As regards his own work, he said it did not matter whether his results were true or not: what mattered was that ‘a method had been found.’ . . . He did not expressly try to tell us exactly what the ‘new method’ which had been found was.—G. E. Moore

INTRODUCTION

How does Wittgenstein’s later philosophy develop? The core of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is, arguably, the determination of the limits of sense and the characterization of propositions of logic as tautologies. Both ideas assume that elementary
propositions are logically independent. Thus, it seems natural to think that once Wittgenstein accepts that there are necessary relations among elementary propositions in his return to philosophy in 1929, the *Tractatus* collapses and a new philosophy is created. This is a widely held view.3

Things are more complicated than that, however. Wittgenstein creates two devices in 1929 (phenomenological language and grammar) to fill the gaps left by the recognition that there are elementary propositions that are not logically independent. Both are in agreement with the core of the *Tractatus*. He first tries to establish a phenomenological language to show the nature of the necessity involved in those propositions. It would be a complementary notation that perspicuously shows why, for instance, “A is blue and red at the same time,” cannot be true and why “A is not blue” follows from “A is red.” Once this project also fails, that role is taken over by a comprehensive notion of grammar, a discipline that was supposed to present a *uebersichtliche Darstellung* (perspicuous representation) of the rules of language, i.e., rules that express all that is essential in language and indicate the limits of sense: “A recognition of what is essential and what inessential in our language if it is to represent (*zur Darstellung*), a recognition of which parts of our language are wheels turning idly, amounts to the construction of a phenomenological language.”4 The idea of a grammar, then, first appears in Wittgenstein’s thought as part of his attempt to continue the project of the *Tractatus*. Thus, it appears, first, not as part of a new philosophy, but as a continuation of the old one.

How, then, does Wittgenstein’s later philosophy arise? I would like to show in this paper that it arises out of Wittgenstein’s struggle with Russell’s *The Analysis of Mind*.5 Many commentators have not paid sufficient attention to the significance of this book for Wittgenstein’s development.6 Others have seen it merely as an important target of his criticisms.7 I argue that it is, however, the fundamental background for a proper understanding of Wittgenstein’s development.

This paper has four major sections and some concluding remarks (the fifth section). In the first I present some of Russell’s central views in *The Analysis of Mind* and show why they give Wittgenstein reason to worry. In the second section I explain that Wittgenstein’s struggle with Russell’s views brings him to try to extend some of the views of the *Tractatus* concerning thinking, projecting and meaning. I also show why these extended views are, for Wittgenstein, as untenable as Russell’s theory. In the third section I explain why the calculus conception of language seems, at first, a trivial solution for the difficulties prompted by the causal theory of meaning. It consists in taking language as an autonomous system of rules in which the connection of language, thought, and world is expressed within the system. In section four, I explain that the calculus conception leaves open the possibility of a rule-following regression and an indeterminacy of facts by rules. Those difficulties are interesting in two different ways: first, because they show the origins of the rule-following problem;8 second, because they are similar (or even identical) to the difficulties that Wittgenstein found in Russell’s causal theory of meaning. The similarity between Russell’s and Wittgenstein’s difficulties and the need to find a way out of them bring Wittgenstein to his new method, which investigates the genesis of philosophical problems. He thinks that false analogies and misleading
trains of thought underlie and engender philosophical puzzlement. By means of the clear formulation of how philosophical problems are generated, the method aims at their dissolution before they develop into a theory.

I. THE CAUSAL THEORY OF MEANING AND WITTGENSTEIN’S ATTACK

The only kind of “stuff” that exists, in Russell’s monistic view in *The Analysis of Mind*, is sensations (*AM*, 69 and 121). Sensations are “neutral” because grasped in one way they obey physical causal laws and grasped in a different way they obey psychological causal laws (in this case they are images, i.e., faded sensations). Meaning, as a relation between a word and an object (the meaning of the word), is explained causally: “The relation of a word to its meaning is of the nature of a causal law governing our use of the word and our actions when we hear it used” (*AM*, 198). Roughly put, when I call “John!” John comes to me and when I see him, for instance, the word ‘John’ comes to my mind. When the objects are not present, Russell argues, images replace them, and so they cause and are caused by words (someone tells me a story and I imagine a situation, for instance).9

Russell thought that to defend his monistic philosophy, he needed to show that beliefs are reducible to sensations, the neutral “stuff.” He says that the content of a belief (“proposition”) is always composed of either sensations, or images, or words, or of a mixture of them (*AM*, 241). Given that images are faded sensations and words stand for images and sensations, the content of a belief is reducible to sensations. To deal with different kinds of beliefs (expectation, memory, hope, fear, etc), which he calls “attitudes,” Russell introduces feelings. A propositional attitude is made up by a proposition, the content, and “a certain feeling or complex of sensations attached to the content believed” (*AM*, 250).

This view brings about a peculiar idea of how propositional attitudes are verified. Russell explains what counts as a verification of an expectation in this way: “When an image accompanied by an expectation-belief is thus succeeded by a sensation which is the ‘meaning’ of the image, we say that the expectation-belief has been verified” (*AM*, 269). I have, say, an expectation that John will play the piano. This expectation is a composition of images of John and the piano (proposition) and a feeling of expectation. According to Russell, the expectation is verified if I see John (the “meaning” of the image of John) playing the piano (the “meaning” of the image of the piano). But this direct comparison prompts a problem for Russell. He asks:

How do we know that the sensation resembles the previous image? Does the image persist in presence of the sensation, so that we can compare the two? And even if some image does persist, how do we know that it is the previous image unchanged? It does not seem as if this line of inquiry offered much hope of successful issue. (*AM*, 270)

In Russell’s view, we have to compare images in our expectation with sensations that correspond to them. The first problem with the direct comparison concerns the image that we want to compare: Do we have the original, present in the
expectation, at the time of the sensation? Second, even if it is the same image, how could we determine whether it has not changed? How could we recognize the original image? Given these difficulties, Russell says:

It is better, I think, to take a more external and causal view of the relation of expectation to expected occurrence. If the occurrence, when it comes, gives us the feeling of expectedness, and if the expectation, beforehand, enabled us to act in a way which proves appropriate to the occurrence, that must be held to constitute the maximum of verification. We have first an expectation, and then a sensation with the feeling of expectedness related to memory of the expectation. This whole experience, when it occurs, may be defined as verification, and as constituting the truth of the expectation. Appropriate action, during the period of expectation may be regarded as additional verification, but is not essential. . . .

I think that all verification is ultimately of the above sort. (AM, 270; my emphasis)

Russell’s solution is, then, to observe “a feeling of expectedness related to memory of the expectation” as a criterion for the fulfillment of the expectation or “truth of the expectation.” There is, then, a feeling of expectation related to the content of an expectation (which distinguishes an expectation from a memory-image, for instance) and there is also a feeling of expectedness, that is, the feeling of a satisfied expectation. The feeling of expectedness relates the memory-belief of the expectation to the original expectation. So, supposedly, we know by means of the feeling of expectedness that the present sensation relates to the previous image involved in the expectation. This view seems to apply to other propositional attitudes as well, each of which must be verified by a particular feeling (of expectedness, fulfilment, etc).

Wittgenstein must have had the above passage of Russell’s book in mind when he criticises Russell’s theory in MS 107:

I.e. for me there are only two things involved in the fact that a thought is true, namely, the thought and the fact; for Russell, on the contrary, three, namely, thought, fact and a third event that, if it occurs, is the recognition. This third event, as it were the satisfaction of hunger (the other two being hunger and eating a specific food), could be, for instance, a feeling of pleasure. Here it is completely irrelevant how/as what we describe this third event; for the essence of the theory this is irrelevant. (MS 107, 290 from 02.07.1930; translated in PR, §21)

According to Wittgenstein, the essence of Russell’s theory is the incorporation of a third element to explain the relation of a sentence to the recognition of what makes it true or what fulfills it (in the case of propositional attitudes). In Russell’s theory, the verification is not really the comparison of proposition and reality, but a feeling, a third element called by Wittgenstein an “external relation.” Note that this is a direct reference to Russell’s “external and causal view of the relation” (AM, 270; quoted in full above).

The most obvious problem with Russell’s view is that if we suppose that the feeling is a criterion of recognition, we still need something else to play the role of a criterion for recognizing that feeling. Besides the feeling of expectedness (say,
the feeling of a kind of pleasure), we would also need a criterion to recognize that this feeling is the right feeling (MS 107, 291; also PR, §22). Wittgenstein presents this infinite regress argument in his lectures at the beginning of 1930:11

On Russell’s view you need a tertium quid besides the expectation and the fact fulfilling it; so if I expect x and x happens something else is needed, e.g. something that happens in my head, to link expectation and fulfillment. But how do I know that it is the right something? Do I, on the same principle, need a fourth something? If so, we have an infinite regress, and I can never know that my expectation has been fulfilled. (We can always ask for a further description of any description given of meaning or fulfillment; which produces an infinite regress.) (WLC30–32, 9; from 02.13.1930)

Another problem with Russell’s view is that the content of the expectation, command, etc. loses what is specific in it: “Russell treats wish (expectation) and hunger as if they were on the same level. But several things will satisfy my hunger; my wish (expectation) can only be fulfilled by something definite” (WLC30–32, 9; from 02.13.1930; my emphasis). So in Russell’s causal approach commands, but also expectations and desires, have the same nature as hunger. Whatever brings about the feeling has to be taken as what corresponds to my command or my expectation. The problem is, of course, that a feeling (pleasure, as Wittgenstein suggests in PR, §21) may be caused by something other than what fulfills the command. I may have the feeling of x connected with the expectation’s fulfillment, but the feeling may be the effect of an image of an empty beach with a blue sea and palm trees.

Another issue related to Russell’s view is when I get to know what the content of my expectation is. If Russell were correct, a future feeling would tell me what I had really expected. By the same token, a future feeling (fulfillment, pleasure, or a feeling of “wishedness”) would determine whether the command was carried out and the wish fulfilled. Wittgenstein observes: “I believe Russell’s theory amounts to the following: If I give someone a command and I am happy with what he then does, then he has carried out my command” (MS 107, 290; from 01.1930).12 As Wittgenstein points out, Russell’s view does not fit our ordinary views, for I obviously know in advance what will fulfill my expectation or count as the fulfillment of my command—commands and expectations are definite, they specify something.

However, not only ordinary views are at risk with Russell’s theory. In Russell’s theory, the sense of a command, an expectation, etc., is undetermined before its fulfillment (or better: before the feeling of fulfillment arrives). In this view, the sense of a sentence is determined by a future fact, the one that makes it true, and the feeling that it causes. That is, the sense of a proposition is on the level of the truth of any empirical hypothesis. In Russell’s theory, thus, the distinction between sense and truth collapses. According to Wittgenstein, this not only makes Russell’s theory false, but also catastrophic for his whole understanding of logic. He says the following about Russell’s conception of meaning:

A wrong conception of the way language functions destroys, of course, the whole of logic and everything that goes with it, and doesn’t just create some merely local disturbance. (MS 107, 289; translated in PR, §20)
No small business. Russell’s theory is a real menace for the view that the sense of a proposition is independent from the truth of any proposition (Tractatus 4.024). From Wittgenstein’s point of view in the Tractatus, Russell is saying that the subject matter of logic, the sense of propositions, is empirically determined. This amounts to saying that logic, in its very nature, has empirical presuppositions or, at worst, is itself an empirical science. Thus, Russell’s theory implies more than “some merely local disturbance.”

The independence of sense from truth is clearly restated by Wittgenstein at the beginning of 1930, in the same context of the remark above: “(Whether a sentence is true or false is decided through experience, but not its sense)” (MS 107, 292; also in PR, §23). In 1930 Wittgenstein simply complements the Tractatus by making clear that sense is independent of truth for all kinds of sentences. We know in advance what fulfills an expectation (MS 107, 290). We know the sense of a proposition, a command and a question without knowing whether there is a fact that verifies them (say, a fact corresponding to a proposition, or a fact that represents the fulfillment of a command or a fact that answers a question). That is, we understand any kind of sentence independently of knowing its truth: the sense is determined in advance.

Prima facie, the independence of sense from truth also makes the “third element” needed by Russell superfluous for Wittgenstein. Since one knows the sense of a sentence without knowing whether it is true, one must be able to know in advance all that is necessary to compare a sentence with reality. The event itself simply indicates that it corresponds to the sentence.

The causal theory of meaning is also incompatible with the notion of understanding that Wittgenstein developed further in 1930. If thinking or describing is projecting according to a general rule (Tractatus, 4.0141), understanding what is thought or described must be to do something with that rule. For Wittgenstein, understanding is translating (interpreting) rules of projection: “To understand a thought means to be able to translate it according to a general rule. For example, playing a piano from a score” (WLC30–32, 44). But according to the causal theory of meaning, understanding is, ultimately, causal. One understands a word when one associates it with the correct object (or, in its absence, its image) and is caused to act in accordance to it. This seems too weak a notion. Wittgenstein says: “But the score does not cause us to play as we do; if it did there would be no right and wrong way of playing” (WLC30–32, 44). In order to oppose Russell’s theory, Wittgenstein will be tempted to extend his views of the Tractatus and introduce “the element of intention” in his analysis of the method of projection.

II. THE PUZZLE ABOUT PROJECTION AND INTENTION, AND ITS TEMPTATIONS

Wittgenstein lays out his major concern with Russell’s view in the following way:

If you exclude the element of intention (Intention) from language, its whole function then collapses.
What is essential to intention is the picture: the picture of what is intended.
It may look as if, in introducing intention, we were introducing an uncheckable, a so-to-speak metaphysical element into our discussion. But the essential difference between the picture conception and the conception of Russell, Ogden and Richards, is that it regards recognition as seeing an internal relation, whereas in their view this is an external relation. (MS 107, 289; translated in PR, §21)

Wittgenstein claims in several passages that Russell left the element of intention out of his analysis (MS 107, 289; MS 108, 259, 261, 262). However, with “intention” he does not want to introduce an assumption that cannot be checked or determined—a “metaphysical element” as he says. The recognition of a picture as a picture of a fact, or the recognition of a command as the command for a specific action, must be *seen* in the comparison of the picture with the fact. For Wittgenstein, the recognition of what fulfills or makes a sentence true is not the perception of a causal, external, relation as Russell and Ogden and Richards argued, but the understanding of an internal relation. Here, Wittgenstein uses ‘internal relation’ and ‘intention’ clearly to oppose Russell’s external view. Note that an internal relation between facts and propositions is simply a relation determined by a rule, i.e., it is a normative, intended rule instead of a causal law.

This, of course, raises the question of how we mean what we say and how intentions are directly recognized without an external relation. How do we recognize what a sentence written by somebody else means? We have to recognize, of course, the general rules of projection of the sentence (see *Tractatus* 4.0141). If we take seriously the idea that the sense of a sentence is independent of its truth, it seems that we need to explain what it is to mean sentences in this or that way without appealing to the fact that makes the sentence true, or fulfills the command, or the expectation. But where is the intentional element? There is an obvious objection to the supposition that it is somehow *in* the picture:

> How is a picture meant? The intention never resides in the picture itself, since, no matter how the picture is formed, it can always be meant in different ways. But that doesn’t mean that the way the picture is meant only emerges when it elicits a certain reaction, for the intention is already expressed in the way I *now* compare the picture with reality. (MS 107, 292; translated in PR, §24)

The sense of a sentence does not emerge with a future reaction, as Russell said. A sentence is not, then, ambiguous in the way he thought it was. It is, however, ambiguous in the sense that it can be meant in different ways. The difficulty, as expressed in the passage above, is that the intention is not in the picture itself. But if it is not in the picture, where is it?

One could also ask, here, where are the rules of projection that make a sentence a description of a unique possible fact. Wittgenstein seems to need to make clear why and how something specific is meant by each sentence and how this specificity is understood when we compare it with reality before a fact makes it true. For Wittgenstein, what makes a sentence symbolize (the projection or intention) must be explained somehow: we need to know why we can directly recognize its truth when we compare a sentence to reality.
In MS 108, Wittgenstein explains that someone may dream that A visits B, but that this is not an expectation even if A does visit B the next day. According to Wittgenstein, the intention that would make the dream into an expectation is missing. The dream becomes an expectation if it is clear how it should be compared with reality, which will make it true or false, either fulfilling it or not. Likewise, “a picture (in the strict sense) is not enough, for it is not given in it how it should be compared with reality” (MS 108, 219; Wittgenstein’s emphasis). Wittgenstein goes on to explain what is missing, what counts as an intention: “The method of projection must also be there; but then the picture reaches to the place where the object of the picture is.” Therefore, says Wittgenstein, “we could say that the intention is the method of projection” (MS 108, 219). The method of projection is what makes the comparison between sentence and reality possible, it reaches to a specific object (MS 108, 219). In the same way that what “constitutes the inner similarity” between a symphony, a score and the music is a general rule—“a rule of projection” (Tractatus 4.0141)—it is also a rule of projection that constitutes the similarity between fact and sentences. A rule of projection is a rule of translation of given signs into another group of signs. In other words, a rule is a method of interpretation. In the Tractatus, it is taken for granted that rules of projection unequivocally determine the sense of a proposition and that they are immediately understood. However, in 1930, Wittgenstein sees a problem with that assumption. The rules of projection may be insufficient to determine what is specific in each sentence: “the sentence (command) is not simply put together with reality, but it is compared with it in/with a specific tendency” (MS 108, 192; from 06.20.1930). The specific tendency is supposedly the way we mean a sentence. The question is whether a picture is meant in a different way because it accepts different rules of projection or whether the rules may be meant in different ways. Given that rules of projection can always be interpreted in various ways, it may seem that what is fundamental is the process of projection. It may be that this process conceals something important behind the rules:

The method of projection must be contained in the process of projecting; the process of representation reaches up to what it represents by means of a rule of projection. If I copy anything the slips in my copy will be compensated for by my anger, regret, etc. at them. The total result—i.e. the copy plus intention—is equivalent of the original. The actual result—the mere visible copy—does not represent the whole process of copying; we must include the intention. The process contains the rule, the result is not enough to describe the process. (WLC30–32, 36; from 11.1930)

The temptation here is to take the process as something more than the rules of projection and to start an investigation of the process of representation. What could it be? It seems that the process of thinking and meaning itself needs to be explained further and that the elucidation by means of rules of projection leaves out something very important, namely the ultimate intention “behind” the rules.

The situation is, then, the following: Russell is wrong, but Wittgenstein’s pictorial conception of sentences does not seem to bring us any further either, unless new elements are added to it. Wittgenstein in 1930 feels the need to go further
and introduce psychological aspects that were not present in the *Tractatus*. This is Wittgenstein’s *temptation* at the time. The “symbolizing relation,” the “specific tendency,” the “intention,” all seem to point to the need for further explanations and, at the same time, seem to be an intangible element underlying our symbols—the description of a projection seems not to give us “intention itself.”

The same temptation is also present in the analysis of the activity parallel to projecting, namely, understanding (or interpreting). Wittgenstein says:

How do we know that someone had understood a plan or command? He can only show his understanding by translating it into other symbols. He may understand without obeying. But if he obeys he is again translating—i.e. by coordinating his action with the symbols. So understanding is really translation, whether into other symbols or into action. (WCL30–32, 24; from 10.1930)

Essential for the understanding of a picture and what is depicted is the translatability, and what is common to different kinds of sentences is the possibility of translation from one into another. According to Wittgenstein, the ‘translating’ that allegedly explains understanding is similar to translation between different languages:

You can draw a plan from a description. You can translate a description into a plan. The rules of translation here are not essentially different from the rules for translating from one verbal language into another. (MS 107, 243; also in *PR*, §20)

But what if we simply think about a situation? Do we also need to translate our thoughts? It seems plausible that one interprets what another person says and “translates” it, but it seems absurd to suppose that this also happens when one merely thinks. One may be tempted to believe, as Wittgenstein was in 1930, that when one thinks one can see the rules of projection immediately given, while one needs an interpretation to understand a plan or sentence on paper. The significant aspect of thought is that it seems that, as a matter of fact, I don’t need to interpret what I think, but do need to interpret what others say: “Thinking means operating with plans. A thought is not the same thing as a plan because a thought needs no interpretation and a plan does” (*WLC*30–32, 24; from 10.12.1930). This “uniqueness of thought” (MS 108, 208) resides in the way it operates, in its procedural nature. This *may* suggest that there is a peculiar language of thought that explains this immediacy (a kind of “mentalese”).

The temptation to posit a process that explains projecting, understanding and meaning increases at this point. Based on the “immediacy of thought,” one may also be inclined to make a distinction between what is “outside” and needs interpretation, and what is “inside,” in thought, and does not: “The interpreter sees the thought, *in fact*, from outside and not from inside; all that we see we see from the outside: i.e., all that we experience is phenomenon” (MS 108, 187–188). It seems that to understand the intention we have to see it from within, while we can only see it from without.

We may also have a problem of getting “within” what is meant. How are we to accomplish this? If we ask someone to explain what is meant, we will only be
confronted by rules in the form of new signs that themselves need interpretation. If you instruct someone about what is meant, only signs are given:

How can the instruction relate to its object, for it is only there when it is there and cannot be replaced. If I say what the sign is an instruction for, then I simply say something, I give further instruction. . . .

To me there is nothing left to answer the question concerning what [action] p is an instruction for except saying i.e., giving a further sign. (MS 107, 243–244)

The “element of intention” seems to slip further away each time we approach it. But the problem also seems to appear when one considers how he, for instance, is the one from whom something is demanded. In the supposition that one doesn’t follow the demand, it seems that something else has to take its place:

But how is it with myself when the demand is directed at me? If I understand the demand and don’t follow it, then understanding can only consist in a process that replaces (vertritt) the execution; therefore, in a process other than the one of execution. (MS 107, 245)

So here we will be tempted to assume a psychological process to explain how a proposition relates internally to reality. Understanding may be seen as a process that can take the place of the execution and as the process that can bring us closer to reality by means of a substitution.

III. OUT OF THE PUZZLE I: LANGUAGE AS A CALCULUS (GAME)

At the end of MS 108, Wittgenstein makes clear what the solution to his difficulties should look like: “Philosophy will consist, at the end, of trivial sentences, remarks” (MS 108, 238). The trivial sentences, remarks, as understood by Wittgenstein at the time, are the guidelines of the calculus conception of language. The triviality of the conception should show how to avoid getting into the doubtful field of psychology, and also elucidate how we can compare sentences and reality in a specific way. To take language as a calculus means to “explain the essence of language with a system of signs” (MS 109, 249). The senses of sentences of the system and the meaning of its words are determined by rules, which operate always in contrast to other rules (MS 109, 184, 220, 222).

Wittgenstein’s application of the idea of a system of rules of grammar (a game or calculus) to the problem of the relation between sentence and reality in 1930–1931 consists in two moves. The first move consists in elucidating the relation between sentence and reality as taking place inside language, i.e., within the system of signs or calculus:

The expectation waits till the moment of decision. But then it touches the decision.—Like the calculation [touches] its result. The fitting of expectation and decision expresses itself in the common feature of the word expression.

. . . Event and expectation touch in language. (MS 109, 59–60)

What is relevant when we describe the expectation (or when we express a proposition and the event it describes) is that it and the event that fulfills it are expressed with the same words: “Of course, the expectation and the fact must have
something in common. But this is expressed in that the language describes both with the same words” (MS 109, 217). Since language and world form one system, the question of fitting sentence and fact should not arise.  

The idea that language is a system of rules, a game or calculus entails that the meaning of a word is its position within a system, it is “the place where a word is in grammatical space” (MS 109, 175). The grammatical space is “given by the grammatical rules” (MS 110, 135). Rules constitute the meaning of words and a word has meaning to the extent that it has rules of use. There is nothing beyond the rules that could be called meaning (MS 110, 133). So if rules constitute the meaning, and it is the position of a word within a system that is its meaning, the meaning “can only be what the explanation of meaning explains” (MS 109, 140). The explanation is always a sentence that expresses a rule. This is why “grammar” is autonomous, or “self-meaning,” as Wittgenstein also says (MS 111, 111). Sometimes we explain the meaning by pointing to an object (ostensive explanation), but not always. When we do it, the object works as a sample that is part of the language (MS 109, 144). But, actually, we can explain the meaning of a word whose named object does not exist, and a name does not lose its meaning once the object to which it refers is destroyed. The idea that the meaning of a word is the object that a name replaces in language must therefore be wrong:

One always has the false idea that the important thing concerning the meaning of a word is an object, i.e., a thing, in the sense that the sword Nothung was the meaning of the word ‘Nothung.’ But there is something wrong here, for I can say “Nothung doesn’t exist anymore”; and is ‘Nothung’ meaningless here because the sword doesn’t exist anymore? (MS 109, 140)

The ostensive explanation, which is central in a causal theory of meaning, and may be what Wittgenstein means by “elucidations” in the Tractatus, turns out not to have the status of the fundamental connection of language and reality; for “meaning is fixed inside language” (WLC30–32, 62), and not by objects outside it.

The second move introduced in the calculus conception is the elucidation of the content of the mental notions of ‘understanding,’ ‘meaning something,’ and ‘thought,’ by means of a system of rules for sentences. The relevant content of mental notions is expressed in the sentences of a language, i.e., in a system of rules, and is determined within it: “a sentence/sign has sense only in the system of a language” (MS 109, 175). In Wittgenstein’s view, the primary condition for understanding a sentence is not the knowledge of how it is to be compared with reality or how it can be made true, but the knowledge of its relation to other sentences of a system of language: “it is impossible to understand only one sentence of a language. I.e., a sentence can only be understood as part of a system” (MS 109, 175).

Understanding a sentence is not a matter of isolated insight, but “analogous to understanding a move in chess” (MS 109, 182), i.e., it assumes the background of a system of rules. For someone who does not know the rules of the game, an isolated move of, say, the queen in a chess match is incomprehensible.

Understanding, meaning, etc., understood as psychological processes, can be dismissed. In order to know what someone means by a sentence it is not necessary for me to know his state of mind or how the sentence is psychologically related
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to a possible fact. Actually, Wittgenstein argues, since the articulated thought “in the mind” can be written on paper, the “thought as psychical process” cannot do more than signs on paper (MS 109, 26). Images in the mind could also be equated, in principle, with signs (for instance, a red mental image can be replaced by a red sample). Wittgenstein, thus, treats the “inner” and the “outer” as not essentially different. This, he says, is the “behavioristic” element in his conception (MS 110, 296). 24 Anything that is relevant in mental notions characterizes a symbol within the system of rules; if something is not a symbol, it is “amorphous” (MS 108, 216). That which is “amorphous” is completely arbitrary (ad hoc). Meanings are not, however, invented ad hoc:

‘I understand these words’ (which I, for instance, say to myself), ‘I mean something with this’, ‘they have a sense’ must always mean something like: ‘they are not sounds invented ad hoc, but signs from a system.’ (MS 109, 285)

What we need to look at, thus, when we want to understand what is relevant in regard to mental notions is how they are expressed in a sentence and how this sentence relates to other sentences of the same system of language:

The answer to the question “what do you mean?” should be the explanation of the system of signs to which the given sign belongs.—And only this is done through the answer “I mean that you should come,” for the sign was now translated into a sentence of a language that we know. And a language is only understandable because we know it, its system. (MS 110, 294; Wittgenstein’s emphasis)

Now we have the elements to show how Wittgenstein deals with the problem of the specificity of sentence and fact by means of the calculus conception. What does it mean for a sentence not to determine specifically a state of affairs? It means that the sentence is ambiguous, that is, it allows more than one interpretation among the possible, contrasting, interpretations within the system: the specificity of a sentence depends solely on other sentences of the same system of rules. Since one always means something “in contrast to” other given possibilities (MS 109, 170, 184, 220, 222), determining the specificity of a sentence is tantamount to determining one interpretation among others already given within the system. When one explains what one means, for instance, one explains it in contrast to other possible explanations in the system. Meaning something or intending something is, thus, choosing one of the given possibilities of the system: one rule in contrast to other rules (MS 109, 222, 280).

If we have the impression, then, that something is only hinted at in the words we use, for instance, in an intended command, and that there must be something going on beyond the words, this is because the system of rules is not fixed:

The command x 1 2 3 4

\[ x^2 \]

seems to be incomplete. It seems to us as if something was only hinted at, something that is not expressed. But something is only hinted at as far as a system is not explicitly / or incompletely/ fixed. (MS 109, 276–277; my emphasis) 25
If we know the system of numbers and the rule expressed in ‘x²’, then we know how to derive the second line, we know what specifically is intended. If we don’t, then the rules need to be explained. What disambiguates sentences, thus, are the rules of language. Ambiguities exist only because many rules of the system of language are not explicit. If one wants to know how the command is meant, one has to know the fixed rules of the system of signs (calculus). If one does not understand the specific command, then, one is not clear about various alternatives *within* the system or allowed by the system. Reasons, justifications, and explanations come to an end, thus, when all alternatives grounded on the rules of the system are made explicit (MS 110, 96; 111, 35, 42; MS 112, 97r). This is why the Wittgensteinian philosopher tabulates rules in the book of grammar (MS 110, 221, 228, 233; MS 111, 77).

**IV. OUT OF THE PUZZLE II: THE GENETIC METHOD**

Even though the calculus conception seems to solve Wittgenstein’s difficulties, it leads us to a variation of the old puzzles. This is because, in philosophy, there is an urge to leave the game, the calculus, of language (MS 112, 96v). As we have seen, the autonomous calculus of language is determined by its rules. If disputes concerning what is meant by contrasting sentences should arise, the rules of the calculus, the grammatical rules, are our last resort: “The only things that are exact and unambiguous and indisputable are the grammatical rules, which in the end must show what is meant” (MS 109, 90; translated in *BT*, 276e).

The problem is that one can, in principle, have doubts concerning those rules. Rules themselves are not self-explaining and their employment is not given in them:

“To know what is the case, if the sentence is true” can only mean to know the rule according to which it is controlled.—But how is it depicted that *it is to be controlled* by this rule? The rule is only added to the sentence, but where is its application to the sentence *depicted*? But wherever it would be depicted, it would be depicted by another picture, and so we would get (into) an infinite regress. (MS 109, 78; my underlining)²⁶

The rules, as it were, cannot do the work on their own, for they also need to be explained. But once the rules are explained, the words used to explain the rules may also need explanation.²⁷ Even if explanations in the system work in contrast to other explanations, there is no guarantee that we will reach an end (in fact, it may be difficult for us to accept that we have come to an end). It seems that we have, again, an infinite regress. Here, then, we find Wittgenstein’s critique of Russell arising in his own view.

Immediately after the passage quoted above, Wittgenstein introduces the seeds of what could be thought of as a new paradoxical situation. A rule not only has different interpretations, but any action is in accord with some rule:

One could also say this: a drawing is not a plan because someone once—*accidentally*—walked in such a way that his path corresponded to the plan, but rather because he followed the plan according to a definite rule. Incidentally,
otherwise every path would correspond to the plan (according to some rule).

(MS 109, 86–87)28

This sounds similar to what Wittgenstein says later: “whatever I do is, in some interpretation, in accord with the rule” (PI, §198). One is, thus, tempted to think that no course of action “can be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be brought into accord with the rule” (PI, § 201). Something is needed, so it seems, to fix the rule, i.e., to determine which rule is followed. If something does not fix the rule that expresses the correspondence of plan and action, the distinction between accidentally acting in accord with a rule and following it seems to disappear. Also here, then, a problem with Russell’s theory reappears in Wittgenstein’s account: it seems that we don’t have the means to determine what makes a command a specific command. The temptation is, again, to assume something mental that makes the rule definite because we have the impression that we never get to the real rule.29

The difficulty concerning specificity arises when Wittgenstein explains what it means to understand a command. Since understanding a command is a kind of translating (interpreting) it either into different words or into action, the understanding of what is meant seems to be something that is added to the signs that we hear or see. In MS 109, 273, Wittgenstein observes:

I tell someone: ‘Go call Peter’.—How is he supposed to know what I mean? It must have been explained to him. But still with signs. He follows this explanation now.
If understanding was a necessary preparation of the following [the command], it must have added something to the sign; but something that is not the execution.

What is this “something added”? What is it that I understand? Given the ambiguity of signs, one gets the impression that it is only the interpretation of signs that gives us the command that was meant. But, apparently, the rule that grounds the description of what fulfills the command is “still with signs” and, therefore, different from the execution itself. This all seems to suggest that a sentence inside a system could be understood as meeting us in an incomplete manner; as though there was something that is only hinted at (see MS 109, 277); or even worse: something that cannot be conveyed (MS 109, 169; MS 110, 55). One (presumably a philosopher) may not see or accept that language works as a system of excluding and exhausting alternatives. The temptation arises again that it is something in our minds—a mental state that corresponds to understanding or is the understanding—that guarantees that we can follow a specific command. Here we find, then, another element of Wittgenstein’s criticism of Russell. The only thing that seems to stop a regress is a self-explaining intention (a kind of self-explaining third element).

What Wittgenstein needs, then, in order to solve his difficulties is not only the allegedly trivial idea that language works as a calculus. The idea of language as a calculus may be a short and trivial answer to the concerns that he had, but it does not eradicate the puzzlement. One could also say, therefore, that showing the truth is not enough when one is dealing with philosophical puzzlement. One has to find a way to bring someone away from the mistake:
(In order to convince someone of the truth, it is not sufficient to establish the truth, but one has to find out the road from the misconception to the truth.) (One has to start with the misconception and bring him to the truth). (I.e., one has to expose the source of the misconception, otherwise hearing the truth is not helpful. It cannot penetrate as long as something else takes its place.) (MS 110, 58)

This passage shows that Wittgenstein is not simply reformulating the problems of his own explanations of the difficulties concerning projection, understanding and thinking that he had already dealt with in MSS 107 and 108. Neither is he simply explaining his conception of language as a calculus. Rather, in the passage above, the emphasis lies in laying out the “source of the misconception.” This, we will see, is the central trait of the genetic method.30

Here we have to pay attention to two things. First, the similarity between the recurrent problems in Wittgenstein’s and Russell’s views is striking. It would be even more striking, or extraordinary, if Wittgenstein were not aware of it; for he himself presented the infinite regress and the lack of specificity arguments against Russell in his MSS and in his lectures of the time. Second, in several passages Wittgenstein makes clear that the interpretation of a rule is something that comes to an end, although one may be inclined to forget it while philosophizing. Contrary to all philosophical paradoxical conclusions, we do follow rules and understand what other people mean. As a matter of fact, the infinite regress does not even arise:

I don’t need another model that shows me how /the depiction goes and, therefore/ [how] the first model has to be used, for otherwise I would need a model to show me the use/application of the second and so on ad infinitum. That is, another model is of no use for me, I have to act at some point without a model. (MS 109, 86)

If we needed a new interpretation and a new model, presumably it would be impossible to act. Our problem, if real, would stop us from acting, which is obviously not the case. What, then, is the nature of a problem that doesn’t really stop what it seems to stop? Wittgenstein thinks that problems that supposedly should make a difference to our action, but do not, are the product of some confusion in our reasoning. In order to get rid of the confusion, first, we have to be clear that allegedly “self-explanatory devices” like mental processes don’t really help us:

The psychological process also cannot achieve more than the characters on paper. For we are tempted again and again to want to explain a symbolic process with a particular psychical [mental] process, as though what is mental could do more in this matter than the sign. (MS 110,18; my emphasis)

As the passage indicates, Wittgenstein is well aware of his temptations and the way that they relate to Russell’s views. His new method consists in investigating what is misconceived in the train of thoughts that gives rise to the temptation to use subterfuges—self-explaining mechanisms—in philosophy. He neither intends to assume “something” self-explanatory (as a condition of possibility of understanding rules), nor accepts Russell’s account:

All difficulties of philosophy can only be based on misunderstandings. A discovery is never needed, is not necessary to solve them. It is a misunderstanding
and can only be solved as such. I.e., without violence. For the door gets open
and everything in it is all right; you only have to understand the lock and move
in the correct way. (MS109, 298; Wittgenstein’s emphasis)

The misunderstandings that Wittgenstein has in mind are grounded on false
analogies. To be led by false analogies to mistakes, and to be unable to get rid of
them is, for Wittgenstein, “the morbus philosophicus”: “We go astray through
false analogies and we cannot get out of this entanglement. This is the morbus
philosophicus” (MS110, 86–87).31

One of his new tasks is precisely to warn against false analogies that can bring
one to philosophical puzzlement:

It is one of the central activities of philosophy to warn against false compari-
sions. To warn against false comparisons/analogies that underlie—without our
complete consciousness of them—our modes of expression. (MS 109,174)

This central activity is, for Wittgenstein, “grammatical,” for at the bottom
of our mistakes there might be analogies suggested by our modes of expression
(mistakes caused by “false grammar” or “false comparisons/analogies,” as he also
says). For instance, one might be misled into assuming self-explaining mental
images in the following way:

How strange that if he isn’t here I can look for him, but not point to him. That
is really the problem of looking for something, and it shows the misleading
comparison.

One might want to say: If I’m looking for him then surely he too has to be
part of the process.—Then he also has to be part of the process if I don’t
find him, and even if he doesn’t exist. (MS 110, 274; translated in
BT, 272e)

We might be tempted to postulate mental images because we are misled by
the similarity among the forms of expression. When one explains who John is,
and John is in the room, one can point to John. When John is absent, and one
looks for John, John seems to be somehow present. After all, we say: “I am
looking for John.” So it seems that our words indicate that the object needs a
replacement when it is absent.32 Underlying this whole train of thought, one could
think, is a “confusion between the meaning and the bearer of a name” (MS 110,
276). Because, allegedly, if ‘John’ means the object John, when John is absent
we seem to need a replacement (after all, ‘John’ still has a meaning when the
person is not present).

Wittgenstein considers philosophical mistakes “difficult grammatical illnesses”
(MS 110, 247). “The cure,” he says, “is the pointing out (Aufzeigen) of the mislead-
ing picture” (MS 110, 248) that leads to the philosophical question.33 The idea is
also to show the steps that lead to puzzlement:

One of the most important tasks is to express all false trains of thought in such
a characteristic way that the reader says ‘yes, I meant it in exactly this way.’
To portray the physiognomy of each error. (MS 110, 230)34

‘To portray the physiognomy’ of an error means expressing the thoughts that
lead to the error and finding the source of the train of thoughts that leads us to the
formulation of the problem.\textsuperscript{35} Later in 1931, Wittgenstein points out that once this is made explicit, the reader can see for himself what is wrong:

I should be only the mirror in which my reader sees his own thinking with all its deformities (\textit{Unformigkeiten}) and the reflection according to which he can set his thinking correctly/with its help set his thinking correctly. (MS 153a, from 1931; also in MS 112, 225, from 11.1931)

The reader will recognize Wittgenstein’s writings as a mirror only if he sees them as an expression of his own tendency, as an expression of how he (and not only Wittgenstein) is inclined to think:

We can bring someone away from a mistake only when he recognizes that this is the expression of his feelings/ . . . if he (really) recognizes this expression as the correct expression of his feelings. (MS 110, 230)\textsuperscript{36}

The key should be given to the reader to enable him to get out of the philosophical problem (MS 110, 98). ‘To get out’ means to give up the problem as a problem, to understand that his problem is not a real one, but the result of a confusion that takes place already when the problem is first formulated. The key is, of course, the correct expression of the train of thoughts that bring us to puzzlement. The reader recognizes himself in what is argued and so unlocks the door, i.e., he changes his attitude (does something different):

As I have often said, philosophy does not lead me to any renunciation, since I do not abstain from saying something, but rather abandon a certain combination of words as senseless. In another sense, however, philosophy does require a resignation, but one of feeling, not of intellect. And maybe that is what makes it so difficult for many. It can be difficult not to use an expression, just as it is to hold back tears, or an outburst of rage. (MS 110, 189–190; translated in \textit{BT}, 300e)

The “difficulty of philosophy” finds expression in Wittgenstein’s own thoughts. So several of his remarks in his later writings are confessional. Wittgenstein himself was tempted by many thoughts expressed by interlocutors in the \textit{Philosophical Investigations}. He himself in his Middle Period tried several of the moves that he blocks in that book.

Wittgenstein in 1931 is clear about where to find the genesis of philosophical confusions, namely, in philosophical misleading trains of thoughts and false analogies. He is not completely clear, however, about how to elucidate precisely the analogies and the mistakes involved in the trains of thought concerning rules of projection, intending and understanding. In one passage he points out the analogy between thinking and the workings of a mechanism that might take place when one uses expressions like “expecting p” and “thinking p”:

One is (by means of false grammar) tempted to ask: how does one think the sentence p, how does one expect that this and this take place (how does one do this) ? And this false question contains already the whole difficulty \textit{in nuce}. The false comparison consists, in this case, in the fact that we think/represent the thing as a mechanism whose external part we know and whose internal working is still hidden from us. (MS 109, 173–174)
Of course, if one asks “How do I do this?” one is tempted to think that introspection will reveal the nature of thinking, and expecting, and how they differ. Then it is almost natural to think that a feeling underlies the difference between “expecting p” and “thinking p” (this could have been Russell’s train of thought). Wittgenstein comes closer to an account of the misleading analogy at the beginning of MS 110: “The first that we want to say about the thought is that it is an activity. A comparison that immediately forces upon us is the one with the digestion” (MS 110, 1). Here, of course, we are using a picture:

We employ simply a picture, if we talk about the activity of thought. Thinking is not to be compared with the workings of a mechanism, which we see from the outside and whose inside we must however gaze at in order to understand its activity. (MS 110, 4)

The mind seems to produce thoughts by means of its activity. This tempts us into thinking of a mechanism whose real workings are concealed: “it is like a mechanism, but we cannot see its inside.” Wittgenstein seems to think that there are several sources of the confusion and more than one false analogy that relates to the picture (analogy) of an underlying “mechanism.” He returns several times to the problem and presents other suggestions of false analogies that may have engendered his temptations and Russell’s theories. He mentions, for instance, that what misleads us is the fact that we can have an intention without expressing it (MS 110, 230). This may suggest that we cannot definitely interpret what is said; it may also lead us into thinking that the meaning of a word is a concealed mental representation (MS 110, 230). In MS 110, 234, he suggests that the false picture is that thoughts must accompany sentences. If we believe that a thought always accompanies sentences, we are tempted to think that we may never reach the thought itself (we get many expressions of thoughts in our sentences, but not the thought itself).

It is important to notice, however, that Wittgenstein also explicitly says that he “cannot find the central grammatical mistake” that underlies his worries concerning the infinite regress:

What we want is to clearly express [analyse] the grammar of the expression ‘the command is followed.’

“Yes, but how do I know, then, that I have followed the command?”

(I cannot find the central grammatical mistake on which all these problems rest).

Naturally, it is the same question as this one: How do I know that this sentence describes this fact. (MS 110, 95)

It is reasonable to think, therefore, that only in a later stage will he fully understand the genesis of his and Russell’s confusions and express them in a clear way. It may be the case that the task is very complex and that philosophical confusions have many sources. However, the task later is still the task of the genetic method, namely, clearing misunderstandings away until complete clarity is achieved. Note that complete clarity “simply means that the philosophical problems should completely disappear” (PI, §133). In order to achieve that goal, “a method is now demonstrated by examples” (PI, §133; originally in MS 112, 47v from 1931). The
method, I take it, even though it has more elements in the *Philosophical Investigations*, is the genetic method.\(^{41}\)

If the reading of MSS 109–110 presented here is correct, Wittgenstein’s new method consists in investigating the genesis of philosophical problems. It can be summarized in five points: (1) He begins with the suspicion, grounded on coincidences between the puzzles that arise in his and Russell’s account, that philosophical problems are generated by false analogies, comparisons, or “pictures,” and misleading trains of thoughts;\(^{42}\) (2) his task is to indicate these false analogies or pictures and clearly express these trains of thoughts (“portraying the physiognomy of errors”);\(^{43}\) (3) this task is only successful if he can make the philosophical reader acknowledge her own thoughts and inclinations expressed in his indication of analogies and descriptions of trains of thoughts (mirror metaphor); (4) since Wittgenstein investigates the genesis of philosophical puzzlement, he does not intend to offer or discuss fully developed doctrines.\(^{44}\) His method works at a prephilosophical level; (5) the aim of his method is to *dissolve* philosophical problems (in contrast to solving them).

**V. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

It is clear, I think, that Wittgenstein did not invent the so-called “rule-following problem” as a variation of a skeptical argument—as argued Kripke. The problem comes more or less naturally into existence. It is precisely this naturalness that needs scrutiny, according to him. The rule-following problem, like any philosophical problem, should be dissolved by the genetic method: “Problems are literally dissolved—like a lump of sugar in water” (MS 110, 99). If Kripke had investigated MSS 109 and 110, I think, he would agree that Wittgenstein, right from the beginning, was not interested in inventing and answering “rule-skepticism,” but in finding out what brings one to formulate such a puzzle. The real issue behind the “paradox,” also in the *Philosophical Investigations*, is “where did these strange ideas come from?” (*PI*, §194). How come we, while philosophizing, are prone to “draw the oddest conclusions” (*PI*, §194)—one could add: “such as Kripke’s.” The problem of the determination of rules, of how we follow rules, is a question that “contains a mistake” (*PI*, §188). Therefore: we have to investigate how a “mode of expression suggests itself to us,” very likely, “as a result of the crossing of different pictures” (*PI*, §191).

Considering what has been said in this paper, one question seems to be pressing: Are the genetic method and the calculus conception really compatible?\(^{45}\) It is clear that Wittgenstein saw the calculus conception at the time of its formulation as nothing more than trivialities (MS 108, 238; also MS 111, 49). In a (weak) sense, at least, it may be trivial, for prima facie it does not seem to assume any theory concerning the nature of the world and the mind. Who would think that it might be problematic to characterize language as a system of rules for sentences and words, which work only in contrast to other sentences and words inside the system? Perhaps, Wittgenstein himself. Later, in the *Blue Book*, for instance, he seems to criticize the calculus conception:
When we talk of language as a symbolism used in an exact calculus, that which is in our mind can be found in the sciences and in mathematics. Our ordinary use of language conforms to this standard of exactness only in rare cases. Why then do we in philosophising constantly compare our use of words with one following exact rules? The answer is that the puzzles which we are trying to remove always spring from just this attitude towards language. \(BB, 25–26\)46

Here, the idea of language as a calculus in which one follows “exact rules” is merely an analogy originating in mathematics and science. A misleading one, for sure, which is to be removed because it generates puzzles. We should also not forget that Wittgenstein in the *Philosophical Investigations* asks us to consider a language of four words a “complete language” \(PI, \S 2\). If that language is a calculus, then it is not a calculus of sentences. This suggests that Wittgenstein himself might have underestimated the power of pictures and analogies (it may be misleading to compare language to a calculus). Whether, and how, Wittgenstein abandons the calculus (game) conception is a story that cannot be told here.47

Let me summarize briefly this paper. Wittgenstein argues that Russell’s causal theory of meaning is unable to make clear how a proposition describes one specific fact; moreover, it generates an infinite regress, unless self-explaining mental entities are assumed. Wittgenstein worries about Russell’s theory, first, because it is incompatible with the idea that the sense of a sentence is independent of its truth, the central point of Wittgenstein’s pictorial conception of language. If the pictorial conception were correct, however, we should be able to see directly in the comparison of the sentence with reality whether it is true. How can we see it and how is it possible that a sentence specifically describes one fact (“connects with reality”)? It seems that either the rules of projection are sufficient to explain that we can understand and compare sentences with reality without assuming a third element or something behind those rules, “what is meant,” needs to be assumed as more basic than the rules of projection. In the process of clarification of his own ideas concerning this matter, Wittgenstein comes to invent the calculus conception of language. The basic tenet of this conception is that language works like an autonomous calculus (or game), whose rules completely determine the senses of sentences and meanings of words. Such a conception could, however, generate worries concerning an infinite regress in the justification of rules and the possibility that each fact is in accord with an indeterminate number of rules (thus, no specific fact would be fixed by the rules of sentences). This brings Wittgenstein to the insight that both Russell and himself were working under misleading assumptions that would lead him to “paradoxical” consequences. While it seems difficult to see how the rules determine the meaning of sentences and how they are understood without generating an infinite regress, it is a quite obvious fact that we do determine the sense of sentences and understand the rules of projection.

This brings Wittgenstein to the invention of the genetic method: to inquire into the genesis of philosophical problems and to look for false analogies and misleading trains of thoughts that ground their formulation. The invention of the method shows, incidentally, that the rule-following problem was not meant to be a skeptical argument with a skeptical solution, as argued Kripke, but as a problem
to be dissolved genetically. The genetic method is fundamental for Wittgenstein’s later philosophy, for it is this method that, I take it, explains his later refusal to present philosophical theories. This does not mean, however, that the method was not modified and enriched after its invention. It took Wittgenstein several years to fully develop it.48

ENDNOTES


6. For instance, Dale Jacquette, Wittgenstein’s Thought in Transition; Wolfgang Kienzler, Wittgensteins Wende zu seiner Spaetphilosophie 1930–1932 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997); David Stern, Wittgenstein on Mind and Language (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); David Pears, The False Prison, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Meril B. Hintikka and Jakko Hintikka, Investigating Wittgenstein (Oxford: Basic Blackwell, 1986); Robert J. Fogelin, Wittgenstein, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1987). A notable exception is Saul Kripke (see note 8). One could argue that commentators have had other goals in mind when explaining Wittgenstein’s philosophical development. However, if I am right, there is no option here, for his development is intrinsically connected with Russell’s work.


8. Also known as the “rule-following paradox.” It is interesting that Saul Kripke (Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982],
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25n19) says “the discussion of Russell’s theory [causal theory of meaning] played, I think, an important role in Wittgenstein’s development.” Kripke, I think, has a deep insight here. However, if one looks at the origin of the rule-following problem, one clearly sees that Wittgenstein neither thought that the problem was a real one, nor defended a skeptical solution for it. This will be explained in sections 4 and 5.

9. According to Russell, the introduction of images is the most relevant difference between his explanation of the workings of language and that given in John B. Watson Behaviorism (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1930). In Russell’s view, Watson’s explanation of linguistic habits is satisfactory only for the cases in which the objects that we talk about are present (AM, 203–204). This was the most important point of disagreement between Russell’s theory and C. D. Ogden and I. A. Richards The Meaning of Meaning (New York: Harcourt, 1923). Wittgenstein opposed Ogden and Richards’s theory as well—see Ludwig Wittgenstein: Cambridge Letters. Correspondence with Russell, Keynes, Moore, Ramsey and Sraffa, ed. B. McGuiness and G. Von Wright (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 183.

10. MSS 107 and 108 have a peculiar composition. The correct order of the remarks is the following: MS 107, 1–229 written from 10.06 to 12.04.1929; MS 108, 1–64 written from 12.13.1929 to 01.05.1930; MS 107, 229–300 from 01.10. to 02.15.1930; MS 108, 65–300 written from 02.16. to 08.09.1930.


12. This parallels Wittgenstein’s jocose critique of Russell’s theory of desire. Russell claims: “If our theory of desire is correct, a belief as to its purpose may very well be erroneous, since only experience can show what causes a discomfort to cease” (AM, 72). Wittgenstein’s objection is quite direct: “(If I wanted to eat an apple, and someone punched me in the stomach, taking away my appetite, then it was this punch that I originally wanted)” (MS 107, 290; translated in PR, §22).

13. The relation to reality is also similar in different kinds of sentences: “The same requirements apply to a description as to a command or a prescription. A description is verified or falsified by comparison with reality, with which it may correspond or not, and so be true or false. This is true of propositions generally” (WLC30–32, 2). In the same key, he says: “The command must be a species (Art) of the comparison of a proposition with reality” (MS 108, 190; from 20.06.1930). But then understanding in all kinds of sentences is also similar: understanding a descriptive sentence (proposition) is knowing its truth-conditions and understanding a command is knowing how to act to fulfil the command (to make it ‘true’).

14. I am not claiming that exactly this view is defended in the Tractatus. There “understanding” a proposition is knowing what is the case if it is true (Tractatus 4.024). One understands what is the case, if one knows what the terms of a proposition mean and how their relationship describes a possible situation, i.e., if one understands the rules of projection (the rules of translation). In the Middle Period, Wittgenstein is inclined to further explain the notion of projection and explicitly takes understanding as translating.

15. I say extend because, in my view, when Wittgenstein wrote the Tractatus, psychological aspects of the method of projection were not part of his concerns. One may think, however, that Wittgenstein in the Tractatus assumes certain facts about how the acts of the
mind make the projection possible. Such a view can be found, for instance, in Peter M. S. Hacker, “Naming, Thinking and Meaning in the *Tractatus*,” *Philosophical Investigations* 22 (1999): 119–135. But even if this view were correct, it would not affect the point I am making here. For, if “psychological processes,” as Hacker says (ibid., 12), “link language to reality, and infuse sentences with life,” these processes are made explicit and discussed only in 1930–1931 precisely because Wittgenstein felt the need to argue against Russell’s causal theory.

16. The sentence continues with a sarcastic reference to the Russell’s solution: “Is it similar to the case where we described a stomach pain and one asked ‘I understand it, but where does the unpleasantness lie[?]’.”

17. It is interesting that the causal account at least offers an answer to this problem: you wait and see what brings the feeling of fulfillment and this is what was expected (“meant” as the expectation). Wittgenstein denies this alternative, of course: I know what exactly I mean with a command before it is fulfilled. But an alternative view makes an answer to the nature of intention more than urgent.

18. ‘Temptation’ and ‘being tempted to’ come to be part of Wittgenstein’s own vocabulary. It is interesting that he rarely uses these words in the Tractarian period (*Tractatus* 5.5351; “Notes on Logic,” in *Notebooks 1914–16*, ed. G. E. M Anscombe and G. Von Wright [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979], 97 and 100). In 1929 their use is only frequent in MS 139a, the “Lecture on Ethics,” 10, 13, 17, 18, and 19 (see also MS 106, 220 and MS 108, 1). After the middle of 1930, however, he often uses them (see, for instance, MS 108, 279; MS 109, 173, 209, 267; MS 110, 18, 26, 86, 106, 123, 141, 148; MS 111, 176; MS 112, 67v; MS 113, 40r). The frequent use of the word is clearly related to the invention of the new method in MSS 109 and 110 at the end of 1930 (see the next sections of this paper). Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out some of the early uses of the expressions (specially the ones in MS 139a). I think that the passages in MS 139a might indicate an interesting bridge between the philosophy of the *Tractatus* and Wittgenstein’s later philosophy.

19. This temptation is made explicit later: “Suppose we said ‘that a picture is a portrait of a particular object consists in its being derived from that object in a particular way’. Now it is easy to describe what we should call processes of deriving a picture from an object (roughly speaking, processes of projection). But there is a peculiar difficulty about admitting that any such process is what we call ‘intentional representation’. For describe whatever process (activity) of projection we may, there is a way of reinterpreting this projection. Therefore—one is tempted to say—such a process can never be the intention itself. For we could always have intended the opposite by reinterpreting the process of projection.” Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and the Brown Books* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), 33; my emphasis. Henceforth BB.

20. Also: “To know what the sign means means to interpret it” (MS 108, 256); and WCL30–32, 44: “To understand a thought means to be able to translate it according to a general rule. For example, playing a piano from a score. But the score does not cause us to play as we do; if it did there would be no right and wrong way of playing.”

21. Note that Wittgenstein himself takes the calculus conception as a kind of explanation, even though it is envisioned to make us stop looking for a substantive explanation grounded on assumptions concerning the connection between world and language or on assumptions concerning mental entities. This indicates that Wittgenstein’s goal of only saying “trivial sentences” may not be achieved by means of the calculus conception. In section V, I indi-
cate that at least one of the assumptions of the calculus conception does not fit such a goal. ‘Calculus’ and ‘system’ are taken as synonyms by Wittgenstein (at least before 1934). See, for instance, MS 109, 182, 220–222, and MS 110, 200, where he says: “To invent a language means to construct a language. To set up its rules. To write its grammar. . . . What is valid for the word ‘language’ must also be valid for the expression ‘system of rules’. Therefore, also for the word ‘calculus’” (translated in The Big Typescript, German-English Scholar’s Edition: TS 213, ed. and trans. C. Grant Luckardt and Maximilian A. E. Aue [Oxford: Blackwell, 2005], 53e). Henceforth BT. Wittgenstein also uses ‘calculus’ in a purely mathematical sense (for instance, MS 110, 11).

22. “Picture and reality must be [part of] one system. Like the result of a calculation and the whole rest of the calculation” (MS 111, 109).

23. The primitive signs, according to the Tractatus (3.263), can only be elucidated. One could reasonably suppose that ostensive explanations are elucidations. In fact, Wittgenstein does not give examples of elucidations there. The lack of specification of elucidations generated a debate concerning their true nature. For a defense of elucidations as ostensive definitions see Hacker, Insight and Illusion, chap. 3; for a defense of the opposite claim see Peter Carruthers, The Metaphysics of the Tractatus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), chap. 2.

24. Note that Wittgenstein thinks that his conception is in one sense behavioristic, namely, in the sense that we should think the “internal” as “external.” He, of course, is not arguing for the reduction of the mental to behavioral dispositions.

25. The issue here is not incompleteness in regard to instructions to fill in the blanks. In this sense, it is, indeed, incomplete. Such incompleteness can be dealt with, for instance in an elementary school exam, with the instruction “Fill the blanks in the line bellow the numbers.” The point is whether the squaring rules are all there is to be understood (whether the rules only hint at something, whether there is always something that is not or cannot be expressed in signs).

26. Compare this with what Wittgenstein said about Russell’s theory: “We can always ask for a further description of any description given of meaning or fulfillment; which produces an infinite regress” (WLC30–32, 9; from 02.13.1930). See section 1 of this paper for the full quotation.


28. The same point is made elsewhere in the same MS: “Does ‘to follow the rules of grammar’ mean to think, in any sense, about these rules while talking? No.—Does it mean, always to talk according to certain rules? No.—It means following rules.—But anyone who does anything at all, does this; for there will be a rule that corresponds to what he does” (MS 109, 281).

29. One feels that one is “guided” by a specific rule (MS 109, 72, 235, 238–242). But what does ‘guided’ mean? Is it a causal relation? Is it like having the purpose of following a command? Concerning “being guided” see PI, §§170–178. Those sections of PI close the “reading interpolation” (§§156–178). Discussions of “reading” are introduced in MS 110, 6–24. “Reading” is an interesting example of being guided by rules, for the dependency between words and action is, it seems, “expressible only by means of a rule” (MS 109, 6).
30. My procedure, in the next pages, will be the following. I will introduce, step by step, the various features of the genetic method: (1) the suspicion that philosophical puzzlement originates in false trains of thoughts and misleading analogies; (2) their presentation in the form of a mirror; (3) this presentation must bring about in the reader the recognition of the genesis of his own puzzlement; (4) the focus of the method is not fully developed philosophical doctrines, but confusions and temptations that might have generated them; (5) the goal of the method is to dissolve philosophical problems (in contrast to solving them).

31. In earlier manuscripts the idea that false analogies mislead philosophers is sometimes mentioned (for instance in MS 108, 23–24, 32, 34, 266). This shows that the idea that false analogies underlie the formulation of philosophical puzzlement is an idea that develops slowly and that Wittgenstein’s change of attitude is not the consequence of an out of the blue inspiration.

32. Note that this is similar to what brings Russell to postulate mental images. For Russell, the behaviorist habit-explanation of the use of words works well for the cases in which the objects are present, but inadequate when not. This, for Russell, implies the need for images: “Having admitted images, we may say that the word ‘box’ in the absence of the box, is caused by an image of the box” (AM, 204). This, in its turn, seems to imply the following: “When we understand a word, there is a reciprocal association between it and the images of what it ‘means’ . . . Thus speech is a means of producing in our hearers the images which are in us” (AM, 206).

33. ‘Misleading picture,’ ‘misleading analogy,’ and ‘misleading comparison’ work as synonyms here. This is clear in the example of what might be the misleading analogy behind Wittgenstein’s struggles with the causal theory of meaning that I give in the next pages.

34. Wittgenstein also says: “Nothing is more important than to pull into light all false thoughts and present them in an absolutely correct/faithful way” (MS 109, 99). See also PI, §254.

35. See PI, §§39–40 and §§304–309 for an explicit use of this methodology.

36. This passage is complemented in the following way: “Namely, only if he recognizes it as such [as the right expression of his feelings] is it the right expression. (Psychoanalysis).” As this passage makes clear, the analogy between Wittgenstein’s method and psychoanalysis is grounded on the idea that both are successful when there is recognition of what engendered the problem (also: MS 156a, 56v). Another interesting aspect of the analogy is that one is not aware of the extended use of analogies while philosophizing (as one may not be aware of the cause of a certain mental disorder). However, one should not extend too much the analogy between Wittgenstein’s method (its therapeutic characteristic) and psychoanalysis. This has been done in many discussions concerning Wittgenstein’s method and was one of the grounds for Baker and Hacker parting their ways. The battlefield for Baker and Hacker are some of the passages of the MSS from 1930–1933 that reappear in the Big Typescript (for instance, 303e) and the works of Waismann based on his collaboration with Wittgenstein between 1929 and 1936 (see The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy [London: Macmillan, 1968] and How I See Philosophy [London: Macmillan, 1968]). Baker criticized Hacker—correctly, I think—for not paying attention to Wittgenstein’s method in the Big Typescript and for over-emphasizing the role played by “grammar” (Gordon Baker, Wittgenstein’s Method: Neglected Aspects, ed. K. Morris [Oxford: Blackwell, 2004]); however, he himself did not pay enough attention to the relevance of “grammar” and its sense determining role in the Big Typescript and in Waismann’s works. As Hacker correctly points out (“Gordon Baker’s Late Interpretation of Wittgenstein,” in Wittgenstein and His Interpreters, ed. G. Kahane, E. Kanterian, and O. Kuusela [Oxford: Blackwell, 2007]), Baker’s psychoanalytic
reading misrepresents the works of Waismann, in which he sees a kind of Wittgensteinian psychoanalytic philosophical methodology, for Baker systematically ignores passages that don’t fit his interpretation. Moreover, Baker misrepresents the philosophy of the Big Type-script, for he does not account for Wittgenstein’s use of grammar grounded on the calculus conception of language (for such passages see, for instance, BT, 76e, 79e, 119e). I think that the dispute between Baker and Hacker that took place after their extraordinary cooperative effort is grounded on partial emphasis: Hacker emphasizes grammar as a sense determining discipline, while Baker emphasizes the therapeutic aspect of Wittgenstein’s method. What characterizes both interpretations (Baker’s and Hacker’s) is the lack of details about Wittgenstein’s Middle Period philosophical development. Hacker thinks that after Wittgenstein invented grammar his later philosophy was essentially complete; Baker thinks that after Wittgenstein invented the, in his view, psychoanalytical method his later philosophy was complete. Both fail to see the detailed surroundings where grammar and method are invented and further developed. For a critique of Hacker’s interpretation see my “What Wittgenstein’s Grammar is Not (On Garver, Baker and Hacker, and Hacker on Wittgenstein on Grammar),” Wittgenstein-Studien (2011): 71–102. For further developments of Baker’s interpretation see, for instance, Stefan Majetschack, “Psychoanalysis of Grammatical Misinterpretations: The Relationship of Ludwig Wittgenstein with the Work of Sigmund Freud,” Wittgenstein-Studien (2010): 151–170, and Eugen Fischer, “Diseases of the Understanding and the Need for Philosophical Therapy,” Philosophical Investigations 34 (2011): 22–54.

37. In this case, we may think that we need an account of thought in general, independently of this or that organism, in order to save the objectivity of thought. At some point, Wittgenstein himself says that “thought is not something human” (MS 108, 217).

38. Note that ‘picture’ and ‘comparison’ (or analogy) are used interchangeably here (the comparison between the mechanism of digestion and the thought is the employed picture). This does not mean that Wittgenstein’s use of ‘picture,’ ‘comparison,’ and ‘analogy’ is the same throughout his career. For instance, in PI, §1, Augustine’s description of how he supposedly learnt his language (“what things the words signified”), according to Wittgenstein, gives us “a particular picture of the essence of human language.” ‘Picture’ here seems to mean ‘rough description’ or ‘model.’ The employed picture, however, seems to be grounded on an uncritically extended analogy, for it arises, according to Wittgenstein, when one thinks “primarily of nouns like ‘table,’ chair,’ bread,’ and of people’s names, and only secondarily of the names of certain actions and properties; and of the remaining kinds of word as something that will take care of itself.” For an account of the nuances of the notion of “picture” in the Philosophical Investigations see David Egan, “Pictures in Wittgenstein’s Later Philosophy,” Philosophical Investigations 34 (2011): 55–76.

39. Like a mechanism, but a quite peculiar one, for its inside workings are always concealed. Thomas Ricketts told me the following Wittgensteinian joke. A asks B: “How does a telephone work?” B answers: “Picture yourself a dog: if you pull its tail on the one side, it barks on the other side.” A: “Interesting, indeed. How does the radio work?” B: “Like the telephone, but without the dog.”

40. Note that following a rule is similar to following a command. Note also that in this passage Wittgenstein is obviously aware that his difficulties are merely a version of the old problems related to the specificity of sentence and fact.

41. An obvious new element of the method is, for instance, the introduction of language-games. What do language-games do? They are supposed to make the “mental mist which seems to enshroud our ordinary use of language” disappear (BB, 17). One should not worry
about the fact that in *PI*, §133 Wittgenstein ends the section with this remark: “There is not a single philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, different therapies, as it were.” At first, this remark seems to be incompatible with what Wittgenstein himself says earlier in the same section (see quotation above). Four points must be made clear here. (1) Wittgenstein himself says that he is teaching a method, and not methods. (2) In fact, the last remark about methods was not written in the last version of the *PI*. Its ancestry is a slip of paper on which one can also find the observation “p. 91 footnote.” Page 91 of TS 227 is, indeed, the page where §133 is. (See Ludwig Wittgenstein *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Kritisch-genetische Edition), ed. J. Schulte [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001], 817; also TS 227a in the Bergen Edition.) It means that Wittgenstein wanted to do something with that remark, probably use it in a footnote, but it is not clear exactly what (the new Schulte and Hacker revised Anscombe translation makes clear that the last remark of §133 is not part of the text). (3) It is reasonable to think that Wittgenstein writes ‘methods’ in the slip of paper because he did not want to be dogmatic about his own method and wanted to leave open the possibility of using other methods. (4) The issue is interesting, but not decisively relevant. We don’t need to count methods, i.e., the genetic method might itself be seen as composed of various methods (looking for false analogies, analyzing false trains of thoughts, and so on).

42. I wrote ‘suspicion’ because Wittgenstein does not need to assume that all philosophical problems are generated by false analogies.

43. In conversations, Michael Kremer argued that already in *Tractatus* 3.323 Wittgenstein points out that certain linguistic analogies mislead us and that in this way “the most fundamental confusions are easily produced (the whole philosophy is full of them).” There are, however, clear differences that run deep between what takes place in the *Tractatus* and what is prescribed by the genetic method in respect of analogies and the genesis of philosophical problems. In fact, Wittgenstein does not talk at all about misleading trains of thoughts in the *Tractatus*. He neither investigates the genesis of the formulation of philosophical problems, nor shows the steps that lead to their formulation there, even though he already believes that philosophical questions are grounded on confusions (note, however, that they are grounded on misunderstandings of the “logic of our language” [4.003]). Thus, the central features of the genetic method (see above) are not present. Note also that the criticism of what misleads us in language according to the *Tractatus* is grounded on a conceptual notation. There is no idea of a conceptual notation grounding the genetic method. In 3.323–325 Wittgenstein is concerned with the correct conceptual notation and points out that one word in ordinary language may belong to different symbols, i.e., it may express different logical roles in the conceptual notation. Thus, in “Green is green,” the first occurrence of the word ‘green’ expresses one kind of symbol, an argument, and the second expresses another symbol, a function; ‘is’ can symbolize copula or identity. If we don’t pay attention to those roles, philosophical confusions are created (3.324). In order to avoid them, we need a conceptual notation “that excludes them by not using in a superficially similar way signs that have different modes of signification” (3.325). In this passage it is clear that, concerning misleading analogies, Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* is closer to Frege and Russell than to the genetic method, for it is a conceptual notation that should avoid them. Wittgenstein explicitly says that Frege and Russell have such a notation (3.325). Their notation, however, he also claims, simply “fails to exclude all mistakes” (3.325). Frege and Russell would certainly agree that philosophy is full of mistakes caused by “superficially similar use of signs,” for they, several times, criticized in similar terms the subject-predicate logic. Russell, on the one hand, criticizes Hegel’s idea of the “union of identity in difference.” Russell says: “Hegel’s argument . . . depends throughout upon confusing the ‘is’ of predication, as in ‘Socrates is
mortal,’ with the ‘is’ of identity, as in ‘Socrates is the philosopher who drank the hemlock.’ Owing to this confusion, he thinks that ‘Socrates’ and ‘mortal’ must be identical . . . vast and imposing systems of philosophy are built upon stupid and trivial confusions” (Our Knowledge of the External World [London: Routledge, 1999], 48–49n1). On the other hand, Frege says, when criticizing “superficially similar uses of signs,” that his conceptual notation should “break the dominance of word over the human spirit by uncovering illusions about the relationships of concepts that, very often, almost inevitably, come into existence” (Begriffsschrift [Hildesheim: Georg Holms Verlag, 1998], preface xii). Wittgenstein already saw with suspicion the basic categories of the conceptual notation some months after his return to Cambridge in 1929 (see, for instance, MS 105, 70).

44. The new method is the reason why, in December 1931, Wittgenstein stopped the project of co-authoring a revision of the Tractatus with Waismann. His reasons are given in a meeting of the Vienna Circle on the 9th: “As regards your Theses [the mentioned book], I once wrote, If there were theses in philosophy, they would have to be such that they do not give rise to disputes . . . 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.” (Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle, conversations recorded by Friedrich Waismann, ed. B. McGuinness, trans. J. Schulte and B. McGuinness [Oxford: Blackwell, 1979], 183–184). Note that Wittgenstein says that he now adheres to this method. If his goal is to show how misleading analogies and confusing trains of thought give rise to philosophical problems, he has to abstain from having himself philosophical opinions. It is interesting to observe that in Tractatus 6.53 Wittgenstein says that “saying nothing” would be the correct method, and not that it is the correct method. This suggests that 6.53 is not even the method employed in the Tractatus. Here I agree with James Conant, “Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein and Nonsense,” in Pursuits or Reason: Essays in Honour of Stanley Cavell, ed. T. Cohen, P. Guyer, and H. Putnam (Lubbock: Texas University Press, 1993), 195–224, and with Cora Diamond, “Ethics, Imagination and the Method of Wittgenstein’s Tractatus,” in The New Wittgenstein, ed. A. Crary and R. Read (London: Routledge, 2000), 149–173. In those papers Diamond and Conant argue that the method of 6.53 is not the method of the Tractatus. It is not completely clear, however, whether they still hold the same view (see, for instance, their “On Reading the Tractatus Resolutely: Reply to Meredith Williams and Peter Sullivan,” in Wittgenstein’s Lasting Significance, ed. M. Koelbel and B. Weiss [London: Routledge, 2004], 42–97; also Cora Diamond “Criss-cross Philosophy,” in Wittgenstein at Work. Method in the Philosophical Investigations, ed. E. Ammereller and E. Fischer [London: Routledge, 2004], 201–220). They may have changed their minds because of Goldfarb’s suggestion concerning 6.53, namely, that Wittgenstein is there “urging a case-by-case-approach” in the Tractatus (“Metaphysics and Nonsense,” Journal of Philosophical Research 22 [1997], 57–73). In any case, the method of 6.53, whatever it is, makes clear that “what can be said” is “propositions of natural science, i.e., something that has nothing to do with philosophy” (6.53). The point seems to be that if we understand that only propositions of natural science can be said, we understand that nothing can be said in philosophy (since “philosophy is not one of the natural sciences” (4.111)). The dissolution of philosophical problems prescribed in 6.53 and the silence prescribed in 7 seem to be, then, consequences of the elucidation of “what can be said,” and not characteristics of the method applied in the book, since there Wittgenstein does not say propositions of natural science and does not wait for someone else to say something.

45. Also: Are Wittgenstein’s apparently “positive conceptions” (“meaning is use,” “essence is expressed in grammar,” etc.), compatible with his method? It depends on how one takes
them. If they are taken as philosophical conceptions, or even opinions, they are incompatible; compatible, however, if taken as “gas to expel old gas,” as Wittgenstein says (Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics 1939, ed. C. Diamond [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989], 14). This means that they should be taken as “equally arbitrary interpretations” not meant to take the place of the old ones, but meant to help us to dissolve them. Wittgenstein says: “I may occasionally produce new interpretations, not in order to suggest they are right, but in order to show that the old interpretation and the new are equally arbitrary. . . . I will only make gas to expel old gas” (ibid., 14). One should not underestimate Wittgenstein’s intention of being faithful to his method: “My opinion? But obviously the whole point is that I must not have an opinion” (ibid., 55; my emphasis). He may, of course, be inconsistent in the way he practices his method: he may defend philosophical conceptions and, at the same time, claim that he has no opinion whatsoever. I don’t think that this is the case. It is clear, however, that one needs to elucidate many dubious passages (for instance, PI, §§371–373) in order to free Wittgenstein from the supposed inconsistency. I cannot do it here.

46. Compare this remark with MS 109, 90, quoted at the beginning of section 4 of this paper. See also the last paragraph of PI, §81. There, Wittgenstein says that “greater clarity about the concepts of understanding, meaning something, and thinking” will shed light on “what may mislead us (and did mislead me) into thinking that if anyone utters a sentence and means or understands it, he is thereby operating a calculus according to definite rules” (my underlining).


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