

WITTGENSTEIN'S *PHILOSOPHICAL REMARKS*: ON TS 208 AND TS 209¹

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Abstract: According to Rush Rhees, Wittgenstein composed TS 209 (*Philosophical Remarks*) and handed it in to Russell in order to renew a grant from the Cambridge Council Cambridge in April-May 1930. Pichler (1994, 2009) and Rothhaupt (2010) challenged Rhees' hypothesis and claimed that Wittgenstein handed in TS 208 to Russell, and not TS 209. Against their view, I argue that Rhees' hypothesis best explains the major motive for the composition of *Philosophical Remarks*, and that it best explains what Wittgenstein handed in to Russell. While I give six reasons in favor of Rhees, I also try to explain how Russell, Moore, Littlewood, Schlick, and Waismann are linked with the composition of TS 208 and TS 209.

Keywords: Wittgenstein; *Philosophical Remarks*; TS 209; middle period Rush Rhees.

1. INTRODUCTION³

Philosophical Remarks (*Philosophische Bemerkungen*) is TS 209

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3 I use the following abbreviations: PR for *Philosophical Remarks* (TS209); WVC for Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle; WiC for Wittgenstein in Cambridge; MS for manuscript of the Nachlass; TS for typescript of the Nachlass; Autobiography for Russell's Autobiography 1914-1944.

according to Von Wright's numeration of the *Nachlass* (Von Wright 1980). Rush Rhees edited the "work" and published it in 1964 with some modifications.⁴ The division into "chapters" (Roman numerals) and "sections" (Arabic numerals), as well as the foreword (actually written in November 1930), and Appendices 1 and 2 are all additions of Rhees. The remarks of TS 209 were originally written in MSS 105-108, from February 1929, right after Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge, until approximately the end of March 1930 (more about this below). Wittgenstein initially chose remarks from the MSS and dictated them, chiefly by following the order in which they appeared in MSS 105-108. This dictation is TS 208. After the dictation, he cut most of the remarks and reorganized them in TS 209 (Von Wright, 1980).⁵ Presumably, he did this work when he visited Austria in March-April 1930 during the Eastern vacations. His purpose at the time was to present a synopsis of the results of his investigations since his return to Cambridge in order to renew a grant from the Cambridge College Council (WiC: 180-8).⁶ The request for funding was approved with reports from Russell and Littlewood.⁷ TS

4 Schulte (1992: 32) says that TS 209 is a "tentatively completed 'work'". I think that this describes well Philosophical Remarks. I cannot show this here, but I also think that it is fair to say that TS 209 shares one of the traits of a "finished work" in Schulte's sense: "a line of argument apparent to the reader, with theses, arguments, objections, underlying considerations, and examples, etc." (1992: 34).

5 Not all remarks of TS 208 were used in TS 209 according to Pichler (1994: 45). For a detailed comparison of remarks in TSS 208 and 209 see Pichler (1994: 30-52).

6 Wittgenstein received the first grant in June 1929 (Moore's letter to Russell from March 09, 1930; *Autobiography*: 282). His grant was renewed in June 1930, and in December 1930 he was elected to a fellowship (WiC: 190).

7 See letters from Russell to Moore and to the Council (*Autobiography*: 282-8). See also Littlewood's *Miscellany* (1986). The first edition of the *Miscellany* (1953) does not contain information about Littlewood's report.

209 was then given to Moore at some point thereafter, and he gave it to Rhees in 1951. Rhees briefly tells the story in the *Editor's Note to Philosophical Remarks*:

Our text [TS 209, *Philosophical Remarks*] is a typescript that G.E. Moore gave us soon after Wittgenstein's death: evidently the one which Wittgenstein left with Russell in May, 1930, and which Russell sent to the Council of Trinity College, Cambridge, with his report in favor of a renewal of Wittgenstein's research grant (PR: 347, *Editor's Note*).⁸

Pichler (1994, 2009) and Rothhaupt (2010) have argued against Rhees. According to them, it was not *Philosophical Remarks* (TS 209) that Wittgenstein handed in to Russell, but TS 208. In what follows, I evaluate their views, but defend that Rhees' hypothesis is still the best. I will argue that Rhees' hypothesis resists criticisms and best explains what happened at the time that Wittgenstein's grant was renewed.

2. PICHLER'S DOUBTS CONCERNING RHEES' HYPOTHESIS

According to Pichler, Rhees' hypothesis is "surely wrong" (2009: 71). He offers four reasons for his claim in Pichler (1994). I begin with two of them:

I believe that it was not TS 209 that Russell received at the time, but TS 208. On the one hand, *the time factor* (at the beginning of TS 209

⁸ See also Rhees' letter to Von Wright from October 26 1951 (Erbacher & Krebs 2015: 221). Rhees' intention was to give it back to Moore as soon as a copy was made. He did not, and ended up losing the volume in a telephone booth in 1962. Fortunately, a microfilm copy had been made already. On this issue, see Rhees' letter to von Wright from July 26, 1962 in Erbacher et al. (2017: 111-2).

one finds notes from the last part of TS 208), and on the other hand, Russell always speaks in the letters of a “typescript” or “bulky typescript”. This would be strange if it were TS 209, that is “cuttings from a carbon copy of 208 pasted into a black ledger book<!>” (von Wright 1986: S. 68). (Pichler 1994: 58; my emphasis).

I am not sure why it would be strange to call ‘bulky typescript’ or ‘typescript’ the “cuttings from a carbon copy of 208 pasted into a black ledger book” (Von Wright 1980: 55). Decisive to call something a typescript is the fact that it contains typewritten remarks, which is the case of TS 209. Moreover, the fact that Wittgenstein used a large ledger book (21 by 31 cm) in order to paste remarks actually explains the adjective ‘bulky’.⁹ The fact that the TS is composed of notes that were cut is not a relevant issue, for several of Wittgenstein’s typescripts are composed in the same manner.

It is possible that Pichler’s concerns were prompted by the so-called “time factor” problem. It appears twice: in the passage quoted above, and in passages that lead to Pichler’s argument. In the passage above, he claims that the problem is that remarks from “the beginning of TS 209” appear in the “last part of TS 208”. Supposedly, Wittgenstein would not have time enough in Vienna in order to dictate and cut such late remarks. However, there is no problem here, for those remarks were written in MS 108 before Wittgenstein went to Austria and began dictations. The latest remark in “Chapter I” of *Philosophical Remarks* (“the beginning of TS 209”) is from March 7 (MS 108: 106), a week before Witt-

⁹ For the size of Wittgenstein’s ledger books, see Von Wright (1980: 40).

genstein's trip.

It seems that what misleads Pichler into thinking that there is a "time factor" problem with Wittgenstein handing in a copy of TS 209 to Russell at the end of April or at beginning of May 1930 is a wrong assumption concerning the date of the latest remark present in TS 208 and TS 209. Two pages before introducing his arguments against Rhees' hypothesis, he writes that "the latest remark" in TS 208 was from "MS 108, p. 132, written on April 24" (1994: 55-56). This seems to be incompatible with Wittgenstein visiting Russell at the end of April or beginning of May 1930 in order to discuss TS 209 and hand in a copy of it. Indeed, if the assumption were correct, the process of cutting TS 208 and pasting remarks in TS 209 would be "too quick" (Pichler 1994: 51 and 55). This, then, suggests the need for an alternative hypothesis to the one that Rhees put forward. However, the passage Pichler has in mind (MS 108: 132) was not written on *April 24*. Wittgenstein originally wrote it at the time when he was still in Vienna, being *March 24* the last dated remark in MS 108 before Wittgenstein came back to Cambridge a month later, on April 25 (MS 108: 133).¹⁰ One could of course suppose that Wittgenstein forgot to date MS 108 after March 24, and so suppose that he could have written the remark thereafter. This is plausible, but even if it were true, there would be no reason to think that the remark was written after the beginning of April 1930, and certainly, there is no reason to

¹⁰ The reader may confirm the dates in the transcriptions and metadata sites offered by WAB for research on the Wittgenstein *Nachlass*. See <http://www.wittgensteinsource.org> and <http://wittgensteinonline.no>.

think that it was written on April 24. ‘April 24’ is a date that does not even appear in MS 108. More likely is that the remark was written on March 24, since this is the corresponding date in MS 108, and if not exactly on that day, then latest a few days later, while he was still in Vienna. If he had not written and dictated the remark while still in Vienna, probably he would not have a copy of TS 208 to hand in to Russell either.

The “time factor” problem is also relevant because of its history. Actually, Pichler’s assumption of the wrong date can be traced back to Rhees, who says that the “latest entry typed and included” remark in TS 209 is from April 24 (PR: 347). Rhees simply mistook April 24 for March 24. Perhaps, the mistake of dates has led many to doubt Rhees’ hypothesis, for the mistake made it look impossible for Wittgenstein to have dictated all his remarks while he was still in Austria. As Pichler put it, it would indeed be “too quick”. However, since Rhees mistook the dates, the composition of TS 209 was not too quick, and there is no “time factor” problem.¹¹

11 When this paper was written, I was not aware that Venturinha (2010) points out Pichler’s mistake of dates. He also traces back the mistake to Rhees and infers that Wittgenstein prepared TS 209 before leaving Vienna (2010: 320-324). However, concerning Pichler’s arguments, he writes the following: “Pichler’s counterarguments that the title sheet - which includes the Augustian frontispiece - from TS 209 may derive from TS 208 - or maybe even TS 220 - is as implausible as the additional arguments he offers, such as the fact that Russell refers to a ‘typoscript’ and not to a binding of Zettel, when these Zettel are actually typed (there are only a few manuscript additions), or that it is unlikely that Wittgenstein presented to Russell a summary as peculiar as that of TS 209, if there was another much more acceptable version for that purpose, when that may have been due to manifest lack of time and, in this way, the motivation to retype this enhanced version” (2010, 324; my translation; my emphasis). I think that Venturinha’s dismissal of Pichler’s arguments as implausible is too quick. It is worth looking into them step-by-step in order to get a clearer picture of what is at stake, particularly because this procedure will open the doors to other discussions related to TSS 208 and 209.

Pichler presents two other reasons against Rhees' hypothesis:

Thirdly, TS 209 - which according to Rhees in PR 1984, p. 315 was sent by Russell to the Council and later handed over to the estate administrators by Moore - is a typescript containing supplementary handwritten additions by Wittgenstein. It is unlikely that Wittgenstein would have left to Russell a typescript for the Council containing handwritten notes (which had not yet been incorporated or further processed). The TS 209 given by Moore is therefore probably not the one handed over to Russell. The received TS 208 contains much more handwritten supplementary remarks; however, presupposing that Russell has received TS 208, Russell may have been given a clean carbon copy. The latter cannot apply to TS 209, since this is actually a ledger book. It is unlikely that Wittgenstein made twice the effort to produce TS 209. (Pichler 1994: 58)

However, it is not unlikely that Wittgenstein handed in TS 209 with handwritten additions to Russell. After all, the relevant opinion for the decision of the council was Russell's, who needed to understand the TS. Actually, the most likely is that at least some of Wittgenstein's short additions were for Russell's own sake, as a letter from (presumably) April 25, 1930 indicates. In this letter, Wittgenstein explains that the typewriter that he used in dictations did not have a sign for π so that he had to use 'II' instead in the TS that he gave to Russell (see WiC: 182).¹² If Wittgenstein

12 Pichler (1994, 58) argued that the corrections of 'II' took place in both TS 208 (pp. 24 and 82) and TS 209 (pp. 57 and 67). Venturinha (2010, 324), however, claimed that corrections were made by Russell in TS 209, and not in TS 208, and that the only correction in TS 208 was made by Wittgenstein himself (2010, 322, footnote). I could not find corrections in TS 208, except for the one just mentioned. Nonetheless, contrary to Venturinha's claim, there are no corrections in the proper sense of the word in TS 209 either. In the facsimile of TS 209 one can only see that the sign 'II' was scratched (a diagonal line over 'II') without corrections added. I do not see how one could establish the author of the scratch. The reader can check this at wittgensteinsource.org.

was sufficiently worried in order to write a letter to Russell with small corrections, there is nothing strange in the fact that he handed in TS 209 with handwritten corrections and remarks. Of course, the typescript itself was a way to show something “concrete” to the council, but there is no reason to suppose that Russell’s copy should be completely clean under such circumstances, for what really mattered was that Russell could understand Wittgenstein’s ideas. After all, the TS was meant to show progress after the *Tractatus*, as is quite clear in Russell’s report (I come back to Russell’s report in section 2). Finally, note that Pichler’s hypothesis depends on an additional ad hoc hypothesis. Since in his own words the “received TS 208 contains *much more* handwritten supplementary remarks”, he must suppose that “Russell may have been given a [clean] carbon copy”. The story of a second copy that was handed in to Russell lacks evidence. It is just a supposition.¹³ Actually, it is a particularly strange supposition, if we keep in mind that Russell forwarded his copy of the TS together with “a formal report” to Littlewood (and the Council) immediately after reading part of it, as he states in a letter to Moore from May 08, 1930 (*Autobiography*, 386). Russell’s copy of the TS went *directly* to the Council through Littlewood. Russell immediately forwarded his copy of the TS to Littlewood before he returned to Cambridge from Petersfield, where he spent his vacations (*Autobiography*: 286).¹⁴

13 The most likely is that one of the copies was given to Waismann and Schlick. I give a reason for this in section 2.

14 Very likely, Wittgenstein met Russell on April 22 and 23 in Southern England before he arrived in Cambridge.

Therefore, it seems that there are no decisive reasons in favor of the hypothesis that TS 208 was handed in to Russell instead of TS 209. Rather, what seems to suggest the very need for an alternative explanation to Rhees' is a mistake concerning the date of the last remark dictated (the "time factor"). One must conclude that Rhees' dating is wrong, and not his hypothesis.

Indeed, we have good reasons for thinking that TS 209 was handed in to Russell after all. First, the title of the "bulky typescript" that Russell read is "*Philosophische Bemerkungen*", according to Russell's own report (*Autobiography*: 287). TS 209 has this title on its front page. TS 208 has no title, and no indication at all that it would be named. Although Wittgenstein named several of his MSS *Philosophische Bemerkungen*, he did not give such a name to TS 208. Note that TS 210, which is, like TS 208, a dictation of remarks from MSS, does not have a title either. Second, the "bulky typescript" was handed in to Russell at the end of April or at the beginning of May 1930, and this agrees with the most likely composition of TS 209 once the "time factor" mistake is eliminated. Very likely, the last remark used in TS 209 was written in Vienna before the end of March. As pointed out already, the last date recorded in MS 108 before April 25 1930 is March 24 (MS 108: 118). Wittgenstein could have written pages 118-132 of MS 108 in a single day. In fact, this is what the dating in MS 108 indicates. All of the remarks on these pages are about the philosophy of mathematics, and most of them are on

ved in Cambridge on April 25 (WiC: 181).

mathematical inequalities (PR: §§200-204). But even if Wittgenstein forgot to date remarks written after March 24, which is not very likely since he was dating systematically MS 108, there is no reason to suppose that they were not written a few days later, i.e., before the end of March or latest before the end of the first week of April. Thus, he had time to dictate TS 208, cut remarks, and organize TS 209 while he was still in Vienna. Of course, we do not know how much time Wittgenstein needed to cut and paste, but it is not reasonable to suppose that he would need more time than the time he spent in Vienna, particularly because he planned to hand in a TS to Russell before he left for Vienna. Third, the grant was Wittgenstein's major reason to collect remarks at the time. Russell asked for a synopsis of Wittgenstein's manuscripts, as Russell's letter to Moore from March 11, and Wittgenstein's letter to Moore from Vienna in March 1930 make clear (*Autobiography*: 283; *WiC*: 181). Therefore, the most obvious thing to do at the time was to *organize* a synopsis of his work that could be useful to Russell. Later, i.e., after getting the grant, such a project would lose its significance. Fourth, Wittgenstein would not collect and organize *those* remarks collected in TS 208 later than May 1930 without adding remarks written after April 1930, for remarks from MS 108, 133 onwards were indeed collected in TS 210. Fifth, TS 209 is a far better presentation of Wittgenstein's philosophy than TS 208 (I come back to this in the next section). This is relevant because we know that Russell forwarded a copy of the TS to Littlewood, who was acting for the council. One must think that Wittgenstein's intention was to hand in to the

council at least something that could be read as a book project, a draft, which is not the case of TS 208.

Before finishing this section, I will briefly look into a supposition regarding the composition of TS 209 that has been left hanging in the air. Pichler claims that Wittgenstein probably composed TS 209 in the autumn of 1930 (2009: 71). One may think that this should imply that Wittgenstein handed in TS 208, and not TS 209, in April-May. Nevertheless, he does not explain why one should accept the idea of the composition of TS 209 that late in 1930. The supposition of a later composition of TS 209 also appears in Hacker (2004) and Paul (2007: 17). Stern assumes this hypothesis and calls TS 209 the “December dissertation” (2016, xxxiv).¹⁵ They justify their view with the claim that TS 209, *Philosophical Remarks*, was used by Wittgenstein in order to apply for a fellowship at the end of 1930. It is indeed a fact that Wittgenstein was elected to a fellowship in December 1930 (WiC: 190), but this fact alone does not show anything. Paul himself points to the lack of evidence: “nowhere in the notes written from April to November have I found any clue to when the cuttings and pasting was actually done” (2007: 114).¹⁶ One must

15 In Engelmann (2020), I pointed out that there was something problematic in Stern’s view, and here I intend to look into its background. Stern seems to follow Hacker, but there is a small conflict between their views. While Hacker claims that Russell and Hardy were in the committee for the fellowship, Stern claims that Hardy, Littlewood, and Russell were the examiners. However, Rothhaupt (1996: 129) thinks that Wittgenstein’s election to the fellowship was grounded in Moore’s recommendation. Besides these conflicting details, we will see that the grounds for the hypothesis of the “December Dissertation” are not solid enough (at least at this point).

16 It seems that what prompts Paul to his hypothesis is the belief that Russell’s first reference to the TS as “a large quantity of typescript” (Autobiography: 284) could only apply to TS 208. Actually, Russell’s unusual wording seems to mean simply many pages of typescript. The expression, as it appears in the letter, could plausibly apply to either TS 208 or TS 209.

add to this, that no records (letters, reports etc.) have been presented for their claim. In fact, the lack of relevant records is threefold: no records have been presented showing that a TS (a “December dissertation”) was needed for the December fellowship, that TS 209 was composed at the time, and that it was indeed used in that occasion.

Moreover, even *if* Wittgenstein needed a TS for his December fellowship, and even if he used TS 209 in that occasion, it is not clear what would follow concerning its composition. It certainly would not follow that, contrary to Rhees’ hypothesis, TS 208 was used for the grant in April-May 1930 instead of TS 209. If Wittgenstein had used TS 209 at the end of 1930 in order to apply for the fellowship, he would have used the same set of remarks for both (grant and fellowship), since all remarks of TS 209 are cuttings from TS 208. Thus, if he needed to show a TS twice (April-May and November-December 1930), he could well have used TS 209 in both occasions. Such a view is indeed advocated by Monk (1990: 292, 304). In any case, the supposition of the late composition of TS 209 is puzzling. It implies that Wittgenstein left out of the TS organized at the end of 1930 *everything* that he wrote after March during that year in MSS 108 and 109 (remarks written between April and August were collected in TS 210 and later remarks in TS 211). This would be particularly strange because in the dictations of TS 208 and in the composition of TS 209, Wittgenstein used all useful remarks out of everything that he had written until April 1930.

In the next section, I give another reason, the sixth, in favor of Rhees’ hypothesis. Before doing this, I discuss Rothhaupt’s hypothesis.

3. WHAT ABOUT LITTLEWOOD AND RUSSELL (AND SCHLICK, AND WAISMANN)?

In his early work, Rothhaupt was not completely sure about the date of the composition of TS 209, and thus claimed that Wittgenstein may have finished it “between May and November 1930” (1996: 95, footnote 4). According to him, “possibly” TS 209 was an “ad hoc composed ‘commission’” for the December fellowship (1996: 129). One must presume that he has changed his mind in this issue, for in a recent paper his hypothesis is that TS 209 was composed before Littlewood finished his report (2010: 57; quoted below). Since Littlewood’s report was written on June 1, presumably Rothhaupt thinks now that Wittgenstein produced TS 209 latest in May 1930. However, surely, he has not changed his mind concerning what Wittgenstein handed in to Russell in April-May 1930: “it was the previous TS 208 that Wittgenstein gave to Russell” (2010: 53). Besides, he also claims, “it can be shown that it is very unlikely that Wittgenstein gave TS 209 (posthumously *Philosophical Remarks*) to Russell” (2010: 53). Unfortunately, no explicit attempt is made to show what supposedly can be shown. Perhaps, he thinks that the presentation of his hypothesis about TS 209 is enough in order to show it:

It is most likely that Wittgenstein constructed and used TS 209 for his own rethinking of themes in preparation for the meetings and conversations with Littlewood, for conversations with members of the Vienna Circle and as preliminary studies for the book he planned to write for publication in the context of and through the Vienna Circle. (Rothhaupt 2010: 57).

This hypothesis is interesting because it points to the possibility of various purposes behind TS 209, and because it points to the relevance of Waismann and Schlick in the context in which TS 209 was composed. The cooperation with Waismann and Schlick needs further elucidation (more on this below). Of course, the trouble with Rothhaupt's hypothesis is that he thinks that Russell's report for the grant is neither the major purpose, nor even one of the purposes of the composition of TS 209. However, one must note that the possible many purposes behind TS 209 is certainly compatible with Rhees' hypothesis as well. Wittgenstein could have in mind conversations with the Circle and the book for the Circle also if he was preparing TS 209 in order to hand it in to Russell. Thus, once the role of members of the Vienna Circle is cleared up, we need to evaluate Littlewood's role in contrast to Russell's.

In the passage quoted above, when Rothhaupt speaks of "preliminary studies for the book he planned to write for publication in the context of and through the Vienna Circle", he has in mind a manuscript mentioned in a letter from Schlick (May 08 1930). However, some details of the letter and its context escape Rothhaupt's attention. Let us look at them. First, if TS 209 was indeed the manuscript mentioned in Schlick's letter, two other in principle relevant alternatives must be ruled out: Waismann's booklet about Wittgenstein's philosophy and Waismann's book written in cooperation with Wittgenstein. The plan for Waismann's booklet about the *Tractatus*, which in 1929-1930 turned into a booklet about the *Tractatus* and the novelties of Wittgenstein's philosophy, was already in place at the end of 1927. This is suggested in Schlick's letter to

Carnap from January 29, 1928.¹⁷ This booklet's final version is *Theses*, published in the volume *Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. In December 1931, Wittgenstein gave up the publication of Waismann's *Theses* (WVC: 182-3).¹⁸ After that occasion, he worked systematically in cooperation with Waismann's new book in parallel with the project of his own book.¹⁹ What survives of Waismann's later book project, probably with many significant modifications, is *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy*. We can be sure that these projects are not what was meant in Schlick's letter from May 1930, for Schlick thanks Wittgenstein for the fact "that you want to hand in later the full version of *your work* for publication" (letter from May 08, 1930; my emphasis). Moreover, in a letter to Wittgenstein from the same day, Waismann mentions "*your manuscript*".

However, there is another possibility concerning the manuscript mentioned in Schlick's letter that escaped Rothhaupt's attention. It is possible that Schlick did not have TS 208 or TS 209 in mind in his letter. In a letter from Schlick to Wittgenstein from October 24 1929, he writes the following: "Mr. Waismann has given me *Remarks on Logical Form*, and told me that you are preparing two other publications on the foundations of the philosophy of mathematics." One must also note that in Waismann's letter to Wittgenstein from May 08 1930, his major concern is the need to contrast Wittgenstein's conception of mathematics with Russell's in the Circle. After explaining it, he

17 Archives of Scientific Philosophy Box 29, Folder 30 029-30-34.

18 See also letter to Schlick from November 20, 1931.

19 On the cooperation with Waismann see Engelmann (2013), chapter 4 and (2018a).

introduces the subject of the publication of a manuscript. At that time, Waismann led a series of discussions on this topic in the Circle (Stadler 2015: 74). This was done probably in preparation for the Königsberg conference, where Waismann should present the Wittgensteinian alternative to logicism, intuitionism, and formalism. The idea was that Wittgenstein's philosophy could end the conflict about the foundations of mathematics (WVC: 102-5). Thus, we cannot be completely sure if the letters from May 1930 are not referring to specific publications on the philosophy of mathematics. However, what speaks against this possibility is the fact that Schlick mentions two publications in the letter from October 1929, but only one in the letter from May 1930. Moreover, while in Vienna in March-April 1930, it seems that Wittgenstein had already given to Waismann and Schlick a copy of an incomplete version of a TS.²⁰ In the mentioned letter from May 08, Schlick thanks Wittgenstein for intending to hand in for publication later the "full version" (*ausführliche Fassung*) of his manuscript. Waismann, in his letter from the same day, writes: "I do not know if you agree with the publication of your manuscript to the extent that I can do it". Both suggest something already in hand. This fact is relevant because it might explain why Wittgenstein made a carbon copy (or copies) of his dictations of TS 208 already in Vienna during the Eastern vacations of 1930 (see section 1 on the relevance of a carbon copy). It is also relevant because even if Schlick and Waismann had in mind a manuscript or manuscripts on

²⁰ Wittgenstein may have given this copy already on March 22, when they certainly met (WVC: 97). Of course, perhaps this happened days or weeks later.

the philosophy of mathematics, TS 208 and TS 209 are not ruled out, for a large part of it is about the philosophy of mathematics. Thus, given those facts and the systematic cooperation between Wittgenstein, Schlick, and Waismann, the idea of multiple purposes of TS 209 is basically correct.

Since the multiple purposes of TS 209 are compatible with Rhees' hypothesis – for Rhees simply claimed that TS 209 was handed in to Russell because of the grant –, what needs evaluation here is Rothhaupt's hypothesis according to which Wittgenstein prepared TS 209 for conversations with Littlewood, instead of handing it in to Russell. The significance of Littlewood in our story comes from the fact that, according to *him*, Russell's report was insufficient for the approval of Wittgenstein's grant. Littlewood tells in his *Miscellany* that the council thought that Russell made reservations in his report (1986: 138). Supposedly, the fact that Russell wrote in his report that he did not know whether Wittgenstein's new views were true made the council suspicious. According to Littlewood, this was the reason why he was asked to write a second report to the council (Rothhaupt 2013: 56; WiC: 187; Littlewood 1986: 138).

Russell wrote the following in his report: "The theories contained in this new work of Wittgenstein's are novel, very original, and indubitably important. Whether they are true, I do not know" (*Autobiography*: 288). It is, of course, possible that the members of the council were suspicious, although according to Russell Wittgenstein's theories were *novel, very original*, and on the top of that, *indubitably important*. Perhaps, had they read Russell's introduction to the *Tractatus*, they would have felt suspicious about that work

as well, for Russell was not sure about the truth of Wittgenstein's views there either, and he saw as a merit of the book that its theory was "not at any point obviously wrong" (Russell's Introduction to the *Tractatus*, xxv). Of course, Russell was neither making reservations about the significance of the *Tractatus* in his introduction, nor about Wittgenstein's TS in his report, but simply expressing his usual reservations (he would say the same about his own theories sometimes). After all, he is the one who wrote: "the point of philosophy is to start with something so simple as not seem worth stating, and end with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it" (*The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, 53).

I am not sure whether Littlewood's story is completely correct. First of all, if the truth of Wittgenstein's ideas was really an issue, it is unlikely that Littlewood's report would be helpful, since he says nothing about it. Instead, he emphasizes something that Russell had already emphasized very much (more than Littlewood!), namely that Wittgenstein's then current work was new (Wittgenstein was not living from "old capital", as Littlewood put it in his report). Besides, when Moore wrote to Russell asking him to write a report, he made clear twice that Wittgenstein needed "reports from experts" (*plural*). We also know that Wittgenstein asked Russell to forward the TS to Littlewood as early as May 5, and that Russell did it on May 8 (*Autobiography*: 282-284). Thus, Wittgenstein and Moore probably had Littlewood in mind as someone to write a second report right from the beginning. Perhaps, the truth behind the story is that the council indeed thought that Russell's re-

port was not good enough, and so an already planed second report by Littlewood became more important.

At any rate, Littlewood indeed wrote a second report, and we need to evaluate the significance of this fact for what is at issue in this paper. Rothhaupt (2010), as seen above, thinks that TS 209 was handed in neither to Littlewood nor to Russell in May 1930, but it was organized because Wittgenstein wanted to explain his ideas to Littlewood in several meetings that preceded the second report from June 01.²¹ This hypothesis preserves the time framework that makes the dictation of TS 208 and the organization of TS 209 plausible (section 1). Nonetheless, there is no evidence for it. It is solely based on the need for a second report that should be written by Littlewood. However, it is clear that Littlewood could have written his report without the composition of TS 209, since it was supposedly meant for Wittgenstein's own use, according to Rothhaupt's own hypothesis. Moreover, it is unclear why Wittgenstein would need TS 209 in order to explain his ideas to Littlewood, if supposedly he did not need it in order to explain them to Russell, who had explicitly *asked* for a synopsis of Wittgenstein's work before March 17 1930 (*Autobiography*: 284). We also know from Russell's letter to Moore from May 05 that Wittgenstein had asked him to forward the TS to Littlewood after reading it already at the time when Russell got it, and that Russell indeed forwarded it to Littlewood on May 08.²² Of course, if Littlewood had a

21 In his report, Littlewood writes that he met Wittgenstein "some 6 or 8 sessions of 1 hour to one hour and a half" (WiC: 187).

22 See letters from Russell to Moore from May 1930 (*Autobiography*: 284-286).

copy of a TS, Wittgenstein could simply use it to explain his ideas during his meetings with him. A second TS in this case would be of little use.

However, what is quite interesting about Littlewood's and Russell's reports is the fact that one can compare them, and in doing so see the real relevance of TS 209 for Russell. Different from Littlewood's report, Russell's is grounded in a TS. It is also more specific and deeper. Actually, Littlewood's report contains absolutely nothing of Wittgenstein's philosophy in TS 208 and in TS 209. The whole report is filled with generalities like "Wittgenstein explained some of his ideas". Not a single idea of Wittgenstein is minimally explained or at least mentioned by Littlewood. Besides generalities, there are compliments ("absolutely first class work", "first rate mind", etc.). All this comes with a caveat: "But I *am* only an amateur in logic" (WiC: 187).²³ Of course, one could expect something of the sort, since Russell was a philosopher-logician, and Littlewood was not. Nonetheless, the interesting issue is that Russell's report is indeed a report grounded in TS 209, and not in TS 208. In what follows I will show this, and by doing it I will give another reason for my main point in this paper.

Russell wrote in his letter to the Council that he had "read about a third" of a "bulky typescript" (*Autobiography*: 287). In his letter to Moore (May 5, 1930) and in his report (May 8), Russell describes some important points of the "bulky typescript". For instance, he clearly divides the subjects discussed into phenomenology/grammar (or phenom-

²³ One could think that the members of the council should have taken this as a serious reservation, if they were concerned about the "reservation" present in Russell's report.

enological grammar) and the philosophy of mathematics. Such a clear division is only present in TS 209. TS 208 is simply a sequence of dictated remarks with mixed topics that follow the sequence of remarks of the MSS (I come back to this below).²⁴ According to Russell's report, Wittgenstein "uses the words 'grammar' and 'space' in peculiar senses, which are more or less connected to each other" (*Autobiography*, 284). Wittgenstein's philosophy "complicate" logic, for words are classified in 'spaces' (like color and sound), and the violation of spaces generates nonsense. If Russell, however, read "about a third" of Wittgenstein's synopsis, what could he have read of TS 208? This would be optimistically pages 1-58. If he had skipped some parts, perhaps he would have reached p. 100. In this case, he would have read only a rather detailed presentation of Wittgenstein's worries at the time of his phenomenological language project and scattered remarks on logic and on the philosophy of mathematics. There is no talk of 'grammatical spaces' in those pages (certainly not before page 95 of TS 208). However, as we saw above, this is the most relevant issue concerning grammar and phenomenology in Russell's report. Thus, had Russell read "about a third" or even more than half of TS 208 in sequence, he would have no idea of Wittgenstein's 'grammar' of 'spaces', for the connection of those notions would appear only at the end-

24 Of course, if one wants to understand the origins of Wittgenstein's philosophy in TS 209, TS 208 is a good source (not as good as the MSS, but a good one). One could go as far as claiming that TS 209 "disguises a profound change" in Wittgenstein's philosophy, and that these changes are better understood if one reads TS 208 and the MSS (Paul 2007: 18). However, Wittgenstein's goal in TS 209 is not to reveal the origins of his philosophical views, but to present and defend them.

ing of the complete TS 208. In order to get a clear idea of these notions, one would need to reach dictations from the end of MS 107 and MS 108, which were typed in the last part of the dictations of TS 208. Before these, ‘spaces’ appear as part of Wittgenstein’s abandoned project of a phenomenological language.

The surviving copy of TS 208 indicates 144 pages, but it was certainly longer, since many cuts of it were used later in TS 212.²⁵ Pichler estimates that TS 208 had at least 167 pages (1994: 51). Even if TS 208 was, say, 170 pages long, the fact is that pages 1 to 94, certainly more than half of it, were all originally written in MSS 105-7 before Wittgenstein had given up the project of a phenomenological language in October 1929. Thus, reading half of TS 208 would give one the idea that Wittgenstein still defended a variation of the phenomenological language project of *Some Remarks on Logical Form* (published in July 1929). The last remark on p. 94 of TS 208 is from MS 107: 164 (October 10, 1929), some days before Wittgenstein abandoned the project. At that point of TS 208, Wittgenstein is discussing reasons that brought him to give up his early project. It is precisely in the first large group of missing pages of TS 208 (95-110) that the transition to the philosophy of *Philosophical Remarks* is finally introduced. Thus, one can say without further ado that Russell’s description of Wittgenstein’s TS is not a description of TS 208. Quite differently, TS 209, *Philosophical Remarks*, opens with a declaration that the project of a phenomenological language had been abandoned.

²⁵ Many pages of TS 208 are missing: 13-16, 95-110, 119-135, 137-143.

There, the reader knows immediately that the project is not what Wittgenstein was pursuing anymore: “I do not now have the phenomenological language, or ‘primary language’ as I used to call it, in mind as my goal” (see second paragraph of PR: §1; MS 107, 205). The reader also knows at the beginning of TS 209 how ‘grammar’ and ‘spaces’ are related (PR: §§1-7). Two remarks may have made that immediately clear to Russell: “Grammar is a ‘theory of logical types’” (PR §7; MS 108, 105) and “Can anyone believe it makes sense to say ‘That’s not a noise, it’s a colour?’” (PR §8; MS 108, 104).

Russell’s report is indeed a faithful general description of “about a third” of TS 209 (pp. 1-46). “About a third” in size is roughly the complete first part of the phenomenological grammar (“chapters” I-IX; p. 40 in the original) plus a part of the philosophy of mathematics (roughly, “chapters” X-XI). Of course, it is more reasonable to think that Russell skipped some parts on phenomenology and read more on the philosophy of mathematics in order to get a better idea of the whole.²⁶ It would be easy for Wittgenstein to point out where to start reading on the philosophy of mathematics in TS 209 – *not* so in TS 208. So Russell may have read a bunch of remarks on phenomenological grammar and a bunch on the philosophy of mathematics. He could have read also some sequences of remarks and perused other sequences of remarks in TS 209 and get a good view of the whole – again, *not* so in TS 208. However, even *if* he did not skip anything, which I think is unlikely, his report still

26 This is indeed suggested by Wittgenstein’s letter from presumably March 25, where he makes clear that the sign ‘II’ means π (see section 1).

follows the content and the order of remarks of about a third of TS 209 in sequence (PR §§1-110). In his report, Russell writes about ‘spaces’ (sound, color, etc.) and how the violation of their rules generates nonsense (see PR: §§ 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 39, 40, and 42). He also mentions how ‘spaces’ are somehow independent of experience (see PR: §§ 1, 4, 7, 44, 84-6). Next, he discusses the philosophy of mathematics. He begins with the idea that mathematics is not logic, not tautological (see PR: §§103-8, 120). Then discusses infinity and set theory (compare with PR: §§ 100, 105, 118, 123-130). Such a description simply does not fit the structure of TS 208, while it fits pretty well the structure of the first ten “chapters” of TS 209 and their immediate sequence (“chapter” XII is about infinity). Regardless of how we understand that Russell read “about a third” of the TS (whether in sequence or skipping some parts), his description does not fit TS 208, but perfectly fits TS 209.²⁷ Given the structure of TS 209, and Russell’s report, one might also surmise that TS 209 was an important tool for Wittgenstein to explain his philosophy to Russell. Of course, for his report, Russell needed to find in the TS what Wittgenstein told him in conversations, otherwise it would be useless in that occasion.

27 One could think that everything Russell wrote in his report he got out of conversations with Wittgenstein. However, Russell explicitly says in his letter to the council that he had read “about a third” of a TS. Moreover, after meeting Wittgenstein on March 15 and 16, he wrote a letter to Moore (letter from March 17, 1930; see *Autobiography*: 284) in which he says that his “impressions” about Wittgenstein’s work were “rather vague” and that a synopsis of Wittgenstein’s work “would make it much easier for me to report adequately” (*my emphasis*).

4. CONCLUSION: RHEES' INSIGHT ABOUT TS 20

The reasons presented in this paper in favor of Rhees' hypothesis are not absolutely decisive, but sufficiently strong for us to favor Rhees' views. The fact is that there is no absolutely decisive evidence at this point, and although it is unlikely, perhaps new evidence will prove Rhees wrong after all. However, considering what we know nowadays about Wittgenstein's development and the documents that count as evidence for this matter, Rhees' hypothesis best explains the major reason for the composition of TS 209, the *Philosophical Remarks*, and it best explains what Wittgenstein handed in to Russell in April-May 1930. I hope that the elucidation of some misunderstandings and difficulties manifest in competing views together with the six reasons in favor of Rhees' hypothesis that I introduced in this paper are at least decisive in this regard.

Yet, perhaps more important than Rhees' hypothesis about the origins of *Philosophical Remarks* is his insight concerning the significance of its content at the time that he was editing it:

I do not think people will begin to appreciate the *Untersuchungen* until they see the discussion from which it has come. It would not be enough, just to print it together with the *Tractatus*. This would suggest that the relation between them is much simpler than in fact it is. People would still not guess the magnitude of the development which there has been. They would not see – as they do not see – what has happened: they would not see what the *Untersuchungen* are saying. (Rhees' letter to von Wright; Erbacher et al. 2017: 118).

The *Untersuchungen* are still mostly studied in contrast

to the *Tractatus* alone, although we have at our disposal “the discussion from which it has come”, and although the traditional discussions of the *Untersuchungen* grounded in an evaluation of the *Tractatus* make the relation between those books “much simpler than in fact it is”. Of course, the *Untersuchungen* should be read in contrast to the *Tractatus*, as Wittgenstein urges. However, this does not mean that the writings of the middle period should be seen as a kind of in between accident. Wittgenstein could not tell his readers to read his *Nachlass* in the preface of *Untersuchungen*, but one can guess that if the *Untersuchungen* is to be read in contrast to the *Tractatus* in order to be properly understood, then both works should be contrasted to all works and manuscripts that led him from the early to the later work. It is precisely in these writings that Wittgenstein introduces contrasting changes.

It is obvious that the publication of *Philosophical Remarks* and other middle period writings has not made the impression in Wittgenstein-studies that Rhees wished, but it is not clear why. Perhaps, the early reception of those works was shadowed by worries concerning his editing of unfinished works from the middle period. This may have diverted people from the systematic study of such “works”.²⁸ Perhaps, the later reception, in the last thirty

²⁸ Most famously, Kenny attacked Rhees’ “editorial intervention” (1984: 25) because of his edition of *Philosophical Grammar*. I would agree that Rhees’ made some editorial mistakes when editing the works of the *Nachlass*. In the case of *Philosophical Remarks*, for instance, the addition of appendices might be confusing. However, he had tough decisions to make, and he, Anscombe, and von Wright, were eager to publish parts of the *Nachlass* after the disappointing reception of the *Untersuchungen* – see Rhees’ letter to von Wright in Erbacher et. Al (2017: 119). One can go on and on disputing the quality (and insights) of Rhees’ editing, but the fact is that now we have access to all unfinished books and the *Nachlass*. Actually, the material is Cont.

years, has been shadowed by excessive attention given to the debate about Wittgenstein's "resoluteness" in the *Tractatus* – a debate, *nota bene*, in which both sides presuppose a "simpler" relation between the two major works.²⁹ Be that as it may, Rhees' words above make a strong case for us to deepen our understanding of "the magnitude of the development which there has been" in Wittgenstein's work³⁰.

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more accessible and manageable to us now than it was to the first editors. For an evaluation of Rhees' insights and mistakes in his editing see Erbacher (2019).

²⁹ On the "resolute reading" and the *Tractatus* see Engelmann (2018b) and (2018c).

³⁰ Thanks to David Stern and Alois Pichler for discussing with me in various occasions the issues that I tried to clarify in this paper.

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