

The goals of this workshop

- *Not* to present the results of some research, but rather to describe something that is being done and explore further possibilities.
- In order to illustrate the case story of the Ludwig Wittgenstein project, some context will be given, starting from the issue of copyright.
- We hope to gather as much input from the audience as possible: feel free to raise your hand whenever you would like!

Part 1

Copyright and the (future) availability of Wittgenstein's works

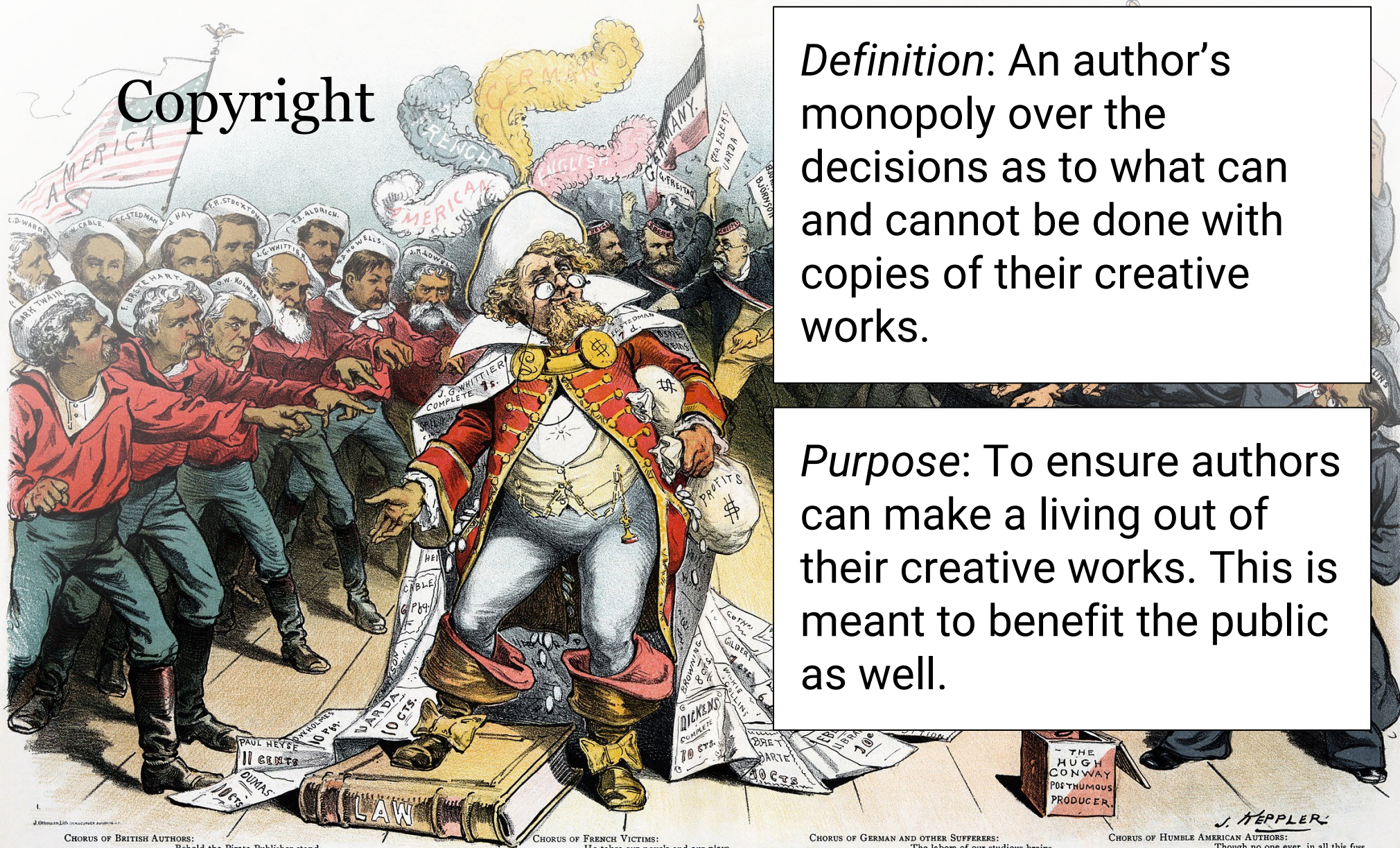


The Ludwig
Wittgenstein Project

The purpose of copyright and the public domain



Copyright



CHORUS OF BRITISH AUTHORS:
Behold the Pirate Publisher stand,
Stealing our brains for Yankee-land;
He's rude, uncultured, bold and free—
THE PIRATE-PUBLISHER: You bet your life: The Law—that's Me.

CHORUS OF FRENCH VICTIMS:
He takes our novels and our plays,
And never a red centime he pays;
He is more Monarque than the Grand Louis—
THE P. P.: You bet your life: The Law—that's Me.

CHORUS OF GERMAN AND OTHER SUFFERERS:
The labors of our studious brains
All go to swell his sinful gains;
He ravages Norway and Germanee—
THE P. P.: You bet your life: The Law—that's Me.

CHORUS OF HUMBLE AMERICAN AUTHORS:
Though no one ever, in all this fuss,
Has thought of according rights to us—
Remember we're pillaged across the sea—
THE P. P.: Who cares for them: The Law—that's Me.

Definition: An author's monopoly over the decisions as to what can and cannot be done with copies of their creative works.

Purpose: To ensure authors can make a living out of their creative works. This is meant to benefit the public as well.

THE PIRATE PUBLISHER.—AN INTERNATIONAL BURLESQUE THAT HAS HAD THE LONGEST RUN ON RECORD.



The public domain

Definition: The legal status of works that can be used, shared, remixed freely, without having to ask for permission and without having to pay any fees.

Purpose: To ensure the circulation of a given work is not forever subject to the laws of buying and selling.



The copyright status of Wittgenstein's works



General copyright rules

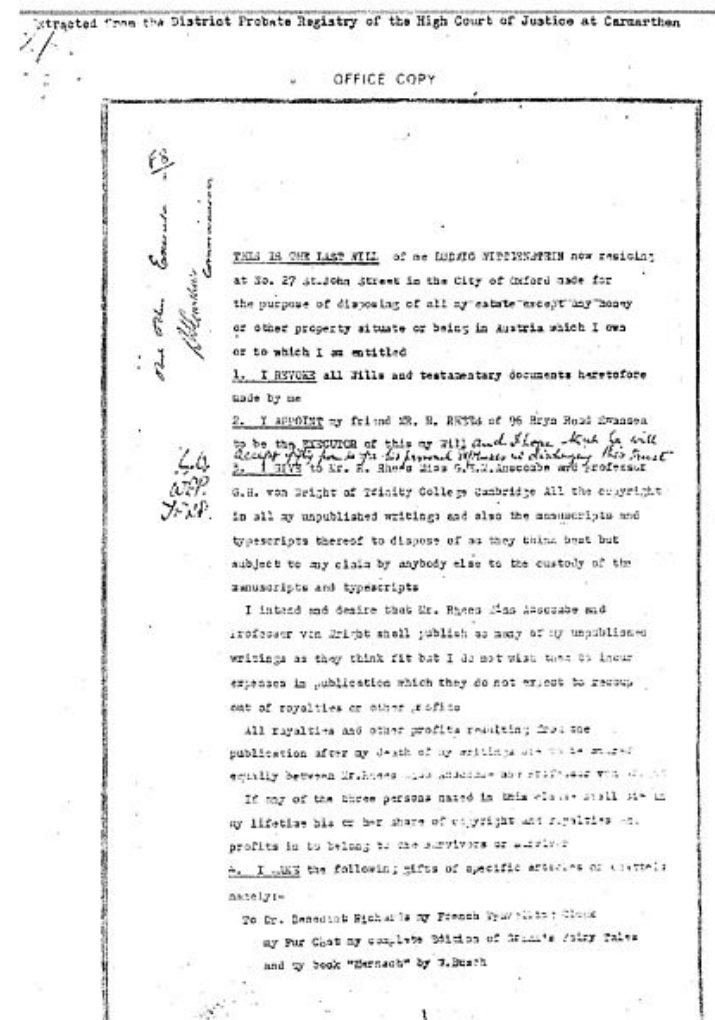
- **Closed by default** (upon the birth of the work, without formalities): all rights reserved
- Copyright protection extends **beyond the author's death** (typically, for 50 or 70 years): all rights stay reserved
- **Copyright expires**: no rights reserved (except, usually, for moral rights)



The copyright status of Wittgenstein's works

This issue is more complicated than with most authors, because

1. almost all of W.'s works were published posthumously,
2. in several different countries,
3. after undergoing more or less extensive editing by multiple people.



The authorship issue

- In most cases, Wittgenstein's works were edited by one of his literary executors, or by someone else, before being published.
- Copyright only protects creative work as opposed to sweat-of-the-brow or "mechanical" labour.
- In many cases, the work of Wittgenstein's editors cannot be considered creative, because it followed Wittgenstein's own text and meta-textual indications very closely.
- In some cases, however, the activity of selecting, grouping and sorting performed by the editors might have to be considered creative.

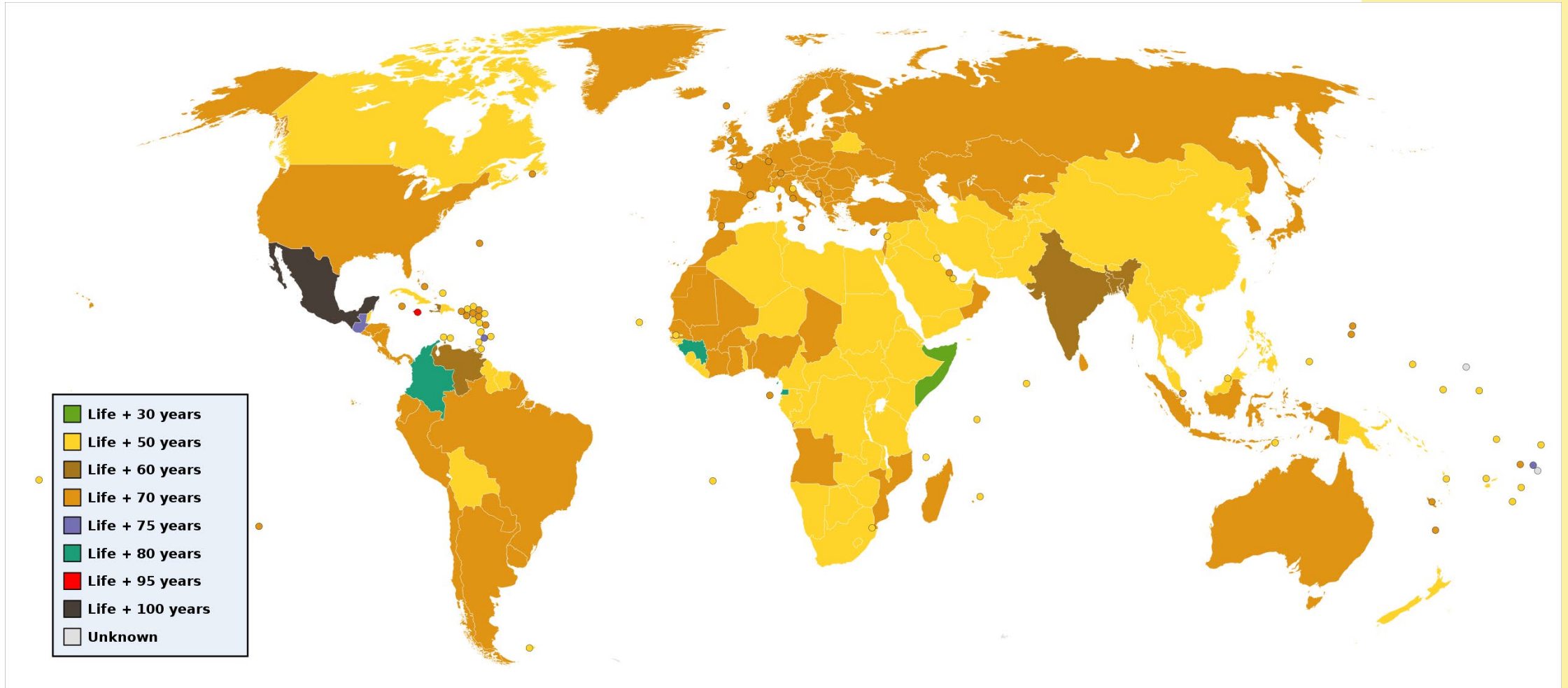


Copyright in the age of the internet: matters of geography

- According to the **Berne Convention**, each signatory country x must grant all works from another signatory country the same copyright protection it grants to works from x .
- Even if a work is in the public domain according to the rules of **country x** , it is not necessarily in the public domain according to the rules of **country y** .
- When publishing out-of-copyright materials online, it is a widely accepted good practice (but not a rule) to ensure that a work is in the public domain **in its country of origin** and **in the country where the website and the uploader are based**. This may still mean that the website is breaking another country's law.



Copyright in the age of the internet: matters of geography



Copyright in the age of the internet: matters of geography

Copyrights of works first published in US

Year of first publication Note: publication is not creation	Copyright duration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * before 1923 * during 1923-63: without notice, or with notice but not renewed within 28 years of first publication * during 1964-77: without notice * from 1978 to March 1, 1989: without notice and without registration within 5 years of first publication 	Work has entered US public domain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * during 1923-63: with notice and renewed * during 1964-77: with notice 	Copyrighted for 95 years after first publication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * from 1978 to March 1, 1989: pre-1978 creation with notice, or without notice but registered within 5 years of first publication * from March 2, 1989 to 2002: pre-1978 creation 	If author is known, copyrighted until the later of either 70 years pma or Dec 31, 2047. If author is unknown or corporate authorship, the earlier of 95 years after first publication or 120 years after creation, but not earlier than Dec 31, 2047.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * from 1978 to March 1, 1989: post-1977 creation with notice, or without notice but registered within 5 years of first publication * from March 2, 1989 to 2002: post-1977 creation * unpublished before 2003 (i.e. first published after 2002) 	If author is known, copyrighted for 70 years pma. If author is unknown or corporate authorship, the earlier of 95 years after first publication, or 120 years after creation.



Glossary:

* pma: post mortem auctoris, or "after the author's death"

Copyright term

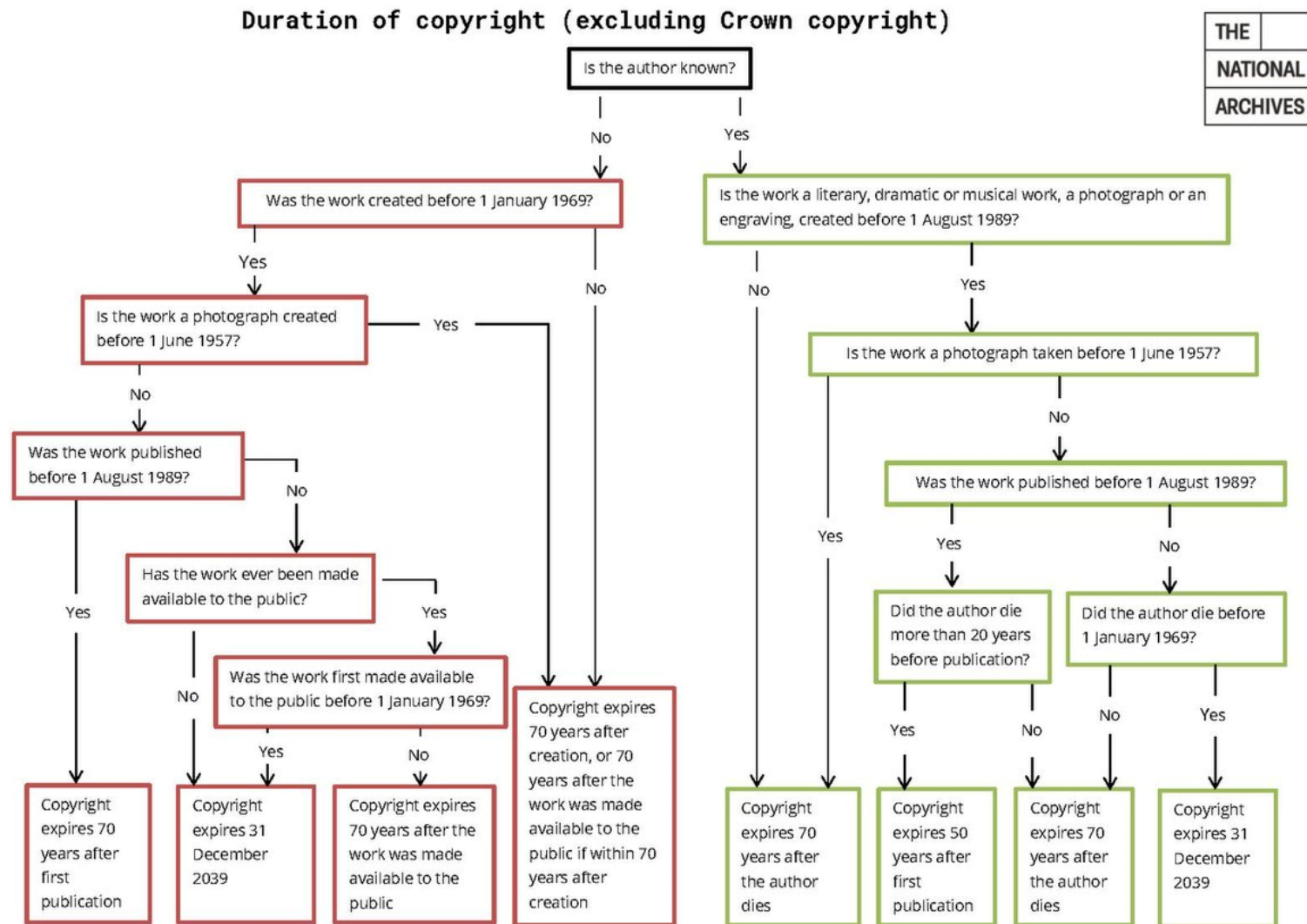
- Countries of origin of Wittgenstein's works:
 - **Austria** (70 years PMA)
 - **Germany** (70 years PMA)
 - **Netherlands** (70 years PMA*)
 - **United Kingdom** (70 years PMA*)
 - **United States** (variable)
- Location of the Ludwig Wittgenstein Project:
 - **Italy (≈ EU)** (70 years PMA)

* With specific provisions for posthumously published works.



Title	Country of origin	Publication date	Released under CC BY-NC by copyright holders	Notes
Review of P. Coffey, "The Science of Logic"	United Kingdom	1913		
Notes on Logic	United States	1957	Yes	
Notes Dictated to G.E. Moore in Norway	Germany	1960		
Tagebücher 1914-1916	Germany	1960		
Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung	Germany	1921		
Wörterbuch für Volks- und Bürgerschulen	Austria	1926		
Wörterbuch für Volks- und Bürgerschulen preface	Austria	1977		
Some Remarks on Logical Form	United Kingdom	1929		
Lecture on Ethics	United States	1965	Yes	
Bemerkungen über Frazers "The Golden Bough"	Netherlands	1967		
Blue Book	United Kingdom	1958		
Brown Book	United Kingdom	1958	Yes	
Philosophische Untersuchungen	United Kingdom	1953		
Zettel	United Kingdom	1967		
Bemerkungen über die Farben	United States	1968		Missing copyright notice
Über Gewißheit	United States	1968		Missing copyright notice

Example of the “algorithmic” determination of a work’s copyright status



Works by Wittgenstein that are in the public domain in their country of origin and in Italy

- Review of P. Coffey, “The Science of Logic”
- Notes Dictated to G.E. Moore in Norway
- Tagebücher 1914-1916
- Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung
- Wörterbuch für Volks- und Bürgerschulen
- Some Remarks on Logical Form
- Bemerkungen über Frazers “The Golden Bough”
- Blue and Brown Books
- Philosophische Untersuchungen
- Zettel
- Bemerkungen über die Farben
- Über Gewißheit

Works that are licenced under CC BY-NC in their country of origin and are in the public domain in Italy:

- Notes on Logic
- Lecture on Ethics



The importance of the public domain and the goals of the LWP



The Ludwig Wittgenstein Project



[About](#) • [All texts](#) • [FAQ](#)

Welcome to The Ludwig Wittgenstein Project, a multilingual website that aims to make Wittgenstein's works available free of charge and with a free licence.

Wittgenstein's works are in the public domain in those countries where rights expire 70 years or fewer after the death of the author: this includes most of the European Union, Africa, Asia and Oceania, most Latin American Countries and Canada.

The Ludwig Wittgenstein Project provides complete, well-formatted, downloadable, free books: the German or English originals are available as well as translations in multiple languages, some of which were purpose-made by our team.

[All texts](#)



The goals of the LWP

- Make Wittgenstein's writings that were previously published in **book** form more readily available to the public – especially **non-experts**.
- Make Wittgenstein's texts more **accessible** to visually impaired people.
- Make high-quality **source files** available.



Reasons for “enforcing” the public domain

- Public domain infringement
- Public domain erosion
- The Internet was always meant to be a public library
- The print book at risk of oblivion



Discussion



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Part 2

The scope of the LWP: original texts and translations



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A project that was born multilingual



Wittgenstein's languages

- German *and* English original texts
- Ramsey's translation of the TLP would enter the public domain at the same time as the German original
- Translations in other languages, such as Portuguese and Italian, existed that could also become freely available as soon as legally possible
- Wittgenstein's original texts, and translations, were bound to gradually become available on the internet once legally possible



(This was going to happen anyway)

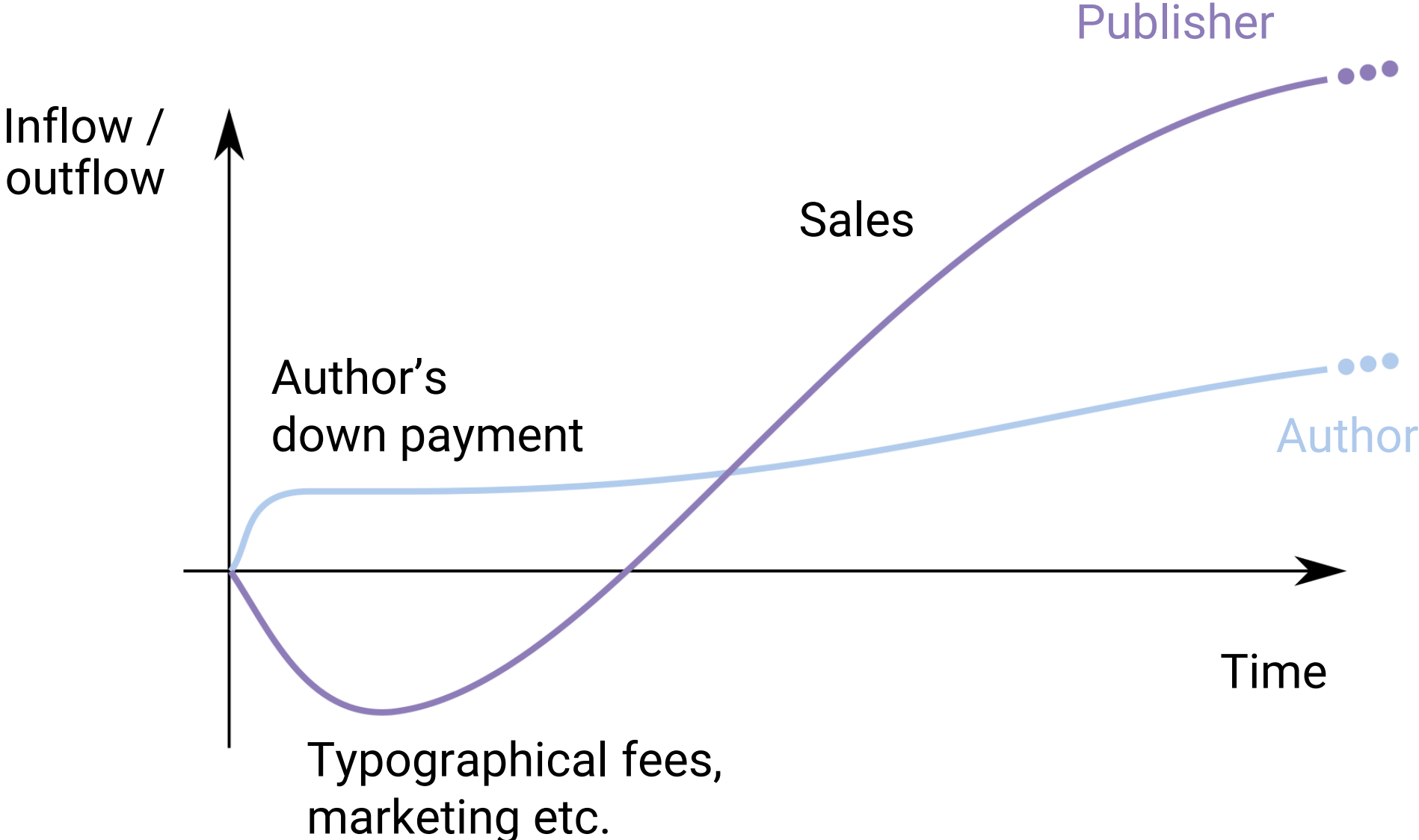
(At least it's all in one place)



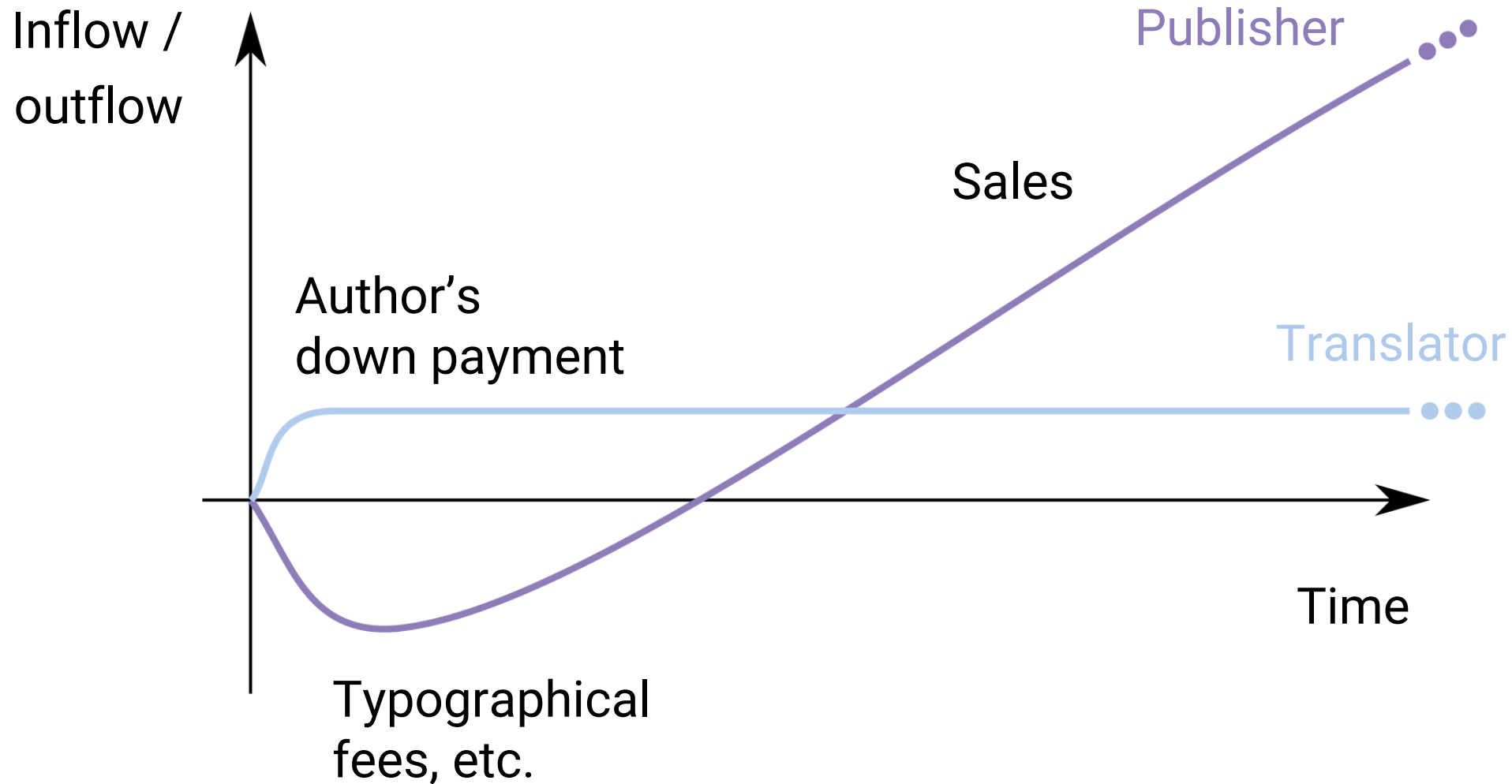
To see a difference



A new book



The translation of a classic



[...] my interest is in showing that things which look the same are really different. I was thinking of using as a motto for my book a quotation from *King Lear*: 'I'll show you differences.'

Remark to M. O'C. Drury, 1948. Reported in Drury, *The Danger of Words & Writings on Wittgenstein* (1996), p. 157.



A new book *vs.* the translation of a classic

- These two things obey a profoundly different logic
- A publishing model different from the traditional one exists: it might be worth experimenting with it further
- What we propose is not essentially different from “fundraising-for-Open-Access” business models, only it focuses on translations rather than original research and it stays within a non-for-profit framework



Where are we,
and how did we get here?



How we got where we are

- **2017**: the realisation that 2022 is around the corner
- **2020**: the domain wittgensteinproject.org is registered and the website is installed
- **2021**: the original-language version of many of W.'s most important texts is uploaded to the website
- **2021**: a few people volunteer to translate and help with the organisation



How we got where we are

- **1 January 2022:** the project goes live
- **2022:** many more people volunteer
 - To translate
 - To help with editing, proofreading
 - To help with the organisation
- **March 2021:** the Wikimedia Italia NGO awards an 800€ grant to the LWP
- **September 2021:** Wikimedia Italia awards another 4000€ grant to the LWP
- **February 2022:** The University of Milan awards a 1400€ grant to the LWP



Where are we exactly?

- 32 texts are currently online, of which
 - 15 original-language texts
 - 21 previously unpublished translations
- 11 languages are represented
- 5000 unique visitors and 11.000 page views in the first 15 days
- On average, 23 unique visitors and 74 page views a day in the last 8 months
- In total, 11.300 unique visitors and 33.400 page views in 2022



Where do we go from here?



Prioritising new translations

- Non-existing, poor or outdated translations
- Underrepresented languages



Gathering extant materials

- Determining what original texts should and can be uploaded, and uploading them
- Searching for extant free translations



Discussion



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Part 3
The promises of
technology



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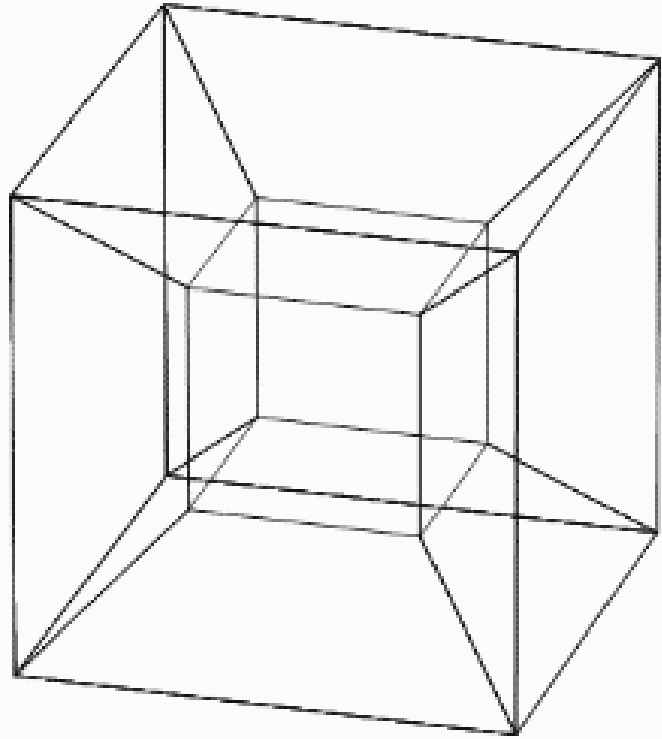
What we already have



What we already have

- Good accessibility
- Good mobile support
- A feature for exporting the texts in PDF, Markdown, EPUB and MOBI
- A tree-like view of the *Tractatus* (in all languages)





What do we need (or want)?



What do we need (or want)?

- A better search engine
- Interlanguage links to individual paragraphs?
- A feature for tracing remarks back to the *Nachlass*?



Discussion



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Download link for this presentation

