10 And here we have the bulwark against a kind of progressive deconstruction of the *Tractatus*: were someone to derive a fantastical "interpretation" from it (that it presented an argument for the oppression of a particular minority, for instance)—the kind that could not support the same sustained dialogical communities that "resolutism" or "the standard reading" have—it would also happen that this interpretation wouldn't succeed in linking up with life at all, at least not any kind of life any of us would recognize.

11 Of course the way that language is "put in play"—as Wittgenstein's work so often demonstrates—is highly varied, often extremely subtle and unexpected, and often not obvious. Keeping this in mind, I do not mean this sentence as a kind of theoretical claim, rather as a statement of an obvious fact. An example from the contrast class would be something like burning a slip of paper on which a machine had printed a word chosen at random from a database (versus, for example, burning a *book!*).

12 It should be obvious how such talk would necessarily run into the type of deconstruction of "private language" that Wittgenstein famously makes in *Philosophical Investigations*.

13 By contrast, one of the most problematic aspects of the substantial conception of nonsense is that it encourages more use and exploration of substantial nonsense, i.e. once one introduces that idea of substantial nonsense, she seems to have to rely upon more and more substantial nonsense to give further exposition.

14 It is important to foreground here my awareness that this paragraph could be seen as an attempt to do the same thing I criticize Bronzo for doing: offering a kind of backdoor argument *for* resolutism. And while I have no particular stake in championing resolutism, if an appreciation for its novelty, etc., and a distaste for ineffabalism render me a resolutist, then so be it. As it is, I couldn't care in the least to argue for a "correct" interpretation of the *Tractatus* (on its conception of nonsense), or whether the Jacobinistic stance the *Tractatus* prompts me to is "justified" by it.

15 The best examples of this, in my thinking, are those of my co-editor, see particularly chapters 6, 7, and 8 of *Philosophy for Life*, London, Continuum, 2007, and his *Applying Wittgenstein*, London, Continuum, 2007.

16 See §308 of *Philosophical Investigations*.

17 See Anat Biletzki's *(Over)Interpreting Wittgenstein*, London, Kluwer, 2003, p. 101.

18 Ibid., p. 101.

19 See p. 425 of Monk's *The Duty of Genius*, New York, Macmillan, 1990.

20 I am indebted to Rupert Read and Silver Bronzo for helpful comments on previous versions of this essay, and for their patience in accommodating my revisions.

6

THE DIALECTIC OF INTERPRETATIONS

Reading Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*

Oskari Kuusela

In a certain sense one cannot take too much care in handling philosophical mistakes, they contain so much truth.

It is never a matter of simply saying, this must be given up.
(Ms112, 99r / Zettel §460, except the last sentence)[1]

This motto is not meant to signal my (over)confidence in identifying what is mistaken or true in the interpretations of the *Tractatus*. But it seems that a fair amount of recent discussion on the *Tractatus* has been carried out in forgetfulness of these cautionary words by its author. The focus has been on excluding particular ideas from the discussion as mistaken, rather than on trying to find ways to incorporate what might be correct in them, even if problematically expressed. Such an approach is in a genuinely philosophical conflict with my own for which a central question is how to understand and do justice to what seems correct in both the negative and positive views advanced by the interpretational parties. (This is not a matter of searching for philosophical compromises, however.) This essay proceeds by playing against each other extant interpretations and tries, in this way, to make progress in solving relevant interpretational problems. Although this method relies heavily on what has already been said by Wittgenstein's interpreters, it is not meant to suggest that finding a satisfactory interpretation of the *Tractatus* wouldn't require bringing new ideas to the discussion. But sometimes novelty may be a matter of combining in a previously unseen way what is already familiar.

More specifically, since the 1990s much of the discussion on the interpretation of the *Tractatus* has assumed the form of a dispute between the proponents of a traditional metaphysical reading and a novel so-called resolute one.[2] According to the former, Wittgenstein's aim is to determine the limits of language by

articulating a theory of the essence of linguistic expression.[3] According to the latter, Wittgenstein's goal is, rather, to question the very possibility of such a theoretical account. But although this characterization of the main interpretive contrast seems accurate as far as it goes, when considering the arguments presented in the debate, one soon feels the need to characterize various positions more precisely. Only in this way is it possible to determine the effectiveness and import of these arguments. Types of resolute readings, for example, seem to differ in their capacity to respond to critiques from the more traditional direction, as I will explain.

In this essay I seek to develop, by examining exegetical as well as philosophical weaknesses and strengths of different interpretations, a version of the resolute reading that incorporates a certain strand of the traditional readings. This strand is their attribution to Wittgenstein of an intention to impart certain very general logical insights, the possibility of which, however, I seek to explain without recourse to the notion of a nonsensical or ineffable theory or truth. As explained in the conclusion, the interpretation put forward here is designed as a response to the conflicting demands that a philosophically viable and at the same time exegetically plausible interpretation of the *Tractatus* is required to meet. I begin with a discussion of the traditional interpretation.

I. Hacker's Ineffability Interpretation and the Role of Nonsense

A leading contemporary proponent of the traditional reading is Peter Hacker.[4] His answer to the problem of why Wittgenstein wrote a nonsensical book, and the philosophical significance of the nonsense he produced, can be summarized as follows. While obvious nonsense is of no real philosophical significance, in the more interesting category of not immediately apparent nonsense a distinction can be drawn between misleading and illuminating nonsense. The former is unself-conscious nonsense that attempts to say what can't be said and in so doing merely misleads. The latter is self-conscious nonsense that serves the purpose of leading the reader to the comprehension of the nature of language and reality, as revealed in what propositions with a sense show but can't say. In the process of illuminating such matters this kind of nonsense is also intended to reveal its own non-sensicalness. Hacker writes: "Illuminating nonsense will guide the attentive reader to apprehend what is shown by other propositions which do not purport to be philosophical; moreover it will intimate, to those who grasp what is meant, its own illegitimacy" (Hacker 1986, pp. 18, 19[5]). Thus, although Hacker recognizes that, in Wittgenstein's view, a nonsensical sentence neither says nor shows anything, he takes Wittgenstein to maintain that something can be intimated, intended, or meant by such a sentence. As he writes: "Apparently what someone means or intends by a remark can be grasped even though the sentence uttered is strictly speaking nonsense" (Hacker 1986, p. 26; cf. p. 18). Indeed, according to Hacker, it is "immediately obvious" on the basis of the *Tractatus*'s text that Wittgenstein "did think that one can *mean* something that cannot be said, but rather expresses

itself in a different way—namely, is *shown* by the features of our language" (Hacker 2000, p. 386; 2001, p. 122).

This account of the function of nonsense seems problematic, however. No doubt a nonsensical sentence can *appear* to have a sense, because one is accustomed to the words which are used in it or for other psychological reasons. (One may associate something with the sounds or ink marks in question.) But insofar as the nonsensicalness of a sentence means that it symbolizes or represents nothing, it remains ultimately unclear how anything meaningful can be expressed by a nonsensical sentence. Indeed, if what well-formed propositions show can't be stated by means of language (*Tractatus* 4.121), then one can't even want to state what such propositions show by means of language. For, if what a nonsensical statement tries to say makes no sense, then it makes no sense to desire to express "that thing" either. In this case there is no real but only an illusory object of desire, as in the case of desiring that mwb£qlkhtp*io. In other words, since a nonsensical sentence has, by definition so to speak, no meaning for its author or for anybody else, there is no meaning to grasp or to desire to communicate with such a sentence. This problem with Hacker's interpretation of the role of the *Tractatus*'s nonsensical sentences can be characterized more specifically as follows.

Essentially, Hacker takes the *Tractatus* as intended to convey what the book would most naturally be taken to convey—a philosophical theory of language and the bounds of sense (see Hacker 1986, pp. 56 ff.)—were it not for the author's statement that the book is nonsense. In a certain sense, readings of the type Hacker represents may therefore be described as not taking entirely seriously the presumed nonsensicality of the book. One maintains simultaneously that something—for example, what propositions show—can't be described but provides a description of it anyway. This is what Diamond has provocatively characterized as chickening out and what Goldfarb has suggested calling "irresoluteness" instead.[6]

More specifically, according to Hacker, the book contains a theory of representation (the picture theory of proposition) from which it follows that formal properties of symbols can't be talked or thought about (Hacker 1986, pp. 20, 21). Consequently, many remarks in the book, i.e. those appearing to talk about the formal or necessary features of language or of the world, are nonsense. But in Hacker's view, this doesn't mean that, according to Wittgenstein, such remarks couldn't lead us to the comprehension of truths of some sort. Rather, the theory, or the line of argument which leads the reader to realize the nonsensicalness of the book constitutes the famous ladder of the *Tractatus*. To climb up the ladder is to follow the argument of the book, and to throw the ladder away is to draw the conclusion that what is said in the book is nonsense. After one has thrown away the ladder something remains, however. The journey through the book provides the reader with an understanding of the essence of language and the world, of "what cannot be said, but manifests itself in what can be said", i.e. shows itself (Hacker 2000, p. 365; 2001, p. 117; cf. 1986, p. 26). As Hacker writes: "one is left holding on to some ineffable truths about reality after one has thrown away

the ladder" (Hacker 2000, p. 357; 2001, p. 105). And: "there are, according to the author of the *Tractatus*, ineffable truths that can be apprehended" (Hacker 2000, p. 368; 2001, p. 123; cf. 2000, pp. 353, 357). Although Hacker, therefore, takes Wittgenstein at one level to reject the notion of philosophical truths, he nevertheless takes him to retain it at the level of ineffable truths. Hence, also the nomination "ineffability reading" for Hacker's interpretation.

But it is the self-destructive nature of Wittgenstein's presumed argument that makes it problematic. For, in the end the notion of such an argument seems incomprehensible. There is no such thing as a nonsensical argument, because one can't draw any logical conclusions from what looks like an argument but is really nonsense. Indeed, insofar as Wittgenstein's doctrine of language could demonstrate the nonsensicalness of philosophical doctrines concerning the necessary features of language and the world, he would have managed to construct a very extraordinary doctrine: one capable of demonstrating its own nonsensicalness. (Finally, we would have a bootstrapping success story in philosophy!) But this leads to a paradox: if the doctrine is nonsense, it doesn't demonstrate anything; in order to demonstrate something it must not be nonsense.

Thus, on Hacker's interpretation, the *Tractatus* ends in a paradox. If one takes seriously the nonsensicalness of nonsense, one must admit that nonsense can't express any thoughts or truths, including thoughts about what propositions show. Yet, Hacker has no suggestions beyond this as to what we should learn from the paradox of the book. Rather, it is the book's paradox or inconsistency that, according to him, explains the later Wittgenstein's dissatisfaction with it. "That the book is inconsistent, that its position can't be upheld, is undeniable—as its author later realized. It is, as he remarked, like a clock that does not work" (Hacker 2000, p. 383, n10; 2001, p. 104, n9). But is it plausible that Wittgenstein would have been unaware of such a straightforward inconsistency that makes the point of the book plainly incomprehensible? I find this hard to believe.[7] Indeed, if the book contains a paradox of the above type, it is difficult to see how Wittgenstein could have described it as a clock that doesn't tell the right time, rather than as a bag of junk professing to be a clock. (For Wittgenstein's clock comparison, see Anscombe 1971, p. 78; cf. Hacker 2000, p. 359; 2001, p. 108). Here it is also important that there is no textual evidence that, according to Wittgenstein, his book fails *because of its paradox*, whatever faults he came to see in it. Certainly, the last remark of the book, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent," taken as it stands is not a statement or acknowledgement of a paradox. Rather, it seems a tautology.[8]

So, perhaps Wittgenstein didn't conceive the role of the *Tractatus*'s nonsensical sentences along the lines of the metaphysical interpretation, as attempting to convey ineffable theoretical insights about language that would then constitute a foundation for an activity of philosophy as logical analysis. (It is hard to see how, on such a reading, the activity of logical analysis could ever get off the ground given that the theory on which it is based is nonsense.) In order, therefore, to avoid

the sterility of the outcome of the ineffability interpretation, and to find out what the paradox *might be meant to do* or *make the reader to do*, we seem required to break with the idea that the *Tractatus* intends to put forward a theory. At this point it is in place to note a certain relevant ambiguity of "to mean." Although "Milk me sugar" (as it stands) doesn't mean anything, for example, gape and stare at me, I can nevertheless say it and *mean* it to have the effect on you that you gape and stare at me—in contrast to, for example, the effect that you should milk me sugar (see *Philosophical Investigations* §498). Similarly the *Tractatus*'s nonsensical sentences might be intended to have a particular effect on the reader, which, however, don't entail that what they seem to say is meaningful, in particular that they have an ineffable meaning.

An alternative to Hacker's interpretation of the role of nonsense in the *Tractatus* has been suggested by the resolute reading[9] to which I now turn.

II. Conant's and Diamond's Reading: Rethinking the Role of Nonsense

James Conant and Cora Diamond reject the view that the goal of the *Tractatus* would be to provide insights into ineffable metaphysical truths. Rather than trying to indicate anything about such truths, the book is designed to enable its reader to get rid of the temptation to put forward philosophical doctrines by showing that such attempts lead to nonsense. As Conant puts it: "the aim of Tractarian elucidation is to reveal (through the employment of mere nonsense) that what appears to be substantial nonsense is mere nonsense," where substantial nonsense would serve the "conferral of insight into inexpressible features of reality," just as Hacker takes nonsense to lead us to understand what sensible propositions show.[10]

An advantage of this interpretation is that it doesn't involve the problematic notion of a nonsensical theory or ineffable truth. The nonsensical sentences of the book are not thought to bring to view any philosophical truths. They are merely meant to make manifest their own nonsensicalness and that of the apparent philosophical doctrines which find their expression in these sentences. Thus, the goal of Wittgenstein's book is to change the way its reader conceives of philosophy. It is designed to introduce a philosophical method or a program for philosophical clarification which consists in making apparent that and how philosophical sentences, which we are inclined to take as making sense, dissolve into nonsense upon closer examination. (I will call this method "elucidation-with-nonsense"). Conant explains the idea as follows: "The *Tractatus* seeks to bring its reader to the point where he can recognize sentences within the body of the work as nonsensical, not by means of a theory that legislates certain sentences out of the realm of sense, but rather by bringing more clearly into view for the reader the life with language he already leads—by harnessing the capacities for distinguishing sense from nonsense . . . implicit in the everyday practical mastery of language that the reader already possesses" (Conant 2002, pp. 423, 424). Thus, the

nonsensicalness of philosophical doctrines as well as of each individual sentence of the *Tractatus* is to be exposed by relying on the readers' non-theoretical or pre-theoretical understanding of what it makes sense to say (Conant 2002, pp. 423, 424).[11] In Conant's and Diamond's view, unlike Hacker's, the term "nonsense" in the *Tractatus* therefore is not a theoretical term whose content is determined by a theory of language articulated by Wittgenstein.

Relating to this, Conant and Diamond emphasize the piecemeal character of Wittgenstein's clarifications. What the *Tractatus* offers is not a general criterion of sense on the basis of which the nonsensicality of statements of a particular type may be determined in a wholesale manner. Rather, to determine whether a statement is nonsensical requires the investigation of what kind of use exactly is made of it or of the expressions that make up the statement. "On our view of the *Tractatus*, we are not supposed to derive from some theory of meaning (or from anything else) conditions of logical legitimacy of some sort, violation of which would put us into a position to infer nonsensicality or to infer that some word or words in a sentence lacked meaning" (Conant and Diamond 2004, p. 60). Diamond writes: "There is no once-and-for-all demonstration in the *Tractatus* that sentences of such-and-such sorts are nonsensical: the task of clarifying propositions is a one-by-one task." And: "Only the activity of philosophical clarification, or of attempting philosophical clarification, can reveal whether, in a particular case, there is or isn't something that we mean."[12]

Corresponding to their rejection of the view that the *Tractatus* articulates a theory, Conant and Diamond maintain that the book doesn't contain an argument. There is no argument the reader is, first, supposed to understand and be illuminated by, but which then collapses into nonsense, while—somehow—leaving the reader in an illuminated state, as if the collapse hadn't taken place. Instead, there is only the illusion of an argument (see Conant 2002, p. 422). Thus, the nonsensicalness of the *Tractatus* doesn't create a problem for Conant and Diamond, as it does for Hacker. Accordingly, given that Conant and Diamond don't take the book to contain an argument, they don't read the last remark of the *Tractatus*, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent," as a *conclusion*. Rather, it is an invitation to philosophize in a certain way. The *Tractatus* puts forward a program for future philosophy, but this future doesn't start only *after* this book. It is meant to begin with the book itself, with the reader's response to it: with her beginning to philosophize in a novel way. This is then what the book is meant to *do* to its reader. It is meant to make her begin anew in philosophy.

This last observation provides us with yet another way of contrasting Conant's and Diamond's interpretation with Hacker's, it being characteristic of the latter that it emphasizes a distinction between philosophy as it is preached and as it is practiced in the *Tractatus*. According to Hacker, the *Tractatus* is the swansong of the old metaphysical philosophy. It promises something new, but doesn't yet exercise this new philosophy (Hacker 1986, pp. 12, 27, 156). Conant and Diamond, by contrast, read the *Tractatus* as exemplifying a new way of philosophizing: "His

aim, in writing that book, was to bring metaphysics to an end; and the method of clarification he thereby sought to practice, to achieve that end, was to be one that was itself free of all metaphysical commitments" (Conant and Diamond 2004, p. 84). More specifically, according to Conant, rather than laying down a theoretical foundation for a philosophical program, the book exemplifies or exhibits a program for philosophical clarification: "The *Tractatus* doesn't put forth a doctrine but only an example of an activity."[13] I will return below to this contrast between the interpretations which, spelled out in a different way, will be of importance to the interpretation I seek to articulate.

III. Hacker's Critique of Resolute Readings and Beyond

While having inspired many to study the *Tractatus* from a new point of view, Conant's and Diamond's reading has also raised vehement objections. Probably the most well-known of these is Hacker's critique in *The New Wittgenstein*, where he raises a number of objections against resolute readings (mainly Diamond's). In this essay I'll discuss only what seem to be the most serious objections, these being at the same time the ones relevant for the development of the interpretation I propose.[14]

A key difficulty for the resolute reading, Hacker argues, is that it leads to the loss of the philosophical insights into the logic of language Wittgenstein's book appears to contain.[15] In the light of the resolute reading, what should one think, for instance, about the insight apparently given expression in the book that logical constants in Frege's and Russell's sense do not represent, a conception which Wittgenstein characterizes as his fundamental idea (*Tractatus* 4.0312)? Does the book contain a critique of Frege's and/or Russell's views on logic? Does it seek to clarify what they get wrong, advancing positive views on logic such as the mentioned view regarding logical constants or the view of the propositions of logic as tautologies, rather than maximally general truths? To Hacker it seems that if the book is nonsense that doesn't hint at ineffable truths, then all such "hard won insights into the nature of logic" are lost (Hacker 2000, pp. 368, 369; 2001, pp. 123, 124; cf. p. 108). As he sums up his concern: "Throwing away the ladder is one thing, throwing away the baby together with the bathwater is another" (Hacker 2000, p. 369; 2001, p. 124).

But is it true that a resolute reading necessarily leads to throwing away the logical insights that the *Tractatus* seems to contain? Contrary to what Hacker suggests, it is not that resolute readers haven't discussed the *Tractatus*'s logical views, or recognized the need to deal with them.[16] Unless they are contradicting themselves, it must therefore be possible for them to address such issues, and a resolute reading doesn't make it necessary to deny that the *Tractatus* constitutes a contribution to (the philosophy of) logic. This leads us to the question: how are logical insights expressed in the *Tractatus*? How should one explain the possibility of logical views being expressed in a book whose author declares it to be nonsense?

We may begin addressing this issue by asking: does doing justice to the *Tractatus*'s logical insights require one to hold that Wittgenstein puts forward a *theory* (true/false theoretical assertions or claims) about logic, as Hacker maintains? That is, can one proceed from the acknowledgment that the *Tractatus* contains insights about logic to the assertion that: "The author of he *Tractatus* was explicitly committed to a host of claims about logic, language, thought, and the logical structure of the world, which cannot be stated in well-formed sentences, but are shown by them" (Hacker 2000, p. 383, n10; 2001, p. 104, n9). In other words, if one accepts that Wittgenstein's book contains insights about the logic of language, is one forced—and indeed justified—to consider these insights as the expression of ineffable truths and Wittgenstein as committed to claims that can't be stated? Crucially, if there are other ways to express philosophical insights besides making claims or theoretical assertions, as I will argue in the following section, then there is a gap in Hacker's argument against the resolute reading. His conclusion that the *Tractatus* must be seen as putting forward an ineffable doctrine doesn't follow. Furthermore, as explained in Section I, a theory-account seems to fare very poorly as an explanation of the book's communication of logical insights. This is a reason to doubt that the logical insights in the book must constitute a set of claims.

Similarly, contrary to what Hacker seems to assume, it doesn't in any obvious way follow from Wittgenstein's acknowledging that there is something that can't be said that there are ineffable *truths*. More specifically, it doesn't follow from there being something that propositions show but can't say that there are truths that can't be stated. To make this transition from there being something propositions show to there being ineffable truths is to treat showing as if it were an alternative vehicle for the expression of true thoughts, as Conant points out (Conant 2002, p. 421). But this is either to ignore Wittgenstein's distinction between saying and showing, or to make saying and showing collapse into each other, given his identification of what propositions say with what can be true or false (*Tractatus* 2.21, 4.021, 4.022). Here it is also notable that Wittgenstein himself makes no attempt to spell out a sense in which what propositions show would constitute a truth of some kind, philosophical or otherwise. Thus, just as it is an interpretational idea without any direct textual support that the *Tractatus*'s failure lies in it containing a paradox, so the view that what is shown is a kind of truth is not supported by any explicit textual evidence.

What about possible resolute ways of making room for logical insights in the *Tractatus*? From the point of view of resolute readings, Wittgenstein's logical clarifications are, essentially, to be understood as aiming to *remind* the reader of something she already knows as a language user. What then needs to be worked out is how such reminders could be seen as leading to appropriate kinds of insights about the logic of language. For, even if the conception of clarifications as reminders is accepted, there are further questions concerning the more specific nature of such clarifications, for example concerning their relation to true/false theoretical statements.

A potential problem concerning the nature of reminders relates to the idea of their piecemeal character. Although I do regard Conant's and Diamond's recognition of the piecemeal nature of clarifications as very important, it doesn't seem to exhaust what Wittgenstein was trying to achieve in the *Tractatus*, or how he conceived philosophical clarification at this time (see Section V below). That is, the characterization of clarification as a piecemeal activity seems incomplete as an account of the *Tractatus*'s view of what logical clarification can achieve. This, I believe, is what makes it hard to see how one could resolutely respond to Hacker's challenge relating to the *Tractatus*'s logical insights. What is at stake is the generality of logical clarifications, the problem being that Conant's and Diamond's view of logical clarification as a case-by-case activity leaves it unclear how one could establish anything general about the logic of language or the logical role of expressions. General insights, of course, are what a logical theory would establish (although a nonsensical theory can't establish anything), and even if one accepts that piecemeal clarifications can offer some kind of logical insights, one might still worry about the generality that can be reached this way. This concern about how to explain the generality of the *Tractatus*'s logical insights might be seen as a way to rearticulate Hacker's worry about resolute readings.

More specifically, against the idea of clarification as a piecemeal activity one might object that, when Wittgenstein makes the point that logical connectives do not stand for anything, he is not merely concerned to point out, for example, that to construe "and" as a name in some particular proposition leads to logical difficulties or nonsense. Rather, his point is meant to apply universally to *all* instances of the use of an expression as conjunction. Whenever a sign plays the logical role of conjunction it is not functioning as a referring expression. Similarly, his point is that negation *never* adds anything to the sense of a sentence, i.e. negation never names anything and nothing in reality *ever* corresponds to the negation sign. And finally, in exactly the same way his conception of the general propositional form (that propositions are (re)presentations or pictures of states of affairs) seems intended to apply universally to *all* propositions. But, if one adopts this view, doesn't it make one's interpretation irrevocably irresolute; is one not here relapsing to ineffable truths about the nature of language? For, what could possibly back up the conception of a general form of propositions but a logical theory? (See Goldfarb 1997, p. 72.) To get clearer about this, and the problem about the generality of clarifications, it is useful to distinguish between different types of resolute readings with respect to what kind of guidelines or constraints they take Wittgenstein to lay down for logical analysis, or the related question of whether the early Wittgenstein assumed that there is something like a canonical concept-script: a notation that can be applied to clarify *any* logical unclarity, and which is, in this sense, "reflective of *the* logical order of thinking," as Floyd formulates it (Floyd 2007, p. 195; see also Floyd 2001).

Here one group of resolute readers, including Conant and Diamond, maintains that the *Tractatus*'s conception of logical analysis does ultimately

be a general propositional form shared by all propositions which is assumed in logical analysis. This conception of the logic of propositions guides logical analysis as a requirement of what completely analyzed propositions must be like. Diamond writes about the *Tractatus*: "What is metaphysical there is not the content of some belief but *the laying down of a requirement*, the requirement of logical analysis. . . . The metaphysics of the *Tractatus*—metaphysics not ironical and not cancelled— is in the requirements which are internal to the character of language as language, in [there] being a general form of sentence, in all sentences having this form" (Diamond 1991, p. 19).[17] This is also where Conant and Diamond take the *Tractatus*'s failure to lie: "there was an entire metaphysics of language embodied in his earlier method of clarification" (Conant and Diamond 2004, p. 84). More precisely, although it wasn't Wittgenstein's intention to put forward a theory of language, he did, nevertheless, do so unwittingly, relapsing to philosophical theorizing. As they write:

> Resolute readers hold that Wittgenstein, when he wrote the *Tractatus*, did not take the procedure of clarification, as he then conceived it, to depend on anything more than the logical capacities that are part of speaking and thinking. The activity of truth-functional analysis was taken by him not to depend on any theory of language put forward in the book; similarly with the use of translation into a "concept-script" in which logical equivocation was impossible. It is important here to distinguish between taking Wittgenstein to have unwittingly failed to have got free of metaphysical preconceptions (as resolute readers may) and taking him to have *intended* to put forward a metaphysical view (as standard readers do).
> *(Conant and Diamond 2004, p. 64)*

So, Conant and Diamond do attribute to Wittgenstein, in connection with their account of the *Tractatus*'s failure, a commitment to certain very general views about the logic and nature of language, although they don't think his *purpose* was to put forward a theory of language. The result of distinguishing in this way between Wittgenstein's intentions and his actual achievement is that the *Tractatus* no longer appears (in Goldfarb's words) to wear its inconsistency on its sleeve. Now Wittgenstein's mistake can be thought of as an expression of "'deep tensions' in the work" (Goldfarb 1997, p. 64; see note 7). His doctrine is contained in his views on philosophical clarification as logical analysis, a method that was supposed to take us beyond philosophical doctrines. As I've put it elsewhere, in the *Tractatus* "metaphysics dresses in the gown of methodology and takes refuge in the philosophical method Wittgenstein spells out" (Kuusela 2008, p. 65; cf. chapter 3).

Another group of resolute readers, however, denies any such commitment on Wittgenstein's part. Floyd proposes an interpretation from the point of view of which "the very idea of a canonical, *correct* concept-script . . . would be seen to be an idea Wittgenstein was trying to overcome in the *Tractatus*" (Floyd 2007, p. 195).

"As I see it Wittgenstein never insisted on, but instead resisted, the idea that thoughts must be imagined to be expressible, in principle, in a single universally applicable, logically fully perspicuous 'ideal' language" (Floyd 2007, pp. 199, 200). If so, then apparently Wittgenstein isn't to be read as committed to there being a general propositional form as a component part of the framework for logical analysis in a sense that makes this commitment ultimately a metaphysical one. Accordingly, resolute readers of the latter type must seek to explain the *Tractatus*'s failure in some other way, not in terms of Wittgenstein's unintended commitment to a theory of the nature of language. Read and Deans propose to call a reading that rejects the idea of a canonical notation "strong resolutism" (Read and Deans 2003, pp. 248, 249–250). I shall adopt this terminology, without, however, assuming further similarities in detail between, for example, Floyd's and Read and Dean's readings.[18]

Which type of a resolute reading should one endorse, if one were to adopt one? If clarification is *always* (in any form it might be practiced) a piecemeal activity, then strong resolutism seems more consistent. For it is unclear how offering piecemeal clarifications could ever commit Wittgenstein to such general views about language that Conant and Diamond attribute to him. This is a point where there appears to be a gap in their reading: Conant and Diamond attribute to Wittgenstein a general claim about the nature (logic) of language, but don't explain how clarification as he understands it could result in a commitment to such a claim. (Perhaps this shouldn't be characterized as merely a gap, but a tension between the way they describe the method employed in the *Tractatus* and its failure. I'll discuss this issue shortly in relation to Conant's writings.) Indeed, even though there seems to be very good evidence that the later Wittgenstein thought his early philosophy *was* committed to a tacit doctrine about language (see Conant and Diamond 2004, pp. 84, 96 n80; Kuusela 2008, chapter 3), this can't alone settle the matter. Such external evidence may indicate that the early Wittgenstein was committed to a doctrine about language. Nevertheless, an account *in terms of the text of the Tractatus is still required* to explain how exactly this commitment found its way into his philosophy. If it came in through a back door, where is that door? The lack of such an account is what I mean by the gap in Conant's and Diamond's interpretation.

Another way to explain the problem for the Conant–Diamond interpretation is by reference to Conant's account of the *Tractatus*'s method as elucidation-with-nonsense (as I proposed to call it above). For, given the way Conant characterizes the method employed by the *Tractatus*, it seems that he can't consistently ascribe to it a failure of the kind described in quotations from Conant and Diamond (2004). The problem is that the method of elucidation-with-nonsense, as described in "The Method of the *Tractatus*," seems to match Wittgenstein's aspiration to abandon philosophical theorizing so well as not to leave any room for a relapse to doctrines. That is, insofar as one takes Wittgenstein's purpose to be only to introduce a method of elucidation-with-nonsense through examples, i.e. one

understands him as engaged in an activity of clarifying why some philosophical thesis or another collapses into nonsense with the purpose of illustrating a method of clarification, there is no reason to ascribe to him any doctrinal commitments. To exemplify a method by showing how it works in particular cases is not yet to commit oneself to a doctrine about what philosophy must be or what language must be. For, a string of examples *need not* be understood as implying any doctrines about the necessary features of whatever is exemplified, even if philosophers traditionally tend to understand examples in this way: as illustrating an essence common to what the examples exemplify. Rather, one can only ascribe doctrinal commitments to Wittgenstein insofar as one interprets the role of his examples as being used for the purpose of setting up an allegedly universally applicable method of logical analysis that embodies a conception of *the* essence of propositions, i.e. a doctrine about the logic of language.

That is, if the *Tractatus* can be described as making a claim about what philosophy and its method *must* be, or what kind of form logical analysis *must always* take, then there are grounds for saying that it did fail to abandon philosophical doctrines. But to maintain that Wittgenstein makes such a claim is to see him as engaged in something more than mere elucidation-with-nonsense in Conant's sense. To see the *Tractatus* as (actually, unwittingly) committed to a doctrine about philosophical method is to see it as preaching a method, i.e. as engaged in a project of introducing an allegedly universally applicable method. This contrasts with an activity of merely practicing and exemplifying a method as an activity which can, in principle, be understood as leaving open the scope of the method's applicability. Hence, to ascribe to the *Tractatus* a failure in the form of a relapse to doctrines requires distinguishing between the method it practices and preaches, although preaching clearly can't be understood here as a matter of laying down the foundations for a method by putting forward an ineffable doctrine, as Hacker maintains (see end of Section II).

More specifically, my suggestion, as explained in the following section, is that we comprehend elucidation-with-nonsense (the method used *in* the *Tractatus*) as a method Wittgenstein employs to introduce a method of logical analysis that involves the use of a canonical concept-script and is intended to be universally applicable in the clarification of any logical unclarity. Here elucidation-with-nonsense emerges as an attempt to establish a philosophical method once and for all and in advance of the latter's employments in particular cases (see Section V). By explaining how Wittgenstein thinks such a method can be introduced without relying on any theoretical claims about language, and seemingly without any commitment to such claims, I hope to fill in the gap in Conant's and Diamond's account or to remove the tension. In this way I aim to open up a way for resolute readers to respond to the revised Hackerian challenge about the generality of logical insights in the *Tractatus*.[19]

IV. How to Respond to the Hackerian Challenge Without Assuming Ineffable Truths

How can one avoid ineffable truths while allowing for the possibility of giving expression to general logical insights, including the (ultimately problematic) insight about general form of propositions? Consider Floyd's suspicion about the possibility of such an account (Floyd 2007, p. 195):

> as Warren Goldfarb pointed out in 1995 (cf. his 1997), Diamond's initial Fregean picture of the *Tractatus* runs the risk of chickening out precisely in accounting for the notion of *analysis*. Logical distinctions would be ineffable yet in some way genuine if they could be shown in the workings of what could be conceived of as a correct or adequate concept-script.

This critical point directed at Diamond is helpful in trying to explain where I think a distinction needs to be drawn. Let us ask: is it correct to maintain, as the above criticism suggests and seems to require one to assume, that to take logical distinctions to be "in some way genuine" is to commit oneself to ineffable facts or truths, i.e. to chicken out? That is, does admitting the genuineness of logical distinctions necessarily mean falling back onto the view that there are ineffable truths or facts about logic? As the beginning of Section III illustrates, Hacker's interpretation takes the answer to these question to be affirmative, this constituting also the basis of his counter arguments against resolute readers.[20] More surprisingly, however, Floyd's and Goldfarb's feeling of the irresoluteness of Diamond's interpretation of the notion of logical analysis in Wittgenstein seems to reveal a similar traditionalist moment in their thinking about the *Tractatus* (see Goldfarb 1997, p. 72). For, insofar as the above criticism of Diamond rests on the mentioned traditionalist presupposition of the identification of genuine with the factual, then the traditional way of thinking has not entirely been left behind, and more work is required in order for us to arrive at a standpoint from which we can fully appreciate Wittgenstein's conception that in logic we are not dealing with truths or facts, ineffable or otherwise. We must be careful not to amalgamate genuineness and factuality: something being genuine (or real) is not always a matter of there being facts or truths about it, including ineffable truths. Rather, a logical distinction might be said to be genuine insofar as its recognition solves a philosophical or logical difficulty or difficulties, but one need not maintain that there are therefore some kinds of truths about it, or that we could speak of it as if about a fact or truth.

Wittgenstein appears to be wrestling with this difficulty in his notebook in the spring of 1915: "Is there a general propositional form? [New paragraph] Yes, if one understands thereby the sole 'logical constant'!" (Ms102, 85r / *Notebooks*, 45e). This quotation can apparently be interpreted in two ways: (1) as an example of the (early) early Wittgenstein's irresolutism or (2) as an expression of the kind of change in the mode of thinking that is required for liberating logic from the

shadow of factuality and truth. In the first sense his acknowledgment of the existence of the general propositional form would be an acknowledgment of a fact that is genuine or real though can't be stated. In the second sense his remarking that the general propositional form is a logical constant would outline a way of comprehending the notion of general propositional form that doesn't involve treating this form as a fact about propositions. I shall pursue the latter line of interpretation, trying to explain in this way how Wittgenstein seeks to redefine the status of logical clarifications as distinct from claims or assertions.

The gist of the interpretation is this. Rather than putting forward a theory or a doctrine about logic, or gesturing at ineffable truths, Wittgenstein's goal in the *Tractatus* is to introduce a particular logical notation, a concept-script—or at least an outline of (some central principles governing) such a notation. (The latter suffices for the purposes of my argument.) This notation, the principles of which the *Tractatus*'s purpose is to make understandable, is then the expression of the logical insights of the early Wittgenstein. This means that these logical insights don't find their expression in (paradoxically nonsensical) theoretical true/false assertions. Rather, they are embodied or built into the notation, whereby it is important that to be in possession of a notation—i.e. certain linguistic or logical tools—is not yet to make a statement (claim, assertion) about anything. For instance, by designing a notation of which it is characteristic that it treats propositions as (re)presentations of facts, i.e. introduces a variable or constant such as the *Tractatus*'s general propositional form, one is *not yet* making any kind of a claim about the nature of propositions. (I return to this issue in Section 5.) Wittgenstein comments on this conception of the expression of philosophical insights in the summer of 1929 (Ms105, 10, 12; continuation of Ms106 on even pages):[21]

> R[amsey] does not comprehend the value I place on a particular notation any more than the value I place on a particular word because he does not see that in it an entire way of looking at the object is expressed; the angle from which I now regard the thing. The notation is the last expression of a philosophical view.

Now, my purpose is not to try to base an interpretation of the *Tractatus* on a remark Wittgenstein makes on his philosophical practice some ten years after the completion of the book. Such support is inconclusive at best and methodologically questionable. Rather, the argument is that this conception of the expression of philosophical or logical insights or views seems able to solve the interpretational problems relating to the *Tractatus*, as described above. It allows one to maintain both that Wittgenstein tries to do something very different from putting forward a theory (theoretical assertions) and at the same time that the book gives expression to certain very general views about the logic of language. (Of course it is also interesting that the author of the *Tractatus* describes this view of the expression of philosophical insights as his own. Notably, there is no indication here that he had

just recently come by this view, and apparently he was still at this time committed to the idea that there is something like *the* correct concept-script (see discussion of the color-exclusion problem at the end of this section).) But in order to see how the above could offer a solution to the interpretational problem, we need to take a few steps back. I begin by relating my suggestion to what Conant, Diamond, Goldfarb, and others have written about related issues.

In explaining their interpretation, Conant and Diamond have made use of a similarity they perceive between Frege and Wittgenstein. Frege, they explain, uses nonsense, things that strictly speaking can't be said and are to be taken with a pinch of salt, for the purpose of the introduction of a logical notation or the principles governing it. As Conant puts it: "The aim of Fregean elucidation is to help us understand the principles of construction that underlie Frege's Begriffsschrift" (Conant 2002, p. 420; cf. Diamond 1991, p. 182). Diamond characterizes such introductory or explanatory remarks as transitional: "We are left after the transition with a logical notation that in a sense has to speak for itself. If we try afterwards to say why it is a good notation, we know that we shall find ourselves saying things which may help our listeners, but which we ourselves cannot regard as the expression of any true thought, speakable or unspeakable" (Diamond 1991, p. 183). Goldfarb sums up this conception, transposing it to the *Tractatus* as an explanation of the clarificatory role of nonsense (Goldfarb 1997, pp. 71, 72):

> An answer suggests itself along Fregean lines. For Frege . . . talk of categorical differences makes no sense; but the illusion of sense, or psychological images the words cause in us, are helpful in getting us to take up the proper language. The sentences are urging us to adopt the [B]egriffsschrift; once we do these remarks can be left behind. . . . So then, for Wittgenstein, we might say that his very detailed remarks serve as an urging to adopt his logical sign-system, a Wittgensteinian [B]egriffsschrift.

Nevertheless, Goldfarb concludes that he can't find a concept-script in the *Tractatus*. Even though we would now have a characterization of a strategy for the introduction of such a notation without making theoretical assertions, somewhat disappointingly Wittgenstein doesn't actually provide us with a concept-script. "Not only does [Wittgenstein] give us no [B]egriffsschrift, he gives us no instruction on how to look for one" (Goldfarb 1997, p. 72). Similarly also Ostrow: "But while it is unquestionable that the notion of canonical Begriffsschrift plays an important (if extremely unclear) role in the *Tractatus*, it is equally certain that Wittgenstein has not actually *provided* us with any such language" (Ostrow 2002, p. 9; the quotations from Floyd in the previous section express the same view). Interestingly, though, the view that Wittgenstein has not provided us with a notation is not universally shared. Russell, for example, appears to have no doubt in his Introduction to the *Tractatus* that it provides us with such a notation, calling it "Wittgenstein's theoretical logical language" (*Tractatus*, p. 16).[22] As for Conant

and Diamond, their position on this question is somewhat unclear (to me). I'm uncertain whether they would say that the *Tractatus* provides us with a concept-script or perhaps only with fragments of such a notation, or merely seeks to clarify the notion of such a script and its philosophical relevance.[23]

Goldfarb's and Ostrow's not being able to spot a concept-script in the *Tractatus*, however, might simply be a problem of their being unable to see what is too close and right in front of their eyes. Or that would be the case, if this suggestion is correct: what we should identify as Wittgenstein's concept-script (or the articulation of its central principles) is what his interpreters have been fond of calling his "picture theory of language", the idea of elementary propositions as pictures of facts that are concatenations of simple names, and complex propositions as the truth-functions of such propositions (see *Tractatus* 3.14, 3.21, 3.22, 4.0311, 5). Thus, the real significance of "the picture theory," according to the proposed interpretation, is that it constitutes a scheme for the logical analysis of propositions.[24] The idea of truth-functional analysis and the idea of analysis of propositions as pictures constitute, so to say, two levels or dimensions of analysis. Wittgenstein is offering, in this sense, a two-level scheme for the analysis of propositions. At the level of complex propositions a truth functional analysis is given which reveals the elementary propositions of which a complex proposition is composed. Such an analysis may then be complemented by an analysis at a sub-sentential level that brings to view the components of which elementary propositions are made up. (Wittgenstein's concept-script, therefore, can be used to clarify simultaneously both conceptual and propositional relations, just as Frege designed his concept-script to be able to do, in contrast to Boole's notation.) Thus, rather than putting forward a speculative theory of the nature of propositions, I suggest, Wittgenstein should be seen only as aiming or intending to outline a framework and a set of tools for logical analysis.[25]

As for the justification of the notation, the criterion of correctness of a concept-script is not, unlike one might perhaps be tempted to think rather naively, a matter of the notation corresponding to facts about language or the world, including ineffable facts shown by well-formed propositions.[26] The correctness of Wittgenstein's notation is not to be thought of in terms of the correctness of a doctrine in this sense. All such stories about correspondence are nonsense, and would involve a "from sideways on"[27] glimpse at the world or language. Rather, the correctness of the notation depends on its capability to dissolve logical and philosophical problems. Wittgenstein makes this point in the *Tractatus*: "we are in possession of the right logical conception, if only everything is all right in our symbolism" (*Tractatus* 4.1213). Accordingly, that "everything is all right in our symbolism," i.e. that the symbolism doesn't give rise to paradoxes and other difficulties, is the only logically legitimate ground for the reader's acceptance of Wittgenstein's concept-script.

In more concrete terms, a legitimate (partial) reason for accepting the notation as correct would be, for instance, the reader's recognition that by not treating the

negation-sign as a name (of a "logical object", a concept or a second-level function) the notation can dissolve certain problems with Frege's notation, or the reader's satisfaction that the *Tractatus*'s way to present logical inference in terms of truth-functional relations is sufficient to render such relations clear, *and so on*. Essentially, what is at stake is the reader's recognition of the dissolution of logical or philosophical problems on the basis of that very same non-theoretic linguistic capacity that allows her to recognize something as philosophically or logically problematic (e.g. paradoxical) in the first place. In this sense, Wittgenstein only needs to appeal, in introducing his concept-script, to what the reader already knows as a language user. This non-theoretical comprehension is the justificatory ground of Wittgenstein's notation.

If my suggestion is accepted, the issue of generality may be explained as follows. What it means for general logical insights, such as the insight that the negation-sign is not a name and that propositions are (re)presentations of states of affairs, to be embodied (to find their expression) in Wittgenstein's concept-script, is simply that this notation treats certain expressions as analyzable in certain (but not other) ways.[28] This is, briefly, a matter of there being certain rules of translation that govern the codification of expressions (signs with a use) into the concept-script, and that not just anything counts as such a translation. (Examples are the possible translations of the words "object" and "no" as they are typically used in English. There are certain limitations as to how these expressions can be rendered in Wittgenstein's concept-script. Neither can be translated as a name.)

Accordingly, simply by introducing its concept-script, the *Tractatus* is already clarifying the logic of language to its reader and imparting general insights into the logic of language. The imparting of such general insights then is, I suggest, the more specific purpose which Wittgenstein's transitional remarks (or his method of elucidation-with-nonsense) serve. They are not only meant to lead the reader to give up logical or philosophical theorising, whilst nothing 'positive' is offered in the place of such theories. Rather, the notation (or its outline) which Wittgenstein introduces is the expression of certain very general logical views—indeed, an expression that doesn't involve the confusion between internal and external properties that Wittgenstein says is characteristic of the philosophical tradition (see *Tractatus* 4.122 ff.).[29] With this explanation of the role of nonsense the gap in Conant and Diamond's interpretation seems closed (the tension dissolved), and an answer to the revised Hackerian challenge to resolute readers has been outlined.[30]

I conclude this section with a quick illustration of how the present interpretation can deflect Hacker's more specific criticisms of resolute readings, even though such criticisms might still be effective against strong resolutism—at least in some forms. (I'll come to the latter point shortly.) Hacker reminds us of the historical fact that Wittgenstein tried to correct the *Tractatus*'s views relating to the independence of elementary propositions upon his return to Cambridge in 1929 and in response to the so-called color-exclusion problem (Hacker 2000, pp. 377

378; 2001, pp. 134, 135: the significance of the color-exclusion problem lies in it showing that the *Tractatus* doesn't get the inferential relations between propositions quite right, i.e. that elementary propositions can't be treated as independent of each other, unlike the truth-table mode of rewriting propositions assumes).[31] These attempts to correct the *Tractatus*'s views Hacker then presents as evidence for Wittgenstein not treating them as nonsense, and as supportive of the interpretation that he did put forward an ineffable doctrine. For why would Wittgenstein have tried to fix something that was meant to be mere nonsense from the start?

But in the light of the present interpretation it is easy to see that Hacker's argument isn't conclusive. Given the proposed reading, there is nothing surprising whatsoever in Wittgenstein having tried to correct his views about elementary propositions with respect to the color-exclusion problem. Only this is not to be seen as an attempt to correct a theory. It is an attempt to fix his notation. Why the color-exclusion problem is problematic for Wittgenstein is that it shows that not "everything is all right in our symbolism" but its design gives rise to logical difficulties. (Again nothing else but our normal linguistic capacities are relied on in our recognition of the problem.)

Nevertheless, Hacker's point seems to remain problematic for strong resolutists (or some of them, at least) who reject the idea that Wittgenstein wanted to put forward a canonical concept-script. For, if Wittgenstein wasn't putting forward a canonical notation, a matter of detail such as color-exclusion would apparently not constitute a significant problem for him. This is the case, for instance, if one understands the *Tractatus*'s concept-script merely as an object of comparison in the sense of the later Wittgenstein, as Read and Deans suggest (see Read and Deans in this volume). In the light of such an interpretation there would be no serious problem with the concept-script not capturing inferential relations in all detail, but the fact that the concept-script doesn't capture some such relations simply marks a point where the object of comparison loses its illuminating power. (That is, if the comparison is not meant to capture language exactly as it is and in every respect, then there is no problem with it not doing so.) Yet, as a matter of historical fact, Wittgenstein did treat the color-exclusion problem as a very serious one. The problem played a significant part in his coming to abandon his early views on logic, as related by Baker (see Baker 1988). Consequently, a difficulty remains for the strong resolutists to explain Wittgenstein's reaction to the problem, insofar as they wish their interpretation to be exegetically plausible.[32]

V. The Strictly-Correct-Method and the Method Employed in the *Tractatus*

At this point (I believe) I've almost reached my goal in this paper. I've explained how one can be resolute about the method employed in the *Tractatus* while simultaneously maintaining that Wittgenstein seeks to impart some very general views about the logic of language. In this final section I will connect the proposed

interpretation with the *Tractatus*'s notion of the strictly-correct-method and issues relating to the failure of Wittgenstein's early philosophy. Among other things, that back door through which metaphysics entered the *Tractatus* still needs to be explicitly marked. I start from what Wittgenstein calls "the only strictly correct method" and characterizes as follows (*Tractatus* 6.53):

> The correct method of philosophy would be this. To say nothing except what can be said, i.e. the propositions of natural science—i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy—and then always when someone wished to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had given no meaning to certain signs in his propositions. This method would be unsatisfying to the other—he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy—but *this* would be the only strictly correct method.

The method described here is not the one employed in the *Tractatus*. The method used in the book involves speaking nonsense, as Wittgenstein explains in the next remark (*Tractatus* 6.54). In the light of this contrast, the interpretation I'm proposing can be explained as follows. The method adopted in the *Tractatus* involves the use of transitional nonsense as a means to introduce the strictly-correct-method. (Put in another way, the *Tractatus* employs the method of elucidation-with-nonsense to introduce the strictly-correct-method.) The strictly-correct-method, in turn, is the method of analysis in terms of Wittgenstein's concept-script, a key concern for Wittgenstein being the introduction of its principles. But what exactly does it mean to endorse the strictly-correct-method? This can be clarified by reference to Wittgenstein's apparent identification of what makes sense with the propositions of natural science in 6.53.

As explained, it is characteristic of Wittgenstein's method of analysis that it treats linguistic expressions as ultimately analyzable into (re)presentation of states of affairs, or factual statements, identifying this class of statements with the propositions of the natural science (*Tractatus* 4.1, 4.11). Given this, it might then seem possible to characterize the class of sensible statements as identical with that of those of natural science. Importantly, however, such general pronouncements about what makes sense are merely, and at best, bits of transitional nonsense. (Such statements exemplify a not-strictly-correct method.) But the reason why such a characterization is nonsensical is not a consequence of a theoretical commitment on Wittgenstein's part, unlike the traditional reading suggest. Rather, the method he is introducing itself excludes such pronouncements, because analyses in terms of the concept-script, i.e. the translation of expressions into it, are always in principle a piecemeal affair. In order to know how statements (linguistic signs used in particular ways) are to be translated into the concept-script we need to pay attention to their use, not just to their surface-grammatical forms. Evidently, this should go also for the identification of a proposition as belonging to natural science. Thus, the remark about such propositions in 6.53 is empty; it doesn't identify a

proposition as sensible or nonsensical, even if we assume only the propositions of natural science will survive analysis. Now we are in a position to characterize the strictly-correct-method as follows.

Accepting Wittgenstein's concept-script as the correct tool of analysis (as a canonical notation) means at the same time accepting certain very general views about the essence and logic of language. (For example, that any sensible proposition can be revealed by analysis to be a (re)presentation of a state of affairs.) This is a "wholesale element" in what the *Tractatus* offers, pertaining to an idea about the form that logical analyses take. A methodological commitment of this kind, however, is, according to the present interpretation, the only thing one is expected to accept wholesale. That is, the only thing *not* decided piecemeal is that translatability into Wittgenstein's concept-script (or even more abstractly to some such canonical notation) should be the means of determining whether a statement makes sense. Whether one accepts this methodological idea, is a question about adopting or abandoning the *Tractatus*'s framework for analysis (or its conception of clarification as logical analysis in terms of some canonical notation).

My interpretation of the *Tractatus*'s failure connects it with the wholesale side of what it offers. (I take this suggestion to be in agreement with Conant and Diamond, despite the differences explained above.) Even though Wittgenstein wasn't supposed to be making a claim about language, but merely putting forward a notation, his commitment to a particular style of analysis, i.e. analysis in terms of a certain notation, does in effect commit him to a doctrine about language. For although one isn't committed to any doctrines about language by simply constructing a notation, to maintain that *all* logical unclarities can be settled through analysis in terms of a particular logical notation is to commit oneself to a thesis about language. This is then how a thesis about the essence of language sneaks into the *Tractatus*. The back door through which metaphysics enters Wittgenstein's early philosophy is his methodological commitment to analysis in terms of the concept-script introduced in the book (or some canonical notation). The back door is the assumption that there should be something like *the* correct method of philosophy, and the dogmatic imposition of a particular framework of analysis onto language as the one to be adopted.[33]

With regard to this, consider this comment on the *Tractatus* by Wittgenstein in 1931 (*Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, p. 184):

> In my book I still proceeded dogmatically. Such a procedure is legitimate only if it is a matter of capturing the features of the physiognomy, as it were, of what is only just discernible—and that is my excuse. I saw something from far away and in a very indefinite manner, and I wanted to elicit from it as much as possible. But a rehash of such theses is no longer justified. I once wrote, the only correct method of doing philosophy consists in not saying anything and leaving it to another person to make a claim. That is the method I now adhere to.

What he saw from far away and in a very indefinite manner was the logical distinction between making a statement and articulating a mode of presentation. Connected with this was an idea of the possibility of a novel kind of approach to philosophy that doesn't involve putting forward theses that treat logical necessity as if such necessities were facts about the objects of investigation. For, this is what the *Tractatus*'s framework for the analysis of language is: a mode of presenting language uses—indeed, a mode into which all sensible uses of language are assumed to be translatable. The indefiniteness of Wittgenstein's grasp of matters, on the other hand, consisted in that he didn't realize that to impose a mode of presentation onto the phenomena and to assume they all *must* fit it, comes to exactly the same as putting forward a philosophical thesis about the necessary characteristics of things. Thus, although he had grasped something very important that later on still informs his philosophical approach, in the end the *Tractatus* did relapse to theses. (For discussion, see Kuusela 2008.) Accordingly, to offer now (in 1931) some alternative notation or method as *the* updated canonical notation or method would be simply to rehash such a philosophical thesis.

But why does Wittgenstein say in 1931 that he now wishes to leave all claims to others and to stick to something he seems to connect with the *Tractatus*'s strictly-correct-method or at least the idea of not making any claims himself? If the strictly-correct-method introduced in the *Tractatus* is problematic in embodying a tacit thesis about language, how can Wittgenstein apparently endorse it at this later point? Or does he endorse it? Conant characterizes the not-strictly-correct-method as a "literary surrogate of the strictly correct method—one in which the text invites the reader alternately to adopt the roles played by each of the parties to the dialogue in the strictly correct method" (Conant 2002, p. 456, n131). Thus, rather than waiting for someone else to make a claim, Wittgenstein formulates his own claims "whose attractiveness we are asked both to feel and to round on" (Conant 2002, p. 456, n131). Although this might be correct, it isn't detailed enough to explain what Wittgenstein might think is wrong with making his own claims in the *Tractatus*. Indeed, as Conant characterizes this method, it is hard to see anything wrong with it (see Section III). Rather, the not-strictly-correct-method seems to emerge as an early employment of the method Wittgenstein characterizes later on (in 1947) by saying: "Don't *for heaven's sake*, be afraid of talking nonsense! Only don't fail to pay attention to your nonsense" (Ms134, 20 / *Culture and Value*, p. 64), a remark which Conant uses in his "The Method of the *Tractatus*" as a motto for a section on Frege's use of elucidatory nonsense (Conant 2002, p. 388). Let us look at this issue more closely.

I assume that some of the claims one might describe the *Tractatus* as making, and which the reader is invited to examine, concern the method of philosophy as logical analysis—even though the *Tractatus*'s claims might not be exhausted by such methodological statements.[34] Assuming this, the problem with the not-strictly-correct-method would then be, essentially, that it is an attempt to introduce a method before any particular problems that the method would be employed to

with have *actually* been articulated or taken up for discussion. Rather, underlying the method is a conception of philosophical problems that is assumed to cover *all* philosophical problems there might be. (In accordance with this, the *Tractatus* offers only an extremely schematic characterization of philosophical problems as based on confusions relating to the modes of signification of our expressions in *Tractatus* 3.323–3.324; see Kuusela 2008, chapter 1.1 for discussion.) Thus, the problem with the not-strictly-correct-method, according to this suggestion, pertains to the wholesale aspect of the *Tractatus*. Part of Wittgenstein's thesis about the correct method of philosophy is a thesis about the nature of philosophical problems as confusions of a particular kind.

By contrast, to *not* make a claim is to wait until there is an actual philosophical claim made, an approach which allows one, in principle, to choose the appropriate method with such particular problems in view. The advantage is that this approach allows one to tailor methods to particular problems in a manner Wittgenstein later thinks necessary. "In philosophy it is not enough to learn in every case *what* is to be said about a subject, but also *how* one must speak about it. We are always having to begin by learning the method of tackling it" (*Remarks on Colour* §43). Now philosophy then is not characterized by anything like *the* correct method, but rather there are many methods of philosophy corresponding to differences between problems to be addressed (*Philosophical Investigations* §133). Accordingly, as Wittgenstein notes in 1932: "The task of philosophy (in my sense) is to point out *actual* mistakes" (Ms156a, 19v, 20r). If this is the thought (even if only in germ) that lies behind Wittgenstein's methodological statement from 1931 about waiting for the other to make a claim, then this statement expresses a principle Wittgenstein continued to adhere for the rest of his career. Accordingly, this interpretation allows us to say that although what Wittgenstein says in 1931 sounds like an avowal of adherence to the strictly-correct-method of the *Tractatus*, it isn't. Wittgenstein's methodological statement from 1931 takes us beyond what the early book proposed one should do.[35]

Consequently, it seems not correct to characterize the not-strictly-correct-method of the *Tractatus* by reference to the remark from 1947 that urges one not to be afraid to speak nonsense. The *Tractatus*'s not-strictly-correct-method could only be understood in the light of the 1947 remark insofar as its purpose would not be to introduce the (dogmatic) strictly-correct-method. But, I've argued, the purpose of Tractarian nonsense and Wittgenstein's not-strictly-correct-method is to introduce the strictly-correct-method. Thus, the not-strictly-correct-method is a method that involves a commitment to a doctrine of language and marks the early Wittgenstein's failure to abandon philosophical theses. To understand the (not-strictly-correct) method employed in the *Tractatus* in the light of the remark from 1947 is to read too much later Wittgenstein into the early work, and exegetically implausible and problematic.

VI. Concluding Remarks

From the point of view of considerations pertaining to the methodology of interpretation, it seems important to distinguish between two potentially conflicting motives or aspirations that an interpretation of the *Tractatus* may be informed by: (1) the aspiration to provide an exegetically faithful interpretation; (2) the aspiration to attribute to the *Tractatus* the philosophically most viable view. Apparently, given the principle of charity, any interpretation of a philosophical text should be informed by the latter aspiration. I've tried in this essay to give equal weight to the former aspiration which emerges as a constraint to the fulfilment of the latter one. Ultimately, this is why I reject the strong resolute reading,[36] even though it might be philosophically more viable than the mild resolute reading. For, while the strongly resolute Wittgenstein's method doesn't suffer from the same philosophical problems as that of the mildly resolute Wittgenstein (since the former doesn't involve a commitment to a canonical notation), the strong resolute reading seems to have difficulty in explaining Wittgenstein's later reactions to the *Tractatus*, and his later critique of the book. If so, it is exegetically problematic.

Regardless of whether these last considerations are correct, however, from the point of view of the methodology of interpretation, the important point is this. To the extent that it is true that the strong and mild resolute readings differ in their aspirations and motives (the former putting less emphasis on exegetical concerns— even though, of course, each scholar's contribution should be considered individually), then apparently disputes between the strong and mild resolutists should be seen in this light, i.e. as disputes where the concerns of the participants match only partially. Analogously, insofar as it is right to say that the philosophical viability of the *Tractatus* is not an important consideration for the traditional interpretation (to the extent that Hacker, for example, is not worried about attributing to Wittgenstein a straightforward inconsistency), then parallel considerations apply to disputes between the traditional and resolute readers. But the purpose of saying this is not to suggest that these debates are therefore either philosophically or exegetically uninteresting. Rather it is only that a clearer comprehension of what is at stake in the debates and what motivates particular interpretations might help to make the debates more calm, i.e. make them feel less like battles between warring parties. And this might be to the philosophical benefit of all.[37]

Notes

1 Another earlier remark seems to say much the same, though is perhaps different in tone: "To every truth that someone holds against me I must always say 'I have nothing against it! just analyse it thoroughly, then I must agree with you'" (Ms108, 136; comma added). References to Wittgenstein's manuscripts and typescripts are by the numbering system established by von Wright. See G.H. von Wright, *Wittgenstein*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1982. Whenever a remark occurs also in Wittgenstein's edited and translated works I provide a reference to them too. If no published translation exists, the translation is mine.

2 The traditional interpretation is also called the "ineffability" reading, owing to its assumption of a notion of ineffable philosophical truths. By way of contrast, resoluteness might be described as a commitment to remain resolute about the nonsensicality of nonsense and to reject the notion of ineffable truth. This is the minimal sense in which I understand resoluteness (in particular, when I use the term to characterize the interpretation proposed here).

3 Two principal forms of a metaphysical interpretation can be distinguished. A metaphysical interpretation in a narrower sense takes the essence of language to be determined by the essence of reality or the other way around. (So, there are two basic types of narrowly metaphysical interpretations: realistic and idealistic.) A metaphysical reading in a wider sense remains neutral with respect to the question whether reality determines the nature of language or language the nature of reality, i.e. whether any such relation of determination exists between reality and language. I shall use the term "metaphysical reading" in this wider sense. Why interpretations of this kind, besides the realist and idealist interpretations, are appropriately called "metaphysical" will become clearer later on.

4 See for example P.M.S. Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986, hereafter "Hacker 1986," and "Was He Trying to Whistle It?," in A. Crary and R. Read, eds., *The New Wittgenstein*, London, Routledge, 2000, hereafter "Hacker 2000," reprinted with revisions in *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, hereafter "Hacker 2001." Other representatives of ineffability readings include G. E. M. Anscombe, *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, South Bend, Ind., St. Augustine's Press, 1971, hereafter Anscombe 1971; Anthony Kenny, *Wittgenstein*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2006; Norman Malcolm, *Nothing Is Hidden, Wittgenstein's Criticism of his Early Thought*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1986, and P. Winch, ed., *A Religious Point of View*, London, Routledge, 1993; David Pears, *The False Prison*, vol. I, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987; and Bertrand Russell, Introduction to the *Tractatus*.

5 To spare the reader from having to look back and forth between dozens of notes, in the sections that follow I will place abbreviated source information of frequently cited papers in the text after an initial full citation of them in a note.

6 Cora Diamond, *The Realistic Spirit*, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 1991, hereafter "Diamond 1991," p. 181; Warren Goldfarb, "Metaphysics and Nonsense: On Cora Diamond's *The Realistic Spirit*", *Journal of Philosophical Research*, 1997, vol. 22, hereafter "Goldfarb 1997," p. 64.

7 In my view, Goldfarb aptly captures the problem when he writes: "that incoherence lies very close to the surface; it is not a question of 'deep tensions' in the work. The *Tractatus*, understood irresolutely, wears its inconsistency on its sleeve; or better, it avoids outright inconsistency only by undercutting any genuine commitment to its basic doctrines" (1997, p. 64).

8 Later on Wittgenstein rejects the metaphor of climbing a ladder in philosophy (Ms109, 207, 208 / *Culture and Value*, p. 10). But he doesn't say the reason is (nor need it be taken to be) that the ladder entangles one in a paradox.

9 Besides Conant and Diamond who are the focus of my discussion in this essay, this reading is developed and supported by, for instance, Juliet Floyd, "The Uncaptive Eye: Solipsism's in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*," in L.S. Rouner, ed., *Loneliness*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1998, "Number and Ascriptions of Number in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*," in J. Floyd, and S. Shieh, eds., *Future Pasts: The Analytic Tradition in Twentieth-Century Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, hereafter "Floyd 2001," "Wittgenstein and the Inexpressible," in A. Crary, ed., *Wittgenstein and the Moral Life, Essays in Honor of Cora Diamond*, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 2007, hereafter "Floyd 2007"; Warren Goldfarb (1997); Michael Kremer, "Contextualism and Holism in the Early Wittgenstein: From *ProtoTractatus* to *Tractatus*,"

Philosophical Topics, 1997, vol. 25:2, "The Purpose of Tractarian Nonsense", *Noûs*, 2001, vol. 35:1; Denis McManus, *The Enchantment of Words: Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006; Matthew B. Ostrow, *Wittgenstein's Tractatus: A Dialectical Interpretation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, hereafter "Ostrow 2002"; Rupert Read and Rob Deans, "'Nothing Is Shown': A 'Resolute' Reply to Mounce, Emiliani, Koethe and Vilhauer," *Philosophical Investigations*, 2003, vol. 26:3, hereafter "Read and Deans 2003"; Thomas Ricketts, "Pictures, Logic, and the Limits of Sense in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*," in H. Sluga and D. Stern, eds., *Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, hereafter "Ricketts 1996"; Peter Winch, "Discussion of Malcolm's Essay," in P. Winch, ed., *Wittgenstein: A Religious Point of View?*, London, Routledge, 1993.

10 James Conant, "The Method of the *Tractatus*," in E.H. Reck, ed., *From Frege to Wittgenstein, Perspectives on Early Analytic Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, hereafter, "Conant 2002," p. 421.

11 See also James Conant and Cora Diamond, "On Reading the *Tractatus* Resolutely: Reply to Meredith Williams and Peter Sullivan," in M. Kölbel and B. Weiss, eds., *Wittgenstein's Lasting Significance*, London, Routledge, 2004, hereafter "Conant and Diamond 2004," pp. 64, 74.

12 Cora Diamond, "Saying and Showing: An Example from Anscombe," in B. Stocker, ed., *Post-Analytic Tractatus*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004, pp. 165 and 166 respectively.

13 James Conant, "Throwing Away the Top of the Ladder," *Yale Review*, 1991, vol. 79, hereafter "Conant 1991," p. 343.

14 Some of Hacker's critical points have already been implicitly answered in the description of the resolute reading above, for example the objection that a resolute reading must implicitly assume a general criterion of sense (Hacker 2000, pp. 361, 362; 2001, pp. 112, 113). It need not make this assumption, and could only do so on pain of inconsistency. (The same argument has been presented by others against Conant and Diamond and has been responded to by them in Conant and Diamond 2004.) Another objection to which I will not devote space here relates to Wittgenstein's statement in the *Tractatus*'s Preface that he takes thoughts expressed in it to be true. This as such can't be used in support of an ineffability view, unlike Hacker seems to think (Hacker 2000, p. 360; 2001, p. 109). The reason is that, if the truth we are talking about is not the truth of factual propositions, then the sense in which Wittgenstein might be talking about the truth of the thoughts expressed in the book remains unclear at this point, and any appeal to the notion of an ineffable truth as the basis of an argument begs relevant questions. I shall explain my interpretation of the notion to the correctness of logical clarifications in Section IV. Questions relating to evidence from Wittgenstein's later writings which form one aspect of Hacker's critique of resolute readings will be discussed later in Sections IV and V.

15 A way to formulate this worry would be to ask: if the *Tractatus* is merely nonsense how can one take it as having anything to do with logic and the philosophy of logic—any more than my shoes do? Although we know from the history of the composition of the book that Wittgenstein saw himself as dealing with problems in logic, this is not good enough to establish any philosophically significant connection between his book and the discipline of logic. If the book is mere nonsense, an account of the employment of nonsense in the book is required that connects his nonsensical sentences with issues in logic. Here Hacker's own explanation that apparently one can mean something by nonsense will clearly not do. To say "apparently" (cf. 1986, p. 26 quoted above) at this point is merely to wave hands in the air.

16 Goldfarb takes up this issue as a difficulty for resolute readers in his discussion of Diamond's *Realistic Spirit* (Goldfarb 1997, p. 72). For discussions of aspects of the *Tractatus*'s logical views from a resolute perspective, see Burt Dreben and Juliet Floyd, "Tautology: How Not to Use a Word," *Synthese*, 1991, vol. 81; Cora Diamond, "Truth

before Tarski: After Sluga, after Ricketts, after Geach, after Goldfarb, Hylton, Floyd, Van Heijenoort," in E.H. Reck, ed., *From Frege to Wittgenstein, Perspectives on Early Analytic Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, and "What Can You Do with the General Propositional Form" in José Zalabardo, ed., *Reading Wittgenstein*, Oxford, Oxford University Press (forthcoming); Michael Kremer, "Mathematics and Meaning in the *Tractatus*," *Philosophical Investigations*, 2002, vol. 25:3; Ricketts 1996. Although Marie McGinn doesn't call her interpretation a "resolute reading," but rather wishes to contrast it with that of Conant and Diamond, she offers a book-length non-ineffabilist discussion of the *Tractatus*'s views on logic. See Marie McGinn, *Elucidating the Tractatus: Wittgenstein's Early Philosophy of Logic and Language*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006. See also my review of her book in *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, http://ndpr.nd.edu/.

17 The metaphysical commitment Diamond ascribes to Wittgenstein is a commitment in the wider sense of metaphysical distinguished in note 3. The commitment is appropriately characterized as metaphysical because requirements of the kind Diamond talks about involve the making of a claim about how things must be, as if (exceptionless logical) necessity was a feature of reality or the object of investigation (in this case language). For the notion of metaphysics and Wittgenstein's early and later attempts to break away from metaphysics, see Oskari Kuusela, *The Struggle Against Dogmatism*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2008, hereafter "Kuusela 2008," chapter 3.

18 Read and Deans contrast strong resolutism with weak resolutism. For more than one reason, I think a more appropriate contrast would be mild resolutism. I adopt this convention.

19 What will in the light of this interpretation still remain a characteristically piecemeal activity, as I will explain in Section V, is the analysis in terms of the concept-script. Clarifications by means of codification or translation of expressions into such a notation are inescapably piecemeal.

20 Hacker goes as far as to present it as evidence for Wittgenstein's commitment to ineffable truths that according to him something ineffable is expressed in a certain poem by Uhland (Hacker 2000, pp. 372, 373; 2001, pp. 128, 129). Not to pause to ask whether Wittgenstein might *not* have taken poems to be in the business of expressing truths strikes me as overly enthusiastic about the notion of an ineffable truth or Wittgenstein's commitment to it.

21 I'm grateful to Alois Pichler for the dating of this remark.

22 There are well-known problems with Russell's interpretation of the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein doesn't think ordinary language is logically defective and doesn't seek to improve on it in the way Russell himself does and Russell assumes in the introduction. Rather, Wittgenstein's "theoretical logical language" is meant only to promote logical clarity (see *Tractatus* 3.325, 5.4633, 5.5563). But this means that Russell's mistake is a mistake about Wittgenstein's aims in constructing a logical notation. It doesn't follow that Russell is wrong about Wittgenstein being engaged in a broadly Leibnizian-Fregean-Russellian project of constructing such a notation.

23 A criterion of completeness for a concept-script (in contrast to something being only a fragment of such a script) would be this. A complete notation would be applicable to *any* task of logical analysis we might need to employ it in. It could be used to clarify any logical confusion we might come across. Thus, that something can't be given a satisfactory analysis in terms of a particular concept-script indicates that the script is either incomplete (doesn't cover certain kinds of uses of language) or misconstructed (doesn't render the modes of signification of some expressions right). (This kind of abstract notion of completeness Wittgenstein comes to reject later. See Kuusela 2008, pp. 67–69, 80–84.)

24 In accordance with this interpretational idea, I understand the class of statements used for the purpose of the introduction of Wittgenstein's notation very broadly. Spelled out

more fully, my suggestion about the role of the *Tractatus*'s nonsensical statements is that we should read what appear to be dogmatic statements constituting an ontology and a theory of language, as explaining or defining the principles of the notation. Thus, for instance, the beginning of the book is to be read as saying something like, "Seen from the point of view of the notation to be introduced, the world consists of facts not things." Why Wittgenstein doesn't actually express himself this way is explainable by reference to his ascribing to his notation a canonical status. For if he is correct and his concept-script correctly captures the logic of though and language, then there is no other point of view for anyone to adopt. Consequently, to talk about a point of view is redundant. Leaving aside certain complications, one might say that Wittgenstein is introducing logical or syntactical principles by talking in the material mode in Carnap's sense. See Rudolf Carnap, *The Logical Syntax of Language*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967. See Oskari Kuusela, "Carnap and the *Tratatus*' Philosophy of Logic" (forthcoming).

25 In addition, for example, the following are characteristics of Wittgenstein's concept-script. The word "object" ("thing" etc.) is expressed in it by a variable (*Tractatus* 4.1272). It doesn't treat the true and the false as objects or the negation sign as a name (*Tractatus* 4.431). The sign of identity is not a part of it (*Tractatus* 5.533, 5.534).

26 As regards the notion of showing, the concept-script is meant to reflect what propositions show in its design. It is constructed in such a way that it displays clearly the logical roles of expressions. But from this point of view, to comprehend what propositions show is not to be in possession of any kind of a truth. By adopting a certain notation that displays the logical roles of expressions in particular ways one is not yet making a true statement about anything or entertaining an ineffable truth.

27 For this expression, which originates with John McDowell, see Diamond 1991, p. 185.

28 Diamond discusses the *Tractatus*'s notion of general propositional form, in a forthcoming book chapter (which I received after the completion of this essay), depicting it as follows: "The g-variable is meant to play a role in the activity of philosophical clarification, in that it presents what is common to a use of signs, a common form that we are then able to recognize in our senseful speaking" (Diamond, forthcoming, section 7). This description of variables as a means of expressing generality captures a part of how I'd like to explain the expression of general logical insights in the *Tractatus*. While the introduction of variables constitutes one vehicle of the expression of general insights about logic, similarly also other notational devices may embody such insights, as exemplified by Wittgenstein's treatment of logical connectives.

29 For a discussion of the distinction between internal and external properties, see my "The Development of Wittgenstein's Philosophy," in Oskari Kuusela and Marie McGinn, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Wittgenstein*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011.

30 An affinity between the present and traditional interpretations (by contrast to strong resolutism) is that according to both there is such a thing as *the* correct logical point of view for the early Wittgenstein. However, I reject the idea that Wittgenstein seeks to explain this point of view in terms of a (nonsensical) theory.

31 See Ms108, 31; Ms112, 126 vff.; Ts209, 34, and for discussion Gordon Baker, *Wittgenstein, Frege, and the Vienna Circle*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1988, hereafter "Baker 1988."

32 Floyd seeks to avoid the problem that pertains to Read and Dean's interpretation through her attribution of the goal of the completeness of the rigorization of logic to Wittgenstein (private correspondence with Floyd; see Floyd 2007, pp. 206 ff., esp. pp. 210–211). Crucial for the success of Floyd's strategy is the interpretation of the notion of completeness in the *Tractatus*, which she proposes to understand in Hilbertian or Gödelian terms. This is crucial because, if, by contrast, one comprehends the completeness of a logical notation in terms of its ability to successfully clarify any logical unclarity we might come across—i.e. in clarificatory rather than mathematical terms,

so to speak—as I would do (see note 23 above), then a complete logical notation is essentially what Floyd calls a "canonical notation" (see quotations from Floyd in Section III). The reason why I propose to understand the notion of completeness in the latter terms is that this is how Wittgenstein himself speaks of (what he calls) the ideal of completeness in his later remarks that are plausibly interpreted as criticisms of the *Tractatus*'s conception of logical analysis. (See Ts220 §114 / *Zettel* §440, Ms142 §132 and Ms115, 50–52; for discussion of Wittgenstein's critique of his early notion of completeness, see Kuusela 2008, pp. 67–69.) No detailed discussion of this issue can be undertaken here.

33 Ultimately, this is problematic in the sense that it leads to problems with particular analyses in terms of Wittgenstein's concept-script, insofar as such analyses promote a false uniformity of our descriptions of language use. That is, although it might be possible to make significant amounts of language fit the kind of model for propositions and language use that the *Tractatus* puts forward, in effect this seems to lead to our overlooking logical distinctions and differences, consequently giving rise to philosophical difficulties. This can be characterized as a deeper sense in which the *Tractatus* fails as an attempt to spell out a correct method of clarification.

34 Recall my broad construal of the class such claims explained in note 24.

35 In one of his essays Conant says, with reference to *Tractatus* 6.53, that the *Tractatus* "condemns 'the strictly correct method'" on the grounds that this method would not be satisfying to the other (Conant 1991, p. 362). I do not regard this as a serious obstacle to the interpretation which I am suggesting according to which a key aspiration of the book is to introduce the strictly-correct-method. To look at the issue more closely, according to Wittgenstein, someone might not find the correct method satisfactory because "he would not have the feeling that we are teaching him philosophy" (*Tractatus* 6.53). But just as well as a condemnation of the correct method, this statement might be read as stating the extent to which, Wittgenstein thinks, the other (still) has to change in order to arrive at a correct philosophical point of view. Hence, the statement might be regarded as part of Wittgenstein's project of helping the other to reach clarity: it notes a difficulty that he expects people to feel with the strictly-correct-method of philosophy he seeks to introduce. Or it gives a measure of the distance between traditional philosophy and his approach, providing a criterion for what counts as having gone through the process of transforming one's outlook to correspond to that of the *Tractatus*.

36 I'm grateful to Simon Summers for discussions on the *Tractatus* that have helped me to see this.

37 I'm most grateful to John Collins, Tamara Dobler, Juliet Floyd, Peter Hacker, Marie McGinn, and Simon Summers for their comments on the essay, but am alone responsible for any remaining mistakes or misrepresentations of others' positions.