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Responding to the 'Satz'-challenge: A reply to Martin Stokhof and Jaap van der Does

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Abstract

I here reply to Martin Stokhof and Jaap van der Does' criticism of my translation of 'Satz' as 'proposition' in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, arguing that they fail to appreciate the difference between translation and interpretation.

In a note on my translation of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* (2023), entitled 'The 'Satz'-challenge', Martin Stokhof and Jaap van der Does (hereafter S&D) criticize my rendering of 'Satz', with just one exception,[1] as 'proposition' throughout the text. The translation of 'Satz' in German philosophical texts has been notoriously controversial, and many scholars have strong views about it, raising as it does deep issues of philosophical significance. In this reply, I respond to their critique.

Let me begin, though, by thanking them for the positive general comments about my translation that frame their critique, and let me follow suit by thanking them, in turn, for raising issues about philosophical translation that are all too poorly recognized and debated by philosophers. One powerful reason for re-translating a philosophical classic is that it shakes philosophers out of their complacency about 'standard' translations, prompting fresh

[1] This is in the phrase 'Satz vom Grunde' in 6.34 and 6.35. In 6.34 I translate 'Alle jene Sätze, wie der Satz vom Grunde' as 'All propositions such as the principle of sufficient reason'. It is clearly right to render 'der Satz vom Grunde' as 'the principle of sufficient reason', since that is the standard phrase in English; but translating 'Sätze' as 'propositions' makes clear that the principle is still a 'proposition'. (Cf. 5.551, where 'Grundsatz' is translated as 'basic principle'.) So it is not a 'deviation' in the inconsistent way S&D suggest (p. 6, fn. 9).

questions about interpretation and understanding. It is especially good to revisit the question as to what 'Satz' means in the *Tractatus*, even though in this case I translated it, in general, in the same way – namely, as 'proposition' – as in the two earlier translations by Ramsey and Ogden and by Pears and McGuinness. S&D's main objection is that philosophical thinking today warrants translating 'Satz' in a variety of ways, depending on the context. While I agree that Wittgenstein uses 'Satz' in a variety of ways, I think that translating it in a corresponding variety of ways is misguided, for reasons that I shall explain in this reply, reasons that are instructive concerning both the interpretation of the *Tractatus*, specifically, and the philosophy of translation, more generally.

Translation and interpretation

My main criticism of S&D is that they fail to appreciate the difference between translation and interpretation. Like many before them, they claim that translation "always involves interpretation" (p. 6), and quote from Gadamer's *Truth and Method* in support: "The situation of the translator and that of the interpreter are fundamentally the same." While there are intricate connections between translation and interpretation, however, the two situations are, in many cases, rather different. On the one hand, many interpreters of a text rely on translations offered by others, frequently with little reflection on whether the translations are accurate (they may not know the language at all). On the other hand, if we allow machine-translation, which seems to be getting better and better, then machines, too, would count as interpreters, which many people would regard as unacceptable. To the extent that machine-translations draw on a vast database of human translation, one might claim that there are *implicit* interpretations involved, but that is very different from saying that the situations of the translator and the interpreter are the same.[2] As I see it, a translator does a better job the more interpretations they consider, but the aim of that is to triangulate on the meaning of the text, weeding out the

[2] The recent translation of the *Tractatus* published by Penguin might be offered as another example of translation without (much, explicit) interpretation. Penguin's editor apparently decided that as Wittgenstein once said that philosophy should be written as 'Dichtung', understood as 'poetry', they should commission a poet to translate it. The translator barely understood the text as a work of philosophy (having no philosophical background), and as far as I can tell, seems to have generally followed Pears and McGuinness' translation, and only tried his hand in offering a more poetic rendering in the case of the more aphoristic remarks.

interpretations that are loosely rooted in the text and balancing out the hermeneutic contributions that the better interpretations make. There may be no uniquely 'best' interpretation, and it is certainly not the task of the translator to impose any one interpretation on the text. Within reasonable parameters, the translator should leave scope for a reader to make up their own mind about how to interpret a text.

S&D quote (on p. 7) another remark by Gadamer about 'openness', which he describes as situating the meaning of a text (or another person) "in relation to the whole of our own meanings or ourselves in relation to it". S&D take this to license "bringing in our own perspective, our own meanings, indeed ourselves", as they put it (p. 7). There may be criticisms to be made of Gadamer's hermeneutics, but he should not be interpreted (ironically) to be quite so egocentric.[3] Openness means *being responsive to the other*, not appropriating selected meanings that fuse comfortably within one's own perspective. Even if there is value in S&D's egocentric view of interpretation, however, this should not be carried over to the case of translation. Their 'argument' amounts to this: "We know what Wittgenstein ought to be saying, so we will translate him to make him say it." The history of philosophy is full of philosophers who have taken this view, at least in dealing with specific passages, and it may contribute to philosophical progress, but it does not make for good translation.

Translating 'Satz'

S&D's main criticism in their note on my translation flows from their failure to appreciate the complex relations between translation and interpretation. So let us now show this by considering the case of 'Satz', which is a perfect example for exploring the issues.[4] This term is admittedly used in a variety of ways, but these ways are *intricately connected* to one another, and any attempt to

[3] For my own view of Gadamer, see Beaney 2019b, 747–50, 757–8. He can be accused of Eurocentrism, but not of egocentrism, at least in the strong form advocated by S&D. For my view of openness, see Beaney 2023d.

[4] The other main case that S&D take is the use of 'Satz' in speaking of different kinds of 'Sätze' – logical, mathematical, ethical, philosophical, etc. I briefly address this in the penultimate section of this paper. A different account of what might be meant in calling these 'Sätze' is required in each case, and discussing this would require a much longer paper. Ultimately, however, one might suggest, Wittgenstein wants us to treat the idea of a 'Satz' itself as one of those ideas that must be thrown away once we have attained the correct point of view.

sever them, by forcing some of them together in translating 'Satz' by 'proposition', for example, and others together in translating it by 'sentence' (or 'statement' or 'principle' or 'remark' or some other term), will obscure these intricate connections. The term is not *ambiguous*, in the sense that there are two distinct meanings (say, 'proposition' and 'sentence'), which must be clearly distinguished (as one distinguishes two meanings of 'bank', to take the standard example), but *connectively polysemous*, with various related meanings in play in some way or another in most cases. The task of the translator, where possible, is to let this polysemy speak for itself, not to tidy it up – or analyse it away – by disconnecting its meanings in rigid interpretation.

As S&D note (p. 2), one of the (many) – and in my view, very strong – reasons for rendering 'Satz' as 'proposition' is that Wittgenstein approved it. There is not a single objection to it, for example, in his detailed correspondence with Ogden over Ramsey's draft translation (Wittgenstein 1973). This shows that he did not see the term as ambiguous, requiring someone else to point it out and correct him. Discussion, by Russell and Moore, among others, about 'the nature of the proposition' (in English) was all around him, and he readily used the term himself when he wrote or dictated in English. Wittgenstein was originally going to call his envisaged treatise 'Der Satz', and he evidently saw his main task as that of clarifying this notion. Translating this as 'The Proposition' is thus appropriate. (Perhaps there was an allusion to Frege's paper 'Der Gedanke', where Frege had attempted to get clear about the nature of 'thought'.) Translating this title instead as 'The Sentence' would be misleading and suggestive of a rather tedious treatise. So presumably S&D would allow 'The Proposition' as the best rendering here. However, if we then had many occurrences of 'Satz' in the treatise itself translated *differently*, Wittgenstein would come across as a confused idiot, constantly changing the subject from one passage to another. As their default position, a translator must respect the integrity of an author, even if an interpreter is willing to allege or even mildly suggest tension or incoherence.

Of course, as interpreters, we can suggest that what Wittgenstein means by a particular use of 'Satz' has more connotations of 'sentence' than of 'proposition' (as those terms might be understood), but we must not lose sight of the connective polysemy of the German term. Where a *translator* can register the different possible meanings of a term, and the relevant issues of interpretation, is in the editorial material, such as in an introduction, translator's

notes, and a glossary; and I was concerned to do just this in my own translation. Neither Ramsey and Ogden nor Pears and McGuinness, regrettably, provided such editorial material, other than Russell's notorious introduction, which Wittgenstein (rightly) deeply disliked. With editorial material, there are then two main options relevant to the present discussion. We can translate 'Satz' uniformly (in general) as 'proposition', noting where this may have other – related – meanings as well. Or we can translate it differently, in accord with our own 'interpretation', but noting that we have the same German term in the original text. I chose the former, partly because Wittgenstein approved it and partly because it directly reflects his use in German of a single term – 'Satz' – throughout. Whichever option we choose, adding relevant explanatory notes is essential. In the case of the former option, it must be made clear that 'Satz' is (generally) rendered as 'proposition', and – ideally – that 'proposition' is not used to translate any other term, so that a reader knows that 'proposition' signifies 'Satz'. Ideally, too, something must also be said about the range of meanings that 'Satz' has and Wittgenstein's conception of a *Satz*.[5] To stress again, though, a translator should not force their own interpretation on the text, especially where there are controversial interpretive issues at stake, but do their best to put the reader in a position to judge for themselves. So the situation of a philosophical translator involves not just translation but also recognition and elucidation of the translational choices that have philosophical significance.

S&D comment at the beginning of their note that my editorial material is "thorough and helpful" (p. 1), but they do not acknowledge its important role in dealing with the tricky issue of the relation between translation and interpretation. A translation should be judged in the context of its publication, especially as embedded in the editorial material. At the end they admit that my choice of "proposition throughout" is "a perfectly fine approach to take", bearing in mind my stated aims. They go on to say, however, that "there are other ways of reading the text" (p. 8). I might agree with this as well, except that their implication (in the context of their note) is that these can be captured in different translations. But this is where their confusion between translation and interpretation manifests itself. For a good translation does not merely offer a 'way of reading the text', but allows different readings, ideally corresponding

[5] For more on this, and for discussion of the principles that guided my translation, see Beaney forthcoming. Cf. Beaney 2019a; 2024.

as closely as possible to the different readings that the original text may allow. S&D seem to hold the view that translation – as 'interpretation' – closes down a text, by restricting what is offered to one way of reading it.

In their conclusion, S&D claim that translation, just like interpretation, is not a matter of being right or wrong (p. 9). I agree with them that there may be no 'right interpretation', but I am surprised that they take such a relativist view of both translation and interpretation. Some interpretations are better than others, just as some translations are better than others. (I hope that mine is better than the two main previous ones, not least as I learnt a lot from working with them for over forty years.) As S&D rightly report me (p. 9), I remarked in my second introductory essay that "translations are children of their time, and fresh translations may well be required in new contexts" (2023b, p. lxxxiv). But I did not claim that all translations are equally good or valuable, and nor do I hold that all interpretations are equally good or valuable, though I accept, of course, that different interpreters disagree about them.

Interpreting Wittgenstein's conception of a Satz

Having defended my *translation* of 'Satz' as 'proposition', limited as that defence is in the space afforded here, let me now turn to my *interpretation* of Wittgenstein's conception of a *Satz*, as suggested by my editorial material (limited as my account there was). S&D are right to single out the 3.1s of the *Tractatus* as crucial in the understanding of Wittgenstein's conception, and they focus on these in both criticizing me and outlining their own interpretation. The key remark is 3.12, in which Wittgenstein writes that "der Satz ist das Satzzeichen in seiner projektiven Beziehung zur Welt", which I translate as "a proposition is a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world". This is what I say in my explanatory note to 3.12 (as S&D cite on p. 5):

> This makes clear Wittgenstein's 'official' conception of a *Satz*: a *Satzzeichen* in its projective relation to the world. It is this use of 'Satz' that is appropriately captured by 'proposition', leaving 'Satzzeichen' as 'propositional sign', for which 'sentence' could also be used—though that would then obscure the connection between 'Satz' and 'Satzzeichen'.

For me, a *Satzzeichen* is a sentence, and the only reason that I did not translate this as 'sentence' is that I wanted to exhibit the cognate connection between 'Satz' and 'Satzzeichen'. A *Satz* is more than just a sentence: it expresses a thought (*Gedanke*) *through* a propositional sign, as I put in in my first

introductory essay (2023a, p. xlv). It is by *projecting* the sentence onto the world, by taking each element (each constituent name) to stand for an object and the *fact* that its elements stand to one another in a certain way to represent how the corresponding objects are in the world (3.14), that we grasp the sense of the *Satz*,[6] the thought expressed. The *Satz* is more than just the *Satzzeichen*.

In my view, S&D misunderstand 3.12, but do so in a philosophically instructive way. They write that "In 3.12 it is stated that a 'Satz' *is* a 'Satzzeichen', so is itself sensorily perceptible" (p. 4). But Wittgenstein is not *identifying* a *Satz* with a *Satzzeichen*, and we do not *see* a *Satz*. We see a *Satzzeichen* and *grasp* the *Satz* it expresses by recognizing the possible state of affairs it represents, in thinking *through* the *Satzzeichen*. (Here there is an interesting comparison with Frege's conception of how we grasp a 'Gedanke'.) S&D also stress the 'projective' nature of a *Satz*, which they characterize in terms of the *Satzzeichen* being "*used* as something that depicts" (p. 4). But this smacks too much of what I shall call *linguistic empiricism*, which *reduces* a *Satz* to a *Satzzeichen*, albeit seen as used in a certain way. We have to *think through* the *Satzzeichen*, not just 'use' it. Wittgenstein's conception of a *Satz* is subtler and epistemically richer than a simple 'use' theory, even if he came to reject that conception in his later work.

An analogy may be helpful here. Imagine explaining what a 'person' is by claiming that a person is a human body in its complex interactive relation to our social world (elaborated in some appropriate way). Such a view does not *identify* a person with a human body, but indicates that someone is a person *through* having a human body interacting in a certain way. Wittgenstein was never an empiricist (though some have seen behaviourist elements in his thought, especially in his middle period), and he was certainly not a linguistic empiricist in the *Tractatus*. (Here we can compare the *Tractatus* to Russell's 1921 book, *The Analysis of Mind*.) Wittgenstein's later conception of meaning as use is clearly influencing S&D's interpretation, and aspects of that are anticipated in the *Tractatus*, but projecting that later conception back onto the *Tractatus*, as S&D seem to do, distorts his views. It may be an 'interpretation' that reveals

[6] We might distinguish here between 'the sense of a sentence [*Satzzeichen*]', with the objective genitive, and 'the sense of a proposition [*Satz*]', with the subjective genitive. Perhaps confusion between these two genitives has generated some of the misunderstanding about the relation between sentences, propositions, and senses; but I will resist trying to elaborate here.

continuities in Wittgenstein's development, but S&D should come clean about what they are doing.

S&D go on to pose what I regard as a false dilemma. Either a *Satz* is a mere linguistic entity or it 'contains' its 'meaning', which they take to be "the situation it depicts" (p. 5). S&D reject the second horn, on the grounds that Wittgenstein (rightly) does not take a *Satz* to be literally composed of anything depicted. S&D formulate the second horn of the supposed dilemma in a confusing way. A *Satz* has a *sense* ('Sinn'), not – as they put it – a 'meaning' ('Bedeutung'), and the sense is the *possible* state of affairs it *represents*. Wittgenstein distinguishes between depicting (*abbilden*) and representing (*darstellen*). (See my explanatory note to 2.201; 2023c, p. 76.) But that aside, the dilemma is spurious anyway. For Wittgenstein's point is that a *Satz* bridges the gap, as it were, between 'mere' language and 'reality': as 3.12 states, a *Satz* is a *Satzzeichen* in its projective relation to the world. Admittedly, the 'projective relation' that Wittgenstein talks about is unclear (it can only be 'shown'), but this is exactly what he worries about and seeks to clarify in his later work.

'Proposition' and 'sentence'

We can now appreciate the point made above about 'Satz' being *connectively polysemous* rather than straightforwardly ambiguous. S&D are operating with a crude conception of 'Satz' being (mainly) ambiguous between 'proposition' and 'sentence', and urging that we decide between the two in translating particular occurrences of 'Satz' in Wittgenstein's text. They opt for 'sentence' in many of the key remarks in which Wittgenstein explains his conception of a *Satz*, such as the 3.1s. But Wittgenstein's conception of a *Satz* includes both propositional and sentential aspects, internally related, so neither 'proposition' nor 'sentence' fully captures its meaning. Propositionality always includes sententiality, on Wittgenstein's view, however, whereas sententiality does not (always) include propositionality, making 'proposition' the better translation.[7]

S&D talk of there being a tension in the text, which my "uniform translation glosses over", while their "more contextual approach brings out the tension more clearly" (p. 8). But if there is a tension in a text, then it is exhibited

[7] The case of (modern) Chinese is instructive in this respect. The (traditional) character 說 (*shuō*) means *say*, *talk*, *explain*; but it contains the character 言 (*yán*), which means *words*, *speech*. In saying or explaining something (expressing a 'proposition'), then, we do so *through* words (a 'sentence'). The connective polysemy of Chinese characters is often visually exhibited in their very graphs.

in Wittgenstein's own 'uniform' use of 'Satz'! It is not for a translator to eradicate this. An interpreter may wish to do so, but that is another illustration of the difference between a translator and an interpreter. The conception of a proposition, in including or overlapping with the conception of a sentence, embodies something of the tension in the German conception of a *Satz*, and in Wittgenstein's conception, in particular. So, again, this makes 'proposition' more suitable than 'sentence' in translating 'Satz', with the added advantage of reflecting the 'uniformity' of Wittgenstein's use of 'Satz', leaving it to the reader (or interpreter) to identify and clarify the 'tension', 'ambiguity', or 'connective polysemy'.

What makes philosophers resist translating 'Satz' as 'proposition', especially today, are the connotations that 'proposition' has accrued over the course of the history of analytic philosophy. In their early naïve realist period, Moore and Russell held that 'propositions' are literally composed of entities in the world. This was never Wittgenstein's view, nor the view of many others at the time, and Russell had changed his mind by the time he was working with Wittgenstein. In later analytic philosophy, 'propositions' have been seen, by some but not all, as abstract objects; and it is this conception that drives S&D to reject 'proposition' as the translation of 'Satz'. They accuse me – quite unjustly – of holding this conception myself. They write: "By translating Satz as proposition throughout, Beaney opts for a reading that is abstract and absolute" (p. 9). This is certainly not my reading, and they provide no evidence of my offering this in anything I have written other than my translation of 'Satz' as 'proposition' – in which I followed Ramsey and Ogden as well as Pears and McGuinness, none of whom offered an 'abstract and absolute' reading, either. I could accuse S&D – with far greater justice – of opting for a reading that is concrete and reductive. Wittgenstein's conception of a *Satz* is neither absolute nor reductive, a dichotomy that he would rightly see as exhibiting philosophical confusion.

S&D also betray their adherence to the egocentric hermeneutic view to which I objected above. They are so concerned to interpret Wittgenstein in relation to their own linguistic empiricism that they close themselves off to the conception of a *Satz* that Wittgenstein was actually trying to articulate in the *Tractatus*. Nor are they open to the conception of a proposition that I seek to elucidate in my editorial material, which I understand, of course, as *Wittgenstein's conception* of a *Satz*. I find it astonishing that S&D should project their own

conception of a proposition as an abstract entity (as stated explicitly on p. 4, for example) onto me, and then complain that I do not understand Wittgenstein's conception! It is Wittgenstein's conception I am trying to explain, and since Wittgenstein approved the translation of 'Satz' as 'proposition', it is perfectly acceptable for me to talk about Wittgenstein's conception of a *proposition*, and elucidate that. Part of the elucidation involves explaining why he approved that translation, something which S&D fail to do. On their view, Wittgenstein should presumably be criticized for accepting that translation!

Other possible translations of 'Satz'

S&D fail to explain credibly how they would translate all the supposedly different occurrences of 'Satz' in the text. They talk variously of using 'sentence', 'formula', 'meaningful sentence', 'statement', and 'remark' (pp. 1, 3, 5–6). But they only gesture at how these terms might be used in translating 'Satz'. They favour 'statement' or 'remark' in the case of philosophy (p. 6). But 'statement' is surely worse than 'proposition', and while 'remark' is good for 'clarifications', this would be the natural translation of 'Bemerkung', which, of course, Wittgenstein used in his later work to describe what he offers. When Wittgenstein talks of 'Sätze' being nonsensical in 6.54, however, this connects with everything he has said up to then in using the term 'Satz', and it would be highly bizarre to suddenly alter the translation.

S&D's suggestions of alternative renderings raise numerous questions. Where are the dividing lines? What are the (implicit) principles of translation involved here? Which of the terms, for example, would they choose in translating 'Satz' when Wittgenstein uses it to render Russell's own use of 'proposition' (as in 5.5251)? Are they going to correct Russell, too? How would they translate 'Scheinsätze' (as in 5.534)? (Here there is an instructive comparison with Frege's use of 'Scheingedanke'.) What about 'Satzzeichen' or any of the other cognates of 'Satz'? S&D write: "Even in German one has [to] stretch the standard use of 'Satz' to incorporate such diversity" (p. 3). But if Wittgenstein can do this in German, then we can do it in English in using 'proposition', as indeed the history of philosophy shows. Translating 'Satz' as

'proposition' is the only way to reflect what Wittgenstein does.[8] This is *translating*, not 'interpreting' in the closing-down sense that S&D tendentiously extract from Gadamer.

The philosophical literature is full of proffered translations of individual sentences as scholars seek to promote their own interpretation. It is one thing to offer ad hoc translations for particular purposes, however, but quite another to translate a whole text, where there are multiple constraints to respect and balance, not least consistency and coherence.[9] I am sure that any translation that S&D would come up with in accord with their 'interpretation' would be far harder to do than they imagine, and result in a confusing mess, with a bewildering array of explanatory notes needed. But if S&D disagree, then they must produce that translation to prove me wrong. Sniping from the interpretive sidelines does not win a translational battle.

S&D's preferred primary translation of 'Satz' is 'sentence', since they take that to capture Wittgenstein's conception of a *Satz* in the 3s and 4s. They admit no use of 'Satz' where 'proposition' is better. But 'sentence' removes many of the connotations that 'proposition' has, connotations that are present in Wittgenstein's conception of a *Satz*. S&D's proposed strategy would emaciate Wittgenstein's philosophical vision in the *Tractatus*. That Wittgenstein was originally going to call his planned treatise 'Der Satz' shows how central the idea of a 'Satz' was, embedded in the intense discussions about 'the nature of the proposition' that he was having with Russell, Moore, and others in Cambridge. To repeat, Wittgenstein approved the translation of 'Satz' as 'proposition', and in this case, especially, we must respect his authorization. Eliminating the use of 'proposition' altogether in translating or interpreting the *Tractatus* is a form of hermeneutic cleansing that has no scholarly or philosophical justification. It is *essential* to reading the *Tractatus* that we appreciate how Wittgenstein employs the term 'Satz', as his translation of 'proposition' in the context of the debates in which he was immersed, through

[8] This provides the obvious response to S&D's objection that 'proposition' cannot be used for logical 'Sätze' (etc.), since they lack sense (p. 3). Wittgenstein calls them 'limiting cases' of *Sätze* (4.466). We can see this as 'stretching' the use of 'Satz'. They might also be called 'purportedly senseful propositions' (applying to other kinds of propositions as well), just as one might talk of 'Scheinsätze' (4.1272, 5.534, 5.535, 6.2).

[9] I confess to being irritated when someone proposes a new and idiosyncratic translation of a single sentence or passage, without any sense of how that would impact translating the text as a whole, and of the multiple constraints. Translating a single sentence is an unreliable guide to how key terms should be translated throughout the relevant text.

the development of the text. Only then can we see 6.54 correctly. This is hermeneutic *open-mindedness*.

Combining historical scholarship and philosophical analysis

This leads me to the final point that I want to make in reply to S&D's critique. Their relativism, which emerges at the end, allows them to backtrack from the hermeneutic cleansing that they advocate in translating the *Tractatus* in accord with their own interpretation. In stating that my translation of 'Satz' as 'proposition' is "a perfectly fine approach to take" (as mentioned above), they go on to comment that this "reads TLP from an historical perspective, in the context in which it was written" (p. 8). In their concluding paragraph they repeat that my approach is "that of the historian: new information about the context in which a text originated may induce new interpretations and call for new translations" (p. 9) However, they go on, "we would maintain that it is also systematic concerns, arising from new ways of dealing with problems, that lead to new interpretations and fresh translations". Here we have that familiar trope of the 'historian of philosophy' versus the 'systematic philosopher', and the implication is clear: the 'systematic' approach is really to be preferred, since 'mere' history just adds "information about the context", as they patronizingly put it. History of analytic philosophy, as a recognized subfield of philosophy, has come a long way since these hackneyed debates about 'historical' versus 'systematic' approaches. History of analytic philosophy has become such a vibrant field precisely because it combines sensitive historical understanding with systematic philosophical analysis. We need the former to appreciate the distinction between translation and interpretation, for example, and the latter to elucidate the conception of a *Satz* that Wittgenstein is actually trying to articulate in the *Tractatus*.

S&D end their critique as follows: "Ultimately, it is the usefulness of a translation in one's research and in one's teaching that will tell one which is 'the best'. And that, too, remains a matter of context." (p. 9) This is a shocking admission. Does what counts as the 'best' translation depend on its 'usefulness'? Qualifying this by reference to 'context' does not ameliorate the egocentric hermeneutic utilitarianism. Perhaps I might agree that a translation is 'better' the more useful it is for a wider audience, hence rejecting the egocentrism, but if it is indeed better, then that is because it is rooted in solid

historical scholarship and careful philosophical analysis. That is what genuinely open-minded and respectful history of analytic philosophy involves.

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