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Reviewed by Jean-Philippe Narboux

Review: *Thinking and Being*, by Irad Kimhi

Jean-Philippe Narboux

Irad Kimhi's book, *Thinking and Being*, is in my view one of the most important books in philosophy to have appeared of late. To set it in its proper context, it may help to begin with with the following excerpts from a course by Wittgenstein:

> There is a peculiar difficulty about the ideas of negation, truth, falsity, proposition, which is expressed in this crude form: that a proposition is false or its negation true when no fact corresponds to the proposition. But if no fact corresponds to it, why is it not nonsensical, as a name would be if it did not name anything (Wittgenstein 1979, 108)?

> Thinking, wishing, hoping, believing, and negation all have something in common. The same sort of puzzling questions can be asked about each. How can one wish for a thing that does not happen or hope that something will happen that does not? How can not-*p* negate *p*, when p may not be the case, i.e. when nothing corresponds to *p* (Wittgenstein 1979, 110–11)?

Whatever their maieutic merits, these formulations, which return us to what Kimhi calls "the gate of philosophy" (the Parmenidean puzzles), may appear to be muddled. To the contemporary philosopher, in effect, they are likely to seem to be running together a number of philosophical issues that Frege taught us it was imperative to keep apart. First, they may seem to conflate the problem of falsehood with the problem of negation. The phrase "to think what is not" is notoriously ambiguous between "to think what, in fact, is not" and "to think as not being". Construed in the former way (that is to say, *de re*) it captures the puzzle of falsehood. Construed in the latter way (that is to say, *de dicto*), it raises the puzzle of negation. Second, these formulations may seem to conflate negation, a truth-functional logical connective, with propositional attitudes like wishing and hoping, thereby obfuscating the difference between so-called "extensional" contexts and "intensional" ones. Third, they may seem to fail to separate the psychological from the logical, thereby suggesting that the laws governing the recognition of truth are continuous with the laws governing truth.

These qualms are not unfamiliar. Thus, in a brilliant essay on Plato's attempted solution to the puzzle of falsehood in the *Sophist*, Wiggins charged Plato's formulation of the puzzle with resting on "a fallaciously opaque reading of the transparent description ['say what is not']" (Wiggins 1971, 279). Quine held that idioms of propositional attitudes like "wishes that" and "hopes that" were best dispensed with, as from a logical point of view they displayed an "abject" "want of clarity" that set them altogether apart from truth-functional words like "not" and "and" (Quine 1986, 33). Finally, in an influential essay on the principle of non-contradiction, Lukasiewicz distinguished ontological, logical, and psychological versions of the principle (hereafter referred to as "OPNC", "LPNC", and "PPNC"; see 29), and he accused Aristotle of committing the fallacy of "logicism in psychology", the exact counterpart of the fallacy of "psychologism of logic", by tracing the impossibility to think both "*p*" and "not-*p*" to the impossibility for "*p*" and "not-*p*" both to be true (Lukasiewicz 1971).

Once sorted out along these broadly Fregean lines, the puzzles indiscriminately raised by Wittgenstein prove to be readily amenable to Fregean solutions. Consider the puzzle of falsehood, as raised by Parmenides. A Fregean "thought" (*Gedanke*), insofar as it is the sense (*Sinn*) of an assertion (*Aussage*), is *there to be thought* whether or not it is grasped or judged to be true by anyone, and whether or not it is in fact true. The asserted content of an assertion is distinct from its assertoric force. In order to *be* at all (i.e., to have the logical unity without which it would not exist in the first place), it need not be put forward as true, let

alone be true. Thus, if what one says, in fact, *is not*, what one says still has *being* in a different sense, namely the being of a thought. On this standard Fregean account (whether it is actually Frege's or not), to think is to stand in a certain relation to such a being. In a different tradition, one would find the notion of "intentional being" invoked at this juncture.

Did Wittgenstein simply blunder then? Kimhi suggests otherwise. Consider such ordinary patterns of inference as the following:

A believes *p*.	A believes *p*.	A believes *p*.
p.	Not-*p*.	A's belief is correct.
So A's belief is correct.	So A's belief is incorrect.	So *p*.

Kimhi calls the logical patterns belonging in this group the "syllogisms of thinking and being" (10, 111, 122–23). Kimhi contends that the defining task of "philosophical logic" is to entitle ourselves to their obvious validity (10).[1] This requires recognizing the same proposition as occurring both in "extensional contexts" like "not-*p*", in which it occurs asserted, and in "intensional contexts" like "A believes not-*p*", in which it occurs unasserted. Frege's account of indirect discourse seems to make this well nigh impossible. For on his account "*p*" changes significance according to whether it occurs outside or inside the intensional context of indirect discourse (12, 123). Thus, "from a Fregean point of view, the premises of these syllogisms are logically unconnected" (123).

It is also not so clear, on a closer look, that a conception of thought and judgment along Fregean lines is able to dispose of the Parmenidean puzzle. Judgeable content is introduced as the highest common factor shared by thought and judgment. One can grasp judgeable content without yet taking the further step of judging it to be true or false (what Frege calls "advancing to a truth-value"). In that way, judgment is logically more complex than thought: it consists in a content grasped *plus* the recognition of the truth of what is thus grasped. This means that the logical unity of the content of an assertion, as conveyed by the predicative use of "is", precedes and is independent of the logical unity of the judgment to which this assertion gives expression, as conveyed by the assertoric use of "is" (8, 18).[2] As Kimhi points out, however, it is far from clear that the notion of judgeable content that is at once forceless and truth-apt is coherent. How can content show how things are if it is true prior to and independently of saying that they do so stand?[3]

It begins to look as if the contemporary neglect of the old puzzles rehearsed by Wittgenstein were far less revelatory of the nature of these puzzles than of the current state of philosophy. The groundbreaking lesson of Kimhi's reflections is that this diagnosis may well be sound. Our sense that we have put these old puzzles behind us speaks of a "misplaced confidence", one that "stems from our present conceptions of logic and language" (2). The task of addressing these puzzles must be confronted anew. Given that the Parmenidean account of the unity of thinking and being lands us in aporia, what is required is a diagnosis of what stands in the way of an alternative account of this unity (8).

It is Kimhi's contention that the fundamental obstacle resides in the assumption that "All logical complexity is predicative or functional in nature" (15, 22), i.e., that every dimension of the

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[1]In her seminal essay "Truth before Tarski", Cora Diamond contends that Wittgenstein seeks to clarify fundamental logical notions by reflecting on "logical features of the use of ordinary sentences", as exhibited by "logical patterns of use" like the above (see Diamond 2002). On her reading, the upshot of Wittgenstein's reflection is the following heterodox diagnosis: it is impossible to account for these patterns of reasoning as long as one is "thinking of propositions as items going into a relation as its terms" (Diamond 2002, 270). On this crucial point, Kimhi's book follows in Diamond's steps.

[2]See also Conant (2020, 452-53).

[3]This inconsistency transpires in the tension afflicting the Fregean notion of judgment insofar as it is fundamentally ambiguous between a logical notion and a merely psychological one (36). See also Conant (2020, 444–45).

logical complexity of a proposition can be rendered in function-argument form.[4] Let us call this assumption the *Uniformity Assumption* (hereafter UA). This assumption, in turn, fuels the assumption that a simple proposition enjoys a unitary being, and so is individuated as the proposition that it is prior to being true or false (39). On this assumption, the veridical being or non-being of what is said by a proposition (i.e., its being the case or not being the case) is extrinsic to its predicative being (i.e., the being expressed by the predicative use of "is") (8, 18). Let us call this assumption the *Externality Assumption* (hereafter EA). Correlatively, the veridical sense of being and non-being (i.e., being as being-true and being as being-false) is held to be at best secondary (69–70). Finally, EA induces a twofold thesis. It is countenanced (1) that every assertion articulates into two components, one of which conveys its semantical *content* and the other, the *force* with which it is put forward (39); and (2) that the contexts in which a proposition can occur divide into two radically different kinds of contexts, namely, *extensional*, "transparent", truth-functional complexes on the one hand, and *intensional*, "opaque", non-truth-functional complexes on the other hand (12). Thus, UA is the ultimate source of the "psycho / logical dualism" (as the book calls it) which was systematically advocated by Frege and is nowadays more or less taken for granted (33–34). This dualistic view of judgment as decomposing into a subjective act and a truth-evaluable content drives a wedge between the psychological and ontological guises of the principle of non-contradiction (PPNC and OPNC respectively) (39). Nowadays, it is almost universally regarded as the only way of steering clear of the pitfall of psychologism about logic (33).

This overall diagnosis is at once profound, original, and controversial. It defines the principal tasks of the book. The book argues that the force-content distinction and the intension-extension distinction lead to a number of dead-ends, as they render the main task of philosophical logic intractable. It traces

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[4]See Conant (2020, 362).

these distinctions to EA and ultimately to UA. Under the name of "psycho-logical monism", it advances an alternative conception of logical complexity, which it seeks to ground in a certain understanding of the notion of "logical capacity". In light of this alternative conception, UA ceases to appear unavoidable and the two above distinctions turn out to be not only problematic but also dispensable.

The book contains a substantial introduction and three chapters. The chapters stand to each other as three concentric circles: three moments in a single spiraling development that culminates in an attempt to recover the insight contained in Parmenides's claim that "thinking and being are the same" (6, 152). Each chapter successively revisits the main steps of the same fundamental argument, albeit from a new angle and with a new focus.

The first chapter inquires into the unity of OPNC and PPNC, the second chapter into the unity of the logical and psychological guises of the principle of non-contradiction (i.e., LPNC and PPNC), and the third chapter into the unity of its ontological and logical guises (i.e., OPNC and LPNC). The first chapter focuses upon the unity of force and content (the "life" of "*p*"), the second chapter upon the unity of the contradictory pair (i.e., the unity of "*p*" and "not-*p*"), and the third chapter upon the unity of thinking and being (i.e., the unity of thinking that *p* and its being the case that *p*). Taken together, the three chapters deliver an understanding of the unity between all three guises of the principle of non-contradiction. In so doing, they bring into view the validity of the above patterns of inference, thereby completing the main task of Philosophical Logic.

All three chapters proceed formally after the same fashion. Each chapter takes its departure in the exegetical puzzles surrounding the interpretation of some central text by Plato or Aristotle. It then contends that the main argument in the text is compelling only to the extent that it impugns EA and therefore UA. Finally, after deriving from the text an account of logical complexity that amounts to a rejection of UA, it proceeds to re-

solve the exegetical puzzles that motivated its inquiry. In other words, the method is essentially "regressive-progressive": after a movement of ascent, aimed at uncovering the conditions under which the initial exegetical puzzle ceases to be intractable, there succeeds a movement of descent, that derives a solution to this puzzle from the conditions in which the former movement arrived. The apex of each chapter consists in a new take on the central thesis of the book, as encapsulated in its central distinction between the "categorematic" and the "syncategorematic" (more on this below).

The crucial clue to the availability of an alternative conception of logical complexity is afforded by the peculiar unity that pertains to the contradictory pair made up of "*p*" and "not-*p*". Accordingly, while the ultimate aim of the book is to secure the unity of thinking and being (i.e., the unity of thinking that *p* and its being the case that *p*), its leading thread resides in an effort to secure the unity of the contradictory pair (i.e., the unity of "*p*" and "not-*p*"). The problem of the intelligibility of the unity of the contradictory pair plays the role of touchstone.

Frege's claim that the assertoric force and the semantic content of a proposition must be dissociated from each other, often referred to as "Frege's Point", builds on the observation that, as Geach puts it, "a proposition may occur in discourse now asserted, now unasserted, and yet be recognizably the same proposition" (37). Thus, "*p*" must occur unasserted in "not-*p*" (since otherwise "not-*p*" would both deny and assert *p*), yet be recognizably the same in "not-*p*" as in "*p*" (since otherwise it would not be manifest that "not-*p*" is the contradictory of "*p*"). It bears emphasizing that Frege's twofold claim that predication and negation do not belong with the assertoric force, but only with the content of the assertion, is not the only possible way of construing the force-content distinction to which one is committed if one adheres to UA and therefore to EA. Descartes, for one, makes the exactly opposite claim (Kimhi calls it "Descartes's Point") to support the very same conceptual distinction (37, 60).

"Frege's Observation" seems to imply "Frege's Point", i.e., the claim that "occurrences of the 'same' thought as unasserted and asserted 'have' a logical content in common, where what they thus 'have in common' is a highest factor" (Conant 2020, 415). For it seems that if assertoric force belongs to *p*, then *p* cannot occur unasserted in "not-*p*" or "if *p* then *q*". Certainly, *as long as EA is in place*, Frege's Observation implies Frege's Point.

While Kimhi does not dispute Frege's Observation, he does dispute Frege's Point. He contends that it is a mistake to construe Frege's Observation as Frege's Point, as Geach and virtually everyone after him have done (38).[5] Far from being equivalent to Frege's Observation, Frege's Point is unfaithful to it. According to the author, Frege's Point rests on the conflation of two distinct notions of occurrence, namely the actual, concrete occurrence of a propositional sign and the symbolic occurrence of a propositional sign within a larger logical context (38).

Frege's Observation must be understood to bear on the historical, non-repeatable occurrences of a propositional symbol that is itself essentially repeatable. What has the force of an assertion is always some historical, non-repeatable occurrence of a propositional symbol. This by no means supports the conclusion that what recurs is essentially forceless. On the contrary, Frege's Observation, properly understood, implies that nothing short of the proposition *p* itself can occur in the statement that "not-*p*" or in the statement that "A thinks *p*" (39). On this alternative understanding of Frege's Observation, which the author ascribes to Wittgenstein (he calls it "Wittgenstein's Point"), what it establishes is that "*p*" must be exactly the same in "A thinks *p*" and "not-*p*" as if it stands alone (50).

In order to do justice to Frege's Observation without separating force and content, Kimhi exploits the notion of "display". Every occurrence of "*p*" in a complex propositional context constitutes a display of the assertion "*p*". But an occurrence of "*p*" can display

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[5]An important exception, not mentioned by Kimhi, is Anscombe (2015).

the assertion "*p*" without itself being an assertion of "*p*", just as a demonstration of an activity (say, swimming) can exemplify this activity without actually performing it (say, one performs the gestures of swimming on dry land). In other words, not every occurrence of "*p*" is an asserted occurrence of "*p*". An occurrence of "*p*" that is a "mere display" is called a "gesture" on account of the above analogy (41, 51).[6]

This view of the matter is up to a certain point in agreement with the sort of view advocated by Anscombe in "Belief and Thought". Anscombe too holds that

> the fact that a proposition that is only part of another one may be unasserted [i.e., Frege's observation] does not tend to show that a proposition that is not part of another is unasserted until something extra accrues to it. Rather the contrary (Anscombe 2015, 161).

She too subscribes to Wittgenstein's criticism of Frege, to the effect that what is assented to must already have a sense, that is to say, already say that such-and-such is the case, and cannot await an act of assertion in order to do so (Anscombe 2015, 165–66). Like Kimhi, Anscombe seeks to explain how we can say at once that the proposition "*p*" itself asserts and that it occurs unasserted in "not-*p*" (Anscombe 2015, 167). However, the two views appear to diverge with respect to both their diagnosis of Frege's mistake and their way of fleshing out Wittgenstein's alternative. A systematic comparison between these two views lies outside the compass of this review, but it would certainly be rewarding.

Anscombe insists that historical acts of asserting (she calls them "personal assertions") are made possible by the availability of propositions as tools of assertion, rather than the other way around (Anscombe 2015, 169). A proposition can be employed by someone to perform some personal act of asserting because it possesses the logical character of assertedness (Anscombe 2015, 166). (Needless to say, Kimhi would object to this dualism of the

personal and the logical.) Anscombe draws two consequences from this. Firstly, the logical distinction "asserted vs. unasserted because only part of a propositional compound" cannot be accounted for in terms of the distinction "asserted vs. unasserted by a person". An inference like "if *p* then *q*; but *p*; therefore *q*" is valid regardless of whether anyone asserts *p* and the conclusion or not (Anscombe 2015, 161). Secondly, the logical distinction "asserted vs. unasserted because only part of a propositional compound" has nothing to do with the distinction "asserted vs. unasserted because only uttered in a play (or more generally, in a mimetic context of utterance)" (Anscombe 2015, 169). Anscombe's proposal combines these two points, both of which go against the grain of Kimhi's alternative proposal.[7]

For the rejection of UA to be compelling, an alternative conception of logical complexity must be provided. In other words, it must be shown that, *pace* Frege, not all logical complexity is predicative or functional in character. To this aim, Kimhi invokes what he calls "the literal notion of the syncategorematic", distinguishing it from the familiar "semantic notion of the syncategorematic" (79). The traditional contrast between "categorematic" and "syncategorematic" expressions is hylemorphic: an

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[7]Anscombe's proposal turns on the following line of thought:

> It is not right to say that a proposition loses its assertedness in some contexts. But it is right to say that a proposition in itself is an assertion and that it is not asserted in every context in which it occurs. That makes it sound as if it did lose something in contexts in which it is not asserted. But not so. "Not asserted in the context C" is the negation of "asserted in the context C", not yet the negation of "asserted". We introduce, as the basic notion of assertedness, *assertedness in a context*—which may be the proposition itself, in which context it is always an assertion—and an absolute notion of assertion has to be defined in terms of assertion in, and completeness of, a context (Anscombe 2015, 168–69).

Remarking that the true function of the assertion sign is that "of a signal of completeness, not at all of a sign which imparts the assertive character to what it embraces" (Anscombe 2015, 168), Anscombe defines the notion of an "asserted occurrence" of a proposition "*p*" in a context C in terms of the notion of a "complete context" of occurrence.

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[6]See also Kimhi (Forthcoming).

expression counts as "syncategorematic" if it indicates *how* the proposition is composed (its form) rather than *what* enters in its composition (its matter) (79–80). Even though it contributes to the sense of the proposition, it does not figure among its referentially significant parts, i.e., it does not designate any entity. The literal contrast is more demanding: an expression counts as "syncategorematic", in this stronger sense, if it cannot be a component of a predicative proposition *at all* (81) i.e., if it cannot be so much as a merely formal component of it.

A syncategorematic expression does not add anything (whether content or form) to the sense of any proposition embedded in it. On Kimhi's account, the assertions "Not-*p*", "A thinks *p*", "*p* is true" and, last but not least, "*p*" itself do not add anything whatsoever to the sense of "*p*". None of these expressions stands for a relation. In fact, none of them stands for anything. They all are syncategorematic expressions. That the assertion "*p*" is itself a syncategorematic unit becomes intelligible once it is realized that the propositional symbol "*p*" consists in a fact rather than a complex (100).

The rejection of UA is a cornerstone of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. In Frege's works, the analysis of propositions into subject and predicate is supplanted by the analysis into argument and function. However momentous this gesture may have been, when set against Wittgenstein's rejection of UA, it appears to be a tempest in a teapot.

Kimhi's distinction between categorematic complexity and syncategorematic complexity is a terminological variant on the distinction that the *Tractatus* draws between *functional* complexity and *operational* complexity. The latter distinction captures what the early Wittgenstein called his "fundamental thought" (*Grundgedanke*), namely the thought encapsulated in the claim that so-called "logical constants" do not represent anything (Wittgenstein 1921, 4.0312). As Kimhi observes, "syncategorematic differences between propositions or judgments, in con-

trast to categorematic differences, do not correspond to any bit of reality" (16). An operation does not characterize the sense of the propositions in which it occurs *at all*. It does not so much as characterize the *form* of their sense (Wittgenstein 1921, 5.241, 5.25). The idea that an operation designates strictly *nothing*— that is to say, that it does not so much as *inform* a proposition in which it occurs—is best conveyed by considering the operation of negation. Kimhi holds with Wittgenstein that one and the same reality corresponds to both "*p*" and "∼ *p*".[8] It follows from this that to the negation-sign "∼" there corresponds strictly *nothing* in reality. In Kimhi's idiom, the difference between "*p*" and "∼ *p*" is merely syncategorematic (16, 19–20).

On the view that Kimhi takes over from Wittgenstein, the operation of negation merely reverses the oriented use of the proposition that it takes as basis: "The judgment that not-*p* simply reverses the syncategorematic direction displayed in *p*", writes Kimhi (61).[9] This requires in turn that a judgment be a fact rather than a complex (98-106). This contrasts starkly with Frege's view of logical constants as first-level functional expressions (i.e., incomplete expressions with gaps for singular terms) that take names of truth-values as arguments. The point generalizes. As Diamond puts it, "nothing with directionality is a *relatum*" (Diamond 2002, 269).[10] On the Tractarian monist account of the nature of propositions, a simple propositional symbol "*p*" does not have any sense apart from its ability to also occur in "∼*p*" and more generally in larger propositional contexts. Thus, the so-called "Context Principle" can no longer be restricted (as it is in Frege) to the claim that we cannot ask for the meaning of a name in isolation from the proposition in which it occurs. The "Complete" or "Full" Context Principle, as Kimhi calls it, does

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[8]See Wittgenstein (1921, 4.0621).

[9]See Wittgenstein (1921, 5.2341).

[10]Wittgenstein writes in the *Notes on Logic*: "Logical indefinables cannot be predicates or relations, because propositions, owing to sense, cannot have predicates or relations" (Wittgenstein 1961).

not grant semantic autonomy to simple propositions (46, 48; see also 14–15).

Combined with the insight that it is essential to logical activity to manifest itself in language, the Complete Context Principle yields what Kimhi calls "the Complete Linguistic Turn" (64). The core of the latter resides in a "hermeneutical circle" (64, 75):

> The complete linguistic turn lies in a hermeneutical circle: the propositional sign *p* must be comprehended as negatable, and therefore by reference to the logical unity of the larger whole which consists in the assertions *p*, ~*p*; this unity of the whole, in turn, depends on the repeatability of the propositional sign *p*. The point can be generalized to all logical unities (64–65).

In construing negation as an operation, i.e., as something *done*, Wittgenstein directly impugns Frege's view of negation as forceless.[11] Correlatively, in charging Frege's sign of assertion with being superfluous, Wittgenstein does not mean to suggest that their being assertions is inessential to propositions, but on the contrary that it is far too essential to them to be something that can be superadded as an extra-ingredient.[12] This criticism turns on the rejection of the force-content distinction, far from bespeaking a commitment to it (50–51).[13]

The suggestion that the difference between "*p*" and "~*p*" is nothing but a *difference in directionality* is anticipated by Aristo-

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[11] See Dummett (1973, 326-27).

[12] See also Conant (2020, 442-43; note 51; 643–44).

[13] The core insight of the *Tractatus*—its "fundamental thought" that logical connectives do not stand for anything—goes hand in hand with what it regards as "the cardinal problem of philosophy", namely, that of properly distinguishing showing and saying. Although Kimhi's book does not explicitly touch on the latter distinction, it should be expected to bear on it, given that its central distinction between the syncategorematic and the categorematic as the two logical dimensions of propositions builds on the *Tractatus*'s insight. I think that it does. Kimhi remarks that, given its syncategorematic character, the occurrences of a repeatable propositional symbol should not be confused with the instances of a concept (i.e., the objects falling under it) (65, 67). This accords well with the Tractarian view that the relevant "sameness" shows forth, so that it need not and cannot be said. See Narboux (2016).

tle (87). In *De Interpretatione 6*, Aristotle divides simple assertions into affirmations (*kataphaseis*) and denials (*apophaseis*): an affirmation (kata-phasis) is "a proposition asserting something toward something [*kata tinos*]" whereas a denial (apo-phasis) is "a proposition asserting something away from something [*apo tinos*]" (87).

However, as Kimhi notes, Aristotle also characterizes affirmation (*kataphasis*) and denial (*apophasis*) respectively as combination (*synthesis*) and separation (*diairesis*) (19, 87). And it is all too tempting to construe the difference between the combination and the separation that make up a contradictory pair as a difference between two modes of predication, i.e., two contrasting relations between what is signified by the subject-term of the assertion and what is signified by its predicate-term (19, 115). So interpreted, Aristotle's "pointer" leads straightaway to a "dead end" (18).[14]

Against the above reading of Aristotle, Kimhi contends that Aristotle conceives of the difference between combination and separation as syncategorematic. He is thereby led to specify the second half of the Hermeneutic Circle concerning Negation in terms of a primacy of affirmation over negation (75, 151). Even though the contradictory pair has priority over both affirmation and negation, negation is parasitic on affirmation.

The book does not rest content with vindicating Wittgenstein's case against UA and unfolding its far-reaching implications, many of which turn out to have eluded the great majority of Wittgenstein's readers. It takes this case significantly further. In effect, it seeks to ground Wittgenstein's rejection of UA in an account of our logical capacity to employ propositional signs and of its ontological import.

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[14] Indeed, the view of negation as a "negative copula", i.e., a "link that severs", aptly criticized by Sigwart, and the alternative view, put forward by Sigwart, of negation as intentionally directed against the copula, i.e., as "the severing of a link", seem equally unpromising, as Brentano and Frege both argued. See Narboux (Forthcoming).

This account combines three proposals, none of which is to be found in Wittgenstein (at any rate, not in so many words).

First, the internal unity of the contradictory pair ("*p*" and "not-*p*"), which we have seen to be the crucial clue for understanding the validity of the "syllogisms of thinking and being", is to be elucidated by appealing to the notion of a "logical two-way capacity" (19–20, 60–61, 108–10). Kimhi construes the contradictory judgments "*S* is *F*" and "*S* is not-*F*" as the positive and negative acts of the two-way logical capacity, itself specified through its end, the positive act of combination (20, 108–9). Separation, as the negative act of the logical capacity of negation, is performed through the display of the positive act of combination. Thus, the separation accomplished by "*S* is not *F*" does not differ from the combination accomplished by "*S* is *F*" except syncategorematically (20, 109). Needless to say, the display by "*S* is not *F*" of the positive act of combination is a mere display, i.e., a "gesture" in the author's sense. This account, Kimhi shows, does justice both to Frege's Observation and to the Hermeneutic Circle.

Second, every syllogism of thinking and being "ultimately reflects which judgments are such that they can be held together in a single consciousness" (10). Kimhi draws on the Kantian "Critical Insight" that the hallmark of judging is that it is an activity whose unity is nothing else than the consciousness of that unity (52–53). As *I judge* is always already contained in *what is judged*,[15] there can be no judgeable content prior to that content being put forward as true in judgment (therefore, the force-content distinction is incoherent); moreover, it makes no sense to hold, with the psycho / logical dualist, that certain combinations of acts of thinking should be prohibited because their contents cannot be combined (53, 55). An immediate corollary of the Critical Insight is that "I think *p*" does not convey a further predicative determination in addition to the one conveyed by *p*. Thus, "I" stands on a level with the logical connectives (52). "I think" is an op-

eration, just like negation and conjunction. Conversely, negation and conjunction are acts of self-identification, just like "I think". "*A* thinks" shares features with operations of both sorts.

Third, the internal unity of thinking and being is to be made intelligible by showing that veridical being and non-being (positive and negative facts, in Tractarian terminology) are nothing but actualizations of the very same logical two-way capacity that also underwrites judging (21–22, 111–12, 156–60). A judgment is true or false according to whether or not the two-way logical capacity that it actualizes is actualized *in the same direction* in the world (111, 159).[16]

The first proposal aims at accounting for Frege's Observation, without divorcing force from content, in a manner that does justice to the Hermeneutical Circle concerning negation:

> I wish to propose that the contradictory judgments "*S* is *F*" and "*S* is not-*F*" are to be understood as the positive and negative acts of a single two-way logical capacity—which. . . can be specified through its positive act: "*S* is *F*". The capacity is asymmetrical since the positive act is prior to the negative. This means that the only predicative determination in a simple contradictory pair is the *positive* predication. Yet even the positive case is essentially one of a *pair of acts* (20).

The notion of a logical capacity at work here is inspired by Aristotle's notion of a rational capacity. Aristotle takes a rational capacity to be essentially two-way, that is to say, to be such as to be actualized in two distinct ways, one of which is logically prior to the other on account of its being the *end* of the capacity. Thus, someone possessing a medical skill knows how to heal (i.e., produce health) and, by the same token, she also knows how to harm (i.e., destroy health). The asymmetry between the two acts of rational capacities in Aristotle's sense carries over to logical capacities in Kimhi's sense. Just as a medical skill is for

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[15]On this Kantian insight, see Rödl (2017, 6).

[16]This is reminiscent of Wittgenstein's suggestion, in the "Notes on Logic" that a proposition be seen as a standard against which to assess the "behavior of the facts" as like in sense (*gleichsinnig*) or opposite in sense with it. See Wittgenstein (1961, 98–99).

healing, not for harming, so the logical capacity that a simple propositional symbol consists in is for combining, not for separating (108–9). Therefore, "the term *combination* is used for the capacity associated with a simple propositional sign and for its positive act" (109).

There exists nevertheless a fundamental difference between a logical capacity in Kimhi's sense and a rational capacity in Aristotle's sense. Whereas a rational capacity is a determination of a substance and is associated with the predicate of a proposition, a logical capacity is associated with the proposition as a whole (20, 110). Separation, as the negative act of the logical capacity, is performed through the display of the positive act of combination. Therefore, the separation accomplished by "*S* is not *F*" does not differ from the combination accomplished by "*S* is *F*" except syncategorematically (20, 109). Needless to say, the display by "*S* is not *F*" of the positive act of combination is a mere display, i.e., a "gesture" in the author's sense.

This account does justice both to Frege's Observation and to the Hermeneutic Circle concerning Negation. Assertoric force is internal to the two-way capacity that a simple repeatable propositional symbol "*p*" is—both in the sense that the positive act of combination yielding an assertion of *p* is what this capacity is for (the job of a proposition is to be asserted) and in the sense that the positive and negative exercises of this capacity are equally assertoric—but assertoric force is not a feature of "*p*" as it figures within the negative act of separation yielding an assertion of not-*p*, that is to say, it is not a feature of the historical, non-repeatable occurrence of "*p*" in an assertion of not-*p*. At the same time, regarding a simple repeatable propositional symbol "*p*" as a two-way capacity brings out that neither of the two modes of actualization of "*p*" is intelligible apart from its unity with the other, so that even the positive assertion "*p*" is dominated by the contradictory pair (in conformity to the Full Context Principle), even though or rather precisely insofar as the negative mode of actualization is logically posterior to the positive, as the sense of

the negative assertion "not-*p*" comes entirely from the positive assertion "*p*".

The second proposal has it that every syllogism of thinking and being "ultimately reflects which judgments are such that they can be held together in a single consciousness" (10). It elaborates on the Kantian insight—Kimhi calls it the "Critical Insight"—that the hallmark of judging is that it is an activity whose unity is nothing else than the consciousness of that unity (52–53). Judging is essentially self-conscious in this sense: "Taking oneself to judge *It is so* is not a different act of the mind from judging this; the act expressed by *It is so* is the same as the one expressed by *I judge it is so*. As the act is one, so is what is thought in this act: *I judge* is inside what is judged" (Rödl 2017, 6). This has two consequences that should be familiar by now. If *I judge* is always already contained in *what is judged*, then: first, there can be no judgeable content prior to that content being put forward as true in judgment (therefore, the force-content distinction is incoherent); second, it makes no sense to hold, with the psycho / logical dualist, that certain combinations of acts of thinking should be prohibited because their contents cannot be combined (53, 55) (therefore, the view that PPNC is not a logical principle but a normative requirement—namely, that one *should* not contradict oneself (31)—is incoherent). This account of judging coheres with the claim that "I think *p*" differs only syncategorematically from "*p*", since "*p*", a syncategorematic unit, cannot occur predicatively in "I think *p*". An immediate corollary of the Critical Insight is that "I think *p*" does not convey a further predicative determination in addition to the one conveyed by *p*.

The present proposal purports to elucidate the sense in which "I" stands on a level with the logical connectives (52). "I think" is an operation, just like negation and conjunction. Conversely, negation and conjunction are acts of self-identification, just like "I think". "*A* thinks" shares features with operations of both sorts. Each operation constitutes "a way of identifying a state of consciousness on the basis of gestures" (58). Thus, the neg-

ative assertion not-*p* is "an identification of consciousness as disagreeing with *p*" (58) and the compound assertion "*p* & *q*" is "an identification of consciousness. . . as disagreeing with any combination of judgments that contains either not-*p* or not-*q*" (59), and so on.

To regard this analysis as a reduction would be a grave misreading. It does not purport to analyze logical connectives away by deriving them from various acts of self-identification of its own state by consciousness. On the contrary, its whole point is to bring out the mutual dependence of consciousness and language. If it were not for the essential repeatability of propositional symbols within larger propositional contexts, a repeatability that is radically different from the repeatability that a concept possesses insofar as it can be instantiated, there would be no self-consciousness in the first place. The logical unity of thinking is essentially dependent on what Kimhi elsewhere calls "the logical-sensible unity of language".

Despite its strategic role, the third and last proposal is perhaps the least worked out of the three. The entire book paves the way for it. A judgment is true or false according to whether the two-way logical capacity that it actualizes is actualized in the same direction in the world or not (111, 159). This is reminiscent of Wittgenstein's suggestion, in the "Notes on Logic", that a proposition be seen as a standard against which to assess the "behavior of the facts" as like in sense (gleichsinnig) or opposite in sense with it (Wittgenstein 1961, 98–99). The author puts forward a deeply original reading of Plato's account of the "partition of Otherness" in the Sophist (156–60). This reading builds upon an influential article by Edward Lee arguing that Plato's account of the partition of Otherness is congenial to Wittgenstein's account of the partition of logical space in the Tractatus (see Lee 1972; McDowell 1982; Narboux 2009).

Although the foregoing does little more than scratch the surface of Kimhi's remarkably rich book, it should be clear by now that this book places some of the most perennial problems of philosophy in a radically new light.

I will end by raising a couple of difficulties. First, it is not clear that the book removes *all* the obstacles to marrying an Aristotelian understanding of the concept of proposition with a Wittgensteinian one. In particular, it fails to adhere to some of the reasons why the *Tractatus* does not endorse the Aristotelian view, countenanced by Kimhi, that every simple proposition uniquely decomposes into a name and a verb, a subject of predication and a predicate. I am not primarily thinking of the obvious issue, not addressed in the present book, of whether an account of generality and quantification not marred by the limitations inherent in Aristotelian logic (and by its consequent inability to account for certain obviously valid patterns of inference) can be successfully grafted on an Aristotelian account of simple propositions. The Fregean account of these patterns of inference exploits the possibility of decomposing a sentence into function and argument in a number of different ways.

There are more fundamental motivations for the rejection of the above Aristotelian view by the *Tractatus*. According to the *Tractatus*, logic has nothing to say as to whether there are simple propositions of a certain logical form, for this cannot be settled a priori. Nor are there logical grounds for introducing a logical distinction between two categories of objects on the basis of the linguistic distinction between subject and predicate. That an object recurs in many facts does not mean that it is the bearer of a general name rather than that of a singular name. No logical conclusion can be drawn from the fact, if it is one, that negation yields a new functional expression when it is attached to a functional expression, whereas it does not yield any singular name when it is attached to a singular name. For there is no logical reason why a functional expression occurring in an unanalyzed proposition should "cover" more than one name.[17] The only

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[17]See Anscombe (1965, 34–35). As Anscombe puts it, "from the *Tractatus* perspective, the distinction between individuals and universals. . . is meaningless. The concept of a universal is a bastard progeny of two quite distinct concepts—those of *function* and of the existence of an object in *many facts*. The

logically significant distinction is that between propositions and names, facts and objects. One way of reading the *Philosophical Investigations* is as a radicalization of this point.[18] In the later work, the very idea that thoughts and reality are uniquely decomposable along a shared logical form, equally intrinsic to both, seems to come under suspicion.[19]

The second difficulty attaches to the status of the author's own discourse. If, as Kimhi contends, "the judgment that not-*p* simply reverses the syncategorematic direction displayed in *p*" (61) and logical principles, like "*p* or not-*p*", are "tautologies" in the sense of "self-cancelling propositional displays" (66), then what are we to make of those ostensible assertions in which the author articulates his view of negation by setting it against what he regards as confusion? How are we to understand the use that *they* themselves make of negation in order to keep confusion at bay? Here are two examples:

> The separation which is the negation of the verb is *not* a different combination, i.e., a different way of holding the terms. . . (107)

> But the difference between the combination and the separation that make up a contradictory pair is *not* a difference between modes of predication. . . negating a determination of a subject is *not* a special way of determining that subject (115, my emphasis).

These ostensible assertions do not seem to be tautologies in Kimhi's sense. Yet they are not bipolar. Like tautologies, they can only be true. They do not admit of an intelligible negation. What they reject, they do not seem to reject as false but as unintelligible. Since they do not admit of so much as a contrary negation, let alone a contradictory one, they are essentially asymmetric. They give expression to "judgments without a contrary" (Rödl 2018). What the later Wittgenstein called "grammatical propositions" are examples of such assertions.[20]

We seem to be faced with the following dilemma. If these ostensible assertions make sense—and the book never so much as hints that they don't—then the account that the book gives of negation is at best incomplete and at worse inconsistent. It is incomplete insofar as not every non-tautological ostensible assertion can be understood in terms of a two-way logical capacity. It is also incomplete insofar as the unity of the two uses of negation that figure in the book—the use of negation that the book elucidates and the other use that the book is driven to make of it in its attempt to elucidate the former—remains opaque. And this account of negation runs the risk of inconsistency to the extent that it cannot be formulated without undermining itself. If, on the other hand, the ostensible assertions under consideration ultimately make no sense at all, then what is missing is an account of what the author aims to achieve in advancing them at all— what is more, without ever acknowledging their nonsensicality.

Perhaps Kimhi does not grant after all that ostensible assertions like the above ones differ from tautologies in his sense. He argues elsewhere that the very notion of a judgment without a contrary is incoherent, as all ostensible assertions divide without remainder into genuine, bipolar propositional symbols and tautologies (Kimhi Forthcoming). If so, however, the uniform conception of tautologies as self-cancelling displays cannot be retained. For although there is a sense in which ostensible asser-

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former is linguistic; the latter, not peculiar to these objects which are referred to by expressions for properties and relations" (Anscombe 1965, 36).

[18]See Travis (2006).

[19]Another issue worthy of consideration that I cannot investigate here due to lack of space is whether the *Tractatus*'s view of negation supports the contention that affirmation is prior to negation in the same way that truth is prior to falsehood, as Kimhi maintains. A number of commentators who concur with Kimhi in underscoring the importance of the asymmetry between truth and falsehood (as truth is the formal end of assertion, there can be no such thing as putting forward propositions as false), have nonetheless resisted the claim that the *Tractatus* endorses, on the basis of this asymmetry, a counterpart asymmetry between affirmation and negation. See e.g., Narboux (2009); Anscombe (2011).

[20]See Narboux (Forthcoming), Diamond (2019), Conant (2020, 977–78).

tions like the above ones do not assert anything (because they do not deny anything intelligible), their emptiness is *not* a matter of the self-cancelling recurrence of simple propositional symbols.

Arguably, the problem reflected by the foregoing dilemma lies at the core of the puzzle of negation, of which the puzzle of the contradictory pair forms but one aspect. On the face of things, the book appears ill equipped to address this problem, as do the main authors on which the book relies, as it reads them. Yet I would contend that this problem figures among the primary preoccupations of at least some of these authors (namely, Plato and Wittgenstein) and that they regard the task of addressing it as an essential part of any attempt to address the puzzle attending negation and falsehood (Narboux Forthcoming).

Whether or not the problem ultimately can be handled from the perspective of *Thinking and Being*, Kimhi's book stands out as a profound philosophical inquiry that no philosopher can safely ignore. How much this book achieves in little more than one hundred fifty pages is confounding. It shows relational accounts of judgment and truth to be irremediably flawed. It dismantles conceptual dichotomies that have largely prevailed within contemporary analytic philosophy since its inception, such as the dichotomy between assertoric force and semantic content, or that between intensional and extensional contexts, or again that between the predicative and the veridical senses of "is". It discloses connections between problems usually regarded as separate and traces hitherto neglected affinities between authors. It marries conceptual analysis with exegesis both seamlessly and fruitfully, thereby exposing the shortsightedness and barrenness of the standard division of labor between philosophy and history of philosophy. It challenges standard readings of Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle and Wittgenstein and deploys compelling alternatives to them. It probes with rare acumen the tensions attending the founding philosophical project of analytic philosophy, as carried out in the works of Frege.

Perhaps its single most important contribution lies in the demonstration that we can and must make progress on all these fronts in a single stroke if we are to take the proper measure of the present tasks of philosophy.

Jean-Philippe Narboux
Université Bordeaux Montaigne and Universität Leipzig
jeanphilippe@narboux.fr

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