

*Philosophical Investigations §§ 1–11, Sophist 232–250*

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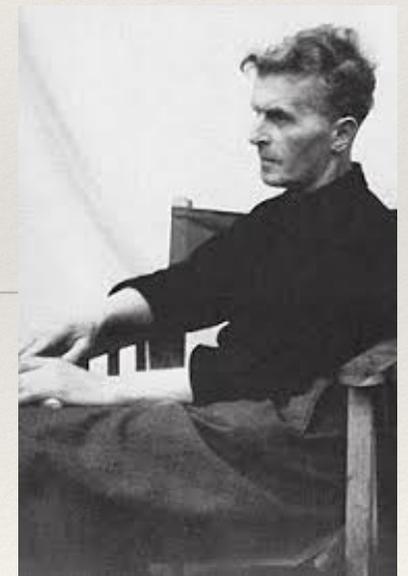
## Wittgenstein and the Sophist

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VL Language and ontology in ancient and analytic philosophy

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# Early Wittgenstein on objects and language: *The Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (1921)

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- ❖ 1. Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist.
  - ❖ 2. Was der Fall ist, die Tatsache, ist das Bestehen von Sachverhalten.
  - ❖ 3. Das logische Bild der Tatsachen ist der Gedanke.
  - ❖ 4. Der Gedanke ist der sinnvolle Satz.
  - ❖ 5. Der Satz ist eine Wahrheitsfunktion der Elementarsätze. (Der Elementarsatz ist eine Wahrheitsfunktion seiner selbst.)
  - ❖ 6. Die allgemeine Form der Wahrheitsfunktion ist:  $[p, \xi, N(\xi)]$ . Dies ist die allgemeine Form des Satzes.
  - ❖ 7. Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muß man schweigen.
- ❖ 1. The world is all that is the case.
  - ❖ 2. What is the case – a fact – is the existence of a state of affairs.
  - ❖ 3. A logical picture of facts is a thought.
  - ❖ 4. A thought is a proposition with sense.
  - ❖ 5. A proposition is a truth-function of elementary propositions. (An elementary proposition is a truth function of itself.)
  - ❖ 6. The general form of a truth-function is  $[p, \xi, N(\xi)]$ . This is the general form of the proposition.
  - ❖ 7. What we cannot speak of we must pass over in silence.

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## Late Wittgenstein on objects and language: *Philosophical Investigations* (posthumous, 1953)

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- ❖ “What lies behind the idea that names really signify simples? – Socrates (in the *Theaetetus*): “If I am not mistaken, I have heard of such things: there is no explanation for the primary elements – if I may so speak – of which we and everything else are composed; for everything which exists in and of itself can be signified by names only; and no other determination of it is possible, neither that it *is* nor that it *is not*... But what exists in and of itself must be... named without any other determination. In consequence, it is impossible to give an explanatory account of any primary element, since for it, there is nothing other than mere naming; after all, its name is all it has. But just as what is composed of the primary elements is itself an interwoven structure, so the correspondingly interwoven names become explanatory language; for the essence of the latter is the interweaving of names.” These primary elements were also Russell’s ‘individuals’, and my ‘objects’ (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*).
- ❖ *Philosophical Investigations* § 46, citing Plato, *Theaetetus* 201d–202b. See Myles Burnyeat (1990), “Wittgenstein and the Dream”, in: *The Theaetetus of Plato*, Indianapolis: Hackett, 149–164.

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# Back to the *Tractatus*

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- ❖ 4.2 The meaning of a proposition is its correspondence and non-correspondence with the possibilities of the attaining and non-attaining of states of affairs.
- ❖ 4.21 The simplest proposition, the elementary proposition, asserts the attaining of a state of affairs.
- ❖ 4.211 It is a sign that a proposition is elementary when no other elementary proposition stands in contradiction to it.
- ❖ 4.22 An elementary proposition consists of names. It is a binding or chaining of names.
- ❖ 4.221 It is evident that in the analysis of propositions we must come to elementary propositions which consist of names in immediate conjunction. The question here is how the binding at the level of the (elementary) proposition comes about.

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# The *Sophist* 232–250

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232–236: Determining the proper object of the power of the Sophist – the power of making “likenesses” (εἰδωλα, 236a6).

236–240: Puzzles concerning non-Being.

240–250: Assessing the accounts of Being: Parmenides, the Materialists, and the Friends of Forms.