems that 'X' or 'red' function as names; therefore, it seems that Wittgenstein treats colours as objects. Or, in other words, we can say that names name primary colours. This encourages us to think that objects have properties and relations. In the same spirit, in the early 1930s, he explains to Desmond Lee that:

Objects etc. is here used for such things as a colour, a point in visual space etc. (*WLC* 32 p.120)

Here, I have to make clear that by making reference to colours, Wittgenstein does not mean all colours but only four of them. In 1929 (22 December) he states:

⁷⁸ Russell seems to have a similar approach towards the existence of objects. In his work, the *Theory of Knowledge* he says characteristically: "Of an actually given *this*, an object of acquaintance, it is meaningless to say that it 'exists'" (Russell 2002a p.138).

Whatever colour I see, I can represent each of them by mentioning the four elementary colours red, yellow, blue, green, and adding how this particular colour is to be generated from the elementary colours.

Discussion about the form of the colour-body. The elementary colours are very pointed.

Every statement about colours can be represented by means of such symbols. If we say that four elementary colours would suffice, I call such symbols of equal status *elements of representation*. These elements of representation are the ‘objects’. (WVC pp.42-43)⁷⁹

On the other hand, beyond the remark here, I have to clarify that there is a specific passage from Wittgenstein’s later work which implies that names of colours must not be conceived of as simple names in the *Tractatus*. This of course encourages the idea that objects can be things that could not have been colours but they could have been something else. In a sense, what is implied here in points (a), (b) and (c) collapses. Particularly, Wittgenstein states:

Now if statements of degree were analysable—as I used to think—we could explain this contradiction by saying that the colour R contains all degrees of R and none of B and that the colour B contains all degrees of B and none of R. (RLF pp.35-36)

Here, by using the phrase ‘I used to think’, Wittgenstein seems to refer to the period in which he was writing the *Tractatus*.

Furthermore, we can find some similarities between Russell’s universals and Wittgenstein’s objects. It seems that Wittgenstein’s conception of the term ‘object’ was influenced by Russell’s conception of ‘universals’.⁸⁰ Russell talks about universals in *The Problems of Philosophy*, a work that Wittgenstein had read.⁸¹ In particular, Russell says:

⁷⁹ In *PR* Wittgenstein says: “The things themselves are perhaps the four basic colours, space, time and other data of the same sort” (*PR* p.169). Here, Wittgenstein appears to hesitate over the question of talking about objects in a clear way. He does not say what objects are but he assumes what they could be by using the word ‘perhaps’.

⁸⁰ Wittgenstein was influenced especially by Russell’s work (see Proops 1997 and 2000).

⁸¹ Russell in a letter to L. Ottoline on 18th March 1912 refers to a criticism that Wittgenstein made about *The Problems of Philosophy* (Griffin 2002 pp.404-406).

We shall find it convenient only to speak of things *existing* when they are in time, that is to say, when we can point to some time *at* which they exist (not excluding the possibility of their existing at all times). Thus thoughts and feelings, minds and physical objects *exist*. But universals do not exist in this sense; we shall say that they *subsist* or *have being*, where “being” is opposed to “existence” as being timeless. The world of universals is unchangeable, rigid, exact, delightful to the mathematician, the logician, the builder of metaphysical systems and all who love perfection more than life. The world of existence is fleeting, vague, with – out sharp boundaries, without any clear plan or arrangement, but it contains all thoughts and feelings, all data of sense, and all physical objects, everything that can do either good or harm, everything that makes any difference to the value of life and the world. (Russell 2001 p.57)

[...] It is obvious [...] that we are acquainted⁸² with such universals as white, red, black, sweet, sour, loud, hard, etc., i.e., with qualities which are exemplified in sense-data. When we see a white patch, we are acquainted in the first instance, with the particular patch; but by seeing many white patches, we easily learn to abstract the whiteness which they all have in common, and in learning to do this we are learning to be acquainted with whiteness [...] Universals of this sort maybe called ‘sensible qualities’. (Russell 2001 p.58)

Some similarities can be observed between Russell’s universals and Wittgenstein’s objects:

⁸² In his work, Russell presents the theory of acquaintance which contends that any sentence we can understand must be constituted by entities with which we are acquainted. To understand the sentence of the form ‘aRb’, Russell claims that we must be acquainted with four (not three) entities (Russell 2002a p.112). The fourth entity is the logical form of the sentence. So, the totality of logical form is based on experience which is necessary to know the truth of generalized sentences. Therefore, for Russell, two different classes of objects of acquaintance are necessary: (a) objects including both particulars and universals and (b) objects of logical forms. Wittgenstein rejects logical form as a separate class of objects of acquaintance. In one of Russell’s letters to Lady Ottoline Morrell, Russell comments on Wittgenstein’s critique on ‘the Theory of knowledge’ saying that Wittgenstein earlier had the same view as Russell but later he acknowledged that it did not work (Clark 1975 pp.204-207). According to Wittgenstein, logical forms are not independent and/or self-sustaining entities. They are not constituents of sentences. Thus, he confines his work to the first class of objects where complex logical forms are determined by the logical forms of atomic sentences and the logical forms of atomic sentences are determined by the forms of objects. Wittgenstein tries to go beyond Russell’s objects of acquaintance to talk not only about one world (the external world) but to talk about possible worlds. By introducing the notion of ‘object’, he can talk about configurations of all possible logical forms of atomic facts. Later in *Logic and Knowledge* Russell says: “All thinking has to start from acquaintance (Russell 2007a p.42) and ‘all cognitive relations [...] presuppose acquaintance” (Russell 2007a p.127). Moreover, he states: “What distinguishes the objects to which I can give names from other things is the fact that these objects are within my experience, that I am acquainted with them [...]” (Russell 2007a p.167).

(a) Both Russell and Wittgenstein consciously avoid using the verb ‘exist’ for universals and Tractarian objects correspondingly. Russell mentions that universals ‘subsist’; they have ‘being’ where ‘being is opposed to existence’. In referring to Tractarian objects, Wittgenstein, as I have already explained, uses the term ‘bestehen’ and not the term ‘existieren’ (exist) (*TLP* 2.0121).

(b) Both Wittgenstein and Russell refer to an unchangeable world. This demands in both cases that Russellian universals and Tractarian objects are unalterable (*TLP* 2.027) and timeless (*TLP* 6.3611).

However, even if we assert that Wittgenstein as much in the *Notebooks* as in his later work counts objects to include properties and relations, in no case can we affirm that in the *Tractatus* he commits himself towards this direction. Pears states:

There are important sources of evidence not only in his preparatory work for the book, but also in his later comments on it, many of which imply that he had at least allowed for the possibility of counting relations and properties as objects. But in the book itself [*Tractatus*] he seems to be more non-committal than in his preparatory work for it, and, therefore, almost certainly deliberately non-committal. (Pears 1997a vol.I p.139)

It is worth mentioning that all these textual evidence we take from outside the *Tractatus* do not tell us in clear way what is going on in the *Tractatus* and the assertions of both realists and nominalists continue not being convincing because of the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ something we will clarify below.

The disagreement between realists and nominalists about whether objects include properties and relations, which is essentially a disagreement on whether there is an asymmetry between different kinds of objects in the world, reflects in terms of language

the disagreement on whether there is an asymmetry among different kind of names. In Tractarian terms of language, the question is whether Wittgenstein accepts such an asymmetry in the structure of the sentence. Having in mind the terms of a kind of grammar of ordinary language, loosely speaking (not in Tractarian terms), we can say that there is a distinction between the two kinds of expression. A kind of expression which refers to an object and a kind of expression which tells us something about that object, what it looks like, how it is, (this is the quality) or which relates two objects (this is the relation). The question which arises here is whether indeed there is a fundamental asymmetry in the grammar of sentences (a single fundamental of asymmetry) and whether there are correlates with an asymmetry in the world. In other words, the question is whether there is a distinction among different kinds of expression which corresponds to a distinction between kinds of entities of the world.

Let us suppose that we are presented with the sentence “Sophia hates Amos”.⁸³ Whilst this is not an atomic sentence, let us pretend that it has the form of an atomic sentence. Loosely speaking, if a predicate is perceived as an element of the sentence — without meaning that this position is apparent — it means that this sentence consists of three elements: three names of which one is a predicate, in particular, two names (‘Sophia’ and ‘Amos’) and the name which is a predicate (‘hates’). If ‘hates’ is not conceived of as an element of the sentence (it does not correspond to an element of the world just as a name) but in terms of the way in which those names are connected, then the sentence has two elements. That is to say, the predicate does not function as a name and ‘hating’ is not an object. With regard to the part of reality represented by the sentence we can

⁸³ Here, I use the example that Evans gives in his article ‘Tractatus 3.1432 in *Mind*’ (Evans 1955) although it is better that the multiplicity (*TLP* 4.04) applies to a symbolism (that obeys to rules of logical grammar) and not to an ordinary sentence (see *TLP* 3.325, 5.533, 5.534 and 6.122). A sentential sign cannot be named (*TLP* 3.144). But even if we use ‘aRb’ instead of using Evans’s example ‘Sophia hates Amos’ this is not an adequate notation either.

consider in a sense that it has either two elements (the two people, Sophia with her hatred and Amos) either three elements (Sophia, Amos and Sophia's hatred). Therefore, it is not clear whether we should take the number of elements of the part of reality represented by the sentence to have the same number of elements with the specific sentence since this depends on from what we define as an element of a sentence and what we define as an element of a fact.⁸⁴ What make this issue more complicated it will be supported below is that we do not know what predicates are and, therefore, how they function in the *Tractatus*. In Wittgenstein's effort to discuss the logical multiplicity that must exist between an atomic sentence and its relevant atomic fact, Wittgenstein states:

In a sentence there must be exactly as many distinguishable parts as in the situation that it represents.

The two must possess the same logical (mathematical) multiplicity (Compare Hertz's *Mechanics* on dynamical models). (*TLP* 4.04)⁸⁵

In the above remark, Wittgenstein avoids the use of the term 'elements' (in contrast to *TLP* 3.2). According to Pears and McGuinness, Wittgenstein uses the term 'parts', whereas according to Ogden, he uses the term 'things'. It is therefore remarkable to note at this point that the German text actually uses the term 'unterscheiden', usually translated in English as 'to distinguish' without any reference to the terms 'parts' and 'things'. There is no word in German at all corresponding to either 'part' or 'thing'. This, however, does not allow us to understand what the German term 'unterscheiden' refers to. As a result, remark 4.04 does not clarify which of the constituents of an atomic sentence represent an atomic fact and therefore their logical – mathematical

⁸⁴ Strictly speaking this is not obvious because while we refer to an atomic fact we use an empirical fact as an example. But without having any example of object it is impossible to have an example of an atomic fact, a combination of objects.

⁸⁵ Hertz makes a similar point: "A material system is said to be a dynamic model of a second system when the connections of the first can be expressed by such coordinates as to satisfy the following conditions: - (1) That the number of coordinates of the first system is equal to the number of the second [...]" (Hertz 2003 § 418 p. 175).

multiplicity (of an atomic sentence and an atomic fact) remains unclarified. We have to admit that this difficulty appears earlier in *Notebooks* as follows:

If there were such a thing as an immediate correlation of relations, the question would be: How are the things that stand in these relations correlated with one another in this case? Is there such a thing as a direct correlation of relations without consideration of their *direction*? Are we misled into assuming “relations between relations” merely through the apparent analogy between the expressions:

“relations between things”
and “relations between relations”?

In all these considerations I am somewhere making some sort of FUNDAMENTAL MISTAKE. (NB pp.9-10, 9.10.14)

By using the phrase “relations between relations”, Wittgenstein rather refers to the idea of isomorphism which is fundamental to the level of possible sentences and possible facts. At the same time, Wittgenstein with the above passage expresses his anxieties about whether it is an idea which can function. What is not clear in this case is the relation of correspondence between atomic sentences and atomic facts and the correspondence between names and objects.⁸⁶ With the car accident mentioned in the

⁸⁶ Russell’s and Frege’s positions about the issue of correspondence between parts of language (a definite description) and the world are of special interest. In *On Sense and Reference*, Frege affirms that if a proposition contains a proper name — a definite description (for example ‘Zeus’ who is a mythical entity which has no reference in the world), a sign for what he calls an object, and that object does not exist, then the name has sense but not reference. Thus, the proposition in which the specific name is included can have sense and expresses a thought but lacks meaning or reference. As a result of this, the proposition does not have a truth-value (the proposition is neither true nor false). Frege clarifies the distinction between the two crucial terms ‘Sinn’ (sense) and ‘Bedeutung’ (meaning) in his own way. The expressions ‘morning star’ and ‘evening star’ have different senses and the same meaning or reference. They refer to the same planet but in two different states of it. In the *Tractatus*, both terms ‘Sinn’ and ‘Bedeutung’ are used in a different way. Wittgenstein claims that only sentences have sense (*TLP* 3.3) and the names or predicates do not. Therefore, Wittgenstein disagrees with Frege’s idea that names, predicates and sentences can have both sense and meaning. He considers that Frege’s position that sentences have truth-value as meanings and are names of truth-values is wrong (*TLP* 5.02). Russell affirms that if a proposition contains a definite description without a bearer, then that proposition does have a truth-value – falsity. In other words, in the case of a proposition in which there is reference to a complexity (definite description) to which no unique thing corresponds, the specific proposition is not nonsense but false. Russell’s theory of descriptions (according to Norman Malcolm ‘Wittgenstein believed that the theory of descriptions was Russell’s most important production’ (Malcolm 2001 p.57)) attempts to show that phrases (definite descriptions) such as ‘the present King of France’ might appear to name a definite object but at the end it fails to do so. Therefore, Russell, unlike Frege, does not think that definite descriptions can play the role of a proper name. Russell keeps this position in his article *On Denoting* (1905) and he differentiates his position in his article *On the Nature of Acquaintance* (1911) where the definite

First Chapter at the forefront of his mind, Wittgenstein formulates the so-called Bild theory which he applies to sentences. I have to examine the extent to which this application succeeds in doing what it sets out to do, a point that many commentators ignore.⁸⁷ I can do this by following Wittgenstein's steps. Firstly, take the car accident

descriptions are conceived to be names. Later, in his article *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* (1918) he returns to his primary position by adopting the idea that ordinary names must not be conceived as names. According to Russell, "A name, in the narrow logical sense of a word whose meaning is a particular, can only be applied to a particular with which the speaker is acquainted, because you cannot name anything you are not acquainted with" (Russell 2007a p.201). In other words, according to Russell many apparent names do not function logically as proper names but rather as definite descriptions. Russell in *Logic and Knowledge* among others says 'it is very important to realise [...] that sentences are not names for facts [...] I never had realised it until it was pointed out to me by a former pupil of mine, Wittgenstein. It is perfectly evident as soon as you think of it, that a sentence is not a name for a fact, from the mere circumstance that there are *two* sentences corresponding to each fact [...] For each fact there are two sentences, one true and one false, and there is nothing in the nature of the symbol to show us which is the true one and which is the false one" (Russell 2007a p.187). According to Wittgenstein: A sentence that mentions a complex will not be nonsensical, if the complex does not exist, but simply false (*TLP* 3.24). Thus, the *Tractatus* agrees with Russell's view rather than Frege's on the matter of complex names, supporting the idea that they are not names (*TLP* 2.0201).

⁸⁷ In his book *Wittgenstein*, Kenny dedicates a whole Chapter to the Bild theory of sentences (Kenny 2006 pp.44-57). He refers to the story of the car accident in Paris (Kenny 2006 pp.44-45), and in particular to the relations between the elements of a car model and the relevant objects of reality. But he does not make any criticism of to what extent these correlations could apply to a case between a model and its relevant atomic fact or between a sentence and its relevant model, as Wittgenstein affirms in sentence 4.01. What Kenny does is to limit his writing by giving an interpretation of what Wittgenstein meant by calling a sentence a Bild (Kenny 2006 pp.50-55). Moreover, in his book *The False Prison* Pears refers to three versions that Wittgenstein used to explain the main idea of the Bild theory of sentences, namely, that a sentence is a Bild of reality (Pears 1997a Vol.I pp.119-120). He starts from a popularized version that Wittgenstein used in one of his lectures in Cambridge (*WLC*32 p.10) by stating that the correlation of names with objects is like the correlation of strokes of paint on a canvas with the situation that is depicted. Pears admits that this is an 'approximate' approach and he presents as a second simple version the idea of the model that was used in the *Tractatus*. A sentence is a model of reality; the elements of the model are representative of the objects of reality (*TLP* 4.01). The third and more sophisticated version, according to Pears, claims that a sentence determines a place in logical space and the names of a sentence are like co-ordinates (*TLP* 3.4 - 3.411). When commenting on the second version, Pears characterises Wittgenstein's analogy as 'misleading' (Pears 1997a Vol.I p.121) without explaining this position. In particular, he avoids clarifying how Wittgenstein moves from the idea of an analogy between an empirical fact and an empirical model to the idea of an analogy between an atomic fact (an atomic sentence) and a Bild. This must be clarified by incorporating in our interpretation to what extent the term 'object' is also elucidated. Furthermore, while Hacker acknowledges the incorrectness of the Bild theory of sentences in his article with the decisive title "The rise and fall of the picture theory" (Hacker 1981), he neither analyses nor explains the specific issue in a deep way. In particular, he explains the positions of the general theory of representation (the relations between a model and its relevant part of reality (Hacker 1981 pp.89-92)) without examining how Wittgenstein reached this idea and to what extent both the general theory of representation and its application to the Bild theory of sentences is successful. While he presents 'the doctrine of isomorphism', 'the doctrine of atomism' and 'the doctrine of truth-functional composition', he does not make any criticism of the crucial term 'object'. What he says is simply that to develop a theory of sentences, there is still a lot to be done: (a) the elements of the picturing fact must be recognized formally; (b) the nature of objects must be defined; and (c) the nature of the logical form must be clarified (Hacker 1981 p.92). But how are these issues clarified or at least what are the difficulties that they have to face? Hacker does not say anything to address this issue specifically. What we would perhaps expect from Hacker is not a reiteration of the well-known story of how the later Wittgenstein rejected his earlier work (Hacker 1981 p.100) but instead to say something beyond this.

that constituted the inspiration of his ‘theory’, in particular the way the empirical objects of the car accident correspond with the empirical objects in a relevant model. Secondly, take a Tractarian fact (we cannot consider the car accident as such as a Tractarian atomic fact) to have objects which correspond with the elements of a relevant Bild (an atomic sentence). Accordingly, I will follow these two lines: the first will explain the relation between the physical objects of a part of reality and the elements of its relevant model; the second will examine the relations between Tractarian objects in an atomic fact and the elements (names) of its relevant atomic sentence (a Bild). Thus, by following these two lines it will become clear why in the second case there are more restrictions on how we speak about the term ‘representation’ than in the first case. This is a difficulty the so-called Bild theory of sentences has to face.

The notion of ‘sameness of form’ has a clear sense in the empirical fact and its relevant model (such as the car accident). The relations between the elements of the model and the physical objects in reality are relations of similarity (see Ch.1 p.33, M2). To say if a spatial model (for example, the model of the car accident) represents a part of reality or not, we should consider the spatial positions and the sizes of the physical objects in the model in relation to the spatial positions and the sizes of the physical objects in the relevant part of reality. This is what seems to have happened *more or less* in the case of the model that was presented in the court in Paris. Firstly, the physical objects of the model must be arranged in the same ways as the physical objects in the relevant part of reality. There must be a sameness of the possibilities of arrangements between the model and reality (see Ch.1 p.33, M2 and M3). Secondly, in our effort to create a specific spatial model, the represented physical objects must not be reduced to such a

Additionally, in *A Wittgenstein Dictionary*, Glock states that “the Bild theory is a poor theory of pictures” (Glock 2004 p.302) without discussing it further.

degree that they become unrecognisable. Also, the representational physical objects must not be enlarged to such a degree that the enlargement presents only a detail of the relevant part of reality and the specific detail is unrecognisable because of its enlargement. Of course, it seems to be obvious that it is possible for a false model to have some specifications that are not clear. However, it is impossible to have a true or false model where all the elements are unclear (see Ch.1 p.33, M1). Therefore, the idea of the model of the car accident seems to function without any problems. Through a model, people in court in Paris managed to represent what happened in the specific car accident.

By referring to the notion of 'logical form' (*TLP* 2.18), we cannot affirm that there is a common logical form between language and reality – between an atomic sentence and an atomic fact. Wittgenstein's position is provocative when it suggests that the possible combinations of the elements of language (names) are the same as the possible combinations of the elements of the world (objects). Language has both grammatical combinations which are legitimate combinations as well as ungrammatical combinations which are illegitimate combinations. In the case of the world, there are no legitimate or illegitimate combinations or grammatical or ungrammatical combinations of its elements; simply, there are possible combinations of the elements of the world. This is because the world does not have any grammar. Of course, if the world had a grammar, it would not show whether a situation in the world is true or false, but whether a situation has sense or not. This seems to be impossible. The world is not liable to any evaluation concerning its meaningfulness. The idea that is expressed in the *Tractatus* that there is a common logical form (as a necessity) between language and world (see Ch.1 pp.41-43, S1-S3) is also cancelled by Wittgenstein later in the

Philosophical Grammar, where by referring to the common form between thought and world, he states:

Here we have the old problem, which we would like to express in the following way: “the thought that p is the case doesn’t presuppose that it is the case; yet on the other hand there must be something in the fact that is a presupposition even of having the thought (I can’t think that something is red, if the colour red does not exist)”. It is the problem of the harmony between world and thought. (PG p.142)

In the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* I said something like: it is an agreement of form. But that is an error. (PG p.212)

Since Wittgenstein admits later that there is no common logical form between thought and world and he identifies thoughts and sentences in the *Tractatus* (this has already been explained in the first Chapter), there is therefore no common logical form between sentences and world. The idea of isomorphism between sentences and the world constitutes an illusion since, as I will assert below, the *Tractatus* pretends that it offers a conception of analysis. The idea of analysis is nothing more than the idea of projection. In the *Philosophical Grammar*, Wittgenstein states that the *Tractatus* would conceive of a projection as a picture of a mathematician:

[...] instead of harmony or agreement of thought and reality one might say: the pictorial character of thought. But is this pictorial character an agreement? In the *Tractatus* I had said something like: it is an agreement of form. But that is misleading.

Anything can be a picture of anything, if we extend the concept of picture sufficiently. If not, we have to explain what we call a picture of something, and what we want to call the agreement of the pictorial character, the agreement of the forms.

For what I said really boils down to this: that every projection must have something in common with what is projected no matter what is the method of projection. But that only means that I am here extending the concept of ‘having in common’ and am making it equivalent to the general concept of projection. So I am only drawing attention to a possibility of generalization (which of course can be very important). (PG p.163)

If we adopt the idea of strict isomorphism by admitting that there are entities in the world which correspond to words of an analysed language with the Tractarian notion, we would say that there is a strict correspondence between the elements of the sentence (names) with the elements of a fact (objects). At this point, the following question arises: how is it explained that two phenomenally different sentences as in ‘Socrates is wise’ and ‘Socrates is characterized by wisdom’ essentially refer to the same fact itself. Loosely speaking (here of course I do not give two atomic sentences since this is impossible but I give two ordinary sentences so that I support all I say) this shows that we can use more than one alternatives which represent a fact without one of these ways being conceived of as necessarily unique. In terms of the *Tractatus* this cannot happen since Wittgenstein states that ‘a sentence has one and only one complete analysis’ (*TLP* 3.25), that is to say, two different atomic sentences cannot have the same sense.⁸⁸

Ellis Evans would recognize four elements in his example ‘Sophia hates Amos’. Beyond the two names (‘Sophia’ and ‘Amos’) that are represented by the two corresponding persons and the third element that is the predicate (‘hates’) of the relation

⁸⁸ The notion ‘sense’ in the *Tractatus* presents an inconsistency in its use encouraging the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’. This becomes understandable by comparing the sentences 2.221, 3.13 and 4.031. Wittgenstein states that “What a Bild represents is its sense” (*TLP* 2.221) which means that a Bild (a sentence is a Bild) contains its sense. If there is no copying error here, then Wittgenstein formulates a false statement since it does not follow other sentences or rather it conflicts with other sentences. Particularly, in sentence 3.13, Wittgenstein claims something different: “A sentence includes all that the projection includes, but not what is projected. Therefore, though what is projected is not itself included, its possibility is. A sentence, therefore, does not actually contain its sense, but does contain the possibility of expressing it. (‘The content of a sentence’ means the content of a sentence that has sense.) A sentence contains the form, but not the content, of its sense.” Therefore, remark 3.13 supports that a sentence does not contain its sense. This, however, conflicts with what is implied in remark 2.221, e.g. that a sentence does contain its sense. Furthermore, in remark 4.031, Wittgenstein is more careful in giving a clearer picture of what he wants to affirm (what he fails to do in sentence 2.221) by stating: “In a sentence a situation is, as it were, constructed by way of experiment. Instead of, ‘This sentence has such and such [so und so] a sense’, we can simply say, ‘This sentence represents such and such a situation’” (the same idea is expressed in the *NB* p.7, 29.9.14). If there is no copying error in remark 2.221, then it is not impossible at all that Wittgenstein leaves the term ‘sense’ unclear on purpose to encourage the whole paradox of the *Tractatus*.

of the two names, a fourth element of a sentence is the *order* of words (the fourth element of the fact is the structure of the relation and its two terms). As Evans states:

Wittgenstein would have said, I think, that the fact that Sophia hates Amos contained four elements: the two people, the hating, and the structure of these, *i.e.* that it is Sophia and not Amos that is doing the hating and Amos and not Sophia that is receiving it. The individual words correspond to those first three elements, and the order of the words to the fourth.⁸⁹

Therefore, according to Evans the sentence ‘Sophia hates Amos’ has the same multiplicity with its relevant fact by supporting that both sentence and fact have an extra element correspondingly.

Disagreeing with Evans’s position, Keyt states that Evans correlates the elements of the sentence ‘Sophia hates Amos’ with the elements of the corresponding fact ‘Sophia hates Amos’ and ignores one of the elements of the sentence. Keyt affirms that if a fact has four elements (‘Sophia’, ‘Amos’, the relation of ‘hating’ and the ‘structure’ of the first three) as Evans claims, then the corresponding sentence must have five elements; that is the three words ‘Sophia’, ‘hates’ and ‘Amos’, the relation of a word that is found between two other words, and the structure of the relation and its three terms. Therefore, an atomic sentence has one element more than the atomic fact it represents (Keyt 1964 pp.498-99). Here, Evans and Keyt use the predicate ‘hates’ as if they know how predicates function in atomic sentences (something that is not clear at all) without providing any strong argument about this. The difficulties on this issue become apparent below.

⁸⁹ See Evans, E. (1955) *Tractatus* 3.1432 in *Mind*, New Series, Vol.64, No.254, p.260.

Eric Stenius conceives the sentence ‘*aRb*’ to have three names but these are not ‘*a*’, ‘*R*’ and ‘*b*’ but ‘*a*’, ‘*b*’ and the relation of being on either side of the letter ‘*R*’.⁹⁰ This leads him to refer to two kinds of names: (a) names of individual objects, which themselves belong to the category of individual objects and (b) names of predicates, which themselves belong to the category of predicates and must have as many places as their denominate (Stenius 1960 p. 136). Stenius conceives the predicate of a sentence to be the relation of a word on the left (‘Sophia’) and a second on the right (‘Amos’) of ‘hates’ and not a word (‘hates’) itself. He calls the word ‘hates’ a ‘characteristic’ of the predicate. According to Stenius, the predicate is a dyadic relation that is formed by a triadic relation of three words (Sophia, hates, Amos). Moreover, concerning predicates he states:

It is always derived from a relation between the logical subjects and one or more symbols which appear as ‘characteristics’ of the predicate.
(Stenius 1960 p.134)

Here, Stenius’ decision to assert a definition for the notion ‘predicate’ is somehow unsuccessful since, as I will support below, Wittgenstein does not clarify the notion. Moreover, Stenius seems to consider that the structure of an atomic sentence is the relation that relates the relational element (hating) of the atomic sentence to its terms (‘Sophia’, ‘Amos’). What is odd about Stenius’ interpretation is that he introduces a second relation between a relation and its terms; in other words, relations are replaced by a single relation (linking relation).⁹¹ The question which arises here is how the many different relations of objects can be represented by a single relation of names. Copi and

⁹⁰ According to Hintikka: “Here what a name is, for Wittgenstein, is not a linguistic *symbol* (e.g., the letter ‘*R*’), but a linguistic *relation*”. Moreover, a name certainly seems to be always a *word*, not a linguistic *property* or linguistic *relation*. Furthermore, Frege sets up a contrast between saturated entities, which he calls *objects*, and unsaturated entities, which he terms as *functions*. On the interpretation presented here, Wittgenstein departs sharply from Frege’s terminology in this respect, for according to this interpretation Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* calls both kinds of entities *objects* (Hintikka & Hintikka 1986 pp.38-39).

⁹¹ Bergmann says: “Qualities [...] need nexus to connect or tie them into ordinary things. A nexus does not need a further entity to tie it to what it ties, otherwise we would have entered upon an infinite regress” (Bergmann 1967 p.9).

Anscombe (who disagree with Stenius) support the idea that in a fully analyzed atomic sentence there is no word or expression that refers to a quality or a relation (*TLP* 3.203, 3.22, 4.22 and 5.55). According to them, qualities and relations are not kinds of objects, and they argue that the role of predicates is taken over by the arrangement of names (structure),⁹² something that exempts them from the idea of the relation in Stenius.

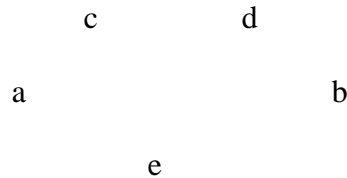
Copi states:

Any relation of objects, spatial or non-spatial, can be represented by a spatial relation of the names of those objects. That *a* has a relation *R* to *b* can be represented by writing “*a*” some specified distance and direction from “*b*”, and that *a* has some different relation *R'* to *b* can be presented by writing “*a*” some different distance and direction from “*b*”. (Copi 1966 p.179)

For Copi, an atomic sentence ‘*aRb*’ that is fully analyzed will contain only the two names ‘*a*’ and ‘*b*’, while for Anscombe, as she rightly claims, it is possible for the predicate ‘*R*’ to conceal the names of analysis further since each atomic fact might consist of an infinite number of objects (*TLP* 4.2211) (Anscombe 1996 p.99). Anscombe gives an illustration (non-linear)⁹³ of an atomic sentence in the form ‘*aRb*’ (Anscombe 1966 p.187) as follows:

⁹² See ‘Objects, Properties, and Relations in the *Tractatus*’ (Copi 1966 pp.167-186) and *An Introduction to Wittgenstein’s Tractatus* (Anscombe 1996 Ch.7) as well as ‘Mr. Copi on Objects, Properties and Relations in the *Tractatus*’ (Anscombe 1966 p.187).

⁹³ Anscombe proposes that the only sentences which are completely pictorial are non-linear and not of the form *abcde* (a linear structure). The crucial passage that is used by Anscombe to support her position is *TLP* 3.1431. But, the verb ‘imagine’ makes the passage less specific in Wittgenstein’s terms. Since Wittgenstein cannot provide any examples of necessary elements – objects, he goes on to explore complex objects by using the same term ‘Gegenständen’, which causes greater confusion. Moreover, in the *Notebooks*, it is stated that: “[...] while we are not certain of being able to turn all situations into Bilder on paper, still we are certain that we can portray all logical properties of situations in a two-dimensional script (*NB* p.7, 29.9.14)”. Here, Wittgenstein makes a distinction (without explaining it) between Bilder on paper and portrayals in two-dimensional script (see also *NB* p.34, 2.12.14). This distinction weakens the idea that a sentence is a diagram. Here, it seems to be implied that the ‘two-dimensional script’ is the familiar linear script of ordinary language. If this reasoning is correct, then the notion of the linear character of a sentence is encouraged. Moreover, In *Philosophical Investigations* (see *PI* I: §48) Wittgenstein refers to a linear structure that is constituted of names; in other words, a linear arrangement of names describes a two-dimensional arrangement of squares. It is stated that a sentence is a series of words. Therefore, a sentence is not conceived as being a diagram of words.



What I have to stress again at this stage is that we do not know exactly how Wittgenstein conceives of predicates as well as how predicates function in atomic sentences since, among others, he does not follow a specific line on this issue. In 1913, he presented the following position:

Indefinables are of two sorts: names, and forms.⁹⁴ Sentences cannot consist of names alone; they cannot be classes of names. (*NL* p.96)

Symbols are not what they seem to be. In “aRb”, “R” looks like a substantive, but is not one. What symbolizes in “aRb” is that R occurs between a and b. Hence “R” is *not* the indefinable in “aRb”. (*NL* p.98)

[...] I have changed my views on “atomic” complexes: I now think that qualities, relations (like love) etc. are all copulae! That means I for instance analyse a subject-predicate sentence, say, “Socrates is human” into “Socrates” and “something is human”, (which I think is not complex). The reason for this is a very fundamental one: I think that there cannot be different Types of things! In other words what-ever can be symbolised by a simple proper name must belong to one type. (*NWLR* pp.121-122)

Reflecting on these quotations, the idea that arises is that predicates figure in atomic sentences but not as elements (names). It seems that predicates are forms of sentences,

⁹⁴ This position reminds of Frege’s distinction between complete and incomplete expressions. He uses the notion ‘object’ (which he conceives as saturated or complete entities) for the referents of ‘names’ (strictly speaking ‘proper names’) and the notion ‘concept’ (that he conceives as unsaturated or incomplete entities) for the referents of ‘predicates’. According to Frege, a concept is not something complete, it is nothing but the predicate of a judgment that has not yet had a subject (Frege 1979 p.17). Moreover, he states that concepts are incomplete because they are functions and functions are unsaturated. The name has to be completed to acquire complete reference (Frege 1979 p.119). Later Frege will admit that even if we cannot completely avoid words like ‘concept’, we need to realize their inappropriateness. Particularly, he states: “Even a part of a thought, or a part of a part of a thought, that is in need of supplementation, has something corresponding to it in the realm of meaning. Yet it is wrong to call this a concept, say, or a relation, or a function, although we can hardly avoid doing so [...] When we use the words ‘concept’, ‘relation’, ‘function’ (as this is understood in analysis), our words fail of their intended target”. (Frege 1979 p.255)

not elements of atomic sentences.⁹⁵ In other words, it seems that predicates are possible ways in which names can be related to one another and these ways of relating names represent the ways in which objects can be combined in reality. Therefore, objects do not include qualities and relations and something else (beyond names) is required in order to have whole sentences.

Even though Wittgenstein, as we have already seen, makes the distinction between names and forms as two kinds of indeterminables, it seems that after a deeper reflection he realized that the relation between forms and the world are not fundamental as it primarily seemed to him. Particularly, in 1915 he held the following position:

Relations and properties, etc. are objects too. (*NB* p.61, 16.6.15)⁹⁶

This idea is expressed later (1930 – 31) in the following way:

Objects etc. is here used for such things as a colour, a point in visual space etc. [...] “Objects” also include relations; a sentence is not two things connected by a relation. “Thing” and “relation” are on the same level.⁹⁷ The objects hang as it were in a chain. (*WLC* 32 p.120)⁹⁸

Since Wittgenstein affirms the above, he must also believe that predicates are elements of atomic sentences. He essentially admits that predicates function as names. Thus,

⁹⁵ In the notes dictated to G.E. Moore in Norway in 1914 Wittgenstein states: “[...] in “aRb”, “R” is *not* a symbol, but *that* “R” is between one name and another symbolizes. Here we have *not* said: this symbol is not of this type but of that, but only: *This* symbolizes and not that. This seems again to make the same mistake, because “symbolizes” is “typically ambiguous”. The true analysis is: “R” is no proper name, and, that “R” stands between “a” and “b” expresses a *relation*. Here are two sentences *of different type* connected by “and”” (*NM* pp.109-110). Perhaps the ‘ambiguity’ Moore refers to is due to Wittgenstein’s attitude to keep a specific line (he did not) concerning the question of what predicates are. Ramsey visited Wittgenstein in Austria in 1923 to discuss the *Tractatus* and one of the things he understood through this discussion was that Wittgenstein wished for some points of the *Tractatus* to remain ambiguous. Characteristically, in 1923, Ramsey explains it in the following way: “Some of his sentences are intentionally ambiguous having an ordinary meaning and a more difficult meaning which he also believes” (*LO* in Appendix Letters by F. P. Ramsey 1923- 1924 p.78).

⁹⁶ See *TLP* 2.01. A state of affairs is nothing but a combination of objects. Also, see *TLP* 4.22 which affirms that an atomic sentence is constituted of names only without needing anything additional (here he does not make any reference to predicates). Their connection is succeeded by a special kind of connection that is managed by names.

⁹⁷ By contrast, in the notes dictated to G.E. Moore in Norway by Wittgenstein in 1914, Wittgenstein refers to ‘the difference between things, facts, properties, relations’ (*NM* p.109).

⁹⁸ A similar idea is expressed in *PG* “A fact is a complex of objects [...] the fact that a man is sick is compared with a combination of two things, one of them the man and the other the sickness” (*PG* p.58).

names and predicates can be connected to create sentences. So, if predicates are names, then relations are objects. Moreover, in a comment for Ogden about sentence 2.03 (“In the atomic fact objects hang one in another, like the links of a chain”),⁹⁹ Wittgenstein asserts that:

Here instead of “hang one on another” it should be “hang one in another” as the links of a chain do! The meaning is that there isn’t anything third that connects the links but that the links themselves make connexion with one another. So if “in” in this place is English please put it there. If one would hang on the other they might also be glued together. (*LO* p.23)¹⁰⁰

Here, Wittgenstein implies that objects include relations.¹⁰¹ This position stands at some distance from the position that he held in 1913. However, if objects include relations (it is very hard to think of an ‘object’ without thinking of the object as having properties or stand in relations), Wittgenstein would not say in a sense that atomic facts can be described (*TLP* 3.144, 3.24 and 4.023) and objects can only be named (*TLP* 3.221).¹⁰²

More specifically, he states that:

Objects can only be *named*. Signs are their representatives. I can only speak *about* them: I cannot *put them into words*. Sentences can only say how things are, not *what* they are. (*TLP* 3.221)¹⁰³

If objects include relations and qualities, then in a sense objects could be described. It is natural on a first level to think that the relation between language and objects is naming and the relation between language and atomic facts (objects that stand in a relation between one another) is description. On a second level, having in mind that in the *Tractatus* there is a sense in which description always correlates with atomic facts and

⁹⁹ I use Ogden’s translation.

¹⁰⁰ In the *Notebooks* this assertion is formulated as follows: “NB that connection is not a relation but only the *holding* of a relation” (*NB* p.26, 4.11.14).

¹⁰¹ Moreover, what I have to say here is that even if objects have relations, this does not mean that objects must not be related to relations.

¹⁰² The idea that objects ‘cannot be described’ is expressed later in *PG* (*PG* p.208). Moreover, Wittgenstein in the same work, by conceiving that some colours are objects he states that: ‘red can’t be described’ (*PG* 209).

¹⁰³ While the remark *TLP* 3.221 affirms that ‘objects can only be named’ in remarks 4.023 and 2.02331, Wittgenstein refers to the description of objects.

never with only one object, this creates further difficulties to understand the case (without asserting that it is the case or that it is not the case in the *Tractatus*) where objects would include properties and relations but which could only be named excluding every possibility for any kind of description of those mysterious things. At the same time, we are discouraged from adopting the idea expressed in 1915 (relations and properties are objects) because a relation has a structure, while an object does not (an object has no parts at all and cannot be analyzed further (*TLP* 3.26)). However, it would be an exaggeration to affirm that the *Tractatus* refers to a world without relations and qualities.¹⁰⁴ Making the claim that the world (the totality of atomic facts) is not the totality of objects (*TLP* 1.1) Wittgenstein seems to imply that the world is something more than the totality of objects. In terms of Wittgenstein's theory of language, we can say that language is something more than the totality of names. Thus, we can think that an atomic fact is not only a set of objects but a set of objects with their relations and qualities,¹⁰⁵ just as an atomic sentence is not only a set of names (of at least two names – no atomic sentence could mention only one name) but a set of names with their

¹⁰⁴ F.H. Bradley (disagreeing with Russell who believed that the world is constituted by objects and properties as well as relations) claims that there are no relations. According to him, if there were relations we should perceive them as a kind of object. But relations are not objects of any kind. In particular he says: "But how the relation can stand to the qualities is [...] unintelligible. If it is nothing to the qualities, then they are not related at all; and, if so [...] they have ceased to be qualities, and their relation is a non-entity. But if it is to be something to them, then clearly we shall require a *new* connecting relation [...] here again we are hurried off into the eddy of a hopeless process, since we are forced to go on finding new relations without end. The links are united by a link, and this bond of union is a link which also has two ends; and these require each a fresh link to connect them with the old. The problem is to find how the relation can stand to its qualities, and this problem is insoluble" (Bradley 2005 pp.32-33). We do not know whether Wittgenstein read Bradley but knowing that he had studied Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World* from where the specific quotation is taken (p.7), then we conclude that Wittgenstein was aware of this idea.

¹⁰⁵ The same idea is expressed in Russell's book entitled "Our knowledge of the external world" as follows: "The existing world consists of many things with many qualities and relations. A complete description of the existing world would require not only a catalogue of the things, but also a mention of all their qualities and relations" (Russell 1949 p. 60).

relations and qualities (*TLP* 3.141).¹⁰⁶ Moreover, it is also difficult to affirm that qualities and relations can exist without belonging to objects. In the *Tractatus* is stated:

Names are the simple symbols: I indicate them by single letters ('x', 'y', 'z').

I write elementary sentences as functions of names, so that they have the form 'fx', ' $\phi(x,y)$ ', etc.

Or I indicate them by the letters 'p', 'q', 'r'. (*TLP* 4.24)¹⁰⁷

In the above remark Wittgenstein uses variable for names x, y, z (in other words the values of those variables are names) which refer to objects. But this does not clarify whether objects include properties and relations or whether names refer to properties and relations. What is hidden behind those variables is not clarified but does not either leave any promise for further clarification. Moreover, he states:

Instead of, 'The complex sign "aRb" says that a stands to b in the relation R', we ought to put, 'That "a" stands to "b" in a certain relation says *that* aRb. (*TLP* 3.1432)

The question that arises is how the complex sign '*aRb*' is interpreted. Let us suppose that we have the atomic sentence of the form '*aRb*'. There are at least three (maybe more) treatments:

(a) '*aRb*' contains three names ('a', 'b', and 'xRy' where 'x' and 'y' are variables — that is to say, we must count more than just words as elements) which refer to objects (this position is expressed in the *Notebooks* in 1915 and later). Particularly:

a is correlated with an object,

¹⁰⁶ In a letter to C.K. Ogden, he states that a sentence is 'no MIXTURE at all but a STRUCTURE' (*LO* p.24). Therefore, a structure cannot be constituted only by its elements but also by the relations of its elements.

¹⁰⁷ Wittgenstein introduces the terms 'sign' and 'symbol' to make the distinction between 'sentential sign' (Satzzeichen) and 'sentence' (Satz). A sentential sign is constituted of signs - words (*TLP* 3.14) and a sentence is constituted of symbols (*TLP* 3.31). The symbols of an atomic sentence are names. Names are referred to as simple signs (*TLP* 3.202) or primitive signs that cannot be analyzed any further by means of a definition *TLP* 3.26) (a similar idea is expressed in *Philosophical Investigations* § 46). What I have to say here is that we can neither see a symbol nor its relation with its object. What we can see is its sign (*TLP* 3.32).

R is correlated with an object (R is an element),

b is correlated with an object.

(b) ' aRb ' contains two names (' a ' and ' b ') which refer to objects and ' xRy ' (which is not a name) shows the way (the structure) in which the two names (' a ' and ' b ') can be arranged (this position is expressed in the *Notebooks* in 1913).¹⁰⁸ Particularly:

a is correlated with an object,

R the letter R symbolizes in a different way the relation between a and b (the form),

b is correlated with an object.

(c) ' aRb ' contains more than two names (' a ' and ' b ') which refer to objects, a series of further names (c , d , e , h , i). This is Anscombe's view (Anscombe 1996 p.99).

Particularly:

a is correlated with an object,

c	}	R : this is not an element – it is a series of names (which go to objects) that are common to many sentences,
d		
e		
h		
i		

b is correlated with an object.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein *seems* indecisive as to which of the three above presented positions to adopt. At this point, I have to mention that we have to take into consideration that the remarks of the *Notebooks* are not those that Wittgenstein chose to

¹⁰⁸ A similar idea is expressed in the *Experience and Substance* by De Witt H. Parker "Relations are modes of unification of elements, not further elements requiring unification" (De Witt 1970 p.215).

publish; therefore, it is not obvious whether we have to accept all those remarks that are distanced from the *Tractatus* or whether they try to encourage different or new ideas. Therefore, the positions that are expressed in the *Notebooks* in 1913 and 1915 cannot be used on their own to create a concrete argument. What will enhance my argument is something which arises from the *Tractatus* itself and nothing other than the examination of the notion ‘predicate’.

What is a predicate?

Here, I follow Morris’ reasoning (Morris 2008 pp.186-87). Dummett states:

The notion of a complex predicate, thought of as formed from a sentence by omission of one or more occurrences of a proper name, is required, by contrast, only in order to explain sentences formed by attaching a quantifier to it (or, more generally, expressions formed by attaching to it some variable binding operator, for instance the description operator). (Dummett 1981 p.28)

What we have to hold from the above quotation is that roughly speaking a predicate is what remains of a sentence which contains names once one or more names have been removed. Based on this definition we can recognize two kinds of predicates: predicates with the minimal sense and predicates with the rich sense. A predicate in the minimal sense is that which is left if one or more names are removed. A predicate in the rich sense is a non-namelike basic sentential component which gives a complete sentence when it is properly combined with one or more names. Wittgenstein seems to disagree that atomic sentences have predicates in this rich sense. Particularly, he states:

An elementary sentence consists of names. It is a nexus, a concatenation, of names. (*TLP* 4.22)

Therefore, what Wittgenstein claims is that a sentence needs nothing other than names. Thus, there are no predicates in atomic sentences if the predicate is understood in the

rich sense (as a non-namelike basic sentential component). On the other hand, Wittgenstein uses individual constant variables of modern predicate logic x, y, a, r, b (see for example 3.1432 there is indeterminacy). The question that arises here is the following:

Do predicate letters reflect the minimal or the rich sense?

The answer to the above question is that there is no indication which clarifies that. Particularly, if predicates reflect minimal sense, then atomic sentences which we write as aRb can be sentences like $adnopb$ (for the similarity of structure R is used as a way of replacement of the specific part). For example,¹⁰⁹ suppose that atomic sentences are a series of names such as:

(1) $a\ b\ c\ d\ e\ f$

(2) $n\ b\ c\ d\ e\ f$

(3) $m\ b\ c\ d\ e\ n$

(1) and (2) share a common form $(bcdef)$. This can be symbolized by letter 'F'. Now the two sentences can be rewritten as follows:

(1a) Fa

(2a) Fn

Thus, (1) and (2) have the form ' Fx '.

Also, (1) and (3) share a common form $(bcde)$. This can be symbolized by the letter 'R'.

Thus, the two sentences can be rewritten as follows:

(1b) aRf

(3b) mRn

¹⁰⁹ Here, I use the example that is given by M. Morris (Morris 2008 pp.187-188).

Thus, (1) and (3) have the form ‘xRy’.

In (1a), (2a), (1b) and (3b), the letters ‘F’ and ‘R’ do not function as names. They are functional expressions that represent whole sentences. Thus, ‘Fa’ represents the sentence ‘abcdef’ as a function of the name ‘a’ and ‘aRf’ represents the sentence ‘abcdef’ as a function of two names ‘a’ and ‘f’ (Anscombe 1996 pp.101-102).

Since we have supposed that (1), (2) and (3) are atomic sentences, we can say that (1a), (2a), (1b) and (3b) could also be atomic sentences even though they are not written in a way as to show all their names. Here, we have conceived a predicate letter to be a predicate in the minimal sense but there is no commitment at all to the number of basic kinds of components. What we have to say is that this view is consistent with remaining neutral about what components sentences have, since Wittgenstein seems not to be interested whether predicates should be conceived of in the minimal sense or in the rich sense. There is no indication in the *Tractatus* which clarifies what predicates are (are they elements of atomic sentences?) and how they function in an atomic sentence. Wittgenstein refers to the term ‘predicate’ only once, in the remark 4.1274, and offers no further elucidation of the term. Moreover, he sometimes refers to the complex sign ‘aRb’ without clarifying its elements (see in *TLP* 3.1432, 4.012, 4.1252, 4.1273 and 5.5151). In the *Notebooks* he refers to the elements of the complex sign ‘aRb’ by stating:

When we say of a sentence of [the] form “aRb” that what symbolises is that “R” is between “a” and “b”, it must be remembered that in fact the sentence is capable of further analysis because a, R, and b are not *simples*. (NM p.111)

This leads to a serious central commitment to the *Tractatus* and under the light of this commitment we can have an interpretation in thinking whether there is one to one

correspondence between the parts of the atomic sentence (names) and the parts of the atomic fact (objects) expressed by the atomic sentence. This is an issue that is related to the issue of the unity of sentences (*TLP* 4.221). How can constituents be combined to create a grammatical sentence? In fact, the *Tractatus* does not explain the unity of sentence. Perhaps this tries to encourage the idea that in the world there is something mystical, incomprehensible to explain, in case we would like to explain it. This idea is compatible with Wittgenstein's attitude for not giving a clear ontological frame as we have already seen in the first Chapter.

2.1b No knowledge for the form of atomic sentences therefore, for objects

To reinforce the claim that Wittgenstein remains neutral on purpose about whether objects include properties and relations there contributes Ramsey's support too. In his article 'Universals',¹¹⁰ Ramsey discusses whether there are different kinds of objects with regard to particulars and universals. Finally, by advancing a sceptical approach, he affirms that there is no distinction at all (neither psychological, nor physical, nor logical as Russell supposes) between them. He affirms that the theory of particulars and universals is a 'great muddle', concluding that of all philosophers 'Wittgenstein alone has seen through this muddle and declared that about the forms of atomic propositions we can know nothing whatever' (Ramsey 1925 p.417). He explains that philosophers are not only misled in that they have supposed that all sentences (propositions) need to have the form subject-predicate (denying the existence of relations), but they are misled with regard to the question 'what is a characteristic of language' which results in the emergence of the problematic theory of particulars and universals. He asserts that things are not clarified by saying that "universals are collections of particulars" and

¹¹⁰ See 'Universals' in *Mind*, New Series, Vol.34, No.136, 1925, pp.401-417.

“particulars are collections of their qualities” (Ramsey 1925 p.401) since he realizes, as we will see below, our impossibility to know *a priori* the forms of atomic sentences.

Here, by saying *a priori*, we mean that which Johnston states:

A ‘*priori*’ means here, I argued, ‘in advance of the performance of analysis’. It is only through the performance of analysis that the elementary forms will become available. It is only through the performance of analysis that we can find out what the logical types of entity are. (Johnston 2008 p.156)

Ramsey acknowledges the grammatical distinction between subjects and predicates but he denies the distinction between the logical roles of subjects and predicates. By denying the logical character of the distinction between particulars and universals, he asserts that there is no subject-predicate distinction of things and as a result of this, there is no distinction between particulars and universals. The argument he gives to rethink this issue is provided through the following example. Let us suppose we have the sentence:

“Socrates is wise” (we call this sentence *x*)

The above sentence can also be formulated as follows:

“Wisdom is a characteristic of Socrates” (we call this sentence *y*)

While the term ‘wisdom’ in sentence *x* functions as the predicate of the sentence, in sentence *y* the same term functions as the subject of the sentence. Thus, both sentences *x* and *y* (that are different) assert the same fact, having both terms ‘subject’ and ‘predicate’ able to be reversed without changing the meaning. In other words, both terms ‘Socrates’ and ‘Wisdom’ function as subject without any distinguished logical

subject in sentence “Socrates is wise”. What is important to mention here is that Ramsey explains that he does not consider the above argument to be conclusive (Ramsey 1925 p.404). Perhaps the reason that he makes this specific acceptance is because through his argument, he accepts quite arbitrarily that particulars are committed by subject terms while universals are committed by predicate terms (one to one correspondingly). At the same time, in no case does he conceive the terms ‘Socrates’ (a term which expresses a real independent entity) and ‘Wisdom’ (a term which expresses a quality) to be names of objects, since the sentence “Socrates is wise” (or the sentence “Wisdom is a characteristic of Socrates”) is not an atomic sentence. According to Ramsey, the terms ‘Socrates’ and ‘Wisdom’ are incomplete symbols. As a result of this, we lead ourselves to a distinction between two sorts of incomplete symbols with a kind of restriction to investigate further any corresponding distinction between two sorts of names or objects (Ramsey 1925 p.409). Here, by referring to ‘incomplete symbols’, what Ramsey means is what Wittgenstein calls ‘expressions’ in the *Tractatus*. In particular, Wittgenstein states:

I call any part of a sentence that characterizes its sense an expression (or a symbol).

(A sentence is itself an expression.)

Everything essential to their sense that sentences can have in common with one another is an expression.

An expression is the mark of a form and a content. (*TLP* 3.31)¹¹¹

In another of his examples, Ramsey does not simply assert that the terms of the sentence function in the same way as for example a subject but that the terms of the sentence do not possess the role either of subject or predicate. Specifically, he gives the sentence “Either Socrates is wise or Plato is foolish”. It is possible to think from this sentence the term ‘Socrates’ as the subject and ‘being wise unless Plato is foolish’ as the predicate,

¹¹¹ See also *TLP* 3.311 - 3.314.

‘being wise unless Plato is foolish’ will have to stand for a universal which will characterize Socrates. According to Ramsey, such a thought is wrong. In other words, let us suppose that we use the sentence of the form aRb . The theory of particulars and universals would claim that there are three related sentences: (a) the relation ‘R’ stands between the terms ‘a’ and ‘b’, (b) the possession by ‘a’ of the complex property of having ‘R’ to ‘b’, and (c) ‘b’ has the property that ‘a’ has ‘R’ to it. Ramsey asserts that those three sentences that have different sets of constituents are not three different sentences but asserts that there is only one which says ‘a’ has ‘R’ to ‘b’ (Ramsey 1925 pp.405-406).

Until Ramsey reaches the idea that particulars and universals are “devoid connotation” he examines Johnson’s and especially Russell’s arguments on the distinction between particulars and universals. Johnson, in order to explain the distinction between particulars and universals makes a distinction of the terms (a) ‘substantives’ and (b) ‘adjectives’. He perceives substantives to function as subject only and adjectives to function either as predicate or subject. For example, ‘unpunctuality is a fault’ where subject is an adjective (Ramsey 1925 p.402). He asserts that the constituents are connected together and he calls this a ‘characterizing tie’. This is not the constituent of a fact but it is represented by a copula (Ramsey 1925 p.407).¹¹² Here, ‘connectional’ is not relation but characterization. At the same time, he conceives of Tractarian objects not to be self-standing units. The ‘ties’ are those which for Johnson remain the mysterious objects. As a result of this conception, Johnson is led to the adoption of the idea that “ultimately a universal means an adjective that may characterize a particular,

¹¹² Johnston poses the question: “What, for Wittgenstein, is this logical copula ‘in’ an atomic complex beside its constituent object? What is this copula, this logical form, which is not itself an object?” (Johnston 2007 p.240). Here, Johnston asserts that Wittgenstein not only does not give an adequate answer, but also he fails to think about the specific question. However, as I will explain in the fourth Chapter, Wittgenstein does not give any answer to this on purpose.

and a particular means a substantive that may be characterized by a universal” (Ramsey 1925 p.408). Ramsey, attacking Johnson, claims that a substantive is a subjective property and not an objective property since “it depends not indeed on any one mind but on the common elements in all men’s minds and purposes” (Ramsey 1925 p.413).

By discussing the unity of a complex,¹¹³ Russell concentrates on the logical categories of particulars and universals (predicates - qualities and relations). He asserts that a complex (which is not simple) has parts, in other words, constituents. In any atomic complex, an entity appears as a relating relation and all the others as terms (an n-ary relation is an entity which may appear as a relating relation in a complex in which n entities appear as terms) (Russell 2002a p.80). By disagreeing with what Johnson says, Russell’s¹¹⁴ conception is based on the fact that the connection is achieved since one of the constituents of an atomic fact is incomplete by its nature and it succeeds to connect the other constituents together. Here, by saying that an object is incomplete, Russell means that it can only occur in a fact by connection with an object or objects of a proper type (Ramsey 1925 p.408). The incomplete constituent must not be conceived of as a third term because then the relational constituent would be constituted by the connections between that third term and the two original terms. From this, the infinite

¹¹³ Concerning the term ‘complex’, Russell claims: “We will give the name of “a complex” to any such object as “a in the relation R to b” or “a having the quality q” or “a and b and c standing in the relation S””. Broadly speaking, a complex is anything which occurs in the universe and is not simple” (Russell 1925 p.44). ‘A “complex” is anything analysable anything which has constituents’ (Russell 2002a p.79). “If we take some particular dual complex xRy , this has three constituents, x , R , and y ” (Russell 2002a p.114). ‘For example, ‘A differs from B’ or ‘A’s difference from B’, is a complex of which the parts are A and B and difference’ (Russell 1992 p.139). Moreover, I have to say that Russell was influenced by Wittgenstein concerning the issue of atomic complexes. Particularly he states: “Chiefly through the work of an Austrian pupil of mine, I seem now to see answers about units; but the subject is so difficult and fundamental that I still hesitate” (Russell to F.H. Bradley, 30 January 1914. The letter is held in the Russell Archives at McMaster University and is cited by Nicholas Griffin 1993, 159).

¹¹⁴ Here, I refer to later Russell like C. Johnston refers to his work entitled *The Unity of a Tractarian fact*. The later position of Russell distances itself by the odd idea that universals (not only particulars) may stand as terms; in other words, relations may appear in the complex not as relations but also as terms (earlier position) and the also strange idea that a form (a logical copula which is responsible for the unity of a complex) is also a term (Russell 1994 pp.98-99).

regress is precluded, which Bradley will later talk about. Russell considers that the connective constituent must be a universal (relation or predicate)¹¹⁵ and the other constituents must be particulars. Russell does not exclude the case in which there are complexes where there is only one term and one predicate and the predicate in this case occurs as relations occur in other complexes (Russell 2002a pp.80-81).

Therefore, according to Russell, a complex is composed by self-standing entities - particulars¹¹⁶ and a non-self-standing copula (universal). That which is self-standing cannot be responsible for the unity of a complex. Moreover, according to Russell, an adjective can never stand on its own or be the subject of a sentence as Johnson supports. In an adjective there is something incomplete. Moreover, 'a relation can never occur except as a relation, never as a subject' (Russell 1998 p.206) and particulars are conceived to be terms of relations in atomic facts (Russell 1998 p.199).

In his effort to demonstrate the distinction between particulars and universals, Russell spots an analogy between the terms 'Socrates' and 'wise' and particulars and universals. He conceives of both particulars and universals to occur as sentential functions that serve to determine ranges of sentences. In the case of particulars he accepts that there is

¹¹⁵ Russell explains the notion 'predicate' as follows: "Understanding a predicate is quite a different thing from understanding a name. [...] To understand a name you must be acquainted with the particular of which it is a name, and you must know that it is the name of that particular. You do not, that is to say, have any suggestion of the form of a proposition, whereas in understanding a predicate you do. To understand 'red', for instance, is to understand what is meant by saying that thing is red" (Russell 1998 p.205).

¹¹⁶ Russell states for particulars: "Particulars have this peculiarity, among the sort of objects that you have to take account of in an inventory of the world, that each of them stands entirely alone and is completely self-subsistent. It has the sort of self-subsistence that used to belong to substance, except that it usually only persists through a very short time, so far as our experience goes. That is to say, each particular that there is in the world does not in any way logically depend upon any other particular. There is no reason why you should not have a universe consisting of one particular and nothing else. That is a peculiarity of particulars. In the same way, in order to understand a name for a particular, the only thing necessary is to be acquainted with that particular." (Russell 1998 p.63). Moreover, Russell states for particulars: "A particular is defined as an entity which can only enter into complexes as the subject of a predicate or as one of the terms of a relation, never as itself a predicate or a relation" (Russell 2002a pp.55-56).

only one range, whereas in the case of universals there are two ranges of sentences. According to Russell, with the terms of the sentence 'Socrates is wise', 'wise' determines the *narrower* range of sentences 'x is wise' and the *wider* range (complete range) 'f wise' (where f is variable) which includes all sentences in which 'wise' occurs. For example, 'neither Socrates nor Plato is wise'. With regard to the term 'Socrates', it determines the *wider* range of sentences (as the values of 'f Socrates' where f is a variable) in which it occurs in any way. With the term 'Socrates', we do not have the *narrower* range. Therefore, 'Socrates' gives only one set of sentences, whereas 'wise' gives two. Ramsey criticizes this and characterizes this distinction as theoretical since he correctly claims that it is possible to have a *narrower* range for the term 'Socrates'. He assumes that we can distinguish among the properties of 'Socrates', some of which are qualities. Then, we could create two sets of sentences. The first set (the *wide* set) of sentences that affirms properties of 'Socrates' and the second set (the *narrower* set) that affirms qualities of 'Socrates'. He asserts that the difference can be eliminated (following Whitehead) by conceiving the term 'Socrates' as an adjective. Whatever incomplete symbol (like Socrates, wise) is an adjective. At the same time, Ramsey does not hesitate to admit that the whole process has a 'subjective character and depends on human interests and needs' (Ramsey 1925 p.414), by asserting that:

[...] it becomes clear that there is no sense in the words individual and quality [...] The two types being in every way symmetrically related, nothing can be meant by calling one type the type of individuals and the other that of qualities, and these two words are devoid of connotation. (Ramsey 1925 p. 416)

To this, however, various objections might be made which must be briefly dealt with. First it might be said that the two terms of such an atomic fact must be connected by the characterising tie and/or the relation of characterisation, which are asymmetrical, and distinguish their relata into individuals and qualities. Against this I would say that the relation of characterisation is simply a verbal fiction. "q characterises a" means no more and no less than "a is q," it is merely a lengthened verbal form; and since the relation of characterisation is admittedly not a

constituent of "a is q " it cannot be anything at all. As regards the tie, I cannot understand what sort of a thing it could be, and prefer Wittgenstein's view that in the atomic fact the objects are connected together without the help of any mediator. (Ramsey 1925 p.416)¹¹⁷

At the end of his article, Ramsey leads things where they should be led; that is to say, he denies that the form of language gives us any reason to see a clear asymmetry among things of the world. So, he asserts that the distinction between particulars and universals as it has been offered until now is not a well-defined contrast and he acknowledges that we cannot say what the basic structure of the world and language is. This raises a crucial issue in this Chapter: the issue of the fundamental asymmetry of things projecting the idea that we cannot decide before analysis, an issue I will discuss in the next Chapter. Ramsey asserts that since we do not know anything about the form of language, about the forms of atomic sentences, we cannot know whether some or all objects can occur in more than one form of atomic sentence. Moreover, we cannot know if two objects can be constituted by terms of the same type. Since we cannot have knowledge about the form of atomic sentences, we cannot have knowledge about objects. Thus, according to Ramsey, a mathematical logician chooses to use a type of objects and name it 'individuals' (Ramsey 1925 p.417). Therefore, by reasoning for the distinction between particulars and universals, it needs to be clear in our mind what object we refer to. In a sense, we could characterize this as an *arbitrary* process but at the same time a *useful* one. This process, which depends on something we do with language (not with the nature of the world), is *arbitrary* since if each time we choose a different type of objects, that is to say, a new point of reference, this will always lead to an extractive type of approach of the things of the world. That is to say, we always have a result (whatever this result might be) which results from a part of things of the world

¹¹⁷ There is no copula or connected constituent since objects in an atomic fact 'hang one in another, like the links of a chain' (see *TLP* 2.03 from Ogden's translation).

and not from the whole set of things of the world. This is because it is very difficult to affirm that the type of objects we have chosen as a point of reference can cover and penetrate all the things in the world. It is very difficult to think of a distinction between particulars and universals by applying it to both concrete things (for example empirical things) and abstract things (for example Cartesian Egos and their properties). However, in no case does it interest us; it would not be attractive at all to classify the things of the world – any possible world, by choosing infinite types of objects, giving thus infinite ways of distinction between particulars and universals to create a uniform conception of the empirical world or any possible world. It seems that this point is clear enough in Ramsey's and Wittgenstein's mind. The first finds a way to formulate it and the second manages to show it through the lines of *Tractatus*. At the same time, in a sense, this process is *useful* since the logician has as a point of reference, a type of objects to think about the distinction of kinds of things of the world.

If we take Tractarian objects as a point of reference for the distinction between particulars and universals, we cannot lead ourselves to a distinction. This is because there is no specificity in the *Tractatus* since its general structure does not demand to say what objects are. As a result of this, Johnston states:

The Tractarian Wittgenstein does not merely avoid giving an answer to the question whether objects include universals: he rejects the terms of the question. (Johnston 2008 p.157)

As evidence for this, Johnston quotes an extract from the discussion between Wittgenstein and Waismann:

When Frege and Russell spoke of objects they always had in mind things that are, in language, represented by nouns [...] [Their] whole conception of objects is hence very closely connected with the subject-predicate form of sentences. It is clear that where there is no subject-

predicate form it is also impossible to speak of objects in this sense.
(WVC p.41)

Since it is impossible to know the subject-predicate form of an atomic sentence as well as its objects, then it is difficult to discuss a logical category term. Therefore, it is not at all clear whether Wittgenstein thinks there is a fundamental asymmetry among entities in the world. O Ramsey seems to imply that Wittgenstein leaves this issue open on purpose, even though he could have predicted from the beginning that this issue would not be possible to solve. At the end of his article 'Universals' he states that only Wittgenstein of all philosophers had understood the confusion of a distinction between entities in the world and he implies a conscious writing on the part of Wittgenstein encouraging the idea that we cannot know about the forms of atomic sentences. Additional evidence that Wittgenstein leaves open the issue of an asymmetry among entities in the world is constituted by his later acceptances. Particularly, he recognises the necessity to provide examples of objects without excluding the possibility of answering the question of what objects are. In 1929 he writes:

It is the task of the theory of knowledge to find them [atomic sentences] and to understand their construction out of the words or symbols. This task is very difficult, and Philosophy has hardly yet begun to tackle it at some points. (RLF p.32)

Here, Wittgenstein acknowledges the difficulty of finding atomic sentences but at the same time he acknowledges that philosophy did not work a lot on this issue, implying that it is possible to achieve this through hard work.

In 1931, he writes:

There is another mistake, which is much more dangerous and also pervades my whole book, and that is the conception that there are questions the answers to which will be found at a later date. It is held that, although a result is not known, there is a way of finding it. Thus I used to believe, for example, that it is the task of logical analysis to discover the elementary propositions. I wrote, We are unable to specify

the form of elementary propositions, and that was quite correct too [a neutral assertion]. It was clear to me that here at any rate there are no hypotheses and that regarding these questions we cannot proceed by assuming from the very beginning as Carnap does that the elementary propositions consist of two-place relations, etc. Yet I did think that the elementary propositions could be specified at a later date. (WVC p.182)

The above quotation is also evidence that Wittgenstein at some point believed that logical analysis will reach atomic sentences, the final constituents of the world, namely objects. At the same time, he acknowledges that this cannot be done (atomic sentences could not be specified at a later date), cancelling every expectation (see the last sentence of the above quotation; he uses past tense, not present tense). That which confuses things a little is the phrase, 'I wrote, we are unable to specify the form of elementary propositions, and that was quite correct too' (WVC p.182). Why does he say that? Maybe because at that period he realised that he should not distance himself much from the idea that it is also somehow right to assert that we are able to specify the form of atomic sentences.

During 1932-1933, he writes:

Russell and I both expected to find the first elements, or "individuals", and thus the possible atomic sentences, by logical analysis.¹¹⁸ Russell thought that subject-predicate sentences, and 2-term relations, for example, would be the result of a final analysis. This exhibits a wrong idea of logical analysis: logical analysis is taken as being like chemical

¹¹⁸ Wittgenstein's and Russell's expectation to discover atomic sentences was also shared by Ramsey a year after the publication of his article with the title 'Universals' (in which he claims that it was impossible to find atomic sentences). Particularly, he writes: "When I wrote my article [Universals] I was sure that it was impossible to discover atomic propositions [sentences] by actual analysis. Of this I am now very doubtful, and I cannot therefore be sure that they may not be discovered to be all of one or other of a series of forms which can be expressed by $R1(x)$, $R2(x,y)$, $R3(x,y,z)$, etc., in which case we could, as Mr Russell has suggested, define individuals as terms which can occur in propositions [sentences] of any of these forms, universals as terms which can only occur in one form. This I admit may be found to be the case, but as no one can as yet be certain what sort of atomic propositions [sentences] there are, it cannot be positively asserted; and there are no strong presumption in its favour, for I think that the argument of my article establishes that nothing of the sort can be known *a priori*. And this is a matter of some importance, for philosophers such as Mr Russell have thought that, although they did not know into what ultimate terms propositions [sentences] are analysable, these terms must nevertheless be divisible into universals and particulars, categories which are used in philosophical investigations as if it were certain *a priori* that they would be applicable" (Ramsey 1990 p.31).

analysis. And we were at fault for giving no examples of atomic sentences or of individuals. We both in different ways pushed the question of examples aside. We should not have said “We can’t give them because analysis has not gone far enough, but we’ll get there in time”. Atomic sentences are not the result of an analysis which has yet to be made. We can talk of atomic sentences if we mean those which on their face do not contain “and”, “or”, etc., or those which in accordance with methods of analysis laid down do not contain these. There are no hidden atomic sentences. (*WLC* 35 p.11)¹¹⁹

Having in mind the above quotation I have to say that it constitutes additional evidence that Wittgenstein believes at some point that he can ‘find the first elements’. Later, it seems that he realizes that the idea of analysis does not work. He admits that there are no hidden atomic sentences that result through an analysis which is not yet done and there is expectation in it. In this way, the idea is projected that any analysis cannot give the final constituents of language, namely names, or the final constituents of the world, namely objects.¹²⁰ Since he realizes that he cannot defend the idea of analysis somehow casually, he states that atomic sentences do not result through analysis, but they are those sentences which do not contain logical constants. Moreover, there is another relevant extract in Wittgenstein’s work – *Some Remarks on Logical Form* – that sheds light on the specific issue. Particularly, Wittgenstein states:

One is often tempted to ask from an *a priori* standpoint: What, after all, *can* be the only forms of atomic propositions, and to answer, *e.g.*, subject-predicate and the relational propositions with two or more terms further, perhaps, propositions relating predicates and relations to one another, and so on. But this, I believe, is mere playing with words. An atomic form cannot be foreseen. And it would be surprising if the actual phenomena had nothing more to teach us about their structure. To such conjectures about the structure of atomic propositions, we are led by our ordinary language, which uses the subject-predicate and the relational form. (*RLF* p.32)

¹¹⁹ This idea is compatible with the following idea: “In philosophy you cannot discover anything [...] The truth of the matter is that we have already got everything, and we have got it actually *present*; we need not wait for anything” (*WVC* p.183). See also *PI*: §126.

¹²⁰ See a similar idea that is expressed in *PI*: §60.

Through the above quotation, it seems that Wittgenstein acknowledges that it is natural for someone to investigate what could be the forms of sentences. He is not limited to that which he thinks is natural, but for a moment he seems to provide possible cases which would give the solution to this kind of investigation. Specifically, he says: “subject-predicate and the relational propositions with two or more terms further, perhaps, propositions relating predicates and relations to one another, and so on”. This ‘so on’ makes what he says less specific and at the same time he prepares what his next sentence will claim: “But this, I believe, is mere playing with words”. Therefore, he distances himself by giving a solution to the investigation of the form of sentence. This is made clear through his assertion “an atomic form cannot be foreseen”. At the same time, Wittgenstein admits that it would cause surprise if the empirical world (actual phenomena) were not enough to help us in order to understand its structure. This leaves the implication that it would be possible to follow a kind of investigation to find the forms of atomic sentences. The only tool we have and use is the sentences of ordinary language which use subject-predicate and the relational form. Here, a new implication (which comes to overshadow the previous implication) projects the idea that it is not at all obvious that we have to think of the forms of atomic sentences like the forms of sentences of ordinary language. It is noteworthy here to say that while what concern us are the forms of atomic sentences, we use sentences of ordinary language for our investigation, a process that does not validate the suitability of method. Ramsey seems not to close his eyes to this since at no point in his article does he ignore that we do not know what Tractarian objects are; on the contrary he remembers that we cannot know what objects are. As a result of this, we cannot know the forms of atomic sentences. Particularly, he states:

[...] we are not acquainted with any genuine objects or atomic propositions, but merely infer them as presupposed by other

propositions. Hence the distinction we feel is one between two sorts of incomplete symbols, or logical constructions, and we cannot infer without further investigation that there is any corresponding distinction between two sorts of names or objects. (Ramsey 1925 p.409)

This point is clarified through Wittgenstein's statement to Waismann:

Now I think that there is one principle governing the whole domain of elementary propositions, and this principle states that one cannot foresee the form of elementary propositions. It is just ridiculous to think that we could make do with the ordinary structure of our everyday language, with subject-predicate, with dual relations, and so forth. (WVC p.42)

Here, Wittgenstein asserts our inability to foresee the form of atomic sentences and at the same time, he admits that sentences of ordinary language are impossible to lead us to the forms of atomic sentences. We cannot settle questions in advance, for instance, whether we can know the form of atomic sentences *a priori*. It seems that this is an empirical issue on a first level. At the same time, on a second level, the *Tractatus* reinforces the idea that we cannot predict the form of atomic sentences. Therefore, since we cannot know the possible ways in which names of atomic sentences could be arranged, we cannot know the possible ways in which objects of corresponding atomic facts could be arranged. Therefore, the form of atomic sentences remains unclarified. The above quotation and the previous one demonstrate the mystery which is created because of these unknown forms of atomic sentences as well as the restrictions which exist for the examination of the whole issue.

What I have to admit at this point is that Wittgenstein brings back a traditional discussion on the issue of a fundamental asymmetry among kinds of things in the world without taking a clear-cut position by adopting the realistic or nominalistic view although as I supported there are some indications outside the *Tractatus* which encourage a realistic view. In no case could we reach the conclusion that objects include

properties and relations or not,¹²¹ since our base is always the logical form of ordinary language. This means that we cannot conceive of the form of products which result from an analysis of an ordinary sentence to be the same as the form of the products of complete logical analysis. Moreover, it is rather impossible to reach *a priori* conclusions about the ontological nature of objects. In this way, Wittgenstein shows how difficult it is to set the criteria for the distinction among kinds of things in the world as well as to discuss the nature of those things which make up the substance of the world – Tractarian objects.¹²² He can neither give any definition of ‘objects’ nor examples; he can only provide some specifications. In 1949 Norman Malcolm asked Wittgenstein:

I asked Wittgenstein whether, when he wrote the *Tractatus*, he had ever decided upon anything as an example of a ‘simple object’. His reply was that at that time his thought had been that he was a logician; and that it was not his business, as a logician, to try to decide whether this thing or that was a simple thing or a complex thing, that being a purely empirical matter! (Malcolm 2001 p.70)

By commenting on Wittgenstein’s answer to Malcolm, I have to say that the absence of examples is not simply due to his type of research (i.e. logical and non-psychological research). The *Tractatus* demands objects to be simple and atomic sentences to be independent (*TLP* 2.02, 2.0211, 2.061 and 4.211). So, every possible example of an object as well as of an atomic sentence can be rejected if we define what the criteria are for something to be ‘simple’ as well as ‘complex’ (at the same time giving examples).¹²³

¹²¹ It seems that Wittgenstein transcends the above difficulty arguing that objects, properties and relations are things that must be shown and not be said. Wittgenstein, among others says to Moore: “This same distinction between what can be *shewn* by the language but not said, explains the difficulty that is felt about types – e.g., as to [the] difference between things, facts, properties, relations. That M is a *thing* can’t be said; it is nonsense: but *something* is *shewn* by the symbol “M”. In [the] same way, that a *proposition* is a subject – predicate proposition can’t be said: but it is shown by the symbol” (*NM* p.109).

¹²² Pears states that the question ‘What kind of thing did he take objects [Tractarian objects] to be?’ seems simpler than what it really is (Pears 1997a Vol.I p.89).

¹²³ Later, Wittgenstein acknowledges that the terms ‘simple’ and ‘complex’ are relative terms (*PI* I:§47). The observation made by L.Goddard and B. Judge concerning the simplicity of objects (physical objects, not Wittgensteinian objects) is very interesting. Particularly, they contend that while a physicist would

The notion ‘simplicity’ is supposed to be absolute in the *Tractatus* in the case of the notion ‘object’. However, it is very difficult and maybe impossible to reach this condition since the notion of ‘simplicity’ is relative and always comes up based on what we choose as a reference point. Therefore, the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ is reinforced. Wittgenstein seems to have realized to a large degree the complexity of the notion of ‘simplicity’. So, he avoids elucidating the criteria of simplicity on purpose. Therefore, the idea that an object is an ultimate unit (necessary element) that can be named only by an ultimate unit of language – a name – is not clear at all. With this in mind, Maslow claims the following:

It is logically arbitrary what we shall choose to consider as simple elements and atomic facts; the criterion of simplicity is to be established by ourselves, not found in the world. The practical considerations of convenience, habit, or usefulness may, of course, guide us in our grammatical determinations, but are logically irrelevant [...] We can take any object whatsoever in our experience and consider it as an element. This simplicity of object is imposed by our language upon the brute ‘given’ of experience and is thus relative to our language [...] There is no sense in speaking of absolute simples. (Maslow 1997 pp.38-39)¹²⁴

2.1c There is no standard definition of the notions ‘particulars’ and ‘universals’

The fact that we do not have a standard definition between particulars and universals is an additional point for the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’. If we wish to be clear about what we mean by the terms ‘particulars’ and ‘universals’ we have to accept that for the moment we have failed. The perplexity of commentators to give definitions and explain what they mean by the terms ‘particulars’ and ‘universals’ and then to give relevant examples is apparent. Many times there is the implication that the examples

claim that protons and electrons are simpler than atoms because protons and electrons are parts of atoms, at the same time protons and electrons can carry charges in contrast to the case of atoms. Therefore, in a sense we can say that atoms are simpler than electrons and protons since they have no charges; they have fewer properties (L.Goddard and B. Judge 1982 p.65). Here, there rises the question whether something that is considered to be simple must have fewer or no properties or nothing than something that is considered to be complex.

¹²⁴ See also *PI* I: §46.

which are given contribute to a better understanding of the definitions but this does not clarify things. For example, Strawson asserts among others:

In mine, as in most familiar philosophical uses, historical occurrences, material objects, people and their shadows are all particulars; where qualities, numbers and species are not. (Strawson 1959 p.15)

Here, Strawson agrees with the examples that are given to support the distinction between particulars and universals, but at the same time he implies that there are philosophical uses of the specific examples which are conceived in a different way since he says, ‘in mine, as in most familiar philosophical uses’. MacBride, who seems to be somehow more careful than Strawson, states:

The concepts of particular and universal are introduced into philosophical discourse by way of a varied repertory of examples.

Persons, physical objects and events have served as paradigmatic examples of particulars. Attributes such as *being human* and *being triangular*, as well as spatial relations, have served as paradigmatic instances of universals. (MacBride 1998 p.205)

Here, by giving some examples, MacBride does not claim that they are particulars (or universals) as Strawson does, he explains that these serve ‘as paradigmatic examples’ or ‘as paradigmatic instances’ of particulars and universals correspondingly. However, these examples given by MacBride are not useful since they do not show us in a certain way how to continue a series of examples. So, a clear range about things is not achieved.

In Lowe’s writings, while he attempts to define the distinction between particulars and universals in terms of the notion ‘instantiation’, he does not keep one definition but different definitions. Particularly, he will assert the following in two different periods:

(L1) A particular is that which is an instance of something but has no instances (other than itself) whereas a universal is that which has instances (Lowe 1989 pp.38-39).

(L2) A particular is that which can have no instances whereas a universal is that which can have instances (Lowe 2004 p.305).

While in his earlier assertion (L1) he seems to adopt the view that a particular is required to be an instance of something and that universals require instances, in one of his later assertions (L2) he claims that it is not required that a particular is an instance of anything but neither is it required that universals have any instances. With regard to the second definition (L2), it is about a careless definition since if we accept that there can exist universals which do not have instances then there cannot exist particulars according to the first definition (L1). This is impossible because we can always find a higher notion about something – basically, that which tends to demand a universal. What we have to say here goes beyond the fact that there is a muddle between the two definitions (L1) and (L2) the effort to give a clear distinction between the notions ‘particulars’ and ‘universals’ based on the above instantiation is unsuccessful or at least non-ontologically helpful since we do not have any instances. This becomes more understandable through MacBride’s work.

MacBride claims that the Aristotelian framework is a point of reference that “provides a far richer theoretical environment in which to articulate the particular-universal distinction than any of the metaphysical systems Ramsey considered” (MacBride 2004 p.318). Here, I have to say that while this framework can encourage the development of a discussion about the distinction between particulars and universals, ultimately this

discussion does not lead anywhere but to where Ramsey led things.¹²⁵ Particularly, MacBride discusses to what degree it is possible to have a definition of a distinction between particulars and universals in his article entitled “Where are particulars and universals?” by taking space-time into consideration. He uses the Aristotelian account which affirms that a particular or universal is determined by the capacity of an entity to be located either in many places or in one place at a time. In other words, both particulars and universals possess locations with the difference that universals are located in many places at a time, while particulars are located in only one place at a time. For example, the human being is located in many places at the same time, while there is only one place where the particular Lewis is located at a time (MacBride 1998 p. 207). By criticizing Aristotle, MacBride discerns a weakness which concerns particulars. He accepts the idea that point particles are particulars that are located only in a single location at a time, but he also introduces the idea that extended particulars possess more than one location at a time. This, according to MacBride, is explained in the following examples: (a) water possesses many distinct and disconnected locations at a time; (b) the River Cayster possesses many distinct and connected locations; (c) Lewis (let us conceive of Lewis as a particular) with his arms in one place and his legs in a different place possesses distinct locations at the same time. So, the Aristotelian account of particulars and universals is modified in the following way: an entity X is a universal if X is wholly present in many distinct locations at a time. An entity Y is a particular if it is wholly present in only one location at a time or Y is partly present (an extended particular is composed of special parts) in many distinct locations at a time (MacBride 1998 pp.207-208). However, MacBride’s seemingly successful modification of the Aristotelian account (later on in his article it remains open whether there are or could be

¹²⁵ Therefore, MacBride’s assertion that ‘Ramsey fails to show that the particulars – universals distinction is not an Aristotelian distinction’ (MacBride 1998 p.205) is unsuccessful.

universals that are capable of being wholly present in one place at a time) does not take us away since by thinking examples to support a distinction between particulars and universals this is somehow arbitrary and extractive. MacBride states that ‘in general, an acceptance definition of the particular-universal distinction will, to a high degree, get the examples right’ (MacBride 1998 p.206). The crucial question here is how one can assure that he gets the examples right. Each example refers to a specific type of things which have a nature. On the other hand, by examining some isolated examples, we cannot generalise and create a rule for the whole. For example, the uninstantiated entities that lack location would inhibit this effort. Particularly, Wittgenstein claims that time and space constitute forms of objects (*TLP* 2.0251). This position does not clarify whether all objects are spatio-temporal or not. If we assert that objects are not spatio-temporal (this is encouraged by the assertion that an object has relations and qualities only when it is combined with at least one other object (*TLP* 2.0121)), our effort for a distinction between particulars and universals becomes even more complicated since the search for the identity of objects transforms into a more difficult attempt.

Since the distinction between particular and universal turns on the notion of ‘instantiation’, this leaves open which kinds of entity there are at the fundamental level. So, if ‘Socrates is wise’ is true, the relation of instantiation leaves us with two different particulars (two entities of different kinds) as instances of wisdom: Socrates (the specific person who owns this wisdom) and Socrates’ wisdom (the specific wisdom Socrates owns). Without being given a standard definition for the terms ‘particulars’ and ‘universals’ (if there were there would be agreement in the examples) this leads us to admit that we have not yet achieved making a clear distinction between both terms.

Of course, the fact that this has not yet been done does not mean that a clear distinction between particulars and universals in the future cannot be given.

What I have to admit here is that it is not clear whether there is a fundamental asymmetry between kinds of things in the world and the kind of this asymmetry is one that can correspond to an asymmetry among different kinds of expressions. Therefore, we cannot claim that the *Tractatus* encourages the idea that there is any fundamental asymmetry among different kinds of expressions. In other words, the idea that the fundamental elements of the sentence should occur - something that corresponds with predicates - is not encouraged. If we could claim that there are objects in the sense of corresponding to predicates – this would correspond to a realistic point of view, if not, this would correspond to a nominalistic point of view.

2.2 The relation between the Tractarian objects and the objects which we might think we experience

The second crucial respect which argues that the notion of ‘object’ is left indeterminate has to do with the question what is the relation that exists between the Tractarian objects and objects which we can experience. Objects we can experience we can think of them in the real world or we can think of them to be sense-data. There are some quotations in the *Tractatus* which weakly imply that objects are empirical and at the same time some other remarks dissolve every supposition for objects to be empirical. Moreover, some remarks imply that objects are sense-data but some other remarks exclude this possibility.

While I have already referred in favour of the idea that Tractarian objects are not empirical, in other words, they are not objects that can be experienced in the real world, there are some passages which imply the opposite.

(E1) An implication that objects are material entities

One of the difficulties of the *Tractatus* is that what we can conceive is always objects in combination; that is to say, what we can perceive is facts and not objects themselves. Thus, the *Tractatus* does not allow us to know what the relationship is between an object and that which is empirical. However, in the *Tractatus*, the following idea is stated:

A spatial object must be situated in infinite space. (A spatial point is an argument – place.)

A speck in the visual field, though it need not be red, must have some colour: it is, so to speak, surrounded by colour-space. Notes must have *some* pitch, objects of the sense of touch *some* degree of hardness, and so on. (TLP 2.0131)

Here, it is implied that objects are entities in experience (something like a speck in the visual field) that are situated in infinite space. What encourages this implication is the statement that objects of the sense of touch must have *some* degree of hardness and so on. At the same time, by saying ‘so on’ Wittgenstein appears to be unwilling to elucidate further that which he attempts to say. What we have to admit here is that the above implication is not very compatible with the idea that it is only facts which are empirical. It is implied in a loose way that objects are experienced too.

(E2) Objects have material properties

Wittgenstein states:

If two objects have the same logical form, the only distinction between them, apart from their external properties, is that they are different. (*TLP* 2.0233)

Just as a description of an object describes it by giving its external properties, so a sentence describes reality by its internal properties. (*TLP* 4.023)

These remarks (*TLP* 2.0233 and 4.023) which talk about the ‘external properties’ of an object seem to refer to the ‘material properties’ of an object. Indeed, it seems that objects have material properties but they cannot be determined. How can this occur? Wittgenstein claims that it is only by means of sentences that material properties, which are not essential properties, are represented (*TLP* 2.0231). Here, I have to repeat that the fact we do not know what the relationship is exactly between objects and facts constrains us from saying more on that.

(E3) Empirical objects are conceived of as Tractarian objects

Wittgenstein asserts:

The essence of a sentential sign is very clearly seen if we imagine one composed of spatial objects (such as table, chairs, and books) instead of written signs.

Then the spatial arrangement of these things will express the sense of the sentence. (*TLP* 3.1431)

Here, spatial objects are conceived of by Wittgenstein in terms of tables, chairs, books, and so on. Although it is apparent that a sentential sign does not consist of spatial things such as tables, chairs and books (a sentential sign consists of its elements (words) (*TLP* 3.14)), Wittgenstein encourages us to ‘imagine’ one consisting of physical objects (*TLP*

3.1431) to understand that a sentential sign ('this is obscured by the usual form of expression in writing of print' (*TLP* 3.143)) is a fact. In other words, the above remark constitutes a demonstration that we get a better idea of sentences if we think of them not in the way we think of ordinary sentences with which we are familiar, but as sentences that are made from empirical things (the *Tractatus* refers to any possible world including the empirical world and here there is some reference to empirical things), a spatial arrangement of empirical things in the way they function in sentence. The possibility of this relation in a sense is used here to model the relation between objects in a sentence. However, the odd point here is that Wittgenstein suddenly conceives tables, chairs and books, as Tractarian objects. While he uses the German term 'Gegenständen', he gives examples of physical objects in brackets (tables, chairs, and books). The physical objects suppose elements of the sentence. If here Wittgenstein does not use a loose analogy between Tractarian objects and physical objects, in other words if he uses the notion 'object' in technical sense then he distances himself from the spirit of the notion of 'Gegenstand'.

(E4) The laws of physics refer to objects in a way that Wittgenstein states:

The laws of physics, with all their logical apparatus, still speak,
however indirectly, about the objects [Gegenständen] of the world.
(*TLP* 6.3431)

In what way can the laws of physics speak for objects of the world in an indirect way?

In a very sudden way, Wittgenstein pushes us to think of Tractarian objects as material objects (or that empirical reality is composed of objects) without this being stated in a decisive way. The laws of physics refer to the empirical world and they are related to physical atomism, not logical atomism.

(E5) The preconceptions on the notion of the ‘Tractarian object’

In the *Notebooks*, we encounter many cases in which Wittgenstein either directly or indirectly states that objects are empirical. By taking into consideration that the preconceptions on the Tractarian notion ‘object’ are formulated in the period of *Notebooks*, I can mention (loosely speaking) some remarks that offer an especially indirect reinforcement for the argument I am trying to develop in this position. In no case do I affirm that Wittgenstein deals with the notion ‘object’ both in the *Notebooks* and the *Tractatus* in the same way. What I try to show here is that there was a predisposition from Wittgenstein’s side in the *Notebooks* to conceive of ‘objects’ as empirical which seems to survive in the *Tractatus* to some degree. At the same time, I have to say that in the *Notebooks*, Wittgenstein appears to try to decide on the nature of objects, while in the *Tractatus* he is almost indifferent but conscious.¹²⁶ Specifically:

(a) Wittgenstein considers objects as points of the visual field. In particular, he states:

As examples of the simple I always think of points of the visual field.
(NB p.45, 6.5.15)¹²⁷

It seems that by referring to ‘points’ in the *Notebooks* (NB p.45 see also NB pp.67 and 69), he uses the specific term either as a symbol or as an extensionless mass. If he avoids using the term ‘particle’ and he uses the term ‘point’ on purpose, then we could perhaps assume that he is trying to escape from the ordinary meaning of the term ‘point’

¹²⁶ Pears is right to claim that Wittgenstein treats peripherally the questions of *Notebooks* in the *Tractatus* (Pears 1997a Vol.I p.89). Moreover, Kenny states: “it seems to me no accident that it is difficult to decide the question [if we have to conceive of all objects as particulars] from the study of the *Tractatus* alone; when writing the book [*Tractatus*] Wittgenstein chose his words carefully so as not to adopt either of the positions about which the *Notebooks* express his doubts and hesitations” (Kenny 1984 p.16).

¹²⁷ Moreover, for Wittgenstein, it *seems* that ‘Patches in our visual field’ are objects since ‘we do not perceive any single point of a patch separately’. Additionally, it seems for him that ‘the appearances of stars’ are objects (NB p.64, 18.6.15) although below he will admit the difficulty of providing an example of an object (NB p.68, 21.6.15).

(a point is not an empirical object). If so, the question is in what way we have to conceive the meaning of this term since there is a concern as to whether Wittgenstein's terminology can be understood in a straightforward way. The unspecificity of the notion 'object' is also voiced by the terminology that Wittgenstein uses. He discusses about necessary elements, namely 'objects', by using the two notions 'Gegenstand' and 'Dingen'. He refers for the first time to necessary elements in sentence 1.1 and he uses the notion 'things' ('Dingen'); in sentence 2.01, he uses the notion 'object' ('Gegenstand') by explaining the notion 'Gegenstand' in brackets with two notions 'Sachen' and 'Dingen' ('entities' and 'things' by using Ogden's translation while Pears and McGuinness translate only the term 'Dingen' as 'things'). Across, the whole of the *Tractatus*, he persists with both of these notions. In her work, 'An Introduction to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*' Anscombe states:

Empiricist or idealist preconceptions, such as have been most common in philosophy for a long time, are a thorough impediment to the understanding of either Frege or the *Tractatus*. It is best, indeed, if one wants to understand these authors, not to have any philosophical preconceptions at all. (Anscombe 1996 pp.12-13)

(b) According to Wittgenstein, objects are parts of space. In particular, he poses the question:

Can we regard a part of space as a thing? In a certain sense we obviously always do this when we talk of spatial things. (*NB* p.47, 13.5.15)

In the *Tractatus*, he refers to spatial objects:

A spatial object must be situated in infinite space. (A spatial point is an argument – place.). (*TLP* 2.0131)

Both of the above remarks encourage the idea that Tractarian objects have an empirical character. But it is somehow odd to be the case that the combinations of objects are empirical, while objects themselves are not empirical. It is natural to think that facts can

be empirical if there is some sense that objects which compose them are also empirical. Around this issue there is a fundamental mystery.

All of the above implications which encourage in a weak way the idea that objects are empirical do not survive because of other remarks which claim the opposite. I will support this by making reference to four points:

(C1) Objects are colourless

Wittgenstein states:

Roughly speaking: objects are colourless. (*TLP* 2.0232)¹²⁸

It seems to be obvious that if Wittgenstein referred to empirical objects he would avoid using this property (colourless) for the term ‘object’. Of course their configurations (atomic facts) can have colour and only in this way is remark 2.0251 explained: ‘Space, time and colour (being coloured) are forms of objects’.¹²⁹ The entity-world is not constituted by the totality of the entities of objects. This is because the world is not the totality of objects but the totality of facts (*TLP* 1.1), or atomic facts (*TLP* 2).

¹²⁸ In this sentence Wittgenstein uses the phrase ‘Beiläufig gesprochen’ translated by Ogden as ‘Roughly speaking’ and by Pears and McGuinness as ‘In a manner of speaking’. In a sense, we have to avoid conceiving this sentence in a literal way.

¹²⁹ In *TLP* 2.0251, the German term ‘Färbigkeit’ is translated by Pears and McGuinness quite carelessly as ‘being coloured’ while Ogden gives a more faithful translation by using the term ‘colouredness’. For the time being, we have to remember that it is not obvious that a Tractarian object has a property (or more), for example, the property of a colour (this is of course a property of complexes), something that will emerge gradually. A colour is the form of those objects that combined with other objects creates colour complexes. Similarly, space is the form of those objects that, when combined with other objects, creates spatial complexes. The same way, we can speak about time. Frascolla’s translation is closer to the German term; he uses the term ‘colour intensity’ something like ‘brightness’ (Frascolla 2007 pp. 80-81).

(C2) Different objects can have the same logical form

Wittgenstein affirms:

If two objects have the same logical form, the only distinction between them, apart from their external properties, is that they are different. (*TLP* 2.0233)

In cases where two empirical objects have the same possibilities of combinations with other empirical objects (according to the Tractarian terminology, they have the same logical form), we could loosely claim that they are the same and not different as asserted in 2.0233. Therefore, Tractarian objects must be conceived of in a unique way.

(C3) ‘bestehen’ not ‘existieren’

It is noteworthy that, in the original German, Wittgenstein refers to Tractarian objects using the term ‘bestehen’ (*TLP* 2.0121) and not the term ‘existieren’ (exist) (*TLP* 2.0121). Both terms ‘bestehen’ and ‘existieren’ are commonly translated into English as ‘exist’ but they have different character. The term ‘bestehen’, among others, states a relation – connection of standing and it is in this way that we have to see the specific term in the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein uses the term ‘existieren’ for other things (*TLP* 3.032, 3.24 and 3.323) but not for objects. It seems that he conceives the existential character of objects to be different since Tractarian objects do not contingently exist.¹³⁰ What we may call necessary existence is that which Wittgenstein tends to call existence. If Wittgenstein refers to objects as contingent entities, this would lead to the abolition of the term ‘form’. For a form to be fixed, its elements must also be invariable (this will be explained below). Moreover, if he did not introduce the notion ‘object’, we could not

¹³⁰ Pears and McGuinness’ decision to translate the German terms ‘Bestehende’ as ‘subsistent’ (*TLP* 2.0271) and ‘besteht’ as ‘subsists’ (*TLP* 2.024) is successful in contrast to Ogden’s translation of ‘existent’ and ‘exist’, correspondingly.

talk about negative facts (*TLP* 2.06) or about the independence of the atomic sentences. Thus, we cannot talk about the existence and non-existence of an object. In other words, we cannot say that this object exists and this does not exist. What I can say here is that objects are entities of a special kind that ‘stand for’ but neither exist nor do not exist. As Wittgenstein explains:

So we cannot say in logic, ‘the world has this in it, and this, but not that’.
(*TLP* 5.61)

The above idea is expressed in the *Notebooks* in a different way:

What seems to be given as *a priori* is the concept: *This*. – Identical with the concept of the *object*. (*NB* p.61, 16.6.15)

Moreover, statement 5.61 is consistent with the idea expressed in 5.552 which claims that logic is prior to the question *How* (how objects are arranged), but not prior to the question *What* (there must be objects).

Later he explains that objects are not things that either exist or do not exist, as follows:

If everything that we call “being” and “non-being” consist in the existence and non-existence of connexions between elements, it makes no sense to speak of an element’s being (non-being); just as if everything that we call “distraction” lies in the separation of elements, it makes no sense to speak of the distraction of an element. (*PI* I:§50)

What I once called ‘objects’, simples, were simply what I could refer to without running the risk of their possible non-existence; i.e., that for which there is neither existence nor non-existence, and that means: what we can speak about *no matter what may be the case*. (*PR* §36 p.72)

What I can say according to the *Tractatus* is the following:

Objects can only be *named*. Signs are their representatives. I can only speak *about* them: I cannot *put them into words*. Sentences can only say how things are, not *what* they are. (*TLP* 3.221)

Thus, what I can affirm at this stage is that *Tractatus*' ontology is not committed to the notion of 'existence'.

(C4) Objects are simple

Wittgenstein makes the following key affirmation:

Objects are simple. (*TLP* 2.02)

Since the idea of form demands distinct elements (O1), then objects must be simple.¹³¹

This means that objects are not complex; therefore, they have no parts. We cannot affirm the idea of 2.02 with regard to empirical objects since we can very easily find distinct elements in them because of their complexity. For example, a car is complex because it is constituted of wheels, doors, windows, seats, a steering wheel and so on and in no case could it be considered as a Tractarian object.

Furthermore, in some points in the whole of Wittgenstein's work we can find implications that claim that Tractarian objects are phenomenological entities; that is to say, they are sense-data, objects that do not exist as things themselves but they constitute the content of our experience (for example, sensible quality like colour). While Wittgenstein replies to Malcolm that he is not interested in what objects are (Malcolm 2001 p.70), he nevertheless makes an effort to answer this question in the *Notebooks* since during that period he seems to have in mind, among others, a kind of things: sense-data. Specifically, in the *Notebooks* he states:

Is a point in our visual field a simple object, a thing? Up to now I have always regarded such questions as the real philosophical ones: and so for

¹³¹ Russell by discussing the issue of simplicity, states: "[...] you can get down in theory, if not in practice, to ultimate simples, out of which the world is built, and that those simples have a kind of reality not belonging to anything else" (Russell 2007a p.270).

sure they are in some sense – but once more what evidence could settle a question of this sort at all? Is there not a mistake in formulation here, for it looks as if nothing at all were self-evident to me on this question; it looks as if I could say definitively that these questions could never be settled at all. (*NB* p.3, 3.9.14)

Moreover, Wittgenstein states:

It seems to me perfectly possible that patches in our visual field are simple objects, in that we do not perceive any single point of a patch separately; the visual appearances of stars even seem certainly to be so. What I mean is: if, e.g., I say that this watch is not in the drawer, there is absolutely no need for it to FOLLOW LOGICALLY that a wheel which is in the watch is not in the drawer, for perhaps I had not the least knowledge that the wheel was in the watch, and hence could not have meant by “this watch” the complex in which the wheel occurs. And it is certain – moreover – that I do not see all the parts of my theoretical visual field. Who knows whether I see infinitely many points? (*NB* pp.64-65, 18.6.15)

As examples of the simple I always think of points of the visual field (just as parts of the visual field always come before my mind as typical composite objects). (*NB* p.45, 6.5.15)

In the first passage (*NB* p.3), Wittgenstein considers the question of whether a point in our visual field¹³² is a simple object and whether this constitutes a real philosophical question *in some sense*. At the same time, he wonders what evidence could settle this question as a philosophical question. Since he does not clarify whether, finally, the specific question is philosophical or not; he leaves the implication that it is not clear whether we have to attempt to answer this question. In the second passage (*NB* pp.64-65, 18.6.15), he avoids giving an example since the characteristic of simplicity renders its definition impossible – what could that ‘something’ be which could not be analysed further? This is a hard question. Wittgenstein holds back from any kind of commitment by saying, ‘It seems to me perfectly possible’. He avoids affirming in a clear way that his example is a *clear* example of an object. In the third passage (*NB* p.45, 6.5.15), he is more determined to give an example but again he defends his statement with the phrase

¹³² Wittgenstein also discusses the visual field in the *Notebooks* on p.45, 7.5.15, p.47, 13.5.15, p.48, 16.5.15, p.51, 25.5.15 and pp.64-65, 18.6.15.

‘I always think’. The phrases ‘it seems to me perfectly possible’ and ‘as examples of the simple I always think’ safeguard his example. The main point we can conclude from the second and the third passage is that Wittgenstein does not refuse to discuss a *possible* example of an object. Moreover, in the *Tractatus* he states:

A speck in the visual field, though it need not be red, must have some colour: it is, so to speak, surrounded by colour-space. (*TLP* 2.0131)

Some years after the publication of the *Tractatus*, December 1929, Wittgenstein seems to conceive objects as phenomenal (phenomenological) entities whose combinations only stand as perceptual phenomena or sensory stimuli (how they appear to the senses) such as blackness, hardness, etc. Particularly, he states:

Only when we analyze phenomena logically shall we know what form elementary sentences have. (*WVC* p.42)

Phenomena are what elementary sentences describe. (*WVC* p.249)

A sentence is a judgment about sense-data, a reading of one’s sense-data; for example “This is red”. No further verification is needed; it is *a priori*. (*WLC* 32 p.66)

Furthermore, he states:

I used to believe [by the *Tractatus*’ period] that there was the everyday language that we all usually spoke and a primary language that expressed what we really knew, namely phenomena. I also spoke of a first system and a second system. Now I wish to explain why I do not adhere to that conception any more. (*WVC* p.45)¹³³

In the above passage, Wittgenstein clarifies that the sentences of primary language, that is to say, of atomic sentences, are those which refer to phenomena. The term ‘phenomena’ in a sense seems to be used here as a corresponding notion to the term

¹³³ In the *PR* Wittgenstein states: “I do not now have phenomenological language or ‘primary language’ as I used to call it, in mind as my goal. I no longer hold it to be necessary. All that is possible and necessary is to separate what is essential from what is inessential in *our* language” (*PR* p. 51). Moreover, he states: “The worst philosophical errors always arise when we try to apply our ordinary – physical – language in the area of the immediately given” (*PR* p.88 §57).

‘atomic fact’ in the *Tractatus*.¹³⁴ Therefore, loosely speaking, if we think that the notion ‘phenomena’ corresponds to the notion ‘atomic facts’, then since phenomena have to be constituted by ‘phenomenal entities’, the corresponding notion of this term (phenomenal entities) are Tractarian objects.

Additionally, in the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein states:

Both Russell’s ‘individuals’ and my ‘objects’ (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*) were such primary elements. (*PI* I:§46)

The above remark seems to imply a broader identification between Russell’s ‘individuals’ and Tractarian objects (here, by the term ‘broader identification’, we mean something beyond the fact that Russell’s ‘individuals’ and Tractarian objects are primary elements). It seems that Wittgenstein perceives Tractarian objects as something similar to sense-data as Russell does. Russell’s individuals are sense-data, given to us through sense-perception. In particular, Russell states:

We speak of whatever is given in sensation, or is of the same nature as things given in sensation, as a *particular*. (Russell 2001 p.53)

Later, Wittgenstein makes the following crucial distinction:

The world we live in is the world of sense-data; but the world we talk about is the world of physical objects. (*WLC32* p.82)

In addition, he states:

To talk about the relation of object and sense-datum is nonsense. They are not two separate things. (*WLC32* p.109)

However, all of the above implications are not enough to conceive Tractarian objects to be sense-data. If objects were sense-data, we would not be able to talk about all the possible worlds, as the *Tractatus* affirms that since sense-data do not exist as things

¹³⁴ Wittgenstein does not use the notion ‘phenomena’ in the *Tractatus* but in 1929 and thereafter he does.

themselves but they constitute the content of our experience. But it would be an exaggeration to claim that we can have the experience of all possible worlds. Beyond that, it would be an exaggeration to assert that sense-data are necessary in every possible world something the *Tractatus* claims for objects. According to the *Tractatus*, objects could not possibly not exist a condition sense-data do not meet. Sense-data come to existence. The non-necessity of sense-data is not compatible with the Tractarian idea of the substance of the world since the substance of the world is made of objects (*TLP* 2.021) which are unalterable (*TLP* 2.027). Therefore, objects cannot be sense-data and be bearers of substance. Beyond that, because of their colourlessness (*TLP* 2.0232),¹³⁵ they cannot be sense-data as in Russell's conception.¹³⁶ Ishiguro rightly claims:

To suppose either that objects of the *Tractatus* are spatio-temporal things, or that they are sense-data, lands us in similar difficulties. To ask what kind of familiar entities correspond to the objects of the *Tractatus* seems to lead us nowhere. (Ishiguro 1969 p.47)

It is worth mentioning that while in the *Notebooks* we are presented with specks in the visual field and the material points are candidates as objects, this discussion in the *Tractatus* is silenced. This of course is justified by logic, among others, in that we only know simples *a posteriori* therefore any examples of simples are impossible to be given. Therefore, the question whether there are atomic sentences cannot be posed (*TLP* 4.1274). Thus, the *Tractatus* does not attempt to answer the big questions which are posed in the *Notebooks* which concern language. No answer is given to the *Tractatus* since the idea that questions themselves are not pure questions is projected there.

¹³⁵ Even though the colourlessness of objects is stated it is not certain that Wittgenstein literally means this.

¹³⁶ What I have to clarify at this point is that Russell refers to the final products of a complete analysis of the theory of knowledge (that is to say for something to be simple a subject must know something about it) while Wittgenstein refers to the final products of a complete logical analysis (that is to say for something to be logical simple means that it is impossible to be analysed further).

What we have to acknowledge here is that the reason why Wittgenstein does not clarify what objects are in the *Tractatus* is not because he is unable to answer the question about whether objects are phenomenological or physical or whether objects include properties and relations or not but because he is indecisive as to how an answer can be provided with regard to the nature of objects. The *Tractatus* does not simply project the idea that we cannot predetermine the atomic fact or the form of an atomic sentence but that we cannot suppose something about these notions. This is because these notions derive from a supposed asymmetry, a supposed contrast between two different fundamental kinds of language elements. What we have to admit is that the *Tractatus* successfully demonstrates how difficult it is to provide a definition or an example of a unit entity or better of a thing which stands for a name – an object.¹³⁷ This is an issue which the whole thesis is concerned with. Since the notion of ‘objects’ in the *Tractatus* is not clarified, it is impossible to know the nature of these things.¹³⁸ Thus we cannot make any further evaluation of this because we do not know what the relation between a Wittgensteinian object and an experienced object is, as just we do not know the relation between a name and an ordinary word in the Bild theory of sentences.¹³⁹ However, this does not prevent Wittgenstein from conceiving of objects from the contrasting viewpoints of Realism and Nominalism in a deliberate (rather strategic) way. What we have to admit here is that Wittgenstein is happy to make a ‘natural’ reading of objects in

¹³⁷ Wittgenstein worries about the term ‘object’ before beginning writing the *Tractatus*, particularly in the *Notebooks* since he dedicates a lot of pages to examine the specific term. Specifically, he introduces the notion from the beginning of his *Notebooks* (NB p.3, 3.9.14) and he focuses more systematically especially on pages 45-72.

¹³⁸ Hacker in his article ‘Laying the Ghost of the Tractatus’ (1975b) claims that it is not necessary to know what objects are to understand the *Tractatus*, while Ishiguro and McGuinness in their articles ‘Use and Reference of Names’ (1969) and ‘The So-Called Realism of the Tractatus’ (1981) maintain correspondingly that objects are values of dummy names since names do not correspond with items in the empirical world (in the sense that a scarecrow is a ‘dummy’ of a person but not a person) or bound variables in fully analyzed sentences.

¹³⁹ Wittgenstein uses the term ‘name’ not in an everyday sense but in a technical sense. By saying that ‘Russell is the name of a philosopher’ the terms of this sentence do not count as names in Wittgenstein’s framework. Moreover, the *Tractatus* does not adopt Russell’s idea that ‘this’ is a fundamental name. In *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein expresses his disagreement about it (PI I:§38-39).

the *Tractatus*, a reading without contradictions, an impossibility. It is also certainly not his naivety that leads him to leave the notion 'object' to be indeterminate but before I examine what is the deeper expediency that does this, something I will do in Chapter Four, it is helpful to explain what is the importance of the unspecificity of the notion 'object' something I will do in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE IDEA OF A THEORY OF LANGUAGE IN THE *TRACTATUS*

3. *Introduction*

In this Chapter, I will claim that the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ is important. In the *Tractatus* there is no specificity since the work itself does not require saying what objects are. As a result of this deeper substantial difficulties arise. I will explain this through two crucial respects: (a) There is a sense that what the *Tractatus* is doing is to present a theory of language, that is based on the idea of analysis, in the sense that it presents something which is substantive. However, there is an extra range of worries about whether Wittgenstein can support a theory in the *Tractatus*. These worries are partly focused on the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’. *Tractatus*’ sentences project a radical unfalsified ability and as a result the *Tractatus* does not offer a theory but a ghost of a theory. As a result of this, the proposed analysis from a theory which would lead us to the fundamental elements, namely objects cannot be done; and (b) the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ does not allow any correlations between elements of language and elements of reality and as a result it is unclear how language could be meaningful. Without knowing what are the constituents of sentences and to what they refer, the form of sentences remains unclear. The fundamental unspecificity of objects is to such a degree that finally nothing clear is said about the relationship between language and the world. Although there are many things that should be clarified, they are not.

3.1 *The idea of a theory of language*

In the *Notebooks*, Wittgenstein appears to have a *theory* in mind (about the relationship between language and world); in the *Tractatus* this idea about a theory changes form

and then in his later writings it is completely abandoned. Particularly, in the *Notebooks*, by referring to his theory, he states:

[...] my theory of logical portrayal seems to be the only possible one, on the other hand there seems to be an insoluble contradiction in it! (NB p.17, 23.10.14)

The difficulty of my theory of logical portrayal was that of finding a connexion between the signs on paper and a situation outside in the world. (NB p.19, 27.10.14)

[...] there is still a definite and decisive lack of clarity in my theory. Hence a certain feeling of dissatisfaction! (NB p.55, 3.6.15)¹⁴⁰

It seems that the *Tractatus*, in a sense, does not abandon the idea of a *theory*, by which we mean the so-called Bild theory of the sentence. By attempting to talk about the relations between language and world, Wittgenstein unavoidably introduces the notion of *correspondence*, a notion that calls for a role between the constituents of language and the constituents of the world. This correspondence presupposes something similar to a theory. Later, in 1930, Wittgenstein seems to be unconcerned with the formulation of a theory and among others he states:

If I were told anything that was a theory, I would say, No, no! That does not interest me. Even if this theory were true, it would not interest me-it would not be the exact thing I was looking for. (WVC p.116)

For me a theory is without value. The theory gives me nothing. (WVC p.117)

It seems that during the period he makes the above statements, he realizes some things which he thought otherwise before. I will have the chance to discuss this change further later. By bearing in mind that there is much in the *Tractatus* that is left undetermined, especially the notion of ‘object’ (I have already discussed about some difficulties over the nature of objects in the previous Chapter), the question that arises is the following:

¹⁴⁰ Wittgenstein uses the notion ‘theory’ in the *Notebooks* but he does not clarify what he means by the specific notion.

Does the *Tractatus* succeed in presenting a theory of language whilst at the same time retaining its unspecificity with regard to objects?

3.2 An explanation of the difficulty of saying that the Tractatus actually presents a theory

By taking into consideration the application of the condition of falsifiability, it is natural to think that a theory (in the ordinary sense) makes substantial commitments which can be false. This idea is expressed by Popper who replaces (in a sense) verification with falsification as follows:

All the statements of empirical science (or all 'meaningful' statements) must be capable of being finally decided, with respect to their truth and falsity; we shall say that they must be '*conclusively decidable*'. This means that their form must be such that *to verify them and to falsify them* must both be logically possible. (Popper 2002 p.17)

In other words, a theory is falsifiable; that is to say, it must run the risk of being false. Even if it cannot be falsifiable through experience, it must be able to be falsifiable by reason. This is a reasonable condition of a philosophical theory. The *Tractatus* projects the idea that it is as if it has a radical unfalsifiable ability. There is no possibility for someone to find any counter example to maintain that the theory which seems to be formulated in the *Tractatus* is false. This should be explained.

By introducing the notion of 'form', Wittgenstein relates it with the notion of 'necessity' – about the way things could be. Commenting on the apparent theory, it is impossible to say how things cannot be. There is a necessary consequence that there is no falsifiable description of the way things are. It is impossible for the Bild theory of sentence to present a false description of form since there is no assertion about the form of an object. Because there is no theoretical description, there is no falsifiable

description of the form of an object. We are not allowed to make a mistake because to make a mistake is to describe something impossible. If there is no falsifiable statement about form, there is no falsifiable statement about which of the objects can be combined. As a result of this, what we can say is that there can be no statement about the form of anything. There is no falsifiable statement about the form of any object. There cannot be any necessarily false statements or nothing can have meaning and be necessarily false. The crucial question which arises here is whether anything could be identified as a Tractarian object without making a statement about the form of objects. It seems that this cannot be done. We cannot identify something with an object without making a statement about its form. This means that if we cannot make falsifiable statements about form, we cannot identify objects. So, we have a serious reason to assert that it is strictly impossible to have examples.

First of all if we had examples of objects, only then we could say something about form. Wittgenstein explained to Malcolm that whether we answer questions such as ‘what objects are’ or ‘what could constitute an example of object’, the conditions of this work would change since he would distance himself from his goal to remain a strict logician (Malcolm 2001 p.70). He considers that these issues are empirical and he admits that he does not wish to discuss issues related to knowledge by asserting that:

Psychology is no more closely related to philosophy than any other natural science.

Theory of knowledge is the philosophy of psychology.

Does not my study of sign-language correspond to the study of thought-processes, which philosophers used to consider so essential to the philosophy of logic? Only in most cases they got entangled in unessential psychological investigations, and with my method too there is an analogous risk. (*TLP* 4.1121)

Indeed, he acknowledges the risk of getting involved in these kinds of issues because he sees such an involvement as a reason why previous philosophers were mistaken.¹⁴¹

Secondly, perhaps the reason for Wittgenstein not giving examples of objects is because he needs an argument to show that it must be possible to have possible theoretical names (see *PI* I: §18 and §23). That is why we need simple signs; otherwise, we cannot make sense from quantifier expressions. Wittgenstein also agrees with this because the notion of an ‘object’ is a counterpart to a simple sign or a name and the notion of the ‘name’ is supposed in quantification (that is why it is a variable). Thus, the notion of ‘concept’ arises out of the pseudo-concept about the notion of ‘object’. So, it must be possible for names to exist because quantifier expressions presuppose them. The difficulty that appears here is that it is not clear that we can understand the idea of a name. This relates to our incapability to provide analysis. Roughly speaking, the idea of a name is the idea of a word which is arbitrarily assigned to something. This requires that we know what a particular thing is to assign it a name. The idea of the arbitrary here requires a particular thing. Later, he states:

It is of the greatest significance that in the case of a logical calculus we always think about an example to which the calculus can be applied, and that we don’t give examples saying they are not really the ideal ones which we don’t have yet. This indicates a false conception. (Russell and I have in different ways worked under it. Compare what I say in the ‘Tract. Log. Phil.’ about elementary propositions and objects). (*MS* 115, 55, 56; cf. *MS* 111, 118)¹⁴²

It seems that Wittgenstein does not think that it is necessary for a calculus to be accompanied by an example so that it becomes a logical calculus. This means that a

¹⁴¹ Here, I have to admit that by following this specific line (which is legitimate), in a sense he disguises fundamental problems. One of them is how we can know something (such issues – epistemological issues – were the concern of the Vienna Circle), which is one of the fundamental questions of philosophy.

¹⁴² This quotation is found in Wittgenstein’s manuscripts as Kuusela cites (Kuusela 2011 p.616).

logical calculus can be posited without giving any examples of it. This idea is expressed in the *Notebooks* as follows:

But it also seems certain that we do not infer the existence of simple objects from the existence of particular simple objects, but rather know them—by description, as it were – as the end—product of analysis, by means of a process that leads to them. (NB p.50, 23.5.15)

A third reason why the *Tractatus* does not give examples of objects is the fact that the logical analysis of sentence has not been achieved yet. If we cannot execute the project of analysis, we can never be in position to give names to some things. We cannot reach objects which will be named. Thus, if we cannot execute a project of analysis, we cannot be in position to give the names. The idea that a name is assigned is arbitrary if we cannot execute analysis. That which is available to us is our ordinary language which does not include names but words. However, without names we cannot refer to objects. We can reach objects only when we do the analysis. If we cannot do the analysis we cannot know which the objects are and it does not make sense to give names to objects.

As we have already said, by examining the *Tractatus* we can perceive that this work cannot be falsifiable because of the unspecificity of the notion of ‘object’, a term that is related with the conception of the idea of analysis which does not pose a limit (according to the *Tractatus* an object is a correlate of a name – a formal concept, is that which reaches the final limit of analysis). Since the unclarity of the notion ‘object’ is committed to the conception of analysis (which is the theoretical possibility of thing), the whole conception of analysis itself is left unclarified. In other words, since the notion of ‘object’ is unclear, the conception of analysis is also unclear.¹⁴³ This means

¹⁴³ What I clarify here is that the logical analysis Wittgenstein refers to is not like a chemical analysis, that is to say, an objective method. If it were something like that, it would presuppose an *a priori* theory

that sentences of ordinary language are not completely analysed and they are liable to further analysis. Thus, the sense of these sentences which indicates something complicated depends on the truth of another sentence (*TLP* 2.0211). What I have to say at this point is that it is not clear whether Wittgenstein realizes that the *Tractatus* encourages the idea that there is no falsifiable description of the way things are. Moreover, maybe the *Tractatus* does not permit its falsification because of the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ but that does not mean that it does not continue to function in a certain way, as we will see in the fourth Chapter. There seems to be a kind of problem in principle since Wittgenstein cannot give the form of an object but as I will explain later, this is not a problem even it raises difficulties which we must face.

3.3 The impossibility of the meaningfulness of language

The whole supposed theory that is given in the *Tractatus* is based on the idea of the fitting together of names with objects at some point. However, the fundamental unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ does not permit any correlations between the elements of language, namely, names and elements of reality, namely, objects and as a result it is unclear how language could be meaningful. Wittgenstein states:

To understand a sentence means to know what is the case if it is true.
(One can understand it, therefore, without knowing whether it is true).
It is understood by anyone who understands its constituents. (*TLP* 4.024)

3.3a An atomic sentence – a Bild as an impossibility

If we do not know the referential meaning of all the names (*TLP* 4.026) of an atomic sentence, we cannot know its sense. In other words, it is impossible to understand the

which would give primitive signs, that is to say, names. Thus, Wittgenstein would be obliged to give examples of objects.

sense of a sentence if a name refers to something which is unknown.¹⁴⁴ While we cannot know the sense, the *Tractatus* continues to make assertions as if we can know the sense. However, we cannot know the form of an atomic sentence (I consider that there is such a thing as a form of sentences but I do not know it); thus, we cannot give any example of an atomic sentence. Therefore, possibility is related not with the forms that are given but with the forms that could be given. Therefore, when we refer to an atomic sentence – a Bild, strictly speaking, there is no such a thing as an atomic sentence. What we *do* refer to is the arrangement of names that refer in turn to objects (to the arrangement of objects) which claim such and such being the case.¹⁴⁵ According to *Tractatus* since the logic of the world, the form of reality is such and such, the logic of language must be such and such. Thus, the fact that names could be arranged in such and such a way could represent how objects could be arranged in such and such a way. But, on the level of language, on the level of sentences that according to the *Tractatus* are Bilder, the world could not be arranged in the same way as on the level of reality where objects could be arranged. Since we cannot formulate an atomic sentence, then its Bild constitutes an impossibility. We cannot have a Bild until we have made it (we have Bilder once they have been determined) and so we cannot even have its pictorial form. If this happened, then we could reflect on how we could speak (arbitrarily of course) about various pictorial forms without having their Bild, something that does not appear

¹⁴⁴ What we could say here is that perhaps we could only accidentally understand the sense of a sentence which includes a name unknown to us. For example, if we have the sentence ‘Tableble is high’ (let us suppose that it is an atomic sentence) we do not know the referential meaning of ‘tableble’. If we suppose that ‘tableble’ means table and indeed the particular name does mean ‘table’, then we can know the sense of the particular sentence. However, even if our assumption is true, we cannot know if it is true. The sense of the particular sentence will therefore remain unclear. So, if we were able to verify the truth of our assumption, we would also be able to know the sense of the sentence. Beyond this, what we should make clear here is that there are no criteria for the determination of the reference of the name. In a case in which the name had its referential meaning with reference to an empirical object (a physical object, which is not the Wittgensteinian case), the name would not receive its referential meaning from the sentence itself.

¹⁴⁵ Wittgenstein in *Notebooks* states: “The possibility of the sentence is, of course, founded on the principle of signs as GOING PROXY for objects” (*NB* p.37, 25.12.14).

to happen. A Bild must be connected with its elements for us to speak about the specific Bild; otherwise, our reference will not make any sense. Thus, without having objects as a point of reference, we cannot have any correspondence with the ultimate constituents of language. As a result, we cannot have any configurations of names that would form sentences which would represent the world. So, the relation between language and world cannot be clarified through specific examples. Therefore, we cannot make any statement on an empirical level since a thought cannot reach its object and neither can a sentence reach its sense. As a result, we cannot know any empirical truth. Thus, the relation between language and reality remains mysterious at this point. Indeed, the fact that we cannot evaluate the Bild theory of sentences on an empirical level is a difficulty that we can either accept as a constituent part of a ‘theory’ or use as the basis of an *a priori* rejection of the ‘theory’. This is a major issue that we have to face in the Bild theory of sentences.

3.3b The general form of language and reality as an impossibility

Beyond the fact that we cannot know the form of atomic sentences *a priori* (in advance of an investigation),¹⁴⁶ we can neither know *the general form of sentences* (the form that any expression must have in order to constitute a sentence)¹⁴⁷ since we cannot reach *a priori* conclusions about the ontological nature of objects. In his later work, once he projects the idea of the property of language which is used to describe things themselves

¹⁴⁶ In my examples I use ordinary sentences pretending that they have the form of atomic sentences. But this does not take us far and the help this approach offers us is limited.

¹⁴⁷ The form of each sentence and that which makes all sentences connect with one another must be something common for all sentences. This common thing must be nothing else but the general form of the sentence (*TLP* 4.5). Wittgenstein expresses the general form of the sentence in entry 4.5 as follows: ‘This is how things stand’ (according to Pears and McGuinness) and ‘Such and such is the case’ (according to Ogden). ‘The general sentential form is a variable’ (*TLP* 4.53) and is symbolized by $[\bar{P}, \bar{\xi}, N(\bar{\xi})]$ (*TLP* 6). The variable is not a sentence in itself. This variable therefore shows that such and such combinations of objects are valid. In other words, each sentence affirms or denies some combinations of objects or the existence or non-existence of some atomic facts (the general sentential form is not restricted to true sentences).

Wittgenstein clarifies that he has given up looking for the general form of sentences and the general form of language, something that had preoccupied him in the past.

Particularly, he states:

For someone might object against me: “You take the easy way out! You talk about all sorts of language-games, but have nowhere said what the essence of a language-game, and hence of language, is: what is common to all these activities, and what makes them into language or parts of language. So you let yourself off the very part of the investigation that once gave you yourself most headache, the part about the general form of sentences and of language”. (*PI* I:§65)

Since a sentence cannot represent the general form of a sentence (no sentence can represent its form) so it cannot represent the general form of reality. Consequently, a sentence can neither say anything about itself nor about the world. Thus, we can neither speak about the form of atomic sentences *a priori* nor about the *general form of sentences a priori*. We cannot know the structure of sentences before theory since there is no way to do the analysis. Thus, we cannot identify any form before analysis. Since we cannot have the form of an atomic sentence it is impossible to have the general form of sentence that would show which would be the possible combinations of names as well as the possible combinations of a sentence with other sentences.¹⁴⁸ Without having the general form of sentence, we cannot have the frame for the possibility. To reach the general form of sentence we need examples of atomic sentences which require names and which should correspond with objects. The general form of reality is transferred by the form of objects, referred to by names. If we do not have examples of atomic sentences which require examples of names of objects, how can we formulate a general principle about them? Wittgenstein leads himself to state that:

¹⁴⁸ It would be provocative to affirm that there is a set of sentences (a special kind of sentences) that can say everything that could be said. Even if it were possible for all sentences of a language to be determined, we could not affirm that the specific language could not expand its limits to produce new sentences that would refer to facts in a different way or to new facts (see *PI* I:§23). Therefore, the *Tractatus* does not exclude the possibility in which there could be new worlds which we could describe. Thus, we cannot speak about the general description of a sentence *a priori*.

If I cannot say *a priori* what elementary sentences there are, then the attempt to do so must lead to obvious nonsense. (*TLP* 5.5571)

What would be an *a posteriori* analysis by contrast to an *a priori* analysis would be the result of an investigated project.¹⁴⁹ There is no conceivable investigation since there is nothing determined which we could use to start an investigation because of the unspecificity of the identity of objects. The idea whether objects include properties and relations remains extremely unspecified. As a result of this, Wittgenstein conceives objects by the contrasting viewpoints of Realism and Nominalism in a deliberate (rather strategic) way. He makes the reading of objects in the *Tractatus* a neutral reading since he does not clarify in a sense whether Tractarian objects include both particulars and universals or only particulars. This question can also be posed (I have already discussed it in Chapter Two) as follows: whether predicates are elements of atomic sentences in the same way as names. The notion ‘predicate’, as I have already explained, can be distinguished in predicates with the minimal sense and predicates with the rich sense but this distinction is not enough to lead us to understand what a predicate is in the way that Wittgenstein means it in the *Tractatus*. As a result, the ontological frame of the *Tractatus* remains unclarified. Therefore, the nature of objects remains unspecific since we cannot know the results of analysis. Thus, the critical difficulty is not only that something remains undetermined, but also that there is no way for it to be clarified. As a result of this, not only we cannot have an *a priori* analysis but we cannot also have an *a posteriori* analysis. Therefore, in no way are we allowed to analyse an ordinary sentence by reaching its atomic sentence where we could know the constituents of that sentence would refer to things in the world. The formal line of *Tractatus* is that none of the

¹⁴⁹ Later, Wittgenstein in his work *Some Remarks on Logical Form*, among others, states: “we can only arrive at a correct analysis by, what might be called, the logical investigation of the phenomena themselves, i.e. in a certain sense *a posteriori*, and not by conjecturing about *a priori* possibilities” (*RLF* p.32).

sentences of the ordinary language is an atomic sentence. We cannot assert that we know how to analyse them.

Even if we realize that we have not reached simples we cannot conceive the idea how we could reach simples. In other words, there is no possibility of producing simple sentences to solve the specific difficulty. It is possible that this leads Wittgenstein in *Tractatus* to be unspecific with regard to the notion 'object'.¹⁵⁰ He states:

Thus the variable name 'x' is the proper sign for the pseudo-concept *object*.

Wherever the word 'object' ('thing', etc.) is correctly used, it is expressed in conceptual notation by a variable name.

For example, in the sentence, 'There are 2 objects which [...]', it is expressed by '(Ex,y) [...]

Wherever it is used in a different way, that is as a proper concept – word, nonsensical pseudo-sentences are the result. (*TLP* 4.1272)

Here, the term 'object' functions as a *linguistic device* that helps us talk about how names work.¹⁵¹ The concept of an object (an object falls under a certain formal concept) is a pseudo-concept. It is nothing but the concept of a correlate of a name – i.e. a concept of form.

3.3c *The logical syntax of language as an impossibility*

A theory of language demands, among others, a language that clarifies the positions of things in the world. These things are necessary for the logical syntax of language since logical syntax is determined by the forms of symbols (*TLP* 3.33) which have to correspond to something. That 'something' in the case of the *Tractatus* is objects. A

¹⁵⁰ In the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein asserts that there is not 'a final analysis of our forms of language, and so a *single* completely resolved form of every expression' (*PI* I:§91). Moreover, he states that 'it may look as if we were moving towards a particular state, a state of complete exactness' but as he clarifies this is not the real goal of our investigation (*PI* I:§91).

¹⁵¹ At the same time, Wittgenstein seems to consider 'object' as a kind of entity (see Ch.2 pp.110-115) which contrasts with his idea that it is a pseudo-concept.

language has to adopt a symbolism whose signs will show the forms of its symbols (*TLP* 3.326). This presupposes a system of signs, a notation. Therefore, there must be a system of signs (the simple signs are those that determine sense (*TLP* 3.23)) by which we can create symbols.¹⁵² According to the *Tractatus*, the reason that permits us the ability to create symbols by a system of signs is because of logic. This idea is expressed in the following passage:

Clearly we have some concept of elementary sentences quite apart from their particular logical forms.
But when there is a system¹⁵³ by which we can create symbols, the system is what is important for logic and not the individual symbols.
And anyway, is it really possible that in logic I should have to deal with forms that I can invent? What I have to deal with must be that which makes it possible for me to invent them. (*TLP* 5.555)

The above remark leaves one point that needs clarification: Is it possible in logic to ‘invent’ forms?

We cannot refer to forms by using a system of signs (according to the *Tractatus*, ‘sign’ is arbitrary – the correlation of a name, which is given by a sign) with that which it names being an arbitrary convention. Particularly, Wittgenstein states in the *Notebooks*:

That arbitrary correlation of sign and thing signified which is a condition of the possibility of the sentences, and which I found lacking in the completely general sentences, occurs there by means of the generality notation, just as in the elementary sentence it occurs by means of names. (*NB* p.25, 3.11.14)

Moreover, in the *Tractatus* is stated:

¹⁵² In no case does Wittgenstein believe that a new language has to be created since he acknowledges the existence of a language (*TLP* 5.5563) which essentially someone does not happen to speak but which we can speak in any language because of languages’ common capacity to represent or picture states of affairs. Moreover, this point is clarified better later. Particularly, Wittgenstein states: “It is wrong to say that in philosophy we consider an ideal language as opposed to our ordinary one. For this makes it appear as though with thought we could improve on ordinary language. But ordinary language is all right. Whenever we make up ‘ideal languages’ it is not in order to replace our ordinary language by them; but just to remove some trouble caused in someone’s mind by thinking that he has got hold of the exact use of a common work” (*BB* p.28). See also *BB* p.52.

¹⁵³ Wittgenstein here by referring to a system he does not mean a system of symbols but a system of signs. The notions ‘symbols’ and ‘signs’ have been explained in Chapter Two (see p.84 footnote 107).

If we turn a constituent of a sentence into a variable, there is a class of sentences all of which are values of the resulting variable sentence. In general, this class too will be dependent on the meaning that our arbitrary conventions have given to parts of the original sentence. But if all the signs in it that have arbitrarily determined meanings are turned into variables, we shall still get a class of this kind. This one, however, is not dependent on any convention, but solely on the nature of the sentence. It corresponds to a logical form —a logical prototype. (*TLP* 3.315)

Our use of the same sign to signify two different objects can never indicate a common characteristic of the two, if we use it with two different *modes of signification*. For the sign, of course, is arbitrary. So we could choose two different signs instead, and then what would be left in common on the signifying side? (*TLP* 3.322)¹⁵⁴

This can become clearer by focussing on four remarks which are mentioned before remark *TLP* 5.555:

We now have to answer a priori the question about all the possible forms of elementary sentences.

Elementary sentences consist of names. Since, however, we are unable to give the number of names with different meanings, we are also unable to give the composition of elementary sentences. (*TLP* 5.55)

It would be completely arbitrary to give any specific form. (*TLP* 5.554)

It is supposed to be possible to answer a priori the question whether I can get into a position in which I need the sign for a 27-termed relation in order to signify something. (*TLP* 5.5541)

But is it really legitimate even to ask such a question?

Can we set up a form of sign without knowing whether anything can correspond to it?

Does it make sense to ask what there must *be* in order that something can be the case? (*TLP* 5.5542)¹⁵⁵

Since we cannot refer to a form *a priori* by using a system of signs we cannot refer to forms of atomic sentences (to forms of symbols) *a priori* by using any system of signs. Since we cannot refer to forms of atomic sentences we cannot give any example of object *a priori* by using any system of signs. As a result of this, the logical syntax of language which is determined by the forms of symbols remains unclarified by examples

¹⁵⁴ Later he refers to the ‘ostensive teaching of words’ (*PI* I:§6).

¹⁵⁵ See also *TLP* 5.5571.

since the forms of symbols correspond to unclarified things – objects. We cannot construct a syntax in accordance with our experience of the object. However, this does not forbid Wittgenstein from stressing the necessity of objects.

3.3d The nature of language as an impossibility

By knowing what objects are (the term ‘know’ will be explained later), we could answer the fundamental question of the philosophy of language, namely, what the nature of language is.¹⁵⁶ This would mean, among others, that we would know what the constituents of language are and to which elements of the world they correspond. Without knowing what objects are, we cannot know their names and the relation between names and objects remains unclarified. If we do not know the ultimate constituents of language, that is to say, if we do not know which objects names refer to, we do not know what the atomic sentences mean. For the formation of an elementary (atomic) sentence, names are required which correspond with objects (*TLP* 3.203). Without knowing what objects are, we cannot formulate their correlations with constituents of language (names). In other words, the elements of an atomic sentence (names) and the objects in reality are not identified. This issue is brought up again in the *Philosophical Investigations* where Wittgenstein seems to pretend that a name is a syntactic role which is arbitrarily assigned to an object (*PI* I:§122, §372 and §508). Moreover, Wittgenstein claims:

The meanings [objects] of primitive signs can be explained by means of elucidations. Elucidations are sentences that contain the primitive signs.

¹⁵⁶ His interest in this issue appears earlier in *Notebooks*, in which he claims: “Don’t get involved in partial problems, but always take flight to where there is a free view over the whole *single* great problem, even if this view is still not a clear one” (*NB* p.23, 1.11.14). Wittgenstein by referring to a ‘*single* great problem’ means what he will state some pages later on, specifically: ‘My whole task consists in explaining the nature of the sentence’ (*NB* p.39, 22.1.15). Additionally, the fact that one of the possible titles of the *Tractatus* was ‘Der Satz’ (The sentence) confirms exactly what the main issue of this work is. Bartley got this information from a colleague of Wittgenstein’s who saw a copy of his manuscript when he was a school teacher (Bartley 1985 p.45).

So they can only be understood if the meanings of those signs are already known. (*TLP* 3.263)

Here, 'elucidations' are presented as sentences that can be understood; otherwise, it would be impossible to define the identity of names (primitive signs) or objects. How can the meanings of primitive signs be explained through elucidations since elucidations themselves also contain primitive signs? Here, Wittgenstein replies to this question by saying that the meanings of signs of elucidations must be known but the explanation he gives does not take us far. This inhibits us from understanding the functions of language. What I have to say here is that the *Tractatus* does not permit such kinds of sentences (elucidations) that can be understood. According to the *Tractatus*, such sentences would be called nonsense. Therefore, that which is stated by the above quotation is that if we have primitive signs, we can use them in the presence of the objects we recognize. Essentially, hidden behind this quotation is the Augustine theory which Wittgenstein mentions in the *Philosophical Investigations*. It is about a theory which tries to explain how we get to know language without knowing a definition of the words we use (*PI* I:§1). Through remark *TLP* 3.263, there seems to be a presupposed conception about how names function and how they are understood. This seems to collapse since in principle it is impossible to execute the logical analysis of sentences. Analysis is not possible but it is infinitely complex, even if there are points in the *Tractatus* which pretend that an analysis is possible. As a result of this, the form of an atomic sentence and its constituents, names, are not clarified. That is to say, what is not clarified is the possible ways in which the names could be combined in an atomic sentence or how an atomic sentence could combine with another sentence or other atomic sentences. What needs to be clarified at this point is what the *Tractatus* means by the phrase 'I know an object'. The crucial *assumption* of the *Tractatus* concerning our knowledge about objects is the following:

If I know an object I also know all its possible occurrences in states of affairs.

(Every one of these possibilities must be part of the nature of the object.)

A new possibility cannot be discovered later. (*TLP* 2.0123)

This assumption (the first sentence of the above passage) constitutes a significant claim. I have to emphasise that it does not claim that we know or that we could know what objects are. Moreover, it does not reject the possibility of knowing or not knowing what objects are. It is simply an assumption or claim which says what it says. In particular, Wittgenstein explains to Ogden that he prefers the verb ‘know’ (*kennen*) which expresses a kind of limited knowledge (I know it without necessarily knowing anything about it) rather than the verb ‘I am acquainted with’ which expresses a kind of a broader knowledge.¹⁵⁷ An explanation of the verb ‘know’ in the above passage is provided by the following sentence:

In order to know an object, I must know not its external but all its internal qualities. (*TLP* 2.01231)¹⁵⁸

It seems that the only way to define the identity of objects is through their internal properties. However, the difficulty in defining the identity of objects in a sense resides in the fact that it is possible for two different objects to have the same internal properties. Particularly, Wittgenstein states:

If two objects have the same logical form, the only distinction between them, apart from their external properties, is that they are different. (*TLP* 2.0233)

Therefore, even if it is possible for two different objects to have the same internal properties, there is no criterion for the distinction of two objects. Therefore, we have no criterion to distinguish two objects that have the same internal properties. As a

¹⁵⁷ See *LO* p.59.

¹⁵⁸ Here, Pears and McGuinness translate the German term ‘internen Eigenschaften’ as ‘internal properties’ while Ogden as ‘internal qualities’.

consequence, the identity of objects remains unclarified without meaning that objects do not have an identity.¹⁵⁹

The *Tractatus* does not offer a theory of language which is based on the idea of analysis and which leads to clear sentences because of the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ something that makes the *Tractatus* itself being unfalsifiable. Thus, the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ does not allow any statement about the form of anything. Also, the clarification of correlations between elements of language (names) and elements of reality (objects) is not allowed and as a result of this it is unclear how language could be meaningful. The impossibility of atomic sentences results in the impossibility of the general form of language and reality. Therefore, the logical syntax of language, that is, the forms of symbols which would correspond to objects, is not clarified and consequently, the nature of language also remains unclear.

In the next Chapter is given a possible resolution of the difficulty of the Tractarian paradox which is supported by the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ encouraging the thought of a movement from the idea of a ‘theory’ towards mysticism.

¹⁵⁹ The indeterminacy of the identity of the notion ‘object’ also leads us to an uncertainty over whether objects are independent of language. According to a realistic interpretation, objects must stand independently of language by determining the logical form of the corresponding names (see D. Pears (1997a) Vol.I, pp.88-114, P.M.S. Hacker (1975a) pp.58-81 and N. Malcolm (1988) pp.20-35). On the other hand, H. Ishiguro, B. McGuinness and P. Winch by disagreeing with realists claim that the reference of a name is given only by its logico-syntactical role in a sentence and that it does not need any external language means (for example pointing) for the determination of reference (see H. Ishiguro (1969), B. McGuinness (1981) pp.60-73 and P. Winch (1987) pp.3-17).

CHAPTER 4

A POSSIBLE RESOLUTION OF THE DIFFICULTY OF THE TRACTARIAN PARADOX – FROM ‘THEORY’ TOWARDS MYSTICISM

4. *Introduction*

Having in mind that beyond the fact that the *Tractatus* does not offer a theory but an illusion of a theory, the whole work leads itself to a dead-end – a paradox. Therefore, it is plausible for someone to wonder whether the *Tractatus* has some value and if yes, then what this value is or, if not, then what it serves for. On a first level, perhaps one would expect that the work has value if it communicates truths. Thus, this is what it will look for. However, how is it possible for a project which is constituted by ‘nonsense’ to communicate truths? In the case in which the *Tractatus* communicates truths, we have to say what these truths are. On the other hand, if it does not communicate truths, then our interpretation must justify why the *Tractatus* was written at all, or what exactly the reader can achieve through its reading. After I will explain the paradox I will present and analyse the three positions concerning this issue: (a) the ‘traditional view’, (b) the ‘resolute reading view’ and (c) my view (a view beyond the ‘traditional’ and ‘resolute reading’ views) which differentiates from the previous two and which gives a possible resolution of the difficulty of the paradox. This Chapter will assert that the resolution of the difficulty of the paradox has to do with a moving away from ‘theory’ towards mysticism which mainly has to do with Schopenhauerian and Kantian influences. Thus, an account is given on the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ which contributes to the sense of mysticism.

4.1 *The Tractatus' paradox*

It seems that Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* not only does not offer a theory of language as we have already seen in the previous chapter but he is also not interested in doing that. If he was interested in formulating a theory beyond what has already been said he would not have created the paradox in the *Tractatus*.

What is the paradox in the Tractatus?

Wittgenstein among others states:

The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. sentences 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 sentences. Although it would not be satisfying to the other person – he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy – *this* method would be the only strictly correct one. (*TLP* 6.53)

The above passage refers to the confusion concerning the use of words. This does not happen because people are unfamiliar with words but because of a misunderstanding of the logic of our language. With this in mind, Wittgenstein formulates his view about the correct method of philosophy¹⁶⁰ and, in turn, this leads him to admit that all the sentences of the *Tractatus* itself, including the Preface (*LO* p.55), are nonsense (without meaning that the statement that the *Tractatus* is nonsense is true).¹⁶¹ He explains this in the following way:

My sentences 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. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)

¹⁶⁰ Wittgenstein equates philosophy with metaphysics.

¹⁶¹ Both Pears and McGuinness as well as Ogden translate the German term 'Unsinn' as 'nonsense' (*TLP* 5.5351, 5.5422 and 5.5571) while the German term 'unsinnig' is translated by Pears and McGuinness as 'nonsensical' and by Ogden as 'senseless' (*TLP* 4.003, 4.124, 4.1274, 5.473, 5.5351, 6.51 and 6.54).

He must transcend these sentences, and then he will see the world aright.
(*TLP* 6.54)

Before I explain the paradox which is constituted to a large degree by the above comments *TLP* 6.53 and 6.54, it is very important to explain how the notion ‘nonsense’ (that is not a Bild) is introduced in the *Tractatus* and how it functions.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein gives us an odd example of nonsense: ‘Socrates is identical’ (*TLP* 5.473 and 5.4733).¹⁶² However, ‘identical’ as an adjective does not have any meaning and it cannot be characterized as a property. Therefore, the sentence ‘Socrates is identical’ does not have sense since, according to the *Tractatus*, for a sentence to have sense all its signs (names) must have meaning (*TLP* 4.02 – 4.021 and 6.53).¹⁶³ It is possible that Wittgenstein chooses this example because it offers him the philosophical character he wants to project. It seems that sentence ‘Socrates is identical’ is to mean something – to have the form of a meaningful sentence. What is problematic is that we do not know where to assign the meaning of the adjective (identical). In this specific example, we have an assigned form (the adjectival form) which does not have any meaning. So, the failure of a specific combination of signs to have sense is due to the failure to correlate at least one sign with its symbol (*TLP* 5.4733). A symbol is a sign with form. So, Wittgenstein states that we cannot represent something illogical in thought or in language (*TLP* 5.4731). This could be the case if we could refer to non-logical symbols. Particularly, he asserts:

¹⁶² In the *NB*, the following sentence is given as an example of nonsense: ‘Socrates is Plato’ (*NB* p.2, 22.8.14).

¹⁶³ According to Conant: “To recognize a *Satz* as nonsensical [Unsinn] is to be unable to recognize the symbol in the sign” (Conant 2005 p.194). He defines the term ‘sign’ as an ‘orthographic unit’ (for example, a written sign) and the term ‘symbol’ as a ‘logical unit’ (for example, proper names or any other logical category) (Ibid., p.190). In other words, we can say that nonsense is called sentences that cannot have truth-conditions: that is to say, they do not have the possibility to be true or false. Therefore, nonsense cannot be verified or falsified empirically.

Thought could never be of anything illogical, since if it were, we should have to think illogically'. (*TLP* 3.03)¹⁶⁴

As a result of this, Wittgenstein states:

Most of the sentences and questions to be found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical. Consequently we cannot give any answer to questions of this kind, but can only point out that they are nonsensical. Most of the sentences 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)

The above passage claims that most sentences of philosophical works do not have sense because people fail to understand the logic of language. This idea is further clarified in sentence 5.4733 with the claim that we set some signs in such a way that we think that this agrees with the sense that is related to these signs. However, although this does not finally happen, this is not because the configuration of signs is ungrammatical: rather, it is because we have failed to give the proper meaning to some signs.¹⁶⁵ This idea is expressed in a clear way in the *TLP* 3.323:

In everyday language it very frequently happens that the same word has different modes of signification-and so belongs to different symbols-or that two words that have different modes of signification are employed in sentences in what is superficially the same way.

Thus the word 'is' figures as the copula, as a sign for identity, and as an expression for existence; 'exist' figures as an intransitive verb like 'go', and 'identical' as an adjective; we speak of *something*, but also of *something's* happening.

(In the sentences, 'Green is green'-where the first word is the proper name of a person and the last an adjective-these words do not merely have different meanings: they are *different symbols*.).

¹⁶⁴ About nonsense, see Colin Johnston, Symbols in Wittgenstein's Tractatus, pp.367-394.

¹⁶⁵ Wittgenstein's tendency to clarify the notion 'nonsense' occurs in the *Philosophical Investigations* as follows: "To say 'This combination of words makes no sense' excludes it from the sphere of language and thereby bounds the domain of language" (*PI* I:§499). Moreover, he states: "When a sentence is called senseless, it is not as it were its sense that is senseless. Rather a combination of words is being excluded from the language, withdrawn from circulation" (*PI* I:§500).

Here it is stated that in the ordinary language the sign 'is' is used (a) as the copula (for example: Socrates *is* wise), (b) as a sign for identity (for example: $2+2$ *is* 4) and (c) as an expression of existence (for example: Socrates *is* alive). Thus, the same sign 'is' functions in three different sentences differently. Moreover, the same sign (green) belongs to different symbols ('the proper name of a person' and an adjective of it) by creating confusion. These two symbols do not have the same form. Therefore, the specific sign 'green', while it occurs twice in the same sentence, corresponds to two different symbols – two symbols with a different form. This leads Wittgenstein to state that:

In order to avoid such errors¹⁶⁶ we must make use of a sign-language that excludes them by not using the same sign for different symbols and by not using in a superficially similar way signs that have different modes of signification: that is to say, a sign-language that is governed by logical grammar-by logical syntax [...]. (*TLP* 3.325)

By bearing the notion 'nonsense' in mind, if we accept Wittgenstein's affirmation that the *Tractatus* as a whole is nonsense, then we are immediately led to a paradox. This can be demonstrated through seven related tensions: (a) while Wittgenstein claims that all of his sentences function as elucidations ('Erläuterungen'), at the same time he claims that all of them (he does not say some of them) are nonsense ('Unsinn') (*TLP* 6.54). The question that arises therefore is: how is it possible for nonsense to serve as an elucidation? (b) How can we understand sentence 6.54 as communicating a truth when, at the same time, it has been classified as nonsense by Wittgenstein's own reasoning? Wittgenstein could not exclude sentence 6.54 by saying that it has sense because if he did, he would violate sentence 6.53 which claims that anybody who attempted to produce a philosophical sentence would fail to give meaning to a specific sign or to specific signs; (c) sentence 6.53 itself, through its affirmation, contradicts itself since it

¹⁶⁶ Here, Wittgenstein means philosophical errors.

demands that we consider that all its signs have meaning, and the sentence itself has sense; (d) how can nonsense refer to the correct method of philosophy (see *TLP* 6.53) and claim that we cannot say anything about philosophy except through sentences of natural science,¹⁶⁷ something which has nothing to do with philosophy? “The totality of true sentences is the whole of natural science (or the whole corpus of the natural sciences)” (*TLP* 4.11). Thus, philosophy is not one of the natural sciences (*TLP* 4.111) and its sentences are nonsense (*TLP* 6.53). Yet, this sentence can only be produced by what is sayable within philosophy. We cannot say that philosophy is nonsense without doing philosophy. We cannot speak about the necessary truths of the world without doing philosophy; (e) according to Wittgenstein, we cannot produce philosophical sentences (*TLP* 6.53). Moreover, he states that “what we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence” (*TLP* 7). In a sense, Wittgenstein is consistent with it since by the finish of the *Tractatus*, for ten years he writes nothing philosophical. Moreover, he then writes things but he does not publish any of them. Then, why does he attempt to speak about philosophy and at the same time create an account of language by formulating the so-called Bild theory of sentences in the *Tractatus*? This question is expressed by Rudolf Carnap as follows:

In the first place he seems to me to be inconsistent in what he does. He tells us that one cannot state philosophical sentences [propositions] and that whereof one cannot speak, one must be silent; and then instead of keeping silent, he writes a whole philosophical book. (Carnap 1935 p.37)

(f) How is it possible to reject the existence of philosophical sentences (*TLP* 6.53) and at the same time allow the existence of philosophical questions? Particularly, he states:

When the answer cannot be put into words, neither can the question be put into words.
The *riddle* does not exist.

¹⁶⁷ The sentences of natural sciences are empirical statements about the world. These statements do not need to be verified because they are verified by experience (the only truths are empirical).

If a question can be framed at all, it is also *possible* to answer it. (*TLP* 6.5)

Here, Wittgenstein does not say that since a question cannot be framed at all, it is impossible to answer it, but through the last sentence of the remark 6.5 (that is an assumption), he implies the possibility of the existence of philosophical questions (see also 6.4321, 6.51, 6.52 and 6.521);¹⁶⁸ (g) Since the point of view of the book is ethical (*BLF* 1971 pp.94-95) and ethics cannot be put in words (*TLP* 6.42 and 6.421), how does the *Tractatus* become legitimate in the space of meaning?

In his effort to speak about the nature of language, Wittgenstein formulates the so-called Bild theory of sentences with the key term 'object'. He formulates this 'theory' but then goes on to undermine it by asserting that all of his sentences are nonsense, thereby creating a *paradox* at the heart of his project. The paradox reaches its peak through the final remarks of the *Tractatus*, particularly in sentences 6.53, 6.54 and 7 which use the rest of the remarks as a basis. In his effort to speak about what he realized, he violates previous sentences, although he claims that for those we cannot speak of, we should not speak of, but be silent about (*TLP* 7) (he refers to a specific kind of silence without giving a lot of explanations for this, something that I will explain below). If Wittgenstein wanted to avoid the paradox, he could have chosen one of the two following lines: (a) he could have left his book without providing any explanation for his remarkable conclusion, thereby avoiding the last remarks, or (b) he could have created a philosophical book that would look like the second part of the *Tractatus* (the ineffable part), as explained to Ludwig von Ficker (*BLF* 1971 pp.94-95), that is to say, a book with empty pages. However, perhaps it would be difficult for the reader to understand in

¹⁶⁸ Later, he refers to the astonishment for the existence of the world, something that is not expressible through a question. Particularly, he states: "Think, for example, of the astonishment that anything exists. This astonishment cannot be expressed in the form of a question, and there is also no answer to it" (*WVC* p.68).

the first case the reason why the *Tractatus* would have this specific ending (a rather sudden ending) and in the second case, a number of empty pages. One could therefore say that since all the sentences of the *Tractatus*, as Wittgenstein tells us, are nonsense, it is ultimately futile to discuss the so-called Bild theory of sentences as well as the role of the notion of ‘object’ in this ‘theory’. But in no case should we lead ourselves to the conclusion that since the *Tractatus* asserts its nonsense (creating the paradox) this means that the part of the *Tractatus* which pretends a theory is worthless. Moreover, it does not mean that the unspecificity of the notion of ‘object’ which leads us to the conclusion that no theory is formulated in the *Tractatus* is also worthless. That which should be clarified here is what the value is of those I have asserted are not worthless. The whole discussion will be based on the crucial question whether the paradoxical *Tractatus* communicates truths. It is natural on a first level for someone to think that a work has value once it communicates truths. For this reason I will present and analyse three positions concerning this issue: (a) the ‘traditional view’, (b) the ‘resolute reading view’ and (c) my view which gives a possible resolution of the difficulty of the paradox.

4.2 Does the *Tractatus* communicate truths?

4.2a The traditional view

The traditional view¹⁶⁹ contends that Wittgenstein leaves the implication that there are two kinds of nonsense: (a) sentences that do not have sense and are clear nonsense – gibberish (the German term is ‘Unsinn’ that is translated as ‘nonsense’) and (b) sentences that lack sense (the German term is ‘sinnlos’ that is translated as ‘senseless’ that is to say without sense) but are useful. This second kind of nonsense is related to Wittgenstein’s distinction between ‘saying’ and ‘showing’. Senseless sentences are

¹⁶⁹ The traditional view is supported by Anscombe (see *An Introduction to Wittgenstein’s Tractatus* 1996) and Hacker (1975a).

neither pseudo-truths nor meaningless but they are sentences that transcend language – philosophically illuminating nonsense. Of course, these sentences do not have sense; that is to say, they cannot have truth-conditions as meaningful sentences but they can show something profound. They cannot be spoken of; rather, they can only show themselves. This is therefore a question of truths of a specific kind.¹⁷⁰ So, according to the traditional view, even if all of the *Tractatus* is nonsense, it still manages to communicate some truths – ineffable (inexpressible) truths that show the limits of saying as well as the limits of the world. In other words, expression of these ineffable truths is a way in which language can be used to express the unsayable.

However, is it possible for a truth to be ineffable?

Wittgenstein does not say anything about how this can happen. In light of this, the traditional view must be incorrect since there are no unsayable truths. The idea of a truth presupposes something we can think. If we can think something, then we can speak about it. Particularly, Wittgenstein states: “We cannot think what we cannot think; so what we cannot think we cannot say either” (*TLP* 5.61). So, something that we can think cannot be ineffable. In a sense, this can also be explained through the so-called Bild theory of sentences which claims that the only sentences that are true or false are sentences that have sense (in other words, they say something). We can therefore assert that the idea that there are some sentences which are nonsense but which would say something true if they could be said is not applicable. Characteristically, Ramsey states:

¹⁷⁰ The distinction between the two attitudes to nonsense is also made by Conant who represents the therapeutic reading view in his article ‘Elucidation and Nonsense in Frege and early Wittgenstein’ by using the following kinds of nonsense: (a) the ‘substantial conception’ (which the traditional view also supports) distinguishes between ‘mere nonsense’ that is ‘unintelligible’ and expresses no thought (gibberish) and ‘substantial nonsense’, which is composed of ‘intelligible’ constituents (it violates logical syntax) and (b) the ‘austere conception’ which claims that there is only one kind of nonsense, or mere nonsense (Conant 2005 p.176).

[W]hat we can't say we can't say, and we can't whistle it either.
(Ramsey 1994 p.146)

Therefore, we cannot assert that there is an ineffable correspondence between the elements of language (names) and elements of the world (objects). So, we cannot assert that atomic facts stand for atomic sentences in an ineffable way. Thus, we cannot affirm that there is an ineffable common logical form between an ineffable atomic sentence and an atomic fact. In other words, there is no ineffable identification between possible ways in which elements of an ineffable atomic sentence could be arranged (names) with the possible ways in which elements of an atomic fact could be arranged (objects). As a result of this, there are no ineffable truths. Thus, no silence can represent its form. Therefore, a silence cannot say anything about itself or about the form of the world. The form of silence (if we can say it) cannot be said.

4.2b The 'resolute reading' view¹⁷¹

A second position which maintains the resolution of the difficulty of the paradox by answering the crucial question whether the *Tractatus* communicates truths is 'the resolute reading' view put forward by Diamond, Conant, Ricketts, Goldfarb and Kremer (these are some of the supporters of this view).¹⁷² According to this view, a part of the *Tractatus* (the 'frame' – the Preface and the last remarks that are only 'motivated' by nonsense) has sense and the rest (the main body) is nonsense¹⁷³ and does not

¹⁷¹ The representatives of the 'traditional view' call the representatives of 'resolute reading' as 'New American Wittgensteinians' by characterising their interpretation as 'post-modern'. The representatives of 'resolute reading' characterise the interpretation of the 'traditional view' as the 'standard reading' or 'orthodox interpretation'.

¹⁷² See C. Diamond (1988), J. Conant (1991 and 2002), T. Ricketts (1996), W. Goldfarb (1997) and M. Kremer (2001).

¹⁷³ Cora Diamond by discussing on the notion 'nonsense' in her work *The realistic Spirit* uses the Annette Baier's categorisation of nonsense which is referred in the article on 'Nonsense' in the Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. This view refers to six sorts of nonsense: (a) sentences that are obviously false, (b) unclear sentences, (c) sentences involving category errors are nonsense of another sort, (d) sentences that lack clear syntactic structure, (e) sentences in which we replace one or more words by nonsense words and (f) nonsense words in sentences without discernible syntax (gibberish) (Diamond 1991 pp.95-96).

communicate any truths. As a result of this, it is claimed that there are no unsayable truths.¹⁷⁴ Of course, nowhere in the *Tractatus* does Wittgenstein refer to a distinction between mere and illuminating nonsense. Therefore, concerning the specific point, the ‘resolute reading’ is more consistent than the ‘traditional view’. The *Tractatus* refers to that which can be said and to that which cannot be said. In no point is there a distinction made about that which cannot be said. However, the main weakness of the ‘resolute reading’ view is that it distances itself from the Tractarian spirit which affirms that *all* sentences of the *Tractatus*, including the Preface, are nonsense (TLP 6.54). In one of Wittgenstein’s letters to Ogden (23.6.1922), Wittgenstein writes:

If I give to Messr[s]. Kegan Paul all publication rights then they ought to print my preface in German too!!! *For the preface is part of the book.* (LO p.55)

So, it would be a mistake to assume that the *Tractatus* needs us to correct it. Therefore, we have to keep to the Tractarian spirit and this means that we have to accept that the *Tractatus* cancels a meta-language of ‘saying’. As I will affirm below, the *Tractatus* encourages a meta-language of ‘showing’ in a special way.

4.3 Is the *Tractatus* true, nonsense or something else?

The failure of the ‘traditional view’ and the ‘resolute reading view’ to give a possible solution to the difficulty of the paradox¹⁷⁵ is natural in leading us to re-think whether the *Tractatus* is true, nonsense or something else. On the one hand, if we conceive the *Tractatus* to be true, then we accept the idea that the *Tractatus* is nonsense as it itself

¹⁷⁴ See Cora Diamond’s ‘Ethics, Imagination and the method of Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*’ and James Conant’s ‘Elucidation and nonsense on Frege and early Wittgenstein’. These articles are found in *The New Wittgenstein*, 2005.

¹⁷⁵ The ‘traditional view’ and the ‘resolute reading view’ work only if we accept TLP 6.53 not to be nonsense. But such an acceptance is extremely arbitrary and would distance us from the Tractarian spirit. Therefore, the above therapies should not constitute one of our choices for the solution of the difficulty of the Tractarian paradox.

claims to be, something that arises from sentences 6.53 and 6.54. This is because the *Tractatus* leaves us the sense that it attempts to produce philosophical sentences and according to Wittgenstein, nothing can be said in philosophy except sentences of natural science which are not philosophical; here I have to say that it would be somehow an exaggeration to claim that the only facts are the facts of natural science. According to the *Tractatus*, any effort to create a philosophical sentence (a philosophical Bild) will be unsuccessful¹⁷⁶ because we will have failed to give meaning to one or more specific signs (*TLP* 6.53). By constructing sentences, it is possible to create an illusion that these sentences are philosophical. In other words, to use the Tractarian terminology, we would say that the words of our sentences function as names and correspond to objects of a possible world, which is, of course, not the case. However, the philosopher is someone who has to clarify to his interlocutor that all his sentences are nothing else but nonsense. On the other hand, if we conceive of the *Tractatus* to be nonsense, as it itself claims, then we accept the idea that the *Tractatus* cannot be true because nonsense cannot affirm that it is indeed nonsense in a meaningful way as sentence 6.54 attempts to do. Nonsense can speak neither nonsense nor sense and, therefore, the *Tractatus* can neither be true nor nonsense. So, most of the recent Tractarian commentators focus on the question of whether the *Tractatus* is nonsense or not and not whether the *Tractatus* or the so-called Bild theory of sentences is correct or incorrect. In a sense, there is a justification for this since if we accept that the *Tractatus* is nonsense in what sense does the *Tractatus* make mistakes? However, it is natural that the two above suppositions push us to wonder why Wittgenstein in his later writings refers to the grave mistakes of the *Tractatus* since it can neither be true because if we accept that it is true then it is

¹⁷⁶ In the *Notes on Logic* he writes: "Philosophy gives no pictures of reality. Philosophy can neither confirm nor confute scientific investigation" (*NL* p.106). This idea leads Wittgenstein to say that "philosophy does not result in 'philosophical sentences', but rather in the clarification of sentences" (*TLP* 4.112).

nonsense; but it can neither be false because of its nonsense which it asserts. Particularly, Wittgenstein offers the following reflections in the Preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*:

Four years ago I had occasion to re-read my first book (the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*) and to explain its ideas to someone. It suddenly seemed to me that I should publish those old thoughts and the new ones together: that the latter could be seen in the right light only by contrast with and against the background of my old way of thinking. For since beginning to occupy myself with philosophy again, sixteen years ago, I have been forced to recognize grave mistakes in what I wrote in that first book. (*PI* in the Preface)

Through these words, it seems clear that Wittgenstein himself acknowledges that the *Tractatus* includes grave mistakes. At the same time, he does not conceive his earlier work as having no value, stating that his later thoughts can be understood only by taking into consideration his previous way of thinking. However, the specific problems of the *Tractatus* are not mentioned in the Preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*.¹⁷⁷ Nevertheless, in the main body of the *Philosophical Investigations*, as well as in his later work as a whole, there are a number of relevant references and implications concerning a set of problems and weaknesses of the *Tractatus*. Particularly, he acknowledges that by formulating the remark that ‘a sentence is a Bild of reality’ (*TLP* 4.01) had ignored the exceptions and counter examples.¹⁷⁸ Particularly, he states:

A *Bild* held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably. (*PI* I:§115)

It was a total mistake; I was quite wrong to think a sentence was like a picture [...] Yes, yes, there is a very clear case in which a sentence is very much like a picture; I was wrong to think that *all* sentences were like this. (*MS* 220, 92)

In the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, he asserts characteristically:

¹⁷⁷ It is implied that *Philosophical Investigations* will provide interpretations of some issues on which the *Tractatus* does not shed light.

¹⁷⁸ This is something that he tries to avoid doing in *PI* I: §23.

The basic evil of Russell's logic, as also of mine in the *Tractatus*, is that what a sentence is is illustrated by a few commonplace examples, and then pre-supposed as understood in full generality. (*RPP* Vol.I §38)

Anscombe, among others states:

Wittgenstein used to say that the *Tractatus* was not *all* wrong: it was not like a bag of junk professing to be a clock, but like a clock that did not tell you the right time. (Anscombe 1996 p.78)

The above quotation leaves the implication that Wittgenstein believed that in the *Tractatus* there is something wrong. But, if things are like that why the overstatement 6.54 affirms that all sentences of the *Tractatus* are nonsense?

Moreover, later Wittgenstein will acknowledge that the logical analysis does not lead to atomic sentences. Particularly, in the *Philosophical Grammar*, he states:

The idea of constructing elementary sentences (as e.g. Carnap has tried to do) rests on a false notion of logical analysis. It is not the task of that analysis to discover a theory of elementary sentences, like discovering principles of mechanics.

My notion in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was wrong: 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). (*PG* p.210)

Formerly, I myself spoke of a 'complete analysis', and I used to believe that philosophy had to give a definitive dissection of sentences so as to set out clearly all their connections and remove all possibilities of misunderstanding.

I spoke as if there was a calculus in which such a dissection would be possible. I vaguely had in mind something like the definition that Russell had given for the definite article, and I used to think that in a similar way one would be able to use visual impressions etc. to define the concept say of a sphere, and thus exhibit once for all the connections between the concepts and lay bare the source of all misunderstandings, etc. At the root of all this there was a false and idealized picture of the use of language. (*PG* p.211)

Through the above quotation Wittgenstein admits that it is a mistake to consider that through a logical analysis we can lead ourselves to a theory of atomic sentences. This is because: (a) the idea that the constituents of a sentence are hidden in a sentence is unclear (this is a consequence of the darkness of the notion ‘object’); and (b) it is not obvious that through the logical analysis, the hidden should become apparent (in *PI* I: §60 and §88, he asserts that the sense of a sentence does not necessarily become clearer through analysis). Moreover, he acknowledges that he did not have a clear thought in his mind for the notion of ‘logical analysis’, ‘something like the definition that Russell had given for the definite article’, as well as having a false idea of the use of language.

Furthermore, the idea that is expressed in the *Tractatus* that there is a common logical form between language and world (*TLP* 2.18) is cancelled by Wittgenstein in the *Philosophical Grammar*, since he acknowledges that the idea of the agreement of the form was an error (*PG* p.212).¹⁷⁹

It seems that Wittgenstein, in the Preface of *Philosophical Investigations* was surrounded by an extractive sense of the Tractarian spirit, distanced himself from a mystical mood which he intensely had when writing the *Tractatus*. This seems to lead him to think the echo of the ghost of a supposed theory of language whose pieces he never managed to put together (this of course did not concern him) but this will constitute the point of reference to write the *Philosophical Investigations*. In one of his

¹⁷⁹ Even if we examine in isolation that part which on a first look seems to present a theory, the part which refers to the relations between language and the world (that is, ignoring the possibility that a theory applies to itself), no theory can be given since beyond the fact that there is a deep unspecificity with regard to the notion ‘object’, some of the assertions of the *Tractatus* are wrong something which Wittgenstein himself recognizes.

letters to Ottoline Morrell in 1919, Russell points out how important the mystical was for Wittgenstein.¹⁸⁰ Characteristically, he writes:

I had felt in his book [*Tractatus*] a flavour of mysticism, but was astonished when I found that he has become a complete mystic. He reads people like Kierkegaard¹⁸¹ and Angelus Silesius,¹⁸² he seriously contemplates becoming a monk. (*LRKM* p.82)¹⁸³

Moreover, Wittgenstein's mystical mood is encouraged by the fact that the *Tractatus* does not offer a scientific theory. In the *Philosophical Investigations*, this idea is not formulated as an implication but it is expressed directly:

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. (The conception of thought as a gaseous medium.) And we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all *explanation*, and description alone must take its place. (*PI* I:§109)

Here, Wittgenstein uses the past tense ('it was true to say [...]') and 'it was not of any possible interest to us to find out'), a clue which is tempting to be perceived as reference to *Tractatus*. He acknowledges that his considerations cannot be characterized as scientific. Therefore, he acknowledges that he does not produce a scientific theory. He does not accept that philosophy must follow the method of science to give answers to questions. Carnap's words are distinctive as recorded in his writings:

His point of view and his attitude toward people and problems, even theoretical problems, were much more similar to those of a creative artist than to those of a scientist; one might almost say, similar to those of a religious prophet or a seer. (Monk 1991 p.244)

¹⁸⁰ According to Anscombe, 'mysticism' is a strange notion for Wittgenstein to employ. In ordinary language, 'mysticism' means the extraordinary and unusual experiences of a unique kind of individual, as Wittgenstein himself was. Wittgenstein takes the notion 'mystical' from Russell (but not exactly the content which Russell attributes it); Russell uses this term in a special way by referring to a wholly ordinary feeling (Anscombe 1996 pp.169-170).

¹⁸¹ Sic. Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), the Danish existentialist philosopher. Wittgenstein admired and thought of Kierkegaard as a profound thinker (Drury 1981 p.87).

¹⁸² The pseudonym of Johann Scheffler (1624-1677), a German poet best known for his religious and mystical epigrams.

¹⁸³ Letter from Russell to Ottoline Morrell, Dec.20, 1919.

This idea is also encouraged by the fact that Wittgenstein rejects the scientific way of thinking with regard to religious, moral and aesthetic issues. To pose evidence about existence or inexistence of God constitutes evidence that “[we] have fallen victim to the ‘other’ – to the idol-worship of the scientific style of thinking” (Monk 1991 p.410).

Later, Wittgenstein writes:

Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does. This tendency is the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness. (*BB* p.18)

Furthermore, remark *PI* I: §109 also implies the impossibility for the creation of any kind of theory asserting that our considerations should not be hypothetical affirmations. This means that he realizes that in all these he has formulated there is some kind of weaknesses and disadvantages. He encourages a description of things without explaining them since he seems to have intensely in mind the idea of the incompleteness of logical analysis which he develops in the *Tractatus*.¹⁸⁴

Additionally, his mystical mood which distances him from formulating a scientific theory can become understandable through the syllogism that someone who expected a scientific theory would require, among others, roughly speaking, the following to be satisfied:

¹⁸⁴ In a passage in 1930, Wittgenstein makes a distinction between his way of thinking with the scientific way of thinking. Particularly, he states: “It is all one to me whether or not the typical western scientist understands or appreciates my work, since he will not in any case understand the spirit in which I write. Our civilization is characterized by the word ‘progress’. Progress is its form rather than making progress being one of its features. Typically it contracts. It is occupied with building an ever more complicated structure. And even clarity is sought only as a means to this end, not as an end in itself. For me on the contrary clarity, perspicuity are valuable in themselves. I am not interested in constructing a building, so much as in having a perspicuous view of the foundations of possible buildings. So I am not aiming at the same target as the scientists and my way of thinking is different from theirs” (*CV* p.7).

(a) Clarified terminology: to be constituted by a set of clarified notions and statements, something which is not observed in the case of *Tractatus*.¹⁸⁵ Conversely, because of the unclarity of the notion ‘object’, the whole terminology of the *Tractatus* remains undetermined. The way in which Wittgenstein writes is not explanatory in the manner that a theory would require from itself.¹⁸⁶ Some of the *Tractatus*’ sentences are possessed by a poetic side. His unwillingness to develop arguments for his views is demonstrated clearly long ago in one of Russell’s letters to Morrell Ottoline on the 28th May 1912 where we can see a poetic mood for things:

I told him he ought not simply to *state* what he thinks true, but to give arguments for it, but he said arguments spoil its beauty, and that he would feel as if he was dirtying a flower with muddy hands [...] I told him I hadn’t the heart to say anything against that, and that he had better acquire a slave to state the arguments. I am seriously afraid that no one will see the point of anything he writes, because he won’t recommend it by arguments addressed to a different point of view. (McGuinness 2005 p.104)

Later, in 1948 he says:

Nearly all of my writings are private conversations with myself. Things that I say to myself tête-à-tête. (CV p.77)

(b) Consistency: a scientific statement should not contradict with other statements of the same scientific theory; otherwise, the specific statement would say nothing about the world. In the case of the *Tractatus*, contradictory statements are formulated which compose the Tractarian paradox, something that I have already examined.

¹⁸⁵ Later, Wittgenstein discusses the issue of the *exactness* by saying “NO *single* ideal of exactness has been laid down; we do not know what we are supposed to imagine under this head – unless you yourself lay down what is to be so called. But you will find it difficult to hit upon such a convention; at least any that satisfies you” (*PI* I:§ 88).

¹⁸⁶ What I have to clarify here is that it is possible in a sense for sentences which contain vague notions or contradict with other sentences to compose a theory, but a theory with disadvantages and weaknesses.

(c) Compelling argument: it is imposed to have the support of a convincing argument for truth. The *Tractatus* leaves the feeling that there are implied arguments which are not clearly formulated. The clarifications of these arguments seem to have to be made by the reader of the work. One of the things which I have already examined is whether the *Tractatus* manages finally to communicate truths, an issue that complicates the case of the *Tractatus* to offer a theory even more. What kind of theory is a theory if it is impossible to communicate truths?

(d) Comprehensiveness: by writing the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein does not expect its comprehensiveness but something different from that, which I will discuss further below. Specifically, he says to Ogden in one of his letters on the 5th May 1922 before the *Tractatus* is printed:

Rather than print the *Ergänzungen* to make the book fatter leave a dozen white sheets for the reader to swear into when he has purchased the book and can't understand it. (*LO* p.46)

Therefore, from what he says to Ogden, I can affirm on a first level that he had written the *Tractatus* in such a way that he does not allow its understanding on purpose. In a sense, it seems that through his words to Ogden, Wittgenstein wishes by his reader to understand that he (the reader) cannot understand the *Tractatus*'s remarks. On a second level, I can assert that Wittgenstein thinks that there is something to understand¹⁸⁷ from *Tractatus* but for its understanding one needs a special kind of poetic mind. In his manuscripts he mentions:

Kleist wrote somewhere¹⁸⁸ that what the poet would most of all like to be able to do would be to convey thoughts by themselves without words. (What a strange admission). (*CV* p.15)

¹⁸⁷ He refers to the understanding of the *Tractatus* in its Preface.

¹⁸⁸ Heinrich von Kleist: 'Letter from One Poet to Another', 5th January, 1811.

Therefore, this way of conveying thoughts requires a special kind of understanding. At the same time, it seems that he is not interested in whether those who understand him are many. Perhaps what he demands (from those who wish to understand him) is to follow his steps or in other words, to climb the same ladder or a similar ladder to the one that he has used. The first person who attempts to climb the ladder that Wittgenstein refers to in 6.54 is himself. This is the reason why Wittgenstein refers to a reader with the same or similar thoughts as himself and thereby, understanding the *Tractatus*:

Perhaps this book will be understood only by someone who has himself already had the thoughts that are expressed in it – or at least similar thoughts. – So it is not a textbook. – Its purpose would be achieved if it gave pleasure to one person who read and understood it. (Preface *TLP* p.3)

In other words, Wittgenstein says: perhaps this book will be understood only by someone who has himself already climbed the same ladder I have climbed – or at least a similar ladder. So, it is not a textbook.¹⁸⁹ Its purpose would be achieved if it gave pleasure to one person who climbed the ladder and who threw it away when he managed to see the world aright.¹⁹⁰ This specific kind of person who can possibly understand him does not include Russell. Specifically in 1929, Wittgenstein said to Russell by referring to the *Tractatus*:

Don't worry, I know you'll never understand it [*Tractatus*]. (Monk 1991 p.271)

¹⁸⁹ In the introduction of the *Tractatus*, by referring to philosophical problems Wittgenstein states that “I therefore believe myself to have found, on all essential points, the final solution of the problems” (*TLP* p.4). Here, Wittgenstein accepts that ‘on all essential points’ he has found the final solution but he does not affirm that he has solved all these problems. Therefore, what we can infer through this is that all these essential points have a common character. So, recognizing it we can lead ourselves to a consciousness of the world.

¹⁹⁰ The explanation that is given here could constitute one answer to Frege’s worries which is expressed in one of his letters to Wittgenstein in 30.9.1919: “Having read your Preface, one does not really know what one is supposed to do with your first propositions. One expects to see a question, a problem posed, and instead one reads what appear to be assertions, in urgent need of justification, but given with none. How do you arrive at these assertions? With which problems are they connected? I would like to see a question posed at the beginning, a riddle whose solution one would be pleased to know [...]” (Frege-Wittgenstein Correspondence, 2014 p.45).

In the case in which we would have asserted that the *Tractatus* formulates a scientific theory, we should accept that a scientific theory, can be constituted by unclear assertions. Some of these will contradict each other and convincing arguments will not be projected about truth as well as the specific unfalsifiable theory being impossible to be understood by its readers. However, if we perceive all these as part of the whole Tractarian paradox which is created on purpose, the discussion differentiates and as a result, we are able to speak about a special kind of method¹⁹¹ and not of theory in the *Tractatus*. That which the *Tractatus* finally succeeds doing is to teach us through a method – a spiritual exercise – and not through a theory as I will explain below, without meaning that Wittgenstein was interested in presenting his conception as a theory.

4.4 The indeterminacies in the notion of ‘object’ are part of the project of moving away from ‘theory’ towards ‘mysticism’

4.4a A view beyond the ‘traditional’ and ‘resolute reading’ views

Beyond the ‘traditional’ and the ‘resolute reading’ view, I will propose a third view which asserts that the *Tractatus* communicates no truths¹⁹² without this making the *Tractatus* being a work without value. This must be explained in more detail. In 6.54, Wittgenstein claims that all the sentences of the *Tractatus* ‘serve as elucidations’. He tries to explain this sentence by saying that anyone who ‘understands’ him recognises these sentences as nonsense. Thus, to conceive the whole of the *Tractatus* as nonsense

¹⁹¹ In the remark *TLP* 6.53, Wittgenstein refers to ‘the correct method of philosophy’ (which does not replace a theory in the *Tractatus*) and not to the correct theory of philosophy. Moreover, Moore states characteristically: “[W] has made me think that what is required for the solution of philosophical problems which baffle me, is a method quite different from any which I have ever used – a method which he himself uses successfully, but which I have never been able to understand clearly enough to use myself” (Schilpp 1968 p.33). Moore here refers to Wittgenstein’s method and not to his theory. Later, he will admit that “There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies” (*PII*:§133).

¹⁹² I adopted this idea after a series of conversations with Michael Morris based on his article with Julian Dodd namely ‘Mysticism and Nonsense in the *Tractatus*’ (Morris and Dodd 2007).

we have to ‘understand’ its author (his spirit). Here, Wittgenstein does not mean that the reader has to literally understand every sentence of the *Tractatus* to ‘understand’ him.¹⁹³ This would look as if one has the sense that he tries to balance his boat to avoid his drowning (in terms of the *Tractatus* we attempt to understand the sense of the sentences which are considered to constitute Bilder of the world) and finally realises that he could not drown since his boat is not in the water (in terms of the *Tractatus* it is impossible to understand its sentences which attempt to talk about the world). Through this specific experience, the boatman has the opportunity to realise the dimensions of his attempt (and again in terms of the *Tractatus* perhaps its sentences are not there to be understood but to give the chance to the reader to think and re-think about them and suspect something more). What Wittgenstein demands from his reader is to think¹⁹⁴ through his sentences and create the presuppositions for the *final feeling*. By thinking through the sentences of the *Tractatus* (the *Tractatus* demands the attention to what language shows), the reader climbs the Wittgensteinian ladder (Leiter) and can therefore create the presuppositions for the final feeling, but he still cannot understand the author of the *Tractatus*. Once he has climbed the ladder and once he has thought through the sentences of the *Tractatus*, the reader *can* ‘understand’ Wittgenstein. That is to say, he can recognise the sentences of the *Tractatus* as nonsense, as the Wittgensteinian spirit demands. According to Wittgenstein, the reader will be able to see the world aright if he throws away the ladder he has climbed, if he transcends these sentences (*TLP* 6.54).¹⁹⁵ The reader cannot climb the height of the ladder without the ladder. He has to use the ladder before we throw it away. By throwing away the ladder, any illusion which might

¹⁹³ Stern asserts characteristically: “The conviction that it must be possible to give a single coherent exposition of the book’s doctrines or its methods is, I believe, an illusion” (Stern 2003 p.126).

¹⁹⁴ Wittgenstein’s tendency to expect his reader to think on his own is something that Wittgenstein continues to do later. Particularly, he states: “I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking. But, if possible, to stimulate someone to thoughts of his own” (*PI* Preface).

¹⁹⁵ The traditional philosophy in a sense might encourage us to use a ladder but it does not indicate to us that by climbing it we have to throw it away – that is to say we have to get liberated from all pseudo-doctrines which we obtained as Wittgenstein does.

have been created by making thoughts about language and the world disappears. Once one sees the world correctly, one will acquire a feeling which is not represented sentimentally but is given through a special silence. Silence needs language to form the boundary of the space in which it obtains. D’herth states:

Silence cannot be ‘expressed’ in language. And yet, if it is to exist at all, it can only be through the means of language. It is only by means of words that silence can be created. (D’herth 1978 p.140)

The *Tractatus* encourages us to think that words do not lead to knowledge but to a silent state of mind in which an approach of the world is possible. The task of philosophy is to show this kind of silence, that is to say, to show what cannot be said. On the one hand, Wittgenstein does not want to limit himself to the thought he expresses in remark 4.01 but on the other hand, he seems to imply the idea that there is a kind of silence that can give us Bilder of reality. It is very hard to think what the elements of a silence could be but what we can say with certainty is that they would be silent, that is to say, ineffable. However, what is the final feeling which will allow us to experience this special kind of silence? The answer to this question is found in the state of mysticism.¹⁹⁶ Here, I have to clarify that this project distances from Hacker’s argument which claims that the rejection of the *Tractatus*’ philosophy also follows the rejection of mysticism (Hacker 2001 pp.381-382). In other words, the nonsense of the philosophical sentences does not follow the nonsense of mysticism. As Morris points out, mysticism does not do what philosophy does. By raising pseudo-questions, philosophy (*TLP* 6.5) attempts that which cannot be said, while mysticism does not need to say things to support what it supports in its own way. Specifically, what mysticism does is nothing other than focus on the fact that the world is (*TLP* 6.44), that there is anything at all, not to how the

¹⁹⁶ Wittgenstein joins World War I as a volunteer mainly not for the sake of his country but for the sake of himself since he believed that ‘the nearness of death will bring light into life’ (Monk 1991 p.112). It seems that his views about the *Tractatus* about the meaning of life and the mystical aspect are correlated with the fear, the pain and the silence of war, states that Wittgenstein experienced at the war.

world is – something that can be said. The inexpressible of philosophy is rather that which mysticism is called to cover (*TLP* 6.522) (Morris 2008 pp.337-338).

4.4b The indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ encourages the idea of mysticism

Despite the fact that Wittgenstein uses the notion ‘mysticism’ three times in the last entries of the *Tractatus* (*TLP* 6.44, 6.45 and 6.522), the notion is never explained.¹⁹⁷ Similarly, in the *Notebooks*, while he discusses issues related to mysticism, the notion appears only once in the middle of the work (*NB* p.51, 25.5.15) without any significant clarifications. According to Hans-Johann Glock, mysticism is traditionally defined as the ‘experience of a union with God or the universe’ (Glock 2004 p.251). In a sense, Wittgenstein does not distance himself much from the traditional general definition of mysticism in the *Tractatus* since he refers, among other things, to a union with the world: ‘I am my world (the microcosm)’ (*TLP* 5.63), and to a union with nature: ‘The world and life are one’ (*TLP* 5.621). At the same time, we have to admit that if we want to understand how Wittgenstein deals with this specific notion in the *Tractatus*, we should not limit ourselves to this traditional general definition as given by Glock. To shed light on this issue, I will examine: (a) some of the diachronic positions of mysticism which may have constituted a first foundation to Wittgenstein’s thought to conceive this notion in the way he does and he somehow scornfully refuses to explain it, and (b) some of the influences he had by other philosophers but without identifying with them. By clarifying the notion of the Tractarian mysticism, I will claim that the indeterminacy of the character of objects encourages the specific notion.

¹⁹⁷ Although the notion of ‘mysticism’ is an important notion in the *Tractatus*, it does not constitute the essential core of the work. The specific notion appears in 1916 during World War I which pushes him to read the *Gospel in Brief* [see *LRKM* p.82] and to re-read Schopenhauer [see *CV* pp.18-19] (Glock 2004 p.251).

4.4b1 The notion of ‘mysticism’ in the *Tractatus* having Russell’s ‘Mysticism and Logic’ as a background

In his article, ‘Mysticism and Logic’, Russell presents the diachronic beliefs of the mystics (Russell 2007b pp.15-17) without himself identifying with them. These beliefs are, according to McGuinness (2002 p.141) parallel with points we encounter in the *Tractatus*. Particularly:

(a) The first case refers to an insight of reality (a reality beyond the world of appearances). This is an insight which is higher and different from reason. In particular:

The belief in a way of wisdom, sudden, penetrating, coercive, which is contrasted with the slow and fallible study of outward appearance by a science relying wholly upon the senses. (Russell 2007b p.15)

Mystic insight leads to the revelation of a hidden wisdom about an inarticulate experience (Russell 2007b pp.15-16). During the time of enlightenment, there emerges the belief about the possibility of knowledge as insight contrasted with sense, reason, and analysis since these lead to illusion (the *Tractatus* also invalidates sense, philosophical sentences and analysis by encouraging the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’). This is the insight pursued by the poet, artist and lover so that they experience that which a mystic experiences (Russell 2007b p.16). At the same time, Wittgenstein asserts that there is an inexpressible feeling (which shows itself (*TLP* 6.522)) which has to solve the problem of life. According to the *Tractatus*, this is correlated with God; God as a solution is identified with the meaning of life and the world as fate, something independent of our ‘will’ (*TLP* 6.372, 6.521 and *NB* pp.72-73, 11.6.16). Those who have this mystical feeling cannot explain it through sentences (*TLP* 6.522). This leads Wittgenstein to claim that:

We feel that even when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely untouched. Of course there are then no questions left, and this itself is the answer. (*TLP* 6.52)

According to Russell, we do not know anything about the reality or unreality of the mystic's world. Insight is 'untested and unsupported, it is an insufficient guarantee of truth' (Russell 2007b p.18). Insight leads to beliefs but the confirmation of reason is an agreement with other beliefs which are also instinctive. Therefore, Russell characterizes the distinction between instinct and reason as illusionary (Russell 2007b p.19).

(b) In the second case the mystic believes in unity, not in division. In other words, Russell deals with this in Heraclitus' words 'good and ill are one' and in Parmenides who claims that there is only one reality that is indivisible (Russell 2007b p.16). This is parallel with Wittgenstein's idea that the world is one and only one limited whole (a unity) (*NB* p.83, 7.10.16 and *TLP* 6.45) (I have already explained in Chapter 1 at 1.5c that the *Tractatus* encourages the idea for limited but not finite, possible combinations of objects). To perceive the world as a whole presupposes that we stand outside the world and discover it. Value comes from an attitude outside the world towards the world as a whole (not from an attitude from within the world towards the world) and this is nothing but a mystical feeling. Thus, Wittgenstein claims that from within the world, there is no sense and value (*TLP* 6.41). Russell thinks that great mystics took for granted the supposed insight of the mystical emotion and that their logical doctrines about mysticism are superficially presented even if they become credible many times (Russell 2007b p.25). The logic of mysticism to understand ordinary world in a specific way imposes a 'genuine acceptance' among metaphysicians, something which Russell states does not occur and as a result, he asserts that the idea for the unity of reality collapses (Russell 2007b p.26).

(c) Almost all mystics believe that time is not real and consider that the distinction between past and future is an illusion (Russell 2007b p.17). This results because of the adoption of the idea of unity, not of division, as I have already mentioned. At the same time, in the *Tractatus* there is the formulation of the view of the world as *sub specie aeterni* (under the aspect of eternity). This is compatible with the idea that the Tractarian objects are unalterable (*TLP* 2.0271) but incompatible with the idea that time is a form of objects (*TLP* 2.0251). Considering that we do not know exactly what the objects are, we cannot assert that. Moreover, in the *Tractatus* there is the idea of the eternal life that belongs to the man who lives in the present (*TLP* 6.45, 6.4311 and 6.4312). Russell claims that time is real and that there is some sense to feel rather than to state that ‘time is an unimportant and superficial characteristic of reality’ (Russell 2007b p.27). According to Russell, we have to acknowledge that present, past and future are real, but at the same time a liberation from them contributes to philosophic thought. On the one hand, he acknowledges the practical rather than the theoretical importance of time by posing the following question: why do our feelings towards the past differ from our feelings towards the future? Our desires can influence the future (which is not determined), but not the past (which is unalterably determined) and every future one day will be past (Russell 2007b p.27). Therefore, the difference between the notions ‘past’ and ‘future’ is a difference in relation to us. Moreover, today’s beliefs may count as true today but tomorrow they may count as false and can be replaced by other beliefs (Russell 2007b p.29). On the other hand, Russell affirms that to see the world truly we have to learn to overcome the difference in the notions ‘past’ and ‘future’ (Russell 2007b p.17), something which the *Tractatus* does successfully.

(d) The fourth belief claims that the distinction between good and evil is an illusion of the analytic intellect (Russell 2007b p.17). Similarly, in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein makes the distinction between good and evil by stating that:

If the good or bad exercise of the will does alter the world, it can alter only the limits of the world, not the facts—not what can be expressed by means of language [...]. (*TLP* 6.43)

At the same time, he affirms that good and evil are not in the world (*TLP* 6.41). What needs to be mentioned here is that the *Tractatus* does not offer, and has no intention to offer, a theory of ethics. This is because despite the fact that the *Tractatus* does not offer a theory in general (this has been discussed in Chapter 3), the *Tractatus* claims that moral value cannot be put into words. Language cannot give genuine sentences; there is no set of rules which we can apply to connect the sentential sign with its sense to understand a sentence. So, language cannot give Bilder of values about something higher (*TLP* 6.42). Therefore, a moral value is not a possible atomic fact (*TLP* 6.42 and 6.421). What we should clarify is that ethics does not have to do with motives (like beliefs and desires) and actions. Ethics is related in a clear sense with the contingency of the world. Particularly, he states:

When an ethical law of the form, ‘Thou shalt [. . .]’, is laid down, one’s first thought is, ‘And what if I do not do it?’ It is clear, however, that ethics has nothing to do with punishment and reward in the usual sense of the terms. So our question about the consequences of an action must be unimportant.—At least those consequences should not be events. For there must be something right about the question we posed. There must indeed be some kind of ethical reward and ethical punishment, but they must reside in the action itself (And it is also clear that the reward must be something pleasant and the punishment something unpleasant). (*TLP* 6.422)¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁸ A similar idea is expressed in Kierkegaard’s writing which states: “Victory in the outer demonstrates nothing at all ethically, because ethically the question is only about the inner. Punishment in the outer is negligible, and far from insisting with aesthetics busyness on visible punishment, the ethical proudly says: I shall punish, all right, namely, in the inner, and it is plainly immoral to class punishment in the outer as something comparable to the inner” (Kierkegaard 1992 p.297). Both Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard conceive ethical to be something inner. According to Schönbaumsfeld (2013 pp.60-61), Wittgenstein was influenced by Kierkegaard. As evidence of this, among others, he mentions in his argument two very important points. Firstly, Wittgenstein had contact with Kierkegaard’s ideas from his childhood since his sister Margaret (‘Gretl’) who was his philosophical mentor was an admirer and a reader of Kierkegaard

With regard to the view of mysticism, Russell also acknowledges the distinction between the two notions of ‘good’ and ‘evil’. Specifically, he maintains that there is a lower kind of good and evil which divides the world of appearance in parts and a higher kind, the mystical kind of good, which belongs to reality and does not conflict with any kind of evil. Perfection belongs to reality and goodness is relative to ourselves (Russell 2007b pp.31-32). At the same time, he acknowledges the subjectivity of good and evil since he states that good and evil as well as the higher good of mysticism are all reflections of our own emotions about things and they are not a piece of the substance of things as they are in themselves (Russell 2007b p.33).

According to Russell, mysticism as projected by taking into consideration the four above beliefs is wrong, but at the same time he acknowledges that there is some value in the mystic’s feelings – ‘an element of wisdom’ which can inspire not only the artist but the scientist as well (Russell 2007b p.18). By taking into consideration the parallels sketched above among the mystic’s diachronic beliefs in the way Russell presents them and Wittgenstein’s beliefs on mysticism as they are presented in the *Tractatus*, what we should say at this stage is that Wittgenstein does not limit the notion of ‘mysticism’ to the mystic’s diachronic beliefs. Beyond that, we cannot assert that Wittgenstein was influenced by Russell about the notion of ‘mysticism’ (Wittgenstein presents more parallels with the mystic’s diachronic beliefs as they are presented by Russell in ‘Mysticism and Logic’ than Russell himself). Additional confirmation is offered by

(Wuchterl and Hubner 1979 p.30). Secondly, (Schönbaumsfeld 2013 p.61) Hermine, Wittgenstein’s sister, writes to him in one of her letters on the 20 November 1917 when he was still at the Front: “You were perfectly correct in supposing that I did not receive the earlier one with your request for books, but I’ve just been out for them and a number of Kierkegaard volumes are already on the way. I hope they are the ones you want, because, given that I don’t know anything about him and his writings, I simply close a few at random” (Wittgenstein 1996 p.48). Maybe we are not allowed by the specific letter to know the precise material that she sent Wittgenstein but we can recognize his big desire to read Kierkegaard while being at war.

McGuinness who claims that there is no evidence that Wittgenstein had read Russell's 'Mysticism and Logic' while writing the *Tractatus*. This specific essay was published in July 1914 and Wittgenstein's last visit to England was long before the War (it seems that it was in October 1913) (McGuinness 2002 p.140). What we cannot know is whether Russell had mentioned some of his ideas about mysticism to Wittgenstein (if he did, what are these ideas?) in previous encounters with him. However, one crucial difference we can cite between Wittgenstein and Russell concerning their perception of the notion 'mysticism' is that Wittgenstein characterizes the mystical as inexpressible and extends it to metaphysics, something that Russell avoids. Russell believes that philosophy is not inexpressible like mysticism. Wittgenstein's disagreement with this is confirmed in one of his letters to Russell on August 19th, 1919, in which he asserts that Russell had supported a theory of types: a theory of correct symbolism where a symbol and its meaning have the same structure. Wittgenstein replies as follows:

That's exactly what one can't say .You cannot prescribe to a symbol what it *may* be used to express. All that a symbol *can* express, it *may* express. This is a short answer but it is true! (NWLR pp.130-31)

Wittgenstein replies in this way since he believes that what cannot be said but can only be shown are the properties of language. The distinction between the notions of 'saying' and 'showing' we encounter in the *Tractatus* encourages the idea of the mystical. This also encourages the idea of a distinction between the empirical sentences of science and the sentences of ethics and aesthetics which he nevertheless identifies (*TLP* 6.421).

4.4b2 The notion of ‘mysticism’ in the Tractatus having Schopenhauer as a background

Although nowhere in the *Tractatus* does Wittgenstein refer to Schopenhauer,¹⁹⁹ it is certain that he had read him²⁰⁰ and as a result, we encounter many influences from his ideas both in the *Notebooks* and the *Tractatus*.²⁰¹ Schopenhauer claims that denial towards our Will-to-live which he identifies with an ascetic attitude of non-will offers a mystical state²⁰² of consciousness²⁰³ (‘Will’ disappears after a war of freedom against nature). This mystical state offers calmness, tranquillity, confidence and serenity (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.I §71 p.411). He connects the notion of ‘mysticism’ with the notions of ‘ecstasy’, ‘rapture’, ‘illumination’ and ‘union with God’. He characterizes this experience as ineffable. The mystical consciousness demolishes space and time and peaks with the abolishment of the ‘Will’ of ‘representation’ and the ‘world’ (any world) (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.I §71 p.410). So, he states: “When my teaching reaches its highest point, it assumes a *negative* character, and so ends with a negation. Thus, it can speak here only of what is denied or given up [...] Now it is precisely here that the

¹⁹⁹ Wittgenstein in the Preface of the *Tractatus* writes: “I do not wish to judge how far my efforts coincide with those of other philosophers. Indeed, what I have written here makes no claim to novelty in detail, and the reason why I give no sources is that it is a matter of indifference to me whether the thoughts that I have had have been anticipated by someone else” (Preface *TLP* p.4).

²⁰⁰ Von Wright among others says: “If I remember rightly, Wittgenstein told me that he had read Schopenhauer’s *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* [The world as Will and Representation] in his youth and that his first philosophy was a Schopenhauerian epistemological idealism” (Malcolm 2001 p.6). Moreover, in 1931 Wittgenstein writes: “I think there is some truth in my idea that I really only think reproductively. I don’t believe I have ever invented a line of thinking; I have always taken one over from someone else. I have simply straightaway seized on it with enthusiasm for my work of clarification. That is how Boltzmann, Hertz, Schopenhauer [...] have influenced me” (*CV* pp.18-19).

²⁰¹ Some of these influences are the following: in the *Notebooks* we discern his idea about the denial of ‘Will’ (*NB* p.77, 29.7.16), an idea which is also formulated in Schopenhauer’s writings (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.I §71 p.410) and in the *Tractatus* the idea that ‘we pictures facts to ourselves’ (*TLP* 2.1), a remainder of Schopenhauerian ideas ‘all knowing is essentially a making of representations’ (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.II p.194). Moreover, other Schopenhauerian ideas can be discerned in *NB* p.85, 17.10.16, pp.72-73, 11.6.16, pp.86-87, 4.11.16 and *TLP* 6.371, 6.41, 6.431 and 6.52.

²⁰² According to Schopenhauer, mysticism is ‘consciousness of the identity of one’s own inner being with that of all things’ (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.II p.613).

²⁰³ The notion of ‘consciousness’ in Schopenhauer is expressed through his reference to the notion of ‘pure subject’: “It is not to be seen: it sees everything; it is not to be heard: it hears everything; it is not to be known: it knows everything” (Schopenhauer 1997 p.208). Moreover, he states: ‘Everyone finds himself as this subject’ (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.I p.5).

mystic proceeds positively, and therefore, from this point, nothing is left but mysticism” (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.II p.612). So, Schopenhauer accepts the Kantian distinction between *phenomena* (things as they seem to us) and *noumena* (things as they are themselves – these things are transcendental since they belong to a world that transcends experience). Wittgenstein also acknowledges that the significance of life belongs to noumena.²⁰⁴ In particular, he states:

The sense of the world must lie outside the world. In the world everything is as it is, and everything happens as it does happen: in it no value exists and if it did exist, it would have no value.
If there is any value that does have value, it must lie outside the whole sphere of what happens and is the case. For all that happens and is the case is accidental.
What makes it non-accidental cannot lie within the world, since if it did it would itself be accidental.
It must lie outside the world. (*TLP* 6.41)

Therefore, we cannot know anything about the sense of the world – we cannot say what the meaning of life is. The problems of life cannot be answered and their solution is found in the disappearance of the problem itself (*TLP* 6.52). Here, I refer to the experience of the mystic (which is necessary to logic) not in the ordinary sense of experience but in that ‘something is’; that is to say, there are possibilities (combinations of objects) because of a world. This experience of the mystic cannot be attributed to the sentences which will constitute some kind of knowledge; therefore, no problem of philosophy is answered nor can any question of philosophy be posed. Thus, the problem of life is solved, something that leads to man’s happiness, to an agreement with the world (*NB* p.75, 8.7.16).

²⁰⁴ David Pears states: “He [Wittgenstein] took much of the framework of the *Tractatus* from Kant through Schopenhauer, whom he had read and admitted [...]” (Pears 1997b pp.45-46). Magee also holds this position (Magee 1997 p.288).

According to the *Tractatus*, what is astonishing for the mystic (perhaps not for the ordinary man) is not how a world is, how things in the world are, but that this world exists (*TLP* 6.44). Having in mind what Wittgenstein writes in the *Notebooks* on the 20th October 1916: ‘aesthetically, the miracle is that the world exists.’²⁰⁵ That what exists does exist’ (*NB* p.86, 20.10.16);²⁰⁶ remark 6.44 seems to correlate with the aesthetic point²⁰⁷ rather than the mystical. Therefore, this allows us to connect the aesthetic viewpoint with the mystical viewpoint (Hacker 1975a p.73). In other words, part of what the aesthetic attitude does in the *Notebooks* is what the mystical attitude does in the *Tractatus*. This seems to emerge from a Schopenhauerian idea which holds that only through artistic vision can someone get liberated from ‘will’. Distance from ‘will’ comes through art – the aesthetic experience of music. In music we do not listen to our or somebody else’s ‘will’. Melodies offer something ideal. Music does not know any limits; it is independent of the phenomenal world and it could continue to exist even if the world disappeared (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.I p.257). Only aesthetic experience (music) can liberate the intellect from limited thought which limits us to the phenomenal experience. Through this liberation, we can reach a deep understanding of the inner nature of reality (Schopenhauer 1958 Vol.II p.382). According to Schopenhauer, freedom cannot be located in the world since in the world everything is

²⁰⁵ In the ‘Lecture of Ethics’ Wittgenstein perceives the existence of the world and the existence of language as a miracle. Particularly, he says: “I will now describe the experience of wondering at the existence of the world by saying: it is the experience of seeing the world as a miracle. Now I am tempted to say that the right expression in language for the miracle of the existence of the world, though it is not a proposition in language, is the existence of language itself” (*LE* p.11).

²⁰⁶ A compatible idea is the assertion that God (the meaning of life, something higher) transcends the world since God ‘does not reveal himself in the world’ (*TLP* 6.41 and 6.432). This affirmation implies that God is identical not with how the world actually is but with that it is. There is an idea before mysticism about logic which holds that ‘Logic is prior to every experience – that something is so. It is prior to the question ‘How?’ not prior to the question ‘What?’’ (*TLP* 5.552).

²⁰⁷ As we will see later *Tractatus*’ point is ethical and a remark with an aesthetic point like *TLP* 6.44 pushes us to remember Kant where he encourages the idea that aesthetics contributes to ethics. In the specific, he claims that aesthetic experience contributes to morality since the beautiful prepares us to love something (Kant 2008 §29 p.98), beauty serves as a symbol of morality (Kant 2008 §59 pp.178-179), the feeling of pleasure in the beautiful is analogous to moral consciousness (Kant 2008 §59 p.181), beauty gives sensible form to moral ideas (Kant 2008 §60 p.183) and the moral idea is the ‘true propaedeutic’ for taste (Kant 2008 §60 p.183).

subject to causal necessity.²⁰⁸ Similarly, as I have already mentioned, Wittgenstein holds that value is outside the world (it is transcendental like logic). Therefore, both Schopenhauer and Wittgenstein imply (each one for his own reasons) that we cannot have control of the world. Causation in Schopenhauer has to do with necessary connections between causes and effects (there is a necessary connection between ‘I’ and ‘my action’; ‘I’ functions as ‘cause’ and ‘my action’ as ‘effect’), while in the case of the *Tractatus* it is held that there are no necessary causal connections among atomic facts in the world. According to the *Tractatus*, atomic sentences must be logically independent of each other. So, atomic facts which make up the world must also be logically independent of each other.

As Schopenhauer characterizes the state of mysticism as ineffable Wittgenstein too perceives mysticism as a state where one does not need to say things to support something. This encourages the idea of silence. In sentence 7, ‘What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence’, Wittgenstein uses the word ‘What’, an element which also implies that there is something about which we cannot speak.²⁰⁹ Additionally, in sentence 6.522, according to the translation of Pears and McGuinness, Wittgenstein claims:

There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical.

According to Ogden’s translation, the sentence reads:

²⁰⁸ Schopenhauer projects the idea that we seem to be two kinds of subject at once: subject of willing and subject of knowledge, which knows everything objectively, including its own body and acts of will, and hovers outside the world of individual things altogether. Moreover, he states: “the identity of the subject of willing with that of knowing by virtue whereof [...] the word ‘I’ includes and indicates both, is the knot of the world (Weltknoten), and hence inexplicable” (Schopenhauer 1997 p.211).

²⁰⁹ In one of Wittgenstein’s letters to Russell in 1919 he wrote: “Now I’m afraid you haven’t really got hold of my main contention, to which the whole business of logical sentences is only a corollary. The main point is the theory of what can be expressed (gesagt) by sentences – i.e. by language – (and, which comes to the same, what can be *thought*) and what cannot be expressed by sentences, by only shown (gezeigt); which, I believe, is the cardinal problem of philosophy” (*LRKM* p.71).

There is indeed the inexpressible. This shows itself; it is the mystical.²¹⁰

As I have already said, Wittgenstein does not give a great deal of explanation about the notion ‘mystical’, limiting himself to saying that:

It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.
(*TLP* 6.44)

In other words, the mystical is that there is ‘something’ rather than nothing, yet how this ‘something’ is arranged in the world is not of importance. The existence of the world pushes the mystic to the experience and wonder about the nature of reality. Moreover, he states:

To view the world *sub specie aeterni* is to view it as a whole – a limited whole. Feeling the world as a limited whole – it is this that is mystical.
(*TLP* 6.45)

Before I go deeper into our discussion of the notion of ‘mysticism’, it is important to examine to what kind of silence Wittgenstein refers to. In other words, what is the character of the Tractarian silence? Firstly, it is about a silence which is silent for the same reason. But why is the ineffable ineffable, according to the *Tractatus*? The reason for this is expressed in sentence 2.172:

A Bild cannot, however, depict its pictorial form: it displays it. (*TLP* 2.172)

Moreover, Wittgenstein claims:

Sentences 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.

In order to be able to represent logical form, we should have to be able to station ourselves with sentences somewhere outside logic, that is to say outside the world. (*TLP* 4.12)

Sentences cannot represent logical form: it is mirrored in them.
What finds its reflexion in language, language cannot represent.

²¹⁰ It is advisable to stick with Ogden’s translation in this case because it is closer to the German text. In the Pears and McGuinness version, the German term ‘Unaussprechliches’ is translated in a rather loose fashion (things that cannot be put into words) in contrast to Ogden’s more accurate translation (the inexpressible).

What expresses *itself* in language, we cannot express by means of language.
 Sentences *show* [zeigt] the logical form of reality.
 They display it. (TLP 4.121)

Thus, no Bild can represent its form or no sentence can represent its form; therefore, a sentence cannot represent the general form of sentences and it cannot represent the general form of reality. As a result, a sentence cannot say anything about itself or about the form of the world. The form of reality cannot be said. This idea leads Wittgenstein to say: ‘What can be shown, *cannot* be said’ (TLP 4.1212);²¹¹ in other words, what can be shown by language cannot be said by language. This is stated through the three following remarks:

[...] in any ordinary sentence, e.g., “Moore good”, this *shews* and does not say that “*Moore*” is to the left of “good”; and *here what* is shewn can be *said* by another sentence. But this only applies to the *part* of what is shewn which is arbitrary. The *logical* properties which it shews are not arbitrary, and that it has these cannot be said in any sentence. (NM p.111)

LOGICAL so-called sentences *shew* [the] logical properties of language and therefore of [the] Universe, but *say* nothing.
 This means that by merely looking at them you can *see* these properties; whereas, in a sentence proper, you cannot see what is true by looking at it. (NM p.108)

The fact that the sentences of logic are tautologies *shows* the formal – logical – properties of language and the world [...]. (TLP 6.12)

What Wittgenstein seems to mean here is that what is shown by something is what can be seen; in other words, it is that which we can conceive. Moreover, it is stated directly that logical sentences show only the logical properties of language; therefore, one can see the properties by the logical sentence. What can be shown by language is what can

²¹¹ This idea is expressed later in the *Philosophical Remarks* in a more focused way on philosophy: “For what belongs to the essence of the world simply *cannot* be said. And philosophy, if it were to say anything, would have to describe the essence of the world” (PR p.85).

be shown by symbols. However, what can be shown by a *primitive* symbol (name), which is its form, cannot be said (*TLP* 3.26 and 3.261). As we have already seen, this kind of statement cannot be empirical. Since a sentence shows only its sense (*TLP* 4.022), the sense of a sentence cannot be said. Thus, everything that is ineffable is ineffable for the same reason and the notion of the ‘ineffable’ does not allow the notion of ‘sayability’ of the name and the elucidation of the notion of ‘object’. During the time Wittgenstein was working on the *Tractatus*, Engelmann sent him a poem by Uhland called ‘Count Eberhard’s Hawthorn’.²¹² Among others, Wittgenstein says in his reply:

The poem by Uhland is really magnificent. 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! (Engelmann 1967 p.7)

What can be contained in what is uttered and what can be unutterable?

Certainly something silent.

A silence is born from someone who is able to see the possibilities of things by contrast to other kinds of silence that do not involve this aspect. This does not need a special kind of ineffable sentence. It requires that one can see the possibilities of sentences. The mystical is that which is shown by form which is the possibility of combination without determining something specific. What Tractarian mysticism encourages is nothing but to make us see possibilities of combinations without judgements. By making reference to judgements, in his work, Kant had in mind something similar.

²¹² Monk, among others, mentions: “In a letter dated 4 April 1917, Engelmann enclosed ‘Count Eberhard’s Hawthorn’, Uhland’s poem recounting the story of a soldier who, while on crusade, cuts a spray from a hawthorn bush; when he returns home he plants the spring in his grounds, and in old age he sits beneath the shade of the fully grown hawthorn tree, which serves as a poignant reminder of his youth. The tale is told very simply, without adornment and without drawing any moral. And yet, as Engelmann says, ‘the poem as a whole gives in 28 lines the picture of a life’. It is, he told Wittgenstein, ‘a wonder of objectivity’” (Monk 1991 p.150).

4.4b3 The notion of 'mysticism' in the *Tractatus* having Kant as a background

According to Kant, a judgement (Urteil) is a kind of cognition (propositional cognition)²¹³ which is determined by an objective conscious mental representation (Kant 1998 A320/B377 pp.398-399). The faculty of judging is the same as the faculty of thinking (Kant 1998 A81 p.21). A cognitive capacity is a determinate conscious propensity of the mind which generates objective representations of certain kinds under certain conditions. A cognitive faculty is spontaneous, stimulated by raw unstructured sensory data and it composes these data yielding novel structured cognitions as outputs (Kant 1998 B1-2, A50/B74 p.193). So, cognitive spontaneity is a structural creativity of the mind with respect to its representations. The judgement is the central cognitive faculty²¹⁴ of the human mind. This is because judgement brings with it the otherwise uncoordinated sub-acts and sub-contents of intuition, conceptualization, imagination and reason via apperception or rational self-consciousness. The aim is the production of a single cognitive product – a judgement with pure concepts²¹⁵ of the understanding or categories (in every category – an *a priori* concept corresponds to a principle – an *a priori* judgement). Kant thinks that when one judges something as essentially beautiful, this is not a judgement but a consciousness of something being there to be judged, as

²¹³ According to Kant, "Intuition and concepts [...] constitute the elements of all our cognition, so that neither concepts without intuition corresponding to them in some way nor intuition without concepts can yield a cognition [...] Thoughts without [intentional] content (*Inhalt*) are empty (*leer*), intuitions without concepts are blind (*blind*). It is thus just as necessary to make the mind's concepts sensible (i.e., to add an object to them in intuition) as it is to make its intuitions understandable (i.e., to bring them under concepts) [...] these two faculties or capacities cannot exchange their functions. The understanding is not capable of intuiting anything, and the senses are not capable of thinking anything. Only from their unification can cognition arise" (Kant 1998 A50-51/B74-76 pp.193-194).

²¹⁴ Kant holds that the human mind has two basic cognitive faculties: (a) understanding (*Verstand*) – the faculty of concepts and (b) sensibility (*Sinnlichkeit*) – the faculty of intuitions, perception and mental imagery (Kant 1998 A51/B75 pp.193-194).

²¹⁵ The concept is essentially the capacity to formulate judgements of a certain kind. In other words, to possess a concept means to have the capacity to formulate judgements which contain the certain concept. Different types of concepts are determined in different ways, possible types of judgment. Kant explains in a systematic way the relation between concepts and judgments (Kant 1998 p.212). Without concepts of categories we cannot have judgments.

being such that one could apply concepts to it. However, it is not required that a concept be applied.

The consciousness Kant describes seems to look like the consciousness Wittgenstein wants his readers to have at the end. The Tractarian mysticism has to do with showing and that which is shown is ‘form’, the possibility of combination. Thus, mysticism would be an issue of evaluation of the possibility of combinations. But without actually combining like it is the case with Kant’s possibility of judgement. The Tractarian mysticism requires that someone has a consciousness of the possibilities of combination without actually determining any combination. The notion of ‘object’ (a notion of uncertainty as I have presented it) encourages contemplation of possibilities without committing to any. As a result of this, we are not allowed to make any judgement. The idea of form, as I have already explained, results from a simple view that words are signs. The core of this view is based on the idea that isomorphism presupposes an association, based on the idea that words (signs) get their meaning from a kind of stipulation, correlations with elements in the world, either explained stipulation or some other process which is an effective stipulation. However, if we do not know what objects are (there is not constraint indicated in the proposed analysis – whether analysis could reach an end which would give the names of objects), we cannot have any examples; thus, it cannot be a process of an actual stipulation (as I have already explained in Chapter 3, the *Tractatus* encourages the idea of an illusionary isomorphism which is based on arbitrary associations). This is because the relation of correlation can arbitrarily vary to suit any objects that are supposed to exist; the kinds of objects can arbitrarily vary to suit in a relation of correlation.²¹⁶ Thus, there seems to exist a shape

²¹⁶ In the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein recognizes the complexity of an actual stipulation by saying that “A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not *command a clear view* of the use

for the perception of language but in essence there is none. Before any specific schematic correlation, we do not know what it is for the world to have the same form as language or vice versa. There is no limitation but the idea that the world has the same form as language is nothing more than a way of suggestion. Going back to Kant, judgement is objectively valid if it is logically well-formed and all of its constituent intuitions and concepts are objectively valid (Kant 1998 A155-156/B194-195 pp.281-282). The objective validity of a judgement is its empirical meaningfulness which is based on empirical reference. The empirical reference of intuitions and concepts is necessarily constrained by human experience which is determined by (a) our receptive capacity for empirical intuition of material objects²¹⁷ and (b) the necessary and non-empirical forms of empirical intuition, our representations of space and time (Kant 1998 A19-22/ B33-36 pp.155-157) (Hanna 2000 pp.156-157 and 161-166). Kant considers form as the *a priori* aspect, while what we are used to doing is to attribute forms to things of the empirical world *a posteriori*. We pretend, in a sense, to be able to reach the ideas (concepts) of pure reason (which includes the principles) attributing forms to things but ideas are necessary concepts to which no object of the sensory experience corresponds. Therefore, our truth is a truth under conditions since the ability of judgement depends on human faculties such as imagination and understanding (Kant 2008 p.15). Imagination and understanding attempt to bring objects under certain

of our words.—Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in ‘seeing connections’. Hence, the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate cases*. The concept of a perspicuous representation is of fundamental significance for us. It earmarks the form of account we give, the way we look at things. (Is this a ‘Weltanschauung?’)” (PI I:§122).

²¹⁷ According to Kant, the proper object of an empirical judgment is an actual or possible object of experience (Gegenstand der Erfahrung) which is an empirical state of affairs or a really possible individual material object (Kant 1998 A176-218/B218-265 pp.295-321). So, actual objects of experience are truth-makers of empirical judgments.

concepts to perceive objects as having empirical features.²¹⁸ Judgements of beauty, for instance, can fail to be pure either because of emotional appeal (they can involve charm or emotion) (Kant 2008 §13 p.54) or because judgements can be contingent on a certain concept applied to the object so that the object is judged not as beautiful but as belonging to that kind (Kant 2008 §16 pp.60-62). However, he who has the capacity, according to Kant, to produce objects which are appropriately judged as beautiful is the artist genius. The artist does not need to consciously follow rules to produce objects. Thus, the artist cannot know or explain how he produced his works (Kant 2008 §47 pp.137-139).

4.4b4 The indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ and the Tractarian mystical feeling

Throughout the *Tractatus*, what one has to do is to ‘see’,²¹⁹ through a mystical feeling what could be possible and what could be impossible in reality. Accordingly, the *Tractatus* does not aim to reveal any philosophical conclusions,²²⁰ but attempts to encourage us to suspect the limits of the world by simply thinking about the entities of the world for what these could or could not be. It is a consciousness of knowing the entities of the world, which could be arranged in a different way. It seems that Wittgenstein perceives thought as something which constrains and considers mysticism as going beyond thought and consequently, beyond any correctness or incorrectness.²²¹ He does not create any meta-language in the *Tractatus* but he encourages us to create our final feeling. This would be a kind of meta-philosophy, a kind of mysticism.

Mysticism does not permit its falsification in the sense that it does not allow us to make

²¹⁸ Here, there arises an important difference between Wittgenstein and Kant with regard to the human faculties. While Kant tends towards a kind of anthropologism, Wittgenstein tends towards a kind of anti-anthropologism.

²¹⁹ The *Tractatus* can be understood through ‘showing’.

²²⁰ This is the reason why Wittgenstein says in the Preface of the *Tractatus* that it is not a textbook (*TLP* p.3).

²²¹ Russell mentions that what Wittgenstein liked most in mysticism was its power to make him stop thinking although Russell thinks that Wittgenstein would not agree with him (*LRKM* p.82).

a mistake. This idea is compatible with the idea that the *Tractatus* itself cannot be falsifiable as we have already seen in the previous Chapter. Through this feeling one can see the world aright. By using the notion ‘aright’ in sentence 6.54, it seems that Wittgenstein implies something ethical. By seeing the world aright, somebody could do right and therefore ethical things. The reason that Wittgenstein does not expand his ideas on this further is revealed in a letter that he sent to Ludwig von Ficker who was a candidate publisher of the *Tractatus*:

[T]he book’s point is ethical.²²² I once meant to include in the preface a sentence which is not in fact there now, but which I will write out for you here, because it will be a key for you. What I meant to write then was this: my work consists of two parts: the one presented here plus all I have not written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one. For the ethical gets its limit drawn from the inside, as it were, by my book; and I am convinced that this is the ONLY rigorous way of drawing that limit.

In short, I believe that where many others today are just gassing, I have managed in my book to put everything firmly into place by being silent about it. (*BLF* 1971 pp.94-95)²²³

The following entries constitute an extension to the above question:

So too it is impossible for there to be sentences of ethics.²²⁴
Sentences can express nothing that is higher. (*TLP* 6.42)

It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words.
Ethics is transcendental.
(Ethics and aesthetics are one and the same). (*TLP* 6.421)

The indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’, which supports the formulation of a nonsense, helps in projecting the moral dimension of the *Tractatus* since we have already seen

²²² This assertion may create surprise to someone who has completed reading the book since the specific work does not deal with issues which traditional ethics discuss such as what is good and bad. Relevant issues with ethics are formulated in a very brief way in the remarks *TLP* 6.4 onwards.

²²³ We encounter this idea in Wittgenstein’s manuscripts: “I never more than half succeed in expressing what I want to express. Actually not as much as that, but by no more than a tenth. That is still worth something. Often my writing is nothing but ‘stuttering’” (*CV* p.18).

²²⁴ In the ‘Lecture on Ethics’ in 1929 Wittgenstein states: “Suppose one of you were an omniscient person and therefore knew all the movements of all the bodies in the world dead or alive and that he also knew all the states of mind of all human beings that ever lived, and suppose this man wrote all he knew in a big book, then this book would contain the whole description of the world; and what I want to say is, that this book would contain nothing that we would call an *ethical* judgment or anything that would logically imply such a judgment [...] There are no propositions which, in any absolute sense, are sublime, important, or trivial” (*PO* pp.39-40).

Wittgenstein mentioning to Ludwig von Ficker that ‘the book’s point is ethical’ (*BLF* 1971 pp.94-95). Nonsense in the *Tractatus* is important for climbing the Wittgensteinian ladder.²²⁵ In other words, Wittgenstein needs nonsense to transcend it by encouraging us to suspect things through an approach beyond the limits of philosophy.²²⁶ The indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ encourages the paradox. The paradox encourages the reader to think that the only way to ‘escape’ from the notion of non-meaningfulness – of nonsense – is to transcend the sentences of the *Tractatus*, to overcome the indeterminacy, just as Wittgenstein did. What needs to be clarified at this point is that the paradox does not constitute a problem or some mistake in the whole work since it creates space for mysticism. The overstatement *TLP* 6.54, which is compatible with the remark *TLP* 4.003, essentially encourages the reader to re-read the whole *Tractatus* from the beginning. Through our second reading, we have to take into consideration the crucial notion ‘nonsense’ which characterises the *Tractatus*. This can help us think about all the remarks of this work in a different way. For instance, by reading for the first time the first remark of the *Tractatus* ‘The world is all that is the case’ (*TLP* 1), we could satisfy our demands concerning the sense of the specific sentence having in mind that we have to read the whole work to create a clear thought. Through the second reading, we have the opportunity to re-think the remarks of the *Tractatus* in a more suspicious and demanding way concerning their sense. Moreover, it is possible for the reader to pose the crucial questions: (a) what do we mean by the term ‘sense’ and (b) what are the conditions that have to be fulfilled so that a sentence has

²²⁵ Later he states: “I might say: If the place I want to get to could only be reached by way of a ladder, I would give up trying to get there. For the place I really have to get to is a place I must already be at now. Anything that I might reach by climbing a ladder does not interest me” (*CV* p.7).

²²⁶ It seems that what Wittgenstein means by the term ‘philosophy’ is a Kantian idea, which is a discipline that reveals a necessary truth about the world. While science examines how things happen, philosophy examines how the world can or cannot be.

sense?²²⁷ Both of the above questions require elements of an ontology. In the case of the *Tractatus*, as we have already seen, these elements are the Tractarian objects which remain intentionally unclarified since Wittgenstein is more neutral than committed for the character of the notion ‘object’. As we have already explained it is left unclarified whether objects include universals, that is to say, properties and relations. This leaves open the question of what kind of entities there exist and in terms of language which are the corresponding kinds of their expressions. Additionally, we are not explained the idea of form – the idea of possibilities. As a result of the above, questions (a) and (b) are not clarified. It seems that Wittgenstein tries to teach us ‘to pass from a piece of disguised nonsense to something that is patent nonsense’ (*PI* I:§464). Philosophy functions as a prerequisite in this process which, as Wittgenstein implies, does not produce any truth since anybody can see the limits of the world in his own way. What the *Tractatus* shows us is to suspect the limits of the world. At the same time, the *Tractatus* succeeds in showing that we can see the world aright transcending sense. Through this idea the correctness or incorrectness of any theory of language disappears and what arises is a better consciousness of the limits of language, the limits of thought and the limits of the world. The indeterminacy of the specificity of the notion ‘object’ encourages us to suspect and create a better consciousness of the world. The obscurity of the notion ‘object’ indirectly encourages the idea that it is impossible to describe the substance of the empirical world in which we live or of any possible world. Moreover, the indeterminacy of the notion ‘object’ encourages the idea that in the world there is something mystical which is non-understandable. It is very ambitious to assert that a specific type of things can cover and penetrate the whole world. What we can do is to

²²⁷ Wittgenstein later in *The Blue Book* poses the question ‘what is the meaning of a word’; a question which raises other relevant questions like how is meaning explained and how the word ‘meaning’ is used (*BB* p.1).

take a step beyond our thought about the world and this can be realized through a mystical feeling something that requires a special kind of poetic mind.

Surprisingly, the idea which makes the *Tractatus* special, mysterious and attractive for a moment is presented to constitute a mistake since the assertion that objects can be discovered is proposed. Wittgenstein, in some of his writings after the publication of the *Tractatus* states that he had thought that ‘the elementary propositions could be specified at a later date’ (WVC p.182) and that he expected with Russell “to find the first elements, or “individuals”, and thus the possible atomic sentences, by logical analysis” (WLC 35 p.11). This constitutes a transfer from a feeling of depth of an unknown object to a feeling of depth of a feasible final analysis. Having in mind the two passages above (WVC p.182 and WLC 35 p.11), loosely speaking, someone could claim that on a first level Wittgenstein appears to have forgotten the notion of the ‘ghost’ of the object he created in the *Tractatus* since that period (after 1929) Wittgenstein had a completely different conception of the notion ‘Gegenstand’ from that which he had in the *Tractatus*.²²⁸ All this he affirms through these two quotations which are as if they stand in front of the whole spirit of the *Tractatus* perplexedly. On the other hand, on a second level, strictly speaking, the feeling of depth which is given in *Tractatus* with the notion of ‘object’ now seems to function in a different way on purpose. The indeterminacy of the notion of ‘object’ functions as a kind of promise – a commitment of a crucial

²²⁸ In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein abandons the notion of the ghost of the Tractarian object and refers to ordinary objects. He escapes from *Tractatus*’ ideas such as: (a) a sentence has only one complete analysis (TLP 3.25), (b) each sentence has a specific sense (TLP 4.064), (c) reality and language are constituted by simple elements (TLP 2.02), (d) a sentence is a Bild of reality (see PI I §115) and (e) language has essence. Thus, by liberating himself from some of his claims in the *Tractatus*, he manages to talk about language issues with more ease by providing specific examples (see PI I: § 1, 7, 10, 11, 23, 33, 34, 38, 117, 601, 626, 669 and PI II: pp.160, 168, 179). Therefore, *PI* refers to the empirical world (to knowledge that we can have between linguistic and non-linguistic items) and it cancels the mysterious logical space of the *Tractatus* (a special mental link between objects and names).

clarification since something is left unclarified to be explained later. Now Wittgenstein thinks that there is something to be discovered in the world. This creates the feeling of a different depth and encourages the idea that even things which seem to be impossible in principle could be possible. Thinking about the notion 'objects', it is essentially an effort to perceive the non-perceptible (ungraspable) since the *Tractatus* pretends that it supports the idea about a true conception of analysis. Wittgenstein appears to envision a possibility to know objects. The promise of analysis allows the rise of a different feeling of depth beyond the feeling which is created because of the indeterminacy of objects. This means that it would be possible to analyse everything by making it clear so that each necessary truth is visible as in a tautology. Therefore, in a way, a hope is left that it is a possible requirement for analysis to be executed, giving thus its ultimate constituents, that is, objects.

EPILOGUE

Through this project, I have demonstrated to a high degree the darkness of the *Tractatus*, focusing on the notion ‘object’. I have explained some of the difficulties that arise because of the unspecificity of the notion ‘object’ as well as the reasons why Wittgenstein wrote this work in this way. Perhaps it is not an exaggeration to assert that the *Tractatus* constitutes a work which is written in such a way that makes it impossible to be interpreted as other traditional philosophical works. The *Tractatus* succeeds in holding its darkness, something which makes the work itself especially appealing. The things which are left undetermined in the *Tractatus* cannot become clear through further research. Since no examples of objects are given (I say this without meaning that he *should* provide them) but only some of their properties which in some cases contradict each other,²²⁹ this looks as if we have a list of characteristics which objects must meet. For instance, we refer to a kind of things which, among others, are simple (*TLP* 2.02), in a sense they are colourless (*TLP* 2.0232), they are unalterable and subsistent (*TLP* 2.0271), they make up the substance of the world (*TLP* 2.0201), what names stand for; but we cannot say that they exist or that they do not exist (the German term is ‘bestehen’ and not ‘existieren’ (exist) (*TLP* 2.0121)), whatever those characteristics mean. What we know with regard to objects is only some of their properties without knowing what objects are. This means that we know some characteristics of an unknown thing. Therefore, what we are inclined to do is to build the possible ways in which the *Tractatus* is possible. But that which seems to be happening is that nothing could meet the conditions which are required of objects.

²²⁹ As we have already seen in the second Chapter there are some passages in the *Tractatus* that encourage the idea that Tractarian objects are particulars and some other passages that encourage the idea that objects are universals. The standard approach for Wittgenstein was to decide either to support one side or the other, but not both of them. If we accept that there is an instability in the sense of object, then the whole thing is unfalsifiable; therefore, it will not be a theory according to Popper’s condition of falsification.

Objects constitute elements not of a theory but of an illusionary theory. In no case can they constitute elements of an actual theory. This is because in the *Tractatus* there is a sense of assertions which could constitute sentences of a theory (in this also contributes the way in which the *Tractatus* is written where remarks are structured with numbers), but the composition of these assertions rather leads to an incomplete theory and never to a complete one since, as I have already asserted among others, that which is formulated is not falsifiable. As I have already explained, if it is not possible to say what objects are, we cannot know their relevant names. Therefore, supposed names can be only arbitrarily assigned to objects without this assignment making sense. Essentially, it is as if we pretend that ordinary names which we use are names in the Tractarian sense, but they are not. Since we realize this, we transfer ourselves to a condition in which the sense name is incomprehensible. That is to say, we have an illusion of a theory because we are transferred through our conception about name by the condition we realize on a first level, where we assume that ordinary words are names and on a second level, where we understand that ordinary words are not names and that we cannot reach names. Additional evidence of the statement of the illusionary theory is the following:

In order to tell whether a Bild is true or false we must compare it with reality'. (*TLP* 2.223)²³⁰

Here, Wittgenstein refers to the method which we could follow in case we would attempt to find out whether a Bild is true or false. It is about a method which has to do with a completely theoretical process (that is, in the case in which we could) and not with an actual process. This is because we cannot know what objects are. Therefore, this would make sense if we could complete the analysis, something that as I have already explained is impossible. Realizing that *Tractatus* does not offer a falsifiable theory but

²³⁰ In no case is a Bild true *a priori* (*TLP* 2.224 and 2.225). Wittgenstein distances himself from Kant's idea that there are synthetic *a priori* truths (that state how the world must, can and cannot be) something that has as a requirement an intuition about reality.

an illusory theory without giving examples for objects it succeeds to create a feeling of depth in his readers to think more about the final constituents of language and the world that hides the secrets of the nature of language as well as the nature of the world. This is achieved in a structured way since on a first level, the opportunity is given to the reader of the *Tractatus* to think about the ontological frame of this work by focusing on the crucial notion ‘object’ and on a second level, to think about the purity of language. What I have to clarify here is that the view that Wittgenstein is not interested in epistemology is a myth, especially in the case of scepticism. Although the *Tractatus* does not say a lot about epistemology, it succeeds in leading its readers to think more deeply about this issue and to suspect the limits of knowledge something that Wittgenstein himself must have done. What the *Tractatus* says is that the ‘theory of knowledge is the philosophy of psychology’ (*TLP* 4.1121).²³¹ Simultaneously, the *Tractatus* does not permit philosophical scepticism to doubt objects. At the same time, he does not tell us how things must be, therefore, Wittgenstein does not presume the investigated project that someone would execute.

The *Tractatus* essentially pretends the being of objects and the investigated project which is to maintain the whole mystery is encouraged by the paradox being prepared from the first remarks of the work and reaches its peak with its last remarks. The *Tractatus* offers an illusion theory which pretends that we know what simple objects are by treating all sentences as if they were simple sentences. This makes the *Tractatus* look

²³¹ This idea is formulated in Russell’s *Theory of Knowledge* as follows: “It is obvious that much of epistemology is included in psychology. The analysis of experience, the distinctions between sensation, imagination, memory, attention, etc., the nature of belief or judgment, in short all the analytic portion of the subject, in so far as it does not introduce the distinction between truth and falsehood must, I think, be regarded as strictly part of psychology. On the other hand, the distinction between truth and falsehood, which is plainly relevant to theory of *knowledge*, would seem to belong to logic [...] it would seem, therefore, that it is impossible to assign to the theory of knowledge a province distinct from that of logic and psychology” (Russell 2002a p.46).

as if it can do it. As a result of this, we confidently create an illusionary idea for what could be the case. In the *Tractatus* there is a kind of complicity which denies speculations and this constitutes part of what cannot be said. This is done on purpose and it is part of the mechanism of language. In the theory's heart of the *Tractatus*, there is the idea that language is meaningful in virtue of the astonishment of a correlation between the facts in virtue of the correlations between elements. The idea of the correlation here is the idea of the stipulation of correlation and this is understandable on the basis that we know what the basic roles are – we know which the objects are and as a result, we can have the relevant stipulations. Finally, that which we know is that we do not know what objects are; therefore, we do not know their stipulations either. What we do is to suppose that there must be some correlation. We begin with something intelligible in virtue of the correlation of the relation and then the correlation of relation is replaced by a mysterious relation. The *Tractatus* seems to offer a theory of language as if we know about language, as if we know about the nature of language something which is not obvious. Roughly speaking, a theory is something explanatory and open to refutation. In the *Tractatus* there is a sense that the theory offered cannot be open to refutation because what is offered in the *Tractatus* is that which is necessarily true.

What we have to keep in mind is that if we consider for a moment that we have discovered what Tractarian objects are, that is to say, if we think that we have reached the formulation of atomic sentences – philosophical sentences, then we have to think that we have led ourselves to a misunderstanding and nothing else. This is because the nature of Tractarian objects requires them to be incoherent, intentionally unapproachable and undiscoverable. As I have explained, Tractarian objects, through their mystery, according to the *Tractatus*, function in a special way pushing us to see the

world aright. Wittgenstein does not believe in an *a priori* intuition in the *Tractatus* but neither does he believe that we need to see what is necessary in the world. What is necessary in the world appears in the grammar of sentences since on a first level, the idea that sentences are isomorphic with the world is projected (in the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein will claim that grammar is not a reflection of the world).²³² This is an indirect way to create an intuition for the world. The feeling of depth is created by the sense as if we understand the necessity of the world and this comes up once we think of grammar²³³ which functions in a sense as a reflection of the world. If we outpace this consideration of grammar being the reflection of the world, we lose this feeling of depth.

The *Tractatus* pushes us to consider that we know what an object is, as if we can check the truthfulness or falsity of a sentence but nothing of these is intelligible. Strictly speaking, there is no process to reach objects or their names and in extension to atomic facts and their relevant sentences. Nevertheless, the fact that the *Tractatus* does not offer a theory does not constitute a problem but it creates prerequisites to think and re-think fundamental philosophical problems beyond a superficial obviousness which they can state to us on a first level. This process helps us move from the idea of an illusionary theory to a special kind of mysticism, that is to say, a silent state of mind which encourages us to think about the possibilities of combinations without judgments.

²³² See *PI* I: §295 and §572.

²³³ In the *PI* Wittgenstein asserts: "Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one. Such an investigation sheds light on our problem by clearing misunderstandings away. Misunderstandings concerning the use of words, caused, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of language.—Some of them can be removed by substituting one form of expression for another; this may be called an "analysis" of our forms of expression, for the process is sometimes like one of taking a thing apart" (*PI* I:§90). Moreover, he states: "A whole cloud of philosophy condensed into a drop of grammar" (*PI* II p.189).

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