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(GESICHTS)ZÜGE, NOTATION AND GRAPHICNESS OF SIGNS. DECONSTRUCTION IN WITTGENSTEIN'S TRACTATUS

“... there is no linguistic sign before writing ...”

(Derrida 1979, 14)

Abstract. In this paper, I attempt to address some of the themes of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* with the aim of their deconstructionist interpretation. My analysis is based on David Gunkel's book *Deconstruction* (MIT Press 2021). Based on some of its findings, I show how the *Tractatus* allows deconstruction and its practice to be thought. I show that the graphic structure of signs is crucial for the young Wittgenstein's analysis and that it justifies the metaphysical findings in favor of which he argues.

Keywords: Ludwig Wittgenstein; deconstruction; logic; difference; writing; notation; sign

1. Deconstruction as a differentiating effort. 2. From the 'truths of logic' to notation. 3. From script/graphie to (Gesichts)zügen. 4. The seeing of signs. 5. Instead of ending.

1. DECONSTRUCTION AS A DIFFERENTIATING EFFORT

In his recently published book *Deconstruction*, David Gunkel convincingly argues in favor of the thesis that deconstruction is an effort to extract the difference, “that [it] opens onto alternative opportunities and challenges that can make a difference” (Gunkel 2021, 87). This passage immediately raises the question of how it is possible to think of or express deconstruction without resorting to a pictorial and vague concept of an ‘effort.’ After all, such an approach is not precise and does not put deconstruction in the framework of unambiguous concepts and well-known metaphors. Obviously, Gunkel does not agree with this approach to deconstruction and devotes a large part of his book to rejecting this temptation. This shows that deconstruction as a certain form of thinking/practicing

philosophy, or even a certain form of thinking effort, which we would most often be inclined to associate with Jacques Derrida's deliberations, cannot be reduced to e.g. Heidegger's destruction, critical analysis or some form of criticism. Nor is it a method or (just) discourse analysis. Derrida himself is not its father, as often taken for granted in popular studies and textbooks.

Let us return, then, to Gunkel's definition: deconstruction as an effort to extract the difference. The concept of an effort implies a kind of renewable, perhaps never-ending endeavor that requires sacrifice. Why does it require it? Because its purpose is to bring out the difference that "can make a difference." This formulation, argues Gunkel, directly relates to what Derrida called "the binary oppositions of metaphysics," i.e. those pairs of concepts by which we are able to think and categorize reality. The list of such oppositions is long and keeps growing. However, let us recall the most important ones: being/non-being; essence/property; mind/body; inside/outside; form/matter; and sign/meaning. Thinking with these oppositions is necessary. But it is not a contingent necessity based on the causal structure of the world. It is, in the words of Derrida, a metaphysical necessity or even a "metaphysical exigency" (Derrida 1993, 93).

However, these binary oppositions, well known and grounded in our cultural practice, are dangerous and deceptive because they are Janus-faced. On the one hand, they enable metaphysical thinking, which is quickly grasped by anyone who comes into contact with the Platonic allegory of the cave; and on the other, as Gunkel emphasizes, they are not indifferent or neutral because they have "potentially devastating consequences" (Gunkel 2021, 39). They introduce asymmetric dichotomies, privileging one side of the opposition. Essence precedes properties, truth precedes falsehood, the whole precedes its parts, and mind precedes body. Whichever side one chooses, it always comes at the expense of the other side. This consequence is perfectly illustrated by the case of the disputes over Cartesian dualism. Hence, binary oppositions are "structurally biased" (Gunkel 2021, 40) and

serve to perpetuate inequality or the domination of some structures over others. For this reason, deconstruction as an attempt to think beyond the binary oppositions and metaphysics is an endless effort, basically doomed to incompleteness, because it clashes with what Gunkel, after Nietzsche, calls “fundamental faith.”

How is it possible to think of a non-binary difference? Is it possible at all? Is it possible to think beyond metaphysics? The deconstructionist practice of reading philosophical texts proposed by Derrida allows us to answer this question in the affirmative. Thinking about the difference happens in deconstructionist practice, which to some extent consists in reading a text upside down, against the intentions of its author and against common interpretations. It is about extracting from the text what differentiates its structure, i.e. what enables binary oppositions characteristic of a given concept. It is therefore about bringing to light the structure that underlies the existing binary oppositions, justifying the order of signs and their meanings.

There is no room for analyzing this thread further in this paper. It goes beyond the possibility of spontaneous reflection in such a short literary form. For more information on this topic let me refer readers to the extraordinary book by Gunkel, among other studies. However, it should be added that each text, including the works of Derrida himself, somehow reveals a different kind of structure that cannot be reduced to one common source. What differentiates Plato’s analysis in the *Phaedrus* is different from what differentiates Husserl’s effort in his *Ideas*. For this reason, it is again possible to think of deconstruction as a continuous and endless effort: the work of deconstruction is endless. Therefore, instead of proposing a *quasi*-complete analysis of the concept of structure or difference in terms of deconstruction, I will try to outline a deconstructionist interpretation of some fragments of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*. I will use some of the leads Derrida suggests and risk a non-binary reading of this otherwise very influential book of twentieth-century philosophy. I will try and apply some of Gunkel’s ideas to confirm his intuition

that “deconstruction does not seek to provide solutions to existing problems. It seeks to demonstrate how the very way we conceive of and talk about a problem is already a problem” (Gunkel 2021, 87). The example of a deconstructionist reading of Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* will show that the (metaphysical) solution proposed by this philosopher basically reveals further difficulties that render the solution itself potentially impossible. I believe that this aporia makes this book thoroughly metaphysical.

2. FROM THE ‘TRUTHS OF LOGIC’ TO NOTATION

Wittgenstein’s writings from the period before the publication of the *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* show that he was looking for an answer to the question of what logic *is*. He formulated his well-known answer in opposition to the ideas of Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell. The key to their conceptions was, respectively, the theory of logical constants and the theory of classes/types. Rejecting these two theories, Wittgenstein not only abandoned the resolutions that followed them, but also denied Frege’s and Russell’s entire conception of formal sciences as deductive sciences. Within this framework, logic, like mathematics, was to be based on a set of axioms from which subsequent theses and theorems would be derived through proving and inference operations. In such a model, logic was supposed to be a general theory of deduction (cf. Rotter 1996; Stevens 2017). It should be added that Wittgenstein agreed with Russell’s belief in the equality of logic and mathematics, but gave this thesis a completely different meaning. For Russell, logic and mathematics are deductive sciences, and everything that can be known in mathematics by mathematical methods can be deduced from pure logic (Rotter 1996, 27) (as is generally known, this encapsulates the entire program of logicism developed by Russell himself). In this approach, logic and mathematics are based on the method of deductive proof. Wittgenstein, however, understood the meaning of a proof in logic differently. In his opinion,

the proof of a given thesis is that “we produce them out of other logical propositions by successively applying certain operations that always generate further tautologies out of the initial ones. (And in fact only tautologies follow from a tautology)” (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.126). Proof in logic, claims Wittgenstein, is only needed when one cannot recognize tautology directly. The proof is “a mechanical expedient” (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.1262). The most important things in logic are expressions, not secondary proofs. In logic, something like a mathematical proof is actually unnecessary. Mathematics itself is “a logical method” (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.2). For Wittgenstein, the claim that “mathematics equals logic” meant only that the statements of logic (tautologies) and mathematics (equations) *say* nothing about the world. Instead, they *show* the hidden logic of this world: “The logic of the world, which is shown in tautologies by the propositions of logic, is shown in equations by mathematics” (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.22).

The question arises: despite the different conception of the relationship between logic and mathematics, is it impossible to defend their deductive character? After all, proof is still used, although to a lesser degree than, for example, in Russell’s system. Wittgenstein had the answer ready. The *Tractatus* (although this idea is already visible in the *Notes Dictated to G.E. Moore*; Wittgenstein 1961), introduced truth-operation procedures instead of proof. The introduction of such procedures was possible only after formulating the correct symbolic notation.

The reasons for Wittgenstein’s new notation are well known (cf. McGinn 2006). According to the author of the *Tractatus*, Frege’s and Russell’s notations did not show the logical properties of symbols, and due to the fact that they allowed for a multiplicity of signs with the same sense, they blurred the differences between symbols. Both these notations, according to Wittgenstein, multiplied signs beyond necessity and insufficiently explicated the context of a given sign and the way it connected with other signs. Wittgenstein

was convinced that creating a new, correct notation would make it possible to correctly recognize the nature of a logical sign and, at the same time, to apply truth-procedures revealing the actual relations between expressions. In Wittgenstein's own words: "Now it becomes clear why people have often felt as if it were for us to 'postulate' the 'truths of logic.' The reason is that we can postulate them in so far as we can postulate an adequate notation" (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.1223).

3. FROM SCRIPT/GRAPHIE TO (GESICHTS)ZÜGEN

The standard approach in the literature on the *Tractatus* recognizes the question of writing as secondary, or subordinate to the logical nature of signs, as what exists "in its projective relation to the world" (Wittgenstein 2001, §3.12) and "is used with a sense" (Wittgenstein 2001, §3.326). Wittgenstein himself directly suggests such an approach, devoting most of his analysis to the logical form of signs, rather than to what can be described by their graphic form. It is significant, however, that Wittgenstein, instead of offering proofs – i.e., engage in a certain discursive activity that refers to the ways of using expressions and the relations that bind them or their content – introduces the already mentioned truth tables (TF schemata; Wittgenstein 2001, §4.31), a graphic element that Derrida calls *script* in *Freud and the Scene of Writing* (Derrida 2005, 249) and *graphie* in *Of Grammatology* (Derrida 1979, 46, 52ff.). Wittgenstein does this in order to re-establish the separation between *saying* and *showing*, which is a fundamental distinction in the *Tractatus*. According to Wittgenstein, "logical truths" are not revealed in proof – verbal or written procedures, as in Frege and Russell, but in notation, which is their domain or, strictly speaking, their matrix. Logic funds itself in the sense that everything that could be required of it is contained in graphical signs: "Logic must look after itself" (Wittgenstein 2001, §5.473). *Showing* is a kind of deciphering what a sign – what is graphic, *script/graphie* – shows. Such signs, adds Derrida radicalizing this

idea, are internal and precede words. A word “invokes signs which do not transcribe living, full speech, master of itself and self-present” (Derrida 2005, 249). What does it all mean? Logic and its signs are not signs in the sense of words and their meaning. They do not have any denotation, do not mark any extension, and are even devoid of intension. However, they remain signs that originate a discourse, a meaningful language. They are signifiers in the sense that the word is given by structuralism (cf. Deleuze 2003). All truth, proof, and thinking derive their source and validity from the silent speech of the signifiers and from what Wittgenstein calls the *logical necessity* (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.37).

What, then, is the graphic character of signs, the status of Derridian *script/graphie*, in the *Tractatus*? What does it mean that a sign, tautology or sentence is somehow written, presented and given in some graphic form? Wittgenstein repeats many times that the whole question of what a tautology and a contradiction are, the whole problem with their identification and explanation, lies in the way they are recorded: in the form of a table – the “intuitive method” (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.1203) – or the graphs that are known from the original notation made by Wittgenstein himself. From this perspective, the answer to the fundamental question asked by the young Wittgenstein about the nature and *a priori* status of logic ultimately concerns the form of its correct notation, i.e. a notation which is supposed to exclude errors, paradoxes and antinomies. A notation whose sense is *visible* after the writing itself. Sense, however, does not entail here a reference to what can be described with the predicates of truth or falsehood. Sense is the condition of all possible reference to that which precedes and conditions meaning and content.

Script/graphie, i.e. the ways of writing or notation methods, are crucial for the architecture of the entire *Tractatus*. All “logical truths,” as Wittgenstein claims, are not revealed in proofs, verbal or written procedures, but in the notation itself, which is their matrix. Everything that is needed in logic is already contained in figurative

signs, in correct notation. It is not the content of a sentence that recognizes its form or its meaning, but only the way it is written. The author of the *Tractatus* calls this *Züge* (Wittgenstein 1969, §3.34, §4.1221).

Wittgenstein states: “Der Satz besitzt wesentliche und zufällige Züge. Zufällig sind die Züge, die von der besonderen Art der Hervorbringung des Satzzeichens herrühren. Wesentlich diejenigen, welche allein den Satz befähigen, seinen Sinn auszudrücken” (Wittgenstein 1969, §3.34). The English translations of this passage render the German *Züge* as *features*.⁴ This translation links essential features with what the philosophical tradition calls the essence/*eidos*. This means that a proposition is constituted by certain internal properties or, in other words, by its necessary properties and by accidental features. The *Tractatus* thus accepts the category typical of traditional metaphysics, described aptly by deconstructionism as binary oppositions. However, it is possible to read the passage above through a deconstructionist, i.e. non-binary, interpretation, emphasizing the primacy of the graphic character of a sign that is not opposed to anything. According to this interpretation, the *Züge* are not properties or a set of constitutive properties, but rather the visibility of the sign, and the sign itself is what is visible – its *Züge*. What does this mean?

Wittgenstein tries to explain the “*Züge*” figuratively by referring to *Gesichtszügen* (Wittgenstein 1969, §4.1221). In the English edition this expression is translated as *facial features*, thereby reducing *Züge* to features and identifying the Wittgensteinian term with a concept of traditional metaphysics. However, this is a fundamental mistake that becomes clearly visible when the German concept of *Gesichtszügen* is

⁴ “A proposition possesses essential and accidental features. Accidental features are those that result from the particular way in which the propositional sign is produced. Essential features are those without which the proposition could not express its sense” (Wittgenstein 2001, §3.34).

analyzed. The face always has some *Züge*, but it is not identical to its appearance, i.e. a set of specific facial features: the size of the nose, the color of the skin or the width of the chin. However, the *Züge* is also somehow identical or convergent with these properties. In other words, *Gesichtszügen* cannot be reduced to facial properties, but they are not different from facial properties. *Gesichtszügen* are something that cannot be described, but can be *seen* and used to recognize a nation, nationality, origin, or even past diseases. There is a reason why, for example, when someone draws a portrait of a person wanted by the law, he or she first tries to capture the *Gesichtszügen*, and only then the person's features such as skin color and so on. A good memory portrait reflects the *Gesichtszügen*, not their properties. A person whose memory portrait shows face features is similar to everyone and no one at the same time. This is because there are *Gesichtszügen*, which capture both the individuality and the generality of a given individual. *Gesichtszügen* are individual in general and general in individuality. *Gesichtszügen* are therefore essential, but not as external properties, that is, something that can be described, or internal properties that can be included in a definition. Rather, they are essential as forms, that is something that forms or shapes the appearance, structure and meaning of a sign. Perhaps a better translation of the German *Züge* would be the less intuitive *drafts* or *traits*, which would capture the graphic meaning of Wittgenstein's analyses.

To sum up: the notation of a sentence that *Züge* reveals is therefore a certain property of the structure, not in the sense of an essential or constitutive property, but as a kind of matrix, pattern or something open for a potential filling. The *Züge* are therefore what makes content, reference and meaning possible. In this context, one can refer to Gilles Deleuze's remark that "structuralism cannot be separated from a new transcendental philosophy, in which the sites prevail over whatever occupies them" (Deleuze 2003, 174). In this sense, the *Tractatus* does not suggest a linguistically reformulated transcendentalism (cf. Hann 2016), nor a philosophical therapy

(cf. Crary, Read 2001) or phenomenism (cf. Hintikka, Hintikka 1986), but some form of (post)structuralism. I understand (post) structuralism here as the position whereby the signifier precedes the signified, being its structural and transcendental condition, and occupies a primary position in relation to it (Lacan 2007, 497).

Let us now return to the graphic side of signs, their *script/graphie*. In this respect, signs are what the philosopher's gaze is directed towards when the question about the structure of the symbol is asked. What is *visible*, what is *revealed* shows the graphic character of a sign or writing as a form of notation. This can be understood in two ways: on the one hand, one could argue, like Wittgenstein and his followers, that *script/graphie*/notation is only a medium, a way of expressing symbolism which is transcendental; on the other hand, following Derrida, one could maintain that symbolism, transcendentalism and intelligibility are graphic themselves, a sort of arche-writing that "is never subject to the spoken word", *script/graphie* that is "never exterior and posterior" (Derrida 2005, 249).⁵ The question about language concerns the text; the question about meaning concerns textuality, the "fabric of text" (Derrida 2005, 259). "The very idea of institution—hence of the arbitrariness of the sign—is unthinkable before the possibility of writing and outside of its horizon. Quite simply, that is, outside of the horizon itself, outside the world as space of inscription, as the opening to the emission and to the spatial *distribution* of signs, to the *regulated play* of their differences, even if they are 'phonic'" (Derrida 1979, 44). Deleuze associates this type of structure with virtuality: "The reality of the virtual is structure" (Deleuze 1994, 209). It is virtuality that, as Gunkel rightly emphasizes, enables the metaphysical opposition

5 "Even before it is linked to incision, engraving, drawing, or the letter, to a signifier referring in general to a signifier signified by it, the concept of the *graphie* [unit of a possible graphic system] implies the framework of the *instituted trace*, as the possibility common to all systems of signification" (Derrida 1979, 46).

between reality and fiction and its derivatives as true/false, sign/meaning, form/matter, content/apprehension.

From this point of view, the deconstructionist reading of the *Tractatus* presents logic and philosophy with the need to rethink what Derrida calls the topology of writing (Derrida 2005, 267), the space in which thinking occurs.

4. THE SEEING OF SIGNS

Let us now return to the dichotomy of *saying* and *showing*, which is central to the structure and argument of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. What a proposition *says* is its content, and what it *shows* is its formal properties, called internal (Wittgenstein 2001, §4.014, §4.122–4.124). We are dealing here, on the one hand, with the formal properties of language; on the other hand, with the constantly revealing sense of a specific proposition, i.e. with its content that *shows up* (Wittgenstein 2001, §4.022). The reader of this book quickly realizes that the aforementioned dichotomy is not symmetrical. It is rather asymmetric, because the young Wittgenstein focuses on the concept of *showing*, i.e. on what is *visible*. Therefore, the dichotomy meets the binary oppositions standard that is structurally biased (Gunkel 2021, 40). In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein speaks of: “recognizing” (Wittgenstein 2001, §3.326), “expression” (Wittgenstein 2001, §3.1, §3.12, §4.431), “showing” (Wittgenstein 2001, §3.262, §4.022, §4.121, §4.461, §6.12, §6.22), “perceiving” (Wittgenstein 2001, §3.32), “being a picture” (Wittgenstein 2001, §4.012), “presenting” (Wittgenstein 2001, §4.115–4.121), “being a *Züge*” (Wittgenstein 2001, §4.1221, §4.126), “manifesting” (Wittgenstein 2001, §5.24) and “demonstrating” (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.121). We cannot consider all these terms as synonyms. Wittgenstein used them in very different contexts to discuss many different things. All these uses confirm the opposition between *seeing/showing* and *saying*: what is *visible*, *shows*,

reveals and is *seen* represents something that cannot be talked about or expressed meaningfully (cf. Wittgenstein 2001, §7).

According to my interpretation, what is *visible* but meaningless or impossible to express, is the writing of signs, their graphic form – a Derridian *script/graphie*. More precisely, this can be compared to a “garment” or form in which the sign is “dressed”, its *Züge*. Take, for example, the sign “note” or, with a different meaning, the sign “♪”. This sign is a kind of graphic notation that signifies what we call a note with all the associations that culture and society impose on it. A traditional metaphysical reading suggests that the graphic shape of a sign is necessary as long as the signature of a person or thing is necessary, i.e. in so far as a certain convention or situation requires it. The notation is therefore what “exposes” the meaning of a given sign or its content. The meaning or content that a sign reveals is what is permanent, necessary and essential, and as such draws the attention of philosophers, linguists and psychologists. The notation itself seems contingent and irrelevant, functioning only as an “indicator” or “symptom.” Nothing would change in the language and image of the world if the sign “note” was replaced by the sign “kote”. By the rules for the use of signs, “kote” could still successfully mean what the sign “note” previously meant. Husserl accurately expressed the core of this argument, writing in *Formal and transcendental logic* about the sign as the “body” in which sense “is expressed” (Husserl 1969, 21).⁶

⁶ “To be sure, our ascertainties do concern verbal formations also as sense-filled locutions, concrete unities of verbal body and expressed sense. But they concern such formations even with respect to the verbal corporeality itself, which is, so to speak, a spiritual corporeality. The word itself, the sentence itself, is an ideal unity, which is not multiplied by its thousandfold reproductions” (Husserl 1969, 21). This passage illustrates well my view expressed in the paper. The issue of the relationship between sign and sense in Husserl was thoroughly discussed by Derrida in *Voice and Phenomenon: Introduction to the Problem of the Sign in Husserl’s Phenomenology* (Derrida 2011). Derrida shows a number of aporias in Husserl’s theory of signs.

Let us note, however, that such an understanding of the graphic character of a sign collides with what Wittgenstein says in the *Tractatus*: it is in the notation itself that the logical truths emerge. “Now it becomes clear why people have often felt as if it were for us to ‘postulate’ the ‘truths of logic.’ The reason is that we can postulate them in so far as we can postulate an adequate notation” (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.1223). Correct spelling shows us what the sign has to convey. The logic of the world is revealed in a logical notation and a mathematical equation (Wittgenstein 2001, §6.22). They can be directly understood as a “schemata” (Wittgenstein 2001, §4.31, §4.441).

By seeing the structure of a sign, you *see* the structure of what the sign signifies. However, this sentence can be understood in two ways. First, saying that a sign signifies is nothing more than giving the definition of the sign (“the sign is what signifies / what it signifies”) which reveals the binary opposition of a sign and its meaning. Secondly, a sign signifies the way in which the sense of a certain concept or proposition is constituted. In other words: a graphic sign is an instance that generates sense, and it only signifies a certain object when it becomes a carrier of sense. This develops and is confirmed by Wittgenstein’s remark that tautology as such is devoid of sense and meaning (Wittgenstein 2001, §4.46–4.462) and yet, or perhaps for this very reason, it *shows* a certain truth about things. Thus, if a sign is to signify something, to reveal some features of reality and signal reality (because tautology *shows* some structural features of both the world and language), does it not have to be endowed with sense and meaning, refer to anything, be intentional? Is its graphic design, its *Züge*, a simple dab with a pen, a condition for any sense to appear?

These questions suggest the non-intuitive and controversial thesis that there is a self-regulating language machine, a Derridian

script/graphie or Freudian writing machine.⁷ Asking such questions is necessary to properly consider Wittgenstein's contribution to the debunking of metaphysics as a specific form of logocentrism, privileging voice at the expense of writing or, in the language of the *Tractatus*, privileging signs at the expense of notation. Wittgenstein himself abandoned this direction, turning his attention to the notion of a grammar and its social dimension. The constitutive has been translated from the graphic level to the cultural dimension. Nevertheless, the very question of the graphic aspect of what is cultural remains. It is possible that a deconstructionist interpretation of Wittgenstein's later philosophy would enable us to understand the graphic dimension of grammar and what Wittgenstein called *Lebensform*.

5. INSTEAD OF ENDING

The analysis above is far from complete. The deconstruction machine could reveal successive layers in Wittgenstein's work, treating it like a palimpsest. However, this contribution showed, I believe, that deconstruction has no limits, i.e. every text of a culture, understood broadly as a form of graphic art, is subject to deconstruction. The graphicness of the visible is related to what Gunkel calls virtuality as "something that exceeds the grasp of the conceptual differences situated between the real and its logical opposites" (Gunkel 2021, 64). Like Deleuze, I would like to associate virtuality with structure. Therefore, if the Wittgenstein-Derridian *script/graphie*, *Züge* is virtual, it can be thought of as a differentiating structure. This notion enables the introduction of a binary opposition in it, and that is why there is an enormous "risk" to "practicing" deconstruction.

7 "Psychical content will be represented by a text whose essence is irreducibly graphic. The structure of the psychical apparatus will be represented by a writing machine" (Derrida 2004, 250). See also Freud 1951.

Wittgenstein sensed that risk. And although he did not think of his philosophy in the categories proposed here, at the end of his life he saw the danger associated with perhaps the deepest metaphysical opposition that is the dualism of necessity and contingency. In the notes published posthumously as *On Certainty* he carried out a kind of deconstruction of his own thinking about the relations of necessity that govern language and its philosophy. In Wittgenstein's own words from a well-known passage: "But I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself of its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false. The propositions describing this world-picture might be part of a kind of mythology. And their role is like that of rules of a game; and the game can be learned purely practically, without learning any explicit rules" (Wittgenstein 1969, §94-95). Language is like a mythology that defines what we call true and what we call false. I suspect it would be hard to find a more deconstructionist confession of faith.

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