

Warren Goldfarb,

“Showing”

A close examination of the passages of the *Tractatus* in which Wittgenstein explicitly talks about what sentences may *show*, rather than *say*, reveals that his notion of showing licenses far less than many commentators have imputed to it (e.g., Anscombe, Hacker, Pears). Its explicit purview lies entirely in the philosophy of logic, not in metaphysics or ontology. Thus showing cannot be used as support for irresolute (ontologically robust) readings of the book. Also there is little textual or logical relation between “zeigen” and “sich zeigen”, between “showing” and “making manifest”, to use the Pears and McGuinness translation. Conflating these two has confused readers, although the latter notion remains very puzzling, but separating it from the former notion allows at least a little clarification.