

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “THROW AWAY THE LADDER”?: A REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM ARGUMENT FOR WITTGENSTEIN’S NATURALISM IN THE TLP

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Abstract. In this paper, I will demonstrate via *reductio ad absurdum* that a resolute reading of Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* should reconsider their equation of “throwing away the ladder” with the “end of philosophy.” To do this, I will show that an inconsistency arises in Wittgenstein’s view regarding the relationship of philosophy and science since he associates “the correct method of philosophy” with the propositions of science at the end of the aforementioned text. Due to this, I will maintain that it is reasonable to posit that the sharp distinction that Wittgenstein makes between philosophy and science in the *Tractatus* is merely illusory. An interesting consequence of this is that if this interpretation holds then this provides sufficient grounds to maintain that what some scholars refer to as “the end of philosophy” may actually be the beginning of “Wittgenstein’s naturalism.”

Keywords: Wittgenstein • *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* • end of philosophy • throwing away the ladder • naturalism

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1. Introduction

Current discussions of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (henceforth *TLP*) primarily use 6.54 of the text as their basis for creating their general framework for its interpretation. We can see this as those who refer to themselves as *resolute* readers of the text (e.g., Conant, Diamond) claim that one can only consider one’s reading of *TLP* as *resolute* so long as one adopts the following commitments in one’s interpretation:

- (1) The propositions of the book that the reader is asked to recognize as nonsensical do not convey ineffable insights;
- (2) No theory of meaning is advanced in the book, and no such theory is required to achieve the aforementioned recognition;
- (3) The book rejects any substantial conception of nonsense. (Bronzo 2012, p.53)

As I have mentioned above, these commitments can be derived from 6.54 of *TLP*. For instance, (1) is a reiteration of Wittgenstein’s claim in 6.54 that “anyone who



understands (him) eventually recognizes (that his propositions are)... nonsensical” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.89). (2) and (3), on the other hand, can be traced to Wittgenstein’s claim that when one has recognized that his propositions in *TLP* are nonsensical then one has “to climb up beyond them” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.89). In conjunction to this, he further claims, “(one) must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after (one) has climbed up it” for it will allow one to “transcend (his) propositions... (and then) see the world aright” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.89).

What is interesting to note is that the abovementioned commitments of the *resolute* interpretations of *TLP* have also led to the equation of *throwing away the ladder* with *the end of philosophy*. We can see the initial outright usage of the *ladder metaphor* as a means to convey the interpretation that Wittgenstein aims to *end philosophy* in *TLP* in what will later be referred to as Cora Diamond’s *resolute* reading of the text below:

What exactly is supposed to be left... after we have thrown away the ladder? Are we going to keep the idea that there is something out there in reality that we gesture at, however badly, when we speak of ‘the logical form of reality’, so that *it, what* we were gesturing at, is there but cannot be expressed in words? *That* is what I want to call chickening out. What counts as not chickening out is then this, roughly: to throw the ladder away is (to adopt the view that)... (w)hat *is* his view is that way of talking may be useful or even for a time essential, but it is in the end to be let go of and honestly to be taken to be real nonsense. (Diamond 1991, p.181)

One of the ways in which we can understand this is in terms of how *resolute* readings of *TLP* are also considered to show “the therapeutic aim” of the text (Bronzo 2012, p.58). To understand how such is the case, we can refer to James Conant’s claim below:

On an ‘end of philosophy’ reading of Wittgenstein, wanting to transcend our own human position is a kind of philosophical neurosis, and the only task that remains for philosophy is to ‘cure’ us. Once cured, we shall be able to live in the ordinary, untroubled by skeptical/metaphysical impulses, however disguised. (Conant 1990, p.316)

In this context, we can also maintain that a *resolute* reading of *TLP* shows that Wittgenstein wrote the text and structured it in such a way that the *act of reading* it will *trigger a cathartic experience in the reader* as it leads him to recognize that although it is tragic and painful to let go of how he previously saw the goals of philosophy, it is necessary to let go of his mistaken worldview (i.e., it is necessary to “throw away the ladder”). *Since reading TLP can be seen as a cathartic experience, it can also be seen as a therapeutic experience* since it forces one to confront one’s own beliefs and see them for what they really are (i.e., nonsensical views) in order to

arrive at a more resolute view of philosophy and its goals. In this way, climbing and later on throwing away the ladder can be seen as a liberating experience (Diamond 1991).

Regardless of the appeals of the resolute readings of *TLP* (e.g., its position that philosophy is therapeutic in character), in this paper, *I will argue that their interpretations of the text ought to reconsider their equation of throwing away the ladder with the end of philosophy.*¹

To do this, I will develop the following argument in this paper:

- (P1) Wittgenstein classifies propositions in at least two categories: (a) those that have sense and (b) those that only purport to have sense (i.e., nonsense) (Wittgenstein 1974).
- (P2) The propositions of natural science belong to those that have sense since they “say something” about the world (or reality), and hence can agree or fail to agree with it (Wittgenstein 1974, p.89).
- (P3) Since (P2), the truth-value of the propositions of natural science are merely contingent (i.e., their truth-value depends on the actual configuration of the world) (Wittgenstein 1974).
- (P4) The propositions of philosophy belong to those that only purport to have sense since they do not really say anything about the world (or reality). Hence, there is nothing in them that can agree or fail to agree with it (Wittgenstein 1974).
- (C1) From (P1) to (P4), it is reasonable to maintain that Wittgenstein accepts a sharp distinction between science (e.g., natural science) and philosophy.
- (P5) A sharp distinction between science and philosophy entails the following: (a) their propositions are different and (b) their aims and methods are also different. For instance, it is correct to say that for Wittgenstein, the aim of philosophy is “the logical clarification of thoughts” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.29).
- (P6) From (P5), the aim and method of philosophy relies heavily on logic (or to be more precise, on a proper understanding of the logic of our language) (e.g., the logic of propositions).
- (P7) Propositions of logic, (e.g., tautologies, contradictions) however, “say nothing” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.41). Hence, they have no content unlike the propositions of natural science (Wittgenstein 1974).
- (C2) To the extent that philosophy involves “the logical clarification of thoughts,” it is plausible to maintain that the philosopher’s propositions also “say nothing” and this is consistent with what Wittgenstein says in 6.54 of *TLP* (i.e., that his propositions are “nonsensical”).
- (P8) If (C2) is correct, we can maintain that philosophy has more affinities with

logic (and mathematics) than with science (e.g., natural science).

- (P9) Logic (in particular, logical form), however, belongs to the domain of “what can be shown” and not to the domain of “what can be said” since logic provides us with the scaffolding by which we can say (or express) things in language (Wittgenstein 1974, pp.30–31).
- (P10) *If (P8) and (P9) are correct, an inconsistency arises: Wittgenstein’s conception of philosophy is at odds with what he takes to be “the correct method” of philosophy.*
- (P11) *Accepting (P10) leads to the denial of (C1) and (C2) since “the correct method of philosophy” that Wittgenstein endorses would place it side by side with the natural sciences (i.e., within the domain of “what can be said”).*
- (C3) *If (P11) is correct, the sharp distinction between science and philosophy is an illusion in TLP*

The argument above merits an exposition and analysis for several reasons. First, it is the first of its kind. That is, it is the first argument that has shown that via *reductio ad absurdum*, Wittgenstein places philosophy vis-à-vis science in *TLP*. Second, it provides support to a reading of *PI* which shows that what the resolute readers refer to as the *end of philosophy* may actually be *the beginning of Wittgenstein’s adherence to a form of naturalism*.

Within this context, the succeeding part of this paper provides an exposition of my argument above. From there, I will conclude this paper by discussing one of the implications of my argument. That is, *TLP* provides us with the initial grounds for claiming that Wittgenstein endorsed a form of naturalism as early as *TLP*.

2. On the Relationship of Philosophy and Science in TLP

Let us begin by distinguishing between what Wittgenstein refers to as *sensical* and *non-sensical* propositions in *TLP*. To do this, let us consider the following propositions:

- (1) Angus is a rabbit.
- (2) Either Angus is a rabbit or Angus is not a rabbit.
- (3) Angus is a rabbit and Angus is not a rabbit.

Wittgenstein will consider (1) above as a *sensical* proposition. This is so, for its truth-value is dependent on the state of affairs in the world (i.e., its truth or falsity is *contingent* on what is the case in reality). That is, its state is dependent on the “combination of objects” in reality (Wittgenstein 1974, p.5). For this reason, if *Angus* does not have the properties that coincide with the properties of what we refer to as *rabbits* then (1) is false. It is important to note that (1) is also in accordance with

Wittgenstein’s characterization of the propositions of natural science. To support this claim, note that in *TLP*, Wittgenstein states that the propositions of natural science “speak, however indirectly, about the objects of the world” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.83). In (1), provided that it is true, we have a proposition that tells us about such objects (i.e., *Angus* and *rabbits*).

In contrast to (1), (2) and (3), on the other hand, are best perceived as logical propositions. Though they may purport to have sense since they *seem* to tell us something about *Angus* and *rabbits*, Wittgenstein will claim that they do not really say anything about the world. To prove this, he will ask us to focus on the logical form of (2) and (3). That is, he will ask us to focus on how (2) is a tautology (i.e., $R \vee \neg R$) and how (3) is a contradiction (i.e., $R \wedge \neg R$). The primary reason why he will ask us to do this can be understood in line with his claims below:

- 4.431 The expression of agreement and disagreement with the truth-possibilities of elementary propositions expresses the truth-conditions of a proposition.
- 4.461 Propositions show what they say: tautologies and contradictions show that they say nothing. A tautology has no truth-condition, since it is unconditionally true: and a contradiction is true on no condition. Tautologies and contradictions lack sense.
- 4.462 Tautologies and contradictions are not pictures of reality. They do not represent any possible situation. For the former admit all possible situations, and the latter none. (Wittgenstein 1974, pp.39-41)

As we mentioned earlier, (2) is an example of a tautology since $R \vee \neg R$ is true in all possible worlds. (3), on the other hand, is an example of a contradiction since $R \wedge \neg R$ is false in all its instantiations in its truth-table. In line with 4.461 and 4.462 above, (2) and (3) thereby count as *non-sensical* propositions for they cannot be facts and as such they cannot provide us with accounts of how things are in the world. This is so, for even if they conform to a specific logical form, they cannot supply a picture of the world. Yet, tautologies and contradictions are extreme cases, so to speak. Other logical propositions cannot be considered *sensical*, as well, in the same way as the propositions of natural science. To further understand why this is so, consider Wittgenstein’s views below:

- 4.022 A proposition *shows* its sense. A proposition *shows* how things stand if it is true. And it *says* that they do not stand.
- 4.023 A proposition must restrict reality to two alternatives: yes and no. In order to do that, it must describe reality completely. A proposition is a description of a state of affairs. Just as a description of an object describes it by giving its external properties, so a proposition describes reality by its internal properties. A proposition constructs the world

with the help of a logical scaffolding, so that one can actually see from the proposition how everything stands logically if it is true. (Wittgenstein 1974, p.25)

Within this context, we can understand propositions in terms of their *form* and their *content*. *Logical propositions do not have content. They merely provide the form for facts about the world or reality.* That is why Wittgenstein claims that the propositions of logic can merely *show* us the world. They can only *show* us the world for we rely on their *structure* to provide us with what is possible and impossible in reality. In contrast, the propositions of natural science *say* something about the world for they provide the *content* of our logical propositions and, in doing so, they *affirm one of the possibilities supplied by their logical form*.

To further understand this, let us return to our proposition *Angus is a rabbit*. Let us assume henceforth that this proposition is true (i.e., Angus is indeed a rabbit and all that this implies). This proposition counts as an example of an elementary proposition (Wittgenstein 1974). It also counts as an example of a “state of affairs” which, as we mentioned earlier, refers to the “combination of objects” in reality (Wittgenstein 1974, p.5). The objects combined in this proposition are *Angus* and *the class of rabbits*. We can say that this combination is *true* since we know the properties of both *Angus* and *the class of rabbits*. Since Wittgenstein claims that “(o)bjects are what is unalterable and subsistent,” so long as the configuration of the objects in our proposition remains unchanging and stable, our proposition will remain true (Wittgenstein 1974, p.8). Now, it is possible to combine this proposition with other propositions (e.g. *Angus is a rabbit and Kiting is a cat*, *Angus is a rabbit therefore he is a feline*). It is possible to do this since the logic of our language allows us to make these combinations. In a similar manner, the logical form of the language that we have adopted also provides us with the possibilities for the truth of their combinations. Hence, if rabbits are, in fact, lagomorphs and not felines then our proposition *Angus is a rabbit therefore he is a feline* is false. With these in mind, it should be amply clear by now how we can understand the *showing* and *saying* distinction that Wittgenstein uses as one of the means to discuss the difference of logical and scientific propositions in *TLP*.

What I would like to emphasize, at this juncture, is how our discussion has led us to a position where we can clearly differentiate between the propositions of logic and science. Their difference can be understood in terms of how their truth or falsity is determined (i.e., *as a byproduct of the methodological difference between logic and science*). To reiterate, whereas the truth-value of the propositions of science are dependent on their truth-maker in the world, the truth-value of logical propositions are dependent on a logical framework (e.g., the definitions and axioms in a model). For this reason, when we spoke of how contradictions were false in all possible worlds

earlier; we were saying that it is false in all of its possible configurations within the framework of a logical system.

Given our abovementioned distinction between logical and scientific propositions, *we can maintain that what differentiates philosophy and science lies in the former’s reliance on a logical system to accomplish its aim.* To substantiate this view, consider Wittgenstein’s claim below:

4.112 Philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts. Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity. A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations. Philosophy does not result in ‘philosophical propositions’, but rather in the clarification of propositions. Without philosophy thoughts are, as it were, cloudy and indistinct: its task is to make them clear and to give them boundaries. (Wittgenstein 1974, pp.29–30)

The activity of clarifying propositions mentioned above can be understood as the activity of simplifying and setting the boundaries of our thoughts through the use of language. He alludes to this as early as his “Preface” to *TLP* as he claims, “(t)he aim of th(is) book is to draw a limit to thought, or rather-not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.3). We can further understand this by focusing on 3.42 where he claims, “(t)he logical scaffolding surrounding a picture determines logical space. The force of a proposition reaches through the whole of logical space” (Wittgenstein 1974, p.22).

To understand the relationship between what Wittgenstein refers to as a *picture*, *logical space*, and the *force of a proposition* above, let us return to our proposition *Angus is a rabbit* once again. The aim of philosophy, as per Wittgenstein’s view, is to create a logical model that can depict, organize, and simplify as much as possible how we view the world. In doing this, it should develop and adopt a logical system that can accommodate *objects* by using variables (i.e., placeholders for objects). This same model should contain the rules that will determine the combination of the variables in the system. For instance, if we adopt the model of first-order logic, we can represent *Angus is a rabbit* as *Ra* wherein *R* (i.e., *being a rabbit*) is the property that we ascribed to *a* (i.e., *Angus*). We can also use our model to accommodate the other properties that we can associate with *Angus* (e.g., *being the companion of Kiting*) by symbolizing it as *Cak* (i.e., *Angus is the companion of Kiting*). Now, when we assert the truth or falsity of the content of *Angus is the companion of Kiting*, the force of this proposition affects our whole picture of the world for it affects the truth-value of the other propositions within our model. For instance, by confirming that it is true that *Angus is the companion of Kiting*, the proposition *Angus is not the companion of Kiting* becomes false. On a different note, recall that in Wittgenstein’s view, the value of using a logical framework to capture facts about the world lies in its ability to accommodate the relationship of the different objects in the world (Wittgenstein

1974). For instance, our framework may be used not merely to speak about *Angus* but also other rabbits. Hence, we can say *There are rabbits* and symbolize it as $(\exists x)Rx$. We can then use this to arrive at other true propositions like *Ozzie is a rabbit* which will now take the form Ro . Let it be noted that I recognize that Wittgenstein used propositional logic in *TLP*. It is due to this that my earlier symbolization of (1) to (3) took the following forms: (1) R , (2) $R \vee \neg R$, and (3) $R \wedge \neg R$. My usage of first-order logic above merely aims to show how a different logical model can also be created and used to represent and clarify the entirety of the propositions of science apart from the model of propositional logic.

Returning to our discussion of a logical model, its importance lies not merely in its capacity to set the limits of our representation of the world but also in how it delimits the objects that can be accepted in our representation of reality. In effect, we can maintain that we can only make sense of all the facts that natural science arrives at since we have a way of setting the co-ordinates of these facts within the entirety of the corpus of science. Wittgenstein actually provides us an example of this when he discusses Newtonian mechanics. He claims:

6.341 Newtonian mechanics, for example, imposes a unified form on the description of the world. . . Mechanics determines one form of description of the world by saying that all propositions used in the description of the world must be obtained in a given way from a given set of propositions—the axioms of mechanics. It thus supplies the bricks for building the edifice of science, and it says, ‘Any building that you want to erect, whatever it may be, must somehow be constructed with these bricks, and with these alone.’

6.342 And now we can see the relative position of logic and mechanics. . . (T)he possibility of describing the world by means of Newtonian mechanics tells us nothing about the world: but what does tell us something about it is the precise way in which it is possible to describe it by these means. We are also told something about the world by the fact that it can be described more simply with one system of mechanics than with another. (Wittgenstein 1974, pp.81–82)

By describing Newtonian mechanics in this way, he is telling us that we can understand it as being primarily composed of two parts. We have its mathematical model which determines, for instance, its axioms as well as the objects that can be accommodated within it along with their possible relations to one another. In addition, we have its empirical content which is presented in line with how propositions are determined to combine with one another based on its mathematical model. By adopting Newtonian mechanics, when we are confronted with moving objects, we make sense of them by explaining them in terms of the relations provided by this scientific model (i.e., in terms of the relationship of mass, velocity, and force). When we are

confronted with the phenomena of light, this scientific model excludes other objects in our attempt to understand it (e.g., phlogistons are not included in the Newtonian model of the world). What is interesting to note above is that Wittgenstein also claims that we also adopt a scientific model for its simplicity and explanatory power. Let us set this aside for the time being.

At this juncture, I have already provided a way on how we can understand the role of creating a logical model in ensuring how philosophy can proceed with what Wittgenstein refers to as its goal of clarifying thoughts (Wittgenstein 1974). Note that in our initial explanation of how a logical model works, what we emphasized was its methodology. That is, by focusing on how it determines the truth-value of a proposition. In the abovementioned explanation of how a logical framework can be understood, however, what we emphasized is how it can be used as a clarificatory tool. Hence, the emphasis was on how it can realize Wittgenstein’s view of philosophy in 4.112 above. *Given how Wittgenstein’s description of philosophy in 4.112 shows its reliance on logic, it is plausible to maintain that the philosopher’s propositions also “say nothing” and this is consistent with what Wittgenstein says at the end of TLP (i.e., that his propositions are “nonsensical”).*

Here, at last, we come to one of the most crucial parts of our discussion. Note that, at this point, we have already established (C1) and (C2) of our argument. Recall that they take the following form:

- (C1) From (P1) to (P4), it is reasonable to maintain that Wittgenstein accepts a sharp distinction between science (e.g., natural science) and philosophy.
- (C2) To the extent that philosophy involves “the logical clarification of thoughts,” it is plausible to maintain that the philosopher’s propositions also “say nothing” and this is consistent with what Wittgenstein says in 6.54 of *TLP* (i.e., that his propositions are “nonsensical”).

A problem arises now for it seems that Wittgenstein’s conception of philosophy is at odds with what he takes to be “the correct method” in philosophy. Consider his description of “the correct method in philosophy” below:

6.53 The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. propositions of natural science — i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy — and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions. Although it would not be satisfying to the other person — he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy — *this* method would be the only strictly correct one. (Wittgenstein 1974, p.89)

If we take Wittgenstein's suggestion in 6.53 seriously, this is tantamount to a denial of (C1) and (C2) since the correct method of philosophy that he endorses would place it side by side with the natural sciences (i.e., within the domain of "what can be said"). If this is correct, then we are forced to reassess Wittgenstein's claim in 4.111 that "philosophy is not one of the natural sciences. (The word 'philosophy' must mean something whose place is above or below the natural sciences, not beside them)" (Wittgenstein 1974, p.24). We are forced to reassess this claim for his description of the correct method in philosophy shows that the sharp distinction he made between the two may only be illusory.

In this section, I (1) distinguished between *sensical* and *non-sensical* propositions. I also (2) discussed the difference between philosophy and the natural sciences. I showed that they are distinct from one another due to the differences in their methodology, aims, and their propositions. Furthermore, I also (3) demonstrated how philosophy, as Wittgenstein conceives it, is reliant on logic. The byproduct of (1) to (3) was that I was able to show via *reductio ad absurdum* that we have good grounds to maintain that, in *TLP*, Wittgenstein prescribes or is at least amenable to the view that philosophy can stand vis-à-vis the natural sciences.

3. Wittgenstein's Naturalism

At this point, we can address the question posed by the title of this paper: "What does it mean to throw away the ladder?" In our earlier descriptions of the *resolute* readings of *TLP*, we mentioned that their interpretation involves embracing "the end of philosophy." In their view, this seems to entail a shift from an analytic to a therapeutic view of philosophy (Bronzo 2012; Diamond 1991). As I see it, this can be seen as a byproduct of their association of analytic philosophy with naturalism which they pejoratively refer to as scientism. Larz Hertzberg claims, for instance, "a form of scientism has come to dominate philosophy of language and philosophy of mind, and to give licenses to scientific metaphysics" (Hertzberg 2006, p.83). He mentions this in conjunction with Diamond's observation that this has led to the almost complete disregard of Wittgenstein's philosophy in contemporary analytic philosophy in English-speaking countries (Hertzberg 2006).

It is easy to understand why, in Hertzberg's view, Wittgenstein has been set aside in contemporary analytic philosophy. We only need to emphasize his association of naturalism with a "scientific metaphysics" (Hertzberg 2006, p.83). Obviously, in this context, contemporary analytic philosophy disregards Wittgenstein's views in *TLP* since he considers metaphysical claims as non-sensical claims. *Yet, as I have demonstrated in this paper, it is premature to maintain that Wittgenstein was not endorsing a form of naturalism in TLP.* We can see this not only in how he characterizes the "correct

method in philosophy” but also in his assessment of scientific theories. Recall that we showed how Wittgenstein used Newtonian mechanics as a way of clarifying his position regarding the importance of a logical (or mathematical) model in representing the world. Recall, as well, that we noted that he mentions that the importance of Newtonian mechanics, at least in his time, was that it provided the simplest model with the greatest explanatory power. We can view this as another sign that Wittgenstein may be endorsing a form of naturalism in *TLP*. Of course, on its own, it is insufficient to prove this point. But, if we view it in conjunction with my argument in this paper, we have additional grounds to support the view that Wittgenstein adopted and endorsed a form of naturalism in the said text. If this is the case, then we are in a position to inquire, what kind of naturalism did Wittgenstein endorse? Is it the type that leads to scientism or is it something else?

It is at this juncture that we can introduce Hutto and Satne’s (2018a; 2018b) relaxed liberal naturalism. Both argue that in Wittgenstein’s philosophy, we can find a kind of naturalism that can give us a better understanding of the relationship of science and philosophy (Hutto and Satne 2018a; 2018b). This form of naturalism however emphasizes the descriptive project of philosophy. As an example, they ask us to consider the phenomenon of *pain*. They maintain that if we look at Wittgenstein’s treatment of the concept, we can see the importance that he attributes to the *form of life* in which this phenomena is understood. They claim:

For example, in *Zettel*, Wittgenstein conjures up a tribe that employs two different concepts of ‘pain,’ “one is applied where there is visible damage and is linked with tending, pity, and so on. The other is used for stomach-ache for example, and is tied up with mockery of anyone who complains” (1967 §380)... Their understanding of pain is different, but related to ours. The crucial thing is that in order to imagine their concept of pain we would need to imagine important differences in their lives. This, in turn, requires that we imagine a number of relevant background facts to be different. (Hutto and Satne 2018b, p.149)

Their discussion of *pain* above already gives us a hint at how they envision Wittgenstein’s naturalism. That is, it is the kind of naturalism which places primacy in how we understand everyday concepts. It leads to a non-scientistic philosophy since what we emphasize now is how the descriptive role of philosophy coincides with the explanatory role of the natural and social sciences.

Given the harmonious role that they envision between philosophy and science above, it is not difficult to see why they refer to Wittgenstein’s naturalism as relaxed. They state:

(T)he vision of nature Wittgenstein promotes regards everyday concepts not as low-grade theoretical constructs but as deeply bound up with the

ways of acting that reflect our particular form of life ... Crucially, for all of these reasons, the descriptive, clarifying work of philosophy-its conceptual investigations-have an empirical dimension... (Hutto and Satne 2018b, p.150)

In effect they are claiming that when science is coupled with philosophy, the role of philosophy would not merely be to provide a unifying reductionist account of nature and the forms of life that we engage in. Its role is more relaxed since it is open to using the results of the different sciences (e.g., cognitive science, social neuroscience) to explain the forms of life that we engage in (Cahill and Raleigh 2018).

Given the characterization of liberating relaxed naturalism and given that Hutto and Satne attributes this to their interpretation of the *PI*, we now have additional support for Hutto and Satne since our argument above shows that philosophy is neither below nor above the natural sciences but is at par with it. In effect, the additional value of my argument, as I have stated earlier, is that it provides grounds to support that, even in his later writings, Wittgenstein endorsed a form of naturalism.

In this section, I (1) addressed the main question of this paper. In the process (2) I also demonstrated that if we wish to find additional proof that Wittgenstein was also an advocate of science in *TLP* then we can also adopt Hutto and Satne's position that he endorsed a form of naturalism in *PI*. This (3) shows that there is coherence in Wittgenstein's view of science in both *TLP* and *PI*.

4. Conclusion

Returning to the ladder metaphor, it should be obvious at this point that, as I see it, if we "throw away the ladder" based on the *resolute* readers' interpretation of *TLP*, we are not liberating ourselves. Rather, we are succumbing to the illusion that liberation can only be achieved by looking at things in a one-sided manner. In fact, this can also be considered as a symptom of neurosis. It is irrational to be fixated on a one-sided view of Wittgenstein's philosophy in *TLP*. If a resolute reader aims to maintain that "throwing away the ladder" is the end of analytic philosophy perhaps they should first refute that we have sufficient grounds to claim that "throwing away the ladder" and "the end of philosophy" may actually be the beginning of "Wittgenstenian naturalism."

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Notes

¹It should be noted that the focus of this paper is on Wittgenstein’s *TLP* since I also aim to demonstrate that as early as *TLP*, Wittgenstein can be seen as adopting a naturalist stance in philosophy. I aim to show that, if this is the case, we have good reasons to adopt Hutto and Satne’s (2018a; 2018b) relaxed liberating naturalism. That is, we can further support their position by showing that a naturalist interpretation of Wittgenstein’s *PI* can be traced to his *TLP*.