

Nomination form
International Memory of the World Register

Philosophical Nachlass of Ludwig Wittgenstein
(Austria, Canada, Netherlands, UK)

ID Code [2016-26]

1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

The subject of this joint nomination is the complete philosophical Nachlass of Austrian-British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) is today widely recognized as one of the most important philosophers of the 20th century. His philosophy was the essential impulse to what was later called the “linguistic turn” in modern philosophy, but even beyond philosophy had a deep impact to many branches of the humanities and even in the arts.

His famous *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (written 1918, published 1921), the only philosophical book he published during his lifetime, is one of the most influential philosophical books ever written. After a break of ten years - teaching as a primary school teacher and working as architect - Wittgenstein continued his philosophical work at the University of Cambridge and developed a new philosophy of ordinary language, which became one of the leading philosophical movements especially in the Anglo-American world. Wittgenstein was unable to realize his intention to publish his new ideas before his death in 1951. In 1953 his literary executors published the *Philosophische Untersuchungen / Philosophical Investigations* posthumously, which is seen as the magnum opus of his later philosophy and has become one of the most important books in the history of modern philosophy.

Wittgenstein’s philosophical development from 1914 to the *Tractatus* and his continuous philosophical work from 1929 till the end of his life is documented in detail in his philosophical Nachlass. It was listed in a systematic and complete form in 1969 by Georg Henrik von Wright, his student and successor in his chair in Cambridge (“*The Wittgenstein Papers*” in: *Philosophical Review* Vol 78,4.1969, p 483-503). Von Wrights Nachlass index contains 83 manuscripts, 45 typescripts an 11 dictations, all together about 20.000 pages.

Based on von Wright’s list Wittgenstein’s Nachlass is nominated in its entirety (not including his letters).

In 2000 an electronic edition was published by the Wittgenstein Archives at Bergen (No): *Wittgenstein’s Nachlass. The Bergen Electronic Edition. Oxford University Press, University of Bergen, The Wittgenstein Trustees* on 6 CDs.

The original items of the Wittgenstein Nachlass are kept in the following five institutions, who apply for this joint nomination:

- a) Trinity College, Cambridge (UK)
- b) Austrian National Library, Vienna (AUT)
- c) Bodleian Library, Oxford (UK)
- d) Noord Hollands Archief, Haarlem (NL)
- e) Bertrand Russell Archives, McMaster University Library, Hamilton (Canada)

For details see Annex(1).

2.0 Nominators (a)

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Trinity College Library, Cambridge

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

Owner

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Jonathan Smith

2.4 Contact details

Name

Jonathan Smith

Address

Trinity College Library, Cambridge
CB21TQ, UK

Telephone

0044 (0)1223 338579

Facsimile

Email

archives@trin.cam.ac.uk

2.0 Nominators (b)

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Austrian National Library, Josefsplatz 1

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

Owner

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Dr. Alfred Schmidt

2.4 Contact details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>
Dr. Alfred Schmidt	Austrian National Library / Josefsplatz 1 1015 Vienna, Austria

Telephone

Facsimile

Email

2.0 Nominators (c)

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Bodleian Library University of Oxford

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

Owner

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Chris Fletcher

2.4 Contact details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>
Chris Fletcher	Bodleian Library, University of Oxford University of Oxford OX13BG, UK

Telephone

Facsimile

Email

chris.fletcher@bodleian.ox.ac.uk

2.0 Nominators (d)

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Noord Hollands Archief in Haarlem

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

Custodian (The nomination is done in agreement with the owners: Mr G.M.H. van de Velde and Mrs E.B.B. van der Wolk)

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Herman Oost

2.4 Contact details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>
Herman Oost	Noord-Hollands Archief in Haarlem Postbus 3006 2001 DA Haarlem, NL

<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Facsimile</i>	<i>Email</i>
0031235172700		Herman.Oost@noord-hollandsarchief.nl

2.0 Nominators (e)

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Bertrand Russell Archives, McMaster University Library, Hamilton (Canada)

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

Owner

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Rick Stapleton

2.4 Contact details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>		
Rick Stapleton	Bertrand Russell Archives Mills Memorial Library Mc Master University 1280 Main Street West Hamilton, ON, L8S 4L8 Canada		
<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Facsimile</i>	<i>Email</i>	
00-1-905-525-9140 /27885	00-1-905-522-0691	archives@mcmaster.ca	

3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

If inscribed, the exact title and institution(s) to appear on the certificate should be given

“Wittgenstein’s philosophical Nachlass”,
for details see Annex (1)

3.4 History/provenance

a) Items of Wren Library, Trinity College Cambridge (UK)

In 1969 the Wittgenstein Trustees, the three literary executors named by Wittgenstein in his last will, had handed over all of Wittgenstein’s original manuscripts remaining England to Trinity College, Cambridge. Others from the Austrian part of the Nachlass were added as a gift from members of the Wittgenstein family. Since then, as more materials have been discovered, further donations have been made, both by the literary executors and by relatives of Wittgenstein’s friends and pupils.

b) Items of Austrian National Library, Vienna (AUT)

When Wittgenstein died in England in 1951 not all of his manuscripts were in Cambridge; some had stayed in Austria with his siblings. This “Austrian estate” – as von Wright called it – was finally divided into two parts. One part was entrusted by members of the Wittgenstein family at the request of the Trustees to Trinity College (Mss 101, 102, 103, 108, 109, 110, 111), the other part was finally sold in 1979 by Thomas Stonborough (son of Wittgenstein’s sister Margret Stonborough) to the Austrian National Library. That was made up of the abovementioned Mss 105, 106, 107, 112, 113, and TS 203. Additionally the ANL could by four important items from the estate of Wittgenstein’s close friend Rudolf Koder in 2004 (Ms 139b, Ms 142, Ms 183, TS 204) and from the Wittgenstein student Theo Redpath (Dic 310), and from the heirs of Margret Stonborough (Dic 309).

c) Items of Bodleian Library, Oxford (UK)

The Bodleian’s typescript, with annotations, of *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung* (MS. German d. 6), was given by Wittgenstein to Paul Engelmann, whose executors donated it to the Bodleian in 1967. The Bodleian’s manuscript in pencil of *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung* (“Prototractatus”)c. 1918 (MS. German d.7) was purchased in 1969 with the aid of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust.

d) Items of Noord Hollands Archief in Haarlem (NL)

The items are owned by Mr G.M.H. van de Velde and Mrs E.B.B. van der Wolk, given to the Noord Hollands Archief for custody. They are the grand children of Moritz Schlick, who was the owner of the originals.

e) Item of the Bertrand Russell Archives, McMaster University Library, Hamilton (Canada)

The documents were created by Russell in 1913. They were translations into English of a manuscript of Wittgenstein’s that no longer exists (Wittgenstein had shown the manuscript to Russell). Russell first created a manuscript version that was later typed in both full length and summary versions, and Wittgenstein supplied annotations by hand. McMaster University acquired the Bertrand Russell archives from Bertrand Russell in 1968. The items relating to Wittgenstein formed part of that acquisition.

4.0 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

The owners are identical with the nominators as listed in no. (2.0) except the items in the Noord Hollands Archief in Haarlem (NL), which are owned by the grand children of Moritz Schlick (Mr G.M.H. van de Velde and Mrs E.B.B. van der Wolk–van de Velde), given to the Noord Hollands

Archief for custody. The owners agree with the nomination.

Name	George M.H. van de Velde Vincent van Goghlaan 20, 7545 RN Enschede, Nederland	
Telephone	Facsimile	Email George Velde <veldeg@me.com>

4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

The custodians are identical with the contact persons in no. (2.3).

Name	Address	
Telephone	Facsimile	Email

4.3 Legal status

a) Trinity College Library, Cambridge (UK)

Trinity College was founded in 1546 for, inter alia, "the advancement of all kinds of beneficial learning". The responsibility for the Library falls to The Librarian who reports to the Library Committee and ultimately to the College Council.

b) Austrian National Library, Vienna (AUT)

According to the Austrian "Bundesmuseen-Gesetz (2002)" the Austrian National Library is the responsible safe keeper of the items listed in Annex (1)

c) Bodleian Library, Oxford (UK)

The collections form part of the holdings of the Bodleian Libraries, on behalf of THE CHANCELLOR, MASTERS AND SCHOLARS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

d) Noord Hollands Archief (NL)

The items are owned by Mr G.M.H. van de Velde and Mrs E.B.B. van der Wolk-van de Velde, given to the Noord Hollands Archief for custody.

e) Bertrand Russell Archives, McMaster University Library, Hamilton (Canada)

McMaster University was incorporated by chapter 95 of the Statutes of the Province of Ontario, Canada, in 1887. The preservation of the archive has been entrusted to the Bertrand Russell Archives, McMaster University Library.

4.4 Accessibility

Access to the original items is possible for research purposes according to the conditions of the owning

institutions.

There is a complete electronic facsimile and text edition on CDROM , the “Bergen Electronic Edition”, (see no (1.0)

A free online edition, organized by the Wittgenstein Archives at the University of Bergen (WAB) is in preparation on Wittgenstein Source (<http://www.wittgensteinsource.org>, (Please do not use Explorer as browser to access this webside) Curator: Alois Pichler). The *Bergen Nachlass Edition* already contains large parts of Wittgenstein’s Nachlass.

4.5 Copyright status

Describe the copyright status of the item(s) / collection

In his last will Wittgenstein gave the copyright of all his unpublished writings to the *Trustees* (three of his students). The current copyright holders are 'The Master and Fellows of Trinity College Cambridge'.

5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 Authenticity.

The authenticity and completeness of the Nachlass is guaranteed by the individual history and provenance for each of the collection of the five owners, and by the Nachlass description list of G.H. von Wright, as quoted in his publication in no. (1.0).

5.2 World significance

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) today is widely recognized as one of the most important and influential philosophers of the 20th century. His *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (written 1918, published 1921), the only philosophical book he published during his lifetime had an enormous influence on the modern philosophy of language. In 1929, after a break of ten years working as a teacher and as an architect, Wittgenstein continued his philosophical work teaching at the University of Cambridge and developed a new philosophy of ordinary language, which became one of the leading philosophical movements especially in the Anglo-American world. Wittgenstein changed our view of language, meaning and the aim and method of philosophy profoundly. The main elements of his new view of language are the concepts of “language games” based in “forms of life” and “family resemblances” replacing Platonic essences and his concept of meaning, based in the use of words. Wittgenstein could not realize his intention to publish his new ideas till his death in 1951. In 1953 the Wittgenstein Trustees (literary executors) published the *Philosophische Untersuchungen / Philosophical Investigations*, which can be recognized as the *opus magnum* of his later philosophy, and is till today one of the most influential books in the history of modern philosophy.

Wittgenstein’s reputation as arguably the greatest Western philosopher of the twentieth century was secured by the publications by his literary executors. These, however, were quite selective and since access to his papers became more widely available the debate over Wittgenstein’s philosophy has received new impetus as new material has made its way into the public domain and more nuanced readings of published texts are now possible. As a record of the process of composition, the Nachlass is vital in bringing us to a greater understanding of this process and through this in interpreting the development of Wittgenstein’s philosophy over several decades. Indeed, the Nachlass stands as an exemplar to academics approaching other archives in the academic field of the potential intellectual profits from a philological approach to such material.

The whole Nachlass was listed in a systematic form in 1969 by Georg Henrik von Wright, his student and follower on his chair in Cambridge (“The Wittgenstein Papers”, *Philosophical Review*, Vol 78.1969,4, p 483-503.). Von Wrights Nachlass index contains 83 manuscripts, 45 typescripts and 11 dictations, all together about 20.000 pages.

While the early Wittgenstein is closely associated with Logical Positivism and the later Wittgenstein with the Philosophy of Language, Phenomenology and the Foundations of Mathematics, his work has been applied in many other areas such as the philosophy of science, art and aesthetics, psychology and cognition, information and the information society, folklore and belief. He thus appears not as a philosopher with narrow interests but one who speaks to academics in many disciplines.

Wittgenstein was essentially a product of early twentieth-century Vienna and later of Cambridge and it is unsurprising that his work first took root in Europe and the English-speaking world. However, there are emerging schools of Wittgenstein's thought in South America, where Portuguese and Spanish translations of his work are available. However, in addition to translations into many European languages, the fact that editions his work have in the last two decades become available in Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Turkish indicate an ever-increasing and truly international interest in his philosophy.

5.3 Comparative criteria:

1 Time

Wittgenstein's philosophy was the essential impulse to what was later called the "linguistic turn" in modern philosophy, but even beyond philosophy had a deep impact to many branches of the humanities and even in the arts.

His early philosophy of the *Tractatus* had a great impact in a normative theory of language, the theory of formal logic (in the tradition of Bertrand Russell and Gottlob Frege), whereas his later philosophy can be recognized as the origin of the so called "ordinary language philosophy", which became one of the dominant movements of the philosophy in the second half of the 20th century.

2 Place

Ludwig Wittgenstein was recognized as a prominent thinker of the Fin de siècle culture of Vienna (see: Alan Janik & Stephen Toulmin: *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, New York 1973). Wittgenstein was born in Vienna in one of the most wealthy families of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. The house of his father Karl Wittgenstein, the dominating figure of the Austrian steel industry, was at the same time one of the leading private cultural centres of Viennese culture at that time, especially interested in music.

Wittgenstein was also working as an architect; together with Paul Engelmann, a scholar of Adolf Loos, he built a city house for his sister Margret Stonborough in the 3rd district of Vienna in 1926-28, which belongs to the most interesting buildings of early modernism in Vienna.

With longer breaks in Norway (Skolden) and Ireland Wittgenstein spent the second half of his life, from 1929 to his death in Cambridge. He became a dominating, charismatic figure in the academic life of Cambridge and followed George Edward Moore on his chair of philosophy in 1939.

4 Subject and theme

Wittgenstein's philosophy of ordinary language changed profoundly our view of language and meaning, of mental acts and consciousness and also the task and method of philosophy in general. It had a strong impact on modern formal logic and the philosophy of mathematics as well.

5 Form and style

Wittgenstein writing style in his *Tractatus* is highly original and had a big impact also on modern poetry. His later texts are written in the form of short remarks, following in a natural order and try to show the readers "sketches of mental landscape". This style of his later manuscripts from 1929 is based on ordinary language, vivid and full of impressive similes and metaphors. It is appreciated as belonging to the best German prose ever written. According to one of his own remarks, philosophy actually can only be done as poetry.

6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance:

From 1927- 1936 Wittgenstein was in close contact with members of the "Wiener Kreis" (mainly Moritz Schlick and Friedrich Waismann), and had a strong influence on the development of Logical

Empiricism.

Since his times as a student in Cambridge (1911-14) he was a close friend and in a regular intellectual exchange with Bertrand Russell and George E. Moore.

6.0 Contextual information

6.1 Rarity

All manuscripts are unique, the Wren Library owns some copies of typescripts, the so called Blue Book (DIC 209) and Brown Book (DIC210) were produced in an limited number of identical copies for his students.

6.2 Integrity

The philosophical Nachlass of Ludwig Wittgenstein nominated here does not include his letters. It is complete according to von Wright's Nachlass list with the exception of three items: 201b, 234, and 301, which must be acknowledged as missing (see Annex 1).
