Russell's Conception of Propositional Attitudes in Relation to Pragmatism

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Abstract

The conventional wisdom has it that between 1905 and 1919 Russell was critical to pragmatism. In two essays written in 1908–9, he sharply attacked the pragmatist theory of truth, emphasizing that truth is not relative to human practice. In fact, however, Russell was much more indebted to the pragmatists, in particular to William James, as usually believed. For example, he borrowed from James two key concepts of his epistemology: sense-data, and the distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description.

Reasonable explanation of this is that, historically, Russell's logical realism and James's pragmatism have at least partly the same roots—the German philosopher Rudolph Hermann Lotze (1817–1881). In this paper we are going to explore the fact that in 1905, under Lotze's cryptic influence, Russell married propositions with beliefs. And a few years later this step also made Russell prone to embrace the theory of truth-making that has its roots in James.

In contrast to the concept of sense-data and to the distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description, however, the understanding that we believe propositions—and not, for example, simply grasp them—was in tension with Russell's Principle of Extensionality, according to which propositions can be logically connected with other propositions only in connection with their truth-value. The point is that when we judge a mind-relation—for example, a relation of belief—to a proposition, the latter cannot be unambiguously determined as true or false.

The two most talented pupils of Russell, Wittgenstein and Ramsey, severely criticized the central place propositional attitudes play in Russell's logic. Wittgenstein analyzed "A believes that p" to " 'p' says p" (1922, 5.542). Ramsey criticized Russell's beliefs in propositions the other way round: He stressed that belief is an ambiguous term and can be interpreted for the

better in the sense of pragmatism. Prima facie surprisingly, he maintained that his "pragmatism is derived from Mr Russell." (1927: 51)

Keywords: James, Lotze, pragmatism, propositional attitudes, Russell

1. William James as a philosopher

A great difficulty in assessing a particular philosopher of about 1900 is the later split of Western philosophy into analytic and continental. Arguably, 20th century was a time of setting out of animus camps in Europe not only in politics but also in philosophy. First emerged the oppositeness between the German and the English philosophy—it was particularly bitter between the two World Wars. Next broke out the quarrel between analytic philosophy and continental philosophy. It still rages.

Especially difficult is to put William James in the pigeonholes of analytic, or continental philosophy. On the one hand, he was clearly a voluntarist, a follower of Rousseau. To be sure, for James human practice ranges higher than theoretical reason. This point was first set out by L. Susan Stebbing (1914). On the other hand, however, James was an anti-speculative, "concrete" philosopher. He understood himself as a "radical empiricist"—in the literal meaning of this expression. This explains why in the Manifesto of the Vienna Circle, James was listed amongst those philosophers who embraced the scientific World-view (Hahn, Neurath, Carnap 1929: 9). Indeed, James was, above all, an anti-transcendentalist and a defender of experience and experiment. To him, every form of transcendentalism is a remnant of the philosophical scholastic. James was an anti-transcendentalist to such an extent that he also fought against the "abstractness of the radical intellectualism" of Russell and Moore. This explains why James was close to such an arch-positivist as Ernst Mach, the poster boy of the Vienna Circle.[1]

2. James's Influence on Russell

We shall start this section with the claim that William James is *le grand inconnu* of Russell's philosophy. Russell first met James in the autumn of 1896, during his first trip to North America: He and his wife Alys paid a visit to James and his wife in Boston. Soon Russell developed a genuine affection for his American host that also found expression in his writings: he borrowed from James important ideas of his new philosophy. Here are three of them:

(i)   The concept of "sense-data". James introduced it in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890, ii.: 146, 184, 620). In 1898–1900, Russell embraced James's term. Unfortunately, he soon abandoned it (Milkov 2001a). A decade later, however, in *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912), he reintroduced this concept in his philosophy, this time, following a hint of G. E. Moore.

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[1] Among other things, James adopted from Mach the conception of the neutral monism (Blackmore 1972).

(ii) The concept "knowledge by acquaintance" as opposed to "knowledge by description". In his *Psychology: Brief Course* James made a distinction between "knowledge of acquaintance" and "knowledge about" (1892: 19). This is the distinction Russell adopted in "On Denoting" (1905a) (Milkov 2000b). Russell, however, made the exact discrimination between "knowledge by acquaintance" and "knowledge by description" only in (1911). Importantly enough, the two terms, sense-data (discussed in § 1) and knowledge by acquaintance, are closely connected. Indeed, according to Russell's epistemology of 1913–14, we know by acquaintance sense-data, universals and logical forms.

(iii) After close examination of James's conception of neutral monism in *Theory of Knowledge* (1913: ch. 2), Russell adopted it in "On Propositions" (1919) and in *The Analysis of Mind* (1921).

(iv) Russell borrowed from James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) the distinction between mysticism and logic (Russell 1914).

3. James's and Russell's Debt to Hermann Lotze

However, the depth of the theoretical relatedness between James and Russell can only be realized if we review the historical roots of their philosophy. To be more explicit, at the roots of their relatedness was the giant but almost forgotten today figure of the German philosopher, psychologist, and logician Hermann Lotze (1817–1881).

3.1. Hermann Lotze and William James

Interestingly enough, William James's philosophy and psychology had their *grand inconnu* as well—they were greatly influenced by Hermann Lotze.[1] This side of James's philosophical development was disclosed through painstaking investigations carried out, among others, by Otto F. Kraushaar in the late 1930s, who "had access to the unpublished letters, literary remains, and the library of William James", which are kept in Widener Library, Harvard University (1940: 448 n. 15) (Poggi and Vagnetti 2015). This claim is confirmed in a letter from Sept. 3, 1879, in which James wrote: Lotze "is the most delectable certainly of all German writers—a pure genius" (1995: 61). Two years later he noted: Lotze "seems to me the most exquisite of contemporary minds" (ibid.: 181).

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[1] On Hermann Lotze's philosophy see Milkov (2010).

James met Lotze in Göttingen in person during his study trip in Germany in 1867–8. But, he was really influenced by the German philosopher and psychologist much later and that in two waves. The first wave began in 1879 when James studied Lotze's works *Medicinische Psychologie* (1852), *Mikrokosmus* (1856–64), *Logik* (1874), and *Metaphysik* (1879). This influence found expression in James's *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). The second wave of Lotze's influence on James extended from the turn of the century till James's death in 1910. It found expression in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902).

James borrowed at least two doctrines from Lotze:

(i) The introduction of immediate data of reality in human understanding: both the data of perception as its content—from this point on was developed the concept of *sense-data*; and the data of judgments and beliefs as their content—from this point the concept of *state of affairs* emerged.[1] As already seen in § 2, Russell, in his turn, adopted the concept of sense-data from James, whereas his student and associate Ludwig Wittgenstein, with whom Russell worked on a joint program in 1912 (Milkov 2013), took on the concept of states of affairs through the phenomenologists who were greatly indebted to Lotze as well.

(ii) The primacy of the practical reason over theoretical. In fact, this idea was leading in the German philosophy after Kant (Murphey 1968). According to Lotze, however, the question "what can I know?" cannot be answered in the abstract, as Kant did. It is only to be responded anthropologically in terms of embodied persons who are situated in concrete socio-historical context. Only when we adopt this position, Lotze thought, we can also grasp the depth and the importance of the metaphysical problems. William James followed the principle of primacy of the practical reason over the theoretical in its Lotzean, not its its Kantian form.

3.2. Hermann Lotze and Bertrand Russell: Propositions are Believed

We have discussed Russell's debt to Lotze in detail in other places (Milkov 2000b, 2008). Here we are going to only concentrate on Russell's debt to Lotze by introducing the concepts of believing propositions and of propositional attitudes in general.

It is a matter of fact that Russell introduced the understanding that we believe propositions when working on Lotze. To be more specific, Russell first mentioned the concept of "belief in proposition" in the paper "The Notion of Order and Absolute Position in Space and Time",

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[1] James himself didn't speak about states of affairs, though. On Lotze as the author who introduced the concept state of affairs in philosophy see Milkov (2002).

delivered on 2 August 1900—in French—at the International Congress of Philosophy in Paris (1901, 1901a, 1901b). In it, Russell discussed Lotze's conception of relations, in particular, Lotze's claim that "relations are either presentations [*Vorstellungen*] in a relating mind or inner conditions of the elements of reality" (Lotze 1879: § 109). Russell further commented that "these presentations, we must suppose, are *beliefs in propositions* which assert relations between the terms which appear related to one another" (1901a: 250; italics added).[1]

By way of elucidation we would like to remind the reader that at that point of time Russell assumed that the world consists of concepts and complexes of concepts. In the language of logic, this understanding can be expressed with the words that the world can be referred to by terms and propositions. It follows that, from a logical point of view, instead of presentations we can speak about beliefs in propositions. In 1901, Russell rejected the first horn of Lotze's dilemma. It conflicted with his "robust sense of reality". Relations are not beliefs (presentations). They are denizens of the external world. In that paper, Russell rejected this position. It conflicted with his "robust sense of reality". Relations are not beliefs. They are denizens of the external world.

In his paper "The Nature of Truth",[2] however, read at the Jowett Society in Oxford on 10 June 1905, Russell readily adopted the concept of "belief in propositions". Now he held that "it is the things which are or may be *objects of belief* that I call *propositions*." (1905: 494) We only believe propositions; moreover, propositions require beliefs. Russell's main enemy now was the concept of judgment—he replaced it with belief. The problem was that "the notion that truth is concerned with judgments is derived from the notion that truth consists in the correspondence of our ideas with facts" and the latter notion is false (492) Against it, Russell, and also Moore of this period, maintained the famous "identity theory of truth", also supported by Lotze, according to which "truth lies not in the correspondence of our ideas with facts, but in the fact itself" (ibid.).

As an implication of his Theory of Description (1905a), however, advanced only a month and a half after he delivered "The Nature of Truth", Russell completely revised his theory of

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[1] Clearly, Russell followed here the method of treating philosophical problems in logical terms he introduced in his book on Leibniz (1900).

[2] Russell's 1905 paper "The Nature of Truth" was written together with "On Fundamentals" (composed between June 7 and 15 1905) in preparing the famous "On Denoting" (written at the end of July 1905) (see Milkov 2003: 66–7).

truth. In "On the Nature of Truth" (1907) he maintained that belief is identical with judgment. Moreover, a belief differs "from an idea or presentation by the fact that it consists of several interrelated terms" (46). This was the first variant of Russell's famous Multiple Relation Theory of Judgment he only abandoned in 1919 (see § 6, below). Belief, or judgment, is a multiple relation of the believing/judging person to a complex. Importantly enough, this understanding was underpinned by the concept of "state of affairs", also introduced by Lotze (see n. 3), in which the individuals of a whole (a state of affairs) reciprocally relate to one another and also to the whole. Despite the fact that Russell never made use of this concept, it neatly fits his 1907 conception of judgment.

We shall end this section with the following remark. Typically, scholars maintain that the most important event for Russell at the August-1900 International Congress of Philosophy in Paris was that he got acquainted with Giuseppe Peano. Above all, Peano helped Russell to adopt Frege's technique of quantification in logic. This was really a radical change in Russell's logic who, up to this point, tried to base it on mereology. This explains why the article Russell read at the Congress, the already mentioned "The Notion of Order and Absolute Position in Space and Time" (1901, 1901a), was less discussed in the literature. As a matter of fact, Russell himself did not highly appreciate it. As we just have seen, however, that paper was also of crucial importance for Russell's development. In it, namely, Russell married his propositions[1] to beliefs and to propositional attitudes in general—a step with important implication for his logic. In the lines to come, we shall see why this was the case.

4. Russell's Propositional Attitudes

For philosophers and logicians today, it is fairly clear that the introduction of the term of belief in logic was a risky move that Russell nevertheless made, as already seen, under Lotze's influence. As we are going to show in the lines below, eventually it turned out to be the Trojan Horse for the introduction of practical elements into his logic.

The problem with the understanding that we believe propositions—and not, for example, simply grasp them, or consider them, or entertain them (as maintained by the influential Cambridge logician of the turn of the century William E. Johnson)—was that it was in palpable

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[1] Russellian propositions "are mind-independent and language-independent objects composed of the very things that our words and thoughts are about." (Stevens 2019, p. 18)

tension with Russell's extensional logic. It was, more precisely, in contest with its Principle of Extensionality which holds that

> the truth or falsehood of any statement about a proposition *p* depends only upon the truth or falsehood of *p* and that the truth or falsehood of any statement involving a propositional function depends only upon the extension of the function. (Russell 1959: 87)

Russell realised the problems in his new conception of proposition much later. Reflecting further on the term "believing propositions", in "On Propositions", Russell introduced the term "propositional attitudes", defining it as:

> A form of words, unless artificially constructed, usually expresses not only the content of a proposition, but also what may be called a "propositional attitude"—memory, expectation, desire, etc.[1] (1919: 309)

The main kind of propositional attitude is belief, though. In *The Analysis of Mind*, where he showed more interest in problems of psychology, he noted that belief "is an actual experienced *feeling*" (1921: 140; italics added) in the way in which asserting is not. Apparently, by introducing the concept of "belief" into his logic, Russell made major concessions to psychologism.

In order to better understand Russell's concept of "propositional attitude", it deserves mentioning that in 1913 and 1914 he worked hard on problems of epistemology. Results of this work were the books *Theory of Knowledge* (1913)[2] and *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914). In these years, Russell maintained that "the distinguishing mark of what is mental, or at any rate what is cognitive, is not to be found in the particulars involved, but only in the nature of the *relations* between them" (1913: 45; italics added). In other words, the difference between believing, dreaming, remembering and imagining is not a function of their objects (propositions) but of the mental attitude to them. The objects in a dream, for example, are

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[1] Russell already toyed with the idea to introduce the term "propositional attitudes" in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism" where he concluded: "But I should not like that because it [the term 'attitudes'] is a psychological term." (1918: 227).

[2] Because of Wittgenstein's critique, Russell didn't finish the book—it was only published in 1984. We are going to say more about this below.

different from the objects we perceive when we are awake only because the relation between the "I" and the object is different. There is no difference in the objects *per se*. Importantly enough, we have cognitive attitudes not only to objects but also to facts, events and, in logic, to propositions.

Russell became aware of the deficiency of his theory of believing/judging propositions only through the already mentioned (in n. 7) Wittgenstein's critique of his *Theory of Knowledge* book-project. According to Russell's "puzzle about the nature of belief", as set out in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism" (in which Russell reassessed his philosophical ideas of the period before the Great War that he stop exploring for more than three years, mainly, because of Wittgenstein's critique),

> you cannot make what I should call a map-in-space of a belief. You can make a map of an atomic fact but not of a belief, for the simple reason that space-relations always are of the atomic sort or complications of the atomic sort. … [The point is that] belief cannot strictly be logically one in all different cases but must be distinguished according to the nature of the propositions that you believe (1918: 224 ff.).

 In other words, propositions of the form "Othello believes that 'Desdemona loves Cassio' " do not relate two terms, *a* and *b*. This is obvious when the judgement happens to be false. Propositions with propositional attitudes as their constituents are "apparent propositions"—they violate the Principle of Extensionality.

In a sense, Russell was right—one cannot make a map of a belief. Still, his interpretation shows that he failed to grasp the full force of Wittgenstein's argument. It is not only the beliefs that we cannot make maps of; we cannot also make maps of any fact whatsoever. This is because maps are produced in space and can represent only spatial objects. They cannot depict facts because these are not spatial.[1] We can only map complexes (Milkov 2013).

Gradually realizing that this position is problematic, in his lectures "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism", Russell toyed with the idea to replace the concept of beliefs in propositions with "propositional verbs". In this connection, however, he reminded his audience that from fundamental point of view the universe can have attributes that are neither psychic nor material

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[1] We are going to say more about this in § 6.

(1918: 227).[1] Hence, the propositions are not necessarily to be embraced by minds. Of course, propositional verbs are very well exemplified by beliefs—but they can also be exemplified by non-psychological terms.

Russell explicitly revolted against the concept of belief in propositions only in "On Propositions" (1919) and in *The Analysis of Mind* (1921) where he adopted William James's (and Ernst Mach's) conception of neutral monism and also John B. Watson's behaviourism in interpreting beliefs. To be more explicit, Russell ceased to maintain that there is a place for propositional attitudes in logic since now he, being a neutral monist, stopped maintaining that there are subjects.

5. Revolt Against Russell

As it can be expected, the two most talented pupils and followers of Russell of the time—Wittgenstein and Ramsey—severely criticised the adoption of propositional attitudes in Russell's logic. They claimed, correctly, that this assumption contests the central principle of Russell's logic: the Principle of Extensionality.

(i) In contrast to Russell, Wittgenstein maintained that there is no subject not because he adopted the theory of neutral monism. He simply analysed "A believes that p" to " 'p' says p" (5.542). In this way, the Principle of Extensionality was saved. Propositions occur in other propositions only as bases of truth-operations.

(ii) Ramsey criticised Russell's beliefs in quite a different way. He maintained that belief is an ambiguous term that can be interpreted in many different ways:

> It is, for instance, possible to say that a chicken believes a certain sort of caterpillar to be poisonous, and mean by that merely that it abstains from eating such caterpillars on account of unpleasant experience connected with them. (1927: 46)

Importantly enough, in "On Propositions" Russell himself suggested such an interpretation and attributed it to pragmatism. According to it, "there is no single occurrence which can be described as 'believing a proposition', but belief simply consists in causal efficiency" (1919: 310). Exactly this position gave Ramsey ground to state: "My pragmatism is derived from Mr Russell" (see the last paragraph of § 1).

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[1] Russell followed here an argument of Spinoza.

A similar correction to Russell made another talented young philosopher of the early 1930s in Cambridge—R. B. Braithwaite. In his paper "The Nature of Believing" (1932–3), Braithwaite adopted a behaviourist account of believing. To be more specific, he joined the statement made by Alexander Bain that "belief has no meaning, except in reference to our action" (1859: 568).

On the continent of Europe, Carnap was exactly so resolute against the Russellian propositional attitudes, defending the Principle of Extensionality: "*all propositions are extensional*" (1928: 63). This position was later argued for by Carnap's friend Quine (1960: 191 ff.). Rather a different stance defends the eliminativist thesis of Paul Churchland (1981) and Stephen Stich (1983) who maintain that the notion of belief is simply scientifically outmoded and is to be eliminated in the way the notions like phlogiston and ether were eliminated in physics.

In Russell's defence it is to be said that his conception of propositional attitudes was his answer to Frege's conception that we make propositions with "affirmative *force*".[1] Importantly enough, the latter stance connected Frege's logic to a kind of logical voluntarism (Milkov 2015) which explains why Russell decisively repudiated it.[2] Russell, in his indirect answer to Frege's position, maintained that "the vehicles of truth and falsehood" are our beliefs, not our will (1921: 139).

In conclusion, it can be said that both Frege and Russell made concessions to the intensional understanding of logic at the cost of extensional logic. For our purpose, it is of special importance to underline that Frege's logical voluntarism, too, was geared up by Hermann Lotze, whose lectures in Göttingen Frege attended as a student (Gabriel 2002).

6. Truth-making

The mainstream scholars of pragmatism today maintain that while Russell showed some sympathy to pragmatism in and after 1919, he was still against "the pragmatist account of truth" (Misak 2019: 72). In this section we are going to show, in contrast, that in those years and in this respect, too, Russell was closer to James than it is usually believed. Furthermore,

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[1] This interpretation is confirmed by the fact that before Russell got acquainted with Frege's logic, and before he simply maintained that we *assert* propositions (83 ff.).

[2] In the next section (§ 6), we shall review Russell's struggle against William James's logical voluntarism between 1907 and 1909.

we shall see that this relatedness was underpinned by the fact, discussed in § 3, above, that both philosophers, James and Russell, started their philosophical development from some seminal ideas of Hermann Lotze. Let us discuss this point in more detail.

In *Pragmatism* James contended:

> Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events. Its verity is in fact an event, a process: the process namely of its verifying itself, its veri-*fication*. Its validity is the process of its vali-*dation*. (James 1907: 89)

James's theory of truth, or his pragmatic maxim, was severely criticised by Moore (1908) and Russell (1908, 1909). They both rejected the concept of truth-making. The truth is not made—it is not a process. Truth is valid. It is something that pertains to logic and there are no processes in logic. Moreover, the truth is not made by men. The truth is objective.

Russell rejected James's theory of truth-making also in *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912); but, typically, he was already toying with the idea of using it. In particular, against James, Russell now argued that "what makes a belief true is a *fact*", not a mind (1912: 203). Despite that Russell's use of the term "making-true" was only rhetorical here—in an effort to refute James—this was a step towards its adopting.

Things changed after Russell read, actually, wrote down, Wittgenstein's "Notes on Logic" in September 1913. Now he started to assimilate the theory of truth-making for real.[1] Wittgenstein, on his side, adopted it after he visited in December 1912 Frege—this former student of Lotze—who convinced Wittgenstein that the propositions do not correspond to complexes but to facts which are individuals.[2] Moreover, in contrast to complexes, facts are not unfolded in space (despite the fact that they are situated in space) but have a living, organic nature.[3]

Wittgenstein transformed these remarks into a specific theory of truth-making (Wittgenstein 1979: 95, 105). To be more explicit, he now held that facts of the real world, which are a kind

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[1] We can only speculate about Russell's role by coining the concept of truth-making in Wittgenstein's "Notes on Logic".

[2] As we have already seen in § 4, this assumption already contained in itself the indication that Russell's multiple relation theory of judgment is false.

[3] For this understanding, Frege was indebted to his training in the context of the German Idealism (Milkov 2015).

of organic unities, *make* specific propositions we construct true and others false (Milkov 2013). It deserves notice that Frege himself didn't speak about truth-making.

In order to better understand in what sense did Wittgenstein spoke about "making" here we must remind the reader his thesis that "in the proposition we—so to speak—arrange things experimentally" with the aim to imitate reality.[1] Practices such as using dolls for modelling a motor-car accident function in the same way. In a sense, the whole of language is a concatenation of such models, or, as Wittgenstein would have it, a concatenation of pictures.

Important point here is Wittgenstein's insistence that language is a product of our "*activity* to construct languages capable of expressing every sense" (1922, 4.002; italics added). This claim automatically allots pragmatist qualities to reality: reality *determines* if these particular language products are true or false. In this sense it produces their truth/falsity. In other words, the act of depicting entails an act of truth-*making*.

Ironically enough, whereas Wittgenstein abandoned the theory of truth-making shortly afterwards, while working on his *Notebooks 1914–1916*, so that this concept found no place in the *Tractatus*,[2] Russell embraced it in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism", in "On Propositions" and in *The Analysis of Mind*. Apparently, Russell didn't notice Wittgenstein's change in view on this point. Moreover, he also failed to notice that this conception put him close to James's theory of truth, and even less so that it went hand in hand with his conception of propositional attitudes.

In fact, this cannot be a surprise since Russell misunderstood James's theory of truth from the very beginning. And he has a good excuse for this: James's theory of truth is really difficult to understand and interpret unambiguously. As H. Putnam pointed out (in 1994), to state its true point is not easier than to set out the true point of Wittgenstein's philosophy. One reason for this is that James deliberately wrote popularly in style and in consequence he often overstated his position. This went together with the fact that his theory of truth was nothing but a summary of different themes that had accumulated in his thought over the years.

It is clear, though, that according to James, his theory of truth is a correspondence theory (Putnam 1997: 170). In other words, he was convinced that what makes our beliefs true is the

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[1] Wittgenstein (1979), p. 13; see also Wittgenstein (1922), 4.0311.

[2] The reason for this was that in or about May 1915, Wittgenstein realized that language is not autonomous entity but is only a way of arrangements of objects of reality in propositions (Milkov 2019). The truth-making relation, however, requires autonomy of language units (see Simons 1992).

external world and nothing beyond it. However, James also held that truth-making is a fitting of two sides: the matter fits the ideas, and the ideas fit the matter. Furthermore, he claimed that "when they [ideas] add themselves to being, they partly *predetermine* the existent, so that reality as a whole appears incompletely definable unless ideas also are kept account of" (James 1909: 185–6). This was in strong opposition to Russell's radical realism, a problem that he, apparently, failed to realize after 1917.

This, however, was not the whole story. To this conception of truth, James also added the idea of usefulness. He namely claimed that when a fact "verifies", or makes true, an idea, or a proposition, the proposition is "useful". "You can say of it either that 'it is useful because it is true' or that 'it is true because it is useful'." (1907: 90) It was especially this notion of "usefulness" that the realists Russell and Moore fiercely fought. For our analysis it is of importance that James adopted this idea directly from Lotze: it followed the principle of primacy of the practical reason over the theoretical.

It was only after 1940, when Russell, being increasingly critical of Wittgenstein, realised that the concept of truth-making, he himself adopted, is heavily pregnant with pragmatism. In consequence, in his lectures published as *The Impact of Science on Society* he explicitly repudiated it (1951: 75). Instead of facts as truth-makers, he now spoke of *verifiers*[1] — apparently, without realizing that this term, too, was introduced by William James. Russell also continued to use the term *verifiers* in his later works, in *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits* (1948: 166 ff.), and in *My Philosophical Development* (1959: 138 ff.).

It deserves notice, however, that also Wittgenstein, who was thus critical to the Russellian propositional attitudes in the *Tractatus*, failed to shun relatedness of this conception to pragmatism.[2] As noted by A. J. Ayer, the principle of verification Wittgenstein adopted in the early 1930s "is indeed identical" with the pragmatic maxim (1968: 45).

7. Epilogue

Some authors have recently pointed out that the dominance of the analytic philosophy in North America after the 1930s was not exclusively connected with the influence of the logical empiricists who immigrated to the USA in the 1930s and 1940s. It was also prepared by the

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[1] This he did for the first time in *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* (1940: 227).

[2] On the relatedness of pragmatism and Wittgenstein see Boncompagni (2016).

radical empiricism of the pragmatists' movement. The smooth process of merging of the tradition of pragmatism with that of the logical empiricism is to be understood in this key. In Europe, that merger came to light already in the mid-1930s, when Charles Morris delivered his paper "The Concept of Meaning in Pragmatism and Logical Positivism" (1936) at the World Congress of Philosophy in Prague. It received a loud acclaim from Carnap (Dahms 1992: 240, 248).

Our concluding contention is that this painless merger between logical empiricism and pragmatism was facilitated by the circumstance that Russell's conception of propositional attitudes can be accurately interpreted in the sense of pragmatism: exactly as Ramsey did this in 1927, and Russell nine years before him. Apparently, Russell's susceptibility to adopting ideas close to pragmatism was conditioned by his "idealist apprenticeship" (Griffin 1991). To be more explicit, Russell's conception of belief of proposition was introduced under the influence of the German philosopher and "teleological idealist" Hermann Lotze who, however, also influenced William James. These roots of Russell's conception of propositional attitudes led him later to also embrace other elements of James's program, in particular, the theory of truth-making. Small wonder, therefore, that the middle and late analytic philosophers strongly repudiated Russell's conception of proposition.

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