

Washington University in St. Louis

Washington University Open Scholarship

All Theses and Dissertations (ETDs)

5-24-2012

Ludwig Wittgenstein and Hermann Broch: The Need for Fiction and Logic in Moral Philosophy

Christopher Bailes

Washington University in St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Bailes, Christopher, "Ludwig Wittgenstein and Hermann Broch: The Need for Fiction and Logic in Moral Philosophy" (2012). *All Theses and Dissertations (ETDs)*. 681.

<https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/etd/681>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Washington University Open Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) by an authorized administrator of Washington University Open Scholarship. For more information, please contact digital@wumail.wustl.edu.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures

Dissertation Examination Committee:

Paul Michael Lützeler, Chair

Julia Driver

Matt Erlin

Erin McGlothlin

Gillian Russell

Lynne Tatlock

*Ludwig Wittgenstein and Hermann Broch: The Need for Fiction and Logic in Moral
Philosophy*

By

Christopher Wade Bailes

A dissertation presented to the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of Washington University in
partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2012

Saint Louis, Missouri

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures and Washington University in Saint Louis for their generous financial support. My dissertation benefited from various guest lecturers, conferences, and graduate seminars supported by the university, and would not have been financially feasible without the tuition waivers and more than adequate living stipends that kept me afloat. I would like to thank various friends with diverse areas of expertise whose conversations were stimulating and directly relevant to themes in my dissertation. These friends include Sundeep Jayaprabhu, Joe Behrmann, Kayce Swigelson, Rob Macdougall, Peter Boumgarden, Tim Clark, Florian Bast, Isaac Wiegman, Kaylin Bolt, Tim Bussen, Stephen Casmier, Michael McFarlane, Father Gregory, and Father Ralph. I would like to thank two philosophers who were not on my committee but who were generous enough to meet and discuss parts of my dissertation. These include Roy Sorensen and Harry Frankfurt. My dissertation committee deserves acknowledgement for their considerable labor involved in reading and critiquing this work, it consists of Gillian Russell, Julia Driver, Lynne Tatlock, Erin McGlothlin, Matt Erlin, and Paul Michael Lützeler. Special thanks to Matt Erlin as the second reader of my dissertation; his articulate thoughts on each of my chapters helped clarify and focus my thoughts and writing. And above all, Paul Michael Lützeler, the chair of my dissertation committee and my primary advisor, who provided the nurturing guidance that helped stimulate my thoughts. His broad knowledge—particularly of Hermann Broch—work ethic, and keen intelligence were indispensable for the completion of this dissertation.

Table of Contents

I. Acknowledgements, ii

II. Table of Contents, iii

III. Abbreviations, iv-v

Introduction, 7-17

Chapter 1, 18-62: Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein and the Birth of Analytic Philosophy

Chapter 2, 63-114: Broch, the First ‘Post-Analytic’ Philosopher

Chapter 3, 115-174: Broch’s *Die Unbekannte Größe* and Wittgenstein’s *Über Gewissheit*

Chapter 4, 175-232: Viewing the World ‘Sub Specie Aeternitatis’: Wittgenstein and Broch’s *Der Tod des Vergil*

Abbreviations

Works by Arendt

“AHB” = “The Achievement of Hermann Broch”

HAHB = *Hannah Arendt—Hermann Broch, Briefwechsel 1946-1951*

Works by Broch

G&Z = *Geist and Zeitgeist*

KW = *Kommentierte Werkausgabe*

HHT = *Hofmannsthal and his Time: The European Imagination 1860-1920*

MHB = *Materialien zu Hermann Broch ‘Der Tod des Vergil.’*

TSW = *The Sleepwalkers*

PSB = *Psychische Selbstbiographie*

Works by Carnap

“EOM” = “The End of Metaphysics”

Works by Wittgenstein

BTS = *The Big Typescript*

CL = *Cambridge Letters: Correspondence with Russell, Keynes, Moore, Ramsey, and Sraffa*

C&V = *Culture and Value*

LWP = *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology*

“LE” = “Lecture on Ethics”

LVC = *Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle: Conversations Recorded by Friedrich Waismann*

NTB = *Notebooks, 1914-16*

OC = *On Certainty*

PI = *Philosophical Investigations*

RFM = *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*

TLP = *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

Works by Bertrand Russell

ABR = *Autobiography of Bertrand Russell*

HKSL = *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits*

HWP = *A History of Western Philosophy*

KEW = *Our Knowledge of the External World*

MPD = *My Philosophical Development*

ROE = *Russell on Ethics*

Works by Arthur Schopenhauer

WWR = *The World as Will and Representation*

Works by Immanuel Kant

CPR = *Critique of Pure Reason*

GMS = *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*

Secondary works

“AGC” = “The Avant-Garde in Crisis: Hermann Broch’s Negative Aesthetics in Exile.”

“ANL” = “Autonomy, Necessity, and Love”

HBM = *Hermann Broch und die Moderne: Roman, Menschenrecht, Biografie*

HBB = *Hermann Broch: Eine Biographie*

“PLW” = “Pictures, Logic, and the limits of sense in Wittgenstein’s Tractatus”

VIE = *Hermann Broch, Visionary in Exile: the 2001 Yale Symposium*

SCA = *Self-Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity*

“TDE” = “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”

TOS = *Taking Ourselves Seriously & Getting it Right*

*“Der Philosoph trachtet, das erlösende Wort zu finden, das ist
das Wort, das uns endlich erlaubt, das zu fassen, was bis jetzt/dahin/immer, ungreifbar,
unser Bewusstsein belastet hat.”*

Ludwig Wittgenstein¹

¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, “The Big Type-Script,” *Philosophical Occasions* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993) 165.

Introduction

In an end-of-the-century survey of philosophers in Canada and the United States, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was ranked the fourth most important work of philosophy in the twentieth century, and his *Philosophical Investigations* was ranked first.² Wittgenstein was perhaps nowhere more influential than in the Vienna Circle, under whom Broch pursued his university studies in the late 1920s. The philosophers and scientists of the Vienna Circle were world-renowned in their fields, and saw in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* a promising way to end the metaphysical and ethical speculation that had preoccupied philosophers to no avail for millennia, and which they believed had prevented philosophy from progressing commensurate to the sciences. New and powerful mathematical logic seemed to offer the means through which language could be made more precise, and philosophical confusions avoided and dissolved. But Wittgenstein objected to the manifesto of the Vienna Circle and the ethos that inspired it. Upon invitation of the Vienna Circle to attend their private meetings, Wittgenstein appeared, but refused to discuss philosophy, instead recited poetry as he defiantly turned his back.

² Douglas P. Lackey, "What are the Modern Classics? The Baruch Poll of Great Philosophy in the Twentieth Century," *The Philosophical Forum*. Vol. XXX, No. 4 (1999): 331.

This dissertation has two primary aims. The first is to show the intellectual/historical context in which Wittgenstein's thoughts influenced, or have parallels, to Broch's. The second is to address the substantive question that preoccupies much of Broch's literary and philosophical works; namely, what are the complementary roles of literature and philosophical logic in revealing the ethical and volitional necessities that guide our actions and shape our moral sensibilities, more specifically, whether anything can be done by means of literary or philosophical exploration that might yield in our minds greater confidence in the viability of our ethical discernment. Broch's position on this latter question is inconclusive; he turns to literature in hopes of finding a better ethical vehicle than the philosophy of his era, but then despairs and turns to psychology and political science. Wittgensteinian theories will help illuminate some of the more obscure aspects of Broch's thought.

This dissertation will maintain a *prima facie* affirmative position to the thesis that ethical questions, broadly conceived, are not resolutely answerable through either philosophical argument alone, or through literary/artistic contemplation and analysis alone, but that each of these activities has important contributions to make to the construction of our web of ethical beliefs. I qualify my affirmation of this thesis because of the diversity of the psychologies across our species, which may very well consist of incorrigible personalities not affected by literature, or rational persuasion, in the same way as Broch and Wittgenstein.

The importance of acknowledging differences in personality is stressed in an influential article, "Against Narrativity" (2004), in which Galen Strawson shows how pervasively—across many academic disciplines—scholars view personal narrativity as an

essential ingredient to living a good and meaningful life. Strawson objects, and argues against the belief that all of us live our lives only as a part of an autobiographical context, and that all new events we experience are only given meaning as they are perceived in the context of our personal narratives. Strawson makes a persuasive argument for the notion that some of our psychic experiences are given full meaning by the discrete moment alone in which our experience occurs (without narrative context), and that our past is imbedded in our psychic structure in a way that makes it unnecessary to appeal to narrative context as the frame for a particular phenomenon. The inner ‘self’ that experiences a moment is not in all cases the same ‘self’ of one’s past or future; some people have what Strawson calls an “episodic” self-experience in which one resists viewing one’s ‘self’ as continuous or enduring: “[t]he past can be alive – arguably more genuinely alive – in the present simply in so far as it has helped to shape the way one is in the present, just as musicians’ playing can incorporate and body forth their past practice without being mediated by any explicit memory of it” (432). He further argues against the normative claim, made by many, that we *ought* to live our lives as if they were narratives of our own creation: “It’s just not true that there is only one good way for human beings to experience their being in time. There are deeply non-Narrative people and there are good ways to live that are deeply non-Narrative” (429). Strawson points out that he does not structure his experiences into a narrative, and that this does not cause him to be superficial, or to miss out on the full depth of human experience.

On both of Strawson’s objections to narrativity, namely, that we *do* and *ought* to perceive our ‘self’ in the context of an autobiographical narrative, Broch’s arguments remain resilient. Broch argues that our ‘repository’ of beliefs and memories of past

phenomena contributes to our new experiences, in the same way as Strawson's episodic personalities. Broch does not imply that we should impose upon our experience a narrative frame, but that in the moment of perception, a multitude of diverse psychic elements, beyond merely the empirical sense data, contribute to our judgments; his *Todes Vergil* uses parataxis to achieve this effect. Broch sees the experience of reading a novel as making important psychic contributions to our moral judgments, and equally important, he sees modal logic—the logic that governs inferences regarding necessities and possibilities—as having an essential role in bringing coherence to these psychic elements as we reflect upon their implications.

In consideration of the psychological implications of this dissertation's thesis, I concede the inability of research in the humanities to give a comprehensive answer without input from scientific research, which I do not offer here. But such a research agenda is active in the U.S. and Germany, for instance, at the *Berlin School of Mind and Brain* at Humboldt University philosophers and scientists are working together to show how our moral psychology affects our ethical judgments, and what evolutionary forces weigh on them. Further research is being done showing how reading novels fires the neuronal connections in our brains very similarly to the way our direct experience with the world does.³

Alas, while science and philosophy might explain how our moral psychology operates, how literature stimulates it, and how logic ensures valid reasoning, science and philosophy do not give us answers to the very individual and private question that each of us must continually answer: 'how should I live?' To answer this question, Broch's

³ Jeffrey M. Zacks and Thomas F. Shipley, eds., *Understanding Events: From Perception to Action* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

philosophy shows remarkable parallels to Harry Frankfurt's Tanner Lectures given at Stanford University in 2005: "Taking Ourselves Seriously & Getting it Right." Broch argues that in discovering our moral and volitional necessities, that is, the things about which we feel an inner "must" pressing us to value or to do, we discover the 'absolutes' that provide the structure for our moral lives. Similarly, Frankfurt argues that recognizing our volitional necessities is essential for living life according to stable and appropriate norms. These necessities don't always manifest themselves as conclusions drawn from a well-defined set of premises; nor do they invariably emerge in our consciousness as we read a novel. But, in so far as our species can do anything at all to improve its situation in the world, logical argumentation and aesthetic/literary contemplation offer two potentially fruitful and cooperative paths for providing the relevant practical knowledge, according to Broch.

Wittgenstein influenced Broch significantly. In a letter to Franz Blei in 1931, Broch insists that he should read Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, and praises it as the great philosophical work of the age:

Übrigens solltest Du immer wieder Wittgenstein anschauen: das ist der einzige Mensch in der deutschen und wahrscheinlich auch sonstig europäischen Philosophie. Wenn ich mit den Schlafwandlern fertig bin, schreibe ich ein Buch über die philosophischen und literarischen Ausdrucksformen der Zeit (HBM 29).⁴

By the way, you should again look at Wittgenstein: that is the only person in German, and probably also European, Philosophy. When I'm finished with *The Sleepwalkers*, I'll write a book on the philosophical and literary form of expression of the time (my translation).

⁴ Lützeler explains that the context of this statement is in reference to the seemingly insurpassible achievements of Kafka and Joyce in literature. See *Hermann Broch und die Moderne: Roman, Menschenrecht, Biografie*. (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2011) 28-9.

Broch's novels are representative of modernism's attempt to re-assemble an existential foundation for one's experience in a world in which the old foundations had been shown to be faulty and in collapse. Robert Musil's *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* [*The Man without Qualities*], written between 1930 and 1942; and Karl Kraus's *Die Letzten Tage der Menschheit* (1918) [*The Last Days of Mankind*] are two important Austrian works that contain some of the same themes as Broch, especially *Die Schlafwandler* (1931-32) [*The Sleepwalkers*] and *Der Tod des Vergil* (1945) [*The Death of Virgil*]. But Broch's view of *fin de siècle* Austria emerges not as much in response to these important contemporary writers, but to the common conditions and *Zeitgeist* that inspired them. Broch's literary influence comes rather from James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Brief des Lord Chandos an Francis Bacon* (1902) [*The Letter of Lord Candos*], and to a lesser extent Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-1927) [*In Search of Lost Time*]. Broch discusses the significance of these works in extensive detail in *Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit* (1948) [*Hofmannsthal and his Time*] and elsewhere.

As exiles from their native Austria, Broch and Wittgenstein glean insights from intellectual trends beyond Vienna, and as Lützel points out, have the unique position of maintaining critical distance from the culture with which they are most intimately acquainted: "exiled authors [...] [have] the opportunity to question the conventions and conformities of the host country [...] [and] profit from the widening of his or her intellectual horizon through confrontation with other traditions and different ways of thinking" (VIE 68). Broch's exile in the U.S.A. began in 1938 and lasted until his death in 1951; it included lengthy stays at Princeton and Yale, which gave him the company of

many prominent intellectuals, both American and European. While Broch's exile was in response to the push factor of Nazi terror, Wittgenstein's exile from his home in Vienna was at first in response to the pull factor of Bertrand Russell, the professorship offered to him in England, and at various times the search for rural solitude in Norway and Ireland. Both Wittgenstein and Broch maintained connections with Vienna; Wittgenstein returned regularly to visit family; Broch was preparing to move back to Vienna when he died in 1951. Life as exiles left its existential mark in the consciousness of both thinkers.

In chapter one of this dissertation, I explain the origin of analytic philosophy, particularly from the original works that Broch read as a student in Vienna.

Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921) and Bertrand Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914) were both pivotal in the development of analytic philosophy, and in Broch's philosophical leanings. But neither of these would have been possible without Ludwig Boltzmann's atomic theory in physics, and Gottlob Frege's development of modern logic in his *Begriffsschrift* (1879). The Vienna Circle drew inspiration from these figures, especially Wittgenstein. The analytic movement in philosophy flourished due in part to the attractiveness of its precision of expression and its congeniality with the natural sciences. But the positivism to which analytic philosophy was attached in its early days, was struck a fatal blow by the second generation of analytic philosophers that found faulty assumptions in the epistemology and philosophy of language of the positivists. Torn asunder from its empirical dogmas, analytic philosophy—as a style of doing philosophy—flourished and opened a breadth and depth of intellectual avenues unmatched in the history of philosophical movements, engaging topics as diverse as love, friendship, formal logic, education reform, good beer,

poetry, as well as considerable attention to philosophical traditions beyond analytic philosophy, and self-reflexive evaluation of itself.

In chapter two, I detail Broch's experience as a student under the Vienna Circle during the peak of its influence. Broch's ambivalence towards his studies consisted of two poles, on the one hand a respect for the technical rigor and scientific progressivism, on the other hand a resentment towards the diminished value the Vienna Circle placed on understanding the human spirit and the realms of thought beyond the reach of empirical verification or conceptual analysis. I argue that Broch was the first 'post-analytic' philosopher because he was trained in analytic philosophy, but already circa 1930 was writing critical essays on central assumptions made by the logical positivists that would only be challenged, at least in published print, two decades later by Willard Quine, a fellow student of the Vienna Circle in 1932-33, and Ludwig Wittgenstein's magnum opus: *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). Broch argues that philosophy is done great harm if narrowed to the confines and methods as defined by Bertrand Russell and the Vienna Circle.

In the third chapter, I discuss Broch's early novel *Die Unbekannte Größe* (1933) and Wittgenstein's *Über Gewissheit* (1951). Broch parodies the hypertrophic rationality of a young physicist, Richard Hieck, whose tremendous acumen in scientific matters leads to an over-dependence on scientific method to resolve all of life's problems. Hieck is perplexed by his emotions, and unable to cope with the uncertainty of his relationship with a woman. Wittgenstein's pragmatist conception of certainty offers a theoretical vantage point through which some light can be shed on Hieck's predicament. Wittgenstein argues against skeptics who believe it is impossible to have certainty

regarding anything; he explains that certainty comes in degrees, and is validated by its force and influence on our actions. Extreme forms of doubt are shown to be ludicrous when their pragmatic implications are considered. I argue that Broch's novel suggests that 'subjective certainty,' completely unverifiable through Hieck's scientific methods, plays a fundamental role in knowing how to act and reciprocate in relationships, and that the rational scrutiny that Hieck habitually applies to all thoughts leaves him emotionally eviscerated until a mystical encounter with love changes him.

In the fourth chapter, I explore the notion of seeing the world *sub species aeternitatis* as it relates to Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil* (1945) and various selections from Wittgenstein's repertoire.⁵ As death approaches, Virgil is able to gain a view of life's circularity, its beginning and end. The particular instances of his life are given fuller meaning as their fit within the whole is perceived. The style of Broch's novel is unique in evoking a sense of simultaneity of perceptions towards the same direct object. This allows an agent to make more discerning *apperceptive* judgments, which for Broch and Wittgenstein, are essential in many ethical judgments.

While Broch's and Wittgenstein's thoughts emerged from, and are most relevant to, a specific era in European history, some of their insights transcend their social/historical context and remain relevant to anyone wanting to understand what inspires human action, how to express feelings and thoughts in language, and how logic and literature might aid one's efforts in coming to terms with one's own conception of a good life.

⁵ Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil* would fit well into Martin Klebes' analyses of the "Wittgensteinian novel." In *Wittgenstein's Novels*, Klebes analyzes four contemporary novels, explaining that the "novels are Wittgenstein's as well as those of their authors because *philosophy has here invaded the novel, and vice versa* [...]" (5). He goes on to tease out the Wittgensteinian elements of each novel.

Works Cited

Klebes, Martin. *Wittgenstein's Novels*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Lackey, Douglas P. "What are the Modern Classics? The Baruch Poll of Great Philosophy in the Twentieth Century." *The Philosophical Forum*. Vol. XXX, No. 4 (1999): 329-46.

Lützel, Paul Michael. *Hermann Broch und die Moderne: Roman, Menschenrecht, Biografie*. München: Wilhelm Fink, 2011.

---. "Visionaries in Exile: Broch's Cooperation with G. A. Borgese and Hannah Arendt." *Hermann Broch, Visionary in Exile: The 2001 Yale Symposium*. Ed. Paul Michael Lützel. Rochester: Camden House, 2003.

Strawson, Galen. "Against Narrativity." *Ratio*. XVII 4 (2004): 428-52.

Zacks, Jeffrey M. and Thomas F. Shipley, eds. *Understanding Events: From Perception to Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Chapter 1

Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein and the Birth of Analytic Philosophy

Philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts. Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity.

Ludwig Wittgenstein⁶

⁶ TLP, 4.112

Analytic philosophy today is a very diverse philosophical tradition that has many competing theories and widely divergent opinions about even the most fundamental assumptions of philosophy.⁷ It is the mainstream approach to philosophy in English-speaking universities, and has played the central role in philosophy in Scandinavia and Poland, is in the “ascendancy in Germanophone countries” (Glock 1), and “is showing every sign of becoming global” (Burge 1). It contrasts with the philosophy analytic philosophers often referred to as ‘continental philosophy’ in its historical lineage, canonical figures, and geographical predominance.⁸ Though the division still exists, some now believe labels ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ are obsolete (Glock 1; Glendinning 201-18; Bieri 355). Michael Dummett, for example, prefers to characterize the difference as one between analytical and phenomenological philosophy (Dummett ix).

⁷ One significant difference of opinion among analytic philosophers in recent decades is between the quietists and naturalists. Quietists believe that the aim of philosophy is a therapeutic or remedial one. The goal is to ‘quiet’ the mind of its deep philosophical turmoil and confusion caused by a misuse of language. The later Wittgenstein, Rorty, and Austin are quietists, as were non-analytic philosophers Schopenhauer and Gandhi. Naturalists on the other hand strive for a theoretical understanding of the universe. They often assume the natural sciences are the most informative for this endeavor. It is the naturalistic philosopher’s aim to test for consistency, criticize, or extrapolate upon scientific findings. Willard Quine is the most prominent advocate of naturalism in contemporary philosophy, though Aristotle, Marx, and Freud could perhaps be considered naturalistic philosophers, too, though not belonging to the analytic tradition per se.

⁸ There are many different, often competing and overlapping schools of thought in continental philosophy; including German idealism, Marxism, existentialism, neo-Kantianism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, structuralism, and post-structuralism.

Analytic philosophers today work in universities across continental Europe⁹; likewise many of the books published in recent years on Hegel,¹⁰ Marx,¹¹ and Heidegger¹² were written by analytic—or analytically trained—philosophers attempting to vindicate some aspects of these continental philosophers’ thoughts (Glock 17; Leiter 15). Analytic and continental philosophies often merge or overlap when philosophers’ interests cross back and forth between the two traditions. In the continental tradition, prominent figures such as Alain Badiou or Ernst Tugendhat frequently cite analytic philosophers; in the analytic tradition, prominent figures such as Charles Taylor or Richard Rorty are more similar to their continental counterparts. Even the continental philosopher *par excellence*, Jacques Derrida, claimed to be an analytic philosopher in response to a paper written by an analytic philosopher:

At the beginning of your paper, when you were defining conceptual philosophy, or analytic philosophy as conceptual philosophy, I thought: well, that’s what I am doing, that’s exactly what I am trying to do. So: I am an analytic philosopher [...]. I say this very seriously. I am not simply on the ‘continental’ side. Despite a number of appearances, my ‘style’ has something essential to do with a motivation that one also finds in analytic philosophy [...]. (Derrida 382)

Labeling the two schools is not only problematic, it is un-helpful when considering the non-philosophical prejudices that such partisanship inevitably rouses. As the analytic philosopher Michael Dummett explains, “Philosophy, having no agreed methodology and hardly any incontrovertible triumphs, is peculiarly subject to schisms

⁹ According to the ‘European Society for Analytic Philosophy’ there are active analytic philosophers in virtually every country in Europe. See <http://www.dif.unige.it/esap>

¹⁰ Allen Wood, *Hegel’s Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

¹¹ J. Roemer, ed., *Analytical Marxism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); or Jonathan Wolff, *Why Read Marx Today?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

¹² Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Being and Time*, Division I (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990).

and sectarianism; but they do the subject only harm” (Dummett xi). Likewise, as the continental philosopher Peter Bieri explains, the distinction between ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ philosophy is only an “annoyance” (Bieri 355).¹³

So what is analytic philosophy today? The former president of the *Gesellschaft für analytische Philosophie*, Ansgar Beckermann, explains that what characterizes analytic philosophy today is the acceptance of two beliefs: first, philosophy consists of the pursuit of answers to substantive rather than historical questions, systematically aided by the universal standards of rationality, and secondly, philosophical questions are best pursued when concepts and arguments are made as clear as possible (Beckermann 2). Essential to these goals is a precise use of language, as Dummett explains, “For Frege, as for all subsequent analytical philosophers, the philosophy of language is the foundation of all other philosophy” (Dummett 441).

While analytic philosophy today is doctrinally diverse, this was not as much the case in its early decades. Modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant was dominated by a concern with the nature of human knowledge; Gottlob Frege continues this interest with a narrow focus on the power of logic to clarify the structure of language and express

¹³ Bieri’s full statement: “Und die Sache mit der „analytischen“ und der „kontinentalen“ Philosophie? Nach allem, was ich bis hierhin geschrieben habe, wird es niemanden wundern, wenn ich sage: Diese Unterscheidung ist ein Ärgernis, einfach nur ein Ärgernis, und man sollte damit absolut keine Geduld haben. Die beiden Etikette haben nicht und hatten nie eine sachhaltige Unterscheidung hinter sich. Auf beiden Seiten hatten sie von Anfang an nur die Funktion von Kampfparolen, und vielfach ist das heute noch so. Was die Europäer angeht, so entwickelte sich eine unselige Spaltung zwischen denjenigen, die die Geschichte der Philosophie und ihre Auslegung hochhielten, und den anderen, die auf die philosophischen Care-Pakete aus der angelsächsischen Welt warteten und auch dann Englisch redeten, wenn sie Deutsch redeten. Und vielfach besteht diese unheilige Allianz von Eiferern auch jetzt noch. Was die Kollegen englischer Zunge angeht, so sind sie nicht unschuldig an dieser Situation. Ihre oft mangelnde historische Bildung verführt sie nicht selten zu verzerrenden Diagnosen und zu einem herablassenden Gebaren uns gegenüber, das mich wortlos sauer macht, weil es zeigt, wie schlicht provinziell die analytische Philosophie manchmal ist.”

meaning.¹⁴ Frege's development of modern logic and philosophy of language often earn him the status as the founder of analytic philosophy, and the tradition owes more to Frege than anyone else.¹⁵

While Frege's work in logic and philosophy of language was essential to analytic philosophy, a broader trend in Germanophone positivistic philosophy was preparing a receptive audience to Frege's innovations. Although analytic philosophy became dominant in English-speaking universities, and not in German universities, its Germanophone origin is often overlooked. Dummett explains: "The sources of analytical philosophy were the writings of philosophers who wrote, principally or exclusively, in the German language; and this would have remained obvious to everyone had it not been for the plague of Nazism which drove so many German-speaking philosophers across the Atlantic" (Dummett ix). Among the influential proto-analytic philosophers are prominent names such as Franz Brentano, Alexius Meinong, Ludwig Boltzmann, and Rudolf Carnap.

The History of Logic and the Precursors to Modern Logic

In the preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1787), Immanuel Kant claims that logic is a completed science and that nothing new can be added to it:

[...]since Aristotle, [logic] has been unable to advance a single step, and thus to all appearance has reached its completion. For if some of the moderns have thought to enlarge its domain by introducing psychological discussions [...]

¹⁴ Tyler Burge, *Truth, Thought, Reason: Essays on Frege* (New York: Clarendon, 2005) 2; Ray Monk, "What is Analytic Philosophy?" *Bertrand Russell and the Origins of Analytic Philosophy* (Southampton: Thoemmes Press, 1996) 3.

¹⁵ Frege's influence in analytic philosophy was largely delayed until Russell and Wittgenstein brought attention to his works. Frege's immediate influence was limited, though he did exchange correspondence with Husserl, arguing against psychologism. See: Burge 1; Hans-Johann Glock, *What is Analytic Philosophy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 226.

metaphysical [...] or anthropological discussions [...] this attempt, on the part of these authors, only shows their ignorance of the peculiar nature of logical science. (Kant 12)

In his four volume work *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande* (1870), the German historian of logic Karl van Prantl agrees with Kant and tries to vindicate him by showing the failed attempts to improve Aristotelian logic. Prantl and Kant imply that Aristotle's logic is as good as it gets, and there can be no improvements.

While many philosophers throughout two millennia of western philosophy found Aristotelian logic useful, a few tried, with limited success, to create a formal logic via mathematics. In the seventeenth century, Gottfried Leibniz made discoveries in algebraic logic but abandoned his efforts and did not publish his work (Jolley 226-40). His discoveries pre-dated the same made two hundred years later. Leibniz's approach to logic was brilliant in its recognition of mathematics as a field with fruitful logical ramifications.

Later there were attempts to view logic in terms of a metaphysical assumption about the universe, not as a study into the nature of consistency or inference. Hegel's view of logic, according to Stephen Houlgate, is almost indistinguishable from ontology, and consists largely of exploring the way the mind categorizes its experiences (9-28).¹⁶ This had immense implications for his philosophical system and was adopted by many of his followers. But Hegel's view of logic, according to Harry Gensler, is entirely different from what logicians today understand about logic (Gensler xviii). Contemporary philosophers generally view logic, according to Dale Jacquette, as any variety of formal

¹⁶ Bertrand Russell also discusses this in *Our Knowledge of the External World*, though he emphasizes the metaphysical aspects of Hegel's logic (48).

systems that can be used to delineate the formal inferential structure of language (Jacquette 1).

Ironically, it was only a few years after Prantl finished his work on the history of logic that logic was to undergo a radical transformation. Modern logic as it is studied and practiced by philosophers, mathematicians, and computer scientists today builds largely on Gottlob Frege's predicate logic articulated first in *Begriffsschrift: Eine der arithmetischen nachgebildete Formelsprache des reinen Denkens* (1879). In the twentieth century, according to Glock, Frege's logic became the "prime even exclusive tool for the analysis of language and thought" (226).

Similar to Leibniz, from whom he draws inspiration, Frege looked to mathematics in pursuit of an understanding of logic. Frege, a mathematician by trade, was as much concerned with providing a theoretical foundation to mathematics as he was with creating a logical tool for philosophers. He attempted, unsuccessfully,¹⁷ to show that *all* mathematics is built upon, and hence reducible to, logic and set theory, a project known as logicism. Though his ultimate ambition failed, his logicist project forced him to make profound revisions to the Aristotelian logic still used in Frege's day.

Frege believed that the ordinary use of language often distorts the reality it purports to represent. In many philosophical problems precision and accuracy of expression are crucial for bringing to light what is problematic. Other confusions arise not merely due to the meanings of words, but by the logical implications of grammar. These confusions hinder philosophers in their thinking, either because the words and

¹⁷ Frege's system had a glitch discovered by Bertrand Russell, aptly named "Russell's paradox". However, even once Russell corrected Frege's logic by modifying it in his *Principia Mathematica* (1913), arithmetic is still not entirely reducible to logic. Kurt Gödel's famous incompleteness theorem showed that logicism's ultimate aims were doomed.

grammar are too vague, are distorted and misrepresented, or keep the logical form of a sentence from clear view because of some stylistic preference of the community using the language.

In *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Hegel committed one notorious example of grammatical confusion that drew the scorn of analytic philosophers and did irreparable damage to Hegel's reputation. Russell's commentary on Hegel's philosophy is illuminating:

Hegel's argument in this portion of his 'Logic' 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. Seeing that they are different, he does not infer, as others would, that there is a mistake somewhere, but that they exhibit 'identity in difference'. Again, Socrates is particular, 'mortal' is universal. Therefore, he says, since Socrates is mortal, it follows that the particular is the universal—taking the 'is' to be throughout expressive of identity. But to say 'the particular is the universal' is self-contradictory. Again Hegel does not suspect a mistake but proceeds to synthesize particular and universal in the individual, or concrete universal. This is an example of how, for want of care at the start, vast and imposing systems of philosophy are built upon stupid and trivial confusions, which, but for the almost incredible fact that they are unintentional, one would be tempted to characterize as puns. (*KEW* 49)

To combat such mistakes, Frege develops a *lingua characterica*, borrowing this term from Leibniz, consisting of formal symbols (\vee , $\&$, \equiv , \sim , $\exists x$, $\forall x$) that is simultaneously a *calculus ratiocinator*.¹⁸ Or in other words, a "formal language," employing symbols void of any rhetorical adornments,¹⁹ modeled on "arithmetic," that is, operating according to

¹⁸ "My intention was not to represent an abstract logic in formulas, but to express a content through written signs in a more precise and clear way than it is possible to do through words. In fact, what I wanted to create was not a mere *calculus ratiocinator* but a *lingua characterica* in Leibniz's sense." from Frege's "Über den Zweck der Begriffsschrift," 1-10; explained in Jean von Heijenoort, *Frege and Goedel: Two Fundamental Texts in Mathematical Logic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970) 2.

¹⁹ Frege was not the first to use symbols instead of ordinary sentences. Aristotle and others used symbols as well.

definite rules. Frege explains in the *Begriffsschrift* that such a language has the potential to counteract the ambiguity of ordinary language:

Wenn es die Aufgabe der Philosophie ist, die Herrschaft des Wortes über den menschlichen Geist zu brechen, indem sie die Täuschungen aufdeckt, die durch den Sprachgebrauch über die Beziehungen der Begriffe oft fast unvermeidlich entstehen, indem sie den Gedanken von denjenigen befreit, womit ihn allein die Beschaffenheit des sprachlichen Ausdrucksmittels behaftet, so wird meine Begriffsschrift, für diese Zwecke weiter ausgebildet, den Philosophen ein brauchbares Werkzeug werden können. (Vorwort vii)

If it is one of the tasks of philosophy to break the domination of the word over the human spirit by laying bare the misconceptions that through the use of language often almost unavoidably arise concerning the relations between concepts and by freeing thought from that with which only the means of expression of ordinary language, constituted as they are, saddle it, then my ideography, further developed for these purposes, can become a useful tool for the philosopher. (Preface 7)

The two most significant innovations Frege makes in the *Begriffsschrift* are the analysis of propositions into function and argument, rather than subject and predicate, and, secondly, quantification theory. Distinguishing between subject and predicate is often grammatically suitable for an ordinary language, such as English or German, but is inadequate for mathematical statements, explains Frege (*Begriffsschrift* 3). Since Frege's concern was, among other things, providing a logical foundation for mathematics, Frege is forced to conceive of a different way of distinguishing between parts of a sentence that is capable of expressing mathematical sentences. Frege thus analyzes sentences into function and argument by considering the component of a sentence that can be replaced, while retaining meaning for the whole sentence, the argument. The stable component of the sentence, on the other hand, is the function. In mathematics, the sentence 'x²+2'

symbolizes a function of x ; the value of x^2+2 is determined by what we replace with the argument x .²⁰

Frege does not clearly define ‘function’ and ‘argument’ in the *Begriffsschrift*; this comes only in later works by Frege. Instead Frege gives a brief explanation of how a function and argument analysis of a sentence in ordinary language works and then gives some illustrations. What is important for the sake of this dissertation is that Frege applies the mathematical notions of function and argument to any objects whatsoever.

Frege begins his analysis of functions in section 9 of the *Begriffsschrift*. He asks the reader to assume that “Wassergasstoff leichter als Kohlensäuregas ist” [hydrogen is lighter than carbon dioxide] (15). When formalized into notation, hydrogen may be substituted for oxygen or nitrogen, explains Frege. The place occupied in the sentence by the changeable variable is function, whereas “is lighter than carbon dioxide,” is the argument. But the function and argument, suggests Frege, can change places by inverting the sentence to say that ‘being heavier than hydrogen’ is the argument, and carbon dioxide is the function. What matters is not the grammar of the sentence, but the “begrifflichen Inhalt” [conceptual content] (3), which remains identical in either formulation of the sentence. By analyzing the sentence into function and argument, the various relations between the function and its argument can be demonstrated explicitly, and inference rules derived from calculus become applicable.

Frege’s introduction of quantification into the realm of logic was equally as revolutionary to the subject. Aristotelian logic was incapable of expressing sentences that contained two or more quantifiers such as ‘all’ or ‘some.’ Frege’s theory of quantification in the *Begriffsschrift* resolved the ‘problem of multiple generality’ by

²⁰ For more on this see Glock page 28.

analyzing a sentence into a single-place function-name, ‘if x is an electron, then x is negative,’ and a quantifier that binds the variable x, in this case a universal quantifier ‘for all x,’ according to Glock (29). Hence it becomes possible to express sentences in which both existential and universal quantifiers apply, such as, ‘For every natural number, there is a greater number’: $(\forall x)(\exists y)(y > x)$.²¹ The result of Frege’s innovations is a logic that is capable of achieving much greater expressive power than Aristotelian logic.

Frege considers his formal language analogous to the “Sprache des Lebens” [language of life] in the same way that a microscope is to the naked eye, both to point out the limitations and illustrate the usefulness of the formal language (Vorwort v). The human eye, Frege explains, is ‘far superior’ to a microscope because of its ability to adjust readily to diverse circumstances, but if circumstances demand great precision, the eye alone will often not suffice. Similarly, explains Frege, the *Begriffsschrift* is like a microscope in that it allows for the mind to penetrate ordinary language, revealing what is otherwise beyond clear comprehension, yet at the same time Frege confesses that for other purposes the formal language is “unbrauchbar” [inapplicable] (Vorwort v).

Together with his later work, *Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik: Eine logisch-mathematische Untersuchung über den Begriff der Zahl* (1884), Frege provides the first axiomatization of first-order logic and showed that mathematical induction is an application of logical law. Frege’s approach to logic has become universally adopted

²¹ Frege’s notation from the *Begriffsschrift* is obsolete, hence I use Glock’s explanation on page 29 of *What is Analytic Philosophy?*.

among logicians thanks in large part to the work of the German logicians David Hilbert and Kurt Gödel in the 1920s.²²

Frege's work then shifts to the philosophy of language in "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" (1892) and "Begriff und Gegenstand" (1892). Frege's philosophy of language is meant to accompany his system of logic by showing how ordinary language can be used in the new logic.

Frege's predicate logic has far reaching implications in the sciences, mathematics, and formal logic. As Hermann Broch, in his essay "Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit" (1948), points out, "... wer z.B. wusste damals etwas von der Umwälzung, die sich für alle wissenschaftliche Grundlagenforschung infolge der Arbeiten eines Gottlob Frege ... vorbereitete?-, geschweige denn dass derartiges zur Kenntnis breiterer Kreise dringt" (*KW* 9/1, 36) [...who, for example, was aware at the time of the revolution in scientific axiomatics being prepared in the work of Gottlob Frege ... not to mention the fact that work of this kind penetrates a wider circle of knowledge] (*HHT* 53). Frege's logic, as studied by Wittgenstein and Broch, and taught at universities today, is not only important for logicians, but is fundamental to academic philosophy, computer science, and serves as one of the foundational pillars of modern mathematics.

Since logic is concerned with valid reasoning, it is most often limited to the use of propositions, that is, sentences that claim that something is or is not the case, true or false.

Since many of our sentences used in ordinary language have metaphorical meanings,

²² In 1928, David Hilbert's *Grundzüge der theoretischen Logik* proved the consistency of first-order predicate logic. In 1930, Kurt Gödel proved the completeness of first-order predicate logic in *Über die Vollständigkeit der Axiome des logischen Funktionenkalküls*, pgs. 349–360. Also mentioned in Harry J. Gensler's *Historical Dictionary of Logic* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006) xxi. See also Jan von Plato, "The Development of Proof Theory" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, April 16, 2008 <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/proof-theory-development> .

include some corollary meaning not explicitly stated, are not indicative, or include words such as colors, which are hopelessly vague, logical notation has its limitations, according to L.T.F. Gamut (6).²³ Wittgenstein admits that his early work, which was heavily influenced by Frege's *Begriffsschrift*, overlooked the diverse ways in which ordinary language is used in any given culture:

All this, however, can only appear in the right light when one has attained greater clarity about the concepts of understanding, meaning, and thinking. For it will then also become clear what can lead us (and did lead me) to think that if anyone utters a sentence and means or understands it he is operating a calculus according to definite rules. (*PI* §81)

Wittgenstein's point here is that ordinary communication contains more than what a pristine formal use of language does; and one of the mistakes of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein suggests, was in failing to see the importance of how a given culture uses language in common practice. However, when careful, a philosopher trained in logic and techniques for semantic clarification *can* use language as a calculus according to definite rules. This becomes clear not only to those who are trained in employing formal logic, but also to anyone who has familiarity with the different ways in which formal logic is applied in telecommunications and computer science.

The British Reception of Analytic Philosophy

Frege's works received little attention when they were published; it was not until Bertrand Russell discovered them nearly two decades later that Frege became known internationally. In "On Denoting (1905)" and *Principia Mathematica (1910)*, Russell draws heavily from Frege, continuing Frege's project of reducing mathematics to logic and relating symbolic logic to ordinary language. Russell, however, discovers a paradox

²³ Modal logic is different in that it deals with non-truth functional language; for Broch, this plays an important role in moral reasoning since moral 'oughts' or 'musts' require special treatment.

in Frege's concept notation, appropriately named "Russell's Paradox," which showed that some of Frege's work was flawed. Russell's work in philosophy of language and logic elevated Russell to the summit of world reputation among professional philosophers and, together with Frege, is credited for having invented modern formal logic widely used by philosophers today.

While Frege may be its founder, Russell and G.E. Moore were the most vocal early proponents of analytic philosophy. In 1898, Moore presented a paper at a conference that challenged the then dominant Hegelian and neo-Kantian²⁴ view of judgment. He argued against a proponent of British idealism, Francis Herbert Bradley, who believed that the mind-independent world is illusory and a product of our mental faculties. The idealists believed that conceptual schemata contributed something (it was not agreed what this something might consist of) to sense perception.

The first analytic philosophers were trained in this tradition of philosophy but rejected it. Russell was perhaps the most outspoken about his conversion away from idealism:

It was towards the end of 1898 that Moore and I rebelled against both Kant and Hegel. Moore led the way, but I followed closely in his footsteps. I think that the first published account of the new philosophy was Moore's article in *Mind* on 'The Nature of Judgment'. Although neither he nor I would now adhere to all the doctrines in that article, I, and I think he, would still agree with its negative part -- i.e. with the doctrine that fact is in general independent of experience. (*MPD* 54)

Moore, and later Russell, favored of a form of realism which holds that the world of our sense data impressions is intimately related to, and more or less corresponds to, the

²⁴ It should be noted that Kant is not an idealist according to the way in which contemporary analytic philosophers use the word 'idealist'. Kant still insists that there are noumena (things in themselves) that exist independently of minds. Kant is critical of idealism, devoting a section of the *Critique of Pure Reason* to refuting it. Kant is instead a realist who suggests we can know very little about objects because our access to them is indirect.

mind-independent world.²⁵ Russell would later recall in *My Mental Development*, that “with a sense of escaping from prison, we allowed ourselves to think that grass is green, that the sun and stars would exist if no one was aware of them [...]” (4). Russell explains that his and Moore’s turn in philosophy was an un-doing of Kant’s self-proclaimed ‘Copernican Revolution’²⁶ articulated in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and a break from the Hegelian tradition. Russell introduces a new philosophical schema in the *Principia Mathematica* (1910) and *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914) that he believed to be on par with the advancement that Galileo brought to physics.

In a similar empiricist spirit, many analytic philosophers assumed some variant of another important doctrine forming their conceptual schema, namely, physicalism. According to this belief, all phenomena and all things that exist do so in physical space. Yet they are not necessarily material things, since ‘physical’ includes relations between objects, waves and particles, and forces generated by particles, which are not composed of matter. Bertrand Russell later describes the empiricist leanings of analytic philosophy, and the relevance of logic to it, as such:

Modern analytical empiricism [...] differs from that of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume by its incorporation of mathematics and its development of a powerful logical technique. It is thus able, in regard to certain problems, to achieve definite answers, which have the quality of science rather than of philosophy. It has the advantage, as compare with the philosophies of the system-builders, of being able to tackle its problems one at a time, instead of having to invent at one stroke a

²⁵ According to R. Monk, Russell was persuaded to abandon absolute idealism because Weierstrass, Dedekind, and Cantor had shown that the unresolved problems in the foundations of mathematics that had been used as support for idealism were in fact resolvable. See, Ray Monk, *Bertrand Russell: the Spirit of Solitude* (London: Cape, 1996), 113-15.

²⁶ Kant and his followers approached epistemology first by asking *how* we know something, then working towards the specifics of *what* we know. The emphasis lying on the mind’s role in forming knowledge. Russell instead believes that the mind only contributes to our knowledge in a limited set of circumstances. Kant’s epistemology, according to Russell, leads one to believe that “the mind has some kind of supremacy over the non-mental universe” (*MPD* 16).

block theory of the whole universe. Its methods, in this respect, resemble those of science. I have no doubt that, in so far as philosophical knowledge is possible, it is by such methods that it must be sought; I have also no doubt that, by these methods, many ancient problems are completely soluble. (HWP 834)

Meanwhile, in 1906, the seventeen-year-old Ludwig Wittgenstein enrolled in the engineering program at Berlin's *Technische Hochschule* in Charlottenburg upon the encouragement of his father. In 1908, Wittgenstein transfers to the University of Manchester, in England, where he reads Russell's *Principia Mathematica* and Frege's *Die Grundlage der Arithmetik*. Wittgenstein's curiosity about airplane propellers and engines shifts to finding an answer to Russell's Paradox and to the foundations of mathematics and logic.

In 1911, Wittgenstein travels to Jena, Germany, to speak with Frege about Frege's work. After some correspondence, Frege suggests that Wittgenstein study with Russell in Cambridge. Wittgenstein goes to Cambridge in October of that year and shows up unannounced at Russell's office while Russell is having tea with a friend. Russell describes the encounter in a letter:

[...] an unknown German appeared, speaking very little English but refusing to speak German. He turned out to be a man who had learned engineering at Charlottenburg, but during his course had acquired by himself, a passion for the philosophy of mathematics and has now come to Cambridge on purpose to hear me. (Schroeder 1)

The next day: "My German engineer, I think, is a fool. He thinks nothing empirical is knowable - I asked him to admit that there was not a rhinoceros in the room, but he wouldn't" (Schroeder 1).

Russell and Wittgenstein were to develop a close, but at times, contested friendship. According to Russell, Wittgenstein was the

most perfect example of a genius traditionally conceived, passionate, profound, intense, and dominating. [...] He used to come to see me every evening at midnight, and pace up and down the room like a wild beast for three hours in agitated silence. Once I said to him: 'Are you thinking about logic, or about your sins?' 'Both', he replied, and continued his pacing. I did not like to suggest it was time for bed, for it seemed probable both to him and to me that on leaving me he would commit suicide. (ABR 329)²⁷

Though Wittgenstein and Russell worked productively together, their disagreements were frequent sources of tension. Wittgenstein's criticism of Russell's epistemology in an unpublished rough draft of *The Theory of Knowledge* led Russell to the brink of suicide. Wittgenstein's criticism was relentless and led Russell to doubt whether he (Russell) was competent enough to do fundamental work in philosophy ever again. In a letter to Ottoline Morel, 1916:

Do you remember that at the time when you were seeing Vittoz I wrote a lot of stuff about the theory of knowledge, which Wittgenstein criticised with the greatest severity? His criticism, tho' I don't think you realised it at the time, was an event of first-rate importance in my life, and affected everything I have done since. I saw that he was right, and I saw that I could not hope ever again to do fundamental work in philosophy. My impulse was shattered, like a wave dashed to pieces against a breakwater. I became filled with utter despair, and tried to turn to you for consolation. (ABR 282)

Although Russell was to abandon his work on *The Theory of Knowledge* he, in consultation with Wittgenstein, was to write *Our Knowledge of the External World* in 1914, the year Wittgenstein left Cambridge, which became very influential in the Vienna Circle and which Broch read closely.

²⁷ Russell's concern for Wittgenstein's mental health was not unwarranted. Three of Wittgenstein's brothers had committed suicide and Wittgenstein often spoke of doing the same. Russell himself had bouts of despair, claiming that had it not been for the prospects of a new a new calculus problem to be solved he would have killed himself. See Bertrand Russell, *Autobiography of Bertrand Russell, 1872-1914* (1951). (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967) 38.

The philosophical agenda of “logical atomism,” which Russell introduced and promoted for two decades before denouncing some of its core tenets, was incorporated (though modified in important ways) into the Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*. Logical atomism was both a methodology for doing philosophy and a set of metaphysical assumptions. According to logical atomism the world consists of a plurality of independent facts consisting of objects (or “particulars”) that stand in relation to one another; these facts are complexes composed of more “atomic” facts. Atomic facts, according to Russell and the logical positivists of the Vienna Circle, though not necessarily Wittgenstein (see next page), are the smallest pieces of possible sense data that are not constructed by more essential constituents. The goal of logical atomism as a method of philosophical inquiry was to provide the most basic vocabulary for all of the sciences by using wholly determinate nouns that denote the most basic (atomic) impressions of sense data, and their properties and relations; then to reconstruct complex facts from this precise language by using the logical inference rules of formal logic.

So, ‘Bob’ is not a fact, but ‘Bob drinks Guinness’ is; it shows what relation Bob has to Guinness; such facts are atomic facts. Atomic facts can be combined by a logical operator to form a molecular proposition. If we combine the atomic fact ‘Bob drinks Guinness’ with a second atomic fact ‘Michael drinks Hefeweizen,’ we have the molecular proposition ‘Bob drinks Guinness and Michael drinks Hefeweizen’. Thus the metaphysics of logical atomism is sometimes referred to as ‘Lego-metaphysics,’ emphasizing the various ways in which Legos can be combined with another to create more complex structures, or, on the contrary, reduced into simpler structures.

The problem that plagues logical atomism is determining what exactly the “simples” are that comprised the fully analyzed atomic sentence. Russell speculates at one point that they are the smallest possible sense data impressions. Wittgenstein, however, did not endorse this view and instead left it to physicists to determine; his concern was only with the structure of atomic and molecular propositions, not the nature of their constituents. Under pressure from criticism, Russell later acknowledges that there need not be an ultimately simple object, but rather a “relatively simple” object, gleaned only by contrasting the simpler atomic proposition against a more complex proposition from which it was reduced: “This conception can be applied without assuming that there is anything absolutely simple. We can define as ‘relatively simple’ whatever we do not know to be complex. Results obtained using the concept of ‘relative simplicity’ will still be true if complexity is afterwards found, provided we have abstained from asserting absolute simplicity” (*HKSL* 259). Vital to this endeavor was the rejection of the subject-predicate syllogistic logic inherited from Aristotle and still employed by all other schools of philosophy (besides logical positivism), which Russell calls “trivial nonsense” and which he credits for leading to all of the metaphysical confusions of the philosophical idealism of Kant and Hegel (*KEW* 43, 45).

In the preface, Russell credits his “friend Mr. Ludwig Wittgenstein” for revealing to him “vitally important discoveries [...] in pure logic [which are] not yet published” as of 1914 (*KEW* 9). These “discoveries” appear in Wittgenstein’s notes on logic, which he later develops into the *Tractatus*. Russell adopts Frege’s system of formal notation and pursues the philosophical implication of it beyond Frege’s original conceived usage of it. By no longer having to treat the surface grammar of a sentence as the sole indication of

the statement's real form, Russell sees the task of philosophy as re-expressing statements into logical notation which allows the philosopher to see what is 'really' at stake in a statement. By doing so the philosopher can analyze away pseudo-philosophical problems and "clear away incredible accumulations of metaphysical lumber" (Russell *KEW* 42). Russell's style of analysis, as decompositional and transformative, is demonstrated most famously in his theory of descriptions.²⁸

Bertrand Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914)

Similar to his heroes Spinoza and Leibniz, Russell attempted to construct a system of the world. Unlike the earlier empiricists who relied on sensory experience to build their theoretical understanding of the world, or the rationalists who began their reasoning with metaphysical doctrines and deduced general principles, Russell chose a middle ground that accounts for both. Russell believed that neither sensory experience nor *a priori* reasoning should provide philosophers with their starting point but instead physical sciences; for these areas of thought, although corrigible and susceptible to falsification, are nonetheless the most epistemologically secure, according to Russell.

In the first chapter of the book, Russell delineates three trends current in philosophy in his day. The first he refers to as the classical tradition of philosophy which traces its origins back to Plato, but whose primary advocates in modern philosophy were the idealists Kant and Hegel. Russell explains that his contemporary advocates of this tradition "are, in the main, those whose extra-philosophical knowledge is literary, rather than those who have felt the inspiration of science" (15). Russell is implying that the idealists are not well-read in serious topics, and, further, that their world-view was

²⁸ For more detail on Russell's decompositional analysis see Michael Beaney's introduction in *The analytic turn: analysis in early analytic philosophy and phenomenology* (London: Routledge), 2007.

fanciful, a product of their fruitful imaginations and intuitions, but incapable of accounting for the facts of observed phenomena.

Russell explains that the classical tradition is still prevalent in his day, but is beginning to wane. This decline is not only because there are “reasoned arguments,” which according to Russell, call into question its validity, but also “certain general intellectual forces against it--the same general forces which are breaking down the other great syntheses of the past” (15). The impulse for this tradition, according to Russell, was originally the “naïve faith” of the Greek philosophers in the “omnipotence of reasoning.” The apparent universal application of geometry, which the Greeks discovered, inspired them to “prove” that the world of sense data is illusory, and that all reality is one, explains Russell. The confidence the Greeks had in these surprising conclusions was derived from their unshakable trust in the process of their reasoning.

In the middle ages, the classical tradition was continued by theological philosophers who often appealed to the authority of tradition to reinforce their arguments. In modern philosophy, beginning with Descartes, explains Russell, philosophers in the classical tradition became independent of the authoritative figures of the past, but nevertheless remained committed to the same Aristotelian logic used since antiquity. Besides the British empiricists (Locke, *et al.*), philosophers were still confident that *a priori* reasoning could bring to light unknown secrets (a reality) about the world that were altogether different from what our direct perceptions of objects would seem to indicate. Russell identifies this as the central belief of the classical tradition and the main hindrance of promoting a “scientific attitude in philosophy” (16).

To illustrate his point, Russell gives an example of an argument from a leading contemporary British representative of this tradition, Francis Herbert Bradley. In *Appearance and Reality* (1893), Bradley dismisses all that he refers to as appearance--this includes objects, relations between objects, space and time, etc.--as unreal, in favor of what *alone* is real, which is a timeless, indivisible, whole, which Bradley calls the 'Absolute.' The Absolute is not comprised of souls or thoughts, but is nevertheless something mystical. Bradley arrives at his conclusion by, according to Russell, "abstract logical reasoning professing to find self-contradictions in the categories condemned as mere appearance and to leave no tenable alternative to the kind of Absolute which is finally affirmed to be real" (20). Russell responds to Bradley's argument first by suggesting that its aim is to cause "bewilderment" rather than genuine philosophical conviction because there is a greater possibility for error in Bradley's method of "subtle, abstract and difficult argument" than for error concerning such a commonsensical fact as the "interrelatedness of things in the world" (18). Russell is implying here that while it may be possible that our perceptions of the interrelatedness of objects are erroneous, our reasons for accepting our sensory perceptions at face value are more persuasive, at least to Russell, than the murky arguments in favor of their illusory nature.

Rather than sustaining a detailed argument against the classical tradition of philosophy, Russell instead appeals to the history of science which, according to Russell, "with our methods of experiment and observation, our knowledge of the long history of *a priori* errors refuted by empirical science, it has become natural to suspect a fallacy in any deduction of which the conclusion appears to contradict patent facts" (18). Hence Russell appears to have some sympathy for what he refers to as the "mystical impulse,"

which he says inspires the idealist, but points out the unreliability of its methods of inquiry. Russell makes this explicit a few pages later:

On the reality or unreality of the mystic's world I know nothing. I have no wish to deny it, nor even to declare that the insight which reveals it is not a genuine insight. What I do wish to maintain [...] is that insight, untested and unsupported, is an insufficient guarantee of truth. (31)

What is a sufficient guarantee of truth for Russell is empirical verification; this 'scientific outlook,' Russell believes, has for most educated people become a 'habit of mind.' It is this materialistic viewpoint or attitude, rather than argument, which is leading to the demise of the classical tradition of philosophy, according to Russell.

The second school of philosophy current in Russell's day is what Russell calls Darwinism, which Herbert Spencer initiated by extrapolating on Darwin's scientific theory of evolution. This school was promoted with greater effectiveness, according to Russell, by Spencer's successors William James and Henri Bergson than Spencer himself. Russell explains that evolutionism is the "prevailing creed of our time," infusing politics, literature, and philosophy (21). According to Russell, the phases of its development in philosophy are represented by Nietzsche, pragmatism, and Bergson, but its widespread acceptance outside of academia shows that evolutionism resonates with the "spirit of the age." By founding itself upon natural science (particularly biology), philosophical evolutionism sees itself, according to Russell, as the cure for the "dogmatic authority" of medieval philosophical systems, likewise for the dependence on "ratiocinative authority" of the Greeks. While Russell suggests that it is easy to sympathize with such a philosophical system, it overlooks what is "vital to a true understanding" of the world (21).

Russell's primary objection to this school of philosophy is that it takes biology as the model for science. Evolution shows that species are in flux and that there is not a clear boundary between categories of life since one species can trace its gradual development from some prior, more primitive, life form. By accepting biology as the science upon which to model philosophy, the philosopher falsely assumes, according to Russell, that there are no stable generalizations and fixed principles, and that there is a "law of development" towards an ideal (22).

The attitude of the evolutionist philosophers was shaped by the impressions of the flux and change of biological life to such an extent that they rejected any kind of "mechanical view of the course of nature" which, according to Russell, the physical sciences, particularly physics, seem to impose (23). The error of the evolutionist philosophers lies then, according to Russell, in their sweeping rejection of the laws of physics, and the "apparatus of logic, with its fixed concepts, its general principles, and its reasonings which seem to compel even the most unwilling assent" (23). Russell's objection consists of two points; the first is that this evolutionistic philosophy is not corroborated by the "facts of evolution" which have been observed scientifically. The second of Russell's objections is that this kind of philosophy is not really philosophy as Russell conceives it because the "motives and interests" that serve as its impetus are exclusively practical and the questions with which it is concerned are contingent instead of general. Hence this school of philosophy 'never really touches' on any of the problems that constitute genuine philosophy. It is thus on the one hand "not philosophical, but only a hasty generalization" and on the other "not scientific, but a mere

unsupported dogma, belonging to philosophy by its subject-matter, but in no way deducible from the facts upon which evolutionism [as a science] relies” (27).

In replace of these two schools of philosophy which Russell describes, he advocates taking a different posture towards philosophical questions than what has previously been taken. Instead of following the mystical impulse of classical (idealist) tradition, or the self-interested and partial attitude of the evolutionists, Russell suggests that philosophy should become “scientific” which consists of a “disinterested intellectual curiosity” which characterizes the person of science. Russell is explicit in his endorsement of this scientific/mathematical turn in philosophy and compares it favorably to the advance that “was introduced into physics by Galileo” which consists of “piecemeal, detailed” analysis with “verifiable results” instead of “large untested generalities recommended only by a certain appeal to imagination” (14). Russell is implying here that our imagination and intuition are useful in supplying us with a sense of knowledge of certain aspects of our contingent experience with the world, but when this intuitive knowledge is allowed to encroach into our dispassionate and intellectual deliberations of theoretical truths, our vision becomes blurred. Just as a biologist or physicist may examine questions pertaining to their fields of inquiry without considering what their personal attitude toward a particular finding may be, or whether a contingent arrangement of facts is beautiful or has ethical implications, so too the philosopher must leave aside these considerations if philosophical progress is going to be made, according

to Russell. Feelings and attitudes, he maintains, should not be elevated to the status of philosophical creed.²⁹

Russell proceeds in his next chapter, “Logic as the Essence of Philosophy,” to describe what he believes should be the aims and methods of philosophy by emphasizing the role the new mathematical logic plays in analysis. He first explains the syllogistic logic of Aristotle continued among some in his day is obsolete and that “all vigorous minds that have concerned themselves with inference have abandoned” syllogistic logic and have broadened the scope of logic (33). The first extension was the inductive method of investigation developed by Bacon and Galileo, which, according to Russell, remains important as it relates to investigation but should play no role in a “perfected science” other than as the means that enables deduction to occur (34). The method of induction, in the sense in which Russell is referring to it, consists of observing empirical events and inferring from that experience a conclusion that is supported by the observation. But since the empirical evidence alone is used in support of the conclusion, the inference made in light of the evidence cannot be proven to be true aside from an appeal to the evidence. That is to say, Russell explains, that there exists no non-circular way in which the inductive conclusion is to be proven, since appealing directly to the evidence is how the inductive conclusion was drawn in the first place. Hence there exists no logical principle upon which inductive conclusions can be guaranteed to be valid. And since observations of past events do not ensure continued occurrences of those same events, the inductive method is only useful in providing a degree of probability of its conclusion which increases with a greater number of observations of the same event (such as the

²⁹ Russell suggests this in his essay “Mysticism and Logic,” *Mysticism and Logic: and other essays* (New York: Longmans, Green and co., 1918). His exact words: “[...] mysticism is to be commended as an attitude toward life, not as a creed about the world” (11).

high probability of the sun rising tomorrow which is inferred from the numerous times this has occurred in the past). Knowledge of logic, explains Russell, is not derived from experience alone, as the empiricists would have it, instead it must be derived *a priori* from mathematics (37).

After dispelling, in Russell's view, the fallacious philosophy of logic of Hegel and his followers, who, though claiming to reject traditional subject/predicate logic, nonetheless assumes it in much of their theorizing, Russell begins a discussion of the origins of a modern logic. He credits Leibniz, and later Boole, for seeing the importance of mathematics for logic, but little was achieved in mathematical logic, according to Russell, until Frege and Giuseppe Peano. Their work showed the traditional view that the propositions "Socrates is mortal" and "All men are mortal" were of the same form to be false. Instead, with an understanding of mathematical logic these propositions can be shown to have a different form from one another. Failure to recognize this difference led many philosophers, according to Russell, to develop fallacious theories on the "whole study of the forms of judgment and inference, [...] the relations of things to their qualities, of concrete existence to abstract concepts, and of the world of experience to the world of Platonic ideas" (50).

Russell begins his discussion of the philosophical application of mathematical logic by distinguishing between various forms of propositions. Every proposition has a form, a way in which it is put together. The forms of the propositions "Socrates is mortal," "The sun is hot," or "Jones is angry" are the same, explains Russell. Their form is preserved by the word "is," even though their constituents change in each case. By contrast, explains Russell, the propositions "Socrates was an Athenian," "Socrates

married Xantippe,” and “Socrates drank hemlock,” have different forms even though the constituent ‘Socrates’ remains in all three. What is important to philosophy, according to Russell, is not the constituents, but the forms of propositions, which can be known apart from knowing the truth of the constituents. It is the task of philosophical logic to make the logical form of sentences explicit and pure, since it is the form alone that is important in inference. For instance, Russell gives an example, in the sentence “Socrates was a man, all men are mortal, therefore Socrates is mortal,” the general form which underlies this sentence is “If a thing has a certain property, and whatever has this property has a certain other property, then the thing in question also has that other property” (53).

But before a study of inference from one proposition to another can be conducted, an understanding of a single proposition itself must be attained. It is at this point that Russell most adamantly rejects the traditional (Aristotelian) logic, which fallaciously holds that all propositions are of the subject-predicate form. Assuming that all propositions are of the subject-predicate form, that is, that every “fact consists of some thing having some quality,” has rendered “most philosophers incapable of giving any account of the world of science and of daily life” (55). Instead most philosophers of the day, explains Russell, were more determined to dismiss the real world as an illusion in favor of some kind of higher Reality that is only conceived of while one is in a mystical mood. But once this mystical mood subsides, according to Russell, these philosophers will search for a rational defense of their mystical insight. Their search is not in a candid and dispassionate way, but in a way that already assumes the truth of the matter in question, preventing them from accepting the reality of relations, that is, of propositions not of the subject/predicate form (56).

Russell explains that the view of logic that admits of only subject/predicate propositions can be refuted in a number of different ways. One way is by admitting of asymmetrical relations. In explaining the significance of relations, Russell distinguishes between two classifications in order for this problem to be made clear.

The first classification is between symmetrical, asymmetrical, and non-symmetrical relations. The second classification is between transitive, intransitive, and non-transitive. After making these classifications Russell explains their significance as it relates to refuting the philosophy of logic held by the other traditions of philosophy:

But when we come to asymmetrical relations, such as before and after, greater and less, etc., the attempt to reduce them to properties becomes obviously impossible. When, for example, two things are merely known to be unequal, without our knowing which is greater, we may say that the inequality results from their having different magnitudes, because inequality is a symmetrical relation; but to say that when one thing is greater than another, and not merely unequal to it, that means that they have different magnitudes, is formally incapable of explaining the facts. For if the other thing had been greater than the one, the magnitudes would also have been different, though the fact to be explained would not have been the same. Thus mere difference of magnitude is not all that is involved, since, if it were, there would be no difference between one thing being greater than another, and the other being greater than the one. We shall have to say that the one magnitude is greater than the other, and thus we shall have failed to get rid of the relation "greater." In short, both possession of the same property and possession of different properties are symmetrical relations, and therefore cannot account for the existence of asymmetrical relations. (59)

After Russell makes his argument for the existence of relations that are not of the subject/predicate form, and for the non-illusory nature of the external world, Russell proceeds to introduce some of the fundamentals of logical atomism.³⁰ Russell first defines a proposition as a "form of words which must either be true or false" (62). A proposition that asserts that a thing has a certain property, or stands in a certain relation to

³⁰ Russell calls his philosophy 'logical atomism' in the first chapter of *Our Knowledge of the External World*. Logical atomism is developed and expanded in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and later by Rudolph Carnap in *Der logische Aufbau der Welt: Scheinprobleme in der Philosophie* (1928), (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1961), both of which Hermann Broch read closely.

another thing, is called an “atomic proposition” (62). Atomic propositions may have an infinite number of forms since the atomic facts to which the proposition refers are likewise capable of being an infinite number of things. An atomic proposition—the examples given by Russell are “this is red” or “this is before that”—can only be known empirically. Hence it is through sense perception that we come to know atomic facts, and at this stage of knowledge logic is of no use. The two poles that present themselves in this view, according to Russell, are pure logic, known *a priori*, and atomic facts, known empirically.

Russell uses the term “atomic” because atomic propositions fit into what Russell calls “molecular propositions” in the same way that atoms fit into molecules. These propositions use conjunctions such as “*if, and, or, unless, etc.*” Russell uses the example “If it rains, I shall bring my umbrella.” In this sentence two propositions are connected together and it is only by doing this, explains Russell, that an inference is possible (63). Thus if we confirm the first proposition empirically, that is, we see that it is raining, we can infer the second proposition.

The next kinds of propositions that Russell discusses are “general propositions.” These kinds of propositions include those that begin with ‘all’ or ‘some.’ Russell already explained that from atomic facts it is possible theoretically to infer all possible truths so long as one knew that there existed no other atomic facts than the ones he knows. But it is not possible to know universal propositions such as “All men are mortal” from logical inference from atomic propositions since it is not possible to know all men and that there are no men which are unknown to you. Hence general truths cannot be known through inference but must instead be taken as “self-evident,” according to Russell.

Since all particular truths are contingent upon empirical evidence, knowledge of general truths (if there is to be such a thing) must exist independent of empirical evidence, that is, sense data (67).

Russell concludes that the old empiricists' belief that all knowledge is derived from experience is false, instead that some general truths exist which are not inferred from sense data, but that are "primitive" (68). Russell believes that many logical truths are of this kind; he appeals to the aforementioned example: "If anything has a certain property, and whatever has this property has a certain other property, then the thing in question has the other property" (69). The truth of this proposition lies wholly in its form and has no basis in empirical experience, according to Russell. A "truly scientific" discussion of philosophical problems is now possible, according to Russell, when logical investigation is conducted in two ways. The first is by examining the actual propositions which we form through sense perception and inference, the second is the investigation into the general forms of logical truths.

Traditional philosophers have failed, according to Russell, by not having an appropriate inventory of logical forms. According to Russell, "the old logic put thought in fetters, while the new logic gives it wings" (68). We are now, Russell explains, able to see what problems are capable of being solved by philosophers, and which ones remain indissoluble.

In the following chapters, Russell offers a more thorough refutation of those philosophies, which deny the existence of the mind-independent world, or assert that it is illusory. Then Russell proceeds to explain the role of physics and sense data in philosophy.

Russell's book became very influential among analytic philosophers and defines much of what is often thought of by contemporary analytic philosophers as 'early-stage' analytic philosophy.³¹ As we will see in chapter two of this work, the qualification 'early-stage' is necessary to distinguish between analytic philosophy before the blow in the 1950s delivered to Russell's logical atomism and the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle which Russell inspired by the analytic philosophers Willard V.O. Quine and Ludwig Wittgenstein, changing the course of analytic philosophy. While Frege and Russell are the two most prominent figures in the development of predicate logic and its connection to language and sense data, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921) explores the implications of these discoveries for philosophy more generally.

***Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921)**

The *Tractatus* has been accepted into the philosophical canon in spite of the fact that it was rejected by all the publishers Wittgenstein originally submitted it to for nearly four years before it was published in 1921 (Schroeder 22). These rejections were likely because of the abstruse style in which it is written.

A short book of fewer than one hundred pages, the *Tractatus* contains seven primary statements, of which six are followed with truncated statements relating back to, or expanding upon, a prior statement. The truncated style of Wittgenstein's writing provided enough of a hermeneutical difficulty that even Frege and Russell, those most learned in the subject matter of the *Tractatus*, did not grasp Wittgenstein's thoughts clearly. Wittgenstein sent a copy of the manuscript to Frege, but complained that Frege

³¹ It is important to note that the inquiry into propositional forms, formal logic, and epistemology continues to receive considerable attention in analytic philosophy, especially in regards to the development of modal logic with the works of Saul Kripke, Donald Davidson, and others. See for instance *The Essential Davidson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2006.

did not ‘understand a word of it’ (CL 124). Likewise, Wittgenstein’s response to Russell’s introduction to the *Tractatus*, was one of derision, “I’m afraid you haven’t got a hold of my main contention” (CL 71). Though critical of Frege’s and Russell’s readings of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein nonetheless credits them in the preface for having influenced it: “To the great works of Frege and the writings of my friend Bertrand Russell I owe in large measure the stimulation of my thoughts” (TLP 4).

One of the ways in which Wittgenstein’s philosophy is different from that of Russell’s is Wittgenstein’s conception of logical atomism. The atomic theory in physics showed that matter was divisible into discrete units (atoms) that function together in forming larger objects; instead of applying this notion to epistemology, as Russell did, Wittgenstein applies it to language and meaning. Wittgenstein’s task in the *Tractatus* was to show how the meanings of words and sentences are divisible into atoms analogous to the way in which physical objects are.

Like Frege and Russell, Wittgenstein was a critic of those still relying on Aristotelian logic (Sorrell and Rogers 9). Yet, according to Thomas Ricketts, Wittgenstein also dismisses the universalist conception of logic³² held by Russell and Frege (PLW 59). The universalist position holds that all objects, properties, and relations fall under the domain of logical inference rules when given the appropriate vocabulary. In this view there is only one world of discourse and any varying interpretations of a statement are either confusions about the semantics of the statement or should be re-expressed as a distinct statement separate from the competing interpretation. Frege thinks this because the very notion of quantification (‘for all x,’ or ‘for at least one x’)

³² Wittgenstein also has reservations about Frege’s identity theory suggesting that identity relations such as ‘Mark Twain was Samuel Clemens’ are not really relations.

already implies a discrete meaning of the subject and predicate to which the quantifier applies. The framework of predicate logic, according to Frege, encompasses all factual thought, and there are no truths but factual truths, hence all truths fall under the scope of logical analysis (“PLW” 60-61). Frege’s work, then, was to find a way in which all statements of premises were made entirely explicit in order to show the inference rules that lead to any particular conclusion; symbolic notation was his way to do this. Thus the limit of predicate logic, in the universalist view of Frege and Russell, is only the limit of our possible sense data (i.e., phenomena) upon which we formulate our sentences.

Frege and Russell believed that logical axioms themselves were a science, known to be true by virtue of their general application, and were rooted in the sentence as a rendition of reality (“PLW” 60-61). Wittgenstein rejects this position in an early letter to Russell; “Logic must turn out to be of a totally different kind than another science” (*CL* 15). Wittgenstein states in the *Tractatus* that the sentences of logic communicate nothing other than tautologies (6.1). This is a dismissal of Frege’s and Russell’s view that logical truths—e.g., all bachelors are single men—are derived from clearly defined axioms and do in fact add to our knowledge. Instead of representing a general principle that can apply to sentences, logical axioms merely show, according to Wittgenstein, the way in which parts of a sentence relate to other parts of a sentence in order for the sentence to be coherent by virtue of a mental picture being possible that represents the sentences (6.13).³³

Thus logic, in the *Tractarian* picture theory, amounts to the arrangement of atomic facts in a mental picture, which corresponds to the arrangement of atomic

³³ See also Thomas Ricketts, “Pictures, Logic, and the limits of sense in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*,” *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*. eds. Hans Sluga and David G. Stern, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 64.

statements in a sentence. Yet Wittgenstein agrees with Frege that “Nur der Satz hat Sinn; nur im Zusammenhang des Satzes hat ein Name Bedeutung” [“Only the proposition has sense; only in the context of a proposition has a name meaning.”] (3.3). This is a denial of Russell’s notion of a direct correspondence between a name and the object that the name denotes, independent of context. Thus it is only when the arrangement of words within a proposition coordinate in such a way as to evoke a mental picture that conveys some possible arrangement of facts, that a statement can be said to have a valid logical structure; this is Wittgenstein’s version of referentialism: “Was jedes Bild, welcher Form immer, mit der Wirklichkeit gemein haben muss, um sie überhaupt—richtig oder falsch—abbilden zu können, ist die logische Form, das ist, die Form der Wirklichkeit” [“What every picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it at all—rightly or falsely—is the logical form, that is, the form of reality.”] (2.18).

Hence atomic statements and the logical structure of a sentence, according to Wittgenstein, are imposed upon the sentence by the limitations of our ability to conceive mental pictures and communicate them meaningfully. While names symbolize objects, logic symbolizes the form of a proposition. Thus, logic limits thought and speech to phenomena, because only phenomena have sense; it is the guiding limitation of meaningful discourse that demarcates the boundary between what can be said in proposition and what cannot; it is the “Form der Abbildung” [“pictorial form”] and the form of the sentence that represents that ‘picture’ (2.17). Logic is the symbolic representation of the form of the picture, whereas the picture *shows* its form (4.041).

This explains why Wittgenstein's conception of logic is not universalist, as Frege and Russell see it, namely, because the form of representation is not itself a fact (2.0), which the universalist conception of a logical axioms purports it to be. Wittgenstein further suggests that our language is capable of expressing all conceivable facts.

Prima facie it appears as if Wittgenstein envisions the work of the philosopher as that of giving a general description of the facts, and the relations between facts, that make up the world:

Die richtige Methode der Philosophie wäre eigentlich die: Nichts zu sagen, als was sich sagen lässt, also Sätze der Naturwissenschaft - also etwas, was mit Philosophie nichts zu tun hat -, und dann immer, wenn ein anderer etwas Metaphysisches sagen wollte, ihm nachzuweisen, dass er gewissen Zeichen in seinen Sätzen keine Bedeutung gegeben hat. (6.53)

The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. propositions of natural science--something that has nothing to do with philosophy--and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his proposition. (6.53)

If we carry 6.53 to its logical conclusion, the philosopher is one who either speaks about scientific things only, or criticizes people for not restricting their speech to scientific language. The attentive reader will now see the contradiction in Wittgenstein's reasoning; on the one hand he is claiming that non-scientific propositions are "unsinnig" [nonsense], yet in saying this he too is saying nonsense. Scholars widely disagree on what the ramifications of Wittgenstein's conception of 'nonsense' are.

According to one group of scholars the *Tractatus* should be read as having a body that is composed of nonsense, surrounded by a preface and final remarks that serve as a frame conveying Wittgenstein's genuine thoughts. One of the passages cited in defense of this view is not from the *Tractatus*, but a letter written by Wittgenstein to the editor of

the *Tractatus* published posthumously: “I would recommend to you to read the preface and the conclusion, because they contain the most direct expression of the point of the book” (CL 111). The nonsensical body, in this interpretation, intends to show what must be disregarded as unintelligible; this interpretation was coined by Cora Diamond, one of its proponents, as the ‘resolute’ interpretation.³⁴ ‘Resolute,’ in the sense used here, suggests Wittgenstein’s assertion that the propositions in his *Tractatus* are nonsensical is to be taken literally, meaning that they are ridiculous, not to be taken seriously. The resolute interpreters emphasize Wittgenstein’s ladder analogy in the final comments of the *Tractatus*:

Meine Sätze erläutern dadurch, dass sie der, welcher mich versteht, am Ende als unsinnig erkennt, wenn er durch sie - auf ihnen - über sie hinausgestiegen ist. (Er muss sozusagen die Leiter wegwerfen, nachdem er auf ihr hinaufgestiegen ist.) Er muss diese Sätze überwinden, dann sieht er die Welt richtig. (6.54)

My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them--as steps--to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright. (6.54)

According to the resolute interpretation, Wittgenstein’s intent is to show what philosophy would amount to if it were to be restricted to merely the propositions of science, the main point being that philosophy cannot be done when it is delimited by such stringent means. The doctrines the *Tractatus* appears to endorse at first glance, would, in this interpretation, be exposed as nonsense, and the attentive reader of the *Tractatus* is

³⁴ See Cora Diamond, “Throwing away the Ladder: How to Read the *Tractatus* (1988),” *The Realistic Spirit* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991); and Crary and Read, *The New Wittgenstein* (London: Routledge, 2000); and Severin Schroeder, *Wittgenstein: the way out of the fly-bottle* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006) 106.

relieved, therapeutically, of any illusions of rigor the body of the *Tractatus* has (Schroeder 106).

But the resolute interpretation of the *Tractatus* is a minority viewpoint and appears to be contradicted by other statements Wittgenstein makes in the *Tractatus* and elsewhere. The traditional, or mainstream interpretation,³⁵ whose case I find more compelling, is that even though a sentence may not have a 'sense' according to the picture theory (4.031) it still may be useful, not mere gibberish as the resolute interpreters believe. Hence we can take Wittgenstein's propositions regarding language and logic as genuinely 'elucidatory,' as he calls them in 6.54, therefore worthy of being taken seriously, or 'climbing up.' But if we are to discover anything about ethics, religion, metaphysics--things that are of great philosophical interest--we must look elsewhere other than in the language of scientific propositions, according to the *Tractatus*.

Wittgenstein appears to endorse this position in a letter to Russell:

Now I'm afraid you haven't really got hold of my main contention, to which the whole business of logical propositions is only a corollary. The main point is the theory of what can be said by propositions --i.e. by language--(and, which comes to the same, what can be thought) and what cannot be expressed by propositions, but only shown; which, I believe, is the cardinal problem of philosophy. (CL 124)

Russell wrote the introduction to the *Tractatus* which emphasizes the implications Wittgenstein's picture theory of language and logic have for the sciences, making it seem as if restricting philosophy to the clarification of scientific propositions was Wittgenstein's primary concern. But Wittgenstein rejects Russell's interpretation. In *Vermischte Bemerkungen [Culture and Value]*, Wittgenstein appears to compensate for Russell's emphasis on restricting language to scientific propositions: "Scheue Dich ja

³⁵ Schroeder 106; P.M.S. Hacker, "Was he Trying to Whistle it," *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001) 98-140.

nicht davor, Unsinn zu reden! Nur mußt Du auf Deinen Unsinn lauschen” [“Don’t for heaven’s sake, be afraid of talking nonsense! Only don’t fail to pay attention to your nonsense”] (64). And even more so: “In den Tälern der Dummheit wächst für den Philosophen noch immer mehr Gras, als auf den Kahlen Höhen der Gescheitheit” [“The valleys of foolishness have more grass growing in them for the philosopher than do the barren heights of cleverness”] (92). Wittgenstein’s criticism of Russell and his refusal to identify himself with the philosophy of the Vienna Circle suggest that he views positivistic philosophy as un-interesting or ill-conceived, and that his interest is more for existential philosophy and the life of the mind.³⁶

The strict bipolarity of language suggested by the picture theory of meaning has important implications for ethics. Wittgenstein calls ethical propositions nonsensical, since no picture can be formed that corresponds to them. What is good or right can only be shown by virtue of consequences, not stated explicitly: “In der Welt ist alles, wie es ist, und geschieht alles, wie es geschieht; es gibt *in* ihr keinen Wert - und wenn es ihn gäbe, so hätte er keinen Wert” [“In the world everything is as it is, and everything happens as it does happen: in it no value exists—and if it did exist, it would have no value”] (6.41).

Wittgenstein, however, should not be read as a nihilist; value may not exist in the world, that is, in physical space, but this does not mean that value does not exist elsewhere. Wittgenstein explains that ethical value is known only solipsistically, not expressible in any statement of fact. Further, he maintains, that it becomes clear only in light of actions the consequences of which affect the mind in various ways:

³⁶ One might object by pointing out that Wittgenstein devotes considerable attention to the philosophy of mathematics upon his return to Cambridge. Nonetheless, Wittgenstein’s interest in the mind and ordinary life permeate much of his future work.

Der erste Gedanke bei der Aufstellung eines ethischen Gesetzes von der Form »Du sollst....« ist: Und was dann, wenn ich es nicht tue? Es ist aber klar, dass die Ethik nichts mit Strafe und Lohn im gewöhnlichen Sinne zu tun hat. Also muss diese Frage nach den *Folgen* einer Handlung belanglos sein. - Zum Mindesten dürfen diese Folgen nicht Ereignisse sein. Denn etwas muss doch an Jener Fragestellung richtig sein. Es muss zwar eine Art von ethischem Lohn und ethischer Strafe geben, aber diese müssen in der Handlung selbst liegen. (Und das ist auch klar, dass der Lohn etwas Angenehmes, die Strafe etwas Unangenehmes sein muss.). (6.422)

When an ethical law of the form, “Thou shalt...”, is laid down, one’s first thought is, “And what if I do not do it?” It is clear, however, that ethics has nothing to do with punishment and reward in the usual sense of the terms. So our question about the consequences of an action must be unimportant. --At least those consequences should not be events. For there must be something right about the question we posed. There must indeed be some kind of ethical reward and ethical punishment, but they must reside in the action itself. (And it is also clear that the reward must be something pleasant and the punishment something unpleasant.). (6.422)

After writing the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein claimed to have dissolved all of the problems of philosophy and gave up philosophy for over a decade to devote himself to gardening, architecture, and teaching at an elementary school in rural Austria. During this time the implications of the *Tractatus* on logic, language, and scientific philosophy were adopted by a very prominent group of Germanophone philosophers and scientists in Berlin³⁷ and more importantly in Vienna³⁸; together these philosophers started the journal *Erkenntnis*, which for decades has been a leading journal for (now post-positivistic) analytic philosophy.

³⁷ The group called themselves *Die Gesellschaft für empirische Philosophie*, and was composed of Hans Reichenbach, Kurt Grelling, Walter Dubislav, C.G Hempel, David Hilbert, and Richard von Mises.

³⁸ The group called themselves *Verein Ernst Mach*, in memory of Ernst Mach, and was composed of Marcel Natkin, Otto Neurath, Olga Hahn-Neurath, Theodor Radakovic, Rose Rand, Friedrich Waismann, Gustav Bergmann, Rudolf Carnap, Herbert Feigl, Philipp Frank, Kurt Gödel, Hans Hahn, Victor Kraft, Karl Menger, Richard von Mises, and Moritz Schlick.

Works Cited

- Beaney, Michael. *The Analytic Turn: Analysis in early Analytic Philosophy and Phenomenology*. London: Routledge, 2007.
- Beckerman, Ansgar. Einleitung. *Grundbegriffe der Analytischen Philosophie*. Ed. P. Precht. Stuttgart: Metzler, 2004.
- Bieri, Peter. "Was bleibt von der analytischen Philosophie, wenn die Dogmen gefallen sind?" *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*. 03/2007, Ausgabe 55.
- Broch, Hermann. "Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit." *Hermann Broch: Schriften zur Literatur 1: Kritik*. Band 9/1, Kommentierte Werkausgabe. Ed. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1975.
- . *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and His Time*. Trans. Michael P. Steinberg. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Burge, Tyler. *Truth, Thought, Reason: Essays on Frege*. New York: Clarendon, 2005.
- Carnap, Rudolph. *Logische Aufbau der Welt: Scheinprobleme in der Philosophie* (1928). Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1961.
- Crary, Alice and Read, Rupert, eds. *The New Wittgenstein*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Davidson, Donald. *The Essential Davidson*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2006.
- Diamond, Cora. "Throwing away the Ladder: How to Read the Tractatus" (1988). *The Realistic Spirit*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1991.

- Dummett, Michael. *Origins of Analytic Philosophy*. London: Duckworth, 1993.
- Dreyfus, Hubert. *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Being and Time*. Division I, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1990.
- Derrida, Jacques. "Response to Moore." *Ratio*, XIII. 2000.
- Frege, Gottlob. *Begriffsschrift: Eine der arithmetischen nachgebildete Formelsprache des reinen Denkens*. Halle: Verlag von Louis Nebert, 1879.
- . "Begriff und Gegenstand." *Vierteljahresschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie* XVI (1892): 192–205.
- . *Conceptual notation, and related articles*. Trans. and ed. Terrell Ward Bynum. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- . *Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik: Eine logisch-mathematische Untersuchung über den Begriff der Zahl*. Breslau: Wilhelm Koebner, 1884.
- . "Über den Zweck der Begriffsschrift." *Jenaische Zeitschrift für Naturwissenschaft* 15 (1883): 1-10.
- . "Über Sinn und Bedeutung." *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik* C (1892): 25–50.
- Gamut, L.T.F. *Logic, Language, and Meaning: Introduction to Logic*. Vol. 1, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Gensler, Harry J. *The Historical Dictionary of Logic*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006.
- Glendinning, Simon. "The Analytic and the Continental." *New British Philosophy: The Interviews*. Eds. Julian Baggini and Jeremy Stangroom. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Glock, Hans-Johann. *What is Analytic Philosophy?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

- Gödel, Kurt. „Über die Vollständigkeit der Axiome des logischen Funktionenkalküls.“
Monatshefte für Mathematik und Physik. Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, 36.2,
(1930); 349–360.
- Hacker, P.M.S. “Was he Trying to Whistle it.” *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies*.
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001.
- Heijenoort, Jean von. *Frege and Goedel: Two Fundamental Texts in Mathematical Logic*.
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Hilbert, David. *Grundzüge der theoretischen Logik (1928)*. New York: Dover Publications, 1946.
- Houlgate, Stephen. *The Opening of Hegel's Logic: From Being to Infinity*. Purdue University
Press, 2005.
- Jacquette, Dale, ed. *A companion to philosophical logic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Jech, Thomas. “Set Theory.” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (Winter 2011) ed. Edward N.
Zalta. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2011/entries/set-theory/>>.
- Jolley, Nicholas, ed. *The Cambridge companion to Leibniz*. New York: Cambridge University
Press, 1995.
- Kant, Immanuel. Preface. *Critique of Pure Reason*. 2nd edition, Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 1998.
- Lackey, Douglas. “What Are the Modern Classics? The Baruch Poll of Great Philosophy in the
Twentieth Century.” *Philosophical Forum*. 30 (4), 1999.
- Leiter, Brian. *The Future for Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- McManus, Denis. *The Enchantment of Words: Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.
New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

- McGuinness, B. and G. H. von Wright, eds. *Cambridge Letters: Correspondence with Russell, Keynes, Moore, Ramsey, and Sraffa*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.
- Monk, Ray. "What is Analytic Philosophy?" *Bertrand Russell and the Origins of Analytic Philosophy*. Southampton: Thoemmes Press, 1996.
- . *Bertrand Russell: the Spirit of Solitude*. London: Cape, 1996.
- Prantl, Karl van. *Geschichte der Logik im Abenlande (1855-70)*. Graz: Akademische Druk, 1955.
- Plato, Jan von. "The Development of Proof Theory." Ed. Edward N. Zalta. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. April 16, 2008.
<<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/proof-theory-development/>>
- Ricketts, Thomas. "Pictures, Logic, and the limits of sense in Wittgenstein's Tractatus." *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*. Eds. Hans Sluga and David G. Stern. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- . "Wittgenstein against Frege and Russell." *From Frege to Wittgenstein: Perspectives on early Analytic Philosophy*. Ed. Erich H. Reck. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. 227-251.
- Roemer, J. (ed.). *Analytical Marxism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Russell, Bertrand. *Autobiography of Bertrand Russell, 1872-1914 (1951)*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967.
- . *My Philosophical Development*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1959.
- . *A History of Western Philosophy*. Simon & Schuster, 1945.
- . *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1948.
- . *The Analysis of Mind*. London: G. Allen & Unwin ltd, 1921.

- . "My Mental Development" (1944). *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*. Ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp. New York: Tudor, 1951. 3-20.
- . Preface. *Our Knowledge of the External World as a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy*. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1914.
- . "Mysticism and Logic." *Mysticism and Logic: and other essays*. New York: Longmans, Green and co., 1918.
- . "On Denoting." *Mind*. vol. 14, 1905.
- . *Principia Mathematica*. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1910-13.
- Schroeder, Severin. *Wittgenstein: the way out of the fly-bottle*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.
- Sorrell, Tom and G.A.J. Rogers. *Analytic Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. "The Big Type-Script." *Philosophical Occasions*. Eds. J.C. Klagge and A. Nordmann. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993.
- . *Philosophische Untersuchungen*. Trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, Oxford: Blackwell, 1997.
- . *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955.
- . *Vermischte Bemerkungen [Culture and Value]*. Ed. G. H. von Wright. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.
- Wolff, Jonathan. *Why Read Marx Today?* Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Wood, Allen. *Hegel's Ethical Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Chapter 2

Broch, the First 'Post-Analytic' Philosopher

“Metaphysics, or the attempt to conceive the world as a whole by means of thought, has been developed, from the first, by the union and conflict of two very different impulses, the one urging men towards mysticism, the other urging them towards science. Some men have achieved greatness through one of these impulses alone, other through the other alone: in Hume, for example, the scientific impulse reigns quite unchecked, while in Blake a strong hostility to science co-exists with profound mystical insight. But the greatest men who have been philosophers have felt the need both of science and of mysticism: the attempt to harmonize the two was what made their life, and what always must, for all its arduous uncertainty, make philosophy, to some minds, a greater thing than either science or religion.”

Bertrand Russell, “Mysticism and Logic”

I. Introduction:

This chapter focuses on two general aspects of Broch's philosophy. The first is concerned with the significance of Broch's philosophy of language and epistemology, especially as it rejects logical positivism and anticipates the later work of Wittgenstein and Willard Quine. The second part of this chapter is concerned with Broch's attempt to show the grounds that can be given to support various beliefs that one may possess about what action is right or wrong. My analysis in this part focuses on Broch's theory of normativity as derived from Kant, Plato, and Aristotle, and the implications this theory has for his view of practical reason (i.e., the ability of the mind to decide what counts as a reason for action). Broch's Kantian ethics will be shown in contrast to the utilitarianism of Russell, and the meta-ethical view of emotivism held by Russell, some in the Vienna Circle, and Wittgenstein.

The two sections of this chapter may appear to be discrete, each deserving a separate chapter. But there is an important thread connecting them: Broch's appeal to Aristotle's conception of the *logos*. In it, Broch finds the theoretical substratum that

engenders a holistic view of the human and its preoccupations with the world; such a view is given greater illumination when seen in light of Wittgenstein's conception of *Lebensform*.

Broch's epistemology and philosophy of language, both of which are tied to his moral theory, deserve, I will argue, to be considered the first 'post-analytic' philosophy³⁹ in that they were born out of the analytic tradition, maintain respect for the conceptual tools of logical analysis, yet broaden the scope of philosophical inquiry into language games unconstrained by the normative rules of reasoning.⁴⁰

An inescapable feature of our lives as humans is normativity. When a teacher assigns a grade, or our conscience tells us something is wrong, or we stop to ask for directions, we appeal (at least implicitly) to a standard or norm that we hope will give us guidance. Yet it is often unclear what the source, or sources, of our normativity are. Leading figures in the Vienna Circle, under whom Broch was a student, denied that intersubjective ethical normativity could be given any justification, that is, they believed that ethical norms are mere expressions of the subjective attitudes of a given person, hence reducible to emotive mental states. Bertrand Russell--a significant influence upon the Vienna Circle--believed ethical statements to be non-cognitive expressions of feelings or desires, therefore failing to meet the verificationist standards of knowledge, and

³⁹ Paul Michael Lützeler alludes to Broch's status as a 'post-analytic' philosopher in *Hermann Broch und die Moderne: Roman, Menschenrecht, Biografie*, (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2011) 134.

⁴⁰ By this I mean the inference rules of classical logic. Broch uses the novel, in addition to arguments, as a way to conduct inquiry. Language in narratives is not susceptible to the same logical scrutiny as language used in arguments. In *Erzählen zwischen Hilbert und Einstein: Naturwissenschaften und Literatur in Hermann Brochs "Eine methodologische Novelle" und Robert Musils "Drei Frauen"*, Ruth Bendels explains Broch's view of the unique ability of literary language to elicit phenomenological thought: "Das besondere Potenzial literarischer Sprache, die ihre verschiedenen Strukturmomente auf unterschiedliche Weise zur Bedeutungskonstruktion einsetzen kann, spielt dabei sowohl bei Broch als auch bei Musil eine entscheidende Rolle für die Form möglicher Erkenntnis: eine Wahrnehmungsform, die über das rein Begriffliche, auf eindeutige Bestimmbarkeit hin Orientierte hinausgeht" (17).

incapable of being shown to be right or wrong. Broch rejects this position and, like Kant, attempts to ground the source of ethical normativity in practical reason, yet unlike Kant, Broch extends ethical normativity beyond ‘duty’ or ‘obligation’ and into the aesthetics of living.⁴¹ The most urgent and pressing question facing Broch’s philosophical ruminations is ‘how should one live?’; hence the attempt made here is to maintain the centrality of this question and not to remain exclusively upon the ladder of theoretical philosophy.

This being said, the aim of this chapter is a synoptic one. I will not test the merits of the philosophies discussed, rather merely explicate what I believe to be the central issues and arguments. Thus this chapter is not a work *of* philosophy, but a work *about* philosophy. The conscientious reader is advised to read more systematic and sustained engagements with the arguments sketched here.

II. Historical Background

Hermann Broch was born in Vienna, three years prior to Wittgenstein, in 1886. Like Wittgenstein’s, Broch’s family was Jewish, led by an authoritarian business entrepreneur father. The family owned and managed a mid-size textile factory. Upon finishing secondary school, Broch was encouraged by his father to attend two technical colleges for the textile industry in Vienna and in a town close to Strasbourg. Broch attended these colleges for four years, from 1904 to 1907. Upon finishing his studies, Broch was awarded a diploma in weaving, and a second diploma in engineering. At the same time, Wittgenstein was pursuing a similar academic route by attending the

⁴¹ I first heard the expression ‘aesthetics of living’ in the context of Heidegger, specifically in reference to the conference held at the University of Sydney titled “Heidegger and the Aesthetics of Living” in 2005. I do not claim that Heidegger and Broch have the same view of what the aesthetics of living entail. I will go into more detail on Broch’s conception of the aesthetics of living in chapter 3.

Technische Hochschule in 1906-07, an engineering school in Berlin Charlottenburg, where he helped design plans for an airplane propeller.⁴²

During these years, Broch attended lectures and seminars at the University of Vienna, including courses such as ‘Practical Philosophy,’ ‘Aristotle,’ ‘Algebra,’ ‘Aspects of Differential and Integral Calculus,’ and most notably ‘Principles of the Philosophy of Natural Science’ taught by Ludwig Boltzmann, a world renowned physicist with whom Wittgenstein later expressed an interest in studying, had he not committed suicide in 1906.⁴³

Though drawn to philosophy and mathematics, Broch was dissatisfied with the ethos to which the disciplines at the university adhered. Broch explains,

Als ich 1904 die Wiener Universität bezog, um Mathematik und Philosophie zu studieren, erfuhr ich -- wie so viele andere -- bestürzt und enttäuscht, dass ich nicht berechtigt sei, irgendeine all der metaphysischen Fragen zu stellen, mit denen beladen ich gekommen war; ich erfuhr, dass es keine Hoffnung auf irgendeine Beantwortung gab. Es war die erste Blütezeit des ‘wissenschaftlichen’ Positivismus. (*KW* 10/2, 195)

When I enrolled at the University of Vienna in 1904 to study mathematics and philosophy I learned with shock and disappointment that, like so many others, I was not entitled to ask all--or even any--of the metaphysical question I had come with. I learnt that there was no hope of any kind of answer. It was the first flowering of ‘scientific positivism.’

Broch was to abandon his studies at the university after only one semester, likely in response to the demands of the textile college that he was attending at the same time.

Broch’s brief exposure to academic philosophy and mathematics sowed in the fertile soil of his imagination a seed that was to grow for two decades. During these

⁴² One should note that Wittgenstein’s engineering aptitude led to the successful patent of an airplane propeller. See Susan Sterrett, *Wittgenstein Flies a Kite* (New York: PI Press, 2006) 83.

⁴³ Sterrett says Wittgenstein admired Boltzmann and hoped “to study physics with him” (xxi).

twenty years, Broch worked in the textile industry by day, and by night he studied philosophy, especially that of Schopenhauer,⁴⁴ Nietzsche, and Weininger⁴⁵ (Lützeler 33). Broch wrote on social and cultural topics, and approached Ludwig von Ficker,⁴⁶ the founder and editor of the journal *Der Brenner*, in 1913. Ficker agreed to publish Broch's essay "Philistrosität, Realismus, Idealismus der Kunst (1913)." Within a month Broch submitted a second essay to *Der Brenner*, "Notizen zu einer systematischen Ästhetik (1913)," but Ficker refused to publish the article because it was too critical of other contributors to the journal (Lützeler 34). Ficker then invited Broch to contribute to a collection of statements on the works of Karl Kraus. Prominent literary figures including Richard Dehmel, Frank Wedekind, Thomas Mann, Georg Trakl, Else Lasker-Schüler, Peter Altenberg, Franz Werfel, Adolf Loos, Stefan Zweig, Alfred Mombert, Willy Haas, and Oskar Kokoschka also were invited to contribute statements on Kraus (Lützeler 34). Their ideas were published in the following issues of the *Der Brenner* in 1913, a year before Wittgenstein was to put Ficker in charge of distributing nearly all of his massive inheritance to Viennese poets and artists, including Georg Trakl, Rainer Maria Rilke, Oskar Kokoschka and Adolf Loos (Schroeder 21).

Broch's first poem, "Mathematisches Mysterium" (1913), was published in the *Der Brenner*. The poem reiterates points from Broch's earlier essay arguing that artistic creativity manifests itself through competing aspects of idealism ('judgement,' 'concept,' 'the divine,' 'the infinite') and realism ('form,' 'appearance,' and 'the world'), explains

⁴⁴ Wittgenstein was deeply influenced by Schopenhauer. Broch's worn copy of Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, suggests Broch studied the work very closely (Lützeler 33)

⁴⁵ Weininger also influenced Wittgenstein.

⁴⁶ Ficker was also Wittgenstein's publisher.

Lützelner (34). Broch's final contribution to the Brenner was a brief essay titled "Ethik: Unter Hinweis auf H. St. Chamberlains Buch 'Immanuel Kant'" in 1914. This essay marks Broch's turn from the philosophy of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Weininger, towards neo-Kantianism, particularly in regard to Kant's ethics and theory of cognition (35).

In the decade to follow, Broch develops many of his philosophical positions that were to influence later works. He explains in "Autobiographie als Arbeitsprogramm" (1941), that the development of his philosophy occurred in three phases, corresponding to his realization of three things: first, that moral philosophy must be done with the aid of logical analysis, "mit streng kritischen Methoden, also eben mit denen des kritischen Positivismus" [with rigorous critical methods, even with those of critical positivism] (*KW* 10/2, 198), in order to achieve the "Strenge" [rigor] and "Eindeutigkeit" [clearness] on par with that of a science; yet not from the standpoint of empiricism, but of the subjective mind.⁴⁷ Secondly, that such work must be directed toward the phenomenology of value, that is, the mind's construction of value as it interacts with the phenomena of its consciousness; from this interaction comes the psychological raw materials that serve as axioms (or sets of assumptions) from which logical inferences can be made.⁴⁸ Thirdly, that a model must be conceived through which events of ethical significance may systematically be shown to cohere and operate according to rules of cause and effect.

⁴⁷ Broch calls this the "idealistische Ausgangspunkt," yet I avoid using the word idealism here because it is a loaded and ill-defined word.

⁴⁸ Broch explains elsewhere that phenomenology gains validity only when done with the rigor of logic: "die phänomenologischen Bestrebungen erst dann [...] ihre Gültigkeit erweisen werden, wenn man daran gehen wird, sie sprachpositivistisch und logistisch zu interpretieren" (*KW* 13/3, 33) [the phenomenological movement will only become valid once it is interpreted using the aid of the tools of modern logic] (my translation).

In order to achieve this difficult task, according to Broch, the distinction between knowledge ascribable to the sciences and that of the humanities must be shown to be a pseudo-distinction based on “Scheingründen” [pseudo-reasons] (*PSB* 89). Knowledge is not reducible to discrete types that are of a qualitatively different character, but is instead composed of beliefs that can be shown merely to possess different degrees of epistemic security due to the different types of justification that count as the reason for the particular belief. This leads Broch to see art as having potential to engender within us knowledge of our ethical commitments in light of our conscience’s response to social phenomena represented in art.⁴⁹

Finally, in 1926, after selling the family factory, Broch devoted himself full-time to his ethical and epistemological questions. He enrolled at the University of Vienna and studies philosophy and mathematics with prominent figures in the very influential Vienna Circle, including Moritz Schlick and Rudolf Carnap. The philosophers of the Vienna Circle met weekly from 1924 to the mid-1930s until a Nazi murdered Moritz Schlick, and several of them fled to the United States. These thinkers were interested in the philosophical ramifications of modern logic and the sciences, and were attempting to create a ‘unified science’ that reduced all scientific knowledge to statements about one’s experience, or physical states of affairs in the world. Following what they believed to be Wittgenstein’s instruction, they regarded ethical, and metaphysical propositions as nonsense, not capable of expression in scientific language; from this they concluded that ethics and metaphysics were not worthy of the dignity of serious philosophical inquiry.

⁴⁹ Moral philosophy consists of more than merely probing one’s conscience. As we will see later, in Broch’s view, a particular value must be coherent with a web of values.

Their criterion for meaning was verification, which meant that a concept or sentence must be analyzable into atomic sentences referring directly to the sense data of an experience.

In *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* (1928), Rudolf Carnap, a leading figure in the Vienna Circle, articulates this doctrine of verificationism and develops Russell's logical atomism from *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914). Carnap's magnum opus was published at roughly the same time that Broch was attending Carnap's philosophy course and public lectures. In this influential work, Carnap attempts to elaborate a system of language with which a scientific reality can be constructed from the "ground level" up, as it were (Puchner 290). The building blocks of this structure are *Protokollsätze* [protocol sentences], which serve as the basic type of sentence upon which other sentences build. Carnap attempted to develop a method of reduction that could reduce more complicated sentences into the simple axiomatic form of a *Protokollsatz*. Carnap believed that all sciences could be unified in such a system with the help of the new logic developed by Frege and Russell.

The Vienna Circle's 'logical positivism,' as it became known, was influential among many Anglophone philosophers from 1930-50, but is no longer an active research agenda, though some of their insights in the philosophy of science are still relevant to philosophical discussions today. Logical positivism is different from the logical atomism of Russell and the *Tractarian* Wittgenstein, though together the two positions comprised the beginnings of the analytic tradition of philosophy.

The Vienna Circle's influence on Hermann Broch was profound and its traces can be found in most of his works. Broch's philosophy and theory of the novel were in large part a response to his academic training in mathematics and analytic philosophy from

members of the Vienna Circle at the University of Vienna. His second stint at the university lasted nine semesters from 1925 to 1930. Some of the philosophy courses he took were ‘Logic and the Theory of Cognition,’ ‘Philosophy of Mathematics,’ ‘The System of Philosophy,’ ‘Philosophy of Science,’ ‘Logic,’ and ‘Philosophy of History.’ Broch took courses from Carnap on ‘The Philosophy of Space,’ ‘Basic Principles of Mathematics,’ and ‘Theoretical Philosophy.’ He also attended ‘A Preparatory Course in Philosophy,’ ‘Kant,’ ‘The History of Modern Philosophy,’ and ‘The History of Philosophy.’ His mathematics courses included ‘Mathematical Exercises,’ ‘Theory of Numbers,’ ‘Introduction to Algebra,’ ‘Algebraic Equations,’ ‘Differential and Integral Calculus,’ ‘Theory of Function,’ ‘Set Theory,’ ‘Differential and Integral Calculus,’ ‘Analytical Geometry,’ ‘Function of Sets,’ and ‘Theory of Curves,’ ‘Elementary Geometry,’ ‘General Metric Geometry,’ and ‘Set Theory in Geometry.’ Broch was also a member of one of Moritz Schlick’s private seminars and frequently attended lectures Schlick was holding. In addition to these courses he was reading Ernst Cassirer’s *Einstein’s Theory of Relativity* (1929), Bertrand Russell’s *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914) and, later, *The Analysis of Matter* (1929) (HBB 63).

In the last years of his studies at Vienna, Broch begins writing a series of philosophical essays titled “Positivismus-Kritik” (1928-34). One of these essays, “Die sogenannten philosophischen Grundfragen einer empirischen Wissenschaft” (1928), appears to be the early workings of a doctoral dissertation in the philosophy of mathematics, according to Lützel (HBB 99). In this essay, Broch explores the potential philosophical applications of Cantor’s and Russell’s work in set theory, and its relation to Frege’s predicate logic. Broch’s innovation lies in his recognition of the significance of

set theory in reconciling the opposing positivistic and idealistic philosophical agendas, and for critiquing the deficiencies of positivistic philosophy.

The “wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung” [“scientific world-view”] that Carnap and the Vienna Circle were advocating was best represented—according to the Vienna Circle’s manifesto—by Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. But their manifesto included the proviso that one should consult Waismann’s adaptation of the *Tractatus* rather than reading the *Tractatus* directly since it is too “difficult to understand” (Puchner 291). The Vienna Circle was selective with regard to which sections of the *Tractatus* they found most compelling; the final sentence “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one shall remain silent” became the “rallying cry of the most militant wing of the Vienna Circle” (Puchner 292).

Broch, however, rejected the reductionism of some of the positivists,⁵⁰ especially Carnap’s, and began to develop ideas that would later be associated with ‘post-analytic’ philosophy, particularly Wittgenstein’s later ideas of *Lebensform* and meaning-as-use thesis.⁵¹ Before we look directly at Broch’s response to Wittgenstein and the emotivism of Russell and some in the Vienna Circle, we must begin with a sketch of a philosophical problem central to Broch’s philosophy regarding the role of logic in ethics.

III. The Problem

What is it about logic that makes us, at least on occasion, endeavor to make use of it? And what is it that we hope to achieve or acquire through its appropriate application?

⁵⁰ Though some in the Vienna Circle were not reductivists; Otto Neurath held to a coherence theory of truth. See Otto Neurath, “Physicalism (1945),” *Logical empiricism at its peak: Schlick, Carnap, and Neurath*. ed. trans. Sahotra Sarkar (New York: Garland, 1996).

⁵¹ Willard Quine’s philosophy is also relevant, not only because he shares a coherence theory and semantic holism similar to Broch’s, but also because he attended the Vienna Circle’s meetings (he was the only American invited) as he studied in Vienna for a year. His coherence theory of truth is articulated most fully in *The Web of Belief* (New York: Random House, 1970).

There are many statements that we hold as true without subjecting them first to the scrutiny of logical analysis. Often this is not due to oversight, intellectual laziness, or negligence, but rather because some statements do not seem to require sophisticated scrutiny to satisfy our intelligence's demand for justifying belief in the statement. If asked what kind of coffee is best, I blurt out an answer without much, if any, reflection. Or if I say, "there is a desk in this room," the affirmation of the statement is self-evident to me. It seems altogether unprofitable to subject these beliefs to rigorous, investigative inquiry, at least in my circumstances. This is either because I do not sense the urgency to justify them, or because the justification I have for these beliefs is not particularly logical in its structure.

But then there are statements that seem to carry much greater importance and that demand painstaking attentiveness to their justification. Their importance is derived in part from the apparent gravity of the correlative commitments that accompany belief in the statement. For instance, if a legislator were to make a statement such as, "for persons to be judged legally culpable for an action, their action must not have been the result of an antecedent, determining cause exterior to their own willing," the same legislator is then compelled to consider whether in fact there are *any* actions which do not ultimately follow from some exterior, antecedent, determining cause. If not, then, considering the logical inference, no persons could be judged legally culpable for any action. If so, on the other hand, then some conceptual clarification must take place to delineate the border between a caused and uncaused action, since the exacting of punishment hinges upon such clarity.

The usefulness of logic⁵² is that it allows me to see what I am committed to when I believe a statement, to bring into clear view that which might add gravity to the commitment, and to provide some confidence that a conclusion derived through reasoning is sufficiently warranted. But the statements of the first kind (my favorite coffee is X, etc.) are more primitive than the one facing the legislator above; some statements, or attitudes towards statements, are given their strongest justification through the perception of our intuitive sense alone. If I see a small child fall from a dock into a lake and scream for help, I do not need to supply my action of pulling the child out of the water with a logical warrant. I *know* that I should do it because of the decisive force this perception exudes on my volitions, and because not pulling the child out of the water is unthinkable to me. In this case my action may be justified without any conscious act of reasoning; the need for philosophizing is thus obviated.

Discerning which statements require logical validation, how best to apply logic, and determining what exactly the nature of logic is are at the crux of the problems facing Wittgenstein's and Broch's philosophy of logic. The great advancements made in modern logic by Frege and Russell were only concerned with the formal structure of logic and how it functions, they were not accompanied with a detailed and sustained inquiry into its broader implications for philosophical thought; Russell himself admits this about his *Principia Mathematica*. Broch and Wittgenstein are among the first to pick up this arduous task.

⁵² I am referring here to classical logic (which is deductive). Most of our uses of logic are inductive, though often arguments will consist of both inductive and deductive logic. For instance, if I say that I like the smell of roses, I am inducing that because I liked the smell of every rose I have ever smelled, I probably like the smell of all roses. But then I can go further using deduction by saying that if I like the smell of red roses, and red roses smell the same as white roses, then I like the smell of white roses. In the latter case I am using a deductive inference. See Harry Gensler, *Introduction to Logic*, (New York: Routledge, 2010).

IV. Emotivism and Language

In Broch's day, emotivism was endorsed by many influential academic philosophers, especially among empirically oriented philosophers who shared Wittgenstein's strict criteria for truth as communicated in the *Tractarian* correspondence theory in which only sentences that have a correspondence relation to our representation of empirical sense data can be considered true. Emotivism is a meta-ethical view that holds ethical statements to be non-cognitive expressions of emotions. The most prominent figures advocating an emotivist view of ethics were Bertrand Russell and logical positivists (including some of the Vienna Circle).⁵³ The most explicit and direct endorsements of emotivism came from the logical positivists A. J. Ayer⁵⁴ and C.L. Stevenson⁵⁵ in the 1930s. For this work I will ignore Ayer and Stevenson since Broch's focus is on Wittgenstein and Russell. I will begin first with some of the reasons Wittgenstein and Russell were led to endorse an emotivist view of ethics.

The strict criteria that Wittgenstein and Russell had for meaning and truth exclude either to the realm of psychological or optative utterances (which cannot be verified as true or false) any statement that is not expressible in formal logic and in direct correspondence with sense data (or those reducible after analysis to statements of sense data). Though Wittgenstein eventually abandoned this picture theory of meaning and the

⁵³ Not all of the Vienna Circle were emotivists. According to Stephen Satris, "Utilitarian, rationalist and cognitivist positions are in fact maintained by the members of the Vienna Circle who wrote in the fields of ethics, social theory and value theory, namely, Moritz Schlick, Otto Neurath, Viktor Kraft and Karl Menger" (23).

⁵⁴ See A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (New York: Dover Publications, 1937)

⁵⁵ C.L. Stevenson articulated emotivism most directly in his essay "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms" (1937) which he expanded upon in his book *Ethics and Language*, in which he credits Hume: "Of all traditional philosophers, Hume has most clearly asked the questions that here concern us, and has most nearly reached a conclusion that the present writer can accept" (273).

correspondence theory of truth that is tied to it, he still adhered to the position when he returned to Cambridge. In “Lecture on Ethics” (1930), Wittgenstein explains that “[o]ur words used as we use them in science, are vessels capable only of containing and conveying meaning and sense, natural meaning and sense. Ethics, if it is anything, is supernatural and our words will only express facts” (7). Hence he concludes, “the verbal expression which we give to these [ethical] experiences is nonsense!” (8).⁵⁶

In the case of sentences that appear to make absolute ethical claims, Wittgenstein says that these sentences do not actually say what they appear to say, and that ethical language is misleading. When a person makes a normative claim such as ‘that is wrong!’, according to Wittgenstein, the person is not stating something that is true or false, rather is expressing an attitude.⁵⁷ The attitude from which an assertion is made regarding whether an act is right or wrong is done in view of the end at which the action aims: “no reason can be given why you should act like this, except that by doing so you bring about such and such a situation, which again you have to accept as an aim” (C&V 23). The acceptance of an aim, according to Wittgenstein, is done not so much as a result of rational deliberation but in the affirmation of one desire or impulse over an alternative.

In modern philosophy, David Hume is often cited as an exponent of this emotivist view: “The approbation or blame which then ensues [after witnessing a murder], cannot be the work of the judgment, but of the heart; and is not a speculative proposition or

⁵⁶ Rudolf Carnap, whose work was read closely by Broch, held a similar view as Wittgenstein regarding the nonsensicality of ethical language. Carnap says, “In the domain of metaphysics, including all philosophy of value and normative theory, logical analysis yields the negative result that the alleged statements in this domain are entirely meaningless” (EOM 117).

⁵⁷ Wittgenstein’s ethics was most likely influenced by Otto Weininger’s *Über die letzten Dinge* (1904). Weininger believed ethics could not be explained, nor given rational grounds. See Schroeder 13.

affirmation, but an active feeling or sentiment” (Hume 217). Wittgenstein says something remarkably similar: if

we read the description of a murder with all its details physical and psychological, the mere description of these facts will contain nothing which we could call an ethical proposition. The murder will be on exactly the same level as any other event, for instance the falling of a stone. Certainly the reading of description might cause us pain or rage or any other emotion, or we might read about the pain or rage caused by this murder in other people when they have heard of it, but there will simply be facts, facts, and facts but no Ethics. (“Lecture on Ethics” 6)

Russell argues similarly: “[e]thical metaphysics is fundamentally an attempt, however disguised, to give legislative force to our own wishes” (*ROE* 78) and further: “What is valuable (in ethics) is the indication of some new way of feeling towards life and the world, some way of feeling by which our own existence can acquire more of the characteristics which we must deeply desire” (*ROE* 110). Russell sees ethics as important, yet not worthy of the dignity of philosophy.

Russell’s emotivism is an attempt to explain ethics merely in terms of what he calls ‘propositional attitudes,’ that is, attitudes towards propositions, involving intentionality, similar to that in the phenomenological tradition of philosophy beginning with Brentano and Husserl. What makes ethics—traditionally conceived, that is, as an attempt to clarify our moral commitments—un-philosophical according to Russell is that the epistemic rigor of logic and empirical verification does not have an appropriate language with which to communicate normative claims. Ethics turns into guesswork.

Wittgenstein and Russell take a Humean perspective in seeing the will as independent of the world of facts. Our willing has no bearing on what actually happens in the world, the fact that I will *x*, does nothing to cause the instantiation of *x*; thus the will is metaphysical, according to Wittgenstein (*TLP* 6.373). Here Wittgenstein

distinguishes between our will as studied by psychology, and the will as we have it ourselves (*TLP* 5.641). The latter is known only solipsistically, and is the ‘bearer’ of the ethical, which Wittgenstein later suggests can only be spoken of in the first person (*LVC* 117).

Since the *Tractarian* Wittgenstein limits meaningful language to descriptions of sense data of the world, and insists the will is ‘outside’ of the world (i.e., metaphysical), the mental processes through which I make a choice, or deem something valuable, cannot be articulated. Broch credits Wittgenstein for showing exactly “wie weit der legitime ‘wissenschaftliche’ Ausdruck überhaupt reichen kann, reichen darf” [how far the legitimately ‘scientific’ expression is able to reach] (*KW* 10/2, 170), but suggests that such a restriction on language leads to a “Stummheit” [muteness] in philosophy regarding its central task, which is to articulate how the human relates to the world, not merely a theoretical interpretation of the world. What follows such a restriction, Broch explains, is at best “eine empiristische Aufklärerei, wie sie von Russell in seinen außerlogistischen Büchern eben betrieben wird, eine Popularethik” [an empirical enlightenment, as is the case with Russell’s non-logical books, a popular ethic (170)].

In “Logik einer zerfallenden Welt” (1931), Broch criticizes what he sees as a dehumanizing mode of reasoning that attempts to remove or isolate the human element from interfering with formally verifiable philosophical conclusions. This tendency is endemic to his generation, yet his criticism is aimed more specifically at Russell and the Vienna Circle. In a private letter, Broch goes so far as to connect Russell’s method of philosophy to the rise of Nazism: “der Positivismus, zu dem die Russellsche Einstellung letztlich gehört, ist ein integrierender Teil eines Weltzustandes, der einen Hitler

hervorgebracht hat” [positivism, to which Russell’s attitude belongs, is an integrated part of a world condition that gave rise to Hitler] (*KW 13/3*, 42). In Russell’s defense, he was an outspoken critic of Hitler from the beginning and one of the more prominent philosophical pacifists of his generation.

Broch’s objection is directed against Russell’s sentiment in *Our Knowledge of the External World (1914)* in which Russell argues that if philosophy is to progress, philosophers must assume the outlook of the scientist, which is an impartial and objective state of mind, without self-interest in the results of philosophical work, and that philosophical problems should be approached in generality, removed from contingent affairs. In the same way that a biologist may examine a species without deeming it good or bad, Russell argues, philosophers should approach philosophical questions without making value judgments.

Broch instead argues that the contributions of the “Geist” [mind] and “Logos” are essential to philosophical understanding, at least to ethics and philosophy of mind (the area of philosophy examining mental events, such as choosing or willing, and mental states, such as attitudes, etc.). Broch’s criticism of Russell reveals Broch’s concern about the inability of positivistic methods of reasoning to accomplish the most vital tasks of philosophy, which is, according to Broch, to provide cogent explanations of how the subjectivity of human experience, in all its complexity, relates to the objectivity of the physical world (including the physical human).

Russell’s, and the other positivist’s, efforts to reduce everything into naturalistically explainable isomorphemes, lead to a false sense of ‘unity,’ Broch explains. Rules that apply only to specific domains of thought end up being applied to all thought

in general. Broch sees this mode of philosophizing as procrustean. The analytic methods of Russell and the *Tractarian* Wittgenstein could reduce concepts into their smallest conceivable parts, but by doing this the philosopher is able to analyze away much of what we experience into prior causal statements. While this kind of philosophy has its place in certain domains of thought, according to Broch, it is incapable of accounting for the complexity of human experience, which is a conglomerate of disparate domains of thought.

Wittgenstein would fall under Broch's criticism of positivism if it were not for Wittgenstein's acknowledgment of the limitations of positivism in the *Tractatus*, which Broch suggests are revealing: "Wittgensteins Haltung, die dem Positivismus nicht zugänglichen Gebiete kurzerhand als mystische Region erklärt, über die nicht legitim geredet werden darf, ist hier noch vorbildlich zu nennen. Am Bestande der Ethik gemessen, ist die positivistische, 'wissenschaftliche' Philosophie keine Philosophie mehr" [Wittgenstein's attitude, which declares the region inaccessible to positivism the mystical region, about which one may not legitimately speak, is exemplary to mention. In regards to ethics, positivistic, 'scientific' philosophy is no longer philosophy] (*KW* 10/1, 170). Broch, however, disagrees with the *Tractarian* criteria for meaning, hence he is not committed to the same stringent restrictions entailed by logical atomism.

According to Broch's philosophy of language, a sentence derives its meaning not only from the direct experience the sentence represents, but *also* from the paragraph, chapter, book, and so on, in which it is embedded. This is because of the role, according to Broch, of *apperception* in the generation of meaning. When reading a narrative, a reader's memory of past sentences contributes to the significance of each new sentence in

the narrative. A sentence such as ‘The cat is on the mat’ (to use Russell’s famous example) may be a positivistic fact verifiable by empirical method, but the meaning should not be limited to the mental picture of a cat lying on a mat. For imagine how the significance of the sentence changes when the cat happens to be one that I care deeply for, that I rescued from a flood, or the one my friend tripped over when pouring my hot coffee. In these cases the role of the sentence ‘The cat is on the mat’ takes on a different significance or meaning; it may in fact be ‘my dear cat’ or ‘my damn cat!’ Such variations of meaning are not limited to narratives in which context is crucial, but also in scientific and philosophical discourses. Apperception unites our sense data representations (past and present) with the psychological attributions of our mind. To consider a sentence in isolation may have its place in some instances, but is not congenial to philosophical inquiry, according to Broch, because the mind’s relation to the sentence is then obscured. This is Broch’s primary complaint against positivism, and the ‘Verwissenschaftlichung’ [scientification] of philosophy, namely, that the subjective mind’s contributions to language, and thus thought, are excluded to the furthest degree possible.

But Broch does not propose an abandonment of logic, or a mystical journey into fantasy or obscurantism. What is needed, according to Broch, is an application of logic different from the approach of positivism. His argument can be summarized as the following:

- i. The empirical facts of the world can only be described; the relations of facts to one another correspond to the logical form of a description (positivism).

But,

- ii. It is the task of philosophy to show the relations of facts to human experience.
- iii. 'Explanations' (Erklärungen) relate the facts of the world to human experience.
- iv. First-person human experience, though occurring in physical space, does not adhere to the same form as physical facts.

So,

- v. Explanations do not always adhere to the same logical form as description.

And,

- vi. Philosophy is in need of a different application of logic than that of positivism.

What then is different about an explanation such that its form is different from a description? And how is a fact about the world shown to relate to human experience? Broch rejects the notion that the distinction between a description and an explanation is analogous to the distinction between the sciences and the humanities (*PSB* 89).⁵⁸ An explanation maintains a direction-of-fit⁵⁹ with the world; hence descriptions of the world are still necessary for an explanation. But explanations go a step further in showing how the subjective mind connects to the world. An explanation is thus an arrangement of statements that evokes some scenario of possible experience identifiable to the reader that accounts for both the factuality of what is the case (*die Sachlage*) and the possible effect on a person's psyche who is living this evoked scenario.

But why is human experience, and the effect of empirical phenomena on one's psyche, not just another fact of the world that can be described in the framework of

⁵⁸ Broch is responding to two works on the nature of science versus the humanities, one is Wilhelm Dilthey's *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften* (1883); the other is Heinrich Rickert's *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft* (1899).

⁵⁹ 'Direction-of-fit,' as a concept in the philosophy of mind, refers to the way in which a mental state relates to the world.

positivism? Broch's answer to this is an appeal to Cartesian dualism; the extant, objective person, i.e., the *Sum*, is definable descriptively, yet the essence of the reflective, and transcendental person, i.e., the *Cogito* (or in Kantian language the 'intelligible self'), cannot be accounted for in any descriptive framework. This is because the *Cogito* lies outside scope of any empirical verification with which a description of it might be formed.

But how can philosophy achieve the kind of rigor and rationality that Broch hopes it can maintain, while also including the input of the subjective and perceptive mind that supervenes over empirical facts. What Broch proposes instead of Wittgenstein's and Russell's correspondence theory of truth and the picture theory of meaning is a coherence theory of truth, accompanied by semantic holism.⁶⁰

A correspondence theory of truth holds that statements (or beliefs) are made true or false by some mind-independent thing (i.e., something in the world). Depending on which correspondence theory one holds to, that thing can be a set of objects, a fact, a state of affairs, or a sequence of members of a domain. Since there is a vast variety of statements and kinds of things in the world, a correspondence theory can be fleshed out to accommodate these varieties. What is important in a correspondence theory is what it is that makes a statement true or false. A correspondence theory is not an explanation of what is true, what it would take to prove that a statement is true, or the meaning of the word 'truth;' any account of these things may come to bear on what it is that makes a statement true, but these things alone are only corollaries of a correspondence theory.

⁶⁰ Some examples of Broch's semantic holism are found in "Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst" (*KW* 9/2), in which Broch explains that a line of poetry contains more semantic content than is explicitly expressed: "Denn kraft der dichterischen Syntax steht diese Realitätsvokabel mit sämtlichen anderen der ganzen Welt in Verbindung, es werden alle anderen mit dieser einen erahnt, und das Wertziel des Dichterischen, die kosmische Unendlichkeit, erfüllt sich in der einzigen Realitätsvokabel eines lyrischen Gedichtes (*KW* 9/2 136)" [For by virtue of poetic syntax, this unit of reality connects with all others in the world, all the others are intuitively felt in this one, and poetry's ultimate value, cosmic limitlessness, is fulfilled in the single reality-unit of a lyric poem] (*G&Z* 20).

Wittgenstein's correspondence theory from the *Tractatus* is stated in explicit terms: "A picture agrees with reality or it fails to agree; it is correct or incorrect, true or false... The argument or disagreement of its sense with reality constitutes its truth or falsity" (TLP 2.21-2.222). The 'sense' of a sentence is the mental picture it evokes.

The correspondence theorist is (most often) an empiricist, of sorts, who believes that the sense data of his experience, that is, the 'given' in immediate perception, is an accurate (or mostly accurate) picture of the mind-independent world, the world that science attempts to understand. Correspondence theorists do not deny the existence of mind-dependent truths, such as, what one's attitude towards a given thing is, they do however assert that these mind-dependent truths can be viewed from a mind-independent perspective, as in the case that I view Peter's attitude as X. Peter's attitude is independent of my mind; hence I can formulate an objective statement about Peter's attitude. The correspondence theorist, or at least in the case of Bertrand Russell and the empiricists of the Vienna Circle, believe that all things can be accounted for, after analysis, in statements which purport to be objective. Hence the correspondence theorist would reduce 'Peter's attitude' to a configuration of neuronal energy impulses and particles in his nervous system and brain.

A coherence theory of truth, by contrast, holds that if a statement (or belief) can be made simultaneous to another statement without contradicting it, it is *possibly* true. If statements are coherent with one another, the person believing in the statements can have greater confidence that they are true; their coherency is an affirmation of some truth-value, yet often of a lesser epistemic value than what the correspondence theorists believe their statement to be worth.

A statement is *probably* true if it coheres with a specified set of justified statements, the probability increases as the number, or strength, of justified statements with which the statement coheres, increases. For Broch this is essential in enabling an ethical judgment to be falsifiable, since in a coherence theory a statement can acquire its justification independent of empirical verification. In the case of an “autonome Wertgebiet” [autonomous field of values], a statement, belief, or attitude is measured against other statements, beliefs, or attitudes about things in that particular field (*KW 9/2, 127*). In regard, however, to statements for which our conscience demands evidence and justification, that is, objective things, facts about the world, and scientific systems used to describe them, the justification becomes circular if it does not appeal to something outside the system, according to Broch. Broch suggests this outside confirmation comes from an internal intuitive conscience, or a “Wahrheitsgefühl” [“feeling of truth”]. Hence what makes Broch’s theory a coherence theory as opposed to a correspondence theory is the transcendence he assigns to the person with the intuitive conscience (one can sense the Kantian influence). The intuitive awareness (or common sense) of an individual, according to Broch, provides the ultimate oversight to all statements, this is not to ensure their truth-value, rather their coherence with the larger web of beliefs, or nexus of values, held by the particular person (*KW 9/2, 127-8*).

The philosophical commitment that leads Broch to a coherence theory of truth is his commitment to a Kantian form of transcendence. This is a position that Broch shares with the *Tractarian* Wittgenstein. Russell, however, by reducing the mind to a product of neuronal states, rejects the transcendental ego that Kant attempts to safeguard in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1782).

The concept of supervenience (Broch does not use this term but implies it in his discussions of set theory in “Die sogenannten philosophischen Grundfragen einer empirischen Wissenschaft,” [KW 10/1]) is crucial to understanding Broch’s coherence theory of truth because of Broch’s ambition of showing a unifying truth that has supervenience over autonomous systems and “Wertgebiete” [fields of value].

Supervenience is a mathematical concept used by philosophers to describe the relation of the functions of different levels within a hierarchy. How and when something supervenes over another is a matter of dispute. For Broch, however, the concept applies to the transcendental ego that is capable of forming emergent knowledge in light of particular facts and social phenomena. Broch calls this knowledge of “Totalität,” which eludes the grasp of positivism, yet is essential to a philosophical understanding, and, he argues, to theism and ‘absolute’ ethical principles (i.e., those demanded by Kant’s categorical imperative).

Broch explains, however, that a totality of coherent knowledge is elusive because we do not always recognize our inner conflicts or contradictions in our values: “Wir selbst, wir halten uns für normal, weil ungeachtet der Zerspaltung unsere Seele, alles in uns nach logistischen Motiven abläuft” (KW 1, 420) [“We ourselves think that we are normal, because in spite of the split in our souls, our inner machinery seems to run on logical principles”] (TSW 375). Persons are able to kill in war, according to Broch, and not be bothered by it afterwards because there is a “Zerspaltung, die in das Einzelindividuum und in seine einheitliche Wirklichkeit selber hinablangt” (KW 1, 420) [“split in the totality of life and experience [...] a split that cuts right into the individual himself and into his integral reality”] (TSW 375). An example of this is Broch’s

character Hugenau from *Die Schlafwandler* (1932). Hugenau clearly perceives economic value and the means to create it; hence he is economically logical, yet he fails to see any ‘absolute’ value regarding the inhumane consequences of his economical acumen. Hugenau lacks a supervening perspective of the various intertwining systems in which he finds himself. He is unable to see, or at least to care, that his actions are not universalizable. He lacks knowledge of the normative rules to which, by virtue of his membership in the human species, he is necessarily subject. Or in more Kantian terms, he is oblivious of the moral law of his will.

V. Broch’s Kantian Ethics and Emotivism

Russell does not consider ethics genuine philosophy since all ethical arguments contain at least one premise that is not a proposition but merely an expression of a desire. Few philosophers however have engaged ethical problems with such vigor, both in writing and in practice. Russell rejects the essential concept of Kant’s ethics: the categorical imperative. What is “lacking in my ethical theory,” explains Russell, “is an element of command, in fact the ‘categorical imperative’” (*ROE* 148). Russell is instead a consequentialist and a relativist:

My view is this: *the good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge*. When I speak of knowledge as an ingredient of the good life, I am not thinking of ethical knowledge, but of scientific knowledge of particular facts. [...] I do not believe we can decide what sort of conduct is right or wrong except by reference to its probable consequences. Given an end to be achieved, it is a question for science to discover how to achieve it [...] Outside human desires there is no moral standard. (*ROE* 130)

Russell explains that ethical theory is superfluous. In the case that a child is ill, love, according to Russell, is what makes you want to cure the child, and science tells

you how this is done (129). There is no middle stage in which theory becomes necessary; that is, there is no need to provide theoretical justification for your action.

Russell rejects Kantian ethics because it only tells us what is forbidden, not what we ought to do (Carey and Ongley 117). He further objects that in the case we should treat persons as ends and not merely as means—which is demanded by the categorical imperative—we run into irreconcilable interests that force submission upon at least one party (*HWP* 205). This, according to Russell, is often the case in politics. The practical problem of honoring persons as ends becomes impossible in the case that interests collide, since you must also treat yourself as an end whose will's autonomy is to be respected, and one person must in many cases be violated.

For Russell, the action that ought to be chosen is the one whose result yields the greatest satisfaction of desires. But Russell's example of the health of a sick child is simplistic when seen in light of Broch's ethical theory. It may be true that in the case of a sick child we do not need ethical theory, this example however is not representative of many other more troubling cases. We care for the sick child because we cannot bear to think of not helping the child. But it is easy to imagine a case in which we are confronted with an ethical dilemma about which we feel no emotion or desire whatsoever (say a complicated bill to be passed by the senate), we are ambivalent towards the problem, perhaps due to its complexity or its apparent distance from the things we do have feelings or desires towards. It is in these instances, according to Broch, that ethical theory, specifically Kantian, provides clarity.

What is fundamental to our current discussion of the connection between rationality and desire is the rift between Russell's and Wittgenstein's view of practical

reason on the one hand, and Broch's on the other. Russell and Wittgenstein both see practical reason as the role thought plays in determining how an act achieves its targeted end, an end which, as we have seen, is the object of one's desires or wishes. But practical reason, in their view, does not tell us what ends our choices ought to aim at (our desire alone does that). A strict division is made between rationality and volition, or in other words, between the head and the heart. In Kantian ethics, the same distinction is made, yet practical reason unifies volition and rationality in the moment of a choice. In *Self-Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity* (2009), Christine Korsgaard argues in defense of Kant's notion of practical reason and the normativity that is entailed by it.⁶¹ She rejects the emotivist position because she believes that caring about or desiring something comes with correlative commitments that extend beyond that thing, for instance, (my example) caring about your child's health commits you to caring about the means to ensure her health, say, by having health insurance. Hence caring or desiring has a logic; it means that you care about, or desire, things beyond the direct object of your immediate desire, Koorsgaard explains.

Korsgaard's position is similar to Broch's. For Broch the web of correlative commitments comprise a "Wertgebiet" [value system] which, though built upon the volitions of an agent,⁶² is not reducible to them and is logical in the sense that the chain

⁶¹ Korsgaard makes this more explicit in her essay "Morality and the Logic of Caring" (2006): "I follow Kant in thinking that, at least in human beings, practical reason is the will, in the sense that the principles of practical reason are constitutive of volition" (57).

⁶² The centrality of value in the formation of the system explains why Broch endorses Nietzsche's suggestion that the concept of value serve as the "methodologischen Kernpunkt der Philosophie (KW 9/2 121)" [methodological heart for philosophy] (G&Z 6).

of cause and effect implicated by the system extends beyond the instance of postulating value (“Wertsetzung”) upon any one particular thing or phenomenon.⁶³

Kant defines a “postulate” as “a *theoretical* proposition [...] attached inseparably to an *a priori* unconditionally valid *practical* law” (CPR 5:122). The law that they ‘attach’ to is the moral law, that is, the categorical imperative. Hence postulating value towards something, according to Broch, is a psychological and subjective phenomena which, to be ethical, must be *in accordance with*, though not *an application of*, the categorical imperative. Knowing what is valuable to us is thus achieved phenomenologically, and through logical inference upon irrational, i.e., subjective, axioms (PSB 93).

Broch’s theoretical essay embedded in the novel *Die Schlafwandler* (1932) explains the phenomenon in greater detail. Broch explains that the input of our irrational minds accompanies, in a Kantian sense (“Kantisch gesprochen”),⁶⁴ all categories of thought:

und nicht nur das Wertsystem selber ist getragen vom spontanen Akt der Wertsetzung, der ein irrationaler Akt ist, sondern auch das Weltgefühl, das hinter jedem Wertsystem steht, ist sowohl in seinem Ursprung als in seinem Sein jeder rationalen Evidenz entrückt. Und der gewaltige Apparat der erkenntnismäßigen Plausibilisierung, welcher um die Sachverhalte herum errichtet ist, hat die gleiche Funktion wie jener nicht minder gewaltige der ethischen Plausibilisierung, in welchem sich die menschliche Handlung bewegt, Brücken des Vernünftigen, die sich spannen und überspannen, sie dienen einzig dem Zweck, das irdische Dasein aus seiner unentrinnbaren Irrationalität, aus seiner »Bösheit« zu höherem »vernünftigem« Sinn und zu jenem eigentlich metaphysischen Wert zu führen, in dessen deduktiver Struktur es dem Menschen ermöglicht wird, der Welt und den Dingen und den eigenen Handlungen die gebührende Stelle anzuweisen, sich selbst aber wiederzufinden, auf dass sein Blick unbeirrbar und unverloren bleibe. (KW 1, 690)

⁶³ Willing an end, according to Kant, commits you to willing the means to achieve that end, which is the hypothetical imperative.

⁶⁴ The following lengthy quote is not peculiarly Kantian, though Broch makes the allusion, I assume, to bring the reader’s attention to the transcendental ego implied in the text.

Irrationality not only supports every value-system—for the spontaneous act of positing a value, on which the value-system is based, is an irrational act—but it informs the whole general feeling of every age, the feeling which assures the prevalence of the value-system, and which both in its origin and in its nature is insusceptible to rational evidence. And the powerful apparatus of cognitive interpretation which is erected around all atomic facts to make their content plausible has the same function as that other and not less powerful apparatus of ethical interpretation which makes human conduct plausible; both of them consist of bridges thrown out by reason, crossing and recrossing at different levels, for the sole purpose of leading earthly existence out of its essential irrationality, out of “evil,” by way of higher and “reasonable” meaning up to that ultimate metaphysical value which by its deductive structure helps man to assign a fitting relevance to his own actions, to all things and to the world, but at the same time enable him to find himself again so that his vision ceases to be erratic and transient.” (TSW 626)

Broch’s concept of a “Wertsystem” [“value-system”] consists of the organic, vague, and often volatile inter-working between the agent (or plurality of agents), the ends willed, and the various means to achieve those ends. The contrast Broch draws between cognitive versus ethical interpretation, is significant in showing that ethical judgments follow after our prior pursuit of an account of what is factual or explainable in empirical terms. Our ethical interpretations, though distinct from our cognitive interpretation, nevertheless follow from our cognitive interpretation.

To see more clearly the significance of ethical theory, particularly the categorical imperative, some clarity must be brought to Broch’s notion of action and agency, and the sources that inspired Broch on the subject, namely Aristotle, Plato, and Kant. Kant’s view of action, according to Korsgaard, is roughly the same as Aristotle’s:

What corresponds in Aristotle’s theory to the description of action is what he calls a *logos* – as I will render it, a principle. A good action is one that embodies the *orthos logos* or right principle – it is done at the right time, in the right way, to the right object, and with the right aim. (SCA 10)

Aristotle's logos entails the same features (plus others) as Kant's view of action which is described by a maxim in the form 'do act x for the sake of y.' The *action* includes both the act and the aim together as one.

In *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785), Kant gives specific examples of actions in the 'do act x for the sake of y' form: "I will commit suicide in order to avoid the personal troubles that I foresee ahead," etc. (4:422). What counts as a maxim, according to Korsgaard, is "the whole package" (11). Hence if I (the theoretical "I") were to commit suicide for some other reason—let's say I had an alter ego with an uncontrollable impulse to detonate an atomic bomb killing millions and I decided to kill myself to save the innocent people—the act of suicide would have different merit than if I were merely trying to avoid a personal hardship. My act of suicide in the case that I have wantonly violent impulses may in fact be commendable.⁶⁵

Some have objected to Kant's ethics as placing unreasonable demands upon one's constraints against their natural desires and impulses. A famous example of this comes in the works of Friedrich Schiller in which he charges Kantian ethics of asceticism: "In the moral philosophy of Kant the idea of duty is proposed with a harshness enough to ruffle the Graces, and one which could easily tempt a feeble mind to seek for moral perfection in the somber paths of an ascetic and monastic life" (Schiller 150). This objection against Kant is in response to the *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785) in which Kant explains that natural inclinations are merely "sources of needs" and that "it must instead be the universal wish of every rational being to be altogether free from them" (4:428). However, Kant revokes this claim in his more mature philosophy in *Die Religion*

⁶⁵ I'm not making this argument though. The point is that the merit of the same act may be different if its aim varies from one circumstance to the next.

innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft (1793): inclinations “are good, that is, not a matter of reproach, and it is not only futile to want to extirpate them but to do so would also be harmful and blameworthy” (6:58). Broch’s moral philosophy is consistent with the mature Kant in that it is self-affirming.

In respect to Kant’s form of action, and Aristotle’s notion of *logos*, Broch is in agreement. From this it follows that Broch also agrees with Wittgenstein and Russell in that normativity springs from the will, but unlike Wittgenstein and Russell, Broch’s normativity is not contingent solely upon one’s desires. This is because there are two types of reasons supplied by our faculty of practical reason, one is for the act and the second is for the ‘act-for-the-sake-of-end’ complex, which must be capable of being willed categorically. Emotivism obscures ethics, according to Broch, because it fails to account for the nature in which an ethical judgment can be deemed true by virtue of the coherence between the action and the *logos* according to which it is performed. Emotivism instead reduces ‘good’ merely to the attitude towards an end (i.e., the aim); separate from the other features surrounding the end such as time, place, manner, act and end, which together, according to Aristotle’s *logos*, make the action right.

Normativity, for Broch, thus entails more than it does for Wittgenstein or Russell since it derives from the universalizability of a desire for a particular action considered in respect to the *logos* with which the action is in accordance. If I can will to do act X in circumstance Y, then in order to meet normative constraints, it must be able to be willed by everyone else put in the same circumstance. Thus I could justify lying to the Gestapo (to use a familiar example) if I were housing Jews because I can also will that everyone

else would lie to the Gestapo if they were housing Jews.⁶⁶ I could not, however, justify lying—assuming we accept Kant’s (and Broch’s) conception of normativity—in the case of volitions that cannot be willed universally. Say, for instance, I am a florist and lie to my patrons about when my roses were picked. I could sell more roses by exaggerating their freshness, claiming that I picked them only a few hours ago when I really picked them a week ago. But in this case I, the florist, cannot will that everyone else who is a florist would lie about the freshness of their roses; for what if my mother (or I) were to purchase week-old flowers only to have them wither the next day. In this case I would be justifiably perturbed at the dishonesty of the florist.

So far we’ve seen roughly how Broch’s conception of normativity works, but there is an important objection by the emotivist regarding the nature of moral judgment that threatens the cogency of Broch’s ethics, and which potentially leads to a collapse into a kind of full-fledged relativism similar to that endorsed by Russell. The emotivist might say that even if we accept the ‘act-for-the-sake-of-an-end’ view of action, it is still merely a second-order desire for the complex that gives assent in the event that the second-order desire⁶⁷ is efficacious in moving us to a choice. Hence—the objection could go—there may very well be a logical form to the complex, yet this does not mean that my volition for the complex is rooted in my rationality or inferred from a prior axiom, I, after all, am merely wishing for the fulfillment of the complex. In order to escape this

⁶⁶ Kant’s views on lying are sometimes a subject of dispute among Kant scholars because Kant appears to be inconsistent or not entirely clear about the matter. He addresses the topic in the *Grundlegung* but is not thorough.

⁶⁷ A second-order desire is the desire to sustain or forgo a particular desire. In the case that this sentence is true: ‘I want to smoke a cigarette, but I wish that I did not want to smoke a cigarette.’ The latter expresses a second-order desire.

circularity, which may have the power to render Kantian ethical theory untenable, Broch turns to Kant's philosophical anthropology.

The grounds for Broch's rebuttal to the emotivist objection lie in his conception of the person. In Kantian ethics, normativity is derived from our autonomy—“we give laws to ourselves” (*SCA* 13). Broch interprets this as following: “kenne ich das Gesetz meines Denkens, so kenne ich das Gesetz meines Ichs, Freiheit und Gebundenheit meines Handelns. Wer das Gesetz *seines Denkens*—nur dieses und kein anderes—verletzt, ist unmoralisch...(*KW* 10/1, 248)” [if I know the law of my thinking, I then know the law of my [intelligible] self, and the freedom and constraints of my action. Whoever violates the law of his thinking—only this and nothing else—is immoral]. The law of my willing (i.e., the categorical imperative) is binding because if I am to exercise my autonomy, it is necessary that my autonomy is not infringed upon by another agent. Willing in accordance with the demands of universalizability is the way to ensure individual autonomy among a plurality of people is maintained.

What resolves volitional discord, and establishes a hierarchy through which ethical value becomes apparent, according to Broch, is a Platonic idea that supervenes over all other systems:

Erst wenn ein übergeordnetes Wertsystem den Kampf der autonom gewordenen Einzelwertgebiete wieder in sich aufnehmen und befrieden wird, erst wenn die Einzelsysteme wieder zu dienenden Gliedern der übergeordneten platonischen Idee geworden sein werden, eingefügt in die Ordnung ihrer Hierarchie, dann erst wird auch wieder die Spannung und der kampfartige Streit des Artverschiedenen aus der Welt, aber auch von der Menschenseele weichen [...]. (*KW* 9/2, 156)

Not until a higher value-system has absorbed and conciliated the warring of autonomous individual value-systems, not until these individual systems have again become subservient to an overriding Platonic Idea, have been fitted into its hierarchy, only then will the tension and convulsive struggles between different groups disappear, not just from the world, but from the soul of man. (*G&Z* 39)

For Plato, the form of thing is perfection, from which alone it is possible for the thing to be what it is. So knowledge of the Platonic idea of our mind or soul is necessary if we are to achieve psychic unity.⁶⁸

VI. Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, 'Post-Analytic' Philosophy, and Broch's Turn to Literature

After teaching elementary school in rural Austria, Wittgenstein returned to Cambridge in 1929 and devoted himself again to philosophy. His so-called transitional years, from 1929-1932, were stimulated by conversations he had with a Marxist economist Piero Sraffa, whom Wittgenstein credited for leading him to more homo-centric philosophical considerations, according to Glock (Glock 21). Wittgenstein still had a *Tractarian* view of the world, as shown by his "Lecture on Ethics" (1930), but soon his philosophy was to undergo significant changes from the logical atomism endorsed by the *Tractatus*. Instead of thinking of language as a function of an abstract system of representation, he begins to see it as a social function. In the preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein writes, "I have been forced to recognize grave mistakes in what I wrote in my first book." According to the *Tractarian* view, language is a kind of calculus whose rules adhere to a precise and definite order that lies behind the otherwise imprecise appearance of language. Wittgenstein began to question the *Tractarian* account of language as he considered the difficulties that it would have accounting for colors, specifically, the propositions 'X is red' and 'X is green.' These two statements

⁶⁸ Koorsgaard refers to this as *self-constitution*: "Normative standards are the principles by which we achieve the psychic unity that makes agency possible. The work of achieving psychic unity ... is what I am going to call *self-constitution*" (7).

are logically incompatible and must be analyzed into two separate propositions. But Wittgenstein decided that this cannot be done because it is not possible to assign a determinate property to a thing that has a range, or in the case of color, different shades without a clear boundary between properties (red versus maroon, for example).

Wittgenstein ultimately came to the conclusion that “comprehending a proposition means comprehending a language” (*PI* 73). Wittgenstein began to question this calculus model beginning in 1932, according to Glock, first by viewing language interchangeably with a kind of calculus and a kind of game (Glock 193). But he eventually replaced the calculus model instead with a game analogy in which language functions according to rules established arbitrarily in social practice: “I shall also call the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, the ‘language-game’” (*PI* 197). Both the calculus model and the game model have their starting point in rules, but in the case of games the rules determine what makes sense in language, that is, what is intelligible to someone with whom one is speaking, not, as with the calculus model, what will bring success as a result of properly applying a formal inference rule.

From this viewpoint, language is freed, at least in many cases, from the predicate logic into which the early-stage analytic philosophers (Frege, Russell, and the early Wittgenstein) were attempting to formalize sentences. We learn the meaning of a word, in Wittgenstein’s game model, not (always) by associating the word with an object, but by learning how the word can be used in context; “for a large class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word ‘meaning’ it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language” (*PI* 20). Hence it may still be the case that some words

derive their meaning by “pointing to [their] bearer” (*PI* 21), that is, the object which the word denotes, but this is only one of many different ways words are used:

But how many kinds of sentence are there? Say assertion, question, and command? --There are countless kinds: countless different kinds of use of what we call ‘symbols’, ‘words’, ‘sentences’. And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once and for all; but new types of language, new language-games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten. (we can get a rough picture of this from the changes in mathematics.) Here the term ‘language-game’ is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life. (*PI* 11)

By suggesting that language is a part of a form of life (*Lebensform*), Wittgenstein turns our attention toward the contingent use of language. The meaning of a single word may have shades, not necessarily in one instance of its usage, since a discrete definition may be assigned *ad hoc* to a word, giving it a precise meaning. But this definition can be revised as soon as the word is used differently from one language-game to the next.

Wittgenstein makes explicit his criticism of linguistic formalism of the logicians Frege’s, Russell’s, and his own, project of creating an ideal language: “It is interesting to compare the multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used, the multiplicity of kinds of word and sentence, with what logicians have said about the structure of language. (Including the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*)” (*PI* 12). Frege suggests that a concept must be “unambiguously determinate” and have “sharp boundaries” in order to have meaning (*Posthumous* 155). Frege’s rationale for this is the principle of bivalence, that is, that every sentence must either be true or false. Wittgenstein agrees with Frege on this principle in the *Tractatus*: “A proposition must restrict reality to two alternatives: yes or no” (*TLP* 4.023). Wittgenstein is committed to this position since it is implied by the picture theory of language; either a proposition represents a state of affairs, or it fails in doing so. But Wittgenstein’s later rejection of

the picture theory frees him from his commitment to the principle of bivalence.

Inexactness and indeterminacy become, for Wittgenstein, an intrinsic property of some experiences and linguistic accounts of these experiences (Glock 99). This might seem obvious when thinking of color words or concepts such as ‘big’ or ‘small,’ but according to Wittgenstein, words that we otherwise might believe to have single definitions such as, ‘knowledge,’ ‘chair,’ and ‘game’ (examples Wittgenstein gives) are words that elude a single, precise definition.

Even though these words can be used in different ways and with different meanings, we are still able to know the meanings of these words, according to Wittgenstein, by seeing the “family resemblances” of the particular instances which these words intend to describe: “When philosophers use a word –knowledge, being, object, I, proposition, name, etc. and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home?” (*PI* 116). Finding the ‘essence’ of a concept means finding a general definition that meets the necessary and sufficient conditions for its application. Yet this is sometimes impossible considering the “complicated network of similarities, overlapping and criss-crossing” (*PI* 66) in which a single concept may be employed.

Wittgenstein’s concept of ‘family resemblances’ emphasizes the vagueness of language and many concepts, yet despite the vagueness of many concepts, they can still usefully be employed in language because these concepts still have boundaries, albeit vague ones, which give the concepts their sense. Determining a concept’s sense thus consists in seeing the ways in which it is used; Wittgenstein compares a word to a chess piece which is capable of doing certain things but not others, as delineated by the agreed

upon rules of chess: “The question ‘what is a word really?’ is analogous to ‘What is a piece in chess?’” (*PI* 108). Hence by pointing to examples in which the word is used in the context of any particular language-game, the meaning of the concept becomes clear to a degree.

What is especially interesting for our current study is Wittgenstein’s thought on the use of fictional or hypothetical uses of language-games. In an attempt to clarify a particular linguistic phenomenon and the accompanying psychological phenomena, Wittgenstein makes use of *ad hoc* language-games as “objects of comparison” (Glock 194). These fictional language-games serve as thought experiments which can be juxtaposed against other language-games, let’s say the language-game of everyday social interaction, which can serve to clarify the juxtaposed language-game in either one of two ways. First, in the case that a simple language-game may bring into clearer view some aspects of our more complicated language-games; Wittgenstein does this in the *Brown Book* to illustrate our uses of notions such as ‘truth.’

A second way in which Wittgenstein uses language-games experimentally is in the form of *reductio ad absurdum* arguments. In doing so, Wittgenstein constructs a language-game that in some way reflects the way in which certain concepts are used in a particular philosophical theory that he is attempting to undermine. The most obvious example of this is Wittgenstein’s bricklayers in the opening pages of the *Philosophical Investigations* (*PI* 2), which he employs to show the error in the *Tractarian* view of language. According to the Augustinian view of primitive language (which Wittgenstein is appealing to), all words refer to objects. When the first builder asks his assistant to bring a block, pillar, slab, or beam, he simply says ‘block,’ etc. Wittgenstein expands

upon this conception of primitive language to show that even with a simple language like the builders, the language user is participating in a form of life, which means that the language is imbued with non-literal and non-referential meanings.

The point of this kind of thought experimentation is to appeal to the intuition of the reader by showing what it would be like if a set of circumstances were the case. Readers must in this instance use their imagination to empathize with the form of life evoked in the thought experiment. In doing so, the reader is supposed to realize the absurdity that would ensue if the circumstance were actually the case. Hence Wittgenstein makes powerful appeals to the reader's intuition, rather than using rigorous argumentation by means of logical inference.

It should further be noted that language-games are autonomous from one another in the sense that a particular word may only derive its meaning from within the context of a single language-game. Philosophical errors often occur, according to Wittgenstein, when language-games cross each other and mistakenly carry the same meaning of a word over into the other language-game (*RFM* 117-18). Only from within a "stream of life" does a word get its meaning, and there are many streams (*LWP* §913).

The main concept which Wittgenstein's notion of 'language-games' is intended to debunk is the *Tractarian* argument for a general form of proposition. But propositions increasingly become liberated from the need for justification in Wittgenstein's later thinking. This is perhaps most pronounced in "On Certainty" (1953), in which Wittgenstein shows that in order to perform many of the activities of ordinary life, an agent must be able to act upon beliefs that do not lend themselves to justifications, at least not justification in terms of a logical inference. What happens when reasoning or

philosophizing is conducted in a formalized manner, abstracted away from ordinary language, is that much of the content that ordinary language possesses is lost: “We have got on to slippery ice where there is no friction and so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk: so we need friction. Back to the rough ground!” (*PI* 107). In “On Certainty,” Wittgenstein rejects skepticism in favor of pragmatism, showing that in order to act and function as a human being we must suspend our skepticism or doubt about the certainty of knowledge yet accept as true much of what cannot be proven true.

The ethical implications of Wittgenstein’s later thinking are different than those expressed in the *Tractarian* view. In 1937, Wittgenstein wrote “The way to solve the problem you see in life is to live in a way that will make what is problematic disappear. The fact that life is problematic shows that the shape of your life does not fit into life’s mold. So you must change the way you live and, once your life does fit into the mold, what is problematic will disappear” (*C&V* 27). Wittgenstein’s concept of ‘mold’ is analogous to Broch’s application of Platonic idea to the sphere of social phenomena. The ethical implication is that there is a form, or forms, to which a good life must adhere if it is to be a good life. Not a rigidly determinate mold, but one with fuzzy edges.

Wittgenstein’s later writing is sometimes referred to as ‘post-analytic’ philosophy. The first traditionally recognized post-analytic philosophy published is sometimes considered to be that of the American philosopher Willard van Orman Quine. Upon finishing his dissertation at Harvard in 1932, Quine was appointed Harvard Junior Fellow, which excused him from teaching for four years. He was invited by members of the Vienna Circle to attend their meetings and discuss his work in formal logic and analytic

philosophy for a year in 1932-33. Among those with whom Quine had discussions was Rudolf Carnap, from whom Broch had taken philosophy courses only a few years prior. Like many analytic philosophers, Quine had very little interest in the history of philosophy, instead finding knowledge of mathematics and physics to be of greater philosophical value than of the intellectual canon. Quine's early works were primarily in formal logic and set theory, but in the 1940s his interests extended into traditional philosophical questions.

During the 1930s and 1940s logical positivism was the dominant school of philosophy in English speaking universities. Two assumptions were made by the logical positivists that were thought to be safe and were seen as essential to their philosophical studies. The positivists believed that real knowledge must ultimately have a strict relationship with empirical experience and that linguistic expressions were only meaningful if they were reducible to vocabulary that captured this experience. In 1951, Quine published the article "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" in *The Philosophical Review*, which attacked both of the essential assumptions of logical positivism. Quine's arguments are not for the lay reader, and an advanced knowledge of logic and analytic philosophy is required to follow them. The opening paragraph of the article, however, serves as an effective abstract:

Modern empiricism has been conditioned in large part by two dogmas. One is a belief in some fundamental cleavage between truths which are *analytic*, or grounded in meanings independently of matters of fact and truths which are *synthetic*, or grounded in fact. The other dogma is *reductionism*: the belief that each meaningful statement is equivalent to some logical construct upon terms which refer to immediate experience. Both dogmas, I shall argue, are ill founded. One effect of abandoning them is, as we shall see, a blurring of the supposed boundary between speculative metaphysics and natural science. Another effect is a shift toward pragmatism. (Quine 20)

The logical atomism advocated by Russell and the early Wittgenstein assumed both of these dogmas that Quine attempts to refute. Russell believed that some logical truths could be known independently of experience, that is, known *analytically*; Russell also held that from sense data atomic propositions could be formed from which all other propositions could ultimately be inferred. By refuting analyticity and reductionism, in fact he was successful,⁶⁹ Quine showed that the ambition of logical atomism and logical positivism were doomed, or at least insufficient.

Quine instead endorsed *semantic holism* in which the meaning of a sentence (and hence the knowledge to be acquired from it) is confirmed by the whole field of experience, not just particular sense data.⁷⁰ Or in other words, “the unit of measure of empirical meaning is all of science in its globality” (“TDE” 40), not a particular word or proposition. Quine’s theory of truth is hence a *coherence theory* as opposed to the correspondence theory of many positivists.

Quine’s paper received immediate attention by academic philosophers and had profound influence in leading to the demise of logical positivism in the 1950s. Quine’s colleague at Harvard, the professor of philosophy Peter Godfrey-Smith, writes in *Theory and Reality* (2003) that Quine’s article is sometimes thought of as “the most important [article] in all of twentieth-century philosophy” (Godfrey-Smith 33). Quine’s attack led for a way around the scientism of the logical positivist philosophy of his day, not merely by suggesting that it was unfruitful, but by showing that it was fundamentally flawed.

⁶⁹ Some philosophers defend analyticity against Quine’s criticism. See Scott Soames, *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century, Volume 1: The Dawn of Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005) 360.

⁷⁰ Quine articulates his semantic holism already in “Two Dogmas of Empiricism,” though he revisits the topic more extensively elsewhere, such as in “From a logical Point of View” (1953).

Two years after Quine's article appeared, Wittgenstein's posthumous writings were published under the title *Philosophical Investigations (1953)*. Although his work is very different from Quine's in its aims, methods, and topics that it addresses, Wittgenstein rejects, like Quine, the reductionism of logical positivism and denies that the language of science is fundamentally different from that used in social practice.

In more recent decades Richard Rorty has perhaps been the most noteworthy philosopher to carry the 'post-analytic' title. In *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (1979)*, Rorty builds on Wittgenstein, Quine, and Wilfred Sellars, arguing that much of analytic philosophy in his day is concerned with pseudo-problems that are only sustained if one plays the same language-games. Rorty, however, does not condemn the methods of analytic philosophy; insisting that it is a "good style" of writing philosophy (Mendieta 23).

Rorty proposes that the philosopher need not identify himself as the "guardian of rationality" but take up the task of "edification" in order to find "new, better, more interesting, more fruitful ways of thinking" (Mendieta 23). The pragmatism behind Rorty's philosophy resembles that of Broch and the later Wittgenstein. Rorty suggests that three primary beliefs characterize the pragmatist: first, "there is no wholesale, epistemological way to direct, or criticize, or underwrite, the course of inquiry," second, that facts and values have "no epistemological difference," and third, that there "are no constraints on inquiry save conversational ones" (Mendieta 100). Broch's attitude toward philosophy is most similar to that of Rorty's.

Broch's philosophy does not easily fit into the criteria of any single particular school of philosophy. Erich Kahler suggests Broch's philosophy is inspired by

pragmatism with value maintaining its central role (Kahler 1). But Broch draws from phenomenological ideas of Husserl, ethical thought from neo-Kantians, and the formal logic from the analytic tradition, not to mention Nietzsche's, Weber's, and Freud's influence. But to the extent that Broch's philosophy does deserve a label, 'post-analytic' is the most fitting, not merely because of close engagement with, and rejection of, early-stage analytic philosophy, but because his aims and approaches are most in accord with the pragmatist attitude of post-analytic philosophers mentioned above.⁷¹ Broch's semantic holism extends meaning far beyond determinate propositions seen by logical positivists as the hallmark of their style.

For Broch, the novel functions in the same role as Wittgenstein's thought experiments in the *Philosophical Investigations*. If humans are to have an intimate understanding of themselves, Broch explains, philosophy is in need of literature:

Hierzu bedarf es einer Verbreiterung des Exemplifizierungsraumes, und die wird erzielt, wenn sich die Sozialtotalität in der Totalität eines in ihr ablaufenden Menschenlebens spiegelt, genau so wie umgekehrt dieses nur dann zur Gänze erfasst werden kann, wenn die ihm zugehörige Sozialtotalität gezeigt wird. Gerade das wird vom Roman und der Hauptsache wohl nur vom Roman geleistet. (KW 9/1, 114)

To do the latter requires a broadening of the scope of exemplification, and this is achieved when the social totality is mirrored in the totality of a human life elapsing within it; just as, conversely, a life can only be grasped in its entirety when the corresponding social totality is depicted. This is precisely what is accomplished by the novel and, in the main, only by the novel. (*HHT* 36)

⁷¹ Broch endorses the attempt to mathematize philosophy: "Was die neue Philosophie will, ihre Erhebung zur reinen Wissenschaft, ihre Abkehr vom Dahin-Reden über die Dinge, drängt letzten Endes zu ihrer Mathematisierung. Das ist erfreulich. Und der Ansatz ist bereits vorhanden, nämlich in der Logistik und ihrer Zeichensprache" (KW 1, 730). See also, Markus Pissarek, "Atomisierung der einstigen Ganzheit"-Das literarische Frühwerk Hermann Brochs (München: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009) 28-9.

Broch's recognition of the limits of logic and scientific language turns him away from the Vienna Circle's scientific philosophy, not because he believes it to be fundamentally flawed, rather he finds it too narrow, lacking a sufficient methodological range to account for ethical and metaphysical judgments. Broch's turn to literature is in recognition of the importance of what is left out of philosophical discussions when the stringent standards of the Vienna Circle's verification principle is imposed upon discourse. In this sense, Broch has a view similar to Wittgenstein's as we find out in a letter Wittgenstein wrote to the editor of the *Tractatus* around the same time Broch was studying philosophy in Vienna:

The book's [Tractatus's] point is an ethical one. I once meant to include in the preface a sentence which is not in fact there now but which I will write out for you here, because it will perhaps be a key to the work for you. What I meant to write, then was this: My work consists of two parts: the one presented here plus all that I have not written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one. My book draws limits to the sphere of the ethical from the inside as it were, and I am convinced that this is the ONLY rigorous way of drawing these limits. In short, I believe that where many others today are just babbling, I have managed in my book to put everything firmly in place by being silent about it. And for that reason, unless I am very much mistaken, the book will say a great deal that you yourself want to say. Only perhaps you won't see that it is said in the book.
(Stern 42)

Wittgenstein's point is that the 'ethical' is not to be found anywhere in positivistic philosophy, yet this only becomes apparent with a rigorous investigation into logic and language. Where then is the ethical to be found? For Broch and Wittgenstein, the ethical shows itself in the cause and effect of social intercourse; this means that philosophy is in need of different methods of inquiry than logical analysis alone. Broch turns his focus to literature in hopes of finding fertile grounds for ethical inquiry.

Works Cited

- Ayer, A.J. *Language, Truth and Logic* (1937). New York: Dover Publications, 1952
- Broch, Hermann. *Hermann Broch Briefe 3 (1945-1951)*. Kommentierte Werkausgabe, Band 13/3, hg. v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981.
- . *Psychische Selbstbiographie*. hg. v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1999.
- . *Die Schlafwandler: Eine Romantrilogie*. Kommentierte Werkausgabe, Band 1, hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1979.
- . *Geist and Zeitgeist: six essays by Hermann Broch*. Intro. and ed. John Hargraves, New York: Counterpoint, 2002.
- . *Philosophische Schriften*. Kritische Werkausgabe, Band 10/1, hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977.
- . *Philosophische Schriften*. Kritische Werkausgabe, Band 10/2, hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977.
- . *Die Schlafwandler: eine Romantrilogie*. 1. Auflage. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978.
- . "Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit." Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1975.

- . *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and his Time: The European Imagination 1860-1920*. Ed. and trans. Michael Steinberg. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Cohen Hermann. *Kants Begründung der Ethik*. Berlin: Harrwitz and Gossman, 1887.
- Carnap, Rudolf. "The Elimination of Metaphysics through the Logical Analysis of Language." *Logical Positivism*. Ed. A.J. Ayer. New York: Free Press, 1956.
- . *Der logische Aufbau der Welt: Scheinprobleme in der Philosophie*. 2 Auflage, Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1961.
- . "The End of Metaphysics?" *Western Philosophy: an Anthology*. Ed. John Cottingham. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.
- Carey, Rosalind and John Ongley. *Historical Dictionary of Bertrand Russell's Philosophy*. Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. 2009.
- Dilthey, Wilhelm. *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften* (1883). Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988.
- Frege, Gottlob. *Posthumous Writings*. Eds. H. Hermes, F. Kambartel and F. Kaulbach, tr. P. Long and R. White. Oxford: Blackwell, 1979.
- Gensler, Harry. *Introduction to Logic*. 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Glock, Hans-Johann. *A Wittgenstein dictionary*. Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1996
- Godfrey-Smith, Peter. *Theory and reality: an introduction to the philosophy of science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. London: A. Millar, 1751.
- Kahler, Erich. *Die Philosophie von Hermann Broch*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1962.

- Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Ed. and trans. Allen W. Wood. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.
- . *Critique of Practical Reason*. Trans. Werner S. Pluhar; intro. Stephen Engstrom. Cambridge: Hackett, 2002.
- . *Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason*. Trans. Werner S. Pluhar; intro. Stephen R. Palmquist. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009.
- Krapoth, Hermann. *Dichtung und Philosophie: eine Studie zum Werk Hermann Brochs*. Bonn: Bouvier, 1971
- Koorsgaard, Christine. "Morality and the Logic of Caring." Harry Frankfurt's *Taking Ourselves Seriously & Getting it Right*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- . *Self-Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Lützeler, Paul Michael. *Herman Broch: A Biography*. London: Quartet Books, 1987.
- Neurath, Otto. "Physicalism" (1945). *Logical empiricism at its peak: Schlick, Carnap, and Neurath*. Ed. Sahotra Sarkar. New York: Garland, 1996.
- Monk, Ray and Anthony Palmer. *Bertrand Russell and the origins of analytical philosophy*. Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996.
- Mendieta, Eduardo. *Take Care of Freedom and Truth Will Take Care of Itself; interviews with Richard Rorty*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- Pissarek, Markus. "Atomisierung der einstigen Ganzzeit"-Das literarische Frühwerk Hermann Brochs. München: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009.

- Quine, Willard van Orman. "Two Dogmas of Empiricism." *The Philosophical Review*. 60 (1951) 20-43.
- . *From a Logical Point of View*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953.
- Rickert, Heinrich. *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft* (1899). Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1915.
- Rorty, Richard. *Philosophy and the mirror of nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- Russell, Bertrand. *Our Knowledge of the External World as a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy*. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1914.
- . *Russell on ethics: selections from the writings of Bertrand Russell*. Ed. Charles R. Pigden. London: Routledge, 1999.
- . "Mysticism and Logic." *Mysticism and Logic: and other essays*. New York: Longmans, Green and co., 1918.
- . *History of Western Philosophy* (1945). New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.
- Satris, Stephen. *Ethical Emotivism*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1987.
- Schiller, Friedrich. *Schiller's "On Grace and Dignity" in its Cultural Context*. Eds. Jane V. Curran and Christophe Fricker. Rochester: Camden House, 2005.
- Schroeder, Severin. *Wittgenstein: the way out of the fly-bottle*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.
- Soames, Scott. *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century, Volume 1: The Dawn of Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

- Stevenson, C.L. "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms" (1937). *Logical empiricism at its Peak: Schlick, Carnap, and Neurath*. Ed. Sahotra Sarkar. New York: Garland, 1996.
- Stern, David. *Wittgenstein on Mind and Language*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Sterrett, Susan. *Wittgenstein Flies a Kite*. New York: PI Press, 2006.
- Weininger, Otto. *A Translation of Weininger's Über die letzten Dinge* (1904/1907). Trans. Steven Burns. New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle: Conversations Recorded by Friedrich Waismann*. Eds. B. McGuinness, J. Schulte; trans. B. McGuinness. Oxford: Blackwell, 1979.
- . *Culture and Value*. Eds. G. H. von Wright and Heikki Nyman; trans. Peter Winch. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1980.
- . *Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology* (1948). Volume 1, Eds. G.H. von Wright and H. Nyman; trans. C.G. Luckhardt and M. A. E. Aud. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.
- . "Lecture on Ethics." *The Philosophical Review*. Vol. 74, No. 1 (Jan., 1965) 3-12.
- . *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921). Trans. D. F. Pears & B. F. McGuinness; intro. Bertrand Russell. London: Routledge, 1974.
- . *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). Trans. G. E. M. Anscombe. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997.
- . *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (1937-44). Ed. G.H. von Wright; trans. R. Rhees and G.E.M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell, 1978.

Chapter 3

Broch's *Die Unbekannte Größe* and Wittgenstein's *Über Gewissheit*

"It seems to me his philosophy is most true when it's latent in the story." -Wittgenstein

referring to Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, in *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with two related problems that plague some, perhaps most, members of our species. The first is the role of one's personal desires in deliberation preceding ethical judgments; namely, to what extent and in what way do personal desires inform, or ought to inform, our judgments of what choices to make regarding our behavior. The second is concerned with the difficulty of achieving clarity about the nature and shape of those desires, particularly in respect to the often debilitating ambivalence that accompanies them. The inquiry that follows will be largely derivative of Broch's novel *Die Unbekannte Größe* and Wittgenstein's *Über Gewissheit*. The chapter is intended to lead to a deeper understanding of Broch's novel, and of the philosophical problems that its characters face.

I will approach Broch's novel with less concern for the epistemological problems it illuminates and that Broch suggests are important; only insofar as these problems are relevant to ethics do they interest me. Thus my view of the problems in the novel are presented slightly differently than Broch's rendering of them. Broch wrote *Die Unbekannte Größe* in 1933, not long after finishing his studies at the University of

Vienna under the tutelage of the science-oriented philosophers of the Vienna Circle.

Broch considered the novel an insignificant work and the lack of attention it has drawn from secondary scholarship suggests that this opinion is held by others as well.⁷²

Commenting on his own novel, Broch brings attention to the two problems that he considers most significant in the story. The first is concerned with the antecedent conditions from which a person begins to view his life from an exclusively intellectual and rational perspective:

Das erste Problem, das sich daher dieser Roman zu stellen hatte, war also die Frage nach den Vorbedingungen, unter welchen ein [...] Mensch zur Einschlagung eines rein intellektuellen Erkenntnismäßigigen Lebens gebracht wird. (KW 2, 243)

The first problem presented in the novel is the question regarding the pre-conditions in which [...] a person is brought to approach life from a purely intellectual and knowledge-based perspective. (my translation)

Broch explains that this problem deals with the most simple of human desires relating to such basic things as “Geburt und Tod, [...] Liebe und Natur und sozialer Verbundenheit” (KW 2, 244) [birth and death, [...] love and nature and social attachment (my translation)]. The pre-condition that causes hypertrophic rationality is an over-estimation of the authority science and rationality have in answering our existential questions. This leads one to neglect affective, intuitive, and evaluative modes of thinking, which do not rely exclusively upon material evidence, inductive probabilities, or deductive rules of inference.

⁷² Paul Michael Lützeler suggests Broch considered the novel a ‘Nebenarbeit’ [side project] but that the novel is important in showing Broch’s engagement with science and logic, particularly foundational problems in physics and mathematics in the late 1920s. See Paul Michael Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen: Studien zum Werk Hermann Brochs* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000) 16.

The second problem Broch highlights is the need for providing some structure in which a person's basic thoughts and feelings are given significance, despite a person's continued devotion to a narrowly defined area of rationality or science. In addition to the "pure" knowledge of mathematics, according to Broch, there is an "Erkenntnis des Gefühls" (*KW 2*, 247) [knowledge of the emotions (my translation)]; when one possesses both, they have attained a "Gesamterkenntnis" (*KW 2*, 245) [holistic knowledge (my translation)]. The pre-conditions of attaining "Gesamterkenntnis" lie in the mysterious depths of both our psychology and formal logic.

The apparatus of mathematics, and the acquisition of knowledge through mathematics, serves in the novel as an exemplar for analogous inner workings within our soul/mind regarding the acquisition of non-mathematical, even non-rational, knowledge. The story consists of a young physics doctoral candidate (and then post-doc), Richard Hieck, at a university (probably in Vienna) in the 1920s. Richard is plagued by the memories of his deceased father, whose mark is still felt on Richard's family. Richard's father is described as an aloof, friendless, mysterious man who prefers the night. His profession was unknown to his family; he came and went quietly from the house arriving home very late only to sit in the dark and watch Richard and his siblings sleep. Richard's father refused to go on walks in the daylight with his children the way other fathers did. Instead on one occasion, upon the insistence of mother, he took Richard on a walk at night. Richard remembers the moonlight walk with his father as uncanny. His father led him to a foggy meadow to pick flowers. After picking them, his father carried them carefully back towards the town as if they were meant as a gift for mother. He then stopped on a bridge and threw the flowers into a dark river below without any

explanation saying “Sterne im Wasser” (*KW 2*, 16) [“Stars in the water” (11)]. His father’s death seven years earlier was seemingly insignificant and his funeral was attended by very few. There were no portraits of his father and the memory of him was vague, indefinite, and shrouded in darkness, just as his life had been.

The Hieck household was still greatly affected by an “Atmosphäre unfaßbarer Unsicherheit” (*KW 2*, 15) [“atmosphere of incomprehensible uncertainty” (Muir trans. 9)] that distorted, in various ways, the lives of the five Hieck children who are now young adults. Richard’s mother has gradually begun to find a more authentic version of herself through contemplation in the years since the passing of her husband. Richard’s sister, Susanne, has turned to religious devotion and is preparing to enter a convent. Richard’s younger brother Otto, the least affected by the memories of their father, is a passionate teenager following his interests in art, soccer, and girls. Richard’s other two siblings have left their hometown.

Richard meanwhile has reacted against what the narrator calls the ‘vagueness’ of his father by seeking “Eindeutigkeit” (*KW 2*, 18) [“definite certainty” (Muir trans. 12)] in the rigor and discipline of mathematics, which he hopes to impart to his own students in the future. This endeavor has determined the path of his life, and has become a safeguard from everything that is uncertain.

The first form of uncertainty Richard encounters as an adult is in his relation to women; for him this is an area of confusion and bewilderment. The narrator of the story describes women as “Nachtmenschen” (*KW 2*, 20) [“creatures of the night” (Muir trans. 15)], in contrast to the “rein und klar und licht gleich der mathematisch durchleuchteten Welt” (*KW 2*, 20) [“pure and clear and light like the shining world of mathematics” (Muir

trans. 16)]. Darkness and night thus represent not so much evil, but vagueness and the indefiniteness of thoughts based not on empirical facts or mathematical theorems, but on intuitions and emotions. Thus the concept of evil may also be included among these thoughts in darkness, but so too are notions of the good, love, etc., though Richard only discovers this late in the novel.

Richard's troubled psyche is in part, according to Broch, because of the decline of a medieval theological world-view, which had provided a hierarchical system in which to organize disparate domains of thought. The loss of this hierarchical and ordering system caused an ever-increasing specialization of intellectual endeavors with little or no connection to a more encompassing and holistic framework in which a particular thought or piece of knowledge is shown to fit. It became dependent on a person's interpretive skill to bring coherence to one's web of beliefs.

What makes these two problems more difficult is determining their relevance to ethics. Broch's novel has a Kantian leitmotif; Kant is alluded to in a couple of contexts, one coming at the end of the novel with his famous line "der gestirnte Himmel über mir und das moralische Gesetz in mir" (KW 2, 140) ["The starry heavens above me and the moral law within me" (Muir trans. 176)].⁷³ In the *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (1785), Immanuel Kant explains that the moral worth of an action is dependent not only on the action itself, but also the motivation behind the action. Only if an action is willed out of duty in accordance with the universal law of morality – the categorical imperative – does the action have moral merit, Kant believes. There are occasions in which it may seem to us as if our choices are the result of moral considerations, yet Kant believes that we cannot be sure: "[it is] absolutely impossible by experience to discern with complete

⁷³ This is from the conclusion of Kant's *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (1788).

certainty a single case [...] we cannot by any means conclude with certainty that a secret impulse of self-love, falsely appearing as the idea of duty, was not actually the true determining cause of the will” (*GMS* 67). The suspicion Kant levies against the encroachment of “the dear self” in our moral deliberations is quite at odds with the sentiment of other ethical systems, such as that of Spinoza. According to Spinoza, the highest good for which we may hope is “self-esteem,” that is, “a joy born of the fact that a man considers himself and his own power of acting” (*Ethics* 52). It is not at all clear what Spinoza means by this, but it presents a very different notion of self-love from Kant’s.⁷⁴

While a Kantian, Broch adopts an affirming notion of self-love similar to Spinoza. By ‘self-love’ I do not mean a self-interested narcissism, rather the affirmation of one’s will as constitutive of who one really is, and an acknowledgement of this will as an inviolable end which has inherent value in itself. Kant believed the will’s autonomy depends upon the authority of the imperatives necessitated by reason, but for Broch, the will’s autonomy depends also on the authority of the imperatives necessitated by love. This implies that by loving an object or person, you take an interest in that object’s well-being; this is a self-less love. Yet by affirming your will’s selfless-love for your beloved, you show simultaneously a love for the substance of your will, which is constitutive of your authentic ‘self’; thus, self-love is essential for a good life, according to Spinoza.

Broch attempts to show his moral philosophy through the medium of a novel because works of art, especially novels, are able, according to Broch, to appeal to our practical rationality and our intuitive feelings from a more synoptic viewpoint than

⁷⁴ For more on this, see Harry Frankfurt, “The Dear Self,” *Philosophers’ Imprint*, volume 1, No. 0, (Jan. 2001).

philosophical arguments alone. Broch does not leave philosophy aside but incorporates it into the narrative: Broch uses Kant's line, "[d]er gestirnte Himmel über mir und das moralische Gesetz in mir" (*KW 2*, 140) to unmask a multitude of philosophical complexities that plague the main character of the story, Richard Hieck.

Richard seeks the epistemological certainty of mathematics in his studies of astronomy and physics, yet when turning his examination inward to the subjective content of his motivations, and towards his own personal moral law, he is confused by the fragmented and opaque structure of his own will. He is unable to attain any degree of certainty regarding what it is that he values. He fears that he is vacuous like his father. Towards the end of the novel, his introspection becomes complicated by love and tragedy; only through these is he able to see more clearly the substance of his own will.

Throughout the novel, Richard suffers from confusion due to his inability to distinguish between epistemological certainty on the one hand, and subjective certainty on the other. Wittgenstein's *Über Gewissheit* elucidates this distinction, and can help clarify the volitional paralysis that follows from subjective uncertainty, which prevents us from having the kind of esteem for the substance of our will, i.e., our 'self,' which is an essential ingredient of the good life.

I. Kantian Ethics and Broch's novel

Kant's moral philosophy has been accused of being stark and demanding the kind of rigid austerity exhibited by Kant himself. Its conception of duty, opponents argue, forces its adherents to make the most solemn calculations regarding the universalizability of their actions. While Kantians may act upon their desires, it is not ethically meritorious to do so. Further, just because an action satisfies all the demands of the categorical

imperative, it still does not guarantee that it is of any moral worth. Only an action that is willed out of duty *and* in accordance with the categorical imperative is ethical. Kant's point is that a person cannot be considered virtuous merely by following his natural inclinations, however benevolent those inclinations may be. It is only the person who does what is right for the sake of doing what is right, the argument goes, that is virtuous. But deciphering the motivation behind an action of another, or for oneself, is virtually impossible, Kant argues. The contents of one's will are often transient and opaque; and humans are prone to rather grandiose feats of self-deception, particularly in regard to their own moral character.

Broch does not challenge Kant's conception of the moral law, nor does he dismiss its relevance to ascertaining the moral merit of a choice. Further, Broch does seem to be content accepting that adherence to moral duty is a necessary component of an ethic that prescribes norms. Where Broch departs from Kant is in Kant's suspicion of personal desire, and the sternness with which a Kantian must hold his own hopes and fears in check during moral deliberation.

For Broch, ethical judgments acquire a quasi-aesthetic status in which the good of an action is perceived much in the same way as beauty is in a work of art. In the same way that an artist's painting is capable of evoking the most profound and subtle of human emotions and inspiration, so too is a life well-lived. Perceiving the good in a life well-lived is a phenomenological enterprise, that is to say, a mental undertaking in which a person's critical intellect is directed upon the sense data (i.e., phenomena) of his conscious experience. Yet this aspect of Broch's philosophy does not commit him to any school of thought in the phenomenological tradition. Broch's ethical theory has both

phenomenological and Kantian elements. In the same way that a thing may be both feline and mammalian, so too can a thinker maintain phenomenological and Kantian components in his theory.

Before I address Broch's novel in greater detail, I should clarify a few relevant components of Broch's philosophy. In "Zur Erkenntnis dieser Zeit: Paradigmatische Skizzen zur Geschichtstheorie" (1919) ["On the Knowledge of this Age: Paradigmatic Sketches of a Theory of History" (my translation)], Broch draws a distinction between what he calls "Wirklichkeit" [reality] and "Leben" [life] (KW 10/2, 11). *Reality*, for Broch, consists of the underlying causal laws that govern the events of time and space; *life* is the experience of those events. If Jill (my example) has one pail of water and Jack fetches her one more, she now has two. The law of addition underlies the experienced event of her accumulating two pails of water; thus in this case, as in most others, *reality* and *life* are intertwined. Reality is more fundamental because of its permanency and the causal power that it has over life.

Broch explains that causal laws underlie our postulation of value upon things. We value X for reason Y; our action, or choice, resulting from our postulation of value is necessarily guided, except in the case of absent-minded convulsions, by the consideration of whether the valued aim is taken into account. That is to say, we value an end, and thus the means we take to achieve that end has a logic that is determined by whether our action satisfies the demands of the aim.⁷⁵ That is the 'reality' of ethical reasoning, but in 'life' only the "Erlebnisinhalt" [contents of experience] are tangibly present (KW 10/2, 25). Reconciling the *a priori* with the *a posteriori*, was a concern of Kant's, Broch explains, and is the most significant Kantian element in Broch's philosophy. Broch cites

⁷⁵ In Kantian terminology, this is referred to as the hypothetical imperative.

Kant's *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* in an attempt to show Kant's approach to resolving this supposed cleft:

und hier steht auch die ethische Tat Kants, nichts anderes wollend, als diesen Riß zu schliessen – seine Forderung nach dem 'guten Willen', der das 'Werk um des Werkes und nur um des Werkes Willen' schafft, [...] m. a. W. handle, daß du das Resultat deines Handelns, deine Wirklichkeit begreifst; was immer du schaffest, schaffe es bewußt und der Definition deines Wertzieles gemäß, denn erst in der Reinheit seiner Definition ist die Reinheit des Werkes, das um seiner selbst willen geschaffen wird, begründet und gegeben. Die Totalität solchen reinen Schaffens aber ist die reine und objektive Wertwirklichkeit des erlebenden Menschen. (KW 10/2, 25)

and here stands also the ethical deed of Kant, wanting nothing else than to close this gap—his requirement for the 'good will' that wills an action only for the sake of the action, [...] in other words, that acts in such a way that the result of its action grasps its reality; whatever you do, do it consciously in accordance with the definition of the valued aim, which is only grounded and given in the purity of its definition, the purity of the action that is willed for its own sake. The totality of such pure activity is the pure and objective value-reality of the experiencing person. (my translation)

The onus of responsibility persons have for the 'reality' of their will, that is to say, the vast web of correlative implications that follow from willing one particular object, is the reason why, for Broch, a phenomenological approach to ethics is, by itself, insufficient. Correlative implications are only made clear when logical connections are made between the direct object of one's will, and possible, or actual, states of affairs. Revealing logical connections is an analytical task, not a phenomenological one; and is never wholly resolvable through any method, at least not to the degree of certainty that Richard hopes for.

Regarding Certainty

Two central philosophical issues raised by Richard's pursuit of certainty are directly pertinent to, and can be given a more subtle illumination by, Wittgenstein's *Über*

Gewissheit. Both of them stem from the same problem that our species faces in its inability to attain indubitable certainty regarding a great number of beliefs. The first consists of the difficulties we face in reconciling the different knowledge we acquire as a result of our *ordinary* experience of life as opposed to the knowledge our species can only attain with the aid of tools (including conceptual tools such as logic, mathematics, scientific methods, or technological tools) that have been developed for the sake of extending our knowledge beyond what we are capable of achieving otherwise. The second philosophical problem, and the one that has even greater ethical implications, results from the potential impairment that uncertainty—and its virulent offspring, ambivalence and doubt—can cause to our agency, vitality, and aesthetic and emotional depth.

After Richard has viewed non-empirical knowledge with pejorative cynicism, his attitude begins to undergo a subtle change that will ultimately result in him finding a kind of knowledge unattainable when limiting one's inquiry to the methods and convictions of the logical positivists of the Vienna Circle.⁷⁶ This shift in attitude comes during a rather sentimental and contemplative episode one night in the Hieck house. Richard is quietly working on a calculation in the dimness of night when Otto says that Richard has it easy being able to work at night instead of during the daylight hours. The narrator explains that Otto—an aspiring artist—cannot suitably express what it is he was hoping to say.

The narrator goes on to characterize Otto's thought as this:

das Unsichtbare in der Welt manifestiert sich in der Nacht, in der Nacht ergreift das Denken Besitz von der Welt, doch wer die Welt mit den Augen bewilligen will, der ist auf die Sonne angewiesen. Und weil er es nicht ausdrücken konnte, sondern lediglich spürte, daß es mit dem Malen zusammenhing, sagte er schließlich nur: »Ich lerne jetzt Kupferstechen«. (KW 2, 21)

⁷⁶ See chapter 2 for Broch's views on logical positivism.

The unseen forces in the world manifested themselves in the night, it was in the night-time that thought embraced the whole world, but if a man wanted to conquer the world by what he saw through his eyes, he had to depend on the sun. And because he could not express this, because he only felt vaguely that it had something to do with his vision as an artist, he said nothing after all but 'I'm learning copper-engraving now.' (Muir trans. 17)

The things seen in daylight are empirical; the sentences that describe them are propositions. But in the dark, one becomes more attuned to his attitude towards these propositions; one's perspective is thus generated and enhanced. This is the result of seeing the intangible relations between a myriad of propositions; a vantage point afforded not through sense data perception of the present, but through the *apperception* of one's memory.

Otto's unarticulated thought soon leads to his comment about how funny their family is with Susanne preparing for a convent and Richard devoted to mathematics. Richard is moved with warmth for his brother and is brought to a reflective state of mind that views the family synoptically; that is, from the perspective of an outsider who can see the whole family and the various relations and components within it. This way of seeing his family released something in Richard and he "gab sich dem Gefühle hin" (*KW* 2, 22) ["surrendered to the emotion" (Muir trans.18)]. The narrator does not describe this emotion, or the thoughts that accompany it, but its effect on Richard is profound and immediate.

Richard's focus gradually returned to the calculation he had been working on when Otto made the comment, but now a new "sternenhafte Landschaft" (*KW* 2, 22) ["crystalline landscape" (Muir trans. 18)] opened up to Richard that could not be described. He could sense in the distance a solution to the group-theory problem "in der

die Zahlengruppen zwar nicht als solche zu sehen, wohl aber so leicht einzuordnen waren, daß man die den Zahlen geöffnete, mit Zahlen sich erfüllende Landschaft in eine beglückend logische und gleichzeitig ein wenig karussellhafte Bewegung versetzen konnte” (KW 2, 22) [“in which the number groups, although not yet actually distinguishable, could be so easily arranged that, when the whole landscape was filled with their flocking constellations, one could set them all spinning like a merry-go-round and yet in gloriously logical fashion” (Muir trans. 18)]. The solution to the problem was still unclear, but the narrator explains Richard nonetheless felt as if he had advanced into a new area of mathematics and discovered an insight into the infinitely complex structure of mathematics that was constructed out of nothing other than the relations of objects to one another. This new knowledge is incomplete, and Richard has yet to articulate it in a theorem. Feeling its inchoate presence inspires Richard to pursue it, “er war von diesem Ignorabismus zu immer neuen Vorstößen angestachelt” (KW 2, 49) [“driven on by that same ignorabimus to break new ground” (Muir trans. 55)].

In “The Theme of Salvation in the Novels of Hermann Broch” (1970), James Hardin observes that in several places in Broch’s *oeuvre* characters experience a phenomenon Hardin calls “mystical salvation” (Hardin 221). By that he means an experience through which a person gains perspective on an occurrence, often social in nature, through which the person’s affections are moved resulting in a ‘salvation’ of sorts from empirical habits of thinking. Unfortunately, such experiences are ephemeral and persons often return to their prior way of thinking: “a sense of mystical salvation overcomes many of Broch’s figures in the love experience, [but] its feeling is transient and seems to have little impact on their lives,” explains Hardin (Hardin 221).

Shortly after his warm emotional experience affected by the humorous view of his loved ones, Richard gets back to work in search of a solution to a mathematical problem sketched to him by his professor, Weitprecht. Richard's view of the interpersonal relations of his family is compared analogously to the problem in group-theory, on which Richard is working tirelessly without making a breakthrough. Yet he is inspired, nonetheless, by a vision of what it might look like: number groups spinning in perfectly logical fashion "karussellhafte Bewegung" ["like a merry-go-round"], waiting to be discovered in a "zart vernebelter Ferne" (KW 2, 22) ["hazy far-off horizon" (Muir trans. 18)]. And so Richard's ambition remains undeterred by the elusiveness of his theorem and all he can hope for is to discover another portion of the "komplizierten unendlichen und niemals ausschreitbaren Gleichgewichtskonstruktion bloßgelegt, die an sich aus leeren Beziehungen besteht" (KW 2, 22-23) ["complicated, infinite, boundless structure of balanced forces which is built up out of nothing other but the relations of things to each other" (Muir trans. 19)]. Richard's moment of mystical salvation is due to his new way of seeing the relations of things.

In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein makes a categorical distinction between seeing an object, versus seeing an object *as* something (193). He gives various examples of this; the most well-known is the duck-rabbit. The drawing of the duck-rabbit can be seen as either a duck or a rabbit depending on how one sees it. It is not as if an optical illusion is occurring, rather the visual object lends itself to interpretation. What is important in this distinction is the ability of our minds to notice aspects that may give rise to conceptual clarity or, on the other hand, create ambiguity. The "dawning of an aspect" (194) occurs through both visual experience and conceptual thought working in

tandem, just as in the case that I meet an old friend and do not recognize him immediately, it may then dawn on me that the face I am seeing is that of my old friend. Wittgenstein explains, “what I perceive in the dawning of an aspect is not a property of an object, but an internal relation between it and other objects” (212). Richard’s visual and social experience of his family relations conjures in his mind a vision of an aspect that is affective in nature, that is to say, a way of seeing his family transposed into an emotive mental state. Yet this first dawning of an aspect engenders a correlative second aspect that has direct implications on Richard’s mathematical problem, which the narrator compares to a merry-go-round.

His application of this newly seen aspect to the sphere of mathematics ultimately leads to a mathematical discovery for which Richard is critically acclaimed by his peers. The narrator describes this as “ein Stück schöpferischer Aufhellung” (*KW* 2, 22) [“an act of creative interpretation” (Muir trans. 19)]. But how, Wittgenstein asks,

is it possible to *see* an object according to an interpretation? The question represents it as a queer fact; as if something were being forced into a form it did not really fit. But no squeezing, no forcing took place here. When it looks as if there were no room for such a form between other ones you have to look for it in another dimension. If there is no room here, there *is* room in another dimension. (200)

Richard does not consciously look for the mathematical aspect in the relations of his family members to one another, it happened by chance. But this familial dimension provided Richard’s mind with the picture most analogous to that of the solution to the group theory problem he has been working on.

This episode gives us insight into a feature of Broch’s philosophy of mind—which helps explain his aversion to the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle—namely, what I will call Broch’s view of, for lack of better words, the *inscrutability of*

intentionality.⁷⁷ To illustrate this concept, let us take as our object of thought

Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit:



Assume you have an aversion towards drawings of ducks, but you like drawings of rabbits. If you see the duck-rabbit as a duck you will despise it, but if you see the duck-rabbit as a rabbit you will like it. Now assume that you see the duck-rabbit at moment 1 as a duck, and you begin to reason about some implication that can be drawn from your sense-data perception. You perceive the duck-rabbit drawing as distasteful, and decide that you should not adorn your wall with distasteful drawings, from these premises it follows logically that you should not adorn the wall of your house with the drawing. But if, upon your conclusion, you re-examine the duck-rabbit, at moment 2, and you perceive it as a rabbit, your line of reasoning that supported your conclusion at moment 1 is now invalid because one of its premises is false. The inference rule of modus ponens (that if A implies B, and A is true, then B is true) is broken due to the dual-aspect of the duck-rabbit, hence the resulting contradiction and the logical fallacy. Conversationally the valid argument looks like this: (i.) *If I like a drawing, then it can adorn my wall;* (ii.) *I like the duck-rabbit drawing. Therefore, (iii.) the duck-rabbit drawing can adorn my wall.* The problem with the argument is the equivocal second premise; I only like the duck-rabbit drawing when I perceive it as a rabbit.

⁷⁷ I couldn't think of another way to describe the concept I have in mind here without using philosophical jargon. The concept is simpler than my verbiage would make it seem. It only amounts to the fact that, at times, our intentionality towards an object shifts or is multi-dimensional leaving us with difficulty when we attempt to discern the logical implications that follow from an argument in which one of its premises relies on a definitive proposition to articulate something inherently transient or ambiguous.

Broch's view of the inscrutability of intentionality points out the dependency of deductive logical rules such as *modus ponens* upon necessary and sufficient conditions. The fact that I view the duck-rabbit drawing as a rabbit, and thus like it, is not a sufficient condition to ensure that another aspect of the duck-rabbit will not cause me to dislike it. The intentionality of my mind towards the duck-rabbit is vague and contingent. So when my argument relies upon an intentional mental state that plays the role of a negation of a thing X, the validity of my argument becomes susceptible to whim and caprice. These facts do not present a formal problem to logicians, but they do present problems to persons engaged in thought about the contents and dispositions of one's own mind, and the manner in which those contents and dispositions relate to the mind-independent world. The point of all this is to show that necessary and sufficient conditions are not easily ascribable to our attitudes towards the things in our consciousness. Thus the power of deductive logic is tempered whenever we are trying to apply deductive rules of logic to our experience in life; however, though its power is tempered, it is not abolished.

To help in such matters, the field of modal logic was developed in the twentieth century to enable more nuanced applications of logic. While contemporary modal logic was not initiated until C.I. Lewis and C.H. Langford published their work *Symbolic Logic* in 1932, Broch anticipates the need of more work in modal logic. Broch alludes to "die Modalität des Schlusses" (KW 10/2, 18) [modality of the conclusion (my trans.)], and further to the troublesome roles of "Nötigung" (KW 10/2, 20) [necessity] and "Möglichkeit" (KW 10/2, 21) [possibility] in logic. Broch is primarily concerned with the difficulties posed to philosophers as they work through problems relating to empiricism and idealism, and Kant's synthetic/analytic distinction.

Wittgenstein addresses the same problem as Broch in *Über Gewissheit*.

Wittgenstein makes a Kantian observation, namely, that we do not have direct access to things-in-themselves but must rely on the representation given to us by our faculties of perception. He explains it this way:

‘I know’ has a primitive meaning similar to and related to ‘I see’ ... ‘I know’ is supposed to express a relation ... between me and a fact. So that the *fact* is taken into my consciousness. (Here is why one wants to say that nothing that goes on in the outer world is really known, but only what goes on in the realm of sense-data.) This would give us a picture of knowing as the perception of an outer event through visual rays which project it as it is into the eye and the consciousness. Only then the question at once arises whether one can be *certain* of this projection. And this picture does indeed show how our *imagination* presents knowledge, but not what lies at the bottom of this presentation. (93)

From this it does not follow that the things-in-themselves are substantially different from our representation of them, but it does force us to admit that our representations are dubitable to a degree.

Wittgenstein’s point here can be applied to Richard’s *seeing* the aspect in which the relations of his autonomous family members function in unison, like autonomous figures on the same merry-go-round. This perception is accompanied by an affective aspect, that is, a way of seeing the family affectively, though the narrator does not articulate the nature of Richard’s affection. Broch explains in his commentary on the film “Das Unbekannte X,” which was inspired by *Die Unbekannte Größe*, that the novel demonstrates two types of knowledge, one that is “rein[en] Erkenntnis” (*KW* 2, 247) [pure knowledge] and another that is “Erkenntnis des Gefühls” [knowledge of the emotions] (*KW* 2, 247). Richard intentionally pursues pure knowledge through his work in mathematics and physics, but through the hardships and realities of his experiences finds himself seeking knowledge of the emotions in equal zeal. Knowledge of the

emotions is not fully comprehensible for human understanding, the novel implies, yet knowing one's emotional state towards a particular thing is justifiable through introspection. This is what Wittgenstein means when he says that there is something true about solipsism (Tractatus 5.62).

Only when this introspective knowledge is united with pure knowledge is, according to Broch, true knowledge of human life attainable: "Der Roman zeigt, daß es neben dieser auch eine "Erkenntnis des Gefühls" gibt, unerfaßbar für den Verstand, dennoch gleichberechtigt, und daß erst in der Verbindung beider das wahre Wissen um das Leben erreicht wird" (KW 2, 247) [The novel shows that in addition to this {scientific knowledge} there is also a 'knowledge of the emotions,' incomprehensible to the understanding, nevertheless just as justifiable, and that only in the connection of both can true knowledge of life be achieved (my translation)]. In his pursuit of mathematical knowledge, Richard toils through the writings of his professor hoping to discover a breakthrough like that of Leibniz's or Cantor's. But the larger vision of what he is seeking fails him. Wittgenstein suggests that a person may be able to see a particular thing, while maintaining an "aspect-blindness" towards seeing the thing for what it is, or may be (PI 213). Similarly, Richard feels as if he is looking at the problem from the right angle, only the larger solution has yet to present itself. Richard possesses knowledge, but somehow it seems to him incomplete or insufficient for understanding what lies just beyond his grasp.

Just as Hardin's claim that mystical salvation is often transient, Richard soon becomes oblivious to the functional aspect he had once seen in his family. Richard is to waver in and out of aspect-blindness toward his family. He is at times unable to see in

them the aspect that previously engendered his affection towards them. This ultimately contributes to his brother's feeling of abandonment and lack of brotherly devotion from Richard preceding the climax of the story.

II. Wittgenstein compared to Richard Hieck's character

Though questions concerning knowledge, certainty, the categorical imperative, etc., are best pursued with straightforward philosophical explication, the manner in which these issues affect our individual personalities, or manifest themselves in our experience, are best shown in the context of a person's life. If we compare Richard Hieck with the accounts of Wittgenstein's personality as recorded by biographers, we see deep personal turmoil that makes these otherwise abstract and impersonal areas in philosophy directly relevant to the quality and depth of experience of these two personalities. Besides the obvious facts of living in roughly the same time and place, Richard shows remarkable similarities to Wittgenstein.

(a) Intellectual similarities

Richard's intellectual curiosity was first stimulated by the supposed possibility of reducing all of mathematics to logic—a project pioneered by Gottlob Frege referred to as logicism. So too was Wittgenstein's first interest in philosophical matters stimulated by the foundational problems of mathematics. As a young student at the *Technische Hochschule* in Berlin Charlottenburg, Wittgenstein studied mathematics as it applies to engineering but after receiving his certificate and continuing his studies at the College of Technology in Manchester, he became more interested in pure mathematics and its foundations. A professor at Manchester suggested that Wittgenstein read Gottlob Frege's *Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik: eine logisch-mathematische Untersuchung über den*

Begriff der Zahl (1884). Apparently that was enough to persuade Wittgenstein to meet with Frege in Jena, who then redirected Wittgenstein to Bertrand Russell. At approximately the same time, Wittgenstein lamented the fact that he could not study physics with Ludwig Boltzmann in Vienna. Boltzmann was one of the foremost proponents of the atomic theory in physics, but had taken a keen interest in the philosophical implications of the theory.

Wittgenstein's interest in atomic theory and its relations to philosophy inspired his *Tractatus*, which features an acute focus on the minutia of meaning, particularly the relation of 'atomic' sense data to a word, its position in a sentence representing a fact, and the mathematical/logical relation of facts to one another. According to Russell's first-hand account, Wittgenstein had a profound ability to analyze the grounds that lie behind our claims to knowledge. It is not until the 1930s that Wittgenstein begins to acquire a more synoptic viewpoint. His later work, particularly his concepts of *forms of life*, *language games*, his revised view of logic, and his use of thought experimentation, suggest a more holistic attitude on the part of Wittgenstein. In *Wittgenstein on Mind and Language*, David Stern explains that Wittgenstein does not abandon the belief that language is rule-governed, but that "rule-governed behavior depends on practical context" (120). In other words, Stern explains, "his conception of language becomes increasingly broad, until it includes the whole range of human activity" (120). Though his philosophy acquires a more anthropocentric focus, Wittgenstein never abandons his concern for the logical rules implicit in language.

In *Die Unbekannte Größe*, Richard is trained in mathematics and physics. Upon finishing his dissertation and publishing an article on group theory, he is offered a

position at the university's observatory. Like the early Wittgenstein, Richard's estimation of the significance of logic is supreme; "Alles, was geschieht, vollzieht sich nach logisch gebauten Gesetzen [...] wenn wir die Logistik erst richtig ausgebaut haben werden, dann haben wir die Wirklichkeit in der Hand" (KW 2, 40) ["everything that happens follows logical laws [...] If we had the science of logic properly worked out, we'd have reality in the hollow of our hands" (Muir trans. 43)]. Richard endorses Frege's and Russell's belief in logicism; as Richard explains it, the belief that "Logik und Mathematik aber sind identisch" (KW 2, 40) ["logic and mathematics are identical" (Muir trans. 43)]. He sees no limitation to the application of logic, and anything that would appear to transcend logical laws he calls mysterious and dark.

Yet this lack of complete understanding is what inspires Richard to pursue science. His intellectual passion dominates his life and extends into every aspect of his life including his personal relations. He expresses relief any time he returns to his academic work after a diversion. In one instance, after spending time with his sister discussing her mystical religious beliefs, Richard is excited to return to the world of science and expresses enthusiasm "wieder einmal mit großer Leidenschaft von erkenntnistheoretischen und logischen Grundlagen jeglicher Forschung zu sprechen" (KW 2, 121) ["to dilate on the epistemological and logical groundwork underlying every kind of research..." (Muir trans. 149)]. This passage is significant in Richard's development as a thinker, not merely as a mathematician or physicist, but as one in search of knowledge that brings synoptic coherence to disparate and seemingly unconnected strands of facts and concepts. Richard shares Wittgenstein's sentiment from Wittgenstein's journal entry before World War I: "Don't get involved in partial problems,

but always take flight to where there is a free view over the whole *single* great problem, even if this view is still not a clear one” (*NTB* 23e). Richard likewise refuses, according to the narrator, to consider “eine Aufgabe anders als im Zusammenhang des Gesamtsystems zu sehen und von diesem aus zu begreifen (*KW* 2, 80)” [“any task except in relation to a systematic whole and understand it from that point” (Muir trans. 96).] This explains Richard’s approach to understanding the research of his professor and advisor Weitprecht; Weitprecht’s magnum opus provides the holistic framework from which all of his various articles acquire their significance. Richard must apply his “Organisations- und Einfühlungsgeschick” (*KW* 2, 80) [“organizing and intuitive powers” (Muir trans. 96)] in order to construct a systematic understanding of particular aspects of Weitprecht’s theory. A particular word or concept derives its meaning only in the proper context of the language game of Weitprecht’s scientific inquiry.⁷⁸

Richard only gradually begins to realize the diverse functions of thought after having a narrowly scientific bias towards the value of thought throughout the bulk of the novel. Richard becomes aware of the narrowness of his focus, and the erroneous picture of the world that can be generated as a result. One instant of this occurs as he is riding on the train discussing Einstein’s theories in physics with Ilse, a fellow physics student. The two of them are seated across from a man reading a newspaper. The narrator describes the two of them looking at the cover of the newspaper and comparing “die Allgemeinverständlichkeit der Zeitung mit der Isolierung ihrer eigenen Verstandesgemeinschaft [...]” (*KW* 2, 89) [“the universal comprehensibility of the newspaper with the isolation of their own specialized understanding” (Muir trans. 108).] But in spite of this admitted narrowness of their research, Richard is not overtly cynical

⁷⁸ Broch argues elsewhere for semantic holism. See chapter 2 of this dissertation.

about its value; he instead pulls out a piece of paper and jots down some formulae. While Richard's thought assumes an increasingly synoptic viewpoint, attention to acute detail is never abandoned.

One way in which the urge to acquire a synoptic, or holistic, viewpoint manifests itself in Wittgenstein and, even more so, Richard is through an interest in astronomy. Norman Malcolm explains that he and his wife met Wittgenstein for a walk one evening and Wittgenstein insisted that the three of them should represent the rotation of the solar system. Malcolm's wife was the sun, Malcolm was the earth, rotating around his wife as she walked steadily through the lawn; Wittgenstein represented the moon as he ran very quickly around Malcolm. Malcolm explains that Wittgenstein "entered into this game with great enthusiasm and seriousness, shouting instructions at us as he ran. He became quite breathless and dizzy with exhaustion" (Malcolm 52). At roughly the same time, Wittgenstein was working on a conception of infinity; perhaps his interest in the topic was stimulated by a wonder at the expanse of the universe.

Above all, the similarity Richard and Wittgenstein share is a deep (perhaps neurotic) concern for the pursuit of understanding. Richard devotes himself to the study of science and mathematics with, according to Broch, a monkish asceticism; Broch suggests this in his commentary:

Der Roman *Die Unbekannte Größe* hat einen jungen Mathematiker zum Helden, der in seiner Wissenschaft eine Art modernes Mönchsideal sieht und von dem Vorsatz erfüllt ist, sein Leben ausschließlichs der "reinen Erkenntnis" zu weihen. (KW 2, 247)

The novel *The Unknown Quantity* has as its hero a young mathematician who sees his devotion to science as a kind of monastic ideal; he's filled with a sense of resolution to consecrate his life exclusively to the pursuit of 'pure knowledge.' (my translation)

Richard views his pursuit of knowledge as a self-sacrificial devotion to the love of truth. Surrendering his personal, non-academic interests is the price he is willing to pay. The narrator describes this as a kind of surrendering; Richard's surrendering is analogous to his sister's religious surrendering, and to that of Christ's submission to Roman authorities before his crucifixion: in all three cases the subjects choose to subject themselves to complete personal loss out of devotion for some greater ideal. Though the ideals are different for each, the inner act of unreserved acquiescence is the same.

Wittgenstein not only demonstrates a similar devotion through his actions, but goes further by articulating such surrendering into a moral maxim. According to Norman Malcolm, Wittgenstein was deeply angered that the wife of the philosopher G.E. Moore would limit the amount of time he could devote to philosophical discussions after he suffered a stroke. Wittgenstein believed that Moore should have been free to discuss philosophy as long as he wanted. If he were to die from a stroke due to the stress of a philosophical discussion, then so be it, that "would be a decent way to die: with his boots on," according to Wittgenstein (Malcolm 67). This reveals much about Wittgenstein's own sense of purpose for his life.

One is reminded here of the young Wittgenstein who, in spite of the danger of war, focused on the problems of logic as he huddled in the dugout of a trench in World War I. According to Bertrand Russell, Wittgenstein "was the kind of man who would never have noticed such small matters as bursting shells when he was thinking about logic" (330). The severity with which Wittgenstein drove himself in pursuit of philosophical understanding is shown further by his preference for austere working conditions. Wittgenstein searches for solitude in rural Norway, Ireland, and Austria where he can

escape the pomp of academia and work without distractions. Further, Wittgenstein's willingness to give away his inherited fortune, only to live in very modest unadorned quarters, sleeping on a cot rather than the comfort of a bed, suggests an attitude of self-sacrifice of material and social well-being for the pursuit of the life of the mind.

(b.) Moral outlook

Richard and Wittgenstein have a strikingly similar moral outlook. Russell describes Wittgenstein as feeling that he was “a miserable creature, full of sin” (Monk 64). Wittgenstein deeply resented vanity, whether his own or that of the intellectuals in Cambridge. As an adolescent, Wittgenstein reflected in his diary (*Denkbewegungen* 183) that he was overly concerned with pleasing others. This pressure was no doubt exacerbated by his being in the prominent Wittgenstein family, and a son to the demanding Karl Wittgenstein. The Wittgensteins regularly hosted prominent musicians and politicians at their house. The pressure to uphold a proper image contributed to his vanity. As he matured and gained greater self-awareness, he lamented that this impulse was still with him. This was a source of extreme inner turmoil for Wittgenstein, and provided the impetus for his austere and simple lifestyle, as if it were only by directly fighting against the temptation to construct a false image of himself that he could bear himself. Intellectual transparency and verbal directness were the best antidotes to the vain and pretentious claptrap he believed most philosophers to be guilty of. Wittgenstein was influenced by Otto Weininger's essay on Henrik Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt*. Weininger explains that the protagonist of the story tries to purge from his mind the vain impulses that drive him to enhance his reputation in the eyes of his peers. For Weininger, this leads to a neglect of one's authentic self in exchange for living according to a

“Lebenslüge,” that is to say, the constructed expectations or norms that others may impose on you, rather than living according to what you find valuable in life.⁷⁹

Wittgenstein’s character, according to G. H. von Wright, was one of extreme seriousness in two regards. The first is “fixed in ‘strong principles’; the other springs from a passionate heart [...]. Wittgenstein was acutely and even painfully sensitive to considerations of duty, but the earnestness and severity of his personality were more of the second kind” (Malcom 19). Wittgenstein’s character manifested itself in his lectures. One of Wittgenstein’s students and closest friends, Norman Malcom, explains the terror of attending Wittgenstein’s lectures:

Wittgenstein was a frightening person at these classes. He was very impatient and easily angered. If someone felt an objection to what he was saying he was fiercely insistent that the objection should be stated. Once when Yorick Smythies, an old friend of Wittgenstein’s, was unable to put his objection into words, Wittgenstein said to him very harshly, ‘I might as well talk to this stove!’ Fear of Wittgenstein helped to keep our attention at a high pitch [...]. Wittgenstein’s severity was connected, I think, with his passionate love of truth. He was constantly fighting with the deepest philosophical problems. The solution of one problem led to another problem. Wittgenstein was uncompromising; he had to have complete understanding. He drove himself fiercely. His whole being was under a tension. No one at the lectures could fail to perceive that he strained his will, as well as his intellect, to the utmost. This was one aspect of his absolute, relentless honesty. Primarily what made him an awesome and even terrible person, both as a teacher and in personal relationships, was his ruthless integrity, which did not spare himself or anyone else. (Malcolm 27)

For Wittgenstein, philosophy is like working on oneself, which he compares to the work of an architect, the task is to change how one sees things (C&V 24). Yet Wittgenstein’s standard for craftsmanship was perfection and, according to Malcolm, Wittgenstein had a “genuinely moral disapproval of the flimsy or the slipshod” (86). Thus any display of flimsy or slipshod philosophy by one of his students, or by himself, led to deep contempt.

⁷⁹ This is explained in better detail in Severin Schroeder, *Wittgenstein: The Way Out of the Fly-Bottle*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006) 12.

Another student of Wittgenstein's, W. A. Hijab, said Wittgenstein "was like an atomic bomb, a tornado — people don't appreciate that" (Fitzgerald 93). Hijab's comments depict both the volatility and destructive force of Wittgenstein's teaching temperament.

Richard's lecturing style was likewise abrasive, and his moral outlook encroached into his lectures. Richard is portrayed as having a teaching style much like Wittgenstein's. According to the narrator, Richard's "Vorträge hatten auch hier denselben Fehler wie im Seminar: aggressiv und autoritär, er duldet weder Zwischenfragen noch Einwände" (*KW 2*, 81) ["lectures had the same fault as his classes: aggressive and authoritarian, he would suffer neither interruption nor objection" (Muir trans. 98)]; and further, he was, in "seiner Unduldsamkeit kein guter Lehrer (*KW 2*, 18) ["his impatience made him a bad teacher" (Muir trans. 12)]. Richard's moral indignation is enflamed in several ways. One way is very similar to Wittgenstein's; namely, by the careless and haphazard use of language when pursuing understanding. In a discussion with the lab assistant Dr. Kapperbrunn, Richard becomes infuriated by Kapperbrunn's comments regarding Richard's interest in astronomy. Richard laments the human race for its propensity to 'bullshit.'⁸⁰ The narrator explains that Richard has

die haßerfüllte Verwunderung über die Ausdrucksfähigkeit des Menschen, über seine ruchlose Fähigkeit, Worte zu halbwegs geordneter Sprache zu verbinden ohne Ahnung von dem Wesentlichen, auf das allein es ankommt und das allein ausdruckswürdig ist. Die Sünde des Nichtwissens! die Verstocktheit des Nichtwissen-Wollens! (*KW 2*, 39)

an amazement, tempered with hatred, at the volubility of the human race, the infamous readiness with which people strung words together into half-articulate speech without having the slightest inkling of the essential meaning of things, which alone was of any consequence and alone made speech justifiable. The sin of not-knowing, the stupidity of not-wanting-to-know! (Muir trans. 43)

⁸⁰ By "bullshit" I mean using language out of pretentious motives without genuine concern for the truth. See Harry Frankfurt, *On Bullshit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 2005.

Richard's indignation is not just towards the disinterest of many people in the pursuit of knowledge, but also of our species' ineptitude in acquiring it. Richard first associates all that is unclear or indefinite as sinful or bad, since it cannot be given intellectual assent from a strict and disciplined mind that demands verification as a criterion for truth. In this sense, his attitude is much like that of the *Tractarian* Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle whose manifesto adopted, pejoratively, the *Tractarian* view that anything not reducible to empirical experience was nonsensical and merely mysticism. But for Richard, the pursuit of knowledge meant shining light into darkness, so to speak, that is to say, identifying the sources of knowledge that generate our hitherto un-verifiable areas of belief (such as ethics or mysticism), or to penetrate into undiscovered areas of knowledge about our universe.

The narrator explains that Richard's academic arguments were often with himself, since the science of logic, Richard believed, was able to describe all causality, understanding logic was the key to understanding the workings of his own soul, and also his place in the universe:

[...] jedes Klarmachen der wissenschaftlichen Situation war ihm immer auch eine Erhellung der eigenen Ziele, und dass er solche Erhellung gewinnen und ussern konnte, das war wie eine Befreiung von dem, was hinter ihm lag, es war wie ein beginnendes Aufatmen und wie die Verheißung eines Lichtes [...]. (KW 2, 81)

[...] every clarification of a scientific situation was also to him an illumination of his own aims, and the fact that he could achieve and utter such an illumination was like a deliverance from all that lay behind him, like the beginning of a freer atmosphere and the promise of a light [...]. (Muir trans. 98)

This passage reveals how personal science and understanding are for Richard. While the scientific method is characterized by cool and dispassionate discourse, underlying this pursuit, for Richard, is an unyielding interest in his own self. He is described as being

self-absorbed; “Er war viel zu sehr eingesponnen in sich selbst, um einen andern zur Kenntnis zu nehmen, um mit ihm Mitleid zu haben” (KW 2, 56) [“Richard was too wrapped up in himself to pay much attention to another, to feel any sympathy for another” (Muir trans. 63)]. This self-absorption was caused in part by the complexity of the contents of his mind, namely, the problems in physics and mathematics with which he was working. This complexity was exacerbated by Richard’s belief that the same problems had direct relevance to all conceivable problems including those of Richard’s own feelings. To make matters even worse for Richard was the apparent discrepancy in his ability, on the one hand, to resolve mathematical paradoxes, and his emotional ineptitude on the other. The narrator of the novel explains that in “menschlichen Dingen begriff Richard langsam” (KW 2, 56) [“Richard was slow of comprehension where human feelings were concerned” (Muir trans. 62)]. Richard’s social intelligence is inhibited by his chronic ambivalence towards others, likely a result of his intellectual habit of suspending judgment, which in some social and aesthetic situations prevents depth or perspective.

(c). *Cynicism Towards Academia*

Cynicism towards academia, or at least towards hyper-intellectualism, is a leitmotif that runs through Broch’s novel. Richard admires his dissertation advisor, Professor Weitprecht, for his brilliance in science, but begins to resent him for his anti-social behavior. When Richard visits Weitprecht at his private residence, Mrs. Weitprecht greets Richard. She does not wait long before she discourages Richard from pursuing a career as a professor like her husband: “Ich warne alle jungen Leute vor der akademischen Laufbahn” (KW 2, 54) [“I always warn young people against an academic

career” (Muir trans. 61)]. Weitprecht is portrayed in this scene as lonesome, unsociable, and absentminded. When he sees Richard he looks at him with a look of incomprehension and quickly greets him only to be distracted by the papers he’s shuffling on his desk. Instead of engaging Richard in friendly conversation, Weitprecht calls for his wife to see if she can find something for him. Weitprecht is searching for two pages of notes relating to his academic work. Finally his wife points to them lying on his desk and Weitprecht is relieved, but still distracted. It is only when she urges Weitprecht to greet Richard that he engages Richard in conversation. But Richard suspects that Weitprecht does not even recognize him. The conversation immediately turns to Weitprecht’s research. The narrator explains that Richard begins to despise Weitprecht; Richard realizes how “verpfuscht” (KW 2, 56) [“deformed” (Muir trans. 63)] this man’s life is. Richard perceives Weitprecht’s narrowness and lack of social understanding and suspects there may be some connection to his inordinate amount of devotion to the pursuit of knowledge of the minutia of physics, while neglecting knowledge of human life.

In another scene, Richard comments that science is a “dürres Geflecht, an dem eine Schar von Blinden in unsinniger Weise beschäftigt war” (KW 2, 42) [“irrelevant tangle at which blind men pick insanely” (Muir trans. 46)]. In “Brochs Drehbuch *Das Unbekannte X: Eine filmhistorische Verortung*” (2009), Claudia Liebrand suggests that the first section of the film *Das Unbekannte X*, based on Broch’s novel, can be read as an “Universitäts satire” (Liebrand 98) [“university satire” (my translation)] depicting the “Eitelkeiten und Beschränktheiten des deutsch-österreichischen Universitäts systems” (Liebrand 98) [“vanity and narrowness of the German-Austrian University system” (my

translation)]. While Richard's disdain of academia stems from the narrowness forced by the specialization of academic research and the negligence that ensues towards the pursuit of a holistic worldview, Wittgenstein's disdain of academia is caused largely by the pretension of the academic climate (for which he blames himself for contributing).

Wittgenstein, according to Malcolm, was "revolted" by his academic lectures, he "felt disgusted with what he had said and with himself" (27): his disgust was attributable to the vanity and incompleteness of the thoughts expressed in them. Wittgenstein warned Malcolm against the trappings of academia, observing that a "normal human being could not be a university teacher and also an honest and serious person" (30). Wittgenstein "attempt [ed] to persuade me," according to Malcolm, "to give up philosophy as a profession. He commonly did this with other students of his" (30). Malcolm goes on to explain that Wittgenstein believed professors' professional vanity and ambitious trifling impair their ability to do honest research. In a letter to Malcolm, Wittgenstein congratulates Malcolm for receiving his PhD: "And now: may you make good use of it! By that I mean: may you not cheat either yourself or your students. Because, unless I'm very much mistaken, *that's* what will be expected from you. And it will be *very* difficult not to do it, & perhaps impossible; & in this case: may you have the strength *to quit*" (36). Wittgenstein eventually takes his own advice and resigns his professorship at Cambridge, in part so that he can devote himself to his philosophical work.

In one respect, Richard and Wittgenstein do share a common reason to despise academia; namely, the vexing turmoil caused by pursuing seemingly un-resolvable problems. The narrator explains that Richard "schämte sich seines Vortrags [...] es war die Scham der Unzulänglichkeit, die ihn befallen hatte" (KW 2, 98) ["felt ashamed of his

lecture [...] it was the shame of insufficiency that seized him” (Muir trans. 118)].

Similarly, according to Malcolm, Wittgenstein was “constantly depressed, I think, by the impossibility of arriving at understanding in philosophy” (32). Part of the cause of Wittgenstein’s revulsion over his lectures was the incompleteness of the thoughts expressed in them. Rudolf Carnap describes the grief involved in Wittgenstein’s pursuit of understanding: “When he started to formulate his view on some specific problem, we often felt the internal struggle that occurred in him at that very moment, a struggle by which he tried to penetrate from darkness to light under an intense and painful strain, which was even visible on his most expressive face” (Monk 244). One source of relief Wittgenstein had from the rigors of philosophy was film; after lecturing he would often watch an American film (apparently he despised British movies). Another source of relief were detective stories, the resolution offered by detective stories brought satisfaction to his seemingly insatiable desire to get to the bottom of problems.⁸¹

Richard, on the other hand, finds little relief from the un-resolvable (at least to him) problems of mathematics; they plague him continuously. A temporary release from this burden comes only toward the end of the novel, the narrator explains that Richard is doing research at the university when a “Strom unbekanntem Lebens drang von irgendwo herein. Strom einer noch unbekanntem Evidenz, die irgendwo floß, einer Evidenz, die allen eigentlichen Sinn, sogar den der Mathematik tragen mochte. Denn das Ziel der Erkenntnis liegt außerhalb der Erkenntnis” (KW 2, 106-07) [“current of unknown life came surging in from somewhere, a current from some as of yet unknown source of evidence which might hold the real meaning of everything even of mathematics. For the

⁸¹ See Roy Sorensen, “Wittgenstein and the Depth of a Grammatical Joke,” *A Brief History of the Paradox: Philosophy and the Labyrinths of the Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 334.

purpose of knowledge lies outside knowledge” (Muir trans. 130)]. Shortly after this experience, Richard and his new love, Ilse, kiss in a moment of passionate embrace. This display of love takes Richard to a blissful state: “Es war das Herausgehobensein aus dem Meere [...] das Grauen der Freiheit, das Phantom des Mittags” (KW 2, 108) [“It was an uplifting out of the sea [...] the shudder of freedom, the spectre of noon” (Muir trans. 132)]. What had seemed important to Richard, namely, the pursuit of intellectual understanding, at once became trivial and unimportant. Richard is released into a new way of seeing the world, and a new state of being. Though this “mystical salvation” (221), as Hardin calls it, is temporary, the new way of seeing the world makes it possible for Richard to affirm the subjective contents of his will. It becomes clearer to him what he wills; he has acquired a degree of subjective certainty.

III. Subjective Certainty and its Relation to Human Flourishing

In *Über Gewissheit*, Wittgenstein makes a case against epistemological skepticism. For the sake of our interest in Broch’s *Die Unbekannte Größe*, I will pick and choose some relevant aspects of Wittgenstein’s conception of certainty, and apply them in a way that Wittgenstein may not have intended, but that still yield some interesting points. Wittgenstein’s *Über Gewissheit* is a collection of notes, written in the last two years of Wittgenstein’s life and not intended for publication. Wittgenstein’s thoughts are in response to G. E. Moore’s “Proof of an External World” (1939) and “Defense of Common Sense” (1925).

One of the aspects of certainty that Wittgenstein broaches is the question of whether, or in what cases, a notion of certainty is merely a psychological phenomenon, or in other words, a degree of conviction regarding a particular truth (e.g., that ‘here is a

hand', etc.). If you are walking through a forest, explains Wittgenstein, and stumble upon a house, you might say, "There's a house." In this case you have a high degree of certainty because there is no evidence against your proposition. It is possible that the house is in fact not really a house, perhaps it was just an illusion. But you may increase the degree of certainty you have in believing it is a house by walking up closer to it, or walking around it. The highest degree of certainty is achieved by anticipating and eliminating reasons for doubt. In this case you have achieved not merely a psychological certainty, (i.e., a very strong conviction about the truth of the sentence), but also an epistemic certainty (or as much of it as is possible).

Epistemic certainty is achieved when there is no good reason to doubt *x*.

Wittgenstein explains, "there is a *tone* of doubt, and a tone of conviction, but no tone of knowledge" (Malcolm 92). What he is doing here is drawing a distinction between psychological and epistemic certainty. The skeptic says that we don't know something if it is possible to conceive of a reason to doubt it, for instance, that something we discover in the future might make it untrue. But for Wittgenstein this kind of skepticism is out of focus and masks the way we ascertain certainty. For Wittgenstein, certainty is evinced by our practical considerations. If one were to entertain a speculative doubt about whether or not one's eyes or lungs exist, this doubt would be alleviated in that very moment in which the doubter breaths or sees. Such practical considerations make speculative doubt an absurdity for Wittgenstein: "Suppose a person of normal behavior assured us that he only believed ... he had hands and feet when he didn't actually see them, and so on. Can we show him that it is not so from the things he does (and says)?" (OC 428).

Wittgenstein's pragmatist argument defeats the skeptic's objection by showing its

incoherence against the backdrop of the skeptic's actions. Certainty of many beliefs is presupposed and also justified by our engagement in, and discourse about, the world.⁸²

While Wittgenstein's concern is with our certainty in the existence of the external world, I would like to redirect this concern to our certainty regarding our attitudes and appraisal of value regarding things. I may ask myself, as Wittgenstein does, 'am I certain that the house exists', but I may also ask myself a question such as 'am I certain that I want to continue living in this house and not some other.' In the latter case, the question of certainty is not answered definitively by empirical evidence, it is admittedly of the psychological kind. However, using Wittgenstein's pragmatist grounds for knowledge, the belief that 'I am certain I want to live in this house' may be justifiable not merely by inner conviction, but also in examining reasons to the contrary. If there exists no reason (and no inner voice) against your continued desire to live in the house, then the belief may acquire an epistemic status. The fact that you continue to choose to live in the house (assuming you have the option of leaving) is enough evidence for you to assume that you are certain you want to live there. The example I just provided is perhaps trivial, but there are many questions regarding the appraisal of value which have far-reaching consequences, and present troubling challenges to the conscientious thinker.

Wittgenstein's *Über Gewissheit* has had an enduring influence on contemporary philosophy of action and a brief excursion will help us see how subjective certainty has important ethical implications. In "The Importance of What We Care About" (1988), Frankfurt explains that philosophers have committed a tremendous amount of effort to

⁸² Wittgenstein explains, "The truth of my statement is the test of my understanding of these statements. That is to say: if I make certain false statements, it becomes uncertain whether I understand them. What counts as an adequate test of a statement belongs to logic. It belongs to the description of the language-game" (OC §80-82).

finding answers to two broad questions; those with a concern for “deciding *what to believe...*” and those for deciding “*how to behave*” (80). But, according to Frankfurt, there is another branch of inquiry whose questions are directly pertinent to our ability to understand ourselves and to flourish; namely, “*what to care about*” (80). The question is fundamental because its answers provide us with, according to Frankfurt, a structured set of ends that we can pursue wholeheartedly, which Frankfurt considers essential to, but does not guarantee, a life well-lived. For Frankfurt, doubt, or ambivalence, towards what we value forges an inner division that cripples us, diminishing our vitality.

For Frankfurt, what prevents us from becoming alienated from our authentic selves is identifying what he calls “volitional necessities.” That is to say, things about which we cannot help but care. These could be almost anything from an invigorating hobby, to a loved one, to an ideal, etc. While some ends may be more rewarding than others to care about, this is not Frankfurt’s point. He is not so much concerned with the specificity of the ends being pursued, rather the role they play in restoring an inner harmony to the agent. By definition, a volitional necessity is the result of an appraisal of value of a thing, which it is literally unthinkable to question. An example might be that of the love of a parent for a child. It is unthinkable for a parent (at least for most parents) to view their child with apathy. Parents are most often incapable of impartiality towards the well-being of their child. Thus they care to act in such a way that preserves that child’s well-being without any thought to the contrary.

Frankfurt believes that many are plagued by a restlessly critical mind that scrutinizes the value they may project upon an object. By identifying a set of valuable

ends, and giving assent to its privileged place in one's conduct, an agent's critical intellect is quieted and his humanity is restored from the paralysis caused by ambivalence.

Frankfurt seems to be arguing in a Wittgensteinian vein. According to Wittgenstein, "some propositions are exempt from doubt, are as it were like hinges on which those turn" (OC 342). The hinge propositions that Wittgenstein evokes fit irrevocably in a system of a language game. He explains further:

It is quite sure that motor cars don't grow out of the earth. We feel that if someone could believe the contrary he could believe everything that we say is untrue, and could question everything that we hold to be sure. But how does this one belief hang together with all the rest? We would like to say that someone who could believe that does not accept our whole system of verification. The system is something that a human being acquires by means of observation and instruction. I intentionally do not say 'learns.' (OC 279)

Wittgenstein's concern in this passage is specifically with empirical facts regarding which persons may obtain verification from a source external to their minds, through observation and instruction. But the kind of verification that is important to *Die Unbekannte Größe* is the kind Richard seeks regarding his feelings and intuitions. While a material observation may stimulate an internal affect in the observer, the verification of the feeling is not the external object of observation, but internal psychic material in one's mind.

How then does one acquire this kind of subjective certainty that is not verified by motor cars, trees, a hand, or a house (all examples used by Wittgenstein)? In *Die Unbekannte Größe*, Richard mistakenly believes that all knowledge is empirical and rational. The dark and mysterious realm of one's psyche, Richard believes, operates according to logical rules; though the science of logic lags behind and is too incomplete to grasp how the psyche works, according to Richard. But Richard is confused about this,

and his confusion is resolved through his love affair with Ilse. Richard discovers the boundary of logic as he steps across it.

As it turns out, love is not the result of reasoning; it is not a conclusion supported by premises.⁸³ It does not, in most cases, depend upon reasons. And it is not up to the logician to conduct a deductive analysis of love's properties. In other words, love does not have a logic.⁸⁴ Love, according to Frankfurt, creates reasons (*TOS* 25). That is to say, the concern that a lover has towards his beloved compels him to consider what action would honor that love. Love thus imposes some constraints upon the lover's will insofar as the lover has compelling reasons to do some things and not others. But in the life of Richard's character, love plays a more fundamental role in his agency than providing practical constraints on his behavior.

Richard's hypertrophic rationality has prevented him from loving with the kind of depth more common to our species; not from loving mathematical and scientific truths, which Richard shows profound devotion, but humans, including himself. Richard begins to identify in himself a desire for greater social depth; this desire becomes apparent to the reader as Richard feels revulsion towards Weitprecht for his un-social behavior. The narrator of the novel directs the reader's attention to the intellectual alienation felt by Richard in contrast to his brother Otto's vitality. Richard embraces his stoicism early in the novel and sees it as a virtue for the pursuit of intellectual understanding. But his stoicism is eventually broken down by his love for Ilse and the death of Otto. These two events play decisive roles in Richard's discovery of what it is he cares deeply about. The

⁸³ My view of the concept of love has been influenced by Harry Frankfurt, *Necessity, Volition, and Love*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1999.

⁸⁴ What I mean is that love for an object is not generated through logical reasoning. In one sense, love does have a logic. If you love X, and Y has some effect upon X, your attitude towards Y may be affected.

objects of Richard's love, Ilse and Otto, function as 'volitional necessities' which not only give him reasons for acting, but engender inside him a subjective certainty, that is to say, a strength of conviction verified not through observation or instruction, but through self-reflexive introspection upon the contents of his own psyche and through his actions that follow from his emotion.

It is through experience that Richard acquires subjective certainty. The achievement of certainty occurs, broadly speaking, in two regards. The first is through an expanse of time in which his relations to Ilse and Otto acquire meaning for him. Through the collection of memories of these two individuals, Richard is able to muster a feeling for them via *apperception*. They are not mere strangers to Richard, but instead each plays a unique role in Richard's psychic biography. Quite beyond his conscious awareness, Richard has come to love Ilse and Otto. The second way through which Richard acquires subjective certainty is in the specific moment in which his subconscious feelings are brought into his conscious mental perception. In respect to his love for Ilse, Richard becomes aware of his love for her as she kisses him and utters the words 'I love you.' The feelings existed prior to this experience, though Richard had yet to embrace them. The same can be said regarding Otto's death. Upon hearing the gruesome news, Richard's brotherly love for Otto is expressed through profound mourning. Both of these moments of love carry a personal significance for Richard that makes his previous concerns for discovering mathematical and scientific truths seem trivial. The subjective importance of his objects of love trumps any objective importance that his academic work might entail.

Richard's thoughts regarding love become clear to him in a scene in his devout sister Susanne's room. On the wall are the words "Du bist der Herr, ich bin Dein Knecht" (KW 2, 119) ["Thou art my master, I am thy servant" (Muir trans. 147)]. Richard sees these words and thinks to himself, "die Welt brennt in uns, nicht auer uns" (KW 2, 120) ["the world burns inside us, not outside us" (Muir trans. 147)]. These words ignite a mystical impulse in Richard. He looks at Ilse and has a "unheimlich" (KW 2, 120) ["uncanny" (my trans.)] feeling: "es war die Blindheit, unheimlich und vorstellbar, und eine wehe und blinde Zrtlichkeit war es, die ihn berkam; die Liebe als unendliche Aufgabe, ja, und als Knecht ihr zu dienen, wie man der Erkenntnis zu dienen hat!" (KW 2, 120) ["It was like blindness, uncanny and unimaginable, and it was a pitiful and blind tenderness that overcame him; Love as an unending task, yes, and to serve Love as a servant, as one had to serve Knowledge" (Muir trans. 147)]. This passage does not suggest Richard has lost any fervor for his pursuit of knowledge, but that he has identified love as an equally compelling end. But it is not love in general that is compelling to Richard; his love has a particular direct object: Ilse. Richard has acquired a high degree of subjective certainty regarding the importance of his beloved Ilse. The conviction of the importance of her well-being gives Richard a final end that can be willed without instrumental considerations. The narrator expresses Richard's mystical creed: "das gttliche Ziel des Seins liegt ausserhalb des Seins, das letzte Ziel der Liebe liegt ausserhalb der Liebe und ist doch die Liebe" (KW 2, 120) [the divine end of Being lies beyond Being, the final end of love lies beyond love and yet is love (my trans.)].⁸⁵ I

⁸⁵ I offered my translation of this passage because it appears incorrectly translated in the English version of the novel.

think this statement is confusing, but it contains something essential to the novel. I will try to unpack it here through some rudimentary conceptual analysis.⁸⁶

An 'end' is a point at which we may direct our perceptions, attitudes, or actions. An end's status as an end suggests it is important to us in itself; but it may still be possible that the end serves as means to yet another end.⁸⁷ A 'divine end' is metaphysical, not contained in the objects of the world. Our 'Being' is the self-reflexive consciousness of the phenomena of our minds; in other words, it is the state of mind that prevails when one directs one's attention to capture phenomenal experience and simultaneously its subjective meaning. To say that 'the divine end of Being lies beyond Being' suggests that our self-reflexive consciousness must have some direct object which itself is not reducible to mental origins; thus Broch is denying solipsism.

The second half of the creed is more challenging to understand. A 'final end' is one that has no further conceivable utility. Unlike a mere end, the value of a final end is wholly terminal; it can command authority come what may. A lover may love a final end, but love itself does not present itself to our consciousness directly; rather our consciousness is directed toward the beloved object. One may define a concept of love, and esteem such a concept, but such esteem is derived in recognition of the role love plays in our psyche, not from the concept itself. In other words, when we love something we adopt an attitude towards it. The attitude is not an object, rather it is *about* an object. There may be properties that the object possesses (red, charm, etc.) that have a causal

⁸⁶ Though analysis will not do the mystical creed justice, or serve as a cheap substitute for the experience that underlies it, it may provide an avenue for attaining a conceptual understanding of the variables contained in it.

⁸⁷ Imagine that I go to college to get a degree. I take courses as a means to achieve that end. But after college, the degree might serve as a means to another end, say, getting employed.

force in generating love, but not a property called love. The attitude towards the object comes with correlative considerations that may then serve as sources for other loves.⁸⁸

Finally, Richard's mystical creed contains an obvious paradox, how can something lie beyond love and yet be love?

If we adopt a Wittgensteinian conception of certainty to this paradox we may surmise that what the narrator expresses is that love is not reducible to an attitudinal disposition or affection, but a particular configuration of the will, that is to say, love is a matter of volition. According to Wittgenstein's pragmatist conception of certainty, the fact that we act in such a way (except in cases of involuntary convulsion, etc.) is evidence that we have a degree of certainty about something. The pragmatist argument made by Wittgenstein is that our action entails a suspension of doubt regarding the importance of the end we are pursuing or the means employed to achieve that end. Hence with this in mind the paradox can be viewed in the following way; love is affective in so far as it determines what end we deem inherently valuable, yet love is also volitional insofar as it determines the course of our conduct towards our beloved final end.

This conception of love defeats the skeptic's arguments against our ability to be certain about our love. The skeptic wants to claim that our certainty regarding what we love is merely a matter of conviction, but Wittgenstein argues that it is something logical as well, since love provides the reasons to justify our volitional action, and verbal utterances, towards the object loved. What is needed, according to Wittgenstein, to defeat the skeptic's arguments doubting our ability to ascertain certainty regarding experiential statements is to show "that the highest degree of certainty is nothing

⁸⁸ For instance, imagine I love it when a specific sports team wins. If a player on that team plays an important role in that team's victory, he may engender my affection.

psychological but something logical: that there is a point at which there is neither any 'making more certain' nor any 'turning out to be false.' Some experiential statements have this property" (Malcolm 91). Wittgenstein goes on to explain that in teaching a language to a child, one does not say "'I believe that that is red' or 'I know that that is red,' but simply 'that is red'" (92). The statement is learned without a reservation because such statements are required for learning the language. A judgment may turn out to be false, but those are exceptional cases, explains Wittgenstein. His point is that some propositions are essential to a "frame of reference"; without them it is impossible to make judgments about anything at all. Yet we do, and must, make judgments in order to act and choose; hence we demonstrate a degree of certainty of our belief about what we value or will by inferring to choose in one way and not in another.

Ilse and Richard soon experience this discrepancy between choice and thought.

Ilse is spending time with Richard discussing mathematics and the cosmos when the narrator explains that with

jedem Atemzug den unlöslichen Zusammenhang zwischen Gedachtem und Erlebtem, zwischen Denkbarem und Erlebbarem als ein neues und großes Aufklingen ihres ganzen Wesens empfand, denn das Erkennen, in dem dies geschah, schwebte einem vielfachen Echo gleich im Gewölbe des Seins [...]. (KW 2, 96-97)

every breath she drew [she] felt the indissoluble relation between what was thought and experienced, what could be thought and experienced, as a new and wonderful harmony of her whole being; for the knowledge by means of which this happened floated like a manifold echo in the vault of Being [...]. (Muir trans. 116)

As Richard and Ilse kiss, the narrator explains that they are "losgelöst von ihrem Willen, losgelöst von ihrem Sein, getragen von der Woge der Dunkelheit, die über ihnen zusammenschlug" (KW 2, 108) ["released from all willing, released from Being, upborne

by the wave of darkness that washed over them” (Muir trans. 132)]. But Richard and Ilse are not alone in discovering the importance of one’s subjective objects of devotion and care; Weitprecht experiences something similar.

Weitprecht takes a vacation—which is very out-of-character for him—and returns with a different perspective on the significance of his academic work. The narrator does not divulge the full details of this vacation, or the causes of Weitprecht’s new perspective, but what is clear is that Weitprecht used to be ‘drawn irresistibly’ to the university but now feels disenchanting with academic work. Richard insists to Weitprecht that his theories are important “außer jedem Zweifel” (KW 2, 123) [“beyond all doubt” (Muir trans. 152)], but Weitprecht replies:

Die objektive wohl, mein lieber Doktor Hieck, so will ich’s wenigstens hoffen, aber die subjektive Wichtigkeit hat nachgelassen . . . ja, ja.. sehen Sie, wenn man mich nicht nach Nauheim geschickt hätte ... dann wäre ich heute wahrscheinlich noch der Alte. (KW 2, 123)

The objective importance certainly, my dear Doctor Hieck, at least I hope so; but their subjective importance isn’t what it was. . . Well, well... you see, if they hadn’t sent me to Nauheim.... Then I should probably be the same man today. (Muir trans. 152)

Weitprecht’s wife insisted that he take a leave to become cleansed by the hot springs at Bad Nauheim, which are believed to cure neuroses, among other ailments. Weitprecht goes on to explain:

wer an der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnis arbeitet, arbeitet mit siebzig genau so, wie er mit dreißig gearbeitet hat . . . und schließlich wird er gef ilt, mittendrin gef ilt, aber an keinem Ende, weil er seines eigenen Todes vergessen hat . . . ein böser Mensch mit einem bösen Herzen . . . ja, ja, lieber Freund, mit einem bösen Herzen, das im Namen der Erkenntnis viel Unrecht geübt hat. (KW 2, 125)

Anyone who labors at scientific knowledge does his work at seventy just as he did when he was thirty ... and finally he is struck down, struck down in the middle of it, but without reaching an end ... an evil man with an evil heart ... Yes, yes, my

dear friend, with an evil heart, which has committed much wrong in the name of knowledge. (Muir trans. 155)

The wrong that Weitprecht has committed in the name of knowledge is the same wrong that Richard has committed; namely, in seeking a purely formal knowledge which is void of content pertinent to one's existential life. The 'evil' in such an omission is in failing to identify particular direct objects of one's love, or will. The result is a loveless, volitionally vacuous, hypertrophically rational person whose humanity is lethargic and inert.

IV. Conclusion: Answering the question 'how should I live?'

Wittgenstein asks "what is the use of studying philosophy if all that it does for you is to enable you to talk with some plausibility about some abstruse questions of logic, etc. and if it does not improve your thinking about the important questions of everyday life?" (Kenny 10). For Richard, questions about life, and how to live, are more difficult than those of mathematics or science because of the inchoate nature of the concepts centrally implicated in the answers. Answering the question 'how should I live?' is challenging in primarily two respects. The first is in delineating what action is morally permissible, or required by the demands of ethical normativity, and the second, even more challenging task is determining for yourself what ends are worthy of your concern. Complicating the second task is the correlative question that accompanies it; namely, what would my life consist of in pursuit of a specific end. An agent may deem an end valuable, but recognize that a life lived in pursuit of that end might be vapid. In such case the agent may feel compelled to pursue ends that are of lesser inherent value, but whose means of pursuit are more invigorating and likely to provide sustained satisfaction and meaning in life. At the beginning of this chapter I mentioned that Broch is

influenced significantly by Kant and Spinoza in his attempt to answer these questions, I will return now to these important philosophers.

In *Treatise on the Improvement of the Understanding* (1662), Spinoza expresses despair at the temporality of his surroundings and resolves to find something that will enable him “to enjoy continuous, supreme and unending happiness” (3). Spinoza suggests that this entails improving one’s rational understanding of the world, which is commensurate more or less with a person’s enjoyment of it. Broch says something remarkably similar in his philosophical writings: “Rationalismus geht oftmals mit Lebensgenuß Hand in Hand” (*KW* 9/1, 111) [“Rationalism often goes hand in hand with an enjoyment of life” (*HHT* 33)].⁸⁹ According to Spinoza, finding joy in the attainment of wealth, sensual pleasure, or fame, is problematic because it arouses tumultuous states of mind such as competitiveness, envy, fear of loss, etc. Instead Spinoza believes that only through the infinite and eternal can one find enduring happiness. What he means by this is that if something is infinite, there is no competition with others for possession of it since there is not a limited supply. Further, if it is eternal, one has no fear of losing it; it’s always going to be there. The fact that something is infinite and eternal is not a *sufficient* condition to guarantee that it will ensure enduring happiness, according to Spinoza, but it is a *necessary* condition. What Spinoza’s ethical outlook seeks to generate is a personal character in which the laws governing nature—those of physics, biology, and mathematics, etc.—are in accord with those guiding one’s choices; or in his words “the knowledge of the union existing between the mind and the whole of nature” (6). This

⁸⁹ Broch’s conception of rationalism entails some sort of instrumentalism, which in the context of art can lead to adornment concealing something ugly; in this context rationalism has some negative connotations. Regardless of whether it has potential to lead to an aesthetic false consciousness and kitsch, in its better applications Broch views rationality favorably, it is not incorrigibly at odds with aesthetics.

cohesiveness produces a stability of mind that enables our various competing and conflicting inner impulses to coalesce in harmony to the forces of nature that are at work both in us and in the world. From this vantage point we can reassess the value we ascribe to various ends, and the means through which ends are pursued.

Not surprisingly, Spinoza's ethical outlook was popular with the Vienna Circle, and other scientists and mathematicians such as Wittgenstein, Russell, and Einstein. The moment in which one becomes most perceptive of the infinite and eternal, is, according to Broch, when one encounters death:

Und weil die Ewigkeit des Todes die Pforte ist, die einzige Pforte, durch die das Absolute in seiner ganzen magischen Bedeutsamkeit ins reale Leben einzieht, in seiner Gefolgschaft die magischen Worte von der Unendlichkeit und von der Ewigkeit und vom All nach sich ziehend, Worte, die als solche einer logischen Zergliederung sonst kaum standhalten würden, und weil der Tod in seiner unvorstellbaren Lebensferne dennoch von so n chster Lebensn he ist, daß er die Seele des Menschen unablässig mit seinem physischen Sein und metaphysischen Dasein erfüllt, deshalb muss seiner Absolutheit, die die einzige Absolutheit der Realität und der Natur ist, eine Absolutheit entgegengeworfen werden, die, vom Willen des Menschen getragen, die Absolutheit der Seele, die Absolutheit der Kultur zu schaffen befähigt ist; und diese sehr merkwürdige Befähigung der Seele, vielleicht die merkwürdigste Erscheinung der menschlichen Existenz, findet ihre Ausdrucksform in jenem stets sich erneuernden Akt, der der Akt der Humanität schlechthin zu nennen ist, und eben in dieser Humanität zum Akt der Wertsetzung und Wertbildung sich erhoben hat. (KW 9/2 125)

And because the eternity of death is the gateway, the only gateway through which the absolute enters into real life in all its magical meaningfulness, bringing in its train the magic words "infinity," "eternity," and "universe," words that otherwise could not withstand logical analysis, [...] because of death, the only absolute of reality and of nature, another absolute must be thrown up against it by the human will, which can create the absolute of the soul and the absolute of civilization; and this remarkable ability of the soul, perhaps the most amazing phenomenon of human existence, finds its form of expression in that ever-renewing act, which could simply be called the "act of being human," and in this humanity, human existence is elevated to the act of value setting and value creating. (G&Z 9)

This passage suggests not only a limitation to the application of logical analysis, but also the necessity of existential awareness, and volitional malleability, if persons are to

ascertain what it is that is meaningful to them and achieve the fruition of their full humanity.

In *Die Unbekannte Größe*, the concept of infinity is introduced through Richard's investigations of group theory. The concept of eternity, on the other hand, is introduced through the death of Richard's brother Otto. As Richard mourns the suicidal drowning of his brother, he gains perspective on the transience of human life. It is through this heightened awareness that it becomes clearer to Richard what he cares most deeply about: in this case the life of his brother. This experience spawns value in the sense that Richard's endless striving for certainty is put to rest and the inner division created by his chronic ambivalence towards all things is resolved, albeit temporarily. Richard can wholeheartedly identify with his love for his brother, and faces no uncertainty as to whether his brother's death merits his mourning; it would be unthinkable for him to remain passively unmoved by the event. He is driven by an 'inner necessity' to mourn. The experience transforms Richard's outlook on the world. He arrives at the mortuary to see Otto's corpse; the narrator explains that "angesichts dieses Todes begann etwas in Richard zu leben" (KW 2, 134) ["in the face of this death something began to live in Richard" (Muir trans. 167)]. Richard was able to hear a 'living voice in his heart'; as he held Otto's hand, Richard began to cry out unashamedly.

The narrator explains that Richard's deep mourning and new perspective on mortality liberates him from a burden, though Richard does not know what the nature of that burden is:

denn in dem Animalischen, das da aufgeschrien hatte, und in der Furcht, deren Schrei alles Animalische durchzittert, war ein Wissen durchgebrochen, vom Animalischen getragen und doch die Furcht überdeckend, ein sonderbares und einmaliges Wissen, das in keinerlei System stand und daher auch nicht beweisbar

war, vollkommen isoliert, trotzdem Leben, trotzdem Erkenntnis, und in gleicher Weise vom Animalischen wie vom Erkennen gespeist. [...] ein Wissen, das, über Otto und über Ottos Tod weit hinausreichend, die Ganzheit der Welt umfaßte und bei aller Unbeweisbarkeit, bei aller Isoliertheit eindeutig, hell und bestimmt war, befreit von aller Mehrsinnigkeit, befreit vom Flackern der brennenden Dunkelheit. (KW 2, 135)

For in the animal instinct that cried out in him, and in the fear whose cry vibrates through all that is animal, an awareness had broken through, borne on his animal nature and yet transcending fear, a strange and unique awareness that could be found in no system and so was not demonstrable, complete in its isolation, but life nevertheless, knowledge nevertheless, and nurtured in like manner from his animal nature and his mind. [...] an intuition and recognition [...] far transcending Otto and Otto's death, embraced the totality of the world, and despite its undemonstrability and its isolation remained simple, clear, and definite, freed from all doubleness of meaning, freed from the flickering uncertainty of the burning darkness. (Muir trans. 168-69)

Richard does not suppress his animal instincts, or passively submit to them; rather he identifies with them by adopting them as authentically his and allowing them to resonate through his mental state. Thus, the causal forces of nature's laws—in this case, the laws of kin selection which have designed his psychology to mourn the death of a loved one—determine his state of mind. Although Richard is subject to causal forces determined beyond his own willing, by identifying a caused mental state (that of deep sadness) as authentically his, he is the rational agent behind his mourning. At last, he is able to feel the harmony between his mind and affections, his love for his brother is unadulterated, and he is no longer in “Schrecken über seine eigene Unklarheit” (KW 2, 35) [horror at his own un-clarity (my translation)] and “Gleichgültigkeit” (KW 2, 35) [“indifference” (Muir trans. 35)] which had previously prevented him from caring deeply about the well-being of others.

The new perspective Richard has is *sub specie aeternitatis*, i.e., a view of the world from eternity, one that is “unabhängig von der Zeit, unabhängig von der Dauer,

sie war unauslöschlich vorhanden [...] unverlierbares Wissen um den unräumlichen Weltraum einer jeden Seele” (KW 2, 135-36) [independent of time, independent of duration, indelibly there [...] an awareness that could never be lost of the non-spatial space of every soul (my translation)].⁹⁰ Like Spinoza, Wittgenstein sees such a view as necessary for perceiving the good life: “the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*” (NTB 83e).⁹¹ A view of the world *sub specie aeternitatis* is also the necessary pre-condition for perceiving the categorical imperative of one’s rational agency. This is because in order to see the law prescribed by the categorical imperative, one must have a view of the relation between the ends willed, the means to the end, and the motivation that underlies the will. Such a view is not afforded with a view of the world exclusively from temporality; one must possess supervening reflective abilities that transcend one’s subjectivity. Only hypothetical imperatives are derived exclusively from the viewpoint of subjectivity, since it is the subject who posits hypothetical ends. But the ends that are to be willed universally, thus demanded by the categorical imperative, are only to be seen from a perspective of universality, which is not the one we have in our temporal cognition of our immediate phenomena.

In “Hermann Broch’s *Die Unbekannte Größe*: the Central Symbol of ‘Sterne im Wasser’” (1974), Watt explains that in his “symbol of ‘Sterne im Wasser’ Broch deliberately expands the significance of Kant’s words beyond the Categorical Imperative to include the phenomena of love and death as reflections in human experience of a

⁹⁰ One might object here that the experience of the death of a loved one would be dependent on time or duration; this much is true. However, a generous reading of Broch would suggest that death makes one more aware of the continuation of time beyond our own passing; hence a sense of the endless expanse of duration.

⁹¹ See chapter 4 for a more extensive engagement with the notion of seeing the world *sub specie aeternitatis*.

transcendental reality” (Watt 848). This reality is grasped by Richard when he faces death vicariously through his brother because, as Carsten Könneker explains,

Im Angesichts des Todes verliert der Mensch seine Bindung an jedes Wertsystem—unabhängig davon, wie eng diese zuvor gewesen sein mag; als Sterbender ist der Mensch nur noch Mensch und nicht mehr Repräsentant irgendeines Partialwertbereichs. Folglich ist seine Erkenntnis dann auch keine partielle mehr, sondern Erkenntnis schlechthin. (Könneker 449)

In the face of death a person loses his connection to every value system – independently of how strong the connection might have been; when dying, a person is just a person and no longer a representative of a particular partial value-area. Thus his knowledge is no longer partial, but knowledge *per se*. (my translation)

The face of death releases our concern for the contingent needs that dominate the living person, such as, comfort, health, money, etc. This liberation enables us to see more clearly the things that are more indelibly important to us. Richard explains that in life we are plagued by the ‘uncertainty of Being,’ an irresolvable perplexity in the system of our values that we never, apart from the moment of death, view with clarity. Though Richard’s mourning is caused by forces beyond his voluntary control—namely, his brother’s death and Richard’s love for his brother—his will is autonomous in so far as, the narrator explains, Richard is able to ascent knowingly to the control of the grief inside him. He is able to legislate to his will the law that loves his brother as an end, and could at the same time be willed by anyone in his circumstances. Thus the conditions of the categorical imperative are met by his mourning. Both the ‘starry heavens’ and the ‘moral law’ are accessible to human consciousness, the former from the sense data of one’s observation, the latter from the perspective of self-reflexivity, which is, according to Kant, “discernable only to the understanding,” and which enables a person to become cognizant

that he is not “in a merely contingent connection, but also in a universal and necessary” connection to the world of sense data (*CPR* 203).

One may be tempted to object to Kant’s unrestrained praise of human understanding; after all, as Ziolkowski points out, Richard’s “elaborate systems turn out to be no defense against the power of emotion” (366). But asking the question ‘what is the limitation of logic?’ has an unnecessarily cynical tone to it. A better question is ‘what does logic accomplish in our practical lives?’ To answer this question one must look into the language games that we use in our practical lives and discern what logical rules are operative in them. When this question is pursued in tandem with the question ‘what does loving, or willing, do for us in our practical lives?’ the discrepancy in the answers to both questions reveals the limitations of logic and rationality.

Broch believed that the novel helps one to see both how logic operates in social discourse, and its limitations:

die kognitive Aufgabe des Dichterischen in ihrer allgemeinen [...] Bedeutung ist Fortsetzung der rationalen Erkenntnis über die rationale Grenze hinaus, ist Hinabsteigen ins Irrationale [...] und eben diese *Totalität des Erkennens und Erlebens* [...] gibt ihm jene Richtung, die zwar auf das Ziel aller Wissenschaft, nämlich die Erkenntnis an sich hinweist [...]. (*KW* 9/2, 46)

the cognitive task of poetry in its general meaning is the extension of rational knowledge beyond the border of rationality, it is the descent into the irrational [...] and it is just this totality of knowledge and experience [...] that gives direction to all of science; which is knowledge for its own sake [...]. (my translation)

This passage strikes me as exceedingly ambitious. One might object to Broch by charging that to acquire a totality of knowledge and experience one must be omniscient and omnipresent, which no one is; thus the task of poetry is doomed. But in a more generous reading of the passage, one may soften the claim by replacing ‘totality of

knowledge and experience' with 'a synoptic viewpoint of knowledge and experience.' I think this expresses in less grandiose terms what Broch is after.

The texts examined in this chapter present a compelling case that love and logic are both necessary in guiding us to attain the kind of life that is the best our species can hope for. The skeptic may have grounds to doubt the certainty of our sense data perceptions; Wittgenstein is willing to admit this: "concepts of knowledge and certainty have no application to one's own sensations" (Malcolm 33). Our species is chronically prone to error concerning the acquisition of belief, and in discerning the justification of beliefs. But in the experience of life, choice regarding our actions and use of words evinces certainty in the success of these choices in leading us to a coherent way of living. What has to be overcome, according to Wittgenstein, is not a "difficulty of the intellect but of the will" (*BTS* 161). This is to say that it is not intellectual rationality that is always to fault when our lives are not as we would like to make it, but volitional rationality.⁹² Wittgenstein explains that the "most important and effective change" (*C&V* 53) that a person can bring about is a change in his own attitude, but such a change is very difficult and often overlooked.

In conclusion, Kant believed that except when we act according to the moral law, we act according to self-interest. Only when we act according to the moral law, suggests Kant, can we achieve autonomy from the same contingencies that Spinoza reluctantly admits have deleterious effects on our wills, such as, the love of comfort, fame, wealth, etc. Broch's novel suggests, however, that the renunciation of our interests for the sake of the demands of the categorical imperative is not always necessary. Insofar as a person's will is comprised of the things about which he most genuinely cares, and a

⁹² Volitional rationality consists of assigning a reasonable degree of strength to a particular desire.

person's self is essentially comprised of his will, then a person can achieve autonomy in the moments in which he affirms the inner necessity of love; Richard is unable to disregard the commands that his love for Ilse and Otto impose on his will. What is essential is that the interests are selfless in the sense that caring deeply about x, y, and z, means that I have a sustained interest in the well-being of x, y, and z, independently of their instrumental value. Richard's love for Ilse and Otto is selfless because he holds them as final ends. According to Kant, rational commands of the moral law are categorical, but according to Frankfurt, the commands of "selfless love are also categorical" ("ANL" 136). Richard's love for Otto and Ilse resonates through his being, only by affirming it unconditionally is he able to achieve a kind of "self-esteem," or an affirmation of his own will, that Spinoza believes is necessary for a good life.

The novel ends with a discussion between Richard and Kapperbrunn.

Kapperbrunn skeptically asks Richard,

Wie heisst es doch bei Ihrem alten Kant: der gestirnte Himmel über mir und das moralische Gesetz in mir? [...] das stimmt gar nicht [...] denn wie windig es mit den kosmischen Gesetzen aussieht, das erleben wir gerade jetzt, und von den moralischen wollen wir lieber ganz schweigen. (*KW 2*, 140-41)

What is it your old friend Kant says again? The starry heavens above me and the moral law within me [...] that isn't right at all [...] for we're finding out now how many holes can be picked in the cosmic laws, and we'd better leave the moral laws out of it. (Muir trans. 176)

But for Richard, the moral law has more enduring cohesion than Kapperbrunn's cosmic laws: the "Erkenntnis der Liebe [ist] [...] gültig ohne Beweis [...] in der Einsamkeit des Herzens ist alles absolut, hier gibt es keinen statistischen Annerkungswert, hier gilt das Gesetz schlechthin" (*KW 2*, 141) ["knowledge of love [is] valid without proof [...] in the loneliness of the heart everything is absolute, in the heart there are no statistically

approximate values, there the law is valid” (Muir trans. 176)]. Richard has found that his love for Otto—made clearer in Otto’s death—and for Ilse, provide him with compelling final ends that alleviate his chronic ambivalence and uncertainty, restoring his vitality and full humanity to him. The commands of love are absolute, for Richard, because it is unthinkable for him to violate them, and because they provide the insoluble justification for his action.

Works cited

- Broch, Hermann. *Die Unbekannte Größe*. Kommentierte Werkausgabe. Band 2, hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977.
- . *Geist and Zeitgeist: six essays by Hermann Broch*. Intro. and trans. John Hargraves. New York: Counterpoint, 2002.
- . Kommentierte Werkausgabe. Band 9/2. hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977.
- . Kommentierte Werkausgabe. Band 9/1. hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977.
- . Kommentierte Werkausgabe. Band 10/2. hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977.

- . *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and his Time: The European Imagination 1860-1920*. Ed. and trans. Michael Steinberg, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- . *The Unknown Quantity*. Trans. Willa and Edwin Muir. Northwestern University Press: Evanston, 1988.
- Fitzgerald, Michael. *Autism and Creativity: Is there a link between autism in men and exceptional ability?* New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004.
- Frankfurt, Harry. "Autonomy, Necessity, and Love." *Necessity, Volition and Love*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- . *On Bullshit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- . "The Dear Self." *Philosophers' Imprint*. volume 1, No. 0. Ann Harbor: Scholarly Publishing, (Jan. 2001).
- . "The Importance of What We Care About." *The Importance of What We Care About*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- . *Taking Ourselves Seriously & Getting it Right*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006.
- Frege, Gottlob. *Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik: eine logisch-mathematische Untersuchung über den Begriff der Zahl*. Breslau, W. Koenner, 1884.
- Hardin, James. "The Theme of Salvation in the Novels of Hermann Broch." *PMLA*. Vol. 85, No. 2 (Mar., 1970), 219-227.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). Ed. and trans. Allen W. Wood. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.
- . *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788). Trans. Werner S. Pluhar; intro. Stephen Engstrom. Cambridge: Hackett, 2002.

- Kenny, Anthony. *Wittgenstein*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Könneker, Carsten. "Hermann Brochs *Unbekannte Größe*." *Orbis Litterarum* 54: 439-463, 1999.
- Liebrand, Claudia. "Brochs Drehbuch *Das Unbekannte X*: Eine filmhistorische Verortung." *Hermann Broch und die Künste*. Eds. Paul Michael Lützeler and Alice Staskova. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009.
- Lewis, C.I. and Langford, C. H. *Symbolic Logic* (1932). New York: Dover Publications, 1959.
- Lützeler, Paul Michael. *Die Entropie des Menschen: Studien zum Werk Hermann Brochs*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000.
- Malcolm, Norman. *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.
- Monk, Ray. *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*. New York: Free Press, 1991.
- Moore, G.E. "Defense of Common Sense." *Contemporary British Philosophy*. 2nd series. Ed. J. H. Muirhead. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1925.
- . "Proof of an External World." *Philosophical Papers*. New York: Collier Books, 1939.
- Russell, Bertrand. *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1968.
- Spinoza, Baruch. *Chief Works*. Trans. R. Elwes. 2 vols. New York: Dover Publications, 1951.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *The Big Typescript*. German-English Scholars' Edition, trans. C. Grant Luckhardt and Maximilian E. Aue. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005.

---. *Culture and Value*. eds. G. H. von Wright and Heikki Nyman, trans. Peter Winch.
Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1980.

---. *Denkbewegungen: Tagebücher 1930-32, 1936-37* (MS 183). Ed. Ilsa Somavilla.
Innsbruck: Haymon Verlag, 1997.

---. *Notebooks 1914-16*. Trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, eds. G.H. von Wright and G.E.M.
Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell, 1961.

---. *Über Gewissheit [On Certainty]*. Ed. and trans. G.E.M. Anscombe and G.H. von
Wright. Oxford: Blackwell, 1969.

---. *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). Trans. G. E. M. Anscombe. 2nd ed. Oxford:
Blackwell, 1997.

Monk, Ray. *Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*. London: Cape, 1990.

Schroeder, Severin. *Wittgenstein: The Way Out of the Fly-Bottle*. Cambridge: Polity Press,
2006.

Sorensen, Roy. "Wittgenstein and the Depth of a Grammatical Joke." *A Brief History of
the Paradox: Philosophy and the Labyrinths of the Mind*. Oxford: Oxford
University Press, 2003.

Watt, Roderick H. "Hermann Broch's *Die Unbekannte Größe*: the Central Symbol of
'Sterne im Wasser.'" *MLN*. Vol. 89, No. 5, German Issue, (Oct. 1974): 840-848.

Ziolkowski, Theodore. "Hermann Broch and the Relativity in Fiction." *Wisconsin Studies
in Contemporary Literature*. Vol. 8, No. 3 (Summer, 1967): 365-376.

Chapter 4

The World viewed ‘Sub Specie Aeternitatis’: Wittgenstein and Broch’s *Der Tod des Vergil*

“The work of art is the object seen sub specie aeternitatis; and the good life is the world seen sub specie aeternitatis. This is the connection between art and ethics” (NTB 83e). –

Wittgenstein

[What one] “finds beautiful in a work of art is the result of these subjective, affective pleasures, of a very personal liberation from fear, uniting him [...] in a literal unio mystica” (G&Z, 18). –Broch

Before Broch wrote *Der Tod des Vergil* [The Death of Virgil], he wrote a shorter piece, *Die Heimkehr des Vergil* [The Homecoming of Virgil], which he read on Austrian radio in 1937. The morning after the Nazi annexation of Austria, in March 1938, four Nazis arrested Broch on the suspicion that he was a communist sympathizer.⁹³ While in captivity Broch began to expand the shorter work into the full-length *Der Tod des Vergil*. He was released after a few weeks, but the experience brought perspective. He explains in a letter ten years after the event:

Das Buch ist nicht als Buch, sondern als eine Art privates Tagebuch geschrieben worden, d.h. es wurde als Buch begonnen, wurde als Tagebuch fortgesetzt und wurde dann schließlich wieder zu einem Buch umgestaltet. Während der Tagebuchzeit glaubte ich, daß ich niemals mehr etwas veröffentlichen und im Konzentrationslager enden würde; es war also private Auseinandersetzung mit dem Todeserlebnis und der Todesrealität. (Lützeler 220)

The book was written not as a book, but as a kind of private diary, that is, it began as a book, was continued as a diary and then the final part was written as a book again. While I was writing it as a diary I believed I would never publish anything again and that I would end my days in a concentration camp; it was therefore a personal confrontation with the experience and reality of death. (Lützeler 157)

The novel is very difficult to understand, and Broch seems to lament that he would write such a work. Hannah Arendt called Broch a “Dichter wider Willen” [poet against his will] (HAHB 186). What she meant was that Broch was a poet even though he saw

⁹³ Paul Michael Lützeler, *Hermann Broch: A Biography* (London: Quartet Books, 1987) 155.

literary language, like Nietzsche, as potentially deceitful and vain.⁹⁴ As a former student of mathematics and philosophy, Broch saw the more pristine language of symbolic logic, mathematics, and the hard sciences as ‘honest’ and epistemologically superior to that of poetic language. However, he believed straightforward discursive language was incapable of yielding full insight into ethical problems.

Broch, like many other canonical German literary figures, including Brecht and Schiller to name only a few, does not identify with the Bohemian creed *l’art pour l’art*.⁹⁵ The Bohemian⁹⁶ would argue that adopting utilitarian ends for the production of art results in art that is not created out of artistic inspiration, but is mere mimicry and kitsch.⁹⁷ Broch is sympathetic to the Bohemian, but does not draw the same conclusion that art and ethics should remain discrete. Broch is also critical of kitsch, and the attempt to use art for the promulgation of moral dogmas (secular or religious). Instead, Broch

⁹⁴ Broch alludes to Nietzsche in the context of language, ethics, and positivism, though it’s not entirely clear what aspect of Nietzsche’s philosophy is most directly pertinent: “so soll die Sprache selber dieses mystische Wertszentrum werden. Es ist nicht die Mystik, welche der logische Positivismus meint [...] Der philosophische Sprachmystizismus ist etwas anderes, er steht an der Grenze der Dichtung—wie das Beispiel Nietzsches zeigt—, [...] er hofft, daß die dischterische Erkenntnis die Aufgabe der philosophischen Erkenntnis übernehmen und daß ihre ‘gemäßigte’ Mystik die Tragik der ethischen Stummheit aufheben werde” (KW 9/2, 193-94) [“language itself must become the mystic value center. This is not the mysticism meant by logical positivism [...] The philosophical mysticism of language is something else, it stands at the edge of poetry—as the example of Nietzsche shows—, [...] in the hope that poetic insight will take over the task of philosophic insight, and that its ‘moderated’ mysticism will finally cancel out the tragedy of ethical silence” (G&Z 57)].

⁹⁵ Broch praises the “Russian novel” for breaking “through the boundaries of *l’art pour l’art*,” which made possible “the ethical work of art” (HHT 51). One should remember here the profound influence Russian novels had on the young Wittgenstein during WWI. Further, the slogan *l’art pour l’art* had not been coined during Schiller’s day, but his substantial engagement with ethics in his works, and his essay *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, suggest he sees art as a primer for ethical discussion.

⁹⁶ The term ‘Bohemian’ as I am using it here, refers to persons devoted to the creation and appreciation of beauty, with a tendency to neglect or ignore their material prosperity and conventional social norms.

⁹⁷ This is a simplification of a somewhat arcane subject of aesthetic psychology. Broch’s opinions on the matter are expressed in “Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst” (KW 9/2, 119-156). Virgil also defends the autonomy of art (KW 4, 313).

believes in the autonomy of art, while also believing that aesthetic inspiration yields art that is often ethically revelatory. Authentic representational art, for Broch, contains insights about the deepest values of our species, and in the case of the novel, can show the ways in which persons relate to the things they value. Thus good art is not generated didactically; coincidentally, however, it contains some didactic value to its perceiver.

Broch's respect for the straightforward, precise language of science did not prevent him from using lyrical language; nor did it prevent him from knowingly uttering 'nonsense,' in the Wittgensteinian conception of the word. On the contrary, Broch blamed positivism and Wittgenstein's famous dictum (calling for silence in matters that cannot be reduced to representational propositions) for inciting unfair cynicism towards language, leading to a "Stummheit" [muteness] (KW 9/2, 178) that contributed to what he considered an ethical retardation of central Europe in the early twentieth century. The most conspicuous evidence of this ethical decline, for Broch, was the widespread popularity of fascist thought and the social Darwinism of the Nazis. The suspicion and sacrilege to which language became subjected, extended to the human "Geist" [spirit] itself, since language is the ether in which the spirit lives and functions (KW 9/2, 178-80).⁹⁸ Broch's defiance of the final line of the *Tractatus*, however, belies the depth to which the thoughts conveyed in the *Tractatus* inspire *Der Tod des Vergil*. In his essay "James Joyce und die Gegenwart (1936)," Broch reveals the relation of his thought to the *Tractatus*:

⁹⁸ Broch explains further: "denn da er am Wort zweifelt, verzweifelt er auch am Geiste, am Geiste seiner eigenen Menschlichkeit, am Geist, der durch die Sprache wirkt [...]" (KW 9/2, 177) ["for having lost faith in words, [mankind] despairs of the spirit, too, the spirit of its own humanity, that spirit which works through language" (G&Z, 42)].

Die Philosophie hat ihrem Zeitalter der Universalität, dem Zeitalter der großen Compendien selbst ein Ende gesetzt, sie mußte ihre brennendsten Fragen aus ihrem logischen Raum entfernen oder, wie Wittgenstein sagt, ins Mystische verweisen. Und dies ist der Punkt, an dem die Mission des Dichterischen einsetzt, Mission einer totalitätserfassenden Erkenntnis, die über jeder empirischen oder sozialen Bedingtheit steht und für die es gleichgültig ist, ob der Mensch in einer feudalen, in einer bürgerlichen oder in einer proletarischen Zeit lebt, Pflicht der Dichtung zur Absolutheit der Erkenntnis schlechthin. [...]. (KW 9/1, 85)⁹⁹

The age of philosophical universality, which was also the age of the great compendiums, was brought to an end by philosophy itself, which became obliged to withdraw its most burning questions from the realm of logical discussion or else, as Wittgenstein has put it, refer them back to the mystical. It is at this point that the mission of literature begins; the mission of a cognition that remains above all empirical or social modes of being and to which it is a matter of indifference whether man lives in a feudal, bourgeois or proletarian age; literature's obligation to the absoluteness of cognition, in general. (*G&Z*, 88)

Unlike other examples of philosophical/literary amalgams, such as those attempted in Schiller's *Gedankenlyrik*, Nietzsche's aphorisms, or Sartre's existential novels, Broch's philosophical literature is unique. He explains that the cognition that remains above the empirical and social is one achievable not through "lyrische Philosophie" (*MHB* 223), which he says he avoids, but instead only in the simultaneous,¹⁰⁰ stream-of-consciousness, and ultimately phenomenological form of literary perception through which alone one is able to glean from a text the ineffable substance of ethics: "nur hiedurch ist es ihm möglich, das Unaussprechbare auszudrücken, nämlich in der Spannung zwischen den Zeilen und Worten, zwischen den Farbflecken auf der Leinwand, zwischen den musikalischen Tönen" (*MHB* 223) [only through this is it possible to express the unspeakable; that is, in the suspense between the lines and words, between the spots of paint on the canvas, between the musical notes (my translation)].

⁹⁹ Broch's belief in the mission of literature is echoed in *Der Tod des Vergil* at KW 4, 313.

¹⁰⁰ I discuss the significance of the simultaneity of perception later in this chapter.

Broch's comments are consistent with Wittgenstein's suggestion, in his "Lecture on Ethics," that the 'absolutes' of ethics are not expressible in propositional language. Further, that the mental states through which the absolute is discerned are only generated from a particular perspective, namely, "*sub specie aeternitatis*" (NTB 83e). Broch's novel attempts to achieve both of these difficult tasks; the result is an intellectually strenuous novel to read, but one that, I believe, offers enough intellectual bounty to make the read worthwhile. Apparently the Austrian P.E.N. Club had a similar opinion as they nominated Broch for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1950, the same year that Bertrand Russell won it.¹⁰¹ Hannah Arendt also held *Der Tod des Vergil* in high regard, having the novel in mind when she said that Broch "belongs in that tradition of great 20th Century novelists who have transformed, almost beyond recognition, one of the classic art-forms of the 19th Century" ("AHB" 476), and further she suggests, "*The Death of Virgil*, one of the truly great works in German literature, is unique in its kind" ("AHB" 481).¹⁰²

This chapter draws equally from Wittgenstein's earlier and later philosophy. The scholarship on Wittgenstein had been heavily weighted towards logical and epistemological concerns until recent decades in which a torrent of works on Wittgenstein's ethics and aesthetics have flooded secondary literature. Some of these works will help tease out the Wittgensteinian elements of *Der Tod des Vergil*. Though Broch was directly acquainted only with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, his *Tod des Vergil* suggests some anticipation of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*.

¹⁰¹ Paul Michael Lützeler, *Hermann Broch und die Moderne: Roman, Menschenrecht, Biografie* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2011) 33.

¹⁰² For more on Arendt's views of Broch's works, and the rather extensive letter exchanges between the two of them, see Paul Michael Lützeler, ed., *Hannah Arendt—Hermann Broch, Briefwechsel 1946-1951* (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1996).

Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil*

The setting for Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil* is ancient Rome in 19 BC, the year of Virgil's death and the completion of his *Aeneid*. The Roman Republic has collapsed, and the Roman Empire is in its nascent stages.¹⁰³ The era is meant to have important commonalities with Europe in the early twentieth century, particularly the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the cultural turmoil of the inter-war years in which a new value-system and political structure have yet to become established. Virgil is summoned to meet with Caesar Augustus regarding the *Aeneid*. In the first chapter, "Water—The Arrival," Virgil arrives by ship in Brundisium. He is carried in a sedan chair through the slums of Brundisium and he is shocked by the animalistic conditions of the people living there. Some in the crowd mock Virgil and yell out insults. The city is in an unusually festive spirit in anticipation of the Caesar's birthday and Virgil's visit. In the bustle of the crowd a young boy sees Virgil and reacts with fanfare. The boy, Lysanias, follows Virgil throughout the story, and it is gradually revealed that Lysanias represents Virgil's boyhood self. A slave belonging to the Caesar also accompanies Virgil. The slave represents another of Virgil's alter egos. Virgil, meanwhile, is old, ill, and expecting his impending death. His awareness of death puts him in a sentimental frame of mind in which he reflects on his life, especially his parents, early childhood, and failed romances.

The narrator explains that Virgil was lured to Athens by the prospects of studying in the same city that produced Plato and the hope that he could escape the aesthetic

¹⁰³ Broch suggests that it is important that there is a sense of "no longer" and "not yet" creating the feeling of transition, death, and emergence. He suggests the same feeling of suspense exists in his own day in respect to the collapse not only of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but of Christendom as well. The feeling of 'not yet,' is in anticipation of a yet to emerge secular democracy. See, *KW* 4, 253, among other places. Or consult Patrick Eiden-Offe, *Das Reich der Demokratie: Hermann Brochs 'Der Tod des Vergil'* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2011).

sophistry in which he felt trapped.¹⁰⁴ Instead Virgil wants to live a life devoted to “Philosophie” and “Wissenschaft” [science] (KW 4, 12).

The second chapter, “Fire—The Descent,” Virgil has arrived at the temple, and prepares to sleep. He continues to reflect on his life as his heightened awareness of the temporality of life leads him to savor the memories of his past. He admits that for his entire life he has been conscious of a coming death and this awareness had always shaped his perspective on life. The *Aeneid*, which has consumed him for many years, fails, Virgil suggests, to express a ‘supernatural’ reality that he had hoped to find through lyrical language. Virgil laments that he has failed as an artist, and that the *Aeneid* is a product of his vanity and has no use to humanity. His conscience calls out to him to burn the *Aeneid*.

In the third chapter, “Earth—The Expectation,” two old friends of Virgil come to his side: Plotius and Lucius. They encourage Virgil to recover from his illness so that he can finish the *Aeneid*. Lucius is a poet, like Virgil, and reasons with Virgil about the value of Virgil’s work. Lucius is not persuaded by Virgil’s criticisms of his own work. A request is sent out for a doctor, and Caesar Augustus, concerned for Rome’s greatest poet, arrives to meet Virgil. Augustus tries to persuade Virgil that the *Aeneid* is a great work, belongs to the people of Rome, and should not be burned. Augustus explains that poetry is divine because it is unique in its ability to represent totality, and that art must play a central role in the kind of society Augustus hopes to mold. Augustus is enchanted by the *Aeneid* and sees the work as championing Roman virtues and legitimizing royal

¹⁰⁴ He has hope for a “kunstabgewandtes, dichtungsfreies Leben” (KW 4, 12) [a life free from art and poetry].

rule.¹⁰⁵ Virgil, however, sees the *Aeneid* as sophistry, perversion, and deceit, and insists that it be burned. Virgil does not get his way; Lucius refuses Virgil's request to burn the *Aeneid*. Virgil continues to resist Augustus until Virgil proposes that the slave that had accompanied Virgil to the palace be set free in exchange for a completed manuscript. Augustus agrees to Virgil's request; too weak to continue working, Virgil insists that Plotius and Lucius finish the *Aeneid*.

In the final chapter, "Ether—The Homecoming," Lysanias points the way to a distant shore as he escorts the dying Virgil. The expanse of water between the two bodies of land represents the 'ether' through which the boat crosses from what can be expressed in language, on one side, and what lies "jenseits der Sprache" [beyond language], on the other. Analogously, words are the 'ether' through which the spirit communicates. During the passage Virgil dies, passing to the realm of eternity. The scene is foreshadowed near the beginning of the story when Lysanias says, "Dein Weg ist Dichtung, dein Ziel ist jenseits der Dichtung" (KW 4, 59) [Your path is poetry, your aim is beyond poetry].

The events of the story occur in a single day, and are frequently interrupted by Virgil's meditative ruminations. As Virgil is arriving aboard the ship, he realizes that his own free will has been compromised by his blind willingness to glorify the Roman Empire. He used his great talent as a poet to please the emperor and create a myth that lauds the status quo of the Roman monarchy. By riding aboard the ship transporting Caesar, Virgil has woven his "Schicksal" [fate] inextricably with that of Caesar's, if only

¹⁰⁵ Lucius also suggests Virgil's *Aeneid* is quintessentially Roman when he remarks that "die Größe Roms und die Größe deiner Dichtung nicht mehr von einander zu trennen sind!" (KW 4, 225-26) ["the greatness of Rome and the greatness of your poem can no longer be divorced from each other" (Untermeyer trans., 240).

temporarily.¹⁰⁶ The wind and water bringing the ship to port are following the eternal causal laws of the cosmos. The theme of fate is an important one because it reveals how a person is “eingebettet im Strom” [embedded in the stream] of life (KW 4, 44). In a meditative state, Virgil declares that “das Schicksal der Äneis, sein eigenes Schicksal, [ist] unvollendet!” (KW 4, 89) [the fate of the Aeneid, its own fate, [is] incomplete (my translation)]. Its fate, like that of all things, is death and destruction. Against the causal determinism of fate and the natural laws that underpin it, there exists only one reprieve, according to Broch, namely, the inner law of one’s own soul. Here is Broch’s Kantian belief that human reason endows a person with self-legislative power, an inner necessity that determines the action of humankind. The key passage articulating the role of necessity for Virgil comes as he makes one last effort to bring himself to the window of his room to look through the darkness of night and breathe in fresh air. He introspects into “das Jetzt seiner Seele” (KW 4, 93) [“vital immediacy of his own soul” (Untermeyer trans., 97)] and struggles to perceive its “innerste irdische *Notwendigkeit*” (author’s italics, KW 4, 93) [“innermost NECESSITY” (translator’s capitalization, Untermeyer trans., 97), or in other words, the soul’s volitional necessities, the things that inspire one to action, that is, the ‘musts’ that shape our agency and direct our behavior. Virgil’s meditation at the window looking out into night reveals to him the only thing stronger than fate, and the volitional necessity which supplies the *vérités fondamentales*¹⁰⁷ of all ethical knowledge; namely, love. Love, for Broch, is volitional and as such originates in

¹⁰⁶ “Er hatte sich vom Schicksal treiben lassen, und das Schicksal trieb ihn dem Ende zu” (KW 4, 12) [“He had allowed himself to be driven by fate and now fate drove on to the end” (Untermeyer trans. 12)].

¹⁰⁷ Broch explains in a letter to Aldous Huxley in 1945 that he is exploring the ways in which one loses and regains “*vérités fondamentales*,” which apply to religion, but to ethics as well (MHB 226).

our wills; this is reconciled with the action demanded by the Kantian imperative as Virgil's trance reveals to him that duty is "zur Tat aufrufend" [...] "härtester Befehl" [summoning to action [...] the imperative command" (Untermeyer trans. 174)]. And later, "es gibt nur ein Gesetz, das Gesetz des Herzens!" (KW 4, 232) ["there is only one law, the law of the heart" (Untermeyer trans. 246-7)]. Since our minds formulate second-order desires and volitions, we are not helplessly steered by the causal forces of nature, or our own primary impulses.

Human action is juxtaposed to the physicality of the four elements in the four chapter titles of *Der Tod des Vergil* — 1. Water: The Arrival, 2. Fire: The Descent, 3. Earth: The Expectation, 4. Ether: The Homecoming. We can decide to contribute to these forces from the causality of our own agency. The novel thus contrasts the deterministic view of fate with the 'law of the heart,' which steers the actions of men.

But Virgil does not realize the power of his own will until he awakens from the dogmatic slumber in which his blind patriotism had led to his masterpiece: *The Aeneid*. He regrets that he did not pursue truth through philosophy or science, resorting instead to poetry,¹⁰⁸ but his justification for using literary language is his belief that literature can lead to a "neuer Einheitsvielfalt, zu neuer Vielfaltseinheit, zu neuer Schöpfung" (KW 4, 275) ["new and united diversity, [...] a new and manifold unity, [a] new creation" (Untermeyer trans. 293)].

¹⁰⁸ This point is made by Walter Baumann in "The Idea of Fate in Hermann Broch's *Tod des Vergil*," *Modern Language Quarterly* June 1st (1968) 197.

The stream of life is the first-person experience of time.¹⁰⁹ But as Virgil begins to realize on the boat journey, the form of life is not merely an abstraction but a subjectively perceivable phenomenon. The narrator explains that as Virgil develops a heightened second-order¹¹⁰ awareness of his body and life, he discovers the “Form seines Lebens” (KW 4, 12) [form of his life (my translation)]. In one important respect, this unites *Der Tod des Vergil* with Wittgenstein’s notion of ‘*Lebensform*’ in his *Philosophical Investigations*. Vergil is able to see the form and structure in which his own life is woven into the fabric of his society and the phenomena of his experience.

From the perspective in which one is able to perceive one’s own ‘*Lebensform*’ imbedded in the structure of the world, one is able to attain a synoptic viewpoint and perceive “das All wie eine einzig zeitlose Erinnerung” (KW 4, 45) [the All as a single timeless memory]. Virgil achieves this viewpoint but becomes ashamed by what he sees of himself. This shame is enhanced as he is walking through the slums of Brundisium in which he sees the masses of people acting as beasts.¹¹¹ He is reminded of his own animality and the inescapability of his own bodily existence.

Most of all the *Aeneid* engenders a feeling of shame in Virgil. He had believed that he wrote it in all seriousness and honesty, but his recent epiphany has made it clear to him that his vanity has led to his own self-delusion. His talent as a poet is unquestioned,

¹⁰⁹ In *Zeit und Geschichte in Hermann Brochs Roman ‘Der Tod Des Vergil,’* Timm Collmann explains that Broch is appealing to Kant’s distinction between the ‘abstract physical conception’ of time versus ‘experienced time’ (6).

¹¹⁰ By ‘second-order’ awareness I mean the uniquely human ability that persons have to formulate thoughts or perceptions about their own thoughts or perceptions. For instance, I might say to myself ‘isn’t it funny that I’m afraid of spiders?’ In this case I have formulated an introspective thought directed at my own mental phenomena.

¹¹¹ He calls them “Massentier” (KW4, 21) [“a mass of animals”].

and his writing charmed not only the Caesar, but others as well. However, it becomes clear to Virgil that this charm leads to nothing positive.

Much of the novel is similar to the historical account of Virgil's death. What is innovative on Broch's part is both the "musical" form in which the novel is written, to which I'll return momentarily, and the content of Virgil's meditations.¹¹² Both of these innovations account for the uniqueness of Broch's work. Together they yield insights that would not come to fruition in a bare-bones historical narrative of Virgil's death. Hence, an analysis of the novel cannot articulate the (putative) insights intended by Broch, simply because the insights of the novel only result from language games of its kind.

Broch's novel presents its own aesthetic theory in the claims of Catullus, one of the poets whose writings inspired Virgil: "Echte Kunst durchbricht Grenzen, durchbricht sie und betritt neue, bisher unbekannte Bereiche der Seele" (KW 4, 239) ["genuine art bursts through boundaries, bursts through and treads new and hitherto unknown realms of the soul" (Untermeyer trans. 255)]. But what "boundaries" are being broken by art? The boundaries are those of language, specifically the representational language theorized in the *Tractatus*. But how are such boundaries broken? Since the boundaries of *Tractarian* language are the same as those imposed on empirical thought, it's the boundary of empirical thought that is being broken. In Broch's theoretical writing, cognition is thought of as an intellectual faculty, whereas the emotions are a different faculty, or perhaps a distinctly unique type of cognition. Art thus has the ability to transverse the boundary of all possible propositions, and into the inner sphere of mind's intentionality

¹¹² Others have commented on how Broch's novel has a musical structure to it. See, for example, Marianne Charriere-Jacquín, "Zum Verhältnis Musik—Literatur im *Tod des Vergil*," *Hermann Broch—Das dichterische Werk: Neue Interpretationen* (Akten des Hermann-Broch-Symposiums Rottenburg-Stuttgart 1986) eds. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützeler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1987) 7-18.

and propositional attitudes. The parts of our minds in which attitudes are housed, so to speak, are the “unknown” realms of the soul. They are unknown because the justification of a propositional attitude is arbitrary, and wholly subjective. But this does not make these justifications of equal value. There are right and wrong justifications supporting propositional attitudes. For Virgil, it is the unique function of art that “bricht durch ins Ursprüngliche, ins Unmittelbare, ins Wirkliche...” (KW 4, 239) [“burst[s] through into the original, into the immediate, into the real” (Untermeyer trans. 255)] making clearer to us the appropriate attitude and degree of fervor with which that attitude ought to guide our behavior. The “real” in this context should be read as the reality of persons’ subjective relations to the things around them, reminiscent of Wittgenstein’s solipsistic view of the will in the *Tractatus*.¹¹³

Considering this subjective reality can explain why Virgil says that he wrote the *Aeneid* “zuerst für mich” (KW 4, 292) [“primarily for myself” (Untermeyer trans., 311)]. The knowledge to be acquired through it is largely subjective. He explains further, “Ungeduldig war ich nach Erkenntnis ... und darum wollte ich alles aufschreiben ... denn das ist Dichtung; ach, Ungeduld nach Erkenntnis ist sie, dies ist ihr Wunsch, und darüber hinaus vermag sie nicht zu dringen ...” (KW 4, 300) [“I was impatient for knowledge [...] and that is why I wanted to write down everything...for this, alas, is what poetry is, the craving for truth; this is its desire and it is unable to penetrate beyond it” (Untermeyer trans., 320)].¹¹⁴ It seems here that Virgil is contradicting his earlier

¹¹³ Wittgenstein explains, “what solipsism *means*, is quite correct, only it cannot be *said*, but it shows itself. That the world is *my* world, shows itself in the fact that the limits of the language (the language which only I understand) mean the limits of my world. The world and life are one. I am my world” (*Tractatus* 74).

¹¹⁴ As a side, Goethe must have felt a similar impatience for analytical discourse as he proclaims “Bilde, Künstler! Rede nicht!” [“Poet: Create! Don’t Talk!”] in *Goethes Gedichte in zeitlicher Folge*, ed. Heinz Nicolai (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1982): 686. I got this from Jürgen Heizmann, “A Farewell to Art:

statements; he says at KW 4, 239 that art bursts through boundaries, and at KW 4, 300 that poetry is unable to penetrate beyond truth. The resolution of this *prima facie* paradox is revealing of Broch's blending of philosophical traditions. It is common in the phenomenological tradition to refer to one's conscious experience as 'reality' and shun attempts to articulate a concise theory of truth, as one might find in the tradition of empiricism. For Broch, a sentence's truth is affirmed by its coherence with the web of beliefs in which it is embedded.¹¹⁵ Thus 'reality' and 'truth' are two distinct things in Virgil's terminology.

This point is important to keep in mind when considering the relation of *Der Tod des Vergil* to the philosophical era in which Broch wrote it. In the first chapter of this dissertation I presented the atomistic views of language held by Frege, Russell, and the *Tractarian* Wittgenstein, and the closely related positivistic view of language held by Broch's professors in the Vienna Circle. The temptation that faced them was to believe that the sense of language is determined *wholly* by the syntax and vocabulary of a particular sentence, and its truth-value is the correspondence relation the sentence has to the state of affairs that it represents. Considerations for the human activity in which a sentence is used was not given due respect. In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein suggests that although humans can use language in a *Tractarian* sense, that is just one of many language games in which our species engages. The meaning of a sentence is derived from the role the sentence plays in the form of life in which the

Poetic Reflection in Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil*," *Hermann Broch: a visionary in exile: The 2001 Yale Symposium*, (Rochester: Camden House, 2003): 187-200.

¹¹⁵ See chapter 2 for more detail.

sentence's user is embedded: the logical rule governing the use of the sentence must also accommodate the variations in which sentences present semantic content.

Thus the latter Wittgenstein's notions of 'form of life' and 'language games' provide a more congenial theoretical approach to understanding the literary theory embedded in *Der Tod des Vergil*. And one of the ensuing questions that follows from such theoretical considerations, and which is most pertinent to the philosophically interested reader of Broch's novel, concerns the influence of literary art, specifically novels, on our moral judgments. Its corollary addresses how a novel in general, and Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil* in particular, provides the reader with a viewpoint from which the reader may gain greater insight into the ethical quandaries facing one's own life. The devil's advocate might sympathize with Virgil by arguing that novels—and lyrical language—merely delude readers yielding false consciousness¹¹⁶ through pretentious language and impossible or hyperbolic scenarios.

In *Wittgenstein, Ethics and Aesthetics: The View from Eternity* (1991), B. R. Tilghman credits the aestheticians of the first half of the twentieth century for asking the right questions and seeing the importance of art in a person's life, but is critical of their "metaphysical obfuscations" and philosophies of perception that were entangled in their answers (15). Tilghman likewise criticizes analytic philosophers for not taking the philosophy of aesthetics seriously during the early and middle decades of the 20th century, and for misidentifying the purpose of Wittgenstein's philosophy by focusing on the 'language of art' instead of the role art plays in our lives; he cites Francis J. Coleman's article "A Critical Examination of Wittgenstein's Aesthetics" (1986) and Richard

¹¹⁶ By "false consciousness" I do not mean its more specific use by the Marxists in the Frankfurt School as it relates to modes of production, but in the more general sense such as in Plato's cave analogy in which a false representation of reality is mistakenly assumed to be reality.

Schusterman's "Wittgenstein and Critical Reasoning" (1986) as examples. Tilghman suggests that the most important task for the philosophy of art is in making clear "why and how art is important to us and how it does and how it can enter into our lives; what, for example, its connection is with our moral life" (16). Tilghman suggests that the "most profitable way of doing this [...] is by means of a deeper and far more careful study of the work of Wittgenstein" (16). Broch would agree with Tilghman on both of these points. Broch was equally critical of metaphysical obfuscation and trivial moralizing. The challenge here is determining whether ethical problems can be brought to resolution more effectively, or in a way that yields better results, if art, particularly the novel, is in some way seen as complementary to rational discourse, and is uniquely revelatory in a way that cannot be mimicked through any other means including logical argumentation or ordinary life experiences.

For Wittgenstein, language is more revelatory; it does not merely communicate the content of propositions. His distinction between what is said in a proposition versus what is shown by the same proposition suggests that he too believes important insights transcend the content of a proposition. He clearly states in the *Tractatus* that the logical form of a proposition is shown, not said, and in his "Lecture on Ethics" he suggests that language cannot communicate the absolutes of ethics, though such absolutes exist in some mystical sense. For Broch, literary form has unique revelatory power for much the same reason that Wittgenstein believes some things are only show-able in language: "Nur die Gedichtform aber ist imstande, eine solche Einheit des Disparaten herzustellen und plausibel zu machen, denn im Gedicht vollzieht sich die Aussage nicht im rationalen Ausdruck, sondern in der irrationalen Spannung zwischen den Worten, zwischen den

Zeilen, kurzum in der ‘Sinnarchitektur’” (KW 4, 494) [Only literary form is suitable to present and make plausible the unity of disparate things; for in poetry a proposition is completed not in rational expression, but in the irrational suspense between the words, between the lines, that is, in the ‘sense architecture’ (my translation)]. Broch’s belief that the form of language is integral in yielding its sense, echoes Wittgenstein’s interest in articulating the form of a proposition in the *Tractatus*. But meaning conveyed in the ‘suspense between the words’ and ‘between the lines’ is more reminiscent of Wittgenstein’s aphorism in *Culture and Value*: “Philosophie dürfte man eigentlich nur *dichten*” (28) [“one should write philosophy only as one *writes a poem*”]. I suspect Wittgenstein means that in writing philosophy, one is forced to condense into a limited number of words meanings that extend beyond their single utterance in the philosophical text; his *Tractatus* might appear to some as a condensed form of ideas that are much bigger than they appear in their truncated *Tractarian* manifestation.

James Joyce’s *Ulysses* inspired Broch’s novel. Commenting on Joyce’s work, Broch applies the standards of “sub speciae aeternitatis et sub speciae mortis” (KW 9/1, 66). Broch’s commentary on *Ulysses* isn’t directly relevant to this chapter, but the fact that such concepts are at the forefront of Broch’s thoughts is important, particularly since Broch alludes to Wittgenstein explicitly. Broch suggests that James Joyce’s *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* defy linguistic conventions and create a new “Weltsicht” [vision of the world], and in its midst an original conception of the “Menschengestalt” (KW 9/1, 241) [shape of mankind]. This ‘shape’ of man, which is represented in our consciousness, is constructed through our perceptual faculties, rather than our empirical senses or rational

apparatus. Hence, the challenge to the reader of a novel to perceive the ‘shape’ of man ultimately entails problems of intentionality.

In the previous chapter I argued that Broch viewed intentionality as problematic; specifically in its role in giving the mind the psychological raw material from which reasoning gains traction, so to speak, with the world. This makes the task of assessing the ethical worth of a novel equally problematic since intentionality is the means through which our minds discern the phenomena of a novel. Broch believed that since a person’s intentionality yields mental phenomena that are often inscrutable and inchoate, using deductive logic to pursue conclusions drawn from said phenomena is not a foolproof method. This caveat is necessary because the premise supplied to an argument by means of one’s intentionality often lacks a stable epistemological footing. I used Wittgenstein’s analogy of the duck-rabbit to illustrate the point. Wittgenstein shows that the duck-rabbit drawing may be seen as a duck, rabbit, or duck-rabbit; it is dependent upon the viewer to see the “aspect[s]” in the drawing giving it the character that one attributes to it. Herein lies one of the problems of looking to an object of art as revelatory.

Drawing a conclusion about the duck-rabbit assumes that the viewer sees it in one way and not the other, yet the same drawing is inherently indeterminate, or perhaps it is better to say that its determinacy is inherently arbitrary since I may be resolute in my perception of the drawing as rabbit and not a duck. The problem for Broch is that deductive logic – while pristine and systematic in its formal state—acquires a level of arbitrariness when used in the language games of ordinary experience. This is in part because the soundness of an argument often depends upon a premise that is comprised solely of an inscrutable mental phenomenon.

The question then arises whether anything might be done to make inscrutable mental phenomena more unequivocal, and whether there is true insight to be gleaned from such opaque and even ‘mystical’ mental phenomena. Broch believed the answer to both of these questions is yes. To the first question—whether unequivocal conclusions can be achieved—he believes it is the role primarily of empirical and rational faculties, while the latter question—whether insight can be gleaned from inscrutable mental phenomena—requires other equally diverse and subtle thinking strategies. For this latter purpose, Broch conceived of an epistemological form for the novel, that is, a form that gives one knowledge—with coherency as its justifying criterion—of one’s relation to the world. The fruit of his ingenuity was *Der Tod des Vergil*.

The novel attempts to give the reader a view of the world *sub specie aeternitatis*, that is, from the perspective of eternity; Broch does not coin this notion, but borrows it from Spinoza.¹¹⁷ But what is that? And what epistemological status do beliefs have that are born from this perspective? To understand this concept and to see how this works in the case of Broch’s novel, we have our work cut out for us. Let’s begin with a rudimentary historical sketch of what the notion of ‘seeing’ something *sub specie aeternitatis* has meant.

Spinoza was the first to use the phrase *sub specie aeternitatis*.¹¹⁸ He admitted that there are different ways of knowing something, and as a rationalist he sought to improve the intellect’s ability to arrive at knowledge. Hence he was interested in understanding how perspectives are generated, maintained, and justified. Spinoza believed that “method

¹¹⁷ Broch alludes to Spinoza on page 184 of *KW 9/2 (G&Z, 48)*.

¹¹⁸ See Baruch Spinoza, *Spinoza’s Ethics and On the Correction of the Understanding*, trans. Andrew Boyle, intro. T.S. Gregory (New York: Dutton, 1977) 72.

is nothing else than reflective knowledge (*cognitio reflexiva*)” (238). The method through which perspectives are attained, for Spinoza, consists of forming an idea in one’s mind that is directed towards experiential sense data. It is reflexive in the sense that the idea itself, a mental entity, can be the object of thought, though the idea may very well consist of content that is derived from a non-mental source. The idea is mental whereas the substance¹¹⁹ about which the idea is directed is ontological, yet is a bearer of physical properties that are discernable through sense perception. The reflexivity of knowledge, for Spinoza, necessarily includes intentionality since the idea has an intentional direct object. Spinoza calls the reflexive method of attaining knowledge *sub specie*, or ‘from the perspective.’

Since sense datum alone does not reveal the causal nexus in which objects persist, it is reason (not sense data) that induces an object’s situation in relation to all things. Thus it is reason that allows us to gain perspective on an object by gaining a synoptic viewpoint of its place in a larger whole. There are of course different angles that afford different perspectives; what is relevant to Broch and Wittgenstein is the perspective one gains from the viewpoint, according to Spinoza, of God.¹²⁰ This is the viewpoint from eternity, i.e., as God would view the world. This is done only when the necessity inherent in nature, that is, nature’s causal nexus, is the context in which the origins of an object are understood. Considering Spinoza’s pantheistic conception of God, a viewpoint from God’s perspective is not one in absentia from physical laws, but in complete conformity

¹¹⁹ Spinoza’s conception of ‘substance’ is a tricky one, and lends itself to a few interpretations.

¹²⁰ Though one should keep in mind that Spinoza was a pantheist, so interpreting him through a particular religious conception of God may yield conclusions quite different from what Spinoza has in mind.

and acquiescence to them.¹²¹ From this perspective, according to Spinoza, one has an absolute perspective. Only from this perspective is knowledge of reality gleaned. In Spinoza's word, "the bases of reason are notions . . . [that] must be conceived without any relation of time, but under a certain species of eternity" (72). Timelessness is important to the concept because the causes of contingent phenomena are thought, by Spinoza, to be consistent and permanent, even though their product is neither.

Spinoza's notion of *sub specie aeternitatis* was revisited in the nineteenth century by Hegel and by Hegel's nemesis Schopenhauer. In "Not Only Sub Specie Aeternitatis, but Equally Sub Specie Durationis: a Defense of Hegel's Criticisms of Spinoza's Philosophy" (2009), Fritzman and Riley suggest that Hegel sees a view of the world *sub specie aeternitatis* as incomplete. They explain instead that Hegel argues that a subject is always involved in the act of perceiving.¹²² The subject's perception is in a moment in time, even if the perception is *sub specie aeternitatis*. Therefore they conclude that, at least for Hegel, "to grasp and express the truth *sub specie aeternitatis* is to explicitly recognize that truth is necessarily *sub specie durationis*" (93). Schopenhauer, though one of Hegel's fiercest critics, has a similar view, and develops the idea further in *The World as Will and Representation* (1818), which was to become a major influence on Wittgenstein before he wrote the *Tractatus*.¹²³

¹²¹ See Abraham Wolfson, *Spinoza, A Life of Reason* (Whitefish: Kessinger, 2006) 47-70.

¹²² Michael P. Steinberg makes an important point relating to this in his introduction to Broch's *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and His Time*. He suggests that Virgil realizes "that thought and knowledge cannot transcend the temporal confines of consciousness" (26).

¹²³ Schopenhauer's influence on Wittgenstein originates from the larger arguments of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, not from single passages, the exception being the ladder analogy from volume II, page 72, which I discuss later in this chapter.

In “Schopenhauer and Spinoza” (1974), Brann suggests that both Schopenhauer and Spinoza “consider overcoming emotions and passions the highest goal of cognitive insight and practical wisdom” (193). For Schopenhauer, art can play a fundamental role in achieving this due to the perspective art gives on the world, as he says, ‘*sub specie aeternitatis*’; art treats an object or a scenario in the world as, in his words, removed “from the stream of the world’s course, and holds it isolated before it. This particular thing, which in that stream was an infinitesimal part, becomes for art a representative of the whole...” (*WWR*, §36). Wittgenstein gives us an example, as Tilghman points out, of something similar to Schopenhauer. In his *Notebooks 1914-16*, Wittgenstein explains, “If I have been contemplating the stove, and then am told: but now all you know is the stove, my result does indeed seem trivial. For this represents the matter as if I had studied the stove as one among the many things in the world. But if I was contemplating the stove *it* was my world, and everything else colorless by contrast with it” (83). In *Culture and Value*, Wittgenstein elaborates further, “only an artist can so represent an individual thing as to make it appear to us like a work of art. [...] A work of art forces us—as we might say—to see it [that is the object] in the right perspective, but in the absence of art, the object is just a fragment of nature like any other” (4). But what is the ‘right’ perspective? And how does this relate to ethics?

For Broch, the ‘right’ perspective, as it relates to ethics, is achieved when a person gains both a new perspective on an object, that is, freed as much as possible from prejudices or biases, conjoined with a perspective in which the object is seen as integral to the person’s conscious existence. This idea, and the role of art in producing perspective, is captured in *Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit*, in which Broch explains:

In jedem Kunstwerk muß, bei allen konventionellen Konventionen, die ganze Kunst neu anheben, nicht nur, weil (im Gegensatz zum wissenschaftlichen Vorgang) der künstlerische Akt, sonst wäre er keiner, stets auf neu das Sein in seiner Ganzheit zu erfassen hat, sondern auch, weil es überhaupt keine verschiedenen Kunstwerke gäbe, wenn nicht jedes in der Totalität, das es ist, ein Stück neuer Seinsrealität aufdeckte. (KW 9/1, 257)

In every work of art, the whole of art, despite all traditional conventions, must begin anew, not only because (in contrast to the scientific process), the artistic act, for otherwise it would not be one, must always grasp being in its entirety as if it had never been seen before, but also because there would be no diverse works of art at all if not each one of them, in the totality which it is, uncovered part of a new reality of being. (HHT 169)

Seeing the role that a particular thing plays in one's consciousness has a generative effect on a person's moral character, that is to say, the attitude (and proclivities) the person takes towards the objects and phenomena in the world, and how the person is likely to respond to the demands of circumstances.

In "The Avant-Garde in Crisis: Hermann Broch's Negative Aesthetics in Exile" (1986), Lützel explains that for Broch, the novel is to take up "tasks which neopositivism [of the Vienna Circle] considers 'unscientific,' i.e., it takes care of an area given up by philosophy" (16). Further, discovering new perceptions "provide[s] the foundation for a new ethical theory" (17). The fact that Broch is reacting against the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle is an important point. Broch's philosophy professor at the University of Vienna, Rudolf Carnap, wrote *Pseudoproblems of Philosophy*, which appeared originally in 1928, the same time Broch was attending Carnap's lectures. Broch is sympathetic to Carnap's assertion that metaphysical nonsense is an obstacle to thought, but arrives at a different conclusion from Carnap's; Broch, in reference to Carnap, suggests "so hat sich die Philosophie vielfach auf das rein Logische zurückgezogen, und wenn sie auch an ihrem prinzipiell philosophischen

Standpunkt nach wie vor festhält, so hat sie sich eben doch bemüßigt gesehen, jene Bereiche— vor allem die des Ethischen und Metaphysischen— aus ihrer Domäne auszuschalten” (KW 9/1, 84-85) [“philosophy has frequently returned to pure logic, but although it clings now as before to its basic philosophical standpoint, it has nevertheless felt constrained to eliminate certain attributes particularly the ethical and the metaphysical” (G&Z 88)]. Whereas Carnap wants to create a clear path that avoids metaphysics, Broch is willing to take up the arduous challenge of metaphysical reflection, quite distinct from the pristine language of Carnap’s creation; Wittgenstein would have supported Broch’s effort.¹²⁴ While Broch is more willing to broach metaphysical questions than Carnap, Broch tries to avoid pursuing answers to the pseudo-problems that Carnap ridicules. Broch makes clear his appreciation for the advancement of philosophy by means of formal innovations in logic, and states that “die Entdeckung der Sinnlosigkeit gewisser Fragestellungen, deren Legitimität früher außer jedem Zweifel gestanden ist, zu den Großtaten der modernen Logik gehört” (KW 9/2, 189) [“one of the great contributions of modern logic has been the discovery of the meaninglessness of certain questions whose validity had previously been beyond question” (G&Z 53)]. Broch is willing to try to trod metaphysical ground to find the means through which genuine problems can be resolved through the attainment of a specific state of mind, not through belief in the correct set of propositions. However, like Carnap, Wittgenstein, and other early-stage analytic philosophers, Broch emphasizes the significance of finding enduring— rather than merely contingent— answers to ethical problems: the aim of the

¹²⁴ Wittgenstein says “Don’t for heaven’s sake, be afraid of talking nonsense! Only don’t fail to pay attention to your nonsense” (C&V 64).

poet is to search for the “Ethische im Unabänderlichen” (KW 9/1, 134) [“ethical within the unalterable” (HHT 51)].

The Tractarian conception of Sub Specie Aeternitatis

Wittgenstein once said “I am not a religious man but I cannot help seeing every problem from a religious point of view” (Drury 79). Perhaps the view that he is referring to is what in other places he refers to as the view *sub specie aeternitatis*, which he believes is essential to both aesthetic and ethical perception. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein suggests that “[e]thics and aesthetics are one” (88). This bold claim defies the various historical conceptions of both ethics and aesthetics. Historically, from figures such as Aristotle, Baumgarten, Kant, Tolstoy, etc., art has been seen as serving ethical purposes, seen as needing to have no purpose, or seen as completely disconnected from human life altogether.¹²⁵ While it is clear that Wittgenstein diverges from tradition, it is not clear what he means when he says that ethics and aesthetics are one. Some light is shed on the matter in his *Notebooks 1914-16*. There he says that the “work of art is the object seen *sub specie aeternitatis*; and the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. This is the connection between art and ethics” (83). But this still doesn’t decide the matter for us. It does not suggest how the world, or an object, is seen *sub specie aeternitatis*, or what this view consists of; nor does it suggest the probable result that comes from such a view. Articulating answers to any of these concerns would inevitably result in crossing the boundary of sensical language, which contradicts Wittgenstein’s quietism. But if we look more closely at Wittgenstein’s conception of transcendence, we may be able to achieve some clarity into what Wittgenstein means by

¹²⁵ Tilghman suggests this in *Wittgenstein, Ethics and Aesthetics: The View from Eternity* (New York: New York: State University of New York Press, 1991) 43.

the assertion that art and ethics are connected by the vantage point of the perceiver of an object or the world.

Wittgenstein explains that the logical form of a sentence is shown, not described: “There is indeed the inexpressible. This *shows* itself; it is the mystical” (*Tractatus* 90). Since a meaningful sentence (according to the *Tractatus*) represents a picture of physical space, seeing the world *sub specie aeternitatis* is to see physical phenomena together with the logical space in which they are embedded. Further, Wittgenstein suggests, this entails seeing the world as a limited whole: “The contemplation of the world *sub specie aeternitatis* is its contemplation as a limited whole” (89). But Wittgenstein emphasizes both an objective and subjective element to this way of perceiving. He makes a distinction between “viewing the world as a limited whole” and “feeling the world as a limited whole” (89). The transcendental view of the world as a totality of contingent facts is an objective view that may be shared with the astronomer, physicist, etc., but the feeling of the world as a limited whole is exclusively personal. It is the experience with the mystical. It is only from this mental state that an absolute ethical judgment can be made by the individual, though words do not have the expressive power to represent the absolute directly. This relates to Wittgenstein’s comments in his “Lecture on Ethics,” which is still very much in the *Tractarian* way of thinking about language; “if a man could write a book on Ethics which really was a book on Ethics, this book would, with an explosion, destroy all the other books in the world. Our words used as we use them in science, are vessels capable only of containing and conveying meaning and sense, natural meaning and sense. Ethics, if it is anything, is supernatural and our words will only express facts; as a teacup will only hold a teacup full of water and if I were to pour out a

gallon over it” (7).¹²⁶ The imagery evoked by the teacup metaphor has an interesting suggestion, namely, that there is more water than what can be contained in the teacup. In other words, there is meaning that cannot be put into sentences. For Wittgenstein, the propositional sentence expresses facts, but he does not limit expression to merely propositional sentences; in *Culture and Value*, he suggests that art is also a “kind of expression” (83). The suggestion here defies the Vienna Circle’s manifesto *Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung. Der Wiener Kreis* [*The Scientific Conception of the World. The Vienna Circle*] whose belief it was that nothing is left to communicate except—staying with Wittgenstein’s metaphor—that which can fit in the teacup, i.e., statements reducible to sense data experiences. The point that Wittgenstein makes is not that nonsensical language is vacuous, but that it shows something that cannot be said in representational language.

The famous ladder analogy at the end of the *Tractatus*, which Wittgenstein borrows from Schopenhauer, elucidates this point. Schopenhauer suggests that

For the man who studies to gain insight, books and studies are merely rungs of the ladder on which he climbs to the summit of knowledge. As soon as a rung has raised him one step, he leaves it behind. On the other hand, the many who study in order to fill their memories do not use the rungs of the ladder for climbing, but take them off and load themselves with them to take away, rejoicing at the increasing weight of the burden. They remain below forever, since they are carrying what ought to have carried them. (WWR, vol. II, 72)

Schopenhauer implies that new knowledge propels one into a realm of higher understanding, but that the various particulars of knowledge themselves are not of value, indeed, are obstructive and cumbersome. Wittgenstein likewise sees the value in obtaining the theoretical knowledge of philosophy, but not as a value in its own right, but

¹²⁶ This quote is directly from Wittgenstein, not from a translator, or misquoted; as a non-native English speaker, his idiomatic use of the English language is pardonable.

instead to return to life with the perspective necessary to guide oneself in accordance with wise norms, or to quiet the turmoil in one's own mind. Wittgenstein's rendition looks like this:

My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright. (*Tractatus* 90)

The arduously logical view of language and language's representational power is able to give the reader a view of the world *sub specie aeternitatis* only if one senses intuitively the existence of the excess gallon of water—using Wittgenstein's metaphor again—that pours over the teacup. Through this realization the ethical purpose of the *Tractatus* is achieved, even though it does not discuss ethics. It enables one to achieve a viewpoint from which an ethical absolute may be felt. The members of the Vienna Circle were drawn to Wittgenstein's logical atomism, but missed the point that what was most important, at least to Wittgenstein, is not communicated in the representational view of language which the *Tractatus* appears to promote. Wittgenstein's comments to the publisher Ludwig von Ficker:

My work consists of two parts: the one presented here plus all that I have not written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one. My book draws limits to the sphere of the ethical from the inside as it were, and I am convinced that this is the ONLY rigorous way of drawing those limits. In short I believe that where many others today are just gassing,¹²⁷ I have managed in my book to put everything firmly into place by being silent about it. (Stern 42)

Hence the *Tractatus* shows us the “right” (90) way to see the world by providing a transcendental vantage point, not by articulating propositions of ethics. Such

¹²⁷ Wittgenstein's colloquialism “gassing” implies vacuous speech, sophistry, or nonsense.

propositions do not exist, according to Wittgenstein: “it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics” (88). The transcendental point of view is better expressed, according to Wittgenstein, in the statement “I wonder at the existence of the world” or “how extraordinary that anything could exist” (“LE” 8). What is to be gleaned from these expressions is that ethics, for Wittgenstein, does not consist merely in directives or norms to govern our actions, but instead consists of the right attitude towards the world. Thus an important distinction must be kept clear when considering Wittgenstein’s ethics. On the one hand Wittgenstein makes moral imperatives and commands, particularly to his students including Norman Malcolm, but in addition to the “musts” that we might appeal to in governing our actions, ethics consists of a *sui generis* perspective or attitude.

The attitude that results from perceiving the world from eternity consists in part of relinquishing one’s ultimate control over the happenings of the world: permanent and stable (or at least relatively so) laws govern the events of time quite independently of human willing. Wittgenstein suggests, “The world is independent of my will” (87), and further in his *Notebooks 1914-16*, “I can only make myself independent of the world – and so in a certain sense master it—by renouncing any influence on happenings” (73e). The Spinozan ethical imperative of achieving supervening independence over the objects of one’s sense-data continuum is clear in these passages. Wittgenstein further elaborates by suggesting that the happy man has no fear even in the face of death (*NTB* 74), is in agreement with the world (75), and more harmonious than the unhappy man (78). The good life, as Wittgenstein implies, consists invariably of both an inner harmony and a harmony with the world; but Wittgenstein does not make it entirely clear how such harmony alleviates fear of death, or whether it is such fearlessness that precedes, and has

causal force upon, one's harmony: "Death is not an event in life: we do not live to experience death. If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present. Our life has no end in just the way in which our visual field has no limits" (*TLP* 88-89). While Wittgenstein does not sustain philosophical inquiry into the implications surrounding death and the change of mental state persons undergo as they become aware of their own mortality, Broch engages the matter in greater detail.

Broch's Notion of *Sub Specie Aeternitatis*

While Broch's notion of *sub specie aeternitatis* contains the same elements as Wittgenstein's, including a perspective from a synoptic and relatively detached viewpoint, it does not entail any element of self-renunciation, which some interpreters have read Wittgenstein as entailing. While a perspective might be formed aloof from the objects perceived, the compulsion to act upon a perspective must come from one's will, according to Broch. In the context of Joyce's *Ulysses* (which Broch says inspired his *Todes Vergil*), Broch explains that the awareness of the temporality of the phenomena of our experience evokes a view of the world *sub specie mortis*. For Broch, a perspective *sub specie mortis* implicates an awareness of one's death, and the temporal nature of existence in general, which enables one to grasp the full circle of life, from birth to death. A view of the world from eternity only becomes fully vivid when it includes a view of one's life under the aspect of one's own death. We see or experience a particular event in our day and know that it came and went, just like all of our experiences. This perspective, according to Broch, causes, at least temporarily, a 'fission of values' because we tend to view a specific phenomenon in isolation from others. The contrast, though not mutually

exclusive, is to possess a view of multiple phenomena simultaneously. The character Virgil attains both vantage points, and his quasi-hallucinogenic monologue is born of the state of mind in which he finds himself, a state of mind synchronized to the events in its perceptual field, and in full grasp of the causal nexus of discrete phenomena.

Music is the example Broch gives of a kind of simultaneity of discrete aural perceptual phenomena; consider the simultaneity of various notes from the instruments of a symphony, or the interplay of base and treble notes of a Bach organ piece. In “Letter to the Editor: Hermann Broch” (1963), Steiner explains that *Der Tod des Vergil* is constructed like a “quartet, and the language renders with uncanny precision alternances of key, mood and cadence, such as are inherent in musical notation. The last movement—Virgil’s entrance into death—carries speech to its last limit: silence. Like Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* [...]” (265). The musical structure of the novel is not a mere aesthetic embellishment; for Broch, musical cognition is the closest a person can come to experiencing timelessness because multiple melodies and notes are able to occupy the same moment. The composer Leonard Bernstein was so impressed by *Der Tod des Vergil* that he contacted Broch to discuss the possibility of making it into a symphony;¹²⁸ and later the novel was put to music by Jean Barraque.¹²⁹ The simultaneity of multiple sensations that inform perception (not just in music), such as, seeing, hearing, etc., have the power to give the perceiving subject the feeling of an annulment of time so long as the perceptions are united by an enduring thought held by the subject. Broch attempts to achieve this in *Der Tod des Vergil* by means of parataxis, that is to say, by stringing

¹²⁸ Broch explains this in a letter to Daniel Brody in 1949 (*MHB* 245).

¹²⁹ See Jörn Peter Hiekkel and Alice Stašková, “Der Tod des Vergil: Broch-Vertonungen des Komponisten Jean Barraque,” *Hermann Broch und die Künste*, hg.v. Alice Stašková und Paul Michael Lützeler (Berlin: Debruyter, 2009) 157-183.

together fragmentary phrases each of which is intended to offer a different angle on the same direct object of thought. In this respect, Broch's novel does not accord with Wittgenstein's *Tractarian* definition of philosophy: "The object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts" (44). But it is more congenial to Wittgenstein's later endeavor of finding meaning by understanding the 'family resemblances' that give conceptual boundaries to a particular thought.

Delineating the boundaries of a concept helps avert full-blown relativism in moral semantics. In "Literature, Philosophy, Politics and the Challenge of Hermann Broch" (1986), Dowden suggests that Broch viewed the effects of relativism as "corrosive" (3). Dowden sees Broch as criticizing both literary naturalism and philosophical positivism for contributing to relativism by limiting discourse to "social descriptions and psychological facts" (4). This abnegates the efforts, in Dowden's reading, of the "value-seeking soul" (4), which alone brings a supervening perspective that allows one to assign the appropriate value where it belongs. Dowden alludes to the last section of *Der Tod des Vergil* in which Broch "proposes that the lyrical in literature, like the ornamental in architecture, simultaneously contains and expresses the irrepressible non-rational side of the mind that the tradition of reason and science have sought to repress" (5). Repression of the irrational side of the mind is helpful if the task is to conceive of the objective relations between discrete phenomena, for Broch, but the contribution of the irrational, or intuitive, side of the mind is essential in forming evaluative judgments, and is inextricably connected to perceptions of sense data. The limitations on science and pure reason, therefore, do not preclude their usefulness, or epistemological basis. Their

limitations are in deciding for us the course of action suitable for our flourishing, recognition of beauty, etc.

Broch attempts to achieve simultaneity in literary form through the formation of single sentences that possess overlapping fragments. An example is the following daunting sentence from *Der Tod des Vergil*:

Zeit strömte oben, Zeit strömte unten, die verborgene Zeit der Nacht, wiedereingeströmt in seine Adern, wiedereingeströmt in die Bahnen der Gestirne, raumlos Sekunde an Sekunde gefügt, die wiedergeschenkte, wiedererwachte Zeit, überschicksalshaft, zufallsaufhebend, ablaufsentschieden das unabänderliche Gesetz der Zeit, das ewigwährende Jetzt, in das er hinausgehalten wurde: Gesetz und Zeit, auseinander geboren, einander aufhebend und stets aufs neu sich gebärend, einander spiegelnd und nur hiedurch erschaubar, Ketten der Bilder und Gegenbilder die Zeit umschließend, das Urbild umschließend, keines von beiden jemals zur Gänze erfassend und dennoch zeitloser und zeitloser werdend, bis im letzten Echo ihres Zusammenklingens, bis in einem letzten Sinnbild sich das des Todes mit dem alles Lebens vereinigt, die Bildwirklichkeit der Seele, ihre Wohnstatt, ihr zeitloses Jetzt und daher das in ihr verwirklichte Gesetz, ihre Notwendigkeit. (KW 4, 92)

Time flowed above, time flowed below, the hidden time of night flowing back into his arteries, flowing back into the pathway of the stars, second bound spacelessly to second, the re-given, re-awakened, time beyond the bonds of fate, abolishing chance, the unalterable law of time absolved from lapsing, the everlasting now into which he was being held: Law and time, born from each other, annulling, yet always giving birth to each other anew, reflecting each other and perceptible in this way alone, chain of images and counter-images, noosing time, noosing the arch-image, neither wholly captured, yet for all that becoming more and more timeless until, in their last echoing unison, in a final symbol, the image of death unites with the image of life, portraying the reality of the soul, her homestead, her timeless now, the law made manifest in her, and hence her necessity. (Untermeyer trans., 97)

Another way in which Broch suggests simultaneity can be achieved in literary form is through the use of archetypal figures or behavioral patterns. The archetypes of the wise old man or the rogue are universally recognizable in various cultures and epochs. Such universality evokes a view of the world, according to Broch, *sub specie aeternitatis*, and lends to art's significance: "alles künstlerische Schaffen [...] eigentlich nur sub specie

aeternitatis erfolgen kann, wenn es nicht an seiner eigenen Sinnlosigkeit verzweifeln und ersticken will [...] (KW 9/2, 196) [“art can only work from the vantage point of eternity, if it is not to despair of and suffocate in its own irrelevance” (G&Z 60)]. The inexpressibility of the absolutes of ethics through propositional language engenders an urge to seek such expression through art, lending art its ethical relevance.

Broch explains that our intellects make clear to us the limits of knowledge attainable through rational and empirical means, but point to a “spirit” whose imperative it is, according to Broch, for every person to understand:

in dieser Haltung, dieser so überaus logischen Haltung wirkt noch der Geist, ein Agens, ein Übergeordnetes, das nicht mehr zum Arbeitsgebiet gehört und vom Arbeitsgebiet nicht erfaßt werden kann, trotzdem aber vorhanden ist und gewußt wird. Und auf dieses Wissen kommt es letztlich an. Es enthält die Legitimation, mehr noch, die Aufforderung, nicht abzulassen und nach dem Geist zu fragen. (KW 9/2, 200)

in this view, this extremely logical view, the spirit is still at work, as *agens*, as a higher power that no longer belongs to the sphere of reason and which cannot be understood by it, but which is nonetheless present, and known to it. And ultimately it is this knowledge that matters, for it contains both the legitimation and, even more, the demand that we never give up our inquiry into the spirit. (G&Z 64)

Broch agrees with Wittgenstein’s assessment that the absolute cannot be said directly, but can be shown, or pointed to, in both the objects of the world and a kind of meta-language that should be discarded once it is climbed. *Der Tod des Vergil* is Broch’s attempt to express what cannot be said, and just as in Wittgenstein’s ladder, the implication, at least from the novel’s main character, Virgil, is that the novel should be destroyed, though Wittgenstein might suggest that throwing it away after reading it would suffice. One apparent difference between Wittgenstein and Broch is the emphasis that Broch places on the role of death, or more precisely, the reckoning of one’s

proximity to death. Whereas Wittgenstein suggests that the happy man is not afraid of death, Broch inverts this order by suggesting that the person who has become reconciled with his death and accepted its inevitability, experiences a serene happiness.

In “Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst” (1933) [“Evil in the Value-System of Art”], Broch exclaims, the “Antlitz des Todes ist der große Erwecker! (KW 9/2, 124) [“countenance of death is the great awakener!” (G&Z 8)].¹³⁰ For Broch, seeing life, that is, your personal existence in the world, in contrast to death, provides an impetus to value both your own existence, and to look for the things that are worthy of being imbued by you with value. Death is the

einzigste Pforte, durch die das Absolute in seiner ganzen magischen Bedeutsamkeit ins reale Leben einzieht [...] weil der Tod in seiner unvorstellbaren Lebensferne dennoch von so nächster Lebensnähe ist, daß er die Seele des Menschen unablässig mit seinem physischen Sein und metaphysischen Dasein erfüllt [...] eben in dieser Humanität zum Akt der Wertsetzung und Wertbildung sich erhoben hat. (KW 9/2, 125)

only gateway through which the absolute enters in to real life in all its magical meaningfulness [...] because death in its unimaginable remoteness from life is nonetheless so near to life that it continuously fills the human soul with its physical presence and its metaphysical existence [...] in this humanity, human existence is elevated to the act of value setting and value creating. (G&Z 9)

The narrator gives the account of Virgil’s meditative view of the world *sub specie*

aeternitatis:

er befand sich in einem Bereich, in dem nur noch die Anzahlen, die Ordnungen, die Zusammenhänge des noch Irdischen galten, gleichsam bloß die Erkenntnisse, die von jenen Seinsgebilden und ihrer einstmaligen Gestaltung ausgingen, und es war Geschehen und Erkenntnis und Sicht und Aussage in einem einzigen leuchtenden Wahrhaben, es war unbegreifliche Nacktheit der Schöpfungsvielfalt, bar ihrer Inhalte, dennoch vollzählig, war die Allheit jedweden Geschehens und jedweder Geschehensmöglichkeit [...] Es war der Bereich des schlechthin Unendlichen. (KW 4, 189-90)

¹³⁰ It’s unclear by the context whether Broch is citing Nietzsche.

he found himself in a region in which only the quantities, the arrangements and the correlations of earthly things were valid, likewise only the knowledge emanating from them and their erstwhile forms, and it was occurrence and knowledge, perception and exposition in one single, gleaming possession of truth, it was an unimaginable exposure of the creation's multiplicity, empty of content but complete, the integration of everything that had occurred or could occur [...] He was in the realm of the infinite. (Untermeyer trans., 199)

But immediately following these words the narrator explains that Virgil's meditative state of mind still does not open a 'path to the good.' This would seem to contradict Wittgenstein's claim that "the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*" (NTB 83e). The narrator of *Der Tod des Vergil*, and let's assume Broch, hold that a view of the world *sub specie aeternitatis* is not *sufficient* to ensure the good life, it is however *necessary*. That is to say, even if one acquires a view of the world from eternity, and is able to transcend the forces that natural needs impose upon our willing, one is only in the right vantage point to grasp the good, i.e., the absolute, it doesn't mean that one will. The narrator explains that during Virgil's meditative trance, good and evil appear with equal 'impressiveness' and 'illumination.' The trance left Virgil in a paradoxical state of 'seeing-blindness' and 'hearing-deafness.' This would at first glance appear as if the novel is jibberish and that Broch is content writing paradoxical nonsense. However, I think there is something Wittgensteinian in these words, not the *Tractarian*, but the latter Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein explains in *Philosophical Investigations* that a thing can be seen, while not being seen for what it is or what it could be. Seeing the duck-rabbit drawing as a duck is one way of seeing it; it is possible to stare directly at the drawing and fail to be able to see it as a rabbit. The same can be said, for Broch, of good and evil. It is possible to see social phenomena and the happenings of the world from a synoptic viewpoint, removed from interaction with them, and still fail to 'see' them as

they are, or to perceive good and evil. What is needed to imbue the perception with good or evil is the contribution of our minds through *apperception*. We hold our perception of an object or event against the ‘repository’ of our beliefs, previous judgments, and feelings, Broch implies.

An Angel appears to Virgil on his journey to the temple to visit Caesar. The Angel exhorts Virgil: “Tritt ein zur Schöpfung, die einstmals war und wieder ist [...] deine Zeit ist da!” (KW 4, 218) [“Enter into the Creation that once existed and again exists [...] your time has come!” (Untermeyer trans., 229-30)]. Broch says that the novel is supposed to represent the ‘totality of life’ and contains more meaning than the sum of its parts. This idea is suggestive of Broch’s criticism of the reductive agenda of logical atomism/positivism in which a ‘protocol sentence’ is thought to be the building block of all higher order meaning. Broch alludes to Joyce’s *Ulysses* as an example of this striving for totality; for Broch it exemplifies a “scharfe Drang zur Selbstbewußtwerdung” (KW 9/1, 67) [“an intense urge toward self-awareness” (G&Z 70)]. It ‘probes,’ according to Broch, “in sie hineingeahnten Konturen der neuen abzutasten und solcherart zu der geahnten neuen Weltsicht” (KW 9/1, 241) [“into its newly inferred inner contours, and hence to feel its way to an intuited new vision of the world” (HHT 157)]. The intuited view of the world *sub specie aeternitatis* affords a new “Seinsrealität” (KW 9/1, 257) [“reality of being” (HHT 169)], in so far as it is able to grant the perspective that makes art, and for Broch, religion, meaningful to us. Further, it grants us a perspective in which we are able to discern the “Absolutheit des Lebenswertes” (KW 9/2, 126) [“absoluteness of life’s value” (G&Z 10)], which, Broch explains, is at the top of the hierarchy from which we deduce the intricate and often precariously balanced web of particular values.

But such awareness does not come, according to Broch, through argumentation alone, with straightforward propositions claiming X or ~X. Rather it comes through non-truth-bearing language that points to ineffable truths. Though such meaning and perspective cannot be *said*, it can still be approached by means of written language. In order to do this, philosophers in the twentieth century became increasingly apt to engage in various forms of intellectual experimentation; namely, through ‘*Gedankenexperimente*.’

***Der Tod des Vergil* considered as a “Gedankenexperiment”**

One of the more prominent twentieth-century novelists in the German literary canon and Nobel Prize laureate, Thomas Mann, called Broch’s *Tod der Vergil* “eines der ungewöhnlichsten und gründlichsten Experimente” (HBB 305) [one of the most unusual and thorough experiments (my translation)]. Broch also used the word ‘experiment’ to describe *Der Tod des Vergil*, insisting that it was not a novel.¹³¹ Referring to the various conversations involving Virgil, Broch said

Die Gespräche waren ein Experiment, u. z. eines, das mir wegen seiner Schwierigkeit nicht geglückt ist [...] ich wollte die Argumente hiezu aus dem tiefsten Unbewußten der handelnden Personen hervorholen, wollte also sozusagen ihre Seelen selber sprechen lassen [...]. (MHB 225)

The conversations were an experiment, one that, because of its difficulty, was not achieved [...] I wanted to pull the arguments out the deepest subconscious of the persons involved; I wanted, one might say, to let their souls speak. (my translation)

But to what extent are these experiments philosophical? What problems or questions are solved? And what is achieved in such experimentation?

¹³¹ Broch says that *Der Tod des Vergil* is not a novel, and doesn’t really fit into any pre-existing categories: “*Der Vergil* ist kein Roman und ist überhaupt nichts, was sich in eine der bestehenden Kategorien (auch nicht in die Joycesche) einreihen läßt” (MHB 228).

Thought experiments acquired a prominent role in twentieth-century philosophy due in part to Wittgenstein's use of them in the *Philosophical Investigations*. For example, he begins the *PI* with a thought experiment consisting of builders who are able to communicate in a primitive language simply by uttering a word that represents an object; the meaning of the word is the object for which it stands. From there Wittgenstein explores the ramifications of such a language, eventually showing that the builder thought experiment presents a view of language that is far narrower than how language is actually used. Wittgenstein shows that the builders' language is too primitive, and that an error is made in assuming the builder's language works in the same way as most human languages. In *Pseudo-Problems: How Analytic Philosophy gets done* (1993), Sorensen explains that Wittgenstein believed "that there is an ineffable insight to be attained by first feeling the problem and then working through it. Something is *shown*" (14). A successful thought experiment has a way of elucidating a problem or conundrum that the philosopher may choose to resolve by proposing an alternative thought experiment or through argumentation. Either way the problem itself, not just the resolution, is intellectually suggestive, implies Sorensen. Sorensen quotes Wittgenstein: "[i]n philosophizing we may not terminate a disease of thought. It must run its natural course, and slow cure is all important" (*Zettel* §382). Sorensen is combating the supposition that the philosopher who attempts to solve a pseudo-problem is a fool. Insight is gleaned by showing the contours and structure of a pseudo-problem. It shows the conceptual confusion that led to the philosopher asking the question in the first place, and the inevitable dead end that results will often lead the philosopher to hone the question so that it might ultimately be answered. Sorensen points to the evolution of

neurology out of phrenology, astronomy out of astrology, chemistry out of alchemy as examples of clusters of pseudo-problems that eventually spawned fruitful question asking. Likewise, Virgil suggests that only “im Irrtum wird der Mensch zum Suchenden” (KW 4, 97) [in error does one become a searcher (my translation)], and further, “der Mensch braucht die Erkenntnis der Vergeblichkeit” (KW 4, 97) [one needs the knowledge of futility (my translation)]. The frustration of an unanswerable question, imply Virgil and Sorensen, serves as an impetus to improve the method in which the questions are raised and answered. This leads to methodological innovations that are capable of yielding greater clarity, which in turn expose pseudo-problems for what they are.

Sorensen’s point about methodological innovations often occurring upon the recognition of a pseudo-problem, or pseudo-science, relates well to Broch’s theory of the novel. Broch believes the methodologies inherent in literary writing can lead to true insight just as easily as to folly and confusion. He comments in an unpublished letter to Kurt H. Wolff dated September 5 1948: “[D]ie Quelle der wahren Entdeckung ist immer das Methodologische” [The source of true discovery is always methodological (my translation)].¹³² Nowhere in Broch’s writing is his method as eccentric or original as in *Der Tod des Vergil*; however, even in his earliest writings Broch was willing to push the envelope to develop new ways of writing. An example of this comes already in 1917 when he writes the novella “Eine methodologische Novelle.” In *Erzählen zwischen Hilbert und Einstein: Naturwissenschaft und Literatur in Hermann Brochs ‘Eine*

¹³² From Kurt H. Wolff, “The Supremacy of Method: A Response to Dominick LaCapra,” *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*. ed. Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia: Camden House, 1988) 56.

methodologische Novelle’ and Robert Musil’s *‘Drei Frauen,’* Ruth Bendels¹³³ compares Broch’s novella to a scientific experiment: “‘Eine methodologische Novelle’ scheint sich an ihrem Beginn dem Anspruch eines naturwissenschaftlichen Experiments und der reinen Konstruktion stellen zu wollen” (220) [“A methodological Novella” appears at its beginning to want to pose under the pretense of a scientific experiment and pure construction” (my translation)]. But in an unpublished letter written nearly two decades later, Broch explains that after reading the novella, he’s embarrassed by his old work, calling the novella “scheußlich” [disgusting] (Bendels 76). Broch does not, however, abandon the belief that literature can be a vehicle for grasping elusive thoughts, in other words, as a “Klarifikationsmittel” [means for clarification] (MHB 236), which he explicitly calls his *Tod des Vergil*.

But what do thought experiments achieve? And can there be different types of thought experiments, akin to Broch’s experimentations in literary methodology? Sorensen suggests that one class of thought experiments “serves as self-conscious preference-revealing devices” (Sorensen 93). Another type of thought experiment for Sorensen is the “Rearrangement Model.” In this type of thought experiment, information is “made more digestible by changing its form” (99). Another model is the “cleansing model.” According to this model one is led to recognize a flaw in one’s reasoning, and repairs the flaw.

Poetry cannot go beyond truth because there is nowhere to go; it can achieve truth by yielding coherent thoughts, but the alternative is only incoherent thoughts, which is not some place beyond truth. Some truths may very well be verified by the ‘reality’ of

¹³³ See Ruth Bendels, *Erzählen zwischen Hilbert und Einstein: Naturwissenschaft und Literatur in Hermann Brochs ‘Eine methodologische Novelle’ and Robert Musils ‘Drei Frauen,’* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008).

one's personal consciousness, 'I feel X towards Y,' and poetry offers the reader a path to bring variety and change to the reality of her consciousness that is not given directly through experience with the world.

The narrator of *Der Tod des Vergil* describes the enlightening process of aesthetic perception: "es war Erfühlen, es war Erspüren, es war Erwissen und darüber hinaus sogar ein Erkennen, es wurde ihm zum Erkennen, ja zum Selbsterkennen, da ihm aus dem Raum seines tiefsten Vor-Wissens, in den er hineingehalten war, ein letztes Begreifen [find quote and finish it] [...] (KW 4, 120) ["it was such an intensification of feeling, of experiencing and of knowing that it became enlightenment, an enlightenment that came to be perception, yes even self-perception, flooding up to him from the deepest repository of the prescience in which he was held" (Untermeyer trans., 126). The 'repository of prescience' contributes the additive to thought that imbues a proposition with meaning beyond its literal sense; this repository can not be taught, but only acquired through time, and the novel is one such experience of time in which one may acquire and create just the right kind of repository of thoughts from which a new perception may spawn.

According to Jürgen Heizmann, "Virgil recognizes the danger that all this artistry is possibly nothing but aesthetic frivolity" (192). Heizmann also mentions that Nietzsche viewed poets as counterfeiters (193). But, according to Heizmann, Broch's novel is supposed to "light up the blindspots of science" (195).¹³⁴ Heizmann says that Broch

¹³⁴ But that is not to suggest Broch's goal is a scientific one, but a philosophical one, which he distinguished from understanding the world: "die Absicht des Philosophen ist nimmer, und nimmer kann sie es sein, Aussagen über die empirisch erfahrbaren Dinge der Welt zu machen [...] sondern seine Einsicht in die Struktur der Welt ist eine Einsicht der inneren Erfahrung und in die Natur des Menschen [...] nicht die Frage 'Wie ist die Welt?' ist aufgegeben, sondern die nach dem Verhalten [...] (KW 9/2, 192) ["The philosopher's insight is never, and never can be, making propositions about the empirically experienced things of the world [...] but insight into the structure of the world insofar as it relates to the inner experience and nature of mankind [...] the question is not 'How is the world?' but how do we relate to it [...] (my trans.)].

thinks literature can “liberate men from the putative certainty of their concepts (Broch would say: from their sleepwalking), to invigorate them to seek and test, and to bring them to self-contemplation” (199). This is done differently than in philosophical reflection because the content and form of a literary work create new phenomena of experience in the mind of the reader, creating new and unique opportunities to create or modify perceptions, or in Broch words: “Hat die Philosophie ihren Erkenntnisgrund verloren, so ist es heute ihre Pflicht, sich ihn wieder zu verschaffen” (KW 4, 325) [“If philosophy has lost its ground of perception its present duty is to regain it” (Untermeyer trans., 347)]. And further Broch adds, “Philosophie ist nicht in der Lage, ihren eigenen Erkenntnisgrund zu erzeugen” (KW 4, 326) [“philosophy [is] not in a position to produce its own ground of perception” (Untermeyer trans., 347)]. Broch calls his procedure of creating new perceptual fields ‘phenomenological’ (KW 10/2, 248).

In *The Problem of Autonomy in the Works of Hermann Broch*, Halsall emphasizes Broch’s belief that art, or at least the kind that Broch wishes to promote, yields ethical nutrition for its perceiver.¹³⁵ Yet, Halsall reminds us, art maintains autonomy from service to this end. Kitsch, on the other hand, is bad art because it is composed in service of some ulterior end. The *prima facie* paradox in Broch’s thinking is his belief that artists’ creativity should not take consideration for the utility of their works, hence maintaining artistic autonomy, yet that such work done in the right spirit will yield “exemplifizierenden Gehalt” [exemplifying content] (KW 6, 11-23). But what is that? I interpret this as being, among other things, an exemplification of the various ingredients

¹³⁵ Halsall’s work is helpful in making connections between Broch and historical figures such as Kierkegaard, Kant, Derrida, etc. For his discussion on Broch’s aesthetic autonomy, see Robert Halsall, *The Problem of Autonomy in the Works of Hermann Broch* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2000) 43-68.

that constitute the good life. These ends, that is to say, the various states of affairs—physical, mental, and spiritual—which together form the best kind of life for which one might hope, are themselves simultaneous phenomena, and in some cases *sui generis*. Hence the connection between a musical structure of the *Der Tod des Vergil* and the various features of the plot and setting.

While some of the impetus behind Broch's theoretical works is to show the philosophical value of literature, it would be inaccurate to suggest Broch was an unreserved advocate for the intellectual value of literature. Broch's conviction regarding the philosophical value of a literary text wavers; and during the years of the Third Reich (in which he wrote *Der Tod des Vergil*), Broch takes a distinctly cynical tone towards the value of literature as a vehicle for self-enlightenment. Broch's own turn toward political science and psychology in his final, and never completed, intellectual treatise on mass psychology suggests that he no longer sees literature with the seriousness he once took it.

Poetry as Deception

Lützeler explains that Broch's turn against literature corresponds roughly with the rise of fascism and seizing of power by the Nazis.¹³⁶ Broch's most productive literary phase was between 1928 and 1933, but Broch's "negative aesthetics," as Lützeler explains, begins shortly thereafter, as Broch becomes "a judge who condemns the poet's occupation, an iconoclast in the picture gallery of literature," Lützeler continues ("AGC" 23). Lützeler points to several passages in Broch's personal correspondence between 1936 and 1939 to support his claim: according to Broch, "literary [...] work has become superfluous" (KW 13/1: 392); and "the artistic is superfluousness in this age" (KW 13/2,

¹³⁶ See Paul Michael Lützeler, "The Avant-Garde in Crisis: Hermann Broch's Negative Aesthetics in Exile," *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*. Ed. Stephen D. Dowden (Columbia: Camden House, 1988) 14-23.

24); and finally, “I have therefore made a big reversal and am dealing more and more with political topics [...]” (KW 13/2: 97). But Broch’s work on political theory was largely futile and soon he would return to literature by drafting a short story “Die Heimkehr des Vergil” [The Return of Virgil], despite maintaining his negative outlook on aesthetics.

Both ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ aesthetics are given voice in *Der Tod des Vergil*. Broch’s cynicism towards literature is mirrored in the character of Virgil and expressed by the narrator, yet Augustus, Plotius, and Lucius all advocate on literature’s behalf. For instance, against literature you have the narrator, who refers to a “scheinwirkliche Zwischenreich der Dichtung” (KW 4, 176) [“sham-real interrealm of poetry” (Untermeyer trans. 183)]. Later the narrator equates the “Platte und Literarische” (KW 4, 236) [“the trivial and the literary” (Untermeyer trans. 251)], and describes entering “einem literarischen Nirgendwo” [“a literary no-man’s land”], which is the realm of sophistry and empty aestheticism, “das nicht einmal die äußerste Oberfläche einer Oberfläche ist, die an nichts grenzt, an keine Himmels-, an keine Erdentiefe, höchstens an den Hohlraum der Schönheit” (KW 4, 236) [“which did not touch even the surface, that encompassed nothing, neither the depths of heaven nor of earth, at most only the empty province of beauty” (251)]. But why then would Virgil commit himself to writing the *Aeneid*? And what did Virgil hope to achieve? The narrator explains that Virgil abandoned his profession as a medical doctor to pursue the career of a poet, believing poetry was the cure to society’s ills. The narrator calls this Virgil’s

verlogene Hilfeleistungs-Hoffnungen, mit denen er seitdem sein Dichtertum ausgestattet hatte, wider besseres Wissen hoffend es werde die Macht der Schönheit, es werde des Liedes Zauberkraft den Abgrund der Sprachstummheit zu guter Letzt überbrücken und ihn, den Dichter, zum Erkenntnisbringer in der

wiederhergestellten Menschengemeinschaft erhöhen [...] solch überheblich eitle Ehrgeizträume und solch sträfliche Überschätzung des Dichtertums! (KW 4, 128)

delusive hope of helpfulness with which he had subsequently decked out his profession as poet, hoping against his inner conviction that the might of beauty, that the magic of song, would finally bridge the abyss of incommunication and would exalt him, the poet, to the rank of perception-bringer in the restored community of men [...] such vain and presumptuous dreams of grandeur, a flagrant overestimation of poetry! (Untermeyer trans., 134-35)

This passage is autobiographical of Broch's own experience, but does not show the full extent to which Broch and Virgil detest the sophistry exhibited by the poet.

The narrator goes on to explain Broch's own aesthetical/ethical theory through the existential turbulence of Virgil's own experiences as a poet. According to the narrator, Virgil became 'seduced' by the allure of poetry's beauty and became fixated by the object produced: the poem; but lost his fixation on the spirit from which the poem originates. The vital truth of one's own spirit is the 'content' of one's perceptual reality, that is to say, the "selbsterkennende Wissen um die eigene Seele" (KW 4, 133) ["self-perceptive knowledge of the individual soul" (Untermeyer trans., 140)]. But the poem, by contrast, is the 'empty form' in which the soul strains, unsuccessfully, to express the subjective truths, which it alone possesses.¹³⁷ The result is 'intoxication' on the part of the poet, or the reader of a poem, that elevates the words of the poem, but that does not revere the spirit that created it. A lack of 'fidelity' ensues in which art is reduced to "Unkunst" [un-art] and poetry to mere "Literatentum" (KW 4, 134) ["literarity" (Untermeyer trans., 140-41)].

¹³⁷ Similarly, Broch explains in "Geist und Zeitgeist": "Denn die gemeinsame Wurzel aller Philosophie, alles ethischen Wollens, alles Erkennens, aber auch die alles Dichtens ist das Wissen um die menschliche Seele" [KW 9/2, 194] ["For the common root of all philosophy, all ethical volition, all learning, but also of all literature, is knowledge of the human soul" (G&Z 58)].

For the narrator, “echte Kunst” (KW 4, 133) [“real art”], or in this case real poetry, aspires to embody humanity and brings the poet and the reader of a poem a sense of affiliation and membership in the broader human community. The opposite of this solidarity--that which is achieved through “un-art”--is a loneliness that becomes exacerbated to an increasing level of despair in which the artist becomes “blind für die Welt” (KW 4, 134) [“blind to the world”] and to the “Göttliche in ihr und im Nebenmenschen” (KW 4, 134) [“divine quality in the world and in fellow-man” (Untermeyer trans., 141)]. The artist begins to see himself as a god/creator figure, according to the narrator, and idolizes himself, and craves recognition and worship from those who view (or read) his art. The concern for ‘effect’ is an indication that the artist is attempting to win his way out of his isolated loneliness by attracting the superficial attention of the ‘mob,’ but he has forfeited true art and betrayed the mission of a renewed spirit, which alone can bring him into authentic communion with humanity, explains the narrator. Such ‘kitsch,’ or ‘un-art,’ is all too familiar to the poet Virgil who feels as if his duty to art has been compromised:

er wußte um diese Vertauschung und Umwendung [...] des Unheilswegs, der ihn von der Heimerde zur Großstadt geführt hatte, vom werktätigen Schaffen bis hinab zur selbstbetrügerischen Schönrederei, von der Verantwortungspflicht der Menschlichkeit bis hinab zu einem verlogenen Scheinmitleid, das die Dinge von oben herab betrachtet und zu keiner wirklichen Hilfe sich aufrafft [...] der Weg, nein, der Absturz in die Pöbelhaftigkeit und dorthin, wo sie am ärgsten ist, ins Literatentum! [...] mochte er [...] sagen müssen, daß er ein nichtswürdig armseliges Literatenleben geführt hatte [...] [ein] Wortemacher. (KW 4, 135-36)

He knew all about this substitution and reversion [...] this erring path which had led him from his native fields to the metropolis and from the work of his hands to self-deceptive rhetoric, from a humane and responsible sense of duty to a pretense of compassion, which observed things from above and aroused itself to no real help [...] the way, no, the fall into vulgarity and there where vulgarity is at its worst, into literarity! [...] he had to admit to himself [...] that he had pursued a

worthless, wretched, literary life [...] [a] mere phrase-maker. (Untermeyer trans., 142)

Such cynicism towards literature, and the literary life, is not confined to a few passages in *Der Tod des Vergil*, but is a theme throughout it.¹³⁸ The topic dominates the conversation between Virgil and his poet-friends Lucius and Plotius who come to visit him, and whom Virgil requests to burn the *Aeneid*.

But Plotius and Lucius provide the voice in defense of poetry and literature against Virgil's assaults. For instance, after Virgil implies that his poetry is deceptive, and less 'honest' than the testimony of a child, Lucius counters by suggesting that 'honesty' is not the point of art. Virgil doesn't fully embrace Lucius's comments, but suggests in reply that art must aim "auf das Wesentlichste im Menschenleben" (KW 4, 238) ["toward the essential in human life" (Untermeyer trans. 253)]. In this sense Virgil is not suggesting that literature must be restricted to merely the most realistic representations of human phenomena, but that its value is measured commensurate with the degree in which it 'expresses' the 'human element.' But Plotius calls Virgil's response "Rhetorengewäsch" (KW 4, 238) ["rhetorical bilge" (Untermeyer trans. 254), and Lucius adds that "[f]ür die Kunst genügt solch billige Ehrlichkeit keineswegs" (KW 4, 239) ["cheap honesty suffices in no way for art" (Untermeyer trans. 254)]. Lucius continues to suggest that literature has the unique ability to 'exalt' human elements; he points specifically to the 'exalted love' between Dido and Aeneas in the *Aeneid*. For Lucius, the petty love affairs of the average person are not an adequate substitute for the

¹³⁸ It's also a theme throughout much of his theoretical writings, one example of such cynicism towards rhetoric is the following: "das Rhetorische kennt keine Zwiesprache, kein Argument, kein Gegenargument, es stammt nicht aus den Sphären des Intellektes, es stammt aus der Dunkelheit [...] (KW 9/2, 178) ["The rhetorical knows no dialogue, no argument or counterargument, it comes not from the sphere of the intellect, but from darkness" (G&Z 43)].

enchanted, exalted love between Dido and Aeneas. Only the genius of the poet, thinks Lucius, can adequately burst through to ‘unknown realms’ of the human spirit, and through the limitations we each face in our own lives. The narrator suggests that Lucius is trying to defend the “Ewigkeitswert der Äneis” (KW 4, 226) [“immortal worth of the *Aeneid*” (Untermeyer trans. 241)], but that Virgil is mocking him for doing so.

The notion that a thing might be or appear ‘enchanted,’ is a problem for Broch and Wittgenstein.¹³⁹ On the one hand the notion is suggestive of sensationalism, magic, and superstition, yet if the term can be salvaged from these associations, it’s suggestive of something essential to Broch and the Wittgenstein’s comments in *Culture and Value*. In *Waste Lands and Silly Valleys: Wittgenstein, Mass Culture, and Re-Enchantment* (2009), Saler suggests that during the interwar period Wittgenstein was concerned with disenchantment as a “preliminary step toward re-enchanting the world” (60).

Conclusion

The dream of Virgil’s meditative philosophical ruminations is of a ‘redeemed’ world governed by an agape love of fellow man; the world prophesied in Broch’s Platonic/Judeo-Christian belief system in which the divine descends to earth, and truth is spoken in a mystical language unlike anything known to humankind. The “wiedererstehenden, niemals gehörten, immer ersehnten Sprache der Auferstehung” (KW 4, 202) [“re-animated, the never-heard, the forever-yearned-for language of a new life” (Untermeyer trans. 213)]: such a new life is one in which there is an accord, and a “Welteneinheit, [...] Weltenordnung, [und] Weltenallerkenntnis” (KW 4, 203) [“world-unity, world-order, [and] world-comprehension” (Untermeyer trans. 213)]. The narrator

¹³⁹ Vergil is accused of being Caesar’s enchanter: “der Zauberer vom Caesar” (KW 4, 33). This has a negative connotation in the story.

intimates that approaching this new life is “die letzte Lösung der Weltenaufgabe” (KW 4, 203) [“the final resolution of the earthly task” (Untermeyer trans. 213)], which is death. Death makes the reality of this dream of a new life more apparent to Virgil; for the reckoning of death frees one from “Rausch” [“intoxication”] and “Haß” [“hatred”] (KW 4, 203 [Untermeyer trans. 214]). He hears the fading of his own heartbeat, and in it a voice that is “außerhalb jeglicher Sprache” (KW 4, 203) [“beyond any speech” (Untermeyer trans. 214)], and more ‘compelling.’ In the instant of hearing his own fading heartbeat he is able to perceive the “Erkenntniseinheit” (KW 4, 203) [“unity of perception” (Untermeyer trans. 214)] of his ‘being’ that is unattainable through ‘human speech’ or earthly symbols. Only through this experience is one capable of achieving an awareness of the “Grenzjenseitigkeit” (KW 4, 204) [“sublime” (Untermeyer trans. 214)]¹⁴⁰ that he had vainly attempted to achieve through poetry.

But as Steinberg points out, as Virgil finally believes that he is perceiving the universe, and his life within it, he is suffering from “his final illusion” [...] (*HHT* 26). This final illusion is captured by an impressive final sentence that includes 272 words, 52 commas, two semicolons, and one colon, and brings the novel to a close. In it the narrator describes Virgil’s physical journey in a boat from a foreign shore to Virgil’s home shore, as well as Virgil’s psychological journey which is driven not by the force of wind, but by an ‘inner necessity.’ The psychological journey is also a metaphysical and spiritual journey to the afterlife and eternity. The sentence attempts to capture the simultaneity of events as the physical, metaphysical, earthly, and spiritual merge and lose their discrete boundaries to which they are inextricably defined in our everyday earthly

¹⁴⁰ A more literal translation of “Grenzjenseitigkeit” is “Grenz” or ‘border’ and “Jenseitigkeit” or ‘otherworldliness;’ so together, the ‘otherworldliness beyond borders.’

existence. Virgil's illusion consists of a "rein[es] Wort" ["pure word"] that remains above all "Verständigung und Bedeutung" [understanding and meaning] and has no beginning or end, and that has the power to destroy or create (KW 4, 453-4). The pure word, the narrator explains, hovers over the universe, and over "[das] Nichts" (KW 4, 454) [the nothing]; Virgil's boat was driven on by the earthly word in pursuit of the pure word, but the closer he came, the more elusive was the pure word. The closer his boat came to the home shore, the rougher the seas became; commensurately, the words which had provided the impulse for his writing, became "unerfaßlich unaussprechbar" [incomprehensibly unspeakable] (KW 4, 454). The last words of the novel suggest the final realization of a dying poet; namely, that the 'pure word,' and the comprehension of totality, are "jenseits der Sprache" ["it was the word beyond speech" (Untermeyer trans., 482)] (KW 4, 454). The dying Virgil ends his life in silence, muted, aware of his inability to attain the mystical through language; the same realization that Wittgenstein makes at the end of the *Tractatus*: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent" (90).

Works Cited

- Arendt, Hannah. "The Achievement of Hermann Broch." *The Kenyon Review* 11/3 (1949): 476-483.
- . *Hannah Arendt—Hermann Broch, Briefwechsel 1946-1951*. Ed. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1996.
- Baumann, Walter. "The Idea of Fate in Hermann Broch's *Tod des Vergil*." *Modern Language Quarterly* 29 (1968): 196-206.
- Bendels, Ruth. *Erzählen zwischen Hilbert und Einstein: Naturwissenschaft und Literatur in Hermann Brochs 'Eine methologische Novelle' and Robert Musils 'Drei Frauen.'* Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008.
- Broch, Hermann. *The Death of Virgil*. Trans. Jean Starr Untermeyer. New York: Vintage International, 1995.
- . *Der Tod des Vergil. Kommentierte Werkausgabe*. Band 4, hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1976.
- . *Geist and Zeitgeist: The Spirit in an Un-Spiritual Age*. Intro. and trans. John Hargraves. New York: Counterpoint, 2002.

- . "Geist und Zeitgeist" (1934). *Kommentierte Werkausgabe*. Band 9/2, hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977. 177-200.
- . "Brief an Hans Sahl; 11.11.1943." *Kommentierte Werkausgabe*. Band 13/2, hg.v. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977. 358-365.
- . *Hofmannsthal and his Time: The European Imagination 1860-1920*. Ed. and trans. Michael Steinberg. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- . *Materialien zu Hermann Broch 'Der Tod des Vergil.'* Ed. Paul Michael Lützeler. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1976.
- Brann, Henry Walter. "Schopenhauer and Spinoza." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 10 (1972): 181-196.
- Carnap, Rudolph. *Scheinprobleme in der Philosophie*. Berlin: Weltkreis-Verlag, 1928.
- Carnap, Rudolf, Hans Hahn and Otto Neurath. *Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung – Der Wiener Kreis (1929)*. Wien: Wolf, transl. "Scientific World Conception – the Vienna Circle." *Empiricism and Sociology*. Eds. M. Neurath and R.S. Cohen. Dordrecht: Reidel, 1973. 299–318.
- Charriere-Jacquín, Marianne. "Zum Verhältnis Musik—Literatur im *Tod des Vergil.*" *Hermann Broch—Das dichterische Werk: Neue Interpretationen* (Akten des Hermann-Broch-Symposiums Rottenburg-Stuttgart 1986). Eds. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützeler. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1987. 7-18.
- Coleman, Francis J. "A Critical Examination of Wittgenstein's Aesthetics." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 5 (1986): 257-66.
- Collmann, Timm. *Zeit und Geschichte in Hermann Brochs Roman 'Der Tod Des Vergil.'* Bonn: H. Bouvier u. Co. Verlag, 1967.

- Dowden, Stephen. "Literature, Philosophy, Politics and the Challenge of Hermann Broch." *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*. Ed. Stephen D. Dowden. Columbia: Camden House, 1988. 1-13.
- Drury, M. O'C. "Some Notes on Conversations with Wittgenstein." *Recollections of Wittgenstein*. Ed. Rush Rhees. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Eiden-Offe, Patrick. *Das Reich der Demokratie: Hermann Brochs 'Der Tod des Vergil.'* Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2011.
- Fritzman, J. M. and Brianne Riley. "Not Only Sub Specie Aeternitatis, but Equally Sub Specie Durationis: A Defense of Hegel's Criticisms of Spinoza's Philosophy." *The Pluralist* 4 (2009): 76-97.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Goethes Gedichte in zeitlicher Folge*. Ed. Heinz Nicolai. Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1982.
- Halsall, Robert. *The Problem of Autonomy in the Works of Hermann Broch*. Vienna: Peter Lang, 2000.
- Heizmann, Jürgen. "A Farewell to Art: Poetic Reflection in Broch's Der Tod des Vergil." *Hermann Broch, Visionary in Exile: The 2001 Yale Symposium*. Ed. Paul Michael Lützeler. Rochester: Camden House, 2003. 187-200.
- Hiekel, Jörn Peter and Alice Stašková. "Der Tod des Vergil: Broch-Vertonungen des Komponisten Jean Barraque" *Hermann Broch und die Künste* hg.v. Alice Stašková und Paul Michael Lützeler. Berlin: Debruyter, 2009. 157-82.
- Just, Hans Günther. *Von der Gründerzeit bis zur Gegenwart. Geschichte der deutschen Literatur seit 1871*. Bern: Francke, 1973.

- Lützeler, Paul Michael. *Hermann Broch: A Biography*. London: Quartet Books, 1987.
- . *Hermann Broch: Eine Biographie*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1985.
- . "The Avant-Garde in Crisis: Hermann Broch's Negative Aesthetics in Exile."
Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium
 1986. Ed. Stephen D. Dowden. Columbia: Camden House, 1988. 14-31.
- Malcolm, Norman. *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*. London: Oxford University Press,
 1966.
- Mann, Thomas. "Letter to Alvin Johnson, April 18, 1951." *Freundschaft im Exil*.
Thomas Mann und Hermann Broch. Ed. P. M. Lützeler. Göttingen: Klostermann,
 2004. 214-16.
- Paik, Peter Yoonsuk. "Poetry as Perjury: The End of Art in Broch's *Der Tod des Vergil*
 and Celan's *Atemwende*." *Hermann Broch, Visionary in Exile: The 2001 Yale*
Symposium. Ed. Paul Michael Lützeler. Rochester: Camden House, 2003. 201-
 16.
- Saler, Michael. "Waste Lands and Silly Valleys: Wittgenstein, Mass Culture, and Re-
 Enchantment." *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational*
Age. Eds. Joshua Landy and Michael Saler. Stanford: Stanford University Press,
 2009.
- Schiller, Friedrich. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*. Oxford: Oxford University Press,
 1982.
- Schopenhauer, Arthur. *The World as Will and Representation*. 2 vols, trans. E. F. J.
 Payne, New York: Dover Publications, 1966, Bk II.

- Shusterman, Richard. "Wittgenstein and Critical Reasoning." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. XLVII (1986): 91-110.
- Sorensen, Roy A. *Pseudo-Problems: How Analytic Philosophy gets done*. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Spinoza, Baruch. *Spinoza's Ethics and On the Correction of the Understanding*. Trans. Andrew Boyle, intro. T.S. Gregory. New York: Dutton, 1977.
- Steinberg, Michael. Introduction. *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and His Time: The European Imagination 1860-1920*. Ed. and trans. Michael Steinberg. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Steiner, George. "Letter to the Editor: Hermann Broch." *Times Literary Supplement*, 62.3 (19 April 1963): 265.
- Stern, David. *Wittgenstein on Mind and Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Tilghman, B. R. *Wittgenstein, Ethics and Aesthetics: The View from Eternity*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1991.
- Ule, Andrej and Matthias Varga von Kibé. "Transcendental Unity and the Intrinsic Connection of Logic, Ethics, and Aesthetics in the 'Tractatus'" *Acta analytica: philosophy and psychology* 13 (1998): 31-47.
- Wefelmeyer, Fritz. "Geschichte als Verinnerlichung: Hermann Brochs Der Tod des Vergil." *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur neueren Germanistik* 51/1 (2001): 243-61.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Culture and Value*. Eds. G. H. von Wright and Heikki Nyman, trans. Peter Winch. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1980.
- . "Lecture on Ethics." *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (Jan., 1965): 3-12.

- . *Notebooks 1914-16*. Trans. G. E. D. Anscombe, eds. G.H. von Wright and G.E.D. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell, 1961.
- . *Philosophical Investigations*. Trans. and ed. G. E. M. Anscombe. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997.
- . *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Ed. G. H. von Wright and trans. G. E. M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell, 1979.
- . *Zettel*. Ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, trans. D. Paul and G. E. M. Anscombe. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969.
- Wolff, Kurt H. "The Supremacy of Method: A Response to Dominick LaCapra."
Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium
1986. Ed. Stephen D. Dowden. Columbia: Camden House, 1988. 54-60.
- Wolfson, Abraham. *Spinoza, A Life of Reason*. Whitefish: Kessinger, 2006.