



Nonsense in Dorothy Wrinch (1894–1976)

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Judgment is traditionally taken to be a relation toward a proposition, which is considered the object of the judgment. According to the so-called *multiple relation theory of judgment*, first put forward by Russell (1906: 46; 1913), instead, judgment is a multiple relation and it is the subject of the judgment who operates the unifying of the other relata thanks to their act of judgment.

It is often argued (according to many, starting from Wittgenstein, see for example 1974: 5.5422) that the multiple relation theory of judgment is inadequate because according to it, but not to the propositional account, it is possible to judge nonsense: while it is not the case that any relata can be combined into a proposition, it seems that any relata can be related by judgment as a multiple relation.

While Dorothy Wrinch agreed that any adequate theory of judgment should rule out the possibility of judging nonsense (1919: 325), she was also the first to note that on the multiple relation theory as well, it is possible to argue that judging nonsense is impossible. The constraints that for the traditional view are imposed by the proposition as the object of the judgment, are imposed, on the multiple relation theory, by the logical form of the judging relation: “the difficulty can be got over by simply stating it as a property of judging relations that the types of the constituents do not form an independent set ... the nature of J as a judging relation makes the type of suitable arguments for the empty place automatically determinate” (1919: 325). Since moreover Wrinch was working within Russell’s theory of types, where any relation is type-constrained, Wrinch could overcome the objection without having to see the judgment relation as in any way special.

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