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(b) Psychologists do not like talking of after-images being somewhere. They prefer to say that after-images appear or have localisation here or there. They also say that after-images are projected on this or that. But if this locution is invented to avoid the problem of localisation, it will not do—normally, something has to be somewhere to be projected. They do not, of course, want to deny that we see our after-images on the wall (say); and if we like, we can say that they are there. But—that is what we want to stress in this note—we must not forget that after-images are not very like other patches that are on walls. And this is what psychologists want to bring out too.

Pedantic people who think that everything ought to be somewhere (not just appear somewhere) place the after-images in the mind. But this is just to deny that they really are on the wall; it is another way of making the same point. Why should everything (not: why should every thing) be somewhere?

Others say that after-images are in a visual two-dimensional field. This is all right for seeing with closed eyes; but do we ever see such a field with open eyes? Some say they do, and perhaps they do; others certainly never do.

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TRACTATUS 6.3751*

By EDWIN B. ALLAIRE

CONSIDER the sentence 'this is red and this is green'. Call it A. Assume that in A the two occurrences of 'this' refer to the same colour spot. In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein claimed that A is contradictory. The claim has provoked varying reactions. Urmson argues¹ that the individuals of the *Tractatus* are rudimentary Aristotelian substances. Accordingly, though he acknowledges the role which the truth-table explication of logical truth plays in this work, he tends to minimize its importance. For this Bergmann takes him to task,² insisting, not unfairly, that he thus fails to appreciate a difficulty which the claim

* I am obliged to Prof. Gustav Bergmann who has read the manuscript and made many helpful suggestions.

¹ J. O. Urmson, *Philosophical Analysis* (London: 1956), pp. 57-59.

² Gustav Bergmann, "The Revolt Against Logical Atomism", *The Philosophical Quarterly*, VII (1957), pp. 323-339 and VIII (1958), pp. 1-14. Cf. pp. 338-39.

creates. Bergmann, himself, faces this difficulty head on by maintaining that the claim is inconsistent with what he calls the bulk of the *Tractatus*, which in this context I take to mean the truth-table explication of logical truth.

I propose to do three things. First, I shall show that as such the claim is not inconsistent with the truth-table explication of logical truth. Second, I shall show that the claim is not based on a substance doctrine. Third, I shall argue that Wittgenstein's determination to secure a privileged status for such sentences as A was a major motive for his eventual rejection of the *Tractatus*.

There are passages in the *Tractatus* that may be taken to advance a substance doctrine. Urmson is quick to exploit them. I shall ignore them. Not that they could be ignored in contesting other aspects of Urmson's analysis. They just happen to be irrelevant to my argument. For, I am not here arguing that the individuals of the *Tractatus* are not rudimentary Aristotelian substances. I merely maintain that Wittgenstein's claim (i.e., that A is contradictory) is not based on a substance doctrine. If correct, this may detract from the plausibility of Urmson's contention that the *Tractatus*, even if only in a rudimentary and implicit fashion, does contain a substance doctrine. I, for one, do not believe that it does. But, again, this is a matter beyond the scope of this note.

What exactly is the difficulty of which Urmson makes too little and Bergmann too much? (a) The analytic-synthetic distinction must be explicated by means of the truth tables (cf. 5.525). (b) There are linguistic simples (cf. 3.1444—3.262). Everyone agrees that both (a) and (b) are central to the argument of the *Tractatus*. But they are compatible with the claim that A is contradictory only if one denies that 'red' and 'green' are (linguistic) simples. For, if they were simples, 'this is red' and 'this is green' would be atomic. Hence, to maintain that A is contradictory one would have to maintain that a conjunction of two atomic sentences is contradictory, which is inconsistent with (a). Urmson has either not seen or not said this as clearly as one might wish. Bergmann, again, has either not seen or not told us about the way out that Wittgenstein proposed in the *Tractatus*:

6.375 As there is only a *logical* necessity, so there is only a *logical* impossibility.

6.3751 For two colours, e.g. to be at one place in the visual field, is impossible, logically impossible, for it is excluded by the logical structure of colour. Let us consider

how this contradiction presents itself in physics. Somewhat as follows: that a particle cannot at the same time have two velocities, i.e. that at the same time it cannot be in two places, i.e. that particles in different places at the same time cannot be identical.

(It is clear that the logical product of two elementary propositions can neither be a tautology nor a contradiction. The assertion that a point in the visual field has two different colours at the same time is a contradiction.)

6.3751 shows that Wittgenstein realizes the difficulty. It also contains the solution he then proposed. 'Red' and 'green' are not simples. Rather, they are defined. This I take to be the import of the phrase "the logical structure of colour". Two comments as to what does not matter for the argument might be helpful. Time is mentioned in the passage. Yet, we need not concern ourselves with the problems of time. The issue of co-exemplification, if I may so express myself, arises already in a timeless universe. That is, even if 'this' in A referred to a momentary particular, the difficulty would persist. Visual fields are also mentioned. But, again, the phenomenalism-realism controversy, which some might wish to bring into the argument, can be safely ignored. For, the problem of coexemplification also confronts the phenomenalist. In sum, the problems of time and the realism-phenomenalism controversy are distinct from the problem at hand.

Wittgenstein, I conclude, was well aware of what he was committed to if he wanted to hold that A is contradictory. And committed he was. But he was not inconsistent. On the other hand, he created for himself a problem which, as we shall presently see and as he himself was soon to discover, is insoluble. But I have shown already, I think, that his claim is not at all based on a substance doctrine. It is made in the full light of both (a) and (b).¹ What Wittgenstein hoped to do was so to define 'red' and 'green' that not-A would become a deductive consequence of his definitions. Thus, since definitions are analytic, not-A would be shown to be analytic. Or, what amounts to the same thing, A would be contradictory.

In the *Tractatus*, though, all this remains a programme. Colour words are claimed to be definable, but their definitions are not given. Nor is this strange. The early Wittgenstein was greatly preoccupied with the syntactical features of his ideal

¹ A substance doctrine is not compatible with both (a) and (b). This, however, I have not undertaken to show in this note.

language. Accordingly, epistemological considerations are scarce in the *Tractatus*. Nor is this a weakness. Considering the intent of the work it is rather a strength. But eventually the ideal language has to be interpreted. That is, the referents of the linguistic simples have to be chosen. In 1929 in the paper on logical form Wittgenstein finally turns to this task. What he there does he himself describes as a “logical analysis of phenomena”.

Wittgenstein did not in 1929 abandon his commitment to the privileged status of A. As we shall see he never did. But another change has taken place. By now he rejects the solution proposed in 6.3751:

“If statements of degree were analyzable—as I used to think—we could explain this contradiction (A) by saying that the colour R contains all degrees of R and none of B and that the colour B contains all degrees of B and none of R.”¹ (pp. 168–69).

I need not for my purpose go into all the reasons that the Wittgenstein of 1929 adduces for the failure of his earlier programme. To see that it must fail it suffices to consider one which he himself does not mention. Assume, for the sake of the argument, that the (actually impossible) definitions are unexceptionable in all respects. Replace A by the sentence which predicates of the spot not that it is red and green but, rather, that it exemplifies two of the presumably simple shades from the spectrum of red and green, respectively. Call this sentence A'. A moment's reflection shows that the difficulty which we first encounter in A now reappears in A'.

However good or bad some of the reasons may be which Wittgenstein himself gave in 1929 for the failure of his earlier programme, the conclusion he draws is correct. A cannot be shown to be contradictory in this way. But there are still two ways out. Either one modifies the syntax of the *Tractatus* (a), or one denies that there are simples (b). In 1929 Wittgenstein still opts for (a). In this he still clings to the idea of an ideal language. Later on, as we shall see, he chooses (b), which of course is incompatible with that idea. But he never wavers in his determination to preserve in some form the privileged status of A. As he himself puts it in 1929, “it will be clear to all of us in ordinary life, that . . . [A] . . . is some sort of contradiction (and not merely a false proposition)” (p. 168).

Let us take a quick glance at the syntactical solution or, rather,

¹L. Wittgenstein, “Some Remarks on Logical Form”, *Aristotelian Society*, Supp. Vol. IX (1929), pp. 162–171.

the syntactical programme of 1929. For it too remained a programme. Its gist is contained in the following passage; more precisely in the sentence I italicize.¹

“ It is, of course, a *deficiency of our notation* that it does not prevent the formation of such nonsensical constructions [A] and a perfect notation will have to exclude such structures by definite rules of syntax. *These will have to tell us that in the case of certain kinds of atomic propositions described in terms of definite symbolic features certain combinations of T's and F's must be left out.* Such rules, however, cannot be laid down until we have actually reached the ultimate analysis of phenomena in question. This, as we all know, has not yet been achieved ” (pp. 170–71).

The gambit is natural enough. If, thinking in the syntactical vein, one cannot show A to be contradictory, one may try to show that it is ill-formed. This is the import of the italicized sentence. More specifically, since A is obviously well-formed, what is, or rather, what ought to be ill-formed is a certain line of its truth table. Whether or not this programme can be realized syntactically, it foreshadows the next and final stage by introducing a peculiar asymmetry between A and not-A. Not-A certainly makes sense and is meaningful. It is even true. A, according to the programme, is in some sense ill-formed. Use for the moment ‘well-formed’, ‘making sense’, and ‘being meaningful’ as if they were synonymous and you arrive at a state of affairs where of two sentences, one the negation of the other, one is meaningful while the other is not. That is the peculiarity. One possible way of making it palatable is to identify meaning with use. This, as we all know, is one of the key ideas of the final phase. If I am right, it follows that with respect to one very major issue, at least, the 1929 paper marks a transitional stage between the thought of the *Tractatus* and that of the final stage.

To see this clearly one merely has to agree that the meaning of a term is determined by the “ grammatical rules ” for its use. If this is understood one can argue that the final stage is reached in *The Blue and the Brown Books* where one reads,²

“ ‘ The colours green and blue can't be in the same place simultaneously ’ . . . is a grammatical rule and states a logical impossibility. ”

¹ The still persisting commitment to the syntactical approach appears in the italicized (my italics) phrase of the first sentence.

² L. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and the Brown Books* (Oxford: 1958), p. 56.

Nor need one give up the earlier use of 'logical structure'. The old phrase can plausibly be explicated in the new manner by maintaining that the "logical structure" of colour must be explored by analyzing the "grammar" of the use of colour words.

It may be worth mentioning in conclusion that as early as 1931 Schlick seems to have sensed the development which I have tried to make explicit. Consider the following passage from his essay, "Is There a Factual *a Priori*?"¹

"Red and green are incompatible, not because I happen to have never observed such a joint appearance, but because the sentence 'This spot is both red and green' is a meaningless combination of words. The logical rules which underlie our employment of colour words forbid such usage . . . *The meaning of a word is solely determined by the rules which hold for its use. Whatever follows from these rules, follows from the mere meaning of the word, and is therefore purely analytic, tautological, formal.* The error committed by the proponents of the factual *a priori* can be understood as arising from the fact that it was not clearly recognized that such concepts as those of colours have a formal structure. . . . The first who, to my knowledge, has given the correct solution of the problem is Ludwig Wittgenstein (see his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and essay in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1929. . . ."

The passage leaves no doubt that in 1931, at least, Schlick did not understand that the original as well as the 1929 defence of the synthetic *a priori* was doomed to failure. Nor, for that matter, did he see that the solution of the final phase is incompatible with those of the two earlier ones. Otherwise he would not have written the last sentence of the passage quoted. Yet, in the two sentences which I italicized he at least anticipated, however vaguely, what became in fact the crucial thought of the final phase. This is impressive.

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¹ Moritz Schlick, "Is There a Factual *a Priori*?", *Readings in Philosophical Analysis* (New York: 1949), pp. 284-285. (My italics).