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Naturalism, Quietism, and the Threat to Philosophy

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Preface

I wrote this book for two reasons. First, naturalism despite – or perhaps because of – its widespread appeal has not received sufficient critical attention in contemporary philosophical discourse. When I began to become interested in naturalism as a topic, I was quickly baffled by how differently naturalism is treated by the philosophical community compared to other philosophical ideas. Almost no other philosophical "-ism" is as often allowed to remain as unclear as naturalism, despite the discipline as a whole rightfully priding itself on being critical of even those of its assumptions that appear to be most common-sensical or trite. Another of my initial surprises was that no other self-identificatory badge seems to be carried so proudly in philosophy as the one that says "naturalist". Calling oneself "naturalist" seems to evoke a different kind of socio-intellectual distinction than identifying as, say, "idealist" or "pragmatist". As a result, it is easy to find "naturalist accounts" of virtually any topic in philosophy, yet it is much more arduous work to locate robust definitions and engagements with what "naturalism" means. All of this seemed stranger the more I investigated this topic.

The second reason for writing this book was that it seemed to me that there is still widespread misrepresentation regarding Wittgenstein's metaphilosophical convictions in wider philosophical discourse, that is, outside of the by now relatively small community of Wittgenstein scholars. To me, the most glaring misconstrual expresses itself in the seemingly innocuous belief that Wittgenstein eschewed "theory" and wanted to "stop" philosophizing altogether. Wittgenstein's own writing, rather than his interpreters, are perhaps to blame for this stinted picture because he does seem to demand an "ending" of philosophy at prominent places of both his early and late writing. Yet, the most vexing feature of this somewhat superficial understanding is that Wittgenstein's whole philosophy seems to become self-contradictory if "theory" is just understood broadly enough since Wittgenstein himself seems to offer some "theory" or another. The account of quietism developed here is driven by the simple desideratum to reconcile a scepticism about "theories" in philosophy with the fact that most areas of philosophy reasonably produce something that might be called "theoretical", which simultaneously someone following Wittgensteinian convictions would have no interest rejecting. This is the starting point of the reading of quietism proposed here according to which quietism in this sense means the rejection of

quasi-scientific theories in philosophy, in other words, a rejection of the en-croachment of the scientific image onto the territory of philosophy.

In the most general terms, this book ultimately tries to contribute to an an-swer to a specific variation of the question of what philosophy is and how we ought to do it (if we are to do it at all). The topic of this book is somewhat reflected in the circumstances of its creation. After having completed my MPhil at *King's College London* in September 2012 I had become disenchanted with aca-demic philosophy as a whole, causing me to not take up doctoral studies right away. The intellectual environment at *King's* was rigorous and demanding in the best way imaginable. Yet, some of the topics and questions this environment dee-med serious problems worth pursuing as well as the accepted way of pursuing them deeply alienated me. It left me wondering why one should in the first place become interested in the technical, traditional problems of philosophy of lan-guage, mind, metaphysics and ethics. I ended up taking a hiatus during which I explored other options of which direction to take, options that were not academic philosophy. I was lucky to regain my prior affection for philosophy in subsequent months however. One of the reasons to return to philosophy were a number of encouraging discussions with Jim Conant while I was interning at the *Wissen-schaftskolleg zu Berlin* in early 2013. The drive behind this decision, and the sub-sequent choice of the topic of quietism, was the need to find out what exactly it was about "mainstream" analytic philosophy that left me disenchanted. The work I present here is the systematic elaboration of my journey trying to understand how this personal disenchantment hangs together with more subject-indepen-dent factors in academic philosophy, namely naturalism and the question of the-ories in philosophy.

Introduction

> It isn't absurd, e.g., to believe that the age of science and technology is the beginning of the end for humanity. – Wittgenstein (1980, 56)

It is difficult to conclusively state when philosophy began in both a temporal sense and with respect to its contents. The canonical delineation marking the beginnings of philosophy with the Pre-Socratics has been challenged by historical counter-narratives which point to the possibility that philosophers like Pythagoras (and Plato) were heavily influenced by Ancient Egyptian thinkers, thus shifting an "official" beginning of philosophy back a few hundred years, and repositioning its cradle from Ancient Greece to North-East Africa.[1] Any engagement with the putative beginnings of philosophy implicitly carries the burden of accounting for what kind of thought specifically counts as philosophical in the first place. For what counts as philosophy proper determines whether there is philosophy in a single unitary sense or whether the name "philosophy" is to be reserved for the tradition that began with the line of the Pre-Socratics. Thus, the question concerning what marks the beginning of philosophy may additionally be fraught with normatively loaded assumptions about what is to be accepted as part of the solemn human practice of philosophy.

The question about whether philosophy *can*, *will* or *ought to* come to an end is just as difficult, perhaps even more so, as the question when philosophy began. Philosophy has been proclaimed finished more than once in the history of philosophy. It can sometimes seem that philosophy is under continuous threat to come to an end, to be put down like a beast of burden past its prime. Such pressures on philosophy originate from both *inside* and *outside* of philosophy.

The external threat is largely political in nature: under the citation of economic pressure of the universities' "bottom line" philosophy is often put in a defensive role in which philosophy departments and individual scholars have to

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[1]   Flegel (2018) offers an accessible overview of how Ancient Egyptian thought may have influenced the Pre-Socratics. Some more vocal proponents suggest it is mere "prejudice" that philosophy began with "the Greeks" (Obenga 2004, 31).

justify their work and their usefulness.[2] This usefulness is per usual framed as a contribution to economic revenue or as the prescription to be interesting to a wider societal audience. The usefulness to a wider societal audience is then often understood as either a form of intellectual edification (for example in the form of public lectures) or dealing with hot topics (i.e. virtually anything that might be considered a relevant political challenge at any given point in time).

The internal threats to philosophy are just as pressing, if not more so. On the other hand, philosophy is interesting and perhaps unique in the sense that it is the only discipline which *itself* has repeatedly proclaimed to have come to an end. In such proclamations, the expression of "coming to an end" can be understood as philosophy either being *completed* (like a jigsaw puzzle being completed) or philosophy becoming *obsolete* (like fax machines are becoming obsolete). Either of these two senses has been present especially since Kant. Ending philosophy by way of completion is in line with the systematic character of German Idealism, most notably with Hegel's system. Hegel declared the history of philosophy as "*beschlossen*" ("resolved" or "concluded") (Hegel 1986a, 461). An attempt to complete Idealism is an attempt to bring philosophy to an end to the effect that nothing more remains to be said and done once "the system" is perfected. The end of philosophy in the sense of becoming obsolete has also been proposed in different manners by Marx, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and others. Marx states (at least in some interpretations) that philosophy as a traditional discipline is obsolete insofar as it is part and parcel of bourgeois ideology, and hence not a fully kosher subject of inquiry anymore (cf. Schnädelbach 2012, 10 ff.). Heidegger similarly views philosophy as in some sense completed insofar as philosophy comes to exhaust its theoretical options (cf. Held 1980). Wittgenstein famously remarked in the Preface to his *Tractatus* that he had found "the final solution to the problems" (Wittgenstein 2001, 4), transforming philosophy into a watchdog that barks whenever metaphysical statements are put on the table. Wittgenstein's idea here seems to integrate aspects of philosophy being both complete and obsolete. Once sense has been delineated from non-sense, philosophy is completed in the sense that nothing more can be said and it has become obsolete because it can only serve to restrain itself. These are only the most salient examples. The history of philosophy can perhaps also be written as the history of philosophy internally struggling for its own legitimacy. For better or worse, neither Kant nor Hegel nor Heidegger nor Wittgenstein nor other philosophers have put an end to philosophy (yet), at least in its form as part of academic institutions. There are still philosophy departments around.

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2   Think, for example, of Marco Rubio's infamous suggestion that young people should pick up training to become a welder instead of studying seemingly useless subjects like philosophy, Rappeport (2015).

    Yet, this struggle for legitimacy is ongoing. This work is motivated by calling attention to and debating two recent, perhaps most important internal threats to philosophy: *naturalism* and *quietism.* Both Richard Rorty and Brian Leiter, arguing for different sides, agree that a standoff between naturalism and quietism is the "deepest and most intractable difference of opinion within contemporary Anglophone philosophy" (Rorty 2010, 57). In order to understand how and why naturalism and quietism threaten philosophy, we have to take a closer look at what these two -isms propose.

    Naturalism enjoys a tremendous amount of popularity and almost qualifies as a received opinion, if there *ever* was one, in the Anglophone philosophical tradition.[3] The content of naturalism is often left unclear, making it an -ism imbued with positive, but potentially unjustified affection in wide parts of philosophy. Naturalism is sometimes just taken to amount to a respectful attitude towards science, sometimes it is understood to be synonymous with physicalism, other times it is (less ambitiously) meant as a term for the rejection of supernatural entities, like ectoplasm, witches or deities. As I shall develop and argue for (in the first chapter), a substantial form of naturalism as a thesis, i.e. *scientific naturalism* (sometimes also called "strict naturalism"), can be characterized by the two following theses:

Ontological thesis: The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of the natural sciences.

Methodological thesis: Philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted. The remaining philosophical problems ought to be solved by emulating natural-scientific methodology.

While not all self-identifying scientific naturalists may hold both of these theses in conjunction, some do, and many may not see good reason to endorse one of them, yet deny the other. Both of these theses will be motivated and discussed in-depth – their content is indeed difficult to pin down, and the phrasings used here reflect the end point of the discussion developed in the first chapter. And while both of these aspects are equally important, regarding the question how naturalism is a threat to philosophy, the methodological thesis is of prime relevance. At least some important forms of the methodological thesis pose a serious threat to philosophy. That is because if philosophy is forced to give up ever more of its turf and if what remains of philosophy ought to adhere to some scientific standards, then this might ultimately spell the end of philosophy as an autonomous disci-

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3   While some may find this obvious given their own experience in the field, I shall rehearse some evidence for this dominance at the beginning of the first chapter.

pline. The threat might not be immediately imminent. And many card-carrying proponents of some kind of methodological naturalism may even not be aware of this consequence or find it unsavoury themselves. Yet, if one takes substantial forms of the methodological thesis seriously, then philosophy is ultimately threatened to cease to exist at all, or philosophy is at least threatened to turn into an accessory of the natural sciences.

Quietism, far from enjoying the same relevance as naturalism, has had an elusive shadow existence in contemporary philosophy. The term is often being used to either refer to a certain subset of thinkers in the Wittgensteinian tradition (McDowell, Rorty, and some others), or to denote a philosophical position according to which philosophical problems, philosophical theory or philosophical practice as a whole should be rejected. Especially the last aspect has often rendered quietism a position to be scoffed at because it supposedly advertises an *end of philosophy* while itself – to the effect of self-contradiction – qualifies as a piece of philosophy. It proves difficult to determine a concrete, exact, and widely shared phrasing of the thought behind the word "quietism". The philosophical usage[4] of the term "quietism" seems to have originated in Crispin Wright's *Truth and Objectivity* (1992).[5] Ideas are usually far older than the names they come to be associated with. In the case of quietism, however, the idea itself only dates back to Wittgenstein's late philosophy, most notably encapsulated in the *Philosophical Investigations*.[6] As such, quietism has come to circumscribe Wittgenstein's main metaphilosophical conviction, sometimes with a nod to the notion of philosophical therapy. Despite (or due to) his unquestionable impact on the philosophical landscape, Wittgenstein's metaphilosophy has become either a shrine for worship or commonly battered strawman. And while there is a vast amount of literature on Wittgenstein, the topic of his quietism remains somewhat understudied, at least by investigations that focus at bringing out its critical potential.

Hence, naturalism threatens philosophy by either declaring it obsolete in the presence of modern natural science or by demoting it to the status of a mere *ancilla* of natural sciences. Quietism, on the other hand, seems to threaten philosophy by rejecting theory as a means of advancing philosophy. While scientific naturalism itself merely implies a threat to philosophy, quietism as a moniker

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[4]   The term "quietism" was first used to describe a form of Christian mysticism. This tradition will not play a role in this project.

[5]   Huw Price uses the word "quietism" earlier in his *Facts and the Function of Truth* (1988), albeit in a different sense.

[6]   The line of thought that ascribes to Wittgenstein a "refusal to offer philosophical theories" dates back at least until the 1970s, see Pears (1970), 188. This idea, i. e. the blanket refusal to theorize, has become – incorrectly – the standard understanding of quietism. As such, Pears formulates the idea of quietism before the term "quietism" was used by Wright for this position.

seems to be designed to express such a threat. The cited "intractable difference" between quietism and naturalism that Leiter and Rorty posit is important. And there is more to this difference than the fact that the "threat levels" of naturalism and quietism are advertised differently.

What then does that "intractable difference" Leiter mentions really amount to? In this work I will develop a somewhat unorthodox answer to this question: naturalism (as a worldview and as a thesis) motivates the construction of quasi-scientific theories. Quasi-scientific theories in philosophy are constructions which aim to mimic the explanatory mode of the natural sciences. On the other hand, I reconstruct philosophical quietism not as the rejection of any unqualified sense of theory in philosophy, but rather as the critical rejection of such quasi-scientific theories in philosophy. Naturalism and quietism are therefore incompatible such that one cannot hold them both simultaneously. It will then turn out that out of these two, only naturalism is even about threatening philosophy as a practice. And, contrary to popular belief, I shall demonstrate that quietism – once we understand it correctly and charitably – is not about ending philosophy at all, but rather warning against a certain kind of philosophical practice that is perhaps not genuinely philosophical at all insofar as it aims to mimic a perceived explanatory mode of the natural sciences.

The chapter structure of this book mirrors the title such that each part of the title is afforded its own chapter.

The first chapter is about naturalism. The first three subchapters are dedicated to elucidating what the notoriously difficult, notoriously unclear term "naturalism" is about. The first part (§1) deals with this general problem that even more so than other philosophical ideas, the content of naturalism is usually kept unclear, making it necessary to spend a substantial amount of time to pin down a phrasing of naturalism which is acceptable to both its proponents and opponents. After discarding more modest forms of naturalism as uninteresting varieties, I turn to scientific naturalism as the relevant kind of naturalism to debate further (§2). Having narrowed the content of scientific naturalism down to be characterized by the methodological and ontological thesis above, I turn to another aspect of what is usually alluded to by the term "naturalism": the naturalist worldview and the scientific image (§3). Often overlooked or not taken seriously enough, I contend that we cannot understand the appeal of scientific naturalism as a thesis without understanding its being embedded in and motivated by the wider naturalistic worldview which – as a worldview – cannot easily be pinned down or moulded into a set of propositions. Naturalism as a worldview is something over and above naturalism as a thesis. And this is an essential part of the explanation of why, on the one hand, it is so difficult to pin down the content of the naturalism thesis, and on the other hand why it is so difficult to formulate arguments against naturalism that stick.

Having argued that the phenomenon of naturalism can only be fully understood by appreciating scientific naturalism as a thesis and the scientific image as a worldview in conjunction, the next part (§4) is about a conspicuous sense in which the scientific image – mediated by the methodological aspect of scientific naturalism – informs philosophical practice. Based on examples given by Hobbes, Descartes, and Leibniz, I propose the idea that naturalism as a worldview has motivated some philosophers to transpose the putative mode of scientific explanation into philosophy. Based on Dilthey's pivotal distinction between explanation (*Erklärung*) and understanding (*Verstehen*), I propose that the way in which this putative mode of scientific explanation has entered philosophy is through something like quasi-scientific theory. The essence of the putative mode of scientific explanation that Hobbes, Descartes, and Leibniz, yet implicitly also more contemporary figures introduce into philosophical theorizing is *calculation.* Quasi-scientific theories make an explanandum calculable by introducing something like abstract unobservables as explanantia, the prime example being found in philosophical "full-blooded" theories of meaning. The rest of the first chapter develops arguments against naturalism (§5). The first argument (§6) questions whether scientific naturalism can even be coherently formulated as a thesis. The second argument (§7) questions whether there is even any acceptable conception of nature available which the scientific naturalist can base her views on. The third argument (§8) asks and partially affirms whether naturalism as a worldview qualifies as an ideology. Even if this specific construal of quasi-scientific theory may be contentious, there is, I hold, a sense in which the idea of calculation as an element of natural-scientific explanation has a grip on philosophical thought. It rather seems to me that the influence of the scientific image on philosophy is so pervasive, yet elusive that it may end up defying any attempt at pinning down a definite, concrete shape of this influence (the formulation of quasi-scientific theories being one such attempt). For example, the idea of logical analysis – analysing propositions into atomic propositions – is "modeled on the chemical or physical analysis of a material compound into its component parts" (Macarthur 2018, 38). This is just one sense in which the scientific image has impacted philosophical thought, which does not neatly line up with the idea of quasi-scientific theory as positing abstract unobservables as explanatory devices. The idea of quasi-scientific theory presented here is therefore to be understood as a kind of blueprint rather than a strict definition. It is a template that requires liberal judgment in applying it to different real-world cases which might exemplify the natural sciences encroaching onto philosophy.

The second chapter is about quietism. Not content with the definitional chaos regarding the idea of quietism, the chapter starts by surveying the conceptual landscape (§1). Based on a phrasing by Blackburn and others that quietism is the rejection of theory, the next part asks what it would even mean to reject theories in philosophy (§2). Discounting the idea that rejecting theories in philoso-

phy means rejecting all kinds of "positive" philosophy or rejecting any particular thesis (say, realism or anti-realism), I propose that it might be fruitful to understand quietism directed against a certain kind of explanation in philosophy, namely the kind of explanation deemed common to science by some (§3). In other words, I suggest that quietism in philosophy can more productively be understood as the rejection of quasi-scientific theories. Given this framework, the rest of the second chapter reconstructs two different ways of rejecting quasi-scientific theories: Wittgensteinian quietism (§4) (championed by McDowell) and Pragmatist quietism (§5) (championed by Rorty and Price).

The third chapter ties up some loose ends and draws out some consequences of construing naturalism and quietism in the way proposed in the preceding chapters. The first result is that quietism and naturalism are poised to act as incompatible rival ideas (§1): naturalism motivates the construction of a quasi-scientific mode of explanation, quietism is the rejection of any quasi-scientific mode of explanation. This is the specification of the stand-off between quietism and naturalism that Rorty and Leiter remain somewhat vague about. The second result is regarding the main question of this work: is philosophy under serious threat by naturalism and quietism to come to an end (§2)? Given the reconstruction developed up to this point, it remains that at least methodological naturalism does present a threat against philosophy insofar as it prescribes to align philosophy with the natural sciences – a demand of which quasi-scientific theories as emulating the explanatory mode of the sciences is one possible version. It should be obvious then that quietism as the rejection of this mode of explanation does not pose a threat to philosophy but can as a moniker be used as a tool for opposition against naturalism.

At this point two more desiderata present themselves. The first is about naturalism (§3): if naturalism as a worldview does exert a grip on many thinkers as pervasive and to an extent immune against argument as I suggested in the first chapter – how could naturalists possibly be won over by anything written here? As in politics, a compromise might sometimes work in philosophy. This part briefly delves into liberal naturalism and near-naturalism as less pernicious alternatives to scientific naturalism. Not entirely content with these options, I propose another peace offering with the scientific naturalist: minimal naturalism. Minimal naturalism is a view that preserves the "science first" attitude for certain practical matters that seems to motivate many naturalists in the first place, without the problematic ontological and methodological restrictions of scientific naturalism. This compromise is a quietist peace offering, so to say.

The second desideratum is about quietism (§4): if quietism is the rejection of quasi-scientific theories specifically and the explanatory mode of the sciences in philosophy more generally – what kind of philosophical practice remains as legitimate? Some may find it implausible or even catastrophic to give up philosophical theories that are explanatory in a sense that puts them into proximity to

the sciences. Recalling again the distinction between explanation (*Erklärung*) and understanding (*Verstehen*) by Dilthey, this part briefly explores the other divide of this distinction: understanding. If the equivalent of putative scientific explanation is bracketed, different forms of understanding as a practice remain as a viable option to philosophy. Here I allude to forms of description (exemplified here by philosophers like Strawson's descriptive metaphysics and Ryle's logical geography) as forms of understanding which are genuinely philosophical and not precluded by a commitment to quietism. Even if the scientifico-explanatory mode as a form of philosophy is rejected, there still remains a whole lot for philosophy to do. This may be obvious to some, yet preposterous to others.

Some may shrug and simply assume that since philosophy has survived many internal threats before, it will survive naturalism and quietism, too. And thus, one may simply eschew any further metaphilosophical engagement with either naturalism or quietism. While one of the results of this work is that philosophy is indeed not under threat to come to an end, engaging with naturalism and quietism is worthwhile.

This work seeks to supplement the existing critical literature on scientific naturalism in different ways. Scientific naturalism is usually *not* engaged with on a meta-level as is done here. It is rather often simply used as a label to attach to a certain philosophical view, account or theory about something. Naturalistic theories are found in virtually all areas of philosophy. This work deliberately does not spend much time debating the advantages or problems of any certain theory which is considered "naturalist". For it is not that we lack first-order debates of such account, but meta-level criticism of what being considered "naturalist" would imply. As such, the points made about scientific naturalism in the abstract can in principle be applied to single "naturalistic" accounts which are tokenings of scientific naturalism as a general thesis.

Existing debates surrounding scientific naturalism tend to focus on scientific naturalism as defined by either the methodological thesis, the ontological thesis, or their conjunction. On the other hand, contemporary remarks on the naturalist worldview are usually informed by debates on Sellars' idea of the scientific image. What I found lacking in the literature is a treatment that takes the methodological thesis, the ontological thesis and broader considerations regarding the scientific image into account, including some philosophers who have thought deeply about the scientific image before Sellars, i.e. Dilthey and Jaspers; literature which then subsequently clarifies the internal relationship between naturalism as a thesis and naturalism as a worldview. My contention is that understanding and thinking these two (image and thesis) together is necessary for a comprehensive account of naturalism.

It is more difficult to situate debate about quietism which I shall nevertheless try to attempt here. The first and foremost problem with the current debate surrounding quietism is that there is not really such a debate. As mentioned, the

term "quietism" is vaguely used either in debates in analytic metaphysics as abstention from taking a certain position or it is used as a pejorative term to suggest that at least some Wittgensteinians reject doing any kind of philosophy. The treatment of quietism in this work is motivated by the hope that the remarks found in Wittgenstein and in other thinkers (like McDowell, Rorty, Price, and Blackburn) which are loosely associated with the vague uses of "quietism" can be used as a foundation to develop this -ism into a more clear, more substantive position that helps to draw out further the critical potential of being "against theory" in philosophy. This is also in an effort to distinguish quietism from perhaps similar views which quietism may seem to be a variation or update of. Relatedly, quietism is often compared, likened or identified with other philosophical positions, most notably Pyrrhonian scepticism and arguments from meaning criteria. *Pyrrhonian scepticism* can be understood as the position that no qualified assertion p can be made at all because it is always possible that any reason for p can be counterbalanced by any good reason that non-p. What is rejected here is the conviction that we are ever fully justified to propose and defend a good philosophical claim at all. While some may see the similarity to an unqualified view of quietism, quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory I propose does not have much in common with Pyrrhonian scepticism. *Arguments from meaning criteria* state that certain problems, questions, assertions or areas in philosophy ought to be rejected because they do not meet certain criteria to qualify as meaningful or sensible in the first place. Examples for such approaches are: classical pragmatism, Kantian rejections of transcendent metaphysics and more recently Peter Unger's rejection of "empty ideas" in philosophy. Classical pragmatism introduced the pragmatist principle as a criterion to identify those questions and problems philosophers ought to reject. Although the exact content of the doctrine can be controversial, the spirit of the pragmatist principle is conveniently captured in William James's *Pragmatism* lectures (James 1975, lecture I). At the beginning of the first lecture, he gives the famous example of a group of his philosopher colleagues arguing about a seemingly useless issue. In the debated scenario, a squirrel hangs on to one side of a tree and a man stands on the other side such that the line of sight between the two is interrupted by the tree. Now imagine the squirrel moves around the tree and the man moves into the same direction around the tree (but drawing a larger circle) such that the line of sight remains interrupted despite their continuous movement. The question posed by James' colleagues is: does the man move *around* the squirrel at all when he is walking around the tree? James' main point is that questions of this kind should be discarded because they do not pertain to any practical matter in any relevant way. Such criteria for the meaningfulness or the tenability of philosophical questions can be found in different places in the history of philosophy. One further famous example is Kant's disavowal of speculative metaphysics for the reason that it is, as a matter of principle, not related to sensibility in any way (Kant 1911,

B 662). Another more recent example is found in Peter Unger's *Empty Ideas*. As a criterion for meaninglessness of a philosophical question or statement, an idea is concretely empty if it is "empty of import for concrete reality", or if it "does not delineate any way for reality to be" (Unger 2014, 6). Unger seems to mean that concretely empty ideas do not tell us anything substantial about the way the world is. Note that truth or falsity is of no matter here: A statement may be true, but it may be concretely empty at the same time just in case, despite its truth, it does not tell us anything informative about the way the actual world we live in is. Unger claims that most ideas in current mainstream analytic philosophy are concretely empty. His master examples are *Ship of Theseus*, Putnam's semantic externalism, Kripke's causal theory of names, the question of persistence, and almost the entirety of David Lewis's philosophy (Unger 2014, 8 f., 26fn1). William James's squirrel example is a concretely empty idea in Unger's sense since no matter how such a dispute would be settled, it does not tell us anything informative or interesting about the way the world is. It does not say anything about the world at all, and is focused on mere technicalities of looking at things in a different way, or expressing the same thing with different words. The same goes, for example, for the question whether the shadow cast on a wall by a spinning sphere is itself spinning or not (cf. Sorensen 2006 who dedicates a whole article to this question). By contrast, traditional philosophy Unger considers to be concretely substantial is comprised, for example, by the doctrines of *metaphysica generalis*: idealism, materialism, and dualism are concretely substantial ideas because they tell us something about our concrete reality. They "[favour] a certain way for concrete reality to be […]" (Unger 2014, 28), and they state something "concerning how things are with concrete reality" (Unger 2014, 224 f.). Whatever we are to make of this, reflections on criteria for the meaningfulness of philosophical questions can be seen as similar to quietism, but they are not of main interest because they do not bear on the notion of quasi-scientific theory in an obvious way, although such a connection cannot be ruled out. Although it may prove valuable to further investigate the similarities and difference of quietism relative to Pyrrhonian scepticism and James, Kant, and Unger respectively, this, too, would dilute the focus of this project, and is therefore bracketed here. The upshot is then that quietism as the rejection of the scientifico-explanatory mode in philosophy is a genuinely different position than either classically sceptical positions or such accounts which aim to render certain philosophical enterprises meaningless.

Recent years have seen a welcome upsurge of research on Wittgenstein's relation to naturalism and scientism, most notably exemplified by a dedicated issue of the *American Philosophical Quarterly* (Moyal-Sharrock 2011) and more recently the volumes of Cahill & Raleigh (2018) and Beale & Kidd (2018). In a seminal article, Ray Monk observes that Wittgenstein's "opposition to scientism was constant" (Monk 1999). Similarly, Warren Goldfarb (1989, 637) deems

Wittgenstein "antiscientist" and Bernard Williams (2006, 196) even calls Wittgenstein the "least scientific of philosophers". Glock (1996, 345) ascribes Wittgenstein a "contempt for the 'idol worship' of science" and Beale (2018, 73) seconds that Wittgenstein's "anti-scientism plays a role in his later conception of philosophy". Such judgments about Wittgenstein are underwritten by his own words: "Science: enrichment & impoverishment. The one method elbows all others aside" (Wittgenstein 1980, 69). And:

> Our craving for generality has another main source: our preoccupation with the method of science. […] Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does. (Wittgenstein 1969b, 18)

Some thematic focuses in the research on Wittgenstein's relation to naturalism and scientism are whether Wittgenstein himself can be qualified as some kind of naturalist and whether Wittgenstein's overt "anti-theory" is in tension with the putative commitment to naturalism (scientific naturalism, liberal naturalism, and any other kind). Especially the latter question is addressed in this work. Although detachable from Wittgenstein, it is undeniable that quietism is a view that originated with (interpretations of) Wittgenstein. Next to some pragmatic advantages of reconceiving quietism in this way, it offers the important benefit of making sense of Wittgenstein's anti-theoretical stance in relation to his rejection of the scientific image and scientific naturalism. There simply is no such tension if the notion of theory that Wittgenstein is directed against is not understood as a blanket rejection of philosophical ideas, but rather as the kind of theorizing that some may take to be derived from the natural sciences (what I call quasi-scientific theory).

Apart from that, exegetical concerns about Wittgenstein, although generally important, will not take centre stage. I will not fervently defend a stance on the question what Wittgenstein's "actual" position is in most cases (a partial exception being ch. 2, §3 on Wittgensteinian quietism). The thesis defended here aims to be in a Wittgensteinian spirit rather than being a faithful interpretation of his "true word". If this work were to be read as making a prescriptive comment on what Wittgenstein "really had in mind", it would merely be the following very modest suggestion: it is important to take Wittgenstein's remarks seriously on *both* philosophical theories and positive philosophy on the one hand, and his views on the status of natural scientific practice on the other (cf. also Wittgenstein 1953, §109, §128, §392, §496, §560). The main trajectory of this suggestion is that to take those remarks fully seriously means to understand their systematic interconnection. The relation between quietism and naturalism developed here can be viewed as one way of elaborating this very connection that is sometimes adumbrated in Wittgenstein's writing (as exemplified by the quotes above). But

this does not entail that taking Wittgenstein's remarks seriously confines us to a wholly internal reconstruction.

Insofar as this work is a work about naturalism and its influence on philosophy and thought as such it does not focus on critiquing this or that naturalistic account but rather the framework. The case made here aims to change the focus of the debate away from smaller issues surrounding naturalism to the broader implications of the scientific image as a whole. This goal is motivated by the idea that the true interesting potential of the debate surrounding naturalism (and subsequently quietism) lies not with whether this or that phrasing of naturalism is correct. It lies rather with the implications that scientific naturalism, as a nigh-received view, has on philosophical practice as such and on the wider intellectual culture.

1. Naturalism

> Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does. – Wittgenstein (1969b, 18)

The guiding question of this chapter is whether naturalism brings philosophy to an end. I shall argue that it is very unlikely that naturalism can mean an end for philosophy. In order to arrive at this conclusion, two questions need to be answered beforehand. First, what is the content of naturalism? And: is it reasonable to subscribe to naturalism?

The first question is notoriously difficult to answer as there is no single agreed upon notion of naturalism (§1). I shall expand on why it is difficult to determine a specific notion of naturalism to serve as grounds for further debate; I will furthermore suggest criteria for any substantial explication of naturalism. I shall first reject modest naturalism as a form of naturalism which is too weak to be sufficiently interesting (§2) and subsequently develop scientific naturalism as the relevant form of naturalism (§3 and §4). This will yield an answer to the first question. The second question is perhaps even more difficult to answer. I develop three arguments against naturalism (§5–§8). The first one casts doubt on the coherence of scientific naturalism. The second argument states that the conception of nature underlying scientific naturalism is flawed, rendering scientific naturalism unintelligible. The third argument states that scientific naturalism – and naturalism more generally – may be an ideology, and hence false trivially. I hold that these arguments give us at least strong reasons to think that scientific naturalism is false.

The topic of this chapter then is a specific form of philosophical naturalism: scientific naturalism. Scientific naturalism has two distinct flavours; it can take the form of a methodological thesis and an ontological thesis. According to the methodological thesis, philosophy is continuous with science. And according to a general statement of the ontological thesis, all there really is are the entities posited by the natural sciences.

Two problems immediately present themselves. First, it is not self-evident what the relation between the methodological thesis and the ontological thesis is. That is, whether one implies the other or whether they can be held separately (§3). Second, and very much related to the first problem, it should be obvious

that the general rough outlines just given of both the methodological thesis and the ontological thesis allow for crucial specifications. Whether or not, and how, the two theses are related obviously hinges on their phrasing being exact. Before beginning the investigations, a few caveats are important.

Naturalism as a Main Paradigm

Scientific naturalism itself is already a more specified form of naturalism, one form among many other formulations. At least some form of naturalism is arguably the main paradigm of current academic, mainstream philosophy. This has been observed by a few philosophers. Jaegwon Kim states that naturalism is "the philosophical ideology" of "contemporary analytic philosophy" (Kim 2003, 84). De Caro and Macarthur, for example, who mention that "scientific naturalism is the current orthodoxy, at least within Anglo-American philosophy" (De Caro & Macarthur 2004, 1; cf. also Gasser & Stefan 2007, 159). Peter Hacker bemoans a "scientistic turn of an intellectual and academic culture intoxicated with science and scientific explanation" (Hacker 2011, 99 f.). Likewise, Daniel Stoljar states that "[…] we live in an overwhelmingly physicalist or materialist intellectual culture" (Stoljar 2017, §17). Some empirical evidence for this sentiment is provided by David Chalmers and David Bourget. They asked 931 philosophers the decisive question: "naturalism or non-naturalism?"; the result: 49.8 % endorsed naturalism, 25.8 % denied, 24.3 % specified "other" (Chalmers & Bourget 2009). Note that this was without qualification of what "naturalism" means, still enough people were willing to vote. Lastly, one can also consider the multitude of naturalization projects. Such projects aim to show that it is possible to reduce a concept to naturalistically respectable concepts "or prove that the concept in question can be eliminated altogether" (De Caro 2001, 27). Common examples of concepts that philosophers have tried to naturalize include justification, knowledge, intentionality, causality, moral concepts, and numbers. In developing these projects, preserving common sense beliefs or intuitions may be a goal for some, but the goal of naturalistic explanation is stronger (Ladyman & Ross 2007, 12). To the naturalist, the results of science trump common sense, as it were. Furthermore, this hints at the fact that some form of naturalism is operative in virtually all areas of philosophy.

But why is naturalism so popular? Daniel Hutto provides a possible reason for the popularity of naturalism: the reason for naturalism's popularity in philosophy right now is because it is seen as offering "genuine assurance of real philosophical progress" (Hutto 2003, 18). This is because, so naturalist thought goes, aligning philosophy with the methodology (and ontology) of natural science will grant it the same success. This attempt at explanation can be contrasted with

Hilary Putnam's more psychologizing remark that the main psychological motivation for naturalists is a "horror of the normative" (Putnam 2004, 70).

The amount of literature directly devoted to naturalism is uncomfortably vast, the number of articles, monographs, and edited volumes almost unmanageable. On top of that, a plethora of works consciously or unconsciously operate within a naturalist framework but do not focus on the naturalism thesis as a topic in and of itself. On the other hand, there is a growing literature taking the meta-stance in writing about naturalism as a philosophical framework or doctrine. It is a Herculean task to find and list all relevant publications on naturalism. This is also caused by the long history of the thought on different forms of naturalism. Although reflection on naturalism has been boosted by the advances of Quine (1960) and Sellars (1962), the idea itself can be traced back to ancient forms of materialism, e.g. atomism. As such, critiques of naturalism can as well be found much earlier than the writings of Quine and Sellars. Interestingly, Bergson already criticizes in 1898 that naturalism merely is "unaware metaphysics, which is presented to the ignorant under the mask of science" (Bergson 2006, 83). Much more could be said about naturalism than what I present in this chapter. The issues surrounding naturalism are more numerous, but one cannot do justice to all complex details without losing analytic focus. So a complete overview of the scholarly articles which either make scientific naturalism itself the topic of their research or just purport to espouse some "naturalistic theory" may take several volumes. Luckily, the purpose of this work generally and this chapter more specifically is to gather and focus a specific notion of naturalism – scientific naturalism – which seems to be operative as a background assumption for many works calling themselves "naturalist".

To continue with the overarching theme of this work, scientific naturalism is of interest because it potentially poses a threat to philosophy as an autonomous practice. Scientific naturalism, *qua* methodological aspect, states that philosophy is to be continuous with science. This sentiment is often taken to mean that philosophy ought to cede ground to natural science whenever possible and use scientific methods whenever possible. Combined with the belief that natural science in a future, ideal state explains everything there is to explain without gaps, then it becomes clear that there is, in principle, no need for philosophical practice at all. If these promises are true, this spells the end of philosophy.

§1   The Difficulty of Clarifying Naturalism, or: "Your Naturalism is not My Naturalism"

What is Naturalism anyway? The main problem of dealing with the topic of naturalism in philosophy is succinctly, neutrally, and concisely expressed in the following assessment:

> One reason for the broad, and often vague, use of the notion of naturalism could be that even within the strict borders of academic philosophy, the notion has not enjoyed any unanimously accepted definition, nor is it particularly clear what being a naturalist actually means. (Rosfort 2013, 1426)

Although it is sometimes touted as such, naturalism is indeed not a unified doctrine. Master doctrines of this kind are often hard to give a single, uniform definition that encompasses the whole phenomenon. This is certainly true in the case of philosophical naturalism. One of the main problems when debating naturalism is that it is hard to find a description of the doctrine that everybody can agree on. Nor is there consensus about subcategories of naturalism (e.g. reductive naturalism, scientific naturalism, modest naturalism, liberal naturalism, near-naturalism, Aristotelian naturalism). A further difficulty is presented by the fact that "naturalism" and "scientism", understood as the unjustified or naïve belief in the explanatory power of natural science are sometimes used interchangeably. So there is room for improvement when pinning down the kind of naturalism we want to debate.

The Naturalism Club. In a tremendously insightful passage, David Papineau writes:

> Even so, this entry will not aim to pin down any more informative definition of 'naturalism'. It would be fruitless to try to adjudicate some official way of understanding the term. Different contemporary philosophers interpret 'naturalism' differently. This disagreement about usage is no accident. For better or worse, 'naturalism' is widely viewed as a positive term in philosophical circles—few active philosophers nowadays are happy to announce themselves as 'non-naturalists'. This inevitably leads to a divergence in understanding the requirements of 'naturalism'. Those philosophers with relatively weak naturalist commitments are inclined to understand 'naturalism' in an unrestrictive way, in order not to disqualify themselves as 'naturalists', while those who uphold stronger naturalist doctrines are happy to set the bar for 'naturalism' higher. (Papineau 2015, 1)

"Naturalism" seems to be the name of a club that everybody wants to be a part of, even if the members do not agree on what kind of sports the club actually plays. Papineau diagnoses that one of the reasons for the confusion about the term "naturalism" is that most philosophers would feel uncomfortable not attributing to themselves the term "naturalist", even though they may be aware that their convictions may diverge from those of more serious "naturalists". This is most likely due to the fact that those philosophers think that those philosophers fear that rejecting the label "naturalism" would thereby commit them to some form of obscurantism or pre-rational spiritualism. Hilary Putnam loathes that "a further very common feature of [naturalist writings] is that, as a rule 'naturalism' is not *defined*" (Putnam 2004, 59). In a similar vein, De Caro and Macarthur assert that "[naturalism's] pre-eminent status can perhaps be appreciated in how little ener-

gy is spent in explicitly defining or explaining what is meant by scientific naturalism" (De Caro & Macarthur 2004, 2).**7** While this may be a slight dramatization, it does often seem unclear what philosophers mean when they use the term "naturalism."

Just one example for this: In his *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, Timothy Williamson defines naturalism as the view that "everything is part of the natural world, and should be studied as such; many [naturalists] study thought as a part of the natural world by not sharply distinguishing it from the natural process of thinking" (Williamson 2007, 18). Naturalism here is characterized by two ideas: 1. Everything is part of nature. 2. Everything should be studied in a way that is appropriate to its being part of nature. At first glance, it seems, contrary to what is written above, that Williamson actually gives an account of what he means by "naturalism". But once one looks closer this only constitutes a description of naturalism in a very superficial sense. For it is, first, unclear, what is meant by "nature" and what "unnatural" things are. And it is, second, unclear what it means to be studied in a way that is appropriate to being natural. Does this mean the scientific method (or methods)? What are then "unnatural" ways of investigating a natural object? Does he presuppose that there is a single uniform method of scientific investigation underneath the differences and nuances of the manifold special sciences? Of course, it can mean some occult or spiritualistic approach, but such an approach would not be taken as worth of consideration by even enemies of naturalism, leaving us with the question what is interesting about naturalism if Williamson's characterization is correct.

Thus, the situation can be painted as follows: On the one hand, many want to qualify as a naturalist. It is the normal thing to do, apparently. And often those who are critical of naturalism are under scrutiny as to why they do not accept it. On the other hand, enthusiastically self-identified naturalists are less often pressed to justify themselves, the fact that only few philosophers put in the work to clearly define and discuss what they mean by "naturalism" may be a symptom of that. And while a look at the historical and systematic background of naturalism can be valuable to know about, they are not entirely determinate of the content of the doctrine as it figures in current debates.

Pace Papineau, I think it is imperative to elaborate what "naturalism" means or, in his words, to "adjudicate" what naturalism has to mean. What are the membership conditions for the club that seemingly everybody wants to be a part of? As a rule of thumb, any characterization of naturalism to serve as grounds for a debate has to fulfil the following two minimal criteria:

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7   A good example for this is found in Giere (2000), 308. He starts a sentence stating that "naturalized Kant's fundamental categories of space, time, and causality in terms of the physics of Einstein […]" without going on to substantiate what it would mean to "naturalize" Kantian "categories", assuming that we already have an intuitive grasp of this matter.

1. *Substantiality.* The criteria have to be substantial. By "substantial", I mean that any characterization of naturalism as a worthwhile philosophical thesis needs to express claims which are controversial to at least some philosophers.
2. *Basic agreement.* Any such characterization of naturalism needs to be acceptable by those who will want to argue against the thesis and those prone to defend the thesis.

These two criteria should not be controversial in the slightest. They are rather the standard which is implicitly operative and fulfilled in most other philosophical debates. Or, if for example the second criterion is not fulfilled, opponents in a debate will aim to find common ground. One common problem to any attempt at specifying naturalism is what I call the *Not My Naturalism*-Objection: Many self-identifying naturalists will want to disavow any specification of naturalism which is not to their taste or in accord with their specific understanding of naturalism and will subsequently claim that any critique levelled against the specified version of naturalism does not concern them since they may believe in a (slightly) different form of naturalism.[8] This may at first seem reasonable as a part of figuring out what the proper definition of naturalism is. Yet, this move is not as innocuous as it seems insofar as it can present a shifting of goal posts (which is further investigated in parts §6 and §8).

Modest Naturalism

With these criteria in hand, we briefly look at forms of naturalism which are *not* going to be under debate in the remainder of this work. I use "modest naturalism" as a catch-all term to group philosophical views which are too weak to constitute an interesting and controversial form of naturalism. Following De Caro & Macarthur (2004), I suggest that it is helpful to understand modest naturalism as comprised of three aspects:

1. respect for science
2. rejection of philosophical foundationalism
3. rejection of supernaturalism.

As a catch-all term, "modest naturalism" describes a cluster of ideas or a stereotype view, meaning that not all philosophers who consider themselves naturalist will, when prompted, elaborate and overtly endorse all three aspects. Yet, a single

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[8]   This is difficult to find in writing just because, as mentioned, many card-carrying naturalists often do not spend much time expressing what their naturalist commitment consists in. However, this kind of resistance routinely props up in informal talks and Q&As at conferences during talks critical of naturalism.

one, all, or any combinations of these three aspects are sometimes cited as properly determining what "naturalism" means.

Firstly, some philosophers will assert that being a naturalist just means having proper respect for the results and workings of the (natural) sciences. The classical formulation for this simple idea comes from American Pragmatism. John Dewey, for example, states that "the naturalist is one who has respect for the conclusions of natural science" (Dewey 1944, 2). This idea has lived on. For a more recent example, consider Colyvan's programmatic statement from an anthology on the so-called *Canberra Plan*:

> So what are the fruits of naturalism? First, the scientific enterprise has a remarkably successful history, and naturalism is little more than a statement of our continued support for that enterprise. After all, rejecting naturalism amounts to claiming that sometimes we ought not accept our best scientific theories. (Colyvan 2009, 307)

Colyvan suggests that naturalism just requires a modicum of subservience to the best scientific theories available, a sort of cheer as a show of "continued support" for science.

Secondly, traditional philosophical foundationalism conceives of philosophy as an *a priori* inquiry into the nature of reality such that philosophy stands in a kind of grounding relation to the (natural) sciences. For example, Kant and Descartes are sometimes attributed the view that philosophy provides the epistemological and metaphysical basis for science. Note that this rejection of foundationalism is also a negative claim about what the relation between philosophy and science is not, but not a positive claim about how to conceive this relation.

The third aspect of modest naturalism is the rejection of supernaturalism. Naturalism shuns supernatural entities from philosophy. Supernaturalism is the belief that "there are entities that lie outside of the normal course of nature" (Dupré 2004, 36). Supernatural entities are those "whose existence cannot be countenanced by (natural) science" (Rydenfelt 2011, 115). Uncontroversial examples for such supernatural entities are: ghosts or goblins or fairies or other kinds of things connected to magic or witchcraft. But it also includes "immaterial minds or souls, vital fluids, angels, and deities" (Dupré 2004, 36).

There are, however, good reasons why any form of such a "modest naturalism" is not an adequate way of pinning down the core ideas behind naturalism. I shall briefly demonstrate the problems incurred by the three aspects of modest naturalism.

The first and the second aspect (both anti-foundationalism and respect for scientific achievements) are largely uncontroversial, hence too weak, to figure as a criterion which separates naturalists from non-naturalists. If respect for science was sufficient, we would have difficulties explaining why some philosophers are uneasy with naturalism. Most self-identified non-naturalists have no discomfort

expressing support for the scientific enterprise, or accepting the truth of the best scientific theories. For example, a self-identified non-naturalist can express their respect for natural science by accepting that vaccinations recommended by our best medical scientists are the best protection available against certain diseases. Similarly, such a non-naturalist can express such respect by simply stating that, say, the best chemical theories we have available are true. It would be disingenuous, for example, to ascribe to Thomas Nagel, as perhaps the most prominent non-naturalist, a lack of respect for science. One can applaud modern theoretical physics and chemistry without thinking that this endorsement has any substantial bearing on philosophy (except in some areas of philosophy of science). If respect for science was really what is at stake in the debate regarding naturalism, then there would more or less be nothing at stake. Colyvan's somewhat simplistic account misses the mark here. Therefore, we must look to construals of naturalism that bear more potential for controversy. The second aspect – rejection of foundationalism – fares similarly: it is difficult to find philosophers in the 20th and 21st century who assert that philosophy has authority over the sciences as some philosophers like perhaps Kant and Descartes may have believed. Instead, virtually any philosopher will assert that the sciences largely work well without philosophical guidance.[9] In the current environment, it seems indeed hopeless to defend the claim that philosophy is in a position to dictate to the sciences commands *ex cathedra*, in a way that may once have been the case.

The third aspect (supernaturalness) fails for another reason: it does not seem to be clear-cut in a way that makes it interesting for philosophy, at least *prima facie*. For example, although the latter examples (e.g. ghosts) are immaterial phenomena, supernatural entities cannot be identified with immaterial things since numbers and governments are also immaterial, but not supernatural in any sense that either naturalists or non-naturalists seem to be willing to assert. Someone wanting to classify numbers and governments as supernatural (because they are not physical), would have to offer substantial argument to make this view plausible. Furthermore, it is indeed hard to find a philosopher who would assert the existence of witchcraft or deities at all. While virtually all philosophers will deny the existence of at least some supernatural entities (God being the exception here), the attitudes towards abstract objects are more complicated. Most philosophers, including self-identifying naturalists, will somehow want to account for abstract entities rather than deem them merely supernatural. In short: a working notion of naturalism along these lines needs to provide a criterion of naturalness.

For these reasons, modest forms of naturalism, i.e. anything like the ideas just presented fail to fulfil the criterion of substantiality. That is, they do not con-

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9   Exceptions apply here, of course. One possible area of scientific inquiry that benefits from philosophical engagement is neuroscience (cf. also ch. 1,§8).

stitute aspects which would render naturalism to be an interesting and worth-while doctrine. Therefore, a different construal of naturalism is needed if naturalism is to be an interesting philosophical idea.

§2 Scientific Naturalism – Naturalism as a Thesis

The stronger form of naturalism is scientific naturalism. Scientific naturalism proper is to be distinguished from mere modest naturalism. Henceforth, I shall use "naturalism" and "scientific naturalism" interchangeably. Scientific naturalism implies modest naturalism such that one who endorses scientific naturalism endorses modest naturalism: subscribing to scientific naturalism implies respect for science, a rejection of philosophical foundationalism, and a rejection of supernaturalism. Yet conversely, one can be a modest naturalist without being a scientific naturalist.

Again, it is difficult to pin down the exact content of scientific naturalism as there is no agreed upon definition of even more ambitious notions of naturalism. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, it is nevertheless generally agreed though that scientific naturalism can come in two flavours: a methodological thesis and an ontological thesis. Carving scientific naturalism up this way is supported by a number of commentators, among them Hutto & Satne (2018), De Caro & Macarthur (2004, 3–5), Rydenfelt (2011, 115), Tetens (2013), Moser & Yandell (2000, 3–5), and Papineau (2015), and Sterelny (1990, xi).[10]

The Ontological Thesis

The ontological thesis of scientific naturalism is somewhat easier to get a grip on than the methodological thesis which is why we shall start with it. Again, one has to be wary of expressions of the ontological thesis which are too loose. For example, David Papineau calls "ontological naturalism" the thesis that "reality has no place for 'supernatural' or other 'spooky' kinds of entity" (Papineau 2015, 2; cf. also Papineau 2017). The inquiry into modest naturalism however yielded the result that this is not a satisfactory phrasing. For the reasons given above, putting it this way does not contribute to the issue if it is not specified what parts of reality are deemed "supernatural" or "spooky". Hence, we need to find a more

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10   Moser and Yandell offer three more distinctions: eliminative ontological naturalism, non-eliminative reductive ontological naturalism, non-eliminative, non-reductive ontological naturalism as well as an analogous set of distinctions for metaphilosophical naturalism. Their differences are not uninteresting, but not important for my current purposes. Papineau distinguishes "ontological naturalism" from "methodological naturalism" as two different forms of naturalism whereas I take them to be two aspects of scientific naturalism as a whole.

substantial phrasing. The intuition behind the ontological thesis is perhaps best expressed in Sellars' *scientia mensura* dictum: "Science is the measure of all things, of what it is that it is, and of what is not that it is not" (Sellars 1997, §41). Based on this dictum, one could phrase the ontological thesis as follows: the only things which exist are the entities countenanced by the natural sciences. In other words, the only ontological commitments we adopt are the ones derived from the natural sciences. This phrasing, however, raises the following questions. First, which sciences are authoritative in determining ontological commitments? Second, in what sense do other entities not countenanced by the natural sciences exist?

First, the which-sciences question asks what scientific disciplines exactly are to be included under the generic notion of science utilized by scientific naturalism. It is usually not specified which disciplines are included by using the terms "science" or "the sciences". It is obvious that this includes the natural sciences (physics, chemistry, biology). But it is less obvious (i) whether this should also include social sciences (e.g. cultural anthropology, psychology, or sociology), or even some humanities, and (ii) whether these disciplines stand in a hierarchical relation. Regarding (i), while often not explicitly excluded, it seems usually implied that "science" in scientific naturalism (especially in the context of the ontological thesis) means the natural sciences specifically (usually not including the quantitative branches of psychology and sociology).

Regarding (ii), the most commonly accepted hierarchy within the natural sciences relevant here is the primacy of physics. This is perhaps most forcefully expressed by Alex Rosenberg:

> What is the world really like? It's fermions and bosons, and everything that can be made up of them, and nothing that can't be made up of them. All the facts about fermions and bosons determine or "fix" all the other facts about reality and what exists in this universe or any other if, as physics may end up showing, there are other ones. Another way of expressing this fact-fixing by physics is to say that all the other facts—the chemical, biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural facts—supervene on the physical facts and are ultimately explained by them. And if physics can't in principle fix a putative fact, it is no fact after all. (Rosenberg 2014, 19)

According to physicalists like Rosenberg, physics determines all. It is not easy to find an account of the ontological thesis which is more inclusive and works out in more detail what it means to incur ontological commitments not only from physics, but also from chemistry and biology. Most naturalists who hold some form of the ontological thesis are, however, physicalists in the sense that the ontological commitments we incur are yielded by physics – all other sciences (natural and otherwise) do not have a say in that. This amounts to the claim that physics is the most fundamental discipline such that other disciplines, their re-

sults and their subject matter, could, in principle, be reduced to the subject matter investigated by physics. Paradigmatically, Armstrong writes that

> [We] have, general scientific grounds for thinking that man is nothing but a physical mechanism we can go on to argue that the mental states are in fact nothing but physical states of the central nervous system. (Armstrong 1981, 10)

Armstrong expresses a common sentiment in the philosophy of mind with this presupposition. As of now, no single account of naturalization of the mind has found widespread acceptance among contemporary philosophers; there is rather a multitude of different attempts of exactly working out the sentiment Armstrong expresses. Nevertheless, still a number of philosophers aim to offer more naturalization projects (often with widely different, usually less ambitious definitions of what "naturalistic" might mean) (Putnam 2004, 62). It is indeed a difficult matter of contention how physicalism is to be spelled out (Stoljar 2017 helpfully distinguishes at least seven different species of physicalism, at least some of which allow for further specification). For the current purposes however, it is only important to note that the ontological thesis is perhaps best to be specified as a variation of physicalism, whatever the most defensible version of physicalism turns out to be.

Furthermore, it is not *current* physics that gives us our ultimate ontological commitments, but rather a form of *future*, *ideal* physics, whatever that may amount to. Any reasonable physicalist will have to concede that current physics does not have the resources to account for everything (whatever "everything" amounts to). Physicalism as the arbiter of what is natural does often not appeal to current actual physical practice, but to future physical practice or "an idealization from contemporary physics" (Pettit 2010, 297). This is due to the fact that the current state of physics is, as even the most staunch physicalist may have to admit, incomplete in two senses: there is no completely unified theory of physics which would eliminate all scientific dissent and the current physical sciences may contain postulations and theories which will not survive the test of time. The idea of a future, ideal physics is certainly difficult to work with since no one can conclusively tell when that status will be reached, what the ideal physical science will look like, and whether the nature of (natural) science even allows for something like an ideal state (or whether it is a never-to-be-reached regulative ideal). However, in what follows, I shall just go along with the idea that there can be an ideal physics which dictates our ontological commitments. The reason is that, at this point, I wish to grant the naturalist even contentious points in order to arrive at a conception of naturalism which is substantial and can be agreed upon by either side.

Returning to the second question, in what sense, if any, do those entities not countenanced by the natural sciences – more specifically: physics – exist? It

would perhaps be disingenuous to ascribe to a scientific naturalist *qua* ontological thesis that he or she believes non-physical entities do not exist *simpliciter*. That position is perhaps only held by Churchland-style eliminativists. In order to reflect scientific naturalists who view themselves as reductionist or endorsing some form of supervenience, we should not ascribe them the view that ordinary objects (chairs, cars) and abstract objects (laws, states) do not exist (i.e. essentially a form of mereological nihilism according to which spatiotemporal objects are merely suitably arranged particles). Instead, naturalists identifying as holding some form of ontological naturalism will simply want to qualify the way in which ordinary objects and abstract objects exist. An ontological naturalist may therefore say that chairs exist, yet they either do not *fundamentally* exist, but only *derivatively*. In stating that ordinary objects and abstract objects do not exist fundamentally, the ontological naturalist can claim that those kinds of objects are there, yet their being there is in some crucial way dependent on the entities posited by ideal physics. This metaphysical dependence can then be specified in various ways, e.g. as a grounding relation, a reduction relation, a supervenience relation or a constitution relation. These are all certainly huge and important debates in their own right and a lot of interesting philosophical questions depend on what it means to exist fundamentally in contrast to only existing derivatively, and how those relations are to be spelled out which would allow for further substantial debate (cf. Correia 2008). Furthermore, this puts the ontological naturalist into the predicament of accounting for numbers which are certainly necessary for physical theories, yet themselves are not physical. One extreme example of dealing with this is Hartry Field on whose view even numbers then must amount to nothing but mere fictions (Field 1992, 271). Fortunately, for the purpose of finding a substantial phrasing of scientific naturalism which can be agreed upon by both proponents and opponents of the issue, we do not need to answer these questions or take a reasoned stance towards them.

Having settled the which-sciences question and the existence-question, we can try to formulate an updated version of the ontological thesis:

Ontological thesis$_{strict}$:   The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of future-ideal physics.

For some, the ontological thesis may be too strong, at least in this phrasing. For example, some may want to claim that the whole point of naturalism is simply to state that there are no "spooky" or otherwise "supernatural" entities in the world, and that this is in no way a commitment to only physical entities. The problem then, as I argued previously, is that simply eschewing "spooky" or "supernatural" entities is not enough if it is not exactly specified what makes things "spooky" or

"supernatural". Yet, we can perhaps formulate a modified version of the ontological thesis.

Ontological thesis_{liberal}:   The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of the natural sciences.

So even if the unmodified version of the ontological thesis is more commonly to be found in the literature, some may perhaps view the modified version as more plausible or more reflective of their commitments. While this phrasing is indeed more liberal and hence more acceptable to some, it does not get us that far, at least for the regular contexts in which naturalism plays a role. This is because the impetus for adopting a version of naturalism is usually to "exorcize" from both the world and philosophical practice those phenomena and entities completely alien to the natural sciences. A physicalist will not find chemical or biological entities "spooky", a more liberal ontological naturalist subscribing to the modified thesis conversely will not necessarily find either physical entities or physicalism "spooky". Instead, both kinds of ontological naturalists share common "enemies": supposedly supernatural or "spooky" entities like ghosts and goblins on the one hand and things like mental substances and normativity on the other hand.

It should then be immediately clear that the ontological thesis – no matter which version – implies a huge task: all derivatively existing phenomena must be in some way related to scientifically respectable entities in a suitable way. This task creates so-called placement problems. Therefore, in the light of their philosophical relevance, the difference between the modified and the unmodified version of the ontological thesis seems negligible, at least for now.

Placement Problems

Huw Price has introduced the helpful term *placement problems* as a re-coining of Jackson's (1995) expression "location problems". Placement problems refer to the problem of accounting for concepts and phenomena which, at least *prima facie*, defy reduction to scientific entities or description in scientific terms, and hence merely derivatively exist according to the ontological thesis. Common candidates for these problems are the mind, causation, goodness, social entities, causality, mathematical entities, and probability (cf. Macarthur & Price 2007, 92 f.). Price offers a metaphor in order to further illustrate the way placement problems come about.

Imagine a child's puzzle book, designed like this. On the left side of the page are some peel-off stickers – perhaps the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge, a koala. The aim of the

> game is to match each of these stickers to corresponding object in a picture on the right-hand side of the page. The game is successfully completed when every sticker has been placed in its correct location. Now think of the right-hand side as the world and the stickers as statements we take to be true of the world. For each statement, it seems natural to ask what makes it true – what fact in the world has precisely the 'shape' required to do the job. Matching true statements to the world seems a lot like matching stickers to the picture; and many problems in philosophy seem much like the problems the child faces when some of the stickers are hard to place. (Price 2013, 23)

In this metaphor, we are forced to match the stickers with shapes in the book, but due to scientific naturalism the shapes on the other side of the book have neither the right number nor the right shapes to fit all the stickers in them. One is then brought upon a certain awkwardness when trying to decide "where" (to stick with the spatial metaphor) goodness and causality are "located" in the world because these concepts seem to fall outside the scope of scientific inquiry. Contrast this with other unproblematic phenomena: scientific inquiry about spatiotemporal objects seems unproblematic since one can accommodate such objects in a world describable in the terms of natural science. This difference should perhaps already point out that a naturalistic worldview tends to hold abstract objects and concepts (causality, goodness, the mind) to the same explanatory standards as spatiotemporal objects The general reaction to such challenges has been to provide explanations of these hard-to-place phenomena that would assign to them a place in nature, thereby solving the placement problem. Naturalization projects aim to find such a "place" for these seemingly problematic phenomena, typically by relating them to objects or explanatory contexts which are perfectly innocuous by naturalistic standards. Colin McGinn expresses this predicament in a more flowery manner:

> There are yawning gaps between these phenomena and the more basic phenomena they proceed from, so that we cannot apply the [scientific, TJS] format to bring sense to what we observe. The essence of a philosophical problem is the unexplained leap. (McGinn 2003, 209)

McGinn concludes that these phenomena will always remain "mysteries" (McGinn 2003, 210). Fittingly, De Caro observes that such phenomena, those perceived as problematic to place, must seem to the naturalist not to be mere mysteries, but *absurdities*, since the naturalist cannot even conceive what a "solution" to those "problems" would look like, given the naturalist's conceptual resources (De Caro 2011, 30). Placement problems and projects of naturalization are two sides of the same coin: Projects of naturalization try to come up with ways to force or fit the left-over stickers into the scarce amount of shapes in the puzzle book.

The Methodological Thesis

Whereas Sellars' *scientia mensura* dictum may be taken as a programmatic statement of the ontological thesis, the methodological theme of naturalism is given expression in an influential phrasing by Quine: philosophy is continuous with science (Quine 1960, 209). Call this the *continuity thesis.* Quine's own most infamous application of the continuity thesis is with regards to epistemology as a part of philosophy: "Epistemology, or something like it, simply falls into place as a chapter of psychology and hence of natural science" (Quine 1969a, 52). The spirit of the continuity thesis, however, had been formulated before Quine by Russell in a more impassioned manner:

> Whatever knowledge is attainable, must be attained by scientific methods; and what science cannot discover, mankind cannot know. (Russell 1998, 45)

And:

> What are we to take as data in philosophy? What shall we regard as having the greatest likelihood of being true, and what as proper to be rejected if it conflicts with other evidence? It seems to me that science has a much greater likelihood of being true in the main that any philosophy hitherto advanced (I do not, of course, except my own). In science there are many matters about which people are agreed; in philosophy there are none […] [w]e shall be wise to build our philosophy upon science. (Russell 1956, 339)

But what exactly would it mean to build "philosophy upon science"? The continuity thesis has been interpreted in different ways. The following are a few examples of such different readings. Sterelny writes that "philosophical theories are conjectures whose fate is ultimately determined by empirical investigation" (Sterelny 1990, xi). Papineau writes that the continuity thesis views "philosophy and science as engaged in essentially the same enterprise, pursuing similar ends and using similar methods" (Papineau 2015, 24). Penelope Maddy adds: "The leading theme of methodological naturalism […] is roughly that science is the best way we have available to find out about the world. If we could define 'science', this rough version would be enough […]" (Maddy 2011, 12).[11] Wilfrid Sellars asserts: "But now that philosophy of science has nominal as well as real existence, there has arisen the temptation to leave it to the specialists, and to confuse the sound idea that philosophy is not science with the mistaken idea that philosophy is independent of science" (Sellars 1997, §39). And Beale & Kidd (2018, 4) assert that according to methodological naturalism, philosophy is a "branch of science or an assistant to the sciences". Eugen Fischer is more specific when he

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11   Note that Maddy (just like Williamson above) does not account for the specific methodological differences between the special scientific disciplines, but only generally speaks of "science".

states that traditional "methodological naturalism seeks to address philosophical problems about a topic X (say, the mind or perception) by building on scientific findings about X" (Fischer 2018, 262; cf. also Fischer & Collins, 2015, 4) and that philosophers ought to rely "on scientific evidence […] to support their claims" (Fischer 2018, 264). Then there are also more local applications of this idea, such as naturalism about social science which "denies that there is something special about the social world that makes it unamenable to scientific investigation, and also denies that there is something special about philosophy that makes it independent or prior to the sciences in general and the social sciences in particular" (Kincaid 2012, 3; loc. cit. Guala 2015).

This is merely an exemplary list. A complete list would perhaps have to include citations from any publication dealing with methodological versions of naturalism along the lines of Quine's continuity thesis. This is because, as noted, there is no unified definition people would have agreed on, not even a certain number of definitions different proponents would argue for or against. It should be immediately clear that this exemplary overview of phrasing a methodological thesis contains formulations that are not synonymous at all. Luckily, Mario De Caro has compiled a comprehensive list of different interpretations of the continuity thesis under which the polyphony of voices above can be subsumed (De Caro 2009, 369 f., paraphrased).

(a) Philosophy is not a privileged superdiscipline.

(b) There is no sense in foundational epistemology of searching for a priori principles.

(c) Philosophy should cede authority to science whenever warranted.

(d) Philosophy should emulate the methods of science.

(e) The scientific method is apt for solving philosophical problems.

(f) Philosophy is continuous with natural sciences, but not other disciplines.

(g) Philosophy will emulate the success of sciences.

(h) Scientific methods in philosophy will be devoid of intentional or normative features.

(i) The scientific method is the only legitimate way to do philosophy.

(j) Employing the scientific method will generate a total professionalization of philosophy.

What is one to do here? Given this long list of possible interpretations of Quine's continuity thesis, one can understand Papineau's inclination (cited above) to not "adjudicate" what "naturalism" should mean. Starting off from this list, I am going to proceed by elimination to isolate those interpretations which can potentially inhabit the "sweet spot", being both substantial and prima facie defensible.

Statement (a) already seems to be included as a part of modest naturalism insofar as it is a variation of the rejection of philosophical foundationalism. Statement (b), however, is trickier: it does not seem reasonable to commit a methodological naturalist to the rejection of any and all *a priori* principles. This is largely because the theses of methodological and ontological naturalism are *a priori* themselves. Hence, a commitment to (b) may render scientific naturalism incoherent. Furthermore, it is unclear why a methodological naturalist would need to claim that there is only continuity with the natural sciences, but not other disciplines (e.g. sociology) as (f) states. In a different manner, (g) seems overly restrictive too. While methodological naturalists may certainly believe that one motivator for adopting scientific naturalism is the promise of progress, the naturalist may not feel the need to think that philosophy's success need be as great as success of the (natural) sciences. Statement (h) seems unfit to count as a methodological starting point of scientific naturalism but is rather an implication of the ontological thesis to be discussed shortly after. Statement (j), too, seems to strong: when pressed, it is likely that some scientific naturalists may concede that there are non-scientific modes of doing philosophy even when the preferred mode of doing philosophy is in "continuity" with science. Lastly, it is difficult to see what (j) could even mean – academic philosophy is already highly professionalized (for better or worse). It is unclear how further alignment with natural scientific methodology would make philosophy more professionalized.

This then leaves statements (c), (d) and (e). The appropriate phrasing of the methodological thesis seems to be a variation of these themes. These statements can be reformulated into a two-part determination of the relation between philosophy and natural science as follows:

Methodological thesis$_{liberal}$: Philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted. The remaining philosophical problems ought to be solved by emulating natural-scientific methodology.

A central advantage of this thesis seems to be how self-identifying naturalists often orchestrate their projects of "naturalization". What do such projects look like in the vein of methodological naturalism? Peter Carruthers asserts that philosophy of mind is (or ought to be) "an exercise in theoretical psychology. [...]. Indeed, in my view it is a mistake to address questions in the philosophy of mind in any other way" (Carruthers 2011, xiii). Naturalistic accounts of action may paradigmatically "model" human action using concepts taken from empirical research on action from, say, psychology. Naturalistic accounts of religion, to take another example, are often based on the neuroscience of religion – proponents like McNamara (2009) and De Cruz & De Smedt (2014) aim to reduce religious

experience to brain-states, Atran & Henrich (2010) explain religious experience as a mere cognitive by-product. In such "projects of naturalization", the philosophical methods and resources, most notably metaphysics vocabulary like "reduction", is used to supplement and assist natural-scientific approaches or to present their findings in an integrated picture. This phrasing of the methodological thesis furthermore implies that any kind of philosophical theorizing which does, for whatever reason, not emulate natural-scientific methodology, may not be in conflict with the methods and results of the best available natural science. In this sense the methodological thesis states that philosophy ought to make states which can in some sense be countenanced from the standpoint of the natural sciences, whatever that standpoint may amount to.

For the sake of inclusivity, I have phrased the methodological thesis to include all natural sciences, most notably chemistry and biology next to physics. Regarding the ontological thesis, its stricter version – a version of physicalism – is often treated as preferable to the liberal version which includes other natural sciences. Is there an analogous stricter version for the methodological thesis that can be formulated? Analogous to the ontological theme, the stricter version of the methodological thesis would perhaps focus on physics:

Methodological thesis$_{strict}$:   Philosophy should cede authority to physics whenever warranted. The remaining philosophical problems ought to be solved by emulating the methodology of physics.

We can certainly formulate this stricter version without outright contradiction. How plausible is this phrasing, however? This strict version seems to be less plausible than the regular phrasing given that it is much more restrictive. It may perhaps be dubbed "methodological physicalism", if there were such a thing. I am unaware of a philosopher actively subscribing to a thesis of this kind.[12] In fact, Papineau (2001, 3) states that the idea of physicalism "has no direct methodological implications". The reason why naturalists might be hesitant to endorse a version of "methodological physicalism" is that methodological pluralism of the natural sciences seems to be something close to a philosophical consensus currently. And given broadly naturalist convictions, a naturalist would probably allow for naturalistic philosophy to reflect the methodological pluralism of the natural sciences. For example, a naturalistic account of action and the mind may aim to include biological categories (and not only physical) (cf. Millikan 1984, 2005).

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[12]   In fact, Gillett (2001) does use the term "methodological physicalism", albeit in a different, i. e. weaker, sense: according to Gillett, methodological physicalism is the idea to use ontological physicalism as a criterion to access other scientific theories.

Therefore, I suggest that the liberal version of the methodological thesis is more likely to be preferred by self-identifying naturalists. It is both substantial and can (at least prima facie) be agreed upon by either side of the debate yet is not overly restrictive like its stricter counterpart. I have tried to forge a number of different suggestions into a workable statement of the methodological thesis whose content is both substantial and can be agreed upon by both proponents and opponents of the thesis. Yet, the problem of the "not my naturalism"-objection may come up again. This may be due to the fact that committing someone to something substantial makes that proponent of a theory "vulnerable to attack". There is no principled way in which we could fully side-step this issue. What remains to be expressed is a warm invitation: any naturalistically minded philosopher unsatisfied with this phrasing of the methodological thesis is welcome to argue for a different characterization of scientific naturalism (or a form of naturalism) which is both substantial and can be agreed upon by identifying non-naturalists.

Are the Methodological Thesis and the Ontological Thesis Related?

I have stated that scientific naturalism is sometimes understood as a methodological thesis and sometimes as an ontological thesis, and sometimes as the conjunction of both. The interesting question is whether these theses can be held separately or whether one who subscribes to either must endorse the other too. With the strict version of the methodological thesis eliminated, three formulations remain:

Liberal methodological thesis:	Philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted. The remaining philosophical problems ought to be solved by emulating natural-scientific methodology.
Liberal ontological thesis:	The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of the natural sciences.
Strict ontological thesis:	The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of future-ideal physics.

Some proponents simply assume that ontological and methodological variants of naturalism are entirely disjoint (e.g. Bishop 2009), but it is not entirely plausible to simply suppose that there is no relation worth considering between the two. Against this, I hold that it is at least prima facie plausible that the methodological

thesis and the ontological thesis are *somehow* related, even if this kind of relation is not immediately clear. It should be clear that the liberal ontological thesis does not imply the strict ontological thesis, and *vice versa.* It seems instead that endorsing either of them precludes one from endorsing the other. For if I assume that the only things that fundamentally exist are the entities of physics, chemistry, and biology, then this is not compatible with claiming that only the entities of physics exist. And if I conversely believe that only physical entities exist, this is incompatible with me believing, more liberally, that chemical and biological entities are fundamental. Therefore, I shall only consider further the relation between the ontological thesis (either version) and the liberal methodological thesis. More specifically, I shall consider whether between these three phrasings there is either an *implication relation* or the (much weaker) relation of *rational suggestion.* By "rationally suggesting", I mean that one thesis is generally a good rational fit for the other such, that it gives an *a priori warrant* to endorse the other thesis, and that it does not present a big leap to both simultaneously if one of them is believed. In other words: thesis T_1 rationally suggests thesis T_2 iff there is a sufficiently good *a priori* argument in which T_1 figures as a premise and T_2 figures as the conclusion, perhaps some further straightforward argument pending that T_2 is true. This implies of course that the cogency of T_2 might be contingent on the plausibility of other invested premises.

Under a certain reading, the liberal methodological thesis implies the liberal ontological thesis, for the following reason: If "ceding authority" implies ceding authority to natural sciences in ontological questions, then this is tantamount to claiming that ontological commitments we incur are to be taken from the natural sciences. This is because ontology is a part of philosophy (obviously). Therefore, I conclude that a thinker committed to the liberal methodological thesis is also committed to the liberal ontological thesis (bit not *vice versa*).

While the liberal ontological thesis does not strictly imply the liberal methodological thesis, the liberal ontological thesis seems to rationally suggest the liberal methodological thesis. It is not the case that accepting ontological commitments from the natural sciences commits one to aligning all philosophical practice along the methods of the natural sciences. However, if a philosopher is already committed to the belief that the natural sciences yield our ontological commitments, then it is difficult to see why that philosopher does not simultaneously believe that the natural sciences ought to act as a standard for other areas of philosophy. It seems that the liberal ontological commitment *rationally suggests* the liberal methodological commitment in the sense that a philosopher committed to the liberal ontological thesis would need to provide further reasons for holding that the natural sciences are authoritative for ontological questions *but not* for other areas in philosophy.

We can render this relation of rational suggestion more surveyable by phrasing it as an argument in standard form:

1. The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of the natural sciences (Liberal ontological thesis).
2. If the only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of the natural sciences (Liberal ontological thesis), then philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted (Liberal methodological thesis).
   ⸻
3. Philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted (Liberal methodological thesis).

The crucial work in this argument is shouldered by premise 2. Premise 2 is by no means obvious or trivial. It is, instead, the case that the success of this argument hinges on whether 2 can be made more plausible by providing further justification for it in the form of at least one further supporting argument. The liberal ontological thesis rationally suggests the liberal methodological thesis in the sense that one will have to come up with at least one good supporting reason for the material implication relating ontological and methodological naturalism codified in the second premise.

Moving on: Does the methodological thesis also imply the strict ontological thesis? One key issue in answering this question is that the methods of the natural sciences can only underwrite ontological commitments which are in accordance with the natural sciences. Without further meta-theoretical commitments, it is not given that the methods of the natural sciences exclude other phenomena from existence. This negative existential claim, i.e. that nothing exists which is not countenanced by the natural sciences, is however part and parcel of ontological naturalism. So it is not immediately clear why the methodological thesis should imply the strict ontological thesis. Daniel Stoljar (2017, 55), in any case, presents an argument for this implication relation of which I give the following reconstruction:

1. It is rational to be guided in one's metaphysical commitments by the methods of natural science.
2. The metaphysical picture of the world that one is led to by the methods of natural science is physicalism (strict ontological thesis).
   ⸻
3. It is rational to believe physicalism (strict ontological thesis).
4. What is rational to believe, is true (suppressed premise).
   ⸻
5. Therefore, physicalism (strict ontological thesis) is true.

This reconstruction is very close to Stoljar's own words. There are two issues with this argument. The first is that the first premise is, of course, highly contentious insofar as it is a version of the methodological thesis: if philosophy is best done

when aligned with the methods of natural science, then this is true also for ontology as a subsection of philosophy. Why are we to believe that? Stoljar simply writes that rejecting the first premise "is not something that most people are attracted to" (Stoljar 2017, 56). What constitutes "most people" may perhaps be determined by the socio-intellectual climate one is steeped in.[13] I am doubtful of the empirical certainty (regarding the number of philosophers who are supposedly on his side) with which Stoljar presents his conviction here. This first worry is, luckily, not of primary importance as the current concern is to understand how naturalism is best to be understood. The second worry is, however, relevant to the current endeavour. For there are self-identified naturalists who subscribe to the first premise, but reject the second. The motivation for this rejection can be a more liberal interpretation of what it means for the "metaphysical picture" to be determined by natural science, i. e. a certain pluralism about the methodology of the natural sciences yielding a more pluralistic "metaphysical picture" (e. g. Dupré 1996). Hence, what this demonstrates is that, as mentioned above, while a strict version of the methodological thesis ("methodological physicalism") implies the strict ontological thesis, the liberal methodological thesis that Stoljar works with here does *not* imply the strict ontological thesis. If one wishes to resist this point on behalf of Stoljar, one would have to present a supplementary argument as to why the metaphysical picture of the world determined by natural science (as a whole) boils down to just the physics, and does not allow for a more pluralistic interpretation. It just simply does not seem to follow as it stands.

Yet, even resisting this implication, in a manner not dissimilar, the liberal methodological thesis may rationally suggest the strict ontological thesis. If one believes that philosophy ought to be methodologically aligned with the natural sciences, then it is not a big leap to rely on an idealized physics of the future to fix ontological commitments, at least given some further physicalist sensibilities. Of course, someone endorsing the liberal methodological thesis may also hold that ontological questions are those which are not to be dealt with by the natural sciences, or physics specifically, yet traditionally ontological questions are those commonly viewed to "warrant" a treatment according to the physics.

One can again represent this relation of rational suggesting in a standard form argument:

1. Philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted (Liberal methodological thesis).
2. If philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted, then the only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of future-ideal physics (Strict ontological

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13   I, for one, belong to the "few" people who reject the first premise.

thesis).

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3. The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of future-ideal physics (Strict ontological thesis).

In this argument again, premise 2 does the crucial work. The relation between the liberal methodological thesis and the strict ontological thesis is here merely rationally suggested because the validity of the argument hinges on 2 being true. While some supporters of naturalism may simply accept 2 as true without further justification, it seems that even a mild sceptic of naturalism would require a substantial justification for two in the form of an additional argument supporting the second premise.

And finally, it seems that the strict ontological thesis (as a version of physicalism) rationally suggests the liberal methodological thesis.

1. The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of future-ideal physics (Strict ontological thesis).
2. If the only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of future-ideal physics (Strict ontological thesis), then philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted (Liberal methodological thesis).

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3. Philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted (Liberal methodological thesis).

Again, premise 2 will simply seem obvious to some supporters of naturalism. To at least a few naturalists, it will be true that: if you already entrust physics with ontological concerns fully, then it does not seem far-fetched to place general trust in the natural sciences for other philosophical questions and domains, even if you may not think that physical science serves as the best methodological guide for other philosophical concerns other than ontology. As mentioned above, a naturalistically minded philosopher may want biological categories to play a role regarding explanations in the philosophy of religion or the philosophy of mind while retaining the view that the ultimate ontological grounds are purely physical in some sense or another. However, yet again, the material implication codified in 2 here will require further justification if approached with even a modicum of reasonable doubt. If, however, both this and the preceding argument should turn out to be sound, then it would be demonstrated that the strict ontological thesis and the liberal methodological thesis are related through a biconditional: liberal methodological thesis ↔ strict ontological thesis. This biconditional would be both very interesting and powerful as it would present a kind of "unity" of naturalisms or naturalistic approaches under the umbrella of scientific naturalism. However, as suggested before, establishing this biconditional would require a

substantial amount of argument regarding either side of the biconditional. Further investigating whether this can reasonably be established would present an additional research desideratum for philosophers engaging with naturalism. In our current context, however, we shall not further pursue this line of reasoning.

I hope to have demonstrated that it is too quick to assume that methodological and ontological naturalism are simply logically disjoint which at times seems to be a tacit consensus. It is instead more reasonable to assume that the strict ontological thesis implies the liberal methodological thesis, and that they otherwise rationally suggest each other. These considerations can be now summarized in the following table for a quick overview:

	Liberal methodological thesis (LMT)
Strict ontological thesis (SOT)	LMT rationally suggests SOT SOT rationally suggests LMT
Liberal ontological thesis (LOT)	LMT implies LOT LOT rationally suggests LMT

The Result

The purpose of this sub-chapter was to arrive at a characterization of scientific naturalism which is both substantial and which can be agreed upon by its proponents and opponents as grounds for further debate. I have suggested that scientific naturalism can be understood in two different ways: as a methodological thesis and an ontological thesis. I have differentiated a liberal and a strict reading of both of these theses and have suggested that a scientific naturalist is perhaps best advised to hold either the (see again below) liberal version of the methodological thesis or the strict version of the ontological thesis, or both of them in conjunction.

Methodological thesis$_{liberal}$: Philosophy should cede authority to natural science whenever warranted. The remaining philosophical problems ought to be solved by emulating natural-scientific methodology.

Ontological thesis$_{liberal}$: The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of the natural sciences.

Ontological thesis$_{strict}$: The only things that fundamentally exist are the entities countenanced by the theories of future-ideal physics.

While it seems that the strict version of the ontological thesis (as a version of physicalism) has received more attention than its liberalized counterpart, it seems unwarranted to exclude the liberal ontological thesis from the debate altogether. While the liberal ontological thesis seems to be less often adopted, rejecting it outright may perhaps alienate at least some self-identifying naturalists, triggering another "not my naturalism"-objection.

Some philosophers will identify as scientific naturalists (or simply call themselves "naturalist") by subscribing to only one of these theses. Some may want to subscribe to the methodological thesis as well as either the liberal or strict form of the ontological thesis. In an irenic spirit, I will hence grant that subscribing to either the methodological thesis or the ontological thesis is sufficient for dubbing oneself "(scientific) naturalist". Yet, one may *not* call themselves "naturalist" or "scientific naturalist" while holding only a kind of merely modest naturalism. This latter point is crucial as setting the bar this low means that the cherished membership to the naturalism club comes at too cheap a price. Anything below the level of the methodological and ontological thesis would mean that virtually any philosopher would gain an automatic membership in the naturalism club even if they actively do not want to associate with its members.

Dealing with three theses under the rubric of "scientific naturalism" may appear to be awkward. It would indeed be much more comfortable to have a single, unitary thesis to call "scientific naturalism". Unfortunately, this is as much clarity as I can bring to the terminological turmoil regarding the term "naturalism" and its cognates without either driving away self-identified naturalists or saying nothing of substance at all.

§3   The Scientific Image – Naturalism as a Worldview

A picture held us captive. – Wittgenstein (1953, §115)

I have repeatedly stressed that it is difficult to pin down the meaning of naturalism and how to properly phrase it. I have at every stage tried to accommodate naturalist sensibilities in reconstructing what a substantial and agreeable version of naturalism may amount to. In this part I shall aim to provide some background as to what may cause those difficulties. Contrary to what I have worked out so far, I shall suggest in this part that naturalism is actually not best understood *merely* as a kind of thesis (ontological, methodological, or epistemological). Rather it is to be understood as an *image* in the sense of a *worldview*.[14] The image or worldview corresponding to naturalism can be called "scientific image". Un-

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[14]   For the sake of simplicity, I use the terms "worldview", "word-picture", and "worldimage" interchangeably.

derstanding naturalism as a worldview in relation to naturalism as a thesis is not wholly unprecedented (e.g. Macarthur 2018, 51 f.), yet this differentiation usually remains unmarked, with naturalism as a thesis being the main topic of debate.

Naturalism is characterized as a thesis or philosophical "movement" or "paradigm" which is to be understood before the scientific image as a background. Naturalism is closely related to the idea of the scientific image, a term that came to prominence in Sellars' seminal *Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man*. Sellars famously distinguishes the manifest image from the scientific image, both of which are idealizations of two different conceptual frameworks. The manifest image is the image of "man-in-the-world", the "framework in terms of which man encountered himself" (Sellars 1962, 6 f.), so on a somewhat simplified reading, the ordinary worldview as a conceptual framework which itself is not totally alien to science, but rather already incorporates parts of scientific reasoning and vocabulary. For example, talk about "bacteria" is already part of the manifest image even if they are not discernible by the naked eye. In contrast, the scientific image is the conceptual framework in virtue of theoretical postulation insofar as natural sciences posit certain fundamental entities which, in its ideal form, offers a complete account of the world, what there really is. While the manifest image is deemed at least useful, the scientific image and the manifest image are in a rivalry. Sellars famously hopes for a synoptic view in which the authoritative scientific image is supplemented with a "language of community and individual intentions" (Sellars 1962, 40). Sellars' rendition of what the "scientific image" is has become perhaps the most influential version, at least in the world of Anglophone philosophy. His ideas are enlightening and their implications hotly debated to this day, especially the question what a synoptic view of the two images would entail in detail.[15]

There is one way in which the scientific image is sometimes taken to find expression: scientism. The term "scientism", I hold, is used to refer to that kind of expression. Scientism is the enthusiastic, not sufficiently justified belief in the explanatory power of the natural sciences.[16] What this means will vary from context to context.[17] Susan Haack formulates six characteristics of scientism:

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15   This is a different debate however, cf. the issue edited by Gabbani (2012).

16   There are different expressions of this idea. For example, Tom Sorell writes that "Scientism is the belief that science, especially natural science, is much the most valuable part of human learning—much the most valuable part because it is much the most authoritative, or serious, or beneficial" (Sorell 1991, 1). Similarly, Olfason writes: "the belief that only antiscientific prejudice and a fuzzy-minded mysticism can stand in the way of a general acceptance of naturalism and the scientific world-view [...] belongs to scientism as the ideology of science rather than to science itself" (Olfason 2001, x).

17   Being "scientistic about philosophy, for instance, might not be the same as being scientistic about art or the understanding of religious beliefs" (Beale & Kidd 2018, 2).

1. The usage of the terms "science" or "scientific" as honorifics.
2. Adopting the manners and terminologies of the sciences irrespective of their actual usefulness.
3. Preoccupation with demarcation between genuine science and pseudo-scientific impostors.
4. Preoccupation with identifying the "scientific" method as a means to explain how the sciences have been successful.
5. Looking to the sciences for answers to questions beyond their scope.
6. Denying the legitimacy or value of other kinds of inquiry (Haack 2011, 77 f., abbreviated).

Some of these aspects are relevant for the debate about scientific naturalism and the scientific image, most importantly the second and fifth characteristic. These two characteristics – about adopting the manners of the natural sciences and applying natural sciences to questions beyond their scope – can inform prime criticisms of scientific naturalism (more specifically, the methodological thesis). Scientism and scientific naturalism are thus related ideas, yet somewhat different: Williams (2015, 3–5) argues, for example, that scientism implies a commitment to scientific naturalism, but not *vice versa*. While scientism, understood as this kind of unwarranted trust in science, is one way in which the scientific image is actualized, there is more to it.

It is important to note that I here use the term "scientific image" in a somewhat different, broader sense than Sellars envisioned. This is because I take Sellars, despite his enlightening views, not to be the first one to have thought about there being a way of looking at the world in a matter wholly informed by the natural sciences. Sellars' way of describing a scientific image or scientific worldview is not the only one; Sellars is by far not the first one to draw attention to the idea of a scientific image. Instead there are variations on the themes Sellars debates which dig, I hold, deeper into the heart of the matter. Preceding Sellars, thinkers like Dilthey, Heidegger and Jaspers have thought deeply about the nature of world images (*Weltanschauungen*, *Weltbilder*) generally and about the implications of a scientific image of the world more specifically. Unfortunately, their ideas have been looming in the background somewhat or at least have not been brought much into contact with more "analytic" approaches in the context of scientific naturalism. Drawing on these thinkers, I want to bring into focus some characteristics of images (in the sense of worldviews) generally and the scientific image specifically in order to gain some much-needed clarity on a rich and challenging metaphor. My general strategy will be to first offer brief overviews of three accounts on images – Dilthey, Jaspers, and Heidegger – which are despite their differences fairly continuous, and then recount the aspects of images they espouse in order to provide an account of what characterizes scientific naturalism *as a worldview*.

While ordinary usually does not mark a difference, Jaspers distinguishes between a worldview (*Weltanschauung*) and worldimage (*Weltbild*). A worldview is comprised of a subjective side and an objective side (the world as an entirety of objects [*Gesamtheit des Gegenständlichen*], Jaspers 1925, 132). Jaspers calls the objective side of the worldview the "worldimage". Worldimages aim to grasp man and the world in their totality, as a unity. Worldimages are self-evident in the sense that anyone clinging to a worldimage takes that worldimage as absolute. Often, people clinging to a certain worldimage cannot conceptualize their worldimage as one among many. Worldimages fixate a part of the whole reality and take that part to be the whole. A worldimage as such is a general thing, a Weberian ideal type – thinkers *in* a given worldimage always only share a part of a worldimage. In other words: the totality of a worldimage outruns or exceeds the number of thinkers who cling to it (Jaspers 1925, 123 f, cf. also 129).

Similar to Jaspers, one of Dilthey's later projects is the *Weltanschauungslehre*, i. e. a systematic study of worlviews. Worldviews are essentially metaphysical affairs for Dilthey. Dilthey begins with stating that there is a tension regarding the origin and veracity of worldviews. On the one hand, worldviews arise historically at certain points and certain places in time under certain contingent conditions. On the other hand, worldviews claim to provide an objective account of reality as a whole. Dilthey's solution to this tension is to develop a systematic study of what worldviews are and what kinds of worldviews there are (Dilthey 1960, 6 ff.).

His remarks on the logical structure of worldviewss are scarce, yet very interesting. Worldviews themselves are not a product of thought that could be characterized as entirely rational. Instead, Dilthey asserts that worldviews have a quasi-psychological basis in a collective conduct of life ("*Lebensverhalten*") and experience of life ("*Lebenserfahrung*") (Dilthey 1960, 86). A given worldview is a relation to the "riddle of life" ("*Lebensrätsel*") (Dilthey 1960, 849), that is, a systematization and structuring of the whole of human experience into a set of problems and solutions. As such, worldviews are not *merely* metaphysical for Dilthey, at least not metaphysical in the sense commonly assumed. Worldviews purport to account for the *whole* world. As such, worldviews derive ethical standards and prescriptions from metaphysical assumptions about the structure of the world (Dilthey 1960, 82). Fittingly, Dilthey's main examples for types of worldviews are religion, art, and philosophy (mirroring Hegel's three forms of absolute spirit).

Dilthey also specifically mentions naturalism ("Naturalism") as a kind of worldview. According to him, naturalism has an epistemological and a metaphysical side: sensualism and materialism, respectively. As one of the early pioneers of psychology, Dilthey views the appeal of naturalism as rooted in two aspects of our experience: first the fact that material things are immediate and abundant, the material world itself is ever-present and inescapable; second the

fact that the material world is the space of uniformities (e.g.: "coldness follows rain"), and uniformities are so crucial for the conduct of life as such (Dilthey 1960, 101). Mechanicism is, according to Dilthey, not a mark of naturalism as such (since mechanical explanations are compatible with other worldviews as well), yet naturalism can take a mechanistic form once the whole world is understood as governed by mechanism (Dilthey 1960, 104). Naturalism, as a worldviews, then also includes certain ethical outlooks: hedonism (the "will to enjoyment") and an acceptance of life governed by deterministic forces ("Unterwerfung [unter den] Weltverlauf") (Dilthey 1960, 101).[18]

The notion of mechanicism and calculation (*Berechnung*) are key for Dilthey's thought about naturalism. Dilthey calls naturalism, or rather the naturalist worldview, the "mechanical worldimage" in several places because "in naturalism, only that is real which is measurable" (Dilthey 1960, 186; transl. mine). The mechanical worldimage assumes that appearances are ultimately underwritten by something that can be ideally described in merely quantitative terms (e.g. matter, energy, atoms, electrons). The assumption that something purely quantitative underlies the appearances is what renders reality ultimately calculable, hence controllable, and renders the qualitative richness of the world as mere appearance. The mechanical image transposes measurement and calculation from its original domain onto all bits of reality, even parts which are usually thought not to be calculated, thereby producing *ad hoc* explanations of the world. According to Dilthey, this has consequences for things outside the scientific domain: calculating, counting, measuring, experimenting become mere ends in themselves. It repurposes even phenomena which are intangible, abstract and qualitatively rich through and through: states, societies, and life itself are thought of in mechanical terms.

Dilthey is certainly not the only one who thought about the scientific image before Sellars. Heidegger's views on *Wissenschaft* (science), technology and the scientific image are deep and complicated. They are but one part of his even more complicated ideas on *Sein* (being) beginning with *Being and Time*. A full appreciation of his views on science and technology would require at least one separate monograph.[19] The purpose of introducing Heidegger's idea in this context is much more humble, and will neither attempt to give a full appreciation of Heidegger's account of technology nor take a stance on the relation to his anti-

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[18]   This may seem odd to some, yet Dilthey is on point here. For example, Kanitscheider (2011) specifically develops his hedonistic ethics (an "enlightened hedonism") as a reaction to the naturalistic image of the world.

[19]   Another hermeneutical layer that has been added in the last few years is the question whether or to what extent Heidegger's critique of technology and modern science is related to the antisemitism found in the *Black Books*. This question will not play a role in which of Heidegger's ideas about the scientific image are dealt with here.

semitism. For the purpose of illuminating the idea of a scientific image, the most expedient approach seems to be to parachute in and appropriate some of his remarks, specifically the idea of the *Ge-stell* and *Berechnung* (calculation).

In the simplest of terms, the *Ge-Stell* is a fundamental way of relating to the world in a certain manner or under a certain view. It is a kind of gaze that views everything as mere *stock* (*Bestand*) with which one can do as one pleases. The *Ge-stell* is essentially characterized by steering (*Steuerung*) and securing (*Sicherung*). The *Ge-stell* as a mode of relating to the world is a prerequisite of modern natural science: modern natural science is a form of expression of the *Ge-stell*. The paradigmatic way in which the *Ge-stell* takes shape in natural science is as a kind of *calculation* (*Berechnen*) in modern physics.

In later remarks, Heidegger directly speaks of the *mathematical-calculating worldimage* (*das mathematisch-rechnende Weltbild*). A worldimage is characterized as a certain understanding of being. The *mathematical-calculating worldimage* interprets all things as readily available for a *calculational mode of understanding*. More specifically, Heidegger credits Descartes with giving prominent expression to it (Heidegger 1977, 87).[20] As such, this worldimage itself is inherently connected to the rise of the natural sciences in the early modern period (Heidegger 1977, 76) such that the natural sciences themselves were only able to arise in the first place against the backdrop of the specific metaphysical background assumption encapsulated by the mathematical-calculating worldimage. Relatedly, this worldimage also gives expression to the modern conception of nature. For Heidegger, this conception is expressed in the belief that nature is that universe of objects (*Gegenstandsbereich*) which is only accessible through "quantified measuring and calculating" (Heidegger 1989, 150). Nature thus is seen intelligible as a "system of information" (Heidegger 2000a, 24). First and foremost, this worldview is a view about nature (and subsequently natural sciences), but Heidegger sees it extend into the treatment of the objects of all sciences, including the *Geisteswissenschaften* or humanities:

> The preying-securing [*nachstellend-sicherstellend*, TJS] method of all theory of the real is a calculating one. (Heidegger 2000b, 57)

This describes a specific mode of thought: calculating thought (*das rechnende Denken*). Heidegger is quick to add that this not merely restricted to explanation through numerical symbols, but it is a mode that can take different shapes according to our different ways of relating to the world. Heidegger clarifies that "calculating" is not meant as mere "operating with numbers"; instead it means

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20   Unless otherwise stated, the English translations of Heidegger's terms in this subsection are provided by the author as many of Heidegger's works have not yet received English editions.

the representation of the real in terms of the *Ge-stell* (*Vergegenständlichung*) (Heidegger 2000b, 57).

There are two important points we can draw from Dilthey's and Heidegger's remarks regarding naturalism as an image. First, naturalism as a worldimage is a *result* of a certain kind of collective life experience – and not the other way around. According to Dilthey, life is primary and primordial, producing naturalism as one possible view on life and the world itself. Secondly, Dilthey does not seem to see the internal connection between explanation as a method on the other hand and naturalism as viewing the whole world as matter on the other hand. *Thinking these ideas together yields the outcome that naturalism – thought through – applies the mode of explanation as the primary mode of the natural science to philosophy itself, or rather: introduces the idea of explanation to philosophy to align it with the natural sciences.* If the scientific image permeates all of life, it permeates philosophy too. Working out the implications of this overlap is the purpose in what follows.

These three short representations of Jaspers, Dilthey, and Heidegger are obviously schematic and much more could be said about these authors. Yet, for the current purposes it is sufficient in order to synthesize characteristics of world images generally and characteristics of the scientific image as one of their specifications. Inspired by these authors, I shall first rehearse three interlocking, partially interdependent characteristics of worldviews as such and afterwards supplement these three characteristics with qualities which are special to the scientific image.

Metaphysical character. How the concept of metaphysics is most aptly described is highly controversial. It is, however, relatively uncontroversial to remark that metaphysical theorems are about objects and explanations beyond sense experience which pertain to the structure of the world in a whole (following the traditional sense of a *metaphysica generalis*). Worldviews have a metaphysical character insofar as they provide a picture of the structure of the world as a whole. Dilthey in this context even asserts that metaphysical systems *ipso facto* are worldviews. To introduce a more concrete elucidation of this idea, we may adduce Robert Brandom's (2009) recasting of the project of metaphysics. According to his construal, metaphysics strives to develop one kind of vocabulary, or one kind of conceptual domain, in which everything can be expressed. For example, naturalism insofar as it is a metaphysical worldview, aims to develop a core vocabulary of terms that are deemed natural, whatever this may amount to.

All-encompassing. Worldviews do not simply pertain to a single area of life or thought but the whole. Worldviews are therefore not singular beliefs (e.g. "there is a blue lamp over there"). This sets them apart from philosophical theorems (e.g. the classical analysis of knowledge as justified true belief) and from scientif-

ic theories with relatively local reach (e.g. the oxygen theory of combustion). The worldview of materialism offers a picture of the whole world, i.e. that *everything* is material. A worldimage is the image of the world, the whole world purportedly brought into view. The scientific image of the world is an image of the world according to natural science.

Presuppositional status. Worldviews are further characterized by their presuppositional status. This is for example indicated by the fact that they (and the propositional contents they can be grasped with) do not possess simple truth conditions (e.g. "there are three knives in this knife block"). This is closely related to the former point. Worldviews cannot be refuted or proven in the manner which is true for ordinary assertions. Instead, they can merely be criticized or endorsed. This characteristic of worldviews is codified in some famous remarks by Wittgenstein:

> But I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself of its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false. (Wittgenstein 1969a, §93)

Worldviews have the character of a transcendental framework assumption: no amount of empirical work we can do would give us sufficient proof that one worldview or another is ultimately true. A worldview cannot become true just on empirical evidence alone. Hence, any reasonable justification of some worldview or another *must* include at least some non-empirical reasoning.

This also implies that worldviews are not truth-evaluable, as an image cannot be true or false. An image can perhaps be more or less accurate, more or less close to an ideal of something, but an image cannot be true or false in the sense that statements are true or false. This is a simple, yet crucial point. Images therefore have a different logical and justificatory status, if they have any at all.

Aesthetic evaluation. While they are not truth-evaluable, images can be evaluated in virtue of aesthetic criteria. An image can be aesthetically pleasing, ugly, elegant, barren or rich. Images emphasize and exclude certain aspects of which they are an image; in this sense, an image cannot be said to be complete or incomplete.

In summary, worldviews are all-encompassing metaphysical images of the world with a peculiar justificatory status. Worldviews insofar as they are pictures are not simply truth-evaluable like statements are, but they can be evaluated according to aesthetic criteria. It is accordingly unlikely that worldviews can be justified by empirical means; in other words, people usually do not come to endorse a certain picture of the world in the same way they come to perceptual beliefs or

scientific beliefs. The statements which aim to encompass the image may be truth-evaluable, but the worldview itself always has a kind of surplus going beyond truth-evaluable statements. Pictures also always necessarily *exclude* something and *accentuate* something else (matter and natural science being what is accentuated by naturalism).

These characteristics count for anything that can be qualified as an image in the sense of a worldview. There are two more characteristics I deem specific to naturalism as a worldview, and the scientific image.

Bottom-up construction. Both the ontological thesis and the methodological thesis of naturalism are expressive of a commitment to a bottom-up construction of the things in the world. This commitment to a bottom-up view of how the picture of the world must be painted in the end is nicely expressed in many phrasings of naturalism. Here are just two of them:

> Nature is a system of derived entities, the basic going to construct the less basic; and understanding nature is figuring out how the derivation goes […]. Find the atoms and laws of combination and evolution, and then derive the myriad of complex objects you find in nature. (McGinn 2003, 207)

Similarly, Schrenk construes David Lewis' metaphysical position as pixel worldview:

> Lewis makes a profound Realist assumption: the world is, fundamentally, a four dimensional space-time mosaic of instantiations of point size categorical properties […]. [If] you say everything about the microstructure then, maybe, what can be known about macro stuff follows already from summaries of the micro world because the macro consists of the micro. (Schrenk 2016, 136 f.)

Of course, the natural sciences are supposed to be telling us what ultimately the "micro" is of which the "macro" consists. Naturalist thinkers like Lewis paint the picture of a metaphysical bottom-up construction of objects in a four-dimensional space which essentially consists of small particles, entirely describable in natural-scientific terms. *Qua* ontological thesis, scientific naturalism offers a view of the world where we can start at the macro level and progressively "zoom" in onto the micro entities of which the macro exists – even if we cannot actually perceive the micro by any means, either for principled reasons or as a matter of mere contingency. The idea of a bottom-up construction is just a general framework which can be specified in many different ways: reductionism, supervenience relations, grounding relations, emergentism, and (specific to the relation between mind and matter) epiphenomenalism. These relations are different metaphysical tools which are supposed to specify *in detail* how the bottom-up construction of the world can be conceptualized. Note that this kind of bottom-up construction

of the world is specific to forms of materialism (or physicalism) rather than to forms of idealism or dualism. Neither idealist nor dualist positions incur the problem of accounting for what the world consists of as a whole in terms of a bottom-up construction going from something the idealist or dualist would conceive of as "micro" to something they would consider to be "macro". At least as far worldviews in philosophy go, naturalism seems to be the only one which makes a bottom-up view of the world mandatory.

Calculation

In order to get the nature of worldviews, specifically the scientific image into view, we have to focus further on the notion of calculation which is linked to the notion of bottom-up constructions. The bottom-up construction of the world from a micro-plane to a macro-plane opens up the possibility to reconstruct the macro-properties as micro-properties by means of calculation. The idea of calculation alluded to here is akin to what I referred to with Heidegger in the construal of the mathematical-calculating worldimage. Calculation in this sense is not merely arithmetic, thus not restricted to assertions of the kind that two plus three equals five. In the broader sense, making something calculable is not related to numbers at all, but is descriptive of a certain kind of procedure of solving a given problem. Making something calculable is solving a problem by reducing it to mechanical procedures: express a certain problem in a symbolic language, reduce the solution of the problem to operations in the symbolic language (Krämer 1988). In this sense, the idea of calculation can be transposed to the context of arithmetic, of numbers, to virtually any area of thought. This is the idea of ratiocination as the prime mode of cognizing, a term developed with theoretical bite by thinkers of the early modern period, most notably Descartes, Leibniz, and Hobbes. Common to these three particular thinkers is the idea of generalizing calculation as a general means of cognizing things which are not numbers. In what follows, I shall shortly point out different phrasings by these philosophers of the same idea, namely the idea that the notion of calculation as known from arithmetic can be transposed to other domains as a means of explanation of the world. The underlying, unifying assumption of these accounts is the idea that calculation can be universalized from its main domain (numbers, arithmetic) to the everything that exists.

In the *Regulae ad directionem ingenii* Descartes bases his approach on an algebraic method and develops it into a *mathesis universalis*, by aiming to generalize it into a "science" for all things:

> [...] all those things only are referred to mathematics in which some order or measure is examined, and that it is irrelevant whether such measure were to be sought in numbers or in figures or in stars or in sounds or in any other object whatsoever. I also realized that,

for this reason, there must be some general science which could explain all that which can be investigated concerning order and measure irrespective of any particular matter. And I realized that this science should be designated […] as 'mathesis universalis' since it contains all that by virtue of which the other sciences are also called 'parts of mathematics'. (Descartes 1985, 95 ff.)

Descartes describes as part of his project the construal of a *mathesis universalis* which contains all other sciences. The *mathesis universalis* is the science of all that concerns "order and measure" *irrespective* of any further qualification of the subject matter involved. Measure can be found pertaining to any kind of object "whatsoever" (e.g. numbers, figures, stars, sounds etc.). Hence, everything which can be an object of thought can be to object of *mathesis universalis*, insofar as everything has measure. It is important to note that Descartes places a methodological criterion on anything that can be the object of proper science: anything that has *measure* is object of the *mathesis universalis*, of the universal science. What does not have measure of any kind cannot be object of the *mathesis universalis.* But, as Descartes seems to be sure, everything has measure, everything falls under the purview of *mathesis universalis.*

Hobbes expresses a similar sentiment with his usage of the term "*ratiocinatio*", or: calculation.

By ratiocination I mean computation. Now to compute is either to collect the sum of many things that are added together, or to know what remains when one thing is taken out of another. *Ratiocination*, therefore, is the same with *addition* and *subtraction*; and if any man add *multiplication* and *division*, I will not be against it, seeing multiplication is nothing but addition of equals one to another, and division nothing but a subtraction of equals one from another, as often as possible. So that all ratiocination is comprehended in these two operations of the mind, addition and subtraction. (Hobbes 1662, 3)

After discussing some examples, Hobbes adds:

We must therefore not think that computation, that is, ratiocination, has place only in numbers, as if man were distinguished from other living creatures […] by nothing but the faculty of numbering; for *magnitude, body, motion, time, degrees of quality, action, conception, proportion, speech and names* (in which all the kinds of philosophy consist) are capable of addition and subtraction. (Hobbes 1662, 5)

Reasoning, according to Hobbes, is computation: adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing. The mode of computation is not limited to numbers. Numbering is simply the main game of computation. Hobbes asserts that rational insight is the same as addition or subtraction insofar as calculating means finding the sum of composite things. Hence, calculation is not to numbers, but pertains to virtually anything with which philosophy is concerned since anything which can somehow be quantified can be added or subtracted in some way, even "qualities" themselves. Ratiocinationas the prime mode of cognizing the world and coming

to know things about the world, too, makes the presupposition that things which are object of cognition as such can be "counted" in a way that is analogous to arithmetical operations. Hobbes main focus here is on the method of philosophy. This will become important later as this can be interpreted already as a form of methodological naturalism.

In a similar vein, we can reconstruct Leibniz's idea of a *characteristica universalis*, a "universal language" which allows one to represent any kind of concept in a way that numbers represent certain quantities, thereby allowing the calculation of concepts. This universal language's purpose is to be ultimately used as a means for universal logical calculation

> The only way to rectify our reasonings is to make them as tangible as those of the Mathematicians, so that we can find our error at a glance, and when there are disputes among persons, we can simply say: Let us calculate (*calculemus*), without further ado, to see who is right. Leibniz (1951, 51)

This famous passage neatly expresses the motivation behind the (unfinished) project of a *characteristica universalis:* to construct a system in which we can ultimately somehow *calculate* human reasoning to find out true and false. The idea of a *characteristica universalis* is a kind of calculus whose symbols are to be interpreted as variables for ordinary concepts and logical concepts. The upshot is the idea that we can replace operations with proper thoughts (e.g. inferring) with operations with symbols. Although Leibniz bemoaned the fact that he did not have time to fully develop this idea, his *characteristica universalis* is already a more fleshed out account of universal calculability than Descartes' and Hobbes' renditions.

Descartes' *mathesis universalis*, Hobbes' *ratiocinatio*, and Leibniz's *characteristica universalis* are complicated ideas which serve, of course, different purposes in the oeuvres of these authors respectively. Certainly, this short construal does not do their complexity justice. Yet, the impetus of universalizing calculation is all-too apparent. A full reconstruction of these accounts together with a proper historical appreciation – tracing the tradition of these ideas from Pythagoras through Bolzano, Frege, Russell, Tarski, Montague, and Chomsky to the present day – would require its own lengthy monograph.[21] What is common

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21   Nowhere is this notion of calculation more explicit than in formal-mathematical theories of language, i.e. those approaches which hold that natural languages can be fully explained and accounted for by way of formal-mathematical means. This spirit is most succinctly present in Richard Montague's following programmatic statement, the very first sentence of his article *Universal Grammar:* "There is in my opinion no important theoretical difference between natural languages and the artificial languages of logicians; indeed I consider it possible to comprehend the syntax and semantics of both kinds of languages with a single natural and mathematically precise theory" (Montague 1970, 222). Montague opines two things: (i) there is no

to all three of these conceptions is the claim that virtually *anything is calculable.* Whether this claim is true or false is not of concern here. Instead, I wish to take these authors at face value and suggest that this claim has, in some transformed shape, survived and has to be positioned in close proximity to naturalism and the scientific worldview. In what follows, I will suggest that this idea of calculation and calculability can be found in philosophical practice itself today under the guise of what I will dub "quasi-scientific theory".

§4 Philosophy in Accordance with Science? – Quasi-Scientific Theory

Scientific language is 'a symbolism used in an exact calculus' – Wittgenstein (1969b, 25)

The preceding section aimed to establish that the methodological thesis states that genuine philosophical questions (which cannot be deferred to natural science) ought to be solved somehow in accordance with the methodologies of the natural sciences. But what does it mean for philosophy to be aligned with the sciences? I have suggested different ways this can be interpreted. As a first and obvious example, experimental philosophy stipulates that at least some philosophical questions ought to be answered with the help of experimental methods of the kind utilized in the sciences. Experimental philosophy is perhaps the "most 'hands-on' form of methodological naturalism to date" (Fischer 2018, 260). A second example lies in the view that philosophy ought to be viewed as a kind of *ancilla* or assistant of the sciences. A view like this is neatly expressed by Ladyman and Ross who hold that properly naturalistic philosophy "is the enterprise of critically elucidating consilience networks across the sciences" (Ladyman & Ross 2007, 28). A third, and perhaps less ambitious reading is to simply state that philosophy ought not to produce statements which are in direct conflict with the natural sciences.

In this section, I aim to motivate and reconstruct a different way in which aligning philosophy with the natural sciences has been construed. This different way is focused on introducing the same or similar form of explanation that is

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substantial difference between theoretical and natural languages. And (ii) natural languages can be comprehended with a single "mathematically precise theory". Chomsky is often thought to have worked out this idea for syntax, and Montague for the area of semantics (cf. Janssen 2017, 1.1). Montague's assumptions licence projects which aim to construct such a mathematically precise theory. These assumptions demonstrate the way a phenomenon – natural languages – is supposed to be comprehended through calculation in the sense of formalization and mathematization.

present in the natural sciences into philosophical practice. I call the kind of explanation in philosophy that aims to mimic the (putative) explanatory mode of the natural sciences: *quasi-scientific theory*. And as it turns out, the idea of scientific explanation operative here is a spiritual successor to the idea of universalizing calculation which can be viewed to be part and parcel of the scientific image.

In a nutshell: The basic idea is that *quasi-scientific theories* explain certain things (which are taken to be in need of an explanation) by introducing abstract unobservables. Quasi-scientific theories posit abstract unobservables as explanantia in order to account for their explananda by making them *calculable* in a sense which is specific to the relevant explanatory circumstance. Quasi-scientific *theories explain* phenomena through abstract *unobservables*, thereby making these phenomena *calculable*. In such explanatory relations, one could treat the objects of philosophical thought in a manner analogous to how some natural sciences treat their objects.

Before developing this idea further some important caveats have to be mentioned. I do not purport to provide a conclusive answer to either of the issues addressed here, neither to the unity of science thesis, nor on the nature of scientific theory and explanation. For what this part is made to accomplish, it is not necessary to provide a "final" or "definitive" account of scientific explanation as such. I use some reflections on how scientific explanation can be understood in order to get into view a certain mode of explanation central to understand the phenomenon of quasi-scientific theory. I simply aim to develop one possible way in which aligning of philosophical practice with natural science often seems to be put into philosophical practice. It would also be incorrect to state that quasi-scientific theories in philosophy are *the* definitive expression of the scientific image or methodological naturalism. It is simply one way in which the scientific image has taken concrete shape. And fleshing out the idea how the scientific image takes a foothold in philosophy is unrelated to the true account of how natural-scientific explanation actually works.[22]

The key question then is what it would mean for philosophy to emulate the explanatory mode of the sciences. This presupposes, of course, an answer to the question what the explanatory mode of the natural sciences is, whether there is just one or many of those modes of explanations. To answer this question is to

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[22]   The two classical, competing theses about the nature of natural-scientific explanations are the semantic view versus the syntactic view. Both views deal with the question how the language of scientific theories is to be adequately translated. Proponents of the syntactic view hold that scientific theories are to be reconstructed in metamathematical language (e.g. set theory), while defenders of the semantic view hold that scientific theories are to be reconstructed in mathematical terms (see Winther 2016 for an overview). While relevant and hotly contested, these issues are far removed from the question how naturalism and the scientific image can be viewed as operative in philosophical reflection, and are hence not further addressed.

answer the very controversial question regarding the *unity of science.* What is the unity of science? Just like naturalism, the unity of science can be framed in different ways. A common construal carves the unity of science thesis up into an ontological and methodological segment. Both segments are present in the now classic article by Oppenheim and Putnam which solidified the unity of science thesis as a field of debate:

> 'Unity of Science' means the state of unitary science. It involves the two constituents […]: unity of vocabulary, or 'Unity of Language'; and unity of explanatory principles, or 'Unity of Laws.' That Unity of Science, in this sense, can be fully realized constitutes an overarching meta-scientific hypothesis which enables one to see a unity in scientific activities that might otherwise appear disconnected or unrelated, and which encourages the construction of a unified body of knowledge. (Oppenheim & Putnam 1958, 4; cf. Tooby & Cosmides 1992 for a more recent reformulation)

What Oppenheim and Putnam call the "unity of language" can be qualified as an ontological unity, once one assumes a representationalist framework, as is often taken for granted in the debates of naturalism. In such a framework, the terms used by a science directly refer to, and vouch for the existence of, the entities introduced in that science, as it were. This is to the effect that "all terms of science are reduced to the terms of some one discipline" (Oppenheim & Putnam 1958, 3). A similar thing can be said about the unity of laws: the unity of laws is achieved once the laws of all scientific disciplines are reduced to the laws of a single discipline. This privileged discipline in both of these segments is commonly assumed to be physics. The ontological segment requires unity of science because it presupposes that all other sciences can be reduced to physics. And the methodological segment requires the unity of science because it presupposes that there is something like a single scientific method, represented by the laws of physics. Hence, the ontological unity of science turns out to be a matter of (some form of) physicalism. The unity of science thesis mirrors here the ontological and methodological theses of naturalism. The unity of science thesis has potential implications for the nature of scientific explanations, namely if there is a methodological unity to the sciences, this may imply that there is only one explanatory mode common to all sciences, even if different sciences feature different kinds of explanatory modes on the "surface".

The unity of science thesis has been attacked and defended over the decades.[23] The position which currently seems to be favoured by more authors is a

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[23]   One of the most canonical attacks on the unity of science thesis is found in Fodor (1974). Jerry Fodor casts doubt on the feasibility of the unity of science and demonstrates that the unity of science thesis has as its prerequisite the idea of reductivism. Reductivism is the view that "all events which fall under the laws of any science are physical events and hence fall under the laws of physics" (Fodor 1974, 97), such that all special sciences are reducible to physics in this way.

support of *disunity* or *pluralism* about the methodology of the sciences
(e.g. Kellert, Longino & Waters 2006). For the concerns of this section, I shall
largely sidestep debates about the unity of science, at least as it is commonly con-
ceived. Instead, I want to adopt a kind of reframing of the idea that philosophy
ought to be in a kind of methodological accordance with the sciences. This re-
framing largely draws on a reintroduction of Dilthey's notion of explanation
(*Erklärung*) as a unifying characteristic of the natural sciences even if we assume
a disunity of the methodologies of the sciences. If Dilthey is right, then even if all
sciences differ in their methodology, they can still be neatly delineated from other
disciplines insofar as they offer explanations.

In what follows, I shall first briefly recapitulate Dilthey's famous distinction
between explanation (*Erklärung*) and understanding (*Verstehen*). Dilthey was
one of the first to provide a principled distinction between the natural sciences
(*Naturwissenschaften*) and the humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*) – the mark of
the natural sciences being that they *explain* their objects. This turns on the ques-
tion what explanation is, of course. I shall develop the idea that explanation in
the natural sciences can be understood as essentially utilizing the kind of calcula-
tion which was introduced as the mark of the scientific image in the previous
chapter. If the natural sciences can be understood as explaining in terms of calcu-
lating, and if philosophy ought to be aligned with the natural sciences (as
methodological naturalism prescribes), then philosophy may have to adopt the
same mode of explanation in terms of calculation. And the kind of philosophy
that posits theories in the explanatory-calculatory sense I call here quasi-scientif-
ic theory.

In the simplest of terms, Dilthey's reasoning for delineating the natural sci-
ences (*Naturwissenschaften*) and humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*) is as fol-
lows: The natural sciences deal with nature. Nature is alien to man insofar as
nature is that which is not made by man. This essential characteristic of what is

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Fodor's argument is that reductivism as a requirement for the unity of sciences is too strong.
This is for two reasons. First, bridge laws connecting laws of the special sciences and laws of
physics only vouch for a weak version of physicalism because the relation expressed in them
does not constitute an identity relation. And for strong ontological reduction, the physicalist
needs this identity relation. Even a rereading of bridge laws as establishing token-physicalism
(via identifying non-physical tokens with physical tokens) is still weaker than reductivism. A
second reason is that certain phenomena can be multiply-realized by different things. So, for
example, physics cannot capture laws of economics. Because the transactions described in eco-
nomic laws are realized by different means: commodities, dollar bills, other currencies, checks.
A bridge law connecting this to physical laws would have to cover these cases with a very large
number of disjunctions of physical properties. But such a law is extremely unlikely to pick out a
physical natural kind (cf. also Van Riel & Van Gulick 2016). For a critique of Fodor's argument
see Papineau (2009).

natural is codified in the original ancient Greek term "*physis*" as that which is what it is through itself, unhappily translated as "*natura*" in Latin. What is part of nature is therefore "outside" of us. In contrast, the *Geisteswissenschaften* deal with that which is somehow product of or otherwise intimately related to *Geist*, i.e. the mind as mental activity as a whole. The mind is something "from us", namely a defining feature of what it is to be human as such. The *human*ities deal, in this sense, with the products and objects which are related to our individual and collective human activity. The products of our individual and collective mental activity can be investigated on different levels: in history, sociology or cultural studies.

Dilthey's key idea now is that those things which are "alien" to us (nature) and those things which are "from" us (culture, *Geist*, the distinctively human) require different modes of investigation: what comes "from" us – *Geist* – has to be *understood* (*verstanden*), that which is "alien" to us – *nature* – can only be *explained* (*erklärt*). It seems easier to get a grip on what understanding in this sense might be. Understanding a certain phenomenon in Dilthey's technical sense means to use one's mind to comprehend something which one might not have been aware of by now, but to which one's mind can simply be *likened* because the object of understanding (a product of human mental activity) and the subject of understanding (the inquirer) are very much *alike*. Nothing "external" has to be adduced in understanding. It is difficult to further explicate this notion without simply reiterating tautologies and platitudes. This is because *Verstehen* simply seems to be something innately human, something we cannot do without. And the *Verstehen* of *Geisteswissenschaften* is simply the mode of understanding systematized and otherwise refined into a "science" (*Wissenschaft*). Dilthey's construal of *Verstehen* is obviously influenced by the hermeneutical tradition (and has gone on to be a major influence on this tradition).[24]

Explanation (*Erklärung*), on the other hand, is more difficult to explicate. According to Dilthey, natural-scientific explanation deals with law-like uniformities (*Gleichförmigkeiten*) of natural phenomena. Making these law-like uniformities accessible happens through induction and experimentation (Dilthey 1965, 90). How exactly do induction and experiment allow us to grasp law-like uniformities in nature in a way that is different from the mode of understanding (*Verstehen*)? Dilthey suggests that explanations (*Erklärungen*) posit something extra (*etwas Hinzugedachtes*) to the natural phenomenon in order to explain it. Explanations postulate a kind of unchangeable bearer. This unchangeable bearer is a mathematical or mechanical, yet ultimately conceptual, construction. Dilthey's talk of mathematical bearers of explanation neatly lines up with the notion of

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24 How *Verstehen* can be informed as a genuinely philosophical practice is further alluded to in chapter 3, §4.

calculation found in Descartes, Hobbes and Leibniz earlier. The kind of *Erklärungen* Dilthey alludes to at least partially seem to include mathematizations.

What would this mean in natural-scientific practice? Dilthey unfortunately remains somewhat unclear. It is especially vexing that he does not specify what these adduced conceptual entities are exactly. There is some evidence, however, that he viewed the psychology of his time (the kind of psychological inquiry he, too, spearheaded) as a paradigmatic case of a science which explains its object by adducing mathematical or mechanical conceptual constructions of some sort. Dilthey's distinction between *Verstehen* and *Erklären* is in fact helpful in understanding how some disciplines have come to view themselves and their object. For example, it would not be difficult to demonstrate that cognitive science, psychology, (parts of) social science, and especially economics view themselves as giving natural-scientific explanations (in Dilthey's sense) for objects which are decisively human or mental products: action, culture, reasoning, economies. In these disciplines, inductions and experiments abound. The fact that these disciplines emulate natural-scientific explanations does not prove Dilthey's distinction wrong – that would be putting the cart before the horse. It rather discloses that they view their objects as something *natural*, and therefore in a sense alien to us.[25] Wherever we are prone to explain something in this sense, we have already determined that the object we want to explain is alien to us in that sense.

While Dilthey's notion of natural-scientific explanation is (though shared by some) ultimately not part of the current philosophy of science, it is not of interest in the current context to somehow prove that we should contrast it with more contemporary philosophy of science which will obviously view things differently. The purpose of this section is to get a grip on what it might mean in practice for philosophy to be in accordance with natural science. And for this purpose, Dilthey's account is fruitful. This is because, as I shall now suggest, there is a kind of theorizing in philosophy which follows the model of natural-scientific explanation (*Erklärung*) which Dilthey had in mind.

In some areas of philosophy, there is something like *quasi-scientific theories*. My hypothesis is that some philosophers and philosophical traditions have at some point adopted the notion of natural scientific explanation (in Dilthey's sense) and introduced it in philosophy. Note that I do not claim that Dilthey is the

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25   It would be a tremendously interesting question to answer whether the replicability crisis in psychology is internally and essentially connected to the discipline's common self-understanding as a natural science which offers explanations (rather than understanding). The fact that the results of experiments in psychology cannot be properly reproduced cannot, in my view, hinge solely on factors like pressure to publish and some epistemological vices of the researchers. It should give us pause and prompt us to reconsider whether the objects of psychology are in need of the kinds of explanation which are common to the natural sciences like physics, chemistry and biology at all.

pivotal figure here. It is rather the case that Dilthey gave an explication to a mode of thinking (i.e. explanations) which was there before and after him, and was effective and operative in thinkers and thoughts which may have never been in causal contact with Dilthey or his notion of explanation. Simply put, the idea of natural-scientific explanation (as described by Dilthey) is a general phenomenon. I shall further suggest that the adoption of this sense of explanation in the shape of quasi-scientific theory is one essential shape methodological naturalism takes.

What are Philosophical Theories?

Some may wonder why an investigation into the meaning of the expression "theory" is even necessary. The word is commonly used without a second thought, both in academic and ordinary contexts. We seem to know what theories are. Yet, the word "theory" is used in many ways. It is used differently across scientific disciplines and even within single scientific disciplines themselves. And even when considering philosophy alone, the term "theory" denotes a variety of different notions. The main problem lies with the fact that there is not much reflection on this topic despite the widespread use of the word "theory" in philosophy. While there is a well-established debate on what a scientific theory is in the philosophy of science, few have explicated how the usage of "theory" differs when talking about theories in philosophy.[26] It is hence not possible to simply rely on a pre-established notion of theory or to rely on the readers' implicit or intuitive understanding. As Daniel Hutto astutely remarks, there is "currently no single, well-understood, or agreed upon notion of what qualifies as a philosophical theory" (Hutto 2009, 630). Fortunately, this does not mean that it is impossible to determine a proper notion of philosophical theory.

Some examples are helpful in getting the problem of the variety of usages of the word "theory" into focus. It is, firstly, arguable whether disciplines like physics, chemistry and biology work sufficiently similar for the same sense of "theory" to apply to physical, chemical and biological theories alike (cf. the disunity thesis in Dupré 1996). On the other hand, disciplines other than the natural sciences, most notably the humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*) may use different notions of theory altogether. For example, a theory of mind in some parts of (developmental) psychology is regarded as "an understanding of mental states – such as beliefs, desire, and knowledge – that enables us to explain and predict others' behavior" (Miller 2006, 142). This view is different from what is usually meant by

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[26] For one recent example for a use of the term "theory" in philosophy which is wholly indiscriminate see Snowdon (2018). Far from being an exception, this is exemplary of the norm.

"theories" in the sub-discipline of philosophy of mind, for example regarding the "theory" of materialism or "theories" of intentionality. Moreover, what constitutes a theory in, say, cultural studies vastly differ from what counts as a theory in biology. This latter difference becomes vivid when we take a closer look at the meaning of "theory" in the field of sociology. Gabriel Abend distinguishes seven different such uses of "theory" (T1–T7), their equivocation causing confusions among the discipline. Two of those seem to have "scientific credentials", at least rhetorically (Abend 2008, 177–181, paraphrased):

> T1: A theory is a system of general (universally quantified) propositions that establish a relationship between different variables.
> T2: A theory is a causal explanation of a particular social phenomenon, identifying factors which bring an event about.

But the other five variations are not close to this, three of which are displayed here:

> T4: Theories are the studies and interpretations of the 'great writers,' such as (for sociology) Weber, Durkheim, Marx, Simmel and others.
> T5: A theory is a worldview, i.e. a conceptual scheme, as a specific way to look at the (social) world. For example, postmodernist theory, poststructuralist theory, feminist theory, queer theory, neoliberalist theory or critical theory may all be seen as codifications of different worldviews.
> T7: Theories are those aspects of disciplinary reflection that overlap with philosophical issues. For example, the sociological questions of the problem of social order, or question about realism vs. anti-realism regarding the social world.

It is not important whether the content of the different usages in this taxonomy is sensible individually. What this discloses is that even within a single discipline, there can be vastly different views about what "theory" means. These examples from sociology are supposed to point out two things: first, that the expression "theory" is indeed in need of clarification and specification; perhaps there is no unity beyond this immense diversity of usages of "theory". Second, looking to other disciplines is only of limited use when thinking about the notion of theory in philosophy.

But even just considering philosophy as a single discipline, there are critical equivocations regarding the term "theory". It is possible to distinguish between at least two different kinds of theory in philosophy. The first common use of the term "theory" in philosophical circles is usually vaguely connected to the notion of *theoria* afforded to us by Aristotle, understood as a form of physically disen-

gaged contemplation or reflection of a certain subject matter (Aristotle 1999, X, 7–8). A theory of something is then understood as a form of more or less systematized thought about that something, without further qualification as to what shape this thinking takes. There is an abundance of examples that exemplify this relatively *laissez-fare* usage of the word "theory", perhaps the vast majority of philosophy could be taken to fall under this denomination. As an example for what this might look like, consider again the *Theory of Communicative Action* by Jürgen Habermas and *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls where the latter offers systematic reflections on the concept of justice.

This is still vague. Perhaps it is of help to look at how *not* to get a grip on what a philosophical theory is. Paul Horwich, Rupert Read, and Daniel Hutto have provided different attempts at specifying what a philosophical theory is. I shall now briefly recount their views and demonstrate why they are insufficient.

Firstly, Rupert Read (2006, 76) suggests that theories in philosophy are characterized by three aspects:

1. separating sense from nonsense
2. separating thought from illogical thought
3. separating description and depiction.

But this seems inept. If this was true then virtually any positive in remark in philosophy would constitute a theory, and hence, the expression "theory" would hardly be of any use in making distinctions between different modes of thought, within philosophy or otherwise. This is because the concept of theory so conceived would be impotent to sufficiently demarcate differences between certain different intellectual activities. Offering such demarcations is, however, a demand on any useful concept, yet not helpful at getting to the core of what theories in philosophy are.

Paul Horwich alludes to two different criteria that would, as it were, single out philosophical theory. The two points he wants to make are:

1. Philosophical theories are about different objects (than scientific theories)
2. Philosophical theories are *a priori.*

Unfortunately, these two criteria are not of much value when trying to understand the kind of theory in philosophy which aims to mimic scientific explanation (and which Wittgenstein ultimately rejects). Regarding the first difference – difference of objects of inquiry – Horwich writes that philosophers who engage in theory construction of that kind

> are not especially concerned with electrons, or fish, or football, or ammonia, or unemployment, or tectonic plates – but rather with meaning, beauty, necessity, and so on. The focus is on concepts and phenomena that strike them as peculiarly pervasive, fundamen-

> tal, rich, and idiosyncratic – and therefore as providing theorization projects that are pe-
> culiarly challenging. (Horwich 2012, 28)

Horwich wants to make the following point: philosophical theory is different in-
sofar as its objects are different. Horwich also adds that it is true that the topics of
philosophy are "pervasive, fundamental, rich, and idiosyncratic." But this begs
the question what makes an object of inquiry "pervasive, fundamental, rich, and
idiosyncratic" in a way that is clearly different from objects of either natural or
social sciences. Especially considering the social sciences, it is unclear how their
respective concepts and phenomena do not just exhibit the same characteristics
of being pervasive, fundamental and rich. The same case can be made about the
physical inquiry into the nature of forces like gravity. Gravity, too, seems to be
pervasive, fundamental, and rich. Hence, it seems that this characterization does
not properly distinguish scientific and non-scientific theory, barring some fur-
ther argument detailing what is meant by "pervasive, fundamental, rich, and id-
iosyncratic". Furthermore, this points to a profound difficulty. Asking for criteria
that single out the topics of philosophy amounts to the question for the nature of
philosophy. No such account in the history of philosophy has arisen as undisput-
ed or even shared by larger parts of the discipline. While this does not include
that there might be in principle such a universal account everyone can agree on,
such a notion cannot currently be simply presupposed when trying to decisively
characterize philosophical theories. Therefore, further inquiring into this direc-
tion may cast only more confusion on the nature of philosophical theory, just in
case it implies, like Horwich's approach, the difficult burden of offering an ac-
count of the nature of philosophy as such.

Secondly, Horwich argues that one of the main differences between philo-
sophical theories and scientific theories is that philosophical theories are based
on principles that must be *a priori* in some sense of the word (Horwich 2012, 21).
The purpose of *a priori* principles is to constrain theories in a way that is analo-
gous to how empirical data constrain theories in the empirical sciences. Since
there are no empirical data in philosophy, philosophical theory building must be
guided by *a priori* convictions so as not to become entirely arbitrary – at least
this seems to be Horwich's thought. Accordingly, one goal of philosophical theo-
ry is to, as it were, create generalizations to accommodate at least some of our *a
priori* intuitions (Horwich 2012, 25). By the same token, philosophy does not
conduct or employ experiments, as the hypotheses cannot be tested against em-
pirical observations, at least not in the way that is relevant for the sciences.

But unfortunately, the concept of *a priori* knowledge and inquiry is hardly a
clear concept that can do the heavy lifting of elucidating the idea of theory in
philosophy. We surely can understand "*a priori*" as "non-empirical", but this
begs the question what "non-empirical" means if we are to understand it in a way
which goes beyond recursively defining it as "not *a priori*". It is undeniable that

we have an intuitive grip on the notion of what is empirical and *a priori.* Yet, the exact specifications of these notions require a more elaborated account in order to underwrite a differentiation of scientific versus philosophical principles. If left with an intuitive notion of the *a priori*, one may argue that scientific inquiry itself is based on or implies *a priori* principles. And this may be most lucid when considering methodological and other presuppositions of scientific practice, for example a methodological atheism that states no scientific explanation ought to refer to the existence of God. Anyone asserting that the apriority of philosophical theories is what sets them apart, will have to answer questions as to what this feature consists in. There is indeed proper motivation and value to Horwich's impetus to gesture toward the different epistemological status that philosophical inquiry has over scientific research. However, in order to utilize this epistemological difference, one would have to give a clearer, more robust notion of *a priori* inquiry. Therefore, this line of thought will not be pursued further at this point. Horwich's suggestions are of little help, unfortunately, when trying to get a hold on the kind of theory relevant to quietism. This concludes the brief appreciation of Horwich's thoughts on philosophical theory.

Thirdly, Daniel Hutto's generally insightful monograph on Wittgenstein's metaphilosophy does not specify to a sufficient degree what exactly "theory" means either (cf. Hutto 2003, 17). Yet, he does state many characteristics of philosophical theories that are helpful in going further, for example:

> However, unlike empirical hypotheses, the testing of a philosophical theory cannot proceed by ordinary experimental methods. Instead, philosophical hypotheses must face the tribunal of counter-examples and testing through thought experiments to establish their credentials. (Hutto 2003, 195)

Hutto gives us the correct hint that theories in philosophy aim to be like scientific theories; he, like Horwich, asserts that the specific constraint on theories in philosophy comes into play through counterexamples and thought experiments. Hutto further states that explanatory theories in philosophy exhibit the following features:

1. They resist scientific assessment and empirical refutation.
2. They are accepted in virtue of philosophical considerations only.
3. They have special explanatory power, claim to be only theory to address a certain type of concern.
4. Their non-empirical status is what makes them philosophical.
5. Their validity is evaluated against other theories (cf. Hutto 2009, 645–646 and Hutto 2007).

Hutto views Fodor's language of thought hypothesis as a prime example exhibiting these aspects. The language of thought hypothesis states that thinking is con-

ducted in a mental language: mentalese. Mentalese ultimately consists in physical representations located in the brain, as it were (Aydede 2015). Hutto goes on to offer a twofold interjection to philosophical theories with such characteristics. Firstly, Hutto states philosophical theories of this kind, unlike scientific theories, are not contingently true, but are tailor-made in advance to guarantee their truth or fittingness with their explanatory object (Hutto 2009, 645). Secondly, he states that philosophical explanations purporting to yield empirical results have to be testable by empirical methods which "hypotheses" like Fodor's by definition do not.

While Hutto must be commended for offering this list of criteria, some of them are questionable. For example, Hutto's appeal to the non-empirical status of philosophical theories suffers from the same problems as Horwich's suggestion detailed above: it leaves unexplained in what sense philosophical theories are non-empirical. Again, this presupposes a notion of a readily available distinction between *a priori* and empirical matters such that conceptual affairs are entirely removed from relations to the empirical world by themselves. And the sense of them being non-empirical has to set them apart from scientific theories. Just like in the case of Horwich, it does not seem fruitful to try and grasp theories in philosophy as *a priori* versus scientific theories as empirical. Altogether, this set of criteria may or may not be able to distinguish philosophical and scientific theories. However, this set list is not offering a proper sense of what *positive* character traits philosophical theories have, insofar as this list seems to suggest that philosophical theories of the kind relevant to quietism can be understood as *privations* of proper scientific theories.

In conclusion, Read, Horwich and Hutto provide a first and partially helpful overview into the topic of philosophical theories. Yet, their accounts do not pinpoint, in my view, how theories in philosophy of the relevant kind are to be understood correctly. Before detailing how one can further build upon their accounts it is worthwhile to get into view what explanation is, in the most general of terms.

Rosenberg provides a useful general introduction into the idea behind scientific theories. Scientific theories aim to explain certain phenomena through empirical generalizations while at the same time stating why the generalization obtains. Further, theories

> unify, and they do so almost always by going beyond, beneath and behind the phenomena empirical regularities report to find underlying processes that account for the phenomena we observe. […] [Theories] operate by bringing diverse phenomena under a small number of fundamental assumptions. (Rosenberg 2000, 69–70)

Rosenberg adds further characteristics: they organize and unify common-sense commitments and have the potential to revise them. And they gain credibility

through theoretical virtues like internal coherence, simplicity, consonance with findings in other fields, explanatory power, optimality (is the theory the best one available?), or durability (survival over time) (McMullin 2001). One paradigmatic scientific theory which exemplifies most of these criteria is Ignaz Semmelweis' theory of cadaverous poisoning and childbed fever. The theory of cadaverous poisoning explained why a significant number of women (with seemingly no unifying characteristics) contracted puerperal fever after labour, and subsequently died. Semmelweis identified necrotic organic matter as the cause underlying all these cases. Matter which the physicians passed onto women during or after labour after having handled corpses just shortly before, without washing their hands or changing their gloves. Note that this was prior to the germ theory of disease becoming a scientific consensus (cf. Beckermann 2012, 13 f.).

Explanation as a Feature of Theory

The main feature of any theory seems to be its explanatory capabilities. The concept of theory and the concept of explanation are closely related. Explanation and theorization are intricately linked to the effect that it is perhaps not possible to understand the notion of scientific theory without the notion of explanation (whereas the reverse might not be true). It seems trivial that the very purpose of a scientific theory is to explain some subject matter. The word "explanation" is derived from the Latin "*explanare*" which means "to flatten out." The picture that presents itself is that an explanation is applied to a subject matter that is curled up in a way that its constituent parts are not in view at first, the explanation "flattens out" the subject matter thereby bringing to the surface what was not in plain sight before.[27] He who offers a theory about x aims to explain x. And she who aims to explain x often (but perhaps not in every case) has to offer a theory. One cannot understand what a scientific theory is without understanding what an explanation is. Explanations "tell us why things happen as they do" (Ladyman 2002, 198), meaning that it is not enough for theories to merely describe the things and events they are about.

Unobservables – Abstract and Concrete

We can further elucidate these specific kinds of explanantia that seem to play a role in philosophical explanations of quasi-scientific theory with the help of the more familiar idea of *unobservables*. Unobservables help us understand what Dil-

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[27]   Note an interesting parallel between this piece of etymology regarding "explanation" and the manifest of the *Vienna Circle* in which they state the following: "In science there are no 'depths'; there is surface everywhere", Neurath (1973), 306.

they supposed was adduced in explanations (*Erklärungen*). Quasi-scientific theories introduce abstract unobservables as explanans in order to explain a philosophical explanandum. This idea is certainly not novel. It has been supported by different philosophers from different strides. Famously, Bas van Fraasen states:

> A current view […] is that theories account for the phenomena (which means, the observable processes and structures) by postulating other processes and structures not directly accessible to observation […]. (van Fraasen 1980, 3)

Van Fraasen states that scientific explanation essentially introduces unobservables as explanatory devices. As another example, further detailing this idea, Hans-Julius Schneider introduces the notion of abstract unobservables in the context of a discussion of a kind of theory of linguistic meaning Wittgenstein allegedly disavows. While Schneider's focus is specifically on the theory of meaning, his remarks can be universalized for other instances of theory formation. Schneider calls this axiomatic-deductive theory characterized by introducing entities which are "hidden […] behind language," which "aims to explain something unobservable by recourse to something hidden" (Schneider 2013, 168). Macarthur (2018, 37) agrees that "sciences typically posit hidden 'unobservables' to causally explain phenomena". Proceeding, this idea of abstract unobservables can be further elaborated through their epistemological status.[28]

The epistemological status of *abstract* unobservables can be brought into view by contrasting them with *concrete* unobservables. Concrete unobservables are those unobservables that are in principle observable but may not have been observed so far due to technological or other limitations. For example, the celestial body Pluto had been a contingently unobservable entity due to the fact that its existence could, at first, only be inferred before it could be directly observed. In this context of introduction, Pluto was an unobservable simply because it could not be observed through the naked eye or optical contraptions. Pluto eventually became observable (in 1930) through more refined technology (Hoyt 1976). As such, it is a matter of contingency whether a concrete unobservable has been observed or not. On the other hand, abstract unobservables are those unobservables which are unobservable as a matter of principle, i.e. because they are essentially a conceptual affair. Abstract unobservables are those that, try as we might, could not touch or otherwise perceive. One crucial example of abstract unobservable entities are concepts themselves, mental items (*pace* eliminativism). The most well-known and influential example of such abstract unobservables is represented in (one popular interpretation of) Plato's theory of forms

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[28]   Another issue concerning unobservables is their ontological status, whether we should be realist or anti-realist/constructivist about them. This debate is, however, is omitted here due to irrelevance to the current concern.

or ideas (ἰδέᾱ). The natural sciences arguably use both contingent unobservables and conceptual unobservables. For example, the positing of forces (like gravity) or dispositions (like solubility) can be classified as abstract unobservables under a certain description. However, the notion of unobservables itself is neither problematic in itself nor sufficient to demarcate the notion of theory relevant to quietism, i. e. quasi-scientific theory. What is special to quasi-scientific theory is the addition of the second aspect: calculability. Quasi-scientific theories make their explananda calculable through abstract unobservables.

Calculability

Here again, the notion of calculation as a part of the scientific image, exemplified by early modern thinkers like Descartes, Hobbes, and Leibniz, becomes relevant to fully understand a putative notion of scientific explanation to be found operative in some forms of philosophy. There is an intrinsic connection between calculability and the unobservables. The unobservables introduced by quasi-scientific theories make the explanandum explainable by making it calculable. It is not the narrower sense of calculability I refer to here, but the broad sense of calculability that is partially definitive of the naturalistic worldview (cf. §4). This broad idea of calculability was traced along the thinking of exemplary early modern thinkers (Hobbes, Descartes, and Leibniz) as the idea of transposing the method of arithmetic onto domains which are previously unrelated. Since the domain is different, the sense of calculation has to be different. Explaining phenomena in the calculatory mode needs to adjust the sense of calculation employed. While algebraic calculation is the prime example of calculation, the notion of calculation at stake in philosophical explanations focused on here is analogous to the algebraic sense, and not strictly restricted to mathematics. The addition of the notion of calculability is what sets quasi-scientific theories apart from more conventional philosophical "theories" like Plato's notion of forms (mentioned previously).

What does it mean to transpose arithmetic to objects of philosophical inquiry? How are such objects made "countable"? Methodological naturalism plays the role of a connective here. Impressed by the undeniable success of the natural sciences, methodological naturalism is the conviction that philosophy ought to be aligned with the natural sciences. The natural sciences are intrinsically linked to mathematics and calculability in a way other academic disciplines are not. Accordingly, Wittgenstein himself states that scientific language is "a symbolism used in an exact calculus" (Wittgenstein 1969b, 25). Hence, we speak of mathematical sciences (even though mathematization is not the only mark of natural science). Aligning philosophy with the natural sciences therefore must somehow include the aspect of mathematization. In an article generally critical of the mathematization of philosophy, Gian-Carlo Rota writes:

> Since mathematical concepts are precise, and since mathematics has been successful, our darling philosophers mistakenly infer that philosophy would be better off if it dealt with precise concepts and unequivocal statements. Philosophy will have a better chance at being successful, if it becomes precise. The prejudice that a concept must be precisely defined in order to be meaningful, or that an argument must be precisely stated in order to make sense, is one of the most insidious of the twentieth century. (Rota 1991, 170)

And:

> Bewitched as they are by the success of mathematics, they [philosophers, TJS] remain enslaved by the prejudice that the only possible rigor is that of mathematics, and that philosophy has no choice but to imitate it. (Rota 1991, 171)

Mathematization means precision. Precision is desirable for any discipline, as it were. Hence, philosophy is well advised to adopt a sense of mathematization, as it were. The simplest aspect of mathematization is calculation (adding, subtracting, dividing, multiplying). If philosophy is to become more like the natural sciences, philosophy perhaps has to adopt in its theorizing the simple idea of calculation. One way to make an object calculable in an explanatory context is, I suggest, the introduction of abstract unobservables.

The introduction of abstract unobservables makes an explanandum measurable (in a way that it was previously not) by assigning them a specific value. With the help of abstract unobservables, one can assign a single unit (a word, a thought, the goodness of an action) a determined value (meaning, truth, degree of goodness or rationality). By determining such a value, the units become commensurable and can be put into relation to other units of the same kind. Metaphorically speaking, the values assigned to the units can be represented two-dimensionally with the use of a graph; the spatial representation can serve as a visual metric on the relation between the units. Once this is achieved, the general phenomenon in question is explained, or can at least in principle be explained. What this means in more detail is best explained through some examples.

Some Examples of Quasi-Scientific Theories

The idea developed so far is that quasi-scientific theories in philosophy introduce abstract unobservables in order to explain target phenomena, thereby making these phenomena *ipso facto* calculable in a certain sense. So far, the notion of abstract unobservables and calculability was only treated abstractly. In order to clarify this notion, it is important to show in more detail a few paradigmatic examples of quasi-scientific theories in philosophy. The following list of chosen examples is comprised of: meaning, perdurantism, and utilitarianism. These examples are chosen for two reasons: firstly, they are well-known and fiercely contested, i. e. they are not fringe issues. This demonstrates that quasi-scientific

theories can take centre stage in many philosophical debates although their status is usually not accurately reflected. Secondly, the examples are gathered from different areas of philosophy, i. e. philosophy of mind, philosophy of perception, ethics, metaphysics, philosophy of language and epistemology. This shows that quasi-scientific theories can be found in virtually all areas of philosophy and are not confined to some idiosyncratic or obscure subsection of the discipline. The notion of quasi-scientific theory cuts across established areas of distinction in philosophy in a way that is often invisible. There are quasi-scientific theories of the kind I describe here in metaphysics, mind, philosophy of language, aesthetics, and normative ethics. Conversely, *not* all philosophical activity in these areas employs quasi-scientific theories at any given instance. There is a way to conduct research in every one of them without using quasi-scientific theory.

Meaning. Another paradigmatic case of quasi-scientific theorizing can be found in the context of the question about linguistic meaning. The idea of formalization of natural languages is a wildly influential and popular instance of trying to render meaning calculable via mathematization. Philosophical theories seeking to explain linguistic meaning have flourished at least since the beginning of the 20th century.[29] There are truth-conditional theories of meaning, normativist theories of meaning, naturalist theories of meaning, inferentialist theories of meaning, externalist theories of meaning, epistemic theories of meaning, verificationist theories of meaning, or causal theories of meaning. I shall focus on a specific species of meaning theory, namely the normativist theory of meaning, to see if the characteristics of theories introduced so far do apply to it. Preceding this example, a few preliminary remarks on theories of meaning in general are warranted. Theories of meaning can be distinguished along two axes. The first distinction is between *foundational theories* of meaning and *semantic theories* of meaning (cf. Lewis 1970, Speaks 2016). Foundational theories of meaning are trying to answer the metaphysical question of by virtue of which facts do expressions have their meaning. Semantic theories, on the other hand, are built to assign semantic contexts to single linguistic expressions, that is, they specify what the meaning of this or that term of a natural language is. The second major distinction is between *modest* and *full-blooded* theories of meaning.[30] Full-blooded

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29   This starts earlier, of course, if one wants to view the work of Gottlob Frege as the starting point of contemporary theories of meaning.

30   These technical terms were introduced by Michael Dummett (1993) as a reaction to Donald Davidson's semantic view developed in Davidson (1967). One of the most influential critiques of Dummett's advocacy of full-blooded meaning theories was raised by McDowell (1987). At the heart of the dispute is the question which kind of meaning theory qualifies as a project that is tenable by genuine philosophy at all. See also Heal (1978). Alexander Miller uses the terms "informal" versus "formal" theory of meaning to mark the same difference (Miller 2013, 656).

theories of meaning aim to reductively explain linguistic meaning without appeal to intentional vocabulary like thoughts, concepts, truth, or understanding. Modest theories of meaning claim the opposite: that meaning cannot be explained "from the outside" of intentional practices themselves (McDowell 1987, 93). One can now interweave these four characteristics to classify theories of meaning: some that are modest and foundational, modest and semantic, full-blooded and foundational, and full-blooded and semantic. Quasi-scientific theories are operative in theories of meaning that are either full-blooded, or semantic, or both full-blooded and semantic, since those theories constitute quasi-scientific theories in the specified sense.

Classical inferentialist semantics seem to qualify as semantic in that sense. An inferentialist theory of meaning aims to specify for each meaningful statement p of a language a set of other statements which stand in suitable inferential relations to p, i.e. both statements which p can be derived from and statements which are inferable from p. The upshot is that the meaning of p is nothing over and above the set of relevant inferences in relation to p. How do unobservables figure in an inferentialist theory of meaning? Inference relations themselves figure as abstract unobservables used to explain ordinary linguistic meaning. Inferences are the explanans, meaning the explanandum. By explaining meaning through sets of inferential properties, the meaning of statements becomes calculable such that determining a certain set of inferential relations amounts to having fixed the meaning of a given statement p.

Perdurantism. Another contemporary example is the doctrine of perdurantism in the philosophy of time. Perdurantism (or four-dimensionalism) is a metaphysical thesis stating that individual material things persist through time by virtue of having temporal parts (or "time slices") in addition to having spatial parts (Sider 1997, 2001). The competing theory of endurantism, instead, holds that individual material things persist through time as a whole. Perdurantism, too, is a quasi-scientific theory. This is because perdurantism seeks to explain the explanandum – persistence of material objects – by positing unobservables as theoretical entities, i.e. temporal parts. In this case, too, temporal parts are unobservable as a matter of principle. Also, talk about temporal parts only makes sense within the context of their introduction, as temporal parts do not figure in ordinary speech addressing the coming into existence or perishing of an object. Lastly, it is again a matter of further argument what kind of ontological status a philosopher would want to assign temporal parts as explananda, that is, whether to grant them a realist or pragmatic interpretation. Perdurantism unwittingly makes its explanandum calculable in the sense that any spatiotemporal object can, in principle, be accounted for or perhaps even identified with a set of temporal parts and material parts. Accounting for something in terms of a set in this way is sufficient for having rendered the object in question calculable with regards to questions of its identity.

Some may perhaps want to interject the following: time-slices do not qualify as unobservables of any kind for the reason that we do observe time-slices directly when observing the object which (partially) consists of them.[31] This objection fails for the following reason. Raising this worry would mean to commit a category mistake: what is observed is the object itself, the time-slices introduced by the quasi-scientific theory are theoretical entities supposed to explain the persistence of the object. One can perhaps make oneself believe – after sufficient philosophical training – that one actually perceives temporal parts instead of the object itself. Still, this would require significant denial of the veridicality of one's own perceptual capacities, just as if one is constantly barraged by faulty or untrustworthy perceptions one is conscious about (for resistance to this view, see Robinson 2014, part 3.1). Consider, for example, the Lyer-Müller illusion according to which two lines of equal lengths appear to be of dissimilar length. If one is familiar with this effect, then one can still consciously hold on to the correct belief that the lines are the same length. One who believes that we actually perceive temporal parts of objects would have to hold on to the (mistaken) belief that the perception of the object itself is, on a fundamental level, some sort of illusion. The point is analogous to a more well-known category mistake in an argument from film perception. Some hold the view that what one perceives when one looks at a film projection, i.e. moving images in coherence, is an illusion; this is because what is supposedly real are the single images which are just projected in succession, but not the film itself – the film itself is just, as it were, an illusion. But holding this view is to conflate two very different things: the images of the film roll on the one hand and the film itself on the other (Feige 2015, 93 f.) In this analogy, the single images of the film roll align with the time-slices and the film aligns with ordinary perception of objects through time. Therefore, thinking that one is actually perceiving temporal parts when perceiving an object is to make a category mistake.

Utilitarianism. One prime example for quasi-scientific theory in practical philosophy is utilitarianism, at least cruder versions of the thought underlying more nuanced positions. The target phenomenon utilitarianism seeks to explain is the goodness of an action. Classical utilitarianism claims that "an act is morally right if and only if that act maximizes the good, that is, if and only if the total amount of good for all minus the total amount of bad for all is greater than this net amount [...]" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2015, 2). The unobservable introduced in this context are instances of utility, often in the form of pleasure or pain, and their supposed maximization. In this case it is very clear that utilitarianism aims to makes goodness of an action calculable, for it directly treats the unobservables posited here as quantifiable phenomena to be put into arithmetic equations. That

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31   I am grateful to Jack Samuel for bringing this worry to my attention.

is, even actors themselves are able, as it were, to calculate utilities in their reasoning for or against a certain action (although they are not obliged to) (Sinnott-Armstrong 2015, 17). And this seems to be largely independent from the further question how utilities which serve as the basis for such calculations are conceived of. For example, preference utilitarianism views utility as the degree to which one's preferences are satisfied, ideal utilitarianism includes values like truth and beauty in the utility calculus, or hedonistic utilitarianism makes the goodness of an action calculable through measuring the amount of pleasure and pain it entails. While the kind of unobservable in such theories varies – preferences, values, pleasure etc. – the calculatory mode remains sufficiently similar. The idea of calculation seems to be built into utilitarianism from the start, this is perhaps the most direct instance of the idea of mathematization taking foothold in philosophy.

To contrast the foregoing quasi-scientific theories, it is perhaps of use to also provide some examples which are commonly referred to as "theories" but do not qualify as quasi-scientific theories, and are hence not to be critiqued (at least for the sake of being "theories"). Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Justice* and Rawls' *Theory of Justice* have already been mentioned. Neither qualify as quasi-scientific theories because neither posit abstract unobservables nor subsequently seek to make the object of inquiry, e. g. justice, calculable. Consider also -isms like idealism, realism or anti-realism which are commonly taken to be "theories". None of these latter -isms seem to qualify as a quasi-scientific theory in the sense specified so far because they do not introduce abstract unobservables. This does not mean that such -isms could not be paired with or supplemented by the addition of further quasi-scientific theories introducing abstract unobservables seeking to make objects in that particular framework calculable. But taken by themselves, such -isms are usually just metaphysical images of the world without such a commitment.

Some may feel distraught at the fact that what is presented here as instances of calculation covers too much ground.[32] Especially philosophers of the kind who pursue the highest degree and exactitude in their writing will find the idea of calculability too broad if it is to range from sense-data to utilitarianism. In spite of that, I find it difficult to narrow down the notion of calculability much more because if the scientific image features the idea of calculability as prominently as thinkers like Dilthey, Jaspers, and Heidegger state, then potentially *everything* can be made calculable in *some sense*. The scientific image of the world is all-encompassing and, by the same token, "messy". Accordingly, the umbrella of phenomena which can be rendered calculable within the scientific image will have to appear equally "messy". If some readers nevertheless want to confine the notion of

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32   I am grateful to an anonymous referee for bringing this worry to my attention.

calculation and calculability to the relatively defined area of mathematics and arithmetic, then I am afraid there is little I might be able to do to change their minds at this point.

Quasi-Scientific Theory and Metaphysics

The phrasing of quasi-scientific theory developed here cuts across some established intra-philosophical boundaries. Some would think that the notions of unobservables and calculability are topics traditionally defined to metaphysics. Yet, the examples of quasi-scientific theories above are chosen in a way to demonstrate that the calculatory mode of theorizing can be found in virtually all areas of philosophy. How then (if at all) are quasi-scientific theory and metaphysics related? Does the notion of quasi-scientific theory imply the notion of metaphysics? Does the notion of metaphysics engender or motivate the construction of quasi-scientific theory? More specifically, are quasi-scientific theories themselves a piece of metaphysics? Are quasi-scientific theories and metaphysics co-extensional? Do quasi-scientific theory and metaphysics overlap at all or are they separate notions?

It is important to note the difficulty of giving a satisfactory account of the concept of metaphysics. "Metaphysics" is one of the philosophical master expressions and its meaning therefore essentially subject to controversial, heated debate. Although it might not be possible to provide a definition which satisfies all interlocutors, it is not necessary to leave entirely implicit what metaphysics is. Metaphysics deals with, one the one hand, the topics of traditional metaphysics (God, the soul, the cosmos), and, on the other hand, questions about the true nature of things, for example, questions of existence, reality, space and time, necessity, and possibility. Metaphysics is supposed to deal with things *beyond* the senses. Metaphysical systems traditionally aim to provide an account of the whole nature of the world, what things are, and how they are related in the most general sense possible.

I suggest that quasi-scientific theory and metaphysical thought are *not* co-extensional, although they are closely related in a sense to be further specified. Metaphysical propositions qualify as quasi-scientific theories just in case they posit abstract unobservables which are, by definition, beyond the senses. This excludes those kinds of metaphysical inquiry which do not produce quasi-scientific theory in the sense of positing abstract unobservables to make a phenomenon calculable. For example, thought about the existence and nature of God qualifies without doubt as metaphysical thought. Yet, such thought typically does not produce quasi-scientific theories, despite being metaphysical. The same goes for at least some accounts in the debate about free will and determinism. Another example is the philosophical question about the proper relationship of mind and world, which is sometimes conceptualized as a debate between realism and anti-

realism. There are usually at least some ways of making remarks about the rela-
tion of mind and world that do not include quasi-scientific theories (e. g. Mc-
Dowell 1996). On the one hand, there are metaphysical contexts which include
quasi-scientific theories. To use the example from before, four-dimensionalism
posits the existence of time-slices to explain the persistence of spatiotemporal ob-
jects, rendering it a quasi-scientific theory. In this context, it also seems that
metaphysical reduction relations seem to have a privileged connection to the
construction of quasi-scientific theory such that the employment of a metaphysi-
cal relation to reductively explain a target phenomenon is sufficient for thereby
having at least begun to construct a quasi-scientific theory. If this is correct, then
reductions entail quasi-scientific theory building, but not all quasi-scientific theo-
ries are reductions *per se.*

Conversely, not all quasi-scientific theories are perhaps best described as
metaphysical. It may seem awkward to some to describe, for example, utilitarian-
ism as metaphysical subject matter even though assigning values to suffering and
to, say, preference maximization is seemingly beyond being simply sensory in
nature. Hence, I conclude that the notion of quasi-scientific theory cuts across
traditional philosophical compartmentalizations. Metaphysics – especially forms
of reductionism – is closely related to the notion of quasi-scientific theory. How-
ever, quasi-scientific theory can be found in virtually all areas of philosophy as a
matter of principle because the motivation to mimic scientific modes of explana-
tion can be applied to all areas of philosophy. Conversely, thought in all areas of
philosophy can be conducted without the appeal to quasi-scientific theory.

Quasi-scientific theories are one way in which one can aim to pin down the
influence of the scientific image on philosophy. This is to say that it is *merely* one
way. And again, it is important to note that the idea of quasi-scientific theory
found to be operative in some parts of philosophy is not reflective of actual natu-
ral-scientific practice, but rather of the notion of universal calculability as a fea-
ture of the scientific image. There are certainly more and different kinds of philo-
sophical theorizing, and expressions of the methodological thesis of scientific
naturalism, which exemplify this influence. One could perhaps argue that forms
of experimental philosophy present such an influence without incurring some-
thing like the quasi-scientific theorizing developed here.[33] Quasi-scientific theo-
ries will play a role again in the second chapter on quietism. Before coming back
to quasi-scientific theory, however, the remainder of this chapter focuses on ar-
guments against naturalism.

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[33]   Nanay (2015), for example, argues that experimental philosophy and the methodological
thesis of naturalism are much less closely connected than usually assumed.

§5   Arguing against Naturalism: Thesis and Worldview

The previous parts are dedicated to generating a comprehensive overview of scientific naturalism. I have tried to clarify and pinpoint the notions a naturalist may hold while being as precise as possible without alienating the self-identifying naturalist. Part of this overview is to not only see naturalism as a thesis (as seems to be the usual consensus in debates) but as a worldview as well. Worldviews, as it turns out, have a different logical status which set them apart from ordinary philosophical theses. Naturalism is more than a metaphysical thesis like, say, four-dimensionalism or accounts of transtemporal personal identity. Naturalism implies something greater – it is a pervasive worldview in addition to being a metaphysical thesis.

Naturalism as a thesis can be characterized in an ontological flavour and a methodological flavour. Naturalism as a worldview is sometimes called the "scientific image". This differentiation is not trivial because the scientific image, as a worldview, has a different logical status than naturalism as a thesis. There is a specific relation between naturalism as a thesis and naturalism as a worldview: the worldview is a background assumption, something that one is convinced of perhaps without being aware of it, something that is exempt from criticism because it is in the background. The philosophical thesis is in the foreground, truth-evaluable and something that can be given reasons for and against. The differentiation serves to best explain two curiosities regarding debates about naturalism: the definitional chaos and an occasional shifting of goalposts.

First, it explains why naturalists not always aim to give proper characterization of what they mean by "naturalism", or that if they give such a characterization, it is often *ad hoc* in the sense that it rarely refers to some kind of established use. In other words, a justification is less often provided for the way in which a technical term "naturalism" is used, which is something that philosophers are usually very cognizant about. If we accept that naturalism as a worldview serves as the background for the philosophical debate about naturalism in the form of a thesis, then we can understand why this is so difficult. For one, since we are "in" the scientific image, it may feel awkward or unnecessary to say what we mean by naturalism, since we all always already understand it "well enough". On the other hand, the scientific image always contains a surplus over what can be captured in expressing the content of this image. An image is something other than apophantic language even if apophantic language can be used to describe or express an image. Hence, different expressions of the scientific image will take different forms. And in pressing for a unified thesis, a definite determination of a naturalism thesis will create unease among those who do not feel their impression of the scientific image operating in the background is being captured.

Second, this differentiation can explain why naturalists are sometimes prone to shift the definitional goalposts. It seems that sometimes when a variant of nat-

uralism as a thesis is challenged and even discarded, the background conviction to naturalism as an image is firmly kept in place, serving as a backdrop to generate a new, more refined version of naturalism. The worldview itself, however, is never threatened. The argument from incoherence [§6] explores more concretely what specific shape this goalpost shifting can take in the debate.

Both of these peculiarities put the critic of naturalism in a difficult spot. If it is the case that naturalism as a worldview and the scientific image have a different justificatory status than the bulk of philosophical propositions, i.e. one that qualifies them as a kind of presupposition – how can one conclusively and convincingly argue *against* naturalism? Even if every and any version of naturalism as a thesis is "defeated" by arguments and if naturalism as a worldview remains untouched by that and at least to some extent immune to the kind of counter-argument that ordinary philosophical theses are – then it is an open question how any kind of progress can be made. The conundrum is: how and why argue against naturalism at all if naturalism as a worldview remains unscathed, no matter one's efforts? It seems pointless, a waste of time.

This is why the following arguments are used in the service of a dual strategy to criticize both naturalism as a thesis (§6 and §7) and naturalism as a worldview. Specifically the argument from coherence (§6) shall disclose in going back and forth in the debate that proponents of naturalism have retreated to defending naturalism as a "stance" or "project" rather than a thesis: instead of judging that a looming incoherence of the naturalism thesis should cause one to take pause and rethink one's commitment to it, those proponents have made their naturalist convictions immune by reconceiving naturalism as a "stance". On the other hand, the argument from ideology (§8) aims to deal with this conundrum by calling attention to the status of naturalism as a worldview, and going further in arguing that there is good reason to assume that naturalism as a worldview qualifies as an ideology proper. This argument from ideology thereby fleshes out the concerns regarding the question to what degree adherence to a worldview in general, and scientific naturalism in particular, can be rational.

§6   Arguments against Naturalism: Coherence

While the strict ontological thesis – physicalism – has received an unfathomable amount of attention in the last century and still enjoys incredible popularity, the methodological thesis has been somewhat less hotly debated. In this part, I shall debate concerns about the coherence of the methodological thesis. I shall argue that, while the methodological thesis is not outright fully incoherent, it does face serious issues regarding its own justification. Defenders of naturalism have been aware of this (some vaguely, some very acutely) and have offered rephrasings of methodological naturalism as a *project* or *stance* (rather than a thesis). I shall

consider and reject these attempts in turn. In conclusion, it shall turn out that the methodological thesis has a precarious justificatory status which self-identifying naturalists ought to take seriously as a problem.

Proper Incoherence : The Empiricist Criterion of Meaning as an Example

For purposes of illustrations, I shall briefly call attention to a curious case in the history of (analytic) philosophy regarding a thesis which constitutes a clear-cut case of incoherence: Hempel's mature phrasing of the empiricist criterion of meaning. One of the central goals of logical positivism was to exorcise metaphysical and other "dubious" intellectual endeavours. Carnap famously argued that metaphysicists either use established words of natural languages in a way that is devoid of meaning or introduce new meaningless terms. In order to uncover such (alleged) misuses, the method Carnap champions is logical analysis, i.e. formalization, of the sentences in question. This is exemplified in Carnap's critique of Heideggerian sentences like "we know the nothing" (Carnap 1932, 230). According to Carnap, such statements are devoid of meaning although they first may appear to be meaningful sentences just because they do not violate the rules of syntax.

In this context, Carl Hempel spent a considerable amount of effort formulating a general principle apt to determine whether a given statement of a natural language is meaningful or not. This criterion would allow one to discount Heideggerian statements in a principled manner, as it were. This *empiricist criterion* (sometimes also called "verifiability criterion") has received several reformulations in response to criticism. One of the more refined attempts at formulating the empiricist criterion is given in one of Hempel's later articles. The empirical criterion of meaning

> qualifies a sentence as cognitively meaningful if its non-logical constituents refer […] to observables. (Hempel 1950, 58)

Hempel also adds that the specific content of a given statement is underdetermined by "means of any class of observation sentences" (ibid). This leaves the idea that a sentence is meaningful if it is suitably connected to empirical observations. This would render metaphysical statements meaningless because they would, by definition, not be related to empirical observations in a way the empiricist countenances. Different formulations of the empiricist criterion have been met with different forms of criticism, most of them pointing out that a given formulation is either too exclusive or inclusive of certain classes of sentences. Those details do not matter here. Instead, the focus shall be on the following very simple, yet powerful objection. The main problem is that the empiricist criterion,

if true, is itself without meaning. This is trivially so because the empiricist criterion does not involve, or suitably relate to, empirical observations. Once the criterion is formulated, it would be without meaning, leading to the paradoxical problem: if the empirical criterion of meaning *does* have meaning, it *does not* have meaning. The empiricist criterion is incoherent because it cannot meet the very standard set by itself. Hempel was aware of this incoherence charge, of course, when he posed the question:

> What kind of sentence, it has often been asked, is the empiricist meaning criterion itself? […] when judged by its own standard, is it not devoid of cognitive meaning? (Hempel 1950, 59).

Hempel does not directly meet this argument, but rather seems to concede its force.[34] This incoherence challenge for the empiricist criterion of meaning has contributed to the eventual demise of logical positivism.

The Precarious Status of Methodological Naturalism

In essence, something similar, if somewhat less critical, is true of the methodological thesis. The empiricist criterion is self-refuting since it does not have meaning if it is true, making it paradoxically non-truth-evaluable. In other words: *the empiricist criterion falls short of a standard it itself sets.* In a similar manner, the methodological thesis sets a standard for justification which it itself cannot meet. The methodological thesis states that philosophy should align itself with the natural sciences regarding its treatment of those philosophical problems which remain once all other problems have been deferred to the natural sciences. In this sense, whether or not a certain philosophical approach, statement, or theory is justified hinges upon whether or not it is properly aligned with some kind of natural-scientific methodology in the sense that that philosophical statement or theorem can at least be countenanced from a natural-scientific standpoint.

The methodological thesis states that philosophical problems should be solved with the methods of the natural sciences or at least in accordance with the natural sciences. The methodological thesis itself is a metaphilosophical thesis. As a metaphilosophical thesis, the methodological thesis is indeed a philosophi-

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[34]   This seems apparent when he argues that the empiricist criterion has the special status as a "clarification and explication" and can therefore be neither true nor false but merely meet standards of "adequacy". This adequacy has two aspects: the empiricist criterion is adequate because it "provides a reasonably close analysis" (i) and a "'rational reconstruction'" (ii) of its target explanandum. It is not convincing, however, how this saves the empiricist criterion from being unintelligible by its own standard. Even statements of "mere" clarificatory and explicatory purposes ought to be truth apt, cf. Hempel (1950, 60 f.).

cal thesis. Hence, the methodological thesis of scientific naturalism itself falls under the purview of philosophy. The philosophical problem that the methodological thesis tries to answer is the question how philosophy ought to be done correctly. The methodological thesis answers this question by stating that philosophical solutions to philosophical problems ought to be guided by the methods of the natural sciences. This may be interpreted that philosophical theses must somehow be answerable to the methodologies of the natural sciences or in some sense be justifiable by the natural sciences.

The problem is that it is entirely unclear in what sense the methodological thesis *itself* is guided by the natural sciences or justifiable in the eyes of the natural sciences. The methodological thesis does not even use natural-scientific vocabulary like, say, some more concrete projects of naturalization do, which would make the methodological thesis perhaps easier to vindicate. This does not make the methodological thesis incoherent or self-refuting in the same sense that Hempel's empiricist criterion of meaning does. However, this raises serious doubts about the justificatory status of the methodological thesis: The methodological thesis articulates a standard for justification (being aligned with the natural sciences in some way) which it itself does not seem to be able to meet. Even on the most charitable or lenient interpretation of what it would mean to be in alignment with the methods of the natural sciences, it is difficult to see how the methodological thesis itself could possibly be in any kind of alignment with the methodology of the natural sciences. This is because it is simply not within the purview of the natural sciences themselves to prescribe metaphilosophical principles on how to do philosophy properly.

Therefore, I conclude that, while not incoherent to the effect of becoming paradoxical (like Hempel's criterion of meaning), the methodological thesis does face serious issues meeting the standard for justification which it posits itself. At the very least, the methodological thesis suffers from a self-made tension which it cannot resolve itself. As it stands, one can hardly be justified in endorsing the methodological thesis without further substantial argument.

The further question is now whether some outside considerations can be adduced in order to make the methodological thesis more plausible. Some self-identified naturalists have, of course, been aware of the difficult justificatory status of the methodological thesis. In what follows, I shall present and argue against attempts at saving or salvaging the methodological thesis.

First Response: The Success Argument

The so-called *argument from the past successes of science* (or simply *success argument*) is usually debated in the context of scientific realism; I shall adjust it for the current context – the question whether methodological naturalism can be

vindicated against the incoherence charge. One version of the success argument claims that, given the past successes of the science, it is not unjustified to assume that future scientific advancement will yield results that would vindicate a commitment to methodological naturalism in the present.[35] Ronald Giere offers such a phrasing:

> Commitment to the method can be sufficiently justified by appealing to past successes at finding naturalistic explanations, such as that for organic life. One might argue even that the success rate has been going up for the past 300 years. More than that one cannot do without going outside a naturalistic stance. (Giere 2000, 214 f.)

The idea is, as it were, that the methodological thesis could be understood as a kind of working hypothesis which does not need any form of *immediate* justification, but is instead justified *ex post* or "proven" to be true in the future – we just need to trust it for now, as it were.

More recently, Ladyman and Ross have employed the same line of argument in a different context, when defending the naturalist credentials which they claim for their project of naturalized metaphysics against an argument from Jonathan Lowe (2002) that naturalism depends on metaphysical assumptions and therefore faces incoherence charges of the kind I have demonstrated:

> […] even if naturalism depends on metaphysical assumptions, the naturalist can argue that the metaphysical assumptions in question are vindicated by the success of science, by contrast with the metaphysical assumptions on which autonomous metaphysics is based which are not vindicated by the success of metaphysics since it can claim no such success. (Ladyman & Ross 2007, 7)

Here, the success argument is even used to outrival competitors who, supposedly, cannot claim scientific success for their philosophical projects. A full treatment of the success argument as pertaining to scientific realism would merit a whole book on its own. This is something I simply cannot do justice to in the present context. I just want to give at least two reasons to reject the success argument (as expressed by Giere and Ladyman & Ross) in the current context of methodological naturalism, reasons which seem to me somewhat underappreciated by naturalists. For the first reason, we can go back to a point made by Hubert Dreyfus in a classical work on artificial intelligence. As in the debate of naturalism, research

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[35]   There are other versions of the success argument, some of them weaker than what is needed for my purposes. For example, Harrison (2018) attacks a version of the success argument, which is tailored to the religious context, i. e. a version of the success argument that is merely about the rejection of supernaturalism. As I argued before, a rejection of the supernatural (whatever that may amount to) is not sufficient to construe a substantial version of naturalism.

in artificial intelligence has relied on the "forecast" of future success in the field in order to vindicate certain assumptions made in the presence.

> The forecast always has been, but one wonders: how encouraging are the prospects? Feigenbaum and Feldman claim that tangible progress is indeed being made, and they define progress very carefully as 'displacement toward the ultimate goal.' According to this definition, the first man to climb a tree could claim tangible progress toward reaching the moon. (Dreyfus 1972, 12)

Dreyfus' point is that the goals for which researchers in artificial intelligence promise progress may not be of the kind that can be, in principle, reached by the study of AI itself. An analogous point can be made about the prospects of the unity of science underwriting naturalism: the kind of progress that naturalists are waiting for may never be forthcoming, simply because the subject of reduction of laws and entities from the special sciences to physics is not one that can be settled or elucidated by scientific research itself.[36] Dreyfus pushes the point that we have no reason to assume that the subject matter about which naturalists *promise* progress is forthcoming is, in principle, not something about which scientific progress can be made. To stay within Dreyfus' metaphor: empirical science may have had huge success in climbing the tree of empirically researchable entities, but the moon of mental and normative properties is still out of reach, and will be so in principle, considering the tree-climber does not have a space shuttle at his or her disposal. In a nutshell, Dreyfus' point is that the success argument boils down to a category mistake: real explanatory success of the sciences is of a different kind than the attainment of a complete scientific image of the world needed to vindicate methodological naturalism *ex post.*

The second consideration starts with the status of the success argument: The success argument takes the form of a *promise.* The problem is that the opponents can promise, too, that the so-called higher-level properties (e.g. the mind and norms) are *resistant* to naturalization even then. Thus, a promissory note for the future is met with another promissory note for the future: the naturalist may promise that in the end everything can be naturalized, but the non-naturalist, too, can promise that he or she will find good arguments resisting naturalization. And unfortunately, if one is to give credence to the promise of naturalist, there does not seem to be a principled way to resist granting the same credit to the non-naturalist's promise. Neither party seems to be in an epistemically dominant position here. The result in such a case is a stand-off and discursive stalemate between two parties exchanging promises, none of which can be fulfilled in the

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36   This, again, evokes the debate about whether there can be a non-problematic account of reduction or supervenience between the special sciences and physics. For a locus classicus of the critique against achieving this relation (and subsequently physicalism) in terms of supervenience, see Horgan (1993).

foreseeable future. A situation like this would not be unlike two *political* parties making promises, with the voter being in a genuinely uncertain position whose promises to trust more. Certainly, gut decisions about whose promise to trust more is no way to rationally deal with genuine philosophical questions. However, Alex Rosenberg, for example, seems to be proud of his blind trust in physics:

> The reason we trust physics to be scientism's metaphysics is its track record of fantastically powerful explanation, prediction, and technological application. If what physics says about reality doesn't go, that track record would be a totally inexplicable mystery or coincidence. Neither science nor scientism stands still for coincidence. The no-miracles and inference-to-the-best-explanation arguments are on the right track. Their alternatives are obviously mistaken. (Rosenberg 2014, 19)

Rosenberg's phrasing of "inexplicable mystery" is of course an allusion to the so-called *miracle argument* traced back to Hilary Putnam:

> The positive argument for realism is that it is the only philosophy that doesn't make the success of science a miracle. That terms in mature scientific theories typically refer […], that the theories accepted in a mature science are typically approximately true, that the same term can refer to the same thing even when it occurs in different theories – these statements are viewed by the scientific realist not as necessary truths but as part of the only scientific explanation of the success of science, and hence as part of any adequate scientific description of science and its relations to its objects. (Putnam 1975b)

I explained why it may be uncalled for to think of natural science, or rather metaphysics inspired by natural science, as on any "track" at all (as Rosenberg confidently proclaims): to think that past success promises us a kind of total knowledge in the future is to make a category mistake of a kind pointed out with the help of Dreyfus above. It is simply a kind of metaphysical eschatology. Why the alternatives are "obviously mistaken", Rosenberg will not tell us. In fact, he does not even let us know what the alternatives are. This is all not to say that there might not be a case to somehow vindicate the success argument. However, simply assuming that an extrapolation of the explanatory success of a special science allows science to determine the whole of metaphysics seems to be an admission of a misguided trust.

This then turns on a metaphilosophical principle expressed by Hegel in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*: the principle of *hic Rhodus, hic saltus* (Hegel 1986b, 26) states that the purpose of philosophy is to deal with what currently is the case, i.e. what we can demonstrate and think *now.* Without referring to Hegel, Daniel Hutto writes in a similar matter:

> In contrast, scientific naturalism has nothing to offer but the *empty promises* of the future explanation of fundamental issues such as the nature of 'mental states', or 'rules' (in both cases these are attempts at explicating the foundations of our practices). Yet, in all such cases scientific naturalists must presuppose something they cannot explain. Thus, if one is

unrelenting in this ambition one must be prepared to cure philosophical diseases by killing the patients, as are the eliminativists. (Hutto 2003, 215, emphasis TJS)

The interesting tension Hutto points to is that a naturalist has to always already presuppose the very notions she or he wishes to naturalize in promising that these things can be done away with in the future somehow. The *hic Rhodus, hic saltus* principle and the requirement not to merely provide promises is at least *prima facie* reasonable and plausible. The burden of proof lies with the naturalist to demonstrate why she feels entitled to let promises of progress do theoretical work at all. Any arguments as to why we should believe the promise of naturalization pending, we can conclude that the success argument is unable to vindicate naturalism from the charge of incoherence.

Second Response: Liberalizing "Science"

Petersen (2014) has offered a recent defence against the incoherence argument which is lengthier and more detailed than most references to naturalism's coherence problems by its proponents. Petersen argues that naturalism can be saved from the looming incoherence in three steps:

1. Construe "naturalism" as a methodological commitment to science.
2. Construe "science" as inference to the best explanation.
3. Construe "explanation" as conceptual unification. (Petersen 2014, 81)

Regarding this first step, Petersen additionally interprets naturalism as a form of "scientism" with the following claim: "Naturalism is the view that science is the only route to knowledge" (ibid). Otherwise, Petersen's understanding of "naturalism" seems not too far off from the way the methodological thesis has been introduced here. Petersen's aim is to thereby retain a form of naturalism which has "reasonable epistemic bite," yet remains internally coherent (Petersen 2014, 88). Disregarding other issues, the crux of his proposal lies with this first step, more specifically with Petersen's interpretation of the term "science" which is codified in the following statement.

But by 'science' I do not mean something so esoteric as to require a lab, a PhD, and grant funding—*discovering everyday facts are still (if done well) investigating the world scientifically.* It is just that this level of science is so easy for most of us that we do not even notice it. (Petersen 2014, 81; emphasis mine)

This understanding of the term "science" seems highly contentious and unfit to underwrite an interesting, i.e. sufficiently ambitious, notion of science to serve as a basis for scientific naturalism. By construing "science" this liberally, Petersen gives up the distinction between ordinary practice and natural science, resulting

in a revisionary understanding of science which would require further argument. Furthermore, this liberal notion of "science" does not adequately delineate natural science from practices which may be non-natural-scientific inquiries, e.g. disciplines like sociology or cultural anthropology. The whole "bite" of naturalism, however, depends on its privileging natural science over other forms of inquiry, be it astrology, sociology, or ordinary practice. Hence, the main problem is that Petersen's liberal notion of "science" can only yield a naturalism "without bite", i.e. a kind of naturalism which does not grant at least some kind of ontological or methodological authority to genuinely natural science as distinct from ordinary practice and other forms of rational inquiry. Hence, this liberal phrasing boils naturalism down to a form of modest naturalism which is weaker than what a naturalist needs to commit to in order to represent an interesting point. Therefore, the attempt to immunize naturalism against the incoherence argument by construing the term "science" more liberally is unsuccessful.

Third Response: Naturalism as a Project

The second attempt to vindicate naturalism against the incoherence charge is to rephrase naturalism as a *project* rather than a thesis. The project of naturalization would then, as it were, be vindicated *ex post* through its success, e.g. by being a useful and reasonable assumption to make as a foundation for further research. The most developed versions of this idea are found in Sukopp (2007) and Rea (2002 & 2007, 107 ff.). Rea clearly sees that naturalism formulated as a thesis as "self-defeating or otherwise unacceptable" (Rea 2002, 60). In most other areas of philosophy, this would be grounds for rethinking one's commitment to the content of the idea in question. Rea, however, draws different consequences:

> neither naturalism nor any alleged version thereof can be expressed as a substantive philosophical thesis that is neither at the mercy of science nor self-defeating, vacuous, or otherwise naturalistically unacceptable. If I am right, then we have only two options: either we reject naturalism and its alleged varieties as severely internally defective, or we draw the conclusion that naturalism is not a substantive philosophical position. Charity requires us to take the latter option. (Rea 2002, 53)

Rea thinks because naturalism formulated as a thesis has to be incoherent, unjustifiable or "epistemically circular" (in his terminology), it is uncharitable to understand naturalism as a thesis. For the sake of charity, he says, we therefore have to understand it as a research project. This reasoning, however, is flawed for two reasons. First, Peels (2017) reminds us that any stance or attitude can be reformulated as a thesis:

> every attitude, affection, or stance, at least if it is to be rational and if it is to be up for debate, can be translated into a thesis, such as the thesis that we should have that affec-

tion, attitude, or stance, or the thesis that it is permissible to have that affection, attitude, or stance. (Peels 2017, 1 f.)

While Peels' focus is "scientism" (as the idea that only natural science produces genuine knowledge), the same idea can be transposed to the context of naturalism. The idea of the methodological thesis as a project is characterized as a such a stance or attitude. Therefore, the ideas motivating naturalism as a project can be formulated as a thesis. And once we do that, I do not see any other way of formulating this stance in propositional content in a way that is substantially different than the characterization of the methodological thesis I have been using. As far as I can tell, Rea does not account for the possibility of reformulating the ideas substantiating or justifying naturalism as stance as theses with propositional content. It can be concluded that reconceiving of naturalism as a project for the sake of charity does not work.

For the second argument, let us grant Rea – *pace* Peels' reminder – that it would be possible to reconceive of the methodological thesis as a project. I am going to suggest that even if we grant that, the idea of methodological naturalism as a project based on methodological goals does not seem promising. This is for the following two reasons:

The first reason for caution is that naturalistic philosophy in its current form is not in reality conducted in the manner of a research project. Research projects in the sciences can be thought of along very general features: planning and execution, success conditions, and justification and value. Research projects as they are common in certain sciences require their participants to jointly coordinate the conception, planning and execution of the project. At the planning stage, an estimated time-frame would be established and jobs would be assigned to the different participants such that the labour of naturalizing target phenomena would be shared. The execution of this project would then mean the execution of the individual jobs, i.e. the naturalization of every single target phenomenon with each researcher reporting back regarding their progress. Furthermore, research projects in the natural sciences are usually relatively concrete in a way that makes it clear what the goal is and under which conditions that goal can be achieved. Lastly, the justification and value of research projects in the natural sciences is usually apparent and well-established. For example, the medical science project to find a cure for a certain form of lung cancer is relatively well delineated, its success conditions are relatively clear and can be decided upon by the relevant specialists. The execution of this project is also relatively reasonably organized, considering the global scale of the effort involved. The value of its projected goal (treatment and prophylaxis, the lives saved) is beyond doubt, justifying the existence of this project in the first place.

It is difficult to see how these general features of research projects apply to the notion of naturalism as a project. In the context of scientific naturalism, con-

ceiving and executing the project of naturalization would mainly imply clarification of concepts and expressions used by all participants. Its success conditions would be mainly constituted by the successful naturalization of the target phenomena in question and would have to entail the subsequent gain of widespread acceptance in a discipline. Lastly, the justification of value of a naturalization project would have to be made plausible and communicable.

And it is difficult to see how current practice in naturalist philosophy could mirror such research projects in the natural sciences. Firstly, naturalists largely disagree about what the idea of naturalization would be in the first place, given the widespread dissent about the doctrine of the term "naturalism" which made it difficult to arrive at a somewhat acceptable characterization of scientific naturalism in the first place. Different phrasings of naturalism would entail different notions of how a project of naturalization ought to be planned and executed. Formulating and establishing naturalism as a project would require for these questions to have answers agreed upon by the philosophical community of those working on this project. The same holds for supposed success conditions of naturalism. Success conditions would be mainly constituted by the successful naturalization of the target phenomena in question and the subsequent gain of widespread acceptance in a discipline. However, such acceptance is yet to be found in the philosophical landscape (despite a commitment to the term "naturalism" as an "-ism"). Lastly, the value of curing lung cancer is apparent to most. Regarding naturalism however, the situation looks different. It is unclear what is to be gained by giving, say, the mind or normativity a "naturalistic explanation", assuming that philosophers could agree on the exact content and goal of "naturalistic explanation" in the first place.

In this spirit, Hilary Putnam provocatively states that the "trouble is that none of these ontological reductions [i. e. naturalization projects, TJS] gets *believed* by anyone except the proponent of the account and one or two of his friends and/or students" (Putnam 2004, 62). While this is perhaps a dramatization, it points out that naturalistic projects in philosophy, just like most theses in philosophy, do not garner support to the extent that would be necessary to establish them as widely accepted projects in the first place. Therefore, naturalism is ill-conceived as a research project.

The second reason for caution is that the rephrasing of naturalism as a project may imply an unargued form of the methodological thesis of scientific naturalism in the first place. The push to reconceive naturalism as a research project may itself already imply that philosophy ought to be conducted in the manner of a natural science, insofar as the idea of research projects as a form of academic research is itself a standard generated by the practice of the natural sciences. Generally speaking, the idea of working on questions in philosophy in the form of projects seems to be relatively recent and tied to the professionalization of philosophy as an academic discipline. To avoid this, a proponent of the rephrasing

strategy would have to offer an exact phrasing that defines naturalism as a research project *without* already orienting its purpose, form and success conditions on the conduct of research projects in the natural sciences.

Fourth Response : Naturalism as a Synoptic View

The last attempt to fend off the looming incoherence of the methodological thesis is to rephrase naturalistic philosophical practice as providing a synoptic view, perhaps in a Sellarsian spirit, of central results of the natural sciences. This strategy has been most notably brought forth by Ladyman and Ross, stating that naturalistic metaphysics of their liking "is the enterprise of critically elucidating consilience networks across the sciences" (Ladyman & Ross, 28). Naturalistic philosophy in this sense means that the task of philosophy is to unify theories and hypotheses of the contemporary natural sciences into a unified image, again as a kind of *ancilla* of the natural sciences.

Attempts of this kind face a dilemma, however: *either* retain the threat of incoherence nonetheless *or* collapse into a form of modest naturalism. Which horn of the dilemma this attempt is impaled on depends on how restrictively this strategy is interpreted.

Regarding the first horn: If the version championed by Ladyman and Ross is interpreted in a restrictive manner, namely as a prescription that *only this kind* of philosophy is countenanced, then a form of the threat of incoherence remains. This amounts to a rehearsal of the problem we began with: the rephrasing of the methodological thesis stating that the job of philosophy is to form such consilience networks is itself a philosophical thesis, and hence would once again not meet the standard set by itself. Since this rephrasing of the methodological thesis itself is philosophical (i.e. metaphysical), it itself is not a statement which unifies theories and hypotheses of the contemporary sciences. Again, how could it be justified given the standard of justification for philosophical theses set by itself?

The second horn implies that such a redefinition may not be ambitious enough to qualify as a form of scientific naturalism. According to the second horn, if the phrasing is understood as a liberal description of merely *one possible shape* that philosophy can take, then it is a phrasing of naturalism that even card-carrying non-naturalists like John McDowell or Thomas Nagel could agree with. This is because one does not have to be a naturalist in any substantial sense in order to allow that *one possible* area of philosophy among others could be working on a unified image of scientific results. A naturalism of this more liberal form does not have the bite that many proponents want naturalism to feature. Therefore, it is unlikely that this third strategy can save scientific naturalism from incoherence either.

After having appreciated (and dismissed) some attempts at defending the methodological thesis against the charge of incoherence and its self-made problems regarding its justification, I conclude that the methodological thesis may be untenable, further argument pending. Again, the "not my naturalism"-objection may pop up – a friend of methodological naturalism may find themselves not represented properly here. However, a difficult task awaits friends of methodological naturalism. If one wishes to retain a commitment to a kind of methodological naturalism, one has to come up with a version which meets the following criteria:

1. *Substantiality.* Any characterization of naturalism as a worthwhile philosophical thesis needs to express claims which are controversial to at least some philosophers.
2. *Basic agreement.* Any such characterization of naturalism needs to be acceptable by those who will want to argue against the thesis and those prone to defend the thesis.

These two criteria were already formulated at the outset of this chapter. They can now be supplemented by the following constraint:

3. *Coherence constraint.* Any form of naturalism (e.g. the methodological thesis) has to be coherent in the sense that it may not formulate a standard of justification which itself cannot meet.

It is difficult to conclusively prove or refute any position in philosophical, perhaps more so metaphilosophical principles like the methodological thesis. In any case, I hope to have shown that the ball is in the court of fans of methodological naturalism to find an expression of their core belief which meets these three constraints.

§7 Arguments against Naturalism: Nature

Discussing modest naturalism, I have suggested that the idea of "supernaturalness" and "non-naturalness" is problematic insofar as it requires an understanding of what is "natural" in the first place. I have also stressed that the commitment to a rejection of "supernatural" things is implied by scientific naturalism, yet it is not sufficient to characterize a full-blown scientific naturalism as a substantial position. In any case, both a modest and a scientific naturalist requires a concept of naturalness in order to be able to sort phenomena into natural and non-natural. This is more pressing when considering the ontological thesis, than the methodological thesis. Unfortunately, self-identified naturalists rarely take the initiative to provide an at least *prima facie* uncontroversial example of naturalness in order to substantiate the view that the concept of nature can easily sort

different phenomena into natural and non-natural. As is symptomatic in the debates surrounding naturalism, many seem to just presuppose an intuitive notion of "natural" as unproblematic. In this section I shall present what seem to be the most promising criteria of "naturalness" a naturalist may want to subscribe to. Again, it is rare for self-styled naturalists to specify what they mean by "natural". Hence, I shall try to speak on behalf of the naturalist and construe three options for a naturalist to conceptualize a criterion of the natural:

1. naturalness as materiality,
2. naturalness as the subject matter of the sciences,
3. naturalness as causal efficacy.

I shall argue in turn why these options, despite their desirability for the naturalist, are not viable.

Materiality. The first option is to understand the concept of nature through the concept of matter. On such an understanding, only those things are natural which are material. While this might seem attractive to some at first glance, there are two reasons why a naturalist cannot entitle herself or himself to this reading. The first problem is that the concept of materiality itself can be put under scrutiny: what have we gained by explaining the term "natural" through the expression "material"? How can the expression "material" be further explained to a satisfactory degree? One such option is to think of "material" as meaning "spatially extended". However, Moser and Yandell (2000, 4) convincingly argue that the notions of "material" and "spatially extended" are too co-dependent on one another to the effect that this explanation would be viciously circular. Moreover, even in the case that one could successfully reduce "material" to "spatially extended", it is unclear how far such a solution could carry the naturalist. This is because the natural sciences involve at least some concepts which are not obviously material in the sense of spatial extension. For example, forces, like gravity, themselves are not spatially extended but one would obviously want to grant that gravity is natural. Therefore, construing "natural" as "material" is unsuccessful.

Natural Sciences. The second, related option would be to retreat from materiality as a criterion for naturalness and assert that simply the subject matter of the natural sciences is what counts as natural in the proper sense. This sentiment is nicely expressed in Rosfort's construal of the ontological thesis:

> Nature is what we assess by means of scientific investigation, and natural things are those which can be explained by the natural sciences. (Rosfort 2013, 1427)

But this seems somewhat arbitrary. Firstly, it is not very informative to explain naturalness through the subject matter of the sciences. What is the subject matter

of the sciences anyway? This would require the naturalist to determine which sciences are counted as authoritative for naturalism. And it is not a trivial or obvious matter where the line is to be drawn.

Secondly, it is in principle possible to apply scientific methods in order to *investigate* (not necessarily explain) the existence of supposedly "supernatural" entities using the methods of the empirical sciences[37] – in such a case, the subject matter would include, albeit negatively, some supernatural concepts which the naturalist would want to have shunned. Ansgar Beckermann, for example, has compiled a few examples of cases where scientific methodology was used to investigate spontaneous recoveries in religious contexts and alleged ghost sightings, in an attempt to argue that the natural sciences can *qua* their methodological breadth be used to investigate those things which seem to fall outside their scope (Beckermann 2012, 7 f.). Furthermore, it is doubtful whether transcendent aspects of religion can be naturalized at all for the following principled reason: if the natural sciences include methodological atheism as a constitutive principle, the natural sciences can perhaps not be utilized to reject the existence of God and the transcendent at all. Methodological atheism itself does not assert the non-existence of God or the transcendent as such, but simply the irrelevance of such entities for scientific investigation. If this was not the case, then it would be impossible for any natural scientist to hold religious beliefs at all.

Causal Efficacy. A third option is to interpret the property of "being natural" as "being causally efficacious". Call this *causalism.* According to causalism, something is natural if and only if it can in principle be part of a causal chain, either causing something or being caused by something. Causalism means that the world is a causally closed, spatiotemporal structure in which everything is governed by causal laws. Causality on this picture is usually restricted to the specific notion of *causa efficiens* (Aristotle 1936, II 3, 194b29). The concept of *causa efficiens* describes a thing's disposition to enact change and to begin or halt motion. In a physicalist framework, this kind of causality is often ultimately conceived in terms of *microbangings*: mechanical force transferred by one small material particle bumping into another. One entailment of conceiving as causality exclusively in terms of *causa efficiens* is that other phenomena like norms, for example, cannot truly cause anything or be caused by anything since the force of norms is not enacted by the transference of physical force.

The introduction of causalism begs the question about a potentially even more complicated concept: causality. Causality is one of the most highly contest-

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[37] It is, of course, very controversial what "the method" or "methods" of the empirical sciences amount to. I endorse a pluralism about the methods of the empirical sciences (following Fodor 1974) and hence reject a reductive view according to which all sciences ultimately follow one methodology.

ed concepts in metaphysics. Taking a reasoned stance on this debate transcends the scope and aims of this work. However, the naturalist seeking to use causal efficacy as a mark of the natural will most likely inherit the issues and difficulties of the debate surrounding causality. Without going into the many intricacies surrounding the concept of causality, we can conclude that the concept of causality is so contested and controversial that the naturalist cannot simply rely on the notion of causality to offer an intuitive and non-problematic criterion of naturalness.[38]

In sum, there is no readily available criterion of naturalness a naturalist could easily adopt without providing a sufficient justification. Therefore, it is necessary to be at least sceptical of the tacit assumption that the concept is a sortal concept. Barring further suggestions or argument in favour of that view, it can be concluded that the concept of nature is not a sortal. In order to understand the logical status of the concept of nature, we have to look elsewhere. I do not claim that these three criteria present an exhaustive list and therefore would allow to formulate a complete disjunction. These are simply the candidates which seem sensible to ascribe to a naturalist.

§8   Arguments against Naturalism: Ideology

The dominance of scientific naturalism raises the question why it seems to so many as a plausible, perhaps unavoidable theorem. I suggest that it is trivially true that naturalism, insofar as it is an expression of the scientific image, is a worldview. The concept of worldview is closely connected to the concept of ideology, a first hint being that the word "ideology" is sometimes used synonymous with "worldview". However, "ideology" usually carries a pejorative note while "worldview" is certainly more neutral. If naturalism (*qua* scientific image) is a worldview, how close is it then to also qualifying as an ideology? In this part, I develop an argument which demonstrates that naturalism (*qua* scientific image) is not only a worldview but can indeed be qualified as an ideology. Its status as an ideology can help explain the dominance of naturalism.

In doing so, this chapter aims to connect two concepts of theoretical philosophy – naturalism – and practical philosophy – ideology – which are usually kept and discussed in separation. The expression "ideology" is complex and controversial. Popularized by Marx, it has become part of ordinary language, yet still remains an object of inquiry in political philosophy. Debates on ideology are

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38   One of the main concerns regarding the concept of causality is the question whether reasons can be causes (for action). A scientific naturalist will obviously want to deny that reasons can be causes as reasons are not the kind of thing that can coherently be attributed causal powers in a naturalist setting.

especially widespread in Critical Theory, yet do not play an important role in theoretical philosophy, especially in the philosophy of science and metaphysics. The term naturalism (often under the guise of the antiquated term "positivism") is usually used in Critical Theory as a pejorative term. Conversely, the term "naturalism" is often used as a positive self-ascription. Both sides, however, have yet not spent sufficient effort reflecting on the logical status of naturalism. For example, Petersen (2014) simply asserts that naturalism is an ideology, yet does not specify what "naturalism" or "ideology" are supposed to mean.

A central difficulty in elucidating this matter is that usages of the concept of naturalism as well as the concept of ideology are widespread, yet their content is usually left unspecified. Just like the term "naturalism", the term "ideology" is fraught with unclarity and controversy. There is on top of that a certain conundrum, social in nature. It is relatively trivial to view naturalism as a worldview. However, qualifying naturalism as an "ideology" is contentious insofar as "ideological" already expresses a thick concept, meaning that it is both descriptive and evaluative. This is to the effect that characterizing a system of thought as an ideology means calling it *mere* ideology. Adherents to naturalism are therefore, one could infer, simply ideologues. Unfortunately, implicitly or explicitly denouncing a philosophical opponent as an ideologue is bound to go awry. At best, the naturalist will dig her heels in and provide counter-arguments. At worst, the naturalist will simply ignore the charge and continue as before. The following argument that there are good reasons to assume that naturalism qualifies as an ideology is, however, intended to be a well-meaning invitation to consider rescinding a beloved, seemingly innocuous belief just a little bit. The argument proceeds in the following steps. Firstly, I shall briefly reconstruct the notion of "ideology". Secondly, I shall argue that naturalism fulfils certain crucial criteria, suggesting that it is aptly described as an ideology.

While these remarks demonstrate that it is relatively easy to think of naturalism as a worldview, it is more different to argue that naturalism qualifies as an ideology. Following scholarship on Critical Theory, I will first give a description of the concept of ideology by reconstructing two criteria for ideology given by Titus Stahl (2013) and Rahel Jaeggi (2009). It is not, however, without the addition of a third criterion outside of their work that we can understand what an ideology is. This procedure, however, resists demands from traditional conceptual analysis insofar as it offers a characterization of the concept in question without purporting to provide a set of necessary conditions which are jointly sufficient for a correct application of that concept. In a further step, I shall argue that naturalism fulfils the criteria laid out before.

1. *Practical consequences.* Ideologies are descriptive and prescriptive because they offer an interpretation of the world insofar as they state which actions are acceptable and to be positively sanctioned (Stahl 2013, 230). Ideologies therefore have

practical consequences and are socially efficacious (Jaeggi 2009, 269 ff.). The most relevant expression of this is the legitimization of existing structures of power and subjugation.

2. *Cognitive deficiency.* Ideologies present a cognitive deficiency in the sense of a dual delusion. Calling something "ideological" means to denounce it as false in two different ways. Firstly, ideologies are cognitively deficient insofar as the way of relating to the world they advocate does not fulfil certain standards of justification. Secondly, the set of beliefs making up a given ideology are false in an ordinary sense of "false". On top of that, however, thinkers under the spell of an ideology fall victim to a false interpretation of their cognitive state. This means that those individuals have false meta-level beliefs about their beliefs, i.e. false beliefs about their false beliefs. This is paradigmatically expressed in the following manner. False meta-level beliefs state that the ideology in question is timeless, universal, objective – and most importantly – *indefeasible.*

While these two characteristics are certainly helpful in understanding ideologies, a third characteristic is needed:

3. *Self-immunization.* Ideological belief systems are differentiated from ordinary beliefs insofar as they seem to feature an intrinsic pull to self-immunization of the ideological beliefs in question. This grants an ideology a special mode of justification. Thinkers under the spell of an ideology tend to discount information and reasons which stand in conflict with their ideology; instead, they will usually try to integrate these conflicting pieces of information into the ideology to render them coherent, for example, by adducing further collateral hypotheses or beliefs. Ideologies integrate their contradictions – in this sense, an ideology is a worldview into which everything can potentially be integrated.

Uncontroversial examples of ideologies are, for example, neoliberalism, certain conspiracy theories (for example, the popular "flat earth theory"), or racism. For the sake of brevity, I shall only go into detail regarding the last example. Racist belief systems are ideological insofar as they display the three characteristics illustrated above. Firstly, racist belief systems are made up of descriptive and normative beliefs. Racist beliefs are especially apt at continuing and legitimizing certain structures of subjugation which (at least in the Western world) benefit white people. Secondly, racist belief systems can be viewed as incorrect; there at least seems to be a kind of consensus in large parts of philosophy and the sciences.[39]

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[39] See, for example, Ned Block's (1995) criticism of a certain form of empirical research which aims to legitimize and justify racist stereotypes. See also Hacking (2005) who argues

Additionally, proponents of racist ideologies are confused regarding the status of incorrectness of their own beliefs. The confusion lies with the false meta-level belief that racist beliefs themselves are indubitable, in a certain sense timeless, and represent natural facts (i. e. parts of the world which are mind-independent). People under the influence of racist ideologies display therefore a lack of *sociological imagination* (Mills 1959), that is, the ability to understand that certain phenomena might have at least to some extent social, not only non-social, causes. Thirdly, racist belief systems tend to be self-immunizing in a related sense. People presented with evidence discrediting their beliefs certain will usually try to find ways to preserve the ideological beliefs in question. In the context of racism, a common strategy lies in, for example, assuming that scientific and scholarly evidence against racist beliefs is ideologically fraught itself or perhaps even fake, manufactured or commissioned work. Another common strategy is to slightly shift the content of a racist ideology; the most prominent example of this strategy is the shift from a kind of racism which grounds certain racialized traits in a natural foundation to a form of cultural racism. This treatment of the concept of ideology is not supposed to represent comprehensively the rich content of different debates about this phenomenon. It is instead supposed to lay a semantic corner stone for further thought.

Does naturalism then, too, exhibit characteristics of an ideology? The strategy to answer the question is to argue that naturalism does indeed exhibit the three typical characteristics of ideology previously mentioned. In a first step, it seems indeed to be the case that naturalism has a number of negative, potentially unwanted ethical consequences. I shall briefly introduce three salient examples: Habermas' concerns regarding personhood, the debate regarding determinism in neurolaw, and Bilgrami's point about the disenchantment of nature.

Regarding the first example, Jürgen Habermas has repeatedly called attention to practical effects of the scientific image for (post-)modern society as a whole. Habermas views the pivotal danger of naturalization of the mind in that it threatens to de-socialize our self-understanding as humans (Habermas 2001, 17 f.). The decisive aspect of these naturalization of the mind is that humans are viewed not as intrinsically normative beings, i. e. agents and persons, but are – on the most fundamental level – a mere, if highly complex, conglomerate of small particles. This view, Habermas contends, can already potentially erode respect for human dignity and undermine the Kantian principle to never use human beings as means, but only as ends. If scientific naturalism disenchants nature itself, Habermas' point is that it disenchants *human* nature, too.

(somewhat in opposition to Block) that the concept of race is not empty, at least in a certain non-traditional sense.

As for a second example, consider the following. Questions regarding determinism and free will have seeped into public discourse of the last decades. One of the most influential and prominent iterations of this theme is presented in the relatively recent combination of cognitive neuroscience and judicial thought, sometimes called *neurolaw*, more specifically the parts of neurolaw that call for adjustment of the notion of culpability in legal practice based on results of neuropsychiatry and neuroscience (cf. Vincent 2013). Often based on the famous *Libet experiments* (Libet 1985), one central assertion of such proponents is that the progress of neuroscience demonstrates that no action is free, but rather determined through neural mechanisms (Roth 1996, 2006). The introspective experience of free will is, as it were, a mere illusion created by the nervous system. Therefore, the culturally and societally highly relevant belief in accountability as such ought to be jettisoned. For if the brain determines any action causally, then the person itself cannot be responsible for them (*pace* compatibilism). This argument has raised sceptical reactions in the context of critical neuroscience, of course (Lavazza & De Caro 2010, Choudhury & Slaby 2009, cf. also Habermas 2004). Delving deeper into this debate is beyond the scope of the current project. What is important is that these bald statements of some prominent neuroscientists and philosophers who are firmly rooted in the scientific image seem to have gained more widespread traction and recognition. The idea of people not being responsible for their actions to be codified in the penal system is perhaps one of the most salient practical considerations of naturalism. In a naturalistic worldview, the will is not free, and agents are not responsible, as it were.

Thirdly, Bilgrami (2010) offers a genealogical reconstruction of the sociopolitical ramifications which promoted the popularity of naturalism within the intellectual circles of early modern Europe. Bilgrami paints a picture according to which the understanding and acceptance of the concept of nature implicit in naturalism is at least partially dependent on economic motives. His fundamental thought is that naturalism disenchants the conception of nature in a way that renders it free from intrinsic meaning and normative significance (Bilgrami 2010, 24–32). The Royal Society, as it were, was able to enforce its naturalist metaphysical picture within the English establishment because it presents a cultural framework expedient to economic interests of the early industrial sector. A disenchanted nature offers its parts as resources ready for industrial ends without having to consider the hitherto assumed potentially divine status of nature and matter. Bilgrami's far-reaching assumption point is that naturalism is of broad cultural and political significance for exactly this reason (Bilgrami 2010, 24). To illustrate the political processes which lead to this kind of disenchantment Bilgrami reconstructs the enduring dispute between the freethinkers and the Royal Society. The debate pertains mainly to the nature of matter as such (Bilgrami 2010, 38). Although both parties endorsed the then ruling scientific, i.e. Newtonian, views, the metaphysical consequences they drew from these views differed. The

Royal Society asserted that the Newtonian view of matter entails God's exile from the world, to be entirely transcendent. This metaphysical outlook represents matter as indolent, inactive, and dumb. The freethinkers, on the other hand, disagree insofar as they clung to a theistic conception of nature. Bilgrami's provocative thesis is thus: the rise of naturalism as a philosophical orthodoxy is preceded by proto-capitalist interests of the European elite and Newtonian intellectual ideologues.[40]

These three examples give a cursory view of potentially unwanted practical consequences of a naturalist worldview, on a socio-cultural scale. A further question is whether some proponents of naturalism have false meta-level belief about naturalism. I suggest that it is indeed so. The last characteristic – self-immunization – is closely related to this. This is why I shall demonstrate that naturalism exhibits these characteristics in conjunction.

According to the second characteristic of ideologies, the first-order belief in question is viewed as universal, objective and indefeasible. However, as argued throughout this chapter, there are a number of arguments demonstrating that naturalism is false. It is unlikely that naturalists would overtly denote naturalism as indefeasible or without alternative. Philosophers tend to think of themselves as undogmatic, critical thinkers after all. Yet, naturalists tend to – in practice – hold onto naturalism, typically unfazed by arguments against it. The third characteristic is then exhibited in the attempts by proponents of naturalism to react to challenges to naturalism. There are roughly three ways in which naturalism as a thesis is self-immunizing against refutation. Firstly, it seems that naturalism is always already treated as correct and without alternative in philosophical practice. This is because naturalism is, as mentioned, usually not treated as an ordinary philosophical thesis but rather as a framework or background assumption by which a given philosophical practice is licenced as acceptable. A related strategy is then for the naturalist to simply ignore counter-arguments against naturalism. Given that philosophy is a dialectical process, ignoring opposition to a given thesis virtually amounts to treating one's own position as being beyond doubt. Secondly, naturalists may try to render naturalism immune against, say, the charge of placement problems by stipulating that, while contemporary physics can perhaps not account for normative and mental properties, a future-ideal physics will be able to. A reply of this kind betrays that there is a certain will in some philosophers to adhere to the naturalism thesis come what may, a kind of will

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40   One can, of course, be critical of the connection between metaphysics and culture. James Ladyman states, for example: "I once reviewed a book by Mary Midgley in which she claimed that deforestation was in part caused by Cartesian dualism, as if vast reaches of Western Europe had not been deforested by our ancient ancestors. Frankly, I find the easy association that many intellectuals make between bad things about industrial and post-industrial capitalism and scientism in metaphysics completely naïve." (Ladyman 2012, 147 f.)

that is close to a sort of faith in naturalism. Thirdly, another strategy to make naturalism immune to refutation is to simply shift the goalposts. In adopting this strategy, the naturalist concedes that there may be some problems for naturalism which ought to be taken seriously. Yet, this is not taken as a reason to reject naturalism but rather as a motivation to reformulate naturalism in order to make it immune to the counter-arguments in question. With regards to naturalism, the most common strategy has already been encountered in the context of the argument from incoherence: rephrasing naturalism as a project or stance rather than a thesis (which I argued not to hold water). Hence, I conclude that there are good reasons to subsume naturalism under the concept of ideology.

Are there reasons against the idea that naturalism is an ideology? Firstly, one may object that overt reflections on naturalism are still most prevalent in academic circles, as opposed to "the folk", whoever that may exclude or include. Naturalism as a view does perhaps not find overt expression in everyday life as commonly as other ideologies. Contrast it perhaps with ideological views such as neoliberalism or racism which are very much part of public debate. However, one has to keep in mind that it is one feature of ideologies that they function as communally shared background assumptions which are efficacious even without sustained or institutionalized expression. To the contrary, it is perhaps further evidence of the ideological status of naturalism that it does not find overt expression as frequently as, say, neoliberalism just because its status as a background assumption is not yet revealed and sufficiently put into focus.

Secondly, a critic might further state that if naturalism seems to have such far-reaching implications that render it close to an ideology, the same must be true for metaphysical ideas like idealism and dualism as worldviews. But this line of thought would be incorrect. Instead, it is more reasonable to hold that idealism and dualism are mere worldviews, but not ideologies. This is for two reasons. First, (subjective) idealism and dualism simply cannot be said to be received views in larger parts of academic circles or "the folk", and has perhaps fewer cultural manifestations of the kind Habermas points out (at least in the Western world). In order to be effective and not impotent, an ideology requires a certain degree of acceptance among at least certain groups of people. An ideology cannot be "private", otherwise it is irrelevant. This is why (subjective) idealism and dualism do not have the same practical efficacy as naturalism. Furthermore, it would perhaps prove more difficult to enumerate practical effects on a societal scale of the kind that rank among the examples I have given above.

Thirdly, one may object that this construal of the concept of ideology entails that all philosophical theses which have some kind of normative significance would have to be characterized as ideologies. There are indeed a number of borderline cases. For example, it would not be implausible to argue that the meta-

ethical thesis of cultural relativism qualifies as an ideology in this sense.[41] It would also be more contentious, yet not fully implausible to argue the same for consequentialist theories in ethics. Controversial borderline cases of this kind cannot be ruled out completely. It seems, nevertheless, that such cases are distinct from naturalism regarding the aspect of cognitive deficiency. This is because proponents of cultural relativism or consequentialism are usually aware that competing positions are not entirely discredited, seemingly preposterous or obsolete. Simply being aware that one's own philosophical stance *might* be false in the light of better arguments is usually sufficient for not holding one's preferred position as not indefeasible, come what may.

The two arguments preceding the argument from ideology have difficulties sticking because a naturalist, with a background commitment to the scientific image, will try to simply reformulate their intuitions. This is why these two prior arguments against naturalism *must* fail in a certain sense. This is because these arguments (necessarily) argue against naturalism as a thesis. If naturalism is, however, not a thesis fully exhausted by its propositional content, then arguments which (necessarily) too employ propositional content miss their target. This third argument now, however, does take the status of the scientific image *as* an image seriously and operates on a different level of reflection. This is one advantage this argument from ideology has over more conventional base-level arguments against naturalism.

One of the main questions of this work is whether the threat to philosophy posed by naturalism or quietism respectively is so great that either of them could put an end to philosophy. I began the first chapter by clarifying what naturalism amounts to by separating unambitious forms of naturalism (collected under the title of "modest naturalism") from the kind of naturalism that seems operative, even if not always apparent, in debates surrounding naturalism: scientific naturalism. I further offered a diagnosis of one problematic aspect of debates regarding naturalism, namely the idea that scientific naturalism – as a thesis in the rational foreground – is complemented and informed by the scientific image – as a worldview in the background. I further suggested a reading of how the scientific image, via methodological naturalism, has exerted an influence on philosophical thinking in a way that I found not to be sufficiently integrated into analyses of naturalism: I construed quasi-scientific theory as a way in which the *bias* of the scientific image has taken foothold in philosophy as an understanding of how philosophy could be aligned with (putative) modes of explanation of the natural sciences.

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41   Some of the critical remarks in Boghossian (2006), for example, can serve as a basis to further develop the claim that cultural relativism itself can be qualified as an ideology.

After this assessment I offered three arguments against naturalism: an argument from coherence, an argument from the idea of nature, and an argument from ideology. What is worth to be noted is that the argument from coherence and the argument from ideology at least partially deal with the naturalist worldview: the debate surrounding the coherence of naturalism has "forced" proponents of scientific naturalism to shift the goalposts in a manner that makes scientific naturalism almost untouchable, namely by reconceiving of it as a project or stance. I suggested that this is because what is at stake in these debates is not scientific naturalism as a thesis alone, but that that conviction is informed by the underlying naturalist worldview. The belief that "something like" scientific naturalism must be correct allows one to develop ever changing formulations instead of giving up one's hold of the naturalist worldview. The argument from ideology built upon this assessment by arguing that scientific naturalism viz the naturalist worldview might qualify as an ideology. There seems to be a special kind of compulsion towards naturalism some philosophers experience. We just *must*, it seems to them, be naturalists for everything else bears the stench of a contemptuous attitude towards the sciences, as it were. If naturalism were to be considered an ideology, what then? I have further argued that ideologies have the same properties as worldviews. Worldviews have a special epistemological status rendering them without easily intuitable truth conditions with the result that they cannot be simply confirmed or rejected.

2. Quietism

> And we may not advance any kind of theory. [...] We must do away with all *explanation* [...] – Wittgenstein (1953, §109)

Quietism and naturalism are sometimes brought into relation with one another. To reiterate Rorty's phrasing from the introduction, the opposition between naturalism and quietism is the "deepest and most intractable difference of opinion within contemporary Anglophone philosophy" (Rorty 2010, 57). What exactly does this difference consist in? The previous chapter clarified what naturalism is. Similar difficulties arise when trying to pin down the content of quietism and assess its plausibility. The main issue is that there have been only few thorough engagements with quietism in the literature. Hence, fundamental aspects of quietism are still underdeveloped, for example what the exact claim of quietism amounts to, and what varieties of quietism exist as theoretical options. The aim of this chapter is to develop an account of the content of quietism which differs from most of the characterizations of quietism available. The preferred characterization of quietism is one that sheds more light on and is more in line with Rorty's insinuation that there is a proximity between naturalism and quietism. I shall develop the view that quietism is antagonistic to naturalism in virtue of its rejection of theory. As shall become clear, some authors (following Wittgenstein) have noted that quietism ought to be understood as the rejection of theoretical explanations in philosophy. Unfortunately, it is usually left unclear what is meant by "theory" in philosophy (as demonstrated in ch. 1). The point here is that the same sense of quasi-scientific theory (developed as one way in which the naturalistic worldview informs views on philosophy) is operative in the proper characterization of quietism. In other words: *quietism is the rejection of quasi-scientific theory*. This means that quietism eschews the idea that philosophy ought to be aligned with the putative methodologies of the natural sciences.

To get to this result, some further work is necessary. In what follows, I shall first provide a comprehensive overview of the ways the term "quietism" has been used in the debates. I shall ultimately side with the phrasings that highlight the connection between quietism and theories in philosophy. Dissatisfied with the notion of theory being left unclear here, I offer a reconception of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theories. Based on this general view, I will reconstruct two species of quietism: Wittgensteinian quietism and Pragmatist quietism, whe-

re I offer a construal of Wittgenstein, and Rorty and Price respectively as quietist philosophers in this sense.

§1   What is Quietism?

The specific problem regarding quietism is that within the relatively scarce amount of literature on it, there is a relatively high number of differing characterizations and attempts at defining it. For example, according to Kit Fine quietism is the doctrine that there is no "higher-order view" (Fine 2001, 1) of the world in philosophy, whereas Crispin Wright tells us that quietism states that "metaphysical debate is impossible" (Wright 1992, 202). John McDowell on the other hand defines quietism as the rejection of "substantive philosophy" (McDowell 2009, 369). Philip Pettit describes quietism as the view that philosophy has "no place in practice" (Pettit 2004, 304). Hans-Julius Schneider understands it as the idea that "there are no relevant philosophical questions left to deal with […]" (Schneider 2013, 168). James Conant characterizes quietism as "eschew[ing] the resolution of philosophical problems" (Putnam & Conant 1997, 196).[42] One of the most authoritative definitions of quietism is Simon Blackburn's view found in the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy:* "Quietism is a doctrine (associated with Wittgenstein) that there is no standpoint from which to achieve the traditional philosophical goal of a theory about some concept or another (e.g. truth, experience)" (Blackburn 2008, 315).

These phrasings are obviously not synonymous; they express different philosophical standpoints. One thing they do seem to have in common is the disavowal or outright rejection of a certain object or element of philosophy. However, the difference lies within what object or element is to be rejected, and for what reason.

Three Species of Quietism

This part offers a discussion of the available debates about quietism and synthesizes different aspects of quietism in order to generate a picture that is richer than the one provided by single attempts at "merely" defining quietism. This serves as a basis for the following part in which these aspects are used to construe a phrasing of content of quietism. At any rate, the different kinds of quietism reconstructed here will ultimately merely serve as a means for contrasting the relevant

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[42]   Other relevant attempts at defining Quietism are found in Macarthur & Price (2007), Macarthur (2012), Rorty (2010), Leiter (2004), Finkelstein (2006) and Hohwy (1997).

kind of quietism (as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory) that is introduced in the following part.

In order to bring into view the different aspects of quietism worth discussing, it is perhaps best to start by looking at an article on quietism that attempts to summarize and order the available scholarship. The article by Stelios Virvidakis (2008) attempts to gather certain definitions found in other works from about the 1990s onwards. This results in an extensive taxonomy of different quietisms. For my purposes, only a smaller part of that taxonomy is useful, namely a distinction of different characteristics of quietism along three axes: scope (i), motivation (ii), and argumentative strategies (iii) (Virvidakis 2008, 161 f.).

Regarding scope (i), the pivotal distinction when it comes to quietism is between a local and a global form of quietism.[43] Global quietism is the view that all instances of the relevant philosophical activity are to be rejected. For example, given Blackburn's definition, global quietism means that we cannot achieve a theory about *all* concepts in philosophy. The local form of quietism, on the other hand, is the idea that this approach is limited to just one or a few, but not all areas of philosophy. Global quietism, however, seems incoherent to some. This is because if quietism is applied to itself, it seems to become a self-defeating doctrine, as it were: if all theory is to be rejected, or if all philosophical questions are to be rejected, is quietism itself not a view that has to be rejected? Is quietism thus not a wildly incoherent view? After having brought the correct phrasing of quietism into view, I shall address and dismantle this charge, such that quietism stands vindicated as not trivially incoherent. The charge from global quietism presupposes that the quietist thesis is of the same sort as the theses rejected by quietism. It will become apparent that quietism rejects only a certain mode of explanation of which it itself is not a part.

Virvidakis also poses the interesting question whether a given form of local quietism can remain local or will have to expand or spill over to other areas of philosophy. Consider, for example, whether the commitment to remain quiet about moral vocabulary does not confine one to silence about aesthetic vocabulary insofar as both are value laden. If that is true, any given form of local quietism may expand into global quietism, leaving the latter as the only theoretically available option. This, of course, hinges on the way the specific forms of local quietism are formulated.

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[43]   David Macarthur mentioned to me in conversation that quietism is always quietism about a specific issue, and that there is no notion of global quietism to be had. However, I think that this is inaccurate since, first, the idea of global quietism can be at least be entertained, and second because, as will become clear, Wittgensteinian quietism is a stance neither specifically about one concept nor about all philosophical concepts, but about issues connected to nonsense.

Regarding motivation (ii), Virvidakis distinguishes *antecedent* from *consequent* forms of quietism. A motivation of the consequential kind means that the quietist view is the result of a reasoning process and philosophical argument. In contrast, antecedent quietist describes views that are quietist from the outset, typically describable as a stance, and not the result of an argument. Virvidakis cites Wittgenstein, Rorty's work, and logical positivism as examples of antecedent quietism, and Hume's scepticism as a form of consequent quietism (Virvidakis 2008, 162). As shall become clear, it is misleading to understand Wittgensteinian quietism and Rorty's brand of quietism as a sort of unargued, unreasoned stance of rejecting certain parts of philosophy. Although their strategy might differ from Hume's motivation for scepticism, their respective quietist convictions are not merely antecedent stances, but substantiated by intelligible, if contentious, reasoning.

Lastly, one can make out different argumentative strategies (iii) substantiating quietism. These strategies broadly bifurcate into positive and negative approaches. Negative approaches in quietism aim to undermine a concept or area of philosophy through showing that part is nonsensical, vacuous, or useless. A positive approach, in contrast, aims to argue in favour of a certain philosophical position which may entail a form of quietism as dialectical consequence. Examples for this may be arguments for minimalism, pluralism about language, or in favour of the primacy of common sense – all positions which would entail a quietist attitude in some other philosophical area.

Represented as a table, Virvidakis' way of carving up the varieties of quietism, which I also address, looks as follows.

	Wittgensteinian quietism	Pragmatist quietism	Local quietism
Scope	neither strictly local nor global	neither strictly local nor global	local
Motivation	antecedent and therapeutic	consequent and programmatic	consequent, programmatic
Argumentative strategy	negative approach	negative approach	positive approach

This table can provide a first helpful overview of the ways in which quietism is typically characterized, yet it is only to be enjoyed with some caution. Given that this understanding may be representative of common notions of what quietism is, it is important to rectify some aspects of this table. Thinking about quietism along these axes can be more confusing than clarificatory. Regarding scope, it is misleading to think of quietism as being about only certain areas of philosophy as such; at least as long as we do not clearly understand what kind of philosophical

activity is meant by this. The two more concrete and developed accounts of quietism (Wittgensteinian quietism and Pragmatist quietism) are more careful than to discount all philosophy. For example, a closer look at Wittgensteinian quietism will disclose that there is actually no demand to cease all philosophy. Regarding motivation, qualifying Wittgensteinian quietism as antecedent seems wrongheaded, namely for the reason that a closer look on Wittgensteinian quietism reveals that it being antecedent amounts to, at most, a kind of suspicion against certain ways of doing philosophy, not an outright dogmatic rejection of some or all kinds of philosophy.[44] The way of carving up the debate about quietism Virvidakis offers is thereby misleading despite its heuristic utility. Furthermore, the varieties of quietism adumbrated above are of little value in the upcoming debates. Therefore, these considerations will for the most part not figure in the further argument. Hence, while this table is a good starting point, it will subsequently be replaced by a characterization of quietism that focuses on quasi-scientific theory.

Local quietism

As already indicated by its name, local quietism's essential characteristic is its scope. A local quietism, perhaps unlike the Wittgensteinian and Pragmatist quietism discussed later, is restricted to a single philosophical concept, philosophical area, or philosophical problem. Local quietisms do not engage in therapy, which was the defining aspect of Wittgensteinian quietism. That is, a local quietism attacks a philosophical concept "directly", that is, it does not try to qualify an assumption underlying that concept in question to be an illusion. A local quietism typically aims to show that a certain interpretation of a concept is untenable. Let us briefly consider two examples of local quietism: quietism about the concept of reality and the area of meta-ethics.

What does it mean to be quietist about realism? This version has been discussed, but not necessarily endorsed, by Arthur Fine, Gideon Rosen, and Simon Blackburn. According to Fine, it means that questions about realism are meaningless or pointless, and that such metaphysical notions of factuality and reducibility are devoid of content. It means that philosophy should abandon its pretension of presenting us with a "higher-order view of how the world really is" (Fine 2001, 12). First, Fine's arguments target a specific philosophical concept, but do not pertain to areas of philosophy beyond that. In particular, this means that quietism about realism can turn out to be true, but that would not touch upon the rest of philosophical theorizing. Second, Fine does not aim to provide a therapeutic assessment of the assumptions or alleged confusions underlying the

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44   This is something John McDowell repeatedly stressed in conversation.

concept of realism. Instead, thirdly, Fine aims to show that the interpretations philosophers have given the concept of realism turn out to be devoid of content, thus manipulating the dialectic in a way that puts proponents of realism on the spot to produce an interpretation of realism that is not affected by the same interpretation that turns out to be untenable. Given such further specifications of the account, one can be quietist about realism, according to Fine.

Ronald Dworkin has developed a particularly conspicuous form of meta-ethical quietism about the concept of objectivity with regards to ethical claims. Dworkin (1996) argues that we cannot take a meta-ethical stance on moral questions because meta-ethical statements are themselves moral statements. They are moral statements because they entail real-world actions. For example, holding the belief that there is no objective fact of the matter whether abortion is wrong has real-world consequences, and thus makes this statement a moral statement. In other words, one cannot position himself or herself outside the moral realm by trying to take a meta-stance. Dworkin goes on to claim that statements of the sort "p is an objective fact" only amount to mere rhetoric because "is an objective fact" merely serves as a device for disquotation and does nothing further than simply asserting "p". In other words, the meta-ethical statement "It is an objective fact that abortion is wrong" deflates to the first-order statement "abortion is wrong" (Dworkin 1996, 96), thereby making it a first-order moral assertion. Dworkin hopes to have shown that we ought to be quietist about meta-ethics as we usually understand it because our interpretations of it turn out not to do the work we want them to. Again, Dworkin's meta-ethical quietism is confined to one area of philosophy. Analogous cases can be made for virtually any area of philosophy, but it is unnecessary to give further examples because local quietisms of this kind are not the subject of the current inquiry, and have therefore not much relevance in the current context. Quietisms about single concepts or areas of philosophy are of limited appeal. The specific topic itself may be interesting for its own sake, but does not help us get the desired form of quietism into view.

The accounts of quietism so far are unified in ascribing to quietism the idea of rejecting some area or problem of philosophy. The following parts shall make clear that quietism can be understood as a more specific doctrine, i.e. the rejection of quasi-scientific theories in philosophy. The local quietisms presented above do not neatly align with this phrasing of quietism developed. It is therefore a further question whether a given form of local quietism, e.g. meta-ethical quietism or quietism about realism, fall themselves under the conception of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory. Since the main forms of quietism are Wittgensteinian quietism and Pragmatist quietism, I will not pursue the question whether these local quietisms fall under quietism proper. The following construal of quietism offers a novel framework to understand the implications surrounding the common usage of the term "quietism". Having formulated this account, I shall relinquish the "conventional" way of conceptualizing quietism reproduced

in the preceding sections because it lacks, I hope it shall become clear, the necessary depth to bring out some interesting features attributable to philosophical quietism.

§2 A Reconception of Quietism: Quietism and Theory

As the last section aimed to establish, some writings on quietism are accompanied by a certain awkwardness, namely that the authors seem to not have agreed upon a common vocabulary expressing their points, in fact, there is little discussion or exchange between them indicating that many may not have felt to canonize a common way of phrasing quietism. Wittgensteinian quietists defend the idea that a larger part of the philosophical enterprise is to be rejected, namely those questions which warrant a *therapeutic* treatment. Local quietisms, as propounded by Fine or Blackburn, claim that realism and meta-ethics are not something we can give philosophical accounts about because, as their arguments try to show, it is not possible to take a meta-stance on reality and morality respectively. Similarly, metaphysical quietism on the one hand accepts the folk-talk of those concepts and issues that are usually subject to traditional philosophical debate (like values or reality), but eschews saying more about those very concepts in philosophy. So as the name suggests, quietists propose that we should keep "quiet" about something, but for different motivations; either because there is nothing of sense to say about that or because the issue itself, if looked at correctly, does not even arise such that there is no need to talk about it.

This section develops my suggestion that there is a common, albeit hidden theme to these varieties of quietism (contra Virvidakis 2008, 158 f.). At the core, philosophical quietism is against the use of a certain kind of theory in philosophy. As a slogan: *Quietism is the rejection of quasi-scientific theories in philosophy.* At first glance, this may seem problematic. How can a generic phrasing of this kind be relatively far removed from prior definition attempts? Note that this formulation is close to Simon Blackburn's phrasing already encountered: quietism is a "doctrine (associated with Wittgenstein) that there is no standpoint from which to achieve the traditional philosophical goal of a theory about some concept or another (e.g. truth, experience)" (Blackburn 2008, 315). Contrasted with the broader, general phrasing I offered, Blackburn is certainly right about quietism being the rejection of a theory about a given philosophical concept. Yet, Blackburn owes us some gesturing at what he means by "theory" here. It is, however, not sufficient to just rely on an implicit understanding of the word "theory" in this context. This shortcoming cannot be blamed on Blackburn alone, however. Ever since Wittgenstein was ascribed with a rejection of "theories", commentators seem to routinely leave it unclear what is meant by "theory" (as patently observed by Hanfling 2004 and Pears 1970, 178–188).

Furthermore, the phrasing I offer has advantages over the others discussed so far. It is more general, thereby allowing to understand other phrasings as species of a wider genus. It is simpler, and it is centred around a single term, namely "theory," rather than "constructive" or "substantive" philosophy. And it avoids simple incoherence. It may not be directly clear how this relates to the different species of quietism we have considered since the term "theory" did not seem to be at the heart of what their proponents take to be the pressing element of quietism. This phrasing stays neutral with regards to the reason for rejecting theories in philosophy, allowing for specification if necessary. As seen, philosophers may adopt quietist stances by way of taking issue with the production of nonsense (nonsense quietism), or they may be quietist about those philosophical problems which do not relate to practice outside of philosophy, as Rorty does. Different forms of quietism vary mainly, again, with regards to scope, motivation and argumentative strategy, thereby further explication *why* quasi-scientific theories are to be rejected.

Some Misconceptions. This quarrel regarding proper definition is accompanied by certain common misconceptions about what quietism entails which are addressed here before moving on to Wittgensteinian quietism and Pragmatist quietism as species of the generic form of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory.

Silence. The first way to misunderstand quietism is to think that quietism requires one to actually remain silent in philosophy, saying nothing at all. Wittgenstein is attributed the view that once the goal of therapy is reached, one has to remain quiet in philosophy, unable to say any more about the subjects that motivate philosophers. This is particularly vexing if one, on top of that, assumes that Wittgenstein is betraying this commitment by himself not staying quiet on certain matters, most notably questions about philosophical meaning (cf. Wright 1992, 202–204). This would render his own philosophical activity incoherent with his overt methodological convictions. This is closely related to the idea that quietism's aim is to "return us to a state of intellectual peace", thereby putting quietism into closer proximity to scepticism (Giladi 2015, 251 f.). With this setup, Giladi tries to qualify both Hegel and William James as quietists because both are committed to the "broad philosophical quietist strategy of dissolving problematics," resulting in intellectual peace (Giladi 2015, 257). Robert Brandom seems to have something similar in mind when he says that Wittgenstein's "theoretical quietism […] discouraged his admirers from attempting to work out the details of a theory of meaning, or for that matter, of use" (Brandom 1994, xii–xiii). More negatively, Tim Button (2010) even attributes quietism the aim of silencing certain forms of philosophy. When quietism is understood differently as the rejection of quasi-scientific theories, then one of the results of this may or may not

be viewed as "intellectual peace." While quietism rejects some conspicuous form of philosophical activity, it does not reject philosophy as such. I argue, however, that once the content of quietism is correctly specified, it will become clear that philosophers endorsing quietism do not have to remain silent. Such an intellectual peace would not necessarily consist in saying nothing at all in philosophy, but adhering to a certain normative constraint of doing philosophy that is set by quietism.

Therapy. The second way is to hold that quietism proper is a particular conception of therapy. The intellectual peace which, as it were confines a philosopher to silence, is the result of philosophical therapy. As shall become clear, it is the other way around: quietism is not necessarily a brand of therapy, but philosophical therapy in the relevant sense is a specified form of philosophical quietism. This is reflected in parts of the first chapter, where I discuss McDowell's Wittgensteinian quietism with its therapeutic trajectory next to Huw Price's brand which represents another species of the genus. Therefore, quietism is a genus that allows for specifications, of which usually only the Wittgensteinian variety is considered.

Metaphysics. A third way to misunderstand quietism is to identify it with the rejection of metaphysics (cf. Hohwy 1997). David Macarthur assumes, for example, that the paradigmatic form of quietism is to be quietist about metaphysics, and subsequently attributes metaphysical quietism to Wittgenstein (Macarthur 2017). There is a strong case to be made that the rejection of metaphysics has a privileged role in quietist views. However, the general notion of quietism to be developed understands quietism as the rejection of a specific form of theory in philosophy. As such, metaphysical quietism can be understood as a refinement of this general notion.

Quietism and Scepticism. It is sometimes claimed that there is a very close connection between Pyrrhonian scepticism and quietism, or even that Pyrrhonian scepticism *is* a form of quietism. For example, Virvidakis claims that – after considering a variety of different definitions – quietism is a "catchword allowing us to describe serious challenges to constructive philosophical thinking, as old as Pyrrhonian scepticism" (Virvidakis 2008, 157, cf. also Macarthur 2017 and Virvidakis & Kindi 2013). But given the general phrasing of quietism that surfaced, such thoughts are unjustified. Pyrrhonian scepticism is the view that one should *withhold judgement* concerning a question or statement of philosophy for one reason or another. Global scepticism, accordingly, is the view that one should withhold judgement about all problems of philosophy (cf. Paár 2016). Quietism, on the other hand, is the rejection of quasi-scientific theories in philosophy. There clearly is a difference between withholding one's judgement concerning a question and rejecting theoretical explanations concerning that question, or rejecting

the question altogether especially because it warrants a theoretical explanation in philosophy. Therefore, philosophical quietism is an idea carefully to be distinguished from forms of scepticism despite their similarities. Pyrrhonic scepticism, for example, is potentially global insofar as it is a blueprint to be applied to any kind of philosophical belief. The quietism espoused so far, however, is *not* applicable to any philosophical thought simpliciter, but is rather applicable to those philosophical settings which construct, motivate or enable quasi-scientific theories.

Quietism as Non-Interventionism. Apart from a wholesale rejection of philosophy, quietism is also sometimes attributed a commitment to a form of philosophical non-interventionism. This seems to stem from Wittgenstein's remark that philosophy "leaves everything as it is" (Wittgenstein 1953, §124). This charge is brought forward by Wright (1992, 202 ff.) and Stekeler-Weithofer (2012), and is more positively explored in its existentialist dimension by Pettit (2004). Philosophical non-interventionism is the thesis that philosophy does not have any altering or revisionary effect on matters outside philosophy, neither as a form commentary on scientific practice or results, nor on matters of common sense. Stekeler-Weithofer's main critique of this notion of non-interventionism is that quietist philosophy could not, as it were, offer a "remedy against scientism" (its opponent) because arguing against scientism as a belief would constitute a form of intervention (Stekeler-Weithofer 2012, 234). The argument seems to be that this notion of non-interventionism presupposes a strict distinction between philosophy on the one hand, and sciences and other human institutions on the other. But such a clear-cut distinction does not exist, according to him. Hence, quietism cannot be correct. (Yet, Stekeler-Weithofer leaves room for a different conception of quietism as interventionist which he deems worth defending.) The kind of quietism I advocate, i.e. as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory, does accommodate the possibility of philosophical intervention. This is because the rejection of quasi-scientific theory does not entail the rejection of philosophical practice as such. For example, highly revisionary and critical ambitions which potentially have profound consequences for practice inside and outside philosophy can be pursued even under a quietist constraint.

Quietism as Self-defeating. Related to the previous point, one of the most common objections to quietism states that it must be self-defeating since quietism is a philosophy thesis or theory, but since it precludes philosophical theses or theories, it cannot be countenanced from its own standpoint. Hence, quietism as a doctrine is untenable, and Wittgenstein as a philosopher is, as it were, either simply oblivious of this contradiction or intellectually dishonest. Variations of this charge have been proposed by a number of thinkers. This charge has found mention in the preceding discussion, yet it is perhaps important to give it some more

space in order to fully dispel this misconception. Fortunately, some commentators have already attacked this objection. For example, Rydenfelt correctly points out that Rorty as a "quietist" is not really quiet which ought to indicate that quietism as a thesis cannot really be about committing oneself to complete silence (Rydenfelt 2011, 123). And Horwich states impactfully:

> In sum: given a modicum of interpretive charity, it is hard to see any basis for the charge that Wittgenstein's metaphilosophy requires him to engage in some of the very intellectual activities that it denounces. And so there is simply no need for any of the radical escape tactics that have been urged on his behalf. (Horwich 2012, 30 f.)

Similarly, but more exhaustively, Hutto writes:

> Of course, we will only be 'shocked' by the inadequacy of Wittgenstein's 'theory' if we wrongly imagine that his offerings were meant to constitute one. It should be clear by now that this was never his interest. To note that rule-following activities are grounded in training, customs and habit does not constitute a communitarian or sociological theory of meaning. At this point it is usual for Wittgenstein to be charged with advocating 'quietism'. Yet, without refinement, this attribution will not do, for as we have just seen, he is prepared to make revealing observations about issues of fundamental philosophical concern. Although we would be unable to appreciate these if we were still under the spell of certain confusions, it is simply untrue that he is completely silent about such matters. Nor, without the restrictions of the Tractarian conception of the limits of sense in play, is there any reason he ought to be mute about such topics. In light of this, it is pertinent to ask: About what is Wittgenstein 'quiet' and in what sense? (Hutto 2003, 165)

Some of these remarks will become more lucid given the treatment of Wittgensteinian quietism below. For the present purpose, Horwich and Hutto are both correct in stressing that interpretive charity allows us to understand that quietism in general is not self-defeating. Note that Hutto asks about what Wittgenstein is quiet about, i.e. what the object of quietism is. Given my construal, we are now in a position to alleviate the charge that quietism is a self-defeating view, and state why exactly it is not self-defeating. Quietism is the rejection of quasi-scientific theories in philosophy. But as the discussion of theory above shows us, quietism itself is not a quasi-scientific theory. The objection rests on an un-qualified implicit notion of theory which usually remains unspecified and conflates the status of quietism as a thesis with the different kind of thought which it is directed against, i.e. quasi-scientific theories. It is rather the case that realism, anti-realism, idealism and other remarks on the question of mind, world, and objectivity are not *ipso facto* "malicious" quasi-scientific theories a quietist would have to reject. Making a distinction between the unqualified term "theory" and quasi-scientific theory enables us to have a grasp on finer distinctions in philosophical activity. Very simply put, since quietism is not a quasi-scientific theory, it is not self-defeating.

§3 Wittgensteinian Quietism

The first of the two greater strands of the quietist "tradition" is Wittgensteinian quietism. Wittgensteinian quietism is grounded in certain metaphilosophical remarks taken from Wittgenstein's later philosophy which express the quietist form *in nuce*.[45]

> Philosophy "leaves everything as it is." (Wittgenstein 1953, §124)

> "The work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose." (Wittgenstein 1953, §127)

> "The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness." (Wittgenstein 1953, §255)

> "The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to. – The one that gives philosophy peace […]." (Wittgenstein 1953, §133)

> "What is your aim in philosophy?—To shew the fly the way out of the fly-bottle. (Wittgenstein 1953, §309)

The thoughts expressed in these statements are further elaborated or alluded to by different philosophers in different manners. A distinctly quietist interpretation is a third option next to realist or anti-realist readings of Wittgenstein. The realist and anti-realist readings take Wittgenstein to be concerned with arguing either for a realist or anti-realist view of certain philosophical concepts such as meaning. A realist about meaning thinks that meaning as a phenomenon is a *genuine* feature of the world, not to be further reduced or eliminated. An anti-realist about meaning denies that meaning is a genuine feature of the world, but is rather, for example, some form of fiction. The quietist reading of Wittgenstein suggests that instead of providing an answer, Wittgenstein actually rejects the problems surrounding concepts like the concept of meaning (represented in Finkelstein 2006, Hacker 2000, Proops 2001). By rejecting certain problems, the motivation of whether one ought to be realist or anti-realist about meaning disappears. Therefore, the quietist understanding of Wittgenstein starts at a point which is dialectically prior to the debate between realism versus anti-realism, thereby undercutting both positions. There are two *prima facie* competing readings of Wittgensteinian quietism in the relevant scholarship. Call these readings *nonsense quietism* (championed by David Finkelstein with inspiration taken from Cora Diamond and James Conant [henceforth referred to as FDC), and *therapy quietism* by John McDowell. On the face of it, these views are distinct,

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but I will briefly argue that they are compatible, and that therapy quietism even includes the notion of nonsense introduced by FDC. In the following, I will first introduce nonsense quietism, then focus on therapy quietism and then demonstrate how they hang together.

So first, nonsense quietism. David Finkelstein offers a first approximation:

> A quietist in the sense I want to consider is someone who rejects a philosophical question, and the theories that seek to answer it, as *nonsense.* To call a thesis nonsense is not to call it false. (Finkelstein 2006, 1)

This means that a quietist about a given philosophical question does not think that any possible answer to that question is true or false. Rather, the quietist rejects that question, or at least rejects an answer to it as nonsensical. Understood this way quietism is not yet an interesting thesis (Finkelstein 2006, 2). For if we take it to reject all philosophical theses, it would simply be self-refuting since that statement is itself a philosophical thesis (as pointed out before). But if one takes it to be only concerned with one or two philosophical concepts, then virtually any philosopher is a quietist. This would render quietism uninteresting as a position, unworthy of further consideration. Therefore, Finkelstein then goes on to offer a more robust, more interesting phrasing:

> *what distinguishes philosophical issues from empirical ones is precisely that they are nonsense for the most part*; or: *almost all of the theses adduced in metaphysics turn out to be nonsense*; or: *it's a central feature of the philosophical enterprise that philosophers end up meeting nonsensical questions with nonsensical answers.* These are not trivial claims, nor are they self-defeating. (Finkelstein 2006, 2; emphasis in original)

This is a much more substantial formulation, but there is still need for clarification. What is, for example, this notion of "nonsense"? And once this notion is clearer: are all philosophical theses nonsensical on this account? Or are there criteria for what makes a philosophical question or concept nonsensical?

Finkelstein's reference to "nonsense" is inspired by Cora Diamond's reading of Wittgenstein. Finkelstein follows Diamond in distinguishing a common-sense understanding of nonsense from a counterintuitive, Wittgenstein–Frege account of nonsense, i.e. an "austere" notion of nonsense (Diamond 1981, Finkelstein 2006, 16). The common-sense view of nonsense may be seen as something being "obviously false" and "flying in the face of the facts," or if it is unclear "what is being spoken of" or sentences "containing category errors [sic, TJS]" (Diamond 1981, 5). A famous example for a category mistake statement is "Caesar is a prime number", a perhaps more contemporary example are statements to the effect that "the brain thinks that p." Finkelstein states that this common-sense view of nonsense can be used to further distinguish three kinds of nonsense: mere nonsense and two kinds of substantial nonsense. Mere nonsense is for instance

"frump the bump," a statement in which the terms are not given any meaning. The first kind of substantial nonsense is exemplified by statements that violate the "rules of logical syntax." Finkelstein's example for this is Heidegger's statement "the nothing itself nothings." This example might be inept, however. On a more charitable reading, Heidegger's statement "the nothing nothings" can be construed as saying "$\neg\exists x: \varphi x$". This would express the thought that it is not possible to ascribe a predicate to a thing that does not exist.[46] On this reading, Heidegger's statements should not have a questionable metaphysical taste, but rather express logical-conceptual thoughts. This erroneous understanding of Heidegger is rooted in logical positivism. One of the central tenets of logical empiricism was to exorcise "metaphysical" and other "dubious" intellectual endeavours. Carnap famously argued that metaphysicists either use established words of natural languages in a way that is devoid of meaning or introduce new meaningless terms. In order to uncover such (supposed) misuses, the method Carnap champions is logical analysis, i.e. forms of formalization, of the sentences in question. This is exemplified in Carnap's infamous critique of Heideggerian statements like "we know the nothing" (Carnap 1931, 230, cf. also again the argument from incoherence ch.1, §6) which Finkelstein alludes to here. According to Carnap, such statements are devoid of meaning although they first appear to be meaningful sentences. If "the nothing nothings" is not a good example of substantial nonsense, what is? My suggestion is to read a statement like "the brain thinks that p" as substantial nonsense (rather than an innocuous analogy). Although "the brain thinks that p" may commonly be held to be a meaningful statement, a proper understanding of the concept of thought and the concept of mind discloses that this sentence is not formed correctly. It is not the brain which thinks, it is the person. In "the brain thinks that p" every word has a perfectly intelligible meaning assigned, but the configuration of words turns out to render the statement nonsensical given a proper understanding.

The second kind of substantial nonsense is exemplified by statements that "combine signs of the wrong semantic category," in fact, that is the same notion Diamond dubbed category error statements. So again, a relevant example here is "Caesar is a prime number," because the term "Caesar" is a name that cannot be brought under the predicate "is a prime number" (Finkelstein 2006, 13 f.). The difference then is: both kinds of substantial nonsense are made up of meaningful expressions which are just incorrectly combined; but sentence of mere nonsense contain expressions to which we have given no meaning. Finkelstein and Dia-

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46   The sentence "the nothing nothings" ("das Nichts nichtet") most prominently figures in Heidegger's *What is Metaphysics?* One possible reading that renders Heidegger's phrasing intelligible, and not obscurantist, starts with acknowledging that Heidegger refers to Leibniz' question "why is there something rather than nothing?" and firstly does interpret it as a simple form of negation in language. Cf. Heidegger (1976, 116 ff).

mond maintain that the notion of nonsense that is relevant for the Wittgensteinian brand of quietism is counterintuitive insofar as it is largely distinct from the usual, common-sense understanding of nonsense just outlined. Diamond's point here is that for Wittgensteinian quietism, there is no differentiating between kinds of nonsense. Instead, there is only one kind of nonsense, namely mere nonsense. This is to the effect that all statements either do have some "sense" or are mere nonsense, i. e. the expressions used in them are without meaning.

The notion of a specific kind of Wittgensteinian quietism is developed mainly by John McDowell. Before fleshing out this view, two caveats are to be addressed. First, McDowell tends to reject, or be critical of, reflections on philosophical method, asserting that philosophers should instead be engaged with the problems of philosophy itself (McDowell 2015, 25). Second, McDowell exhibits a kind of uneasiness about the expression "quietism". This is mostly credited by his enduring use of scare-quotes when using the word "quietism" indicating that he might endorse the idea expressed by that term, but not the possibly pejorative flavour some associate with it. He only agrees with the usage of the term "quietism" as a commitment to dispel the need for substantive philosophy, but rejects the context in which it was introduced by Crispin Wright (McDowell 2009). According to Wright's interpretation, Wittgenstein sets up substantial philosophical questions worth answering, yet Wittgenstein himself is forbidden to solve them due to his own alleged quietism. If that was correct, then Wittgenstein's quietism became something like "an embarrassing failure to acknowledge the character of his own philosophical achievement" (McDowell 1996, 175).

Thus, Wittgensteinian quietism can be characterized by the following three connected elements: (i) rejection of philosophy as a practice of putting forward *theses*, (ii) *therapy*, and as a result (iii) *mental peace.* What do those aspects mean and how do they hang together? A good place to start is by looking at John McDowell's version of quietism which incorporates those aspects. McDowell's brand of quietism is one of the most developed and most influential, I take it to be the most important representative of Wittgensteinian quietism to date (see, for example Lovibond 2002, Maher 2012).[47] Although McDowell himself seems to dislike the term "quietism", as mentioned above, he has developed a form of Wittgensteinian quietism that remains relatively close to Wittgenstein's original remarks and can be read as a cautious elucidation of the content of such remarks while trying not to put quietism forward as a "positive" thesis itself. This caution is based on the fear that any further thesis-like elaboration would render quietism incoherent. This worry, however, is unfounded.

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[47]   Quante (2004) and Giladi (2015) have tried to ascribe to Hegel a form of therapeutic quietism in a style similar to the Wittgensteinian quietism described here. Assessing this claim would require an investigation for its own sake, however.

Firstly, philosophy usually employs theses of some sort to explain certain phenomena or concepts. McDowell calls this "constructive" or "substantive" philosophy, terms which can be used interchangeably. The rejection of constructive philosophy specifically means doing philosophy without "putting forward any theses" (McDowell 2009, 365). Instead, philosophy should be "assembling reminders" of things we already know but might have forgotten. Philosophical theses in contrast try to argue for something novel, it seems McDowell wants us to believe.

This is where, secondly, quietism is connected with the Wittgensteinian idea of therapy. This picture, he explains, amounts to the thought that there is a binary state of doing philosophy: either "succumbing to an illusion" causing philosophers to produce philosophical theses; that would be the traditional way philosophy has been done throughout the centuries. Or one can try to treat the "intellectual pathologies" causing such illusions. This kind of treatment is philosophical *therapy*. Philosophical therapy is performed by developing conceptual elucidations rather than stating empirical facts. Charles Larmore offers one of the more elegant phrasings: The McDowellian notion of quietism means that "progress in philosophy is not achieved by solution, but by dissolution of problems, *qua* diagnosis of misconceptions that give rise to the felt need for theory" (Larmore 2002, 194). Similarly, Chauncey Maher reads the idea as "avoid[ing] the mystery by rejecting the false assumption at the root of the theory" (Maher 2012, 77). So, therapy involves the diagnosis and reconception of the problem causing confusion (Macarthur 2008). For example, the later Wittgenstein himself offers a substantial amount of diagnosis of philosophical problems, but not as much reconception in an effort to alleviate the issues unearthed by the diagnoses. Richard Rorty on the other hand offers, *vice versa*, ambitious reconceptions of philosophical problems without offering much preceding motivating diagnosis, sometimes leaving readers bewildered as to why the problem itself would need a reconception at all. Rorty's most conspicuous example of this procedure and style is perhaps his *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* which is quick to abandon the concept of truth as useful and focuses instead on an alternative framework conducive to further thought on social progress (Rorty 1989).

Thirdly, should the preceding steps prove to be successful, the prize awarded to the Wittgensteinian quietist is peace of the mind. The quietist philosopher is no longer "tortured" by self-made and self-imposed problems of philosophy to which he or she could not find solutions no matter the effort. By having understood, examined, reconceived and treated his problems, one earns the privilege and right to remain quiet about philosophical issues because, as one has shown, there is nothing to speak about in the first place.

The broad scope of Wittgensteinian quietism is also one of its striking characteristics. Wittgensteinian quietism is not about finding one or two specific concepts in philosophy to be nonsensical. Rather, it claims that many or most philosophical concepts or areas of inquiry amount to no more than nonsense

(e.g. "the brain thinks that p"). McDowell, however, also makes room for the idea that there are, in fact, parts of philosophy which warrant neither theory nor philosophical therapy:

> Think, for instance, of reflection about the requirements of justice or the proper shape for a political community. I know no reason to suppose Wittgenstein would have insisted that everything that happens in political philosophy, to stay with that example, falls under that "either/ or." (McDowell 2009, 367)

It is a further question how nonsense quietism and therapy quietism are related. Can the different version of Wittgensteinian quietism given by FDC and McDowell be reconciled? One could perhaps argue that McDowell's version of quietism is closer to the reading of FDC than I make it out to be here. Such an irenic understanding has to show that the concepts of nonsense and constructive philosophy are in a closer relationship. The most plausible way to establish such a relationship is this: therapy of the kind McDowell proposes is something that needs to be applied to a philosophical thought – as a token of constructive philosophy – about which there is the illusion that it makes sense, even though it only amounts to nonsense.

These characteristics can become more tangible by giving an example of how a Wittgensteinian quietist philosopher might operate. Parts of John McDowell's *Mind and World* can be read as a practical employment of the Wittgensteinian quietist approach to a certain perennial problem in philosophy. It targets the philosophical question of how mind and world can be brought into an intelligible, stable equilibrium within human thought.[48] McDowell aims to dispel a certain calcified state of debate surrounding this question, a debate that has taken the shape of the clash between empiricism and coherentism in the 20th century, positions represented by philosophers Ayer (2001) and Davidson (1986) respectively. The term "empiricism" here is meant to catch variations of the idea that perception, knowledge, and subsequently thought, have their ultimate foundation in some form of sense experience, most commonly thought of to be comprised of sense-data. Coherentism, on the other hand, holds that perceptions and beliefs are ultimately justified in virtue of other perceptions and beliefs, but not by something external to such mental items. McDowell argues that the debate has led to a stand-off between these positions which can be won by either side: coherentism threatens to lose the notion of an objective reality if it cannot accommodate minimal empiricist demand that there should be an external element as a constraint on thought; and empiricism turns out to be "useless" since sense-data ("the given") cannot fully act as rational justifications (McDowell 1996, 23). He

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48   Another more recent example is McDowell's treatment of Millikan's critique of Frege in the context of the topic of a naturalization of the mind, McDowell (2004, 101–103).

deems this state as an expression of a confusion caused by a deep-seated, deeply cherished tacit belief. This tacit belief is scientific naturalism: the view that all that really exists are the phenomena and entities which are part of the theories of the natural sciences (regarding ontology), and the idea that philosophy should only express such statements which can be countenanced from the standpoint of the natural sciences (regarding methodology). Instead of arguing for or against either empiricism or coherentism or a third option, McDowell tries to demonstrate how philosophers got themselves into the stalemate, i.e. by having embraced scientific naturalism as an unargued presupposition.

He then proceeds to cast doubt on scientific naturalism by trying to establish that the concept of nature implicit in scientific naturalism is inadequate and suggesting it be replaced by his conception of second nature. The reason is that scientific naturalism conceives nature as something that excludes normativity and the human mind, what Sellars calls the *space of causes.* If one thinks that scientific naturalism delineates the whole picture of all that is natural, then normativity and the mind start to look dubious, as something that must stand outside of nature, and that has to be given a philosophical background story to be reintegrated into nature (McDowell 2004, 93). This "background story" usually takes the form of naturalization projects that aim to (most often) reduce normative and mental properties to those properties countenanced by natural sciences. The concept of second nature includes the normative dimension of human life, i.e. the *space of reasons* (Sellars 1997) excluded by scientific naturalism, namely the whole of normative concepts that pervade the human mind. This broad conception more specifically includes the ideas of reasons, rationality (as a capacity to be responsive to reasons), and other forms of normativity.[49] McDowell's point is that there is a specific relation between the first nature (pre-rational, sentient, mere animal nature that is perhaps adequately covered by the concept of scientific naturalism), and the second nature (namely humans being thinkers, actors, and reasoners). First nature itself includes everything necessary to allow pre-rational humans to develop into thinking beings given the right surroundings and circumstances. Healthy humans are equipped with properties and abilities to be introduced into normative behaviour and thought by their caregivers and peers who are already in the space of reasons. First and second nature are continuous in this sense. Having a mind just is "normal part of what it is for a human being to come to maturity" (McDowell 1996, 84). He further expands the notion as follows:

> To avoid conceiving thinking and knowing as supernatural, we should stress that thinking and knowing are aspects of our lives. The concept of a life is the concept of the career of a

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[49]   This is, of course, a reiteration of the placement problems created by scientific naturalism debated in the first chapter.

> living thing, and hence obviously the concept of something natural. But there are aspects of our lives whose description requires concepts that function in the space of reasons. We are rational animals. Our lives are patterned in ways that are recognizable only in an inquiry framed within the space of reasons. On these lines, we can see thinking and knowing as belonging to our mode of living, even though we conceive them as phenomena that can come into view only within a *sui generis* space of reasons. (McDowell 2008, 94 f.)

Human lives are natural. Thinking and knowing, i. e. having a mind, is part of what it is to be a living human animal. So, having a mind is natural. Once this is understood, McDowell holds, there is no gap between first and second nature that would make normative and mental properties spooky. And since there is no longer such a gap, normative and mental properties no longer require a specific kind of explanation to qualify them as natural. Once this is accepted, the standoff between empiricism and coherentism becomes a non-issue, that is, it becomes something that we can and perhaps ought to be quiet about (McDowell 1996, 68 – 70, 84 –86).[50]

Kripkenstein and Wittgensteinian Quietism

The content of Wittgensteinian quietism can be characterized by the following three aspects: the rejection of constructive philosophy, therapy, philosophical non-interventionism, and mental peace as a result. The present part's purpose is to give a more detailed example for Wittgensteinian quietism. Such an example can be found in McDowell's rebuttal of the so-called *Kripkenstein* reading of the rule-following passages in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. I shall first reconstruct McDowell's broadly quietist argument of the rule-following considerations and its misreading developed by Kripke. This is an argument that aims to establish quietism about meaning and intentionality.

McDowell's treatment of the Kripkenstein example follows the pattern of Wittgensteinian quietism. It starts by isolating an *illusion*, a false belief: meaning is not possible. Then he goes on to offer a *diagnosis:* one only believes that meaning is not possible if one thinks that every understanding requires an interpretation. He finishes by offering a simple reconception by providing a *reminder:* we can fall back on the notion of a custom, practice, or form of life to see that not every instance of understanding something requires an interpretation. McDow-

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[50] There is another variation of this theme against scientific naturalism, one in which McDowell (2004) specifically reconstructs the sense in which a commitment to the defective understanding of nature renders mysterious the very possibility of the mind. This further variation yields interesting insights on Ruth Millikan's philosophy as an example that falls prey to false assumptions but does not introduce entirely new points that would help understand McDowell's quietist position. Hence, I shall not delve further into it.

ell's argument begins with a thorough appreciation of Kripke's interpretation of Wittgenstein's rule-following problem. Thereby, the illusion is dispelled, as it were. McDowell takes his cue from distinguishing his own interpretation of Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations from Kripke's interpretation. In his account, Kripke sets up the "sceptical paradox" about meaning to which he offers a "sceptical solution." The sceptical solution implies an acceptance of the rule-following regress as a genuine, unsolvable problem. Operating within these confines, the sceptical solution aims to account for the phenomenon of meaning in terms of the social ratification of linguistic behaviour.

This rule-following problem predates Wittgenstein, however. Variations of it have been a topic in philosophy at least since Plato (e.g. Plato 1996, 132 a–c). Other renditions have been brought forth by Kant (1998, B172) and Carroll (1985). The following presentation aims to reconstruct the rule-following problem in a general form. Consider any concept F. The concept F is applied to things in the world by uttering statements like "this is F", e.g. "this is a stone." Certain philosophers have held the view that concepts can be understood as rules. So whenever one utters a statement "this is F," she follows a rule specifying what things actually are F, and which are not F. A rule specifies F by specifying under which circumstances it is correct to utter "this is F." The question is: how exactly do the concept F or the rule F determine the usage of utterances like "this is F"? One may be inclined to give another rule that specifies how the concept F ought to be used. For example: "only say of a thing x 'this is a stone', if x is grey and hard." But such a rule does not solve the initial problem. It reiterates the problem because 'Grey' and 'Hard' are just two more concepts of which one can ask for a rule that specifies how they ought to be used. In a generalized phrasing: every instance of following a rule is an interpretation, and every such interpretation represents the expression of a rule which requires another interpretation, *ad infinitum.* Therefore, we have entered a vicious regress of rules. This is the rule-following problem.

In the 20th century, Saul Kripke (1982) gave the rule-following problem a new twist. Kripke develops a new line of thought out of engaging with Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations.* Kripke cites the following passage as grounds for the sceptical paradox:

> This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because any course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. (Wittgenstein 1953, §201)

In addition to the regress, Kripke's argument questions the notion of meaning and content itself. This pertains to meaning in the metaphysical sense, not merely the epistemological doctrine that it is impossible for one to know what she means by an utterance. Regardless of whether it is a faithful interpretation of Wittgenstein, Kripke's argument offers a substantial discussion of the rule-following

problem. The focus is on the question: which rule is expressed by a given set of examples? Kripke shows that every finite set of examples is in accordance with indefinitely many logically possible rules. So whatever rule a speaker favours as the one explaining a set of examples, there are still indefinitely many other possible rules that are equally compatible with the same set of examples.

Kripke's example is the rule of addition and the made-up rule of quaddition. Addition is the rule for the operation "plus", quaddition is the rule for the operation "quus". Quaddition is just like addition for all numbers smaller than 57. But if there are numbers greater than 57 involved, quaddition always yields the result 5. Imagine that all your past additions have involved numbers smaller than 57. Now add 68 to 57. Anyone capable of addition would answer "125". But Kripke now argues that it is possible that in all past instances of your addition, you in fact have used the operation quaddition, not addition, according to which x quus y is the sum of x and y, but only if both variables are lower than 57. If they are not lower than 57, the sum is 5. Hence, applied to the case of adding 57 to 68, you should answer "5" because you are using quaddition, not addition.

You may object that you always meant plus. But, by hypothesis, all your past uses are consistent with the rule of quaddition and there is no fact about the speaker which determines that you meant to use "addition" and not "quaddition" in any of your past usages. Kripke argues that this does not only apply to addition, but to all cases of rule-following. Every rule can be "gerrymandered", i.e. every instance of following a rule can be made out to accord with another rule. For example, all my past usages of the word "stone" may be consistent with the rule *things that are 'spatially extended' and 'store heat'.* And it may be equally in coherence with the rule "things that 'are minerals and lie in water'" in case my past usages only applied "stone" to instances that happened to be in water. There is no fact about me which determines that I meant to use "addition" and not "quaddition" in any of my past usages. This can be phrased as a slogan: there are no facts about meaning. And if there are no facts about meaning, dramatically put, nobody ever understands anything at all.

Kripke thinks the paradox obtains. He thereby accepts that the rule-following paradox renders meaning impossible, because understanding meaning requires an interpretation, enabling a regress of interpretations. This leads to a scepticism about meaning. What Kripke then has to offer is a not regular, but a sceptical solution to a sceptical paradox about meaning. Kripke's sceptical solution to this problem goes like this: there are no facts about a person, mental or physical, determining what he or she means; but still, meaning and meaning attribution are a part of our lives somehow; we must look elsewhere to explain meaning. And Kripke proposes that what we experience as meaning can be explained by introducing the idea of social practices. This idea states that meaning and understanding are modelled on correctness of attributions: while there may be no facts about meaning, the linguistic community or peers taking utterances

to be correct or incorrect can account for the phenomenon of meaning. The sceptical solution saves us from having to say that there is no meaning or understanding whatsoever, while still maintaining that the regress proves that there are no facts about meaning.

So far, I have provided the exposition of the problem and the so-called sceptical solution. John McDowell offers a reading of the rule-following paradox, different from Kripke's understanding, in which Wittgenstein's treatment of the paradox points in a different direction. While Kripke accepts the rule-following paradox and offers a subsequent sceptical solution, McDowell interprets Wittgenstein as developing the paradox as a devastating consequence entailed by a false assumption, such that once the assumption is made, the paradox is in full force. Given this reading, McDowell develops a *straight solution* to the rule-following paradox. McDowell infers that the whole point of Wittgenstein's argument is to uncover a misconception which grants the paradox its traction: "[The straight solution] works by finding fault with the reasoning that leads to the paradox" (McDowell 1992, 43; see also McDowell 1984, 338). It is in the context of this straight solution that we can find a detailed argument for quietism about meaning. McDowell identifies the assumption that leads to the rule-following paradox, and names it *master thesis*.

Master Thesis: What one has in mind can only sort extra-mental things in virtue of having one of many possible interpretations, such that every instance of understanding a given meaning requires an interpretation. (McDowell 1992, 45 f.)

The master thesis was already implicit in the reconstruction of the rule-following problem itself. The master thesis begets the rule-following paradox, and subsequently theories of meaning that operate under the impression that the master thesis is correct. The idea that every interpretation needs another interpretation is to blame here. As such, the master thesis makes questions like "how is meaning possible?" and "how is intentionality possible?" seem plausible.

What is wrong with the master thesis? According to McDowell, it is not an innocent assumption that understanding always requires an interpretation. The question then is: what are other forms of intentionality, meaning and understanding which do not come in the form of an interpretation? The answer McDowell takes from Wittgenstein is: meaning, understanding and intentionality are possible in an unproblematic way by virtue of belonging to a *custom*, *practice*, *institution*, or *form of life* (McDowell 1984, 342; Wittgenstein 1953, §199, §202). These conceptions are the place where the "spade" is turned back, as it were, which is to say that these notions somehow *ground* the application of rules and concept usage by putting a stop to the regress (Wittgenstein 1953, §217). By ex-

tension, abandoning the master thesis demonstrates that ultimately, understanding cannot be guaranteed through referring or appealing to a rule or another meaning.

Furthermore, Wittgenstein introduces the idea of *training* into this context (Wittgenstein 1953, §198). Being trained to react in a certain way, that is: to follow a rule, does not involve an interpretation. Training, as McDowell puts it, "is initiation into a custom" (McDowell 1992, 50). Having been initiated into the customs that are related to understanding concepts, allows one to just grasp meanings in a flash, without the help of any further interpretation. This is not to say that the notion of interpretation itself is problematic, but that at some point a thinker understands meaning without an act of interpretation. Daniel Hutto phrases it as follows:

> There is no getting below this point for beyond it questions of 'truth' and 'falsity', 'interpretation' and 'misinterpretation' do not arise. It is only because he [Wittgenstein, TJS] rejects the very possibility of giving explanations and justifications of this sort that it would be correct to call Wittgenstein a quietist. (Hutto 2003, 171)

One may now be enticed to use the idea of custom as a building block of theory which explains meaning and concept usage by way of, for example, reducing meaning and concept usage to the concept of custom. But McDowell is quick to assert that the introduction of the idea of custom is *not* to be understood as a cue by Wittgenstein to engage in constructive philosophy. For engaging in constructive philosophy would be in tension with other commitments of (McDowell's) Wittgenstein. Instead, McDowell interprets this as another reminder, merely stating that "the natural phenomenon that is normal human life is itself already shaped by meaning and understanding" (McDowell 1992, 51). Critics may be tempted to want more than this. Regarding such a demand, Daniel Hutto rebuts:

> With respect to such a fundamental concern as rule-following, there is simply no prospect of advancing or defending philosophical theories or explanations at all. It is not just that Wittgenstein lacks an interest in giving explanations of this phenomena, as is sometimes suggested, rather he realises that here one runs up against the limits of what can be explained or justified. (Hutto 2003, 163 f.)

In effect, this eschews what is sometimes called *full-blooded theories* of meaning. Full-blooded theories of meaning hold that the identity of a word is ultimately not determined by the meaning of that word itself, but rooted in something else. In this sense, a word is "not, of necessity, tied to its meaning" (Maher 2012, 77), leaving meaning mysterious. However, *pace* Hutto, the remarks on the ideas of practice, custom, form of life, and teaching given by both Wittgenstein and McDowell are rather sparse. And it is indeed possible to say more about these expressions without thereby engaging in quasi-scientific theory building. At least

two important points ought to be supplemented here. Firstly, the ideas of custom and practice have to be differentiated and should not be taken to mean the same thing. One central difference is that a custom is something that refers to an individual's habitual doings. It can be a thinker's mere personal custom to just follow a signpost into a certain direction, to stick with the example. In contrast, the idea of practice always already implies a social element, namely some cooperative form. The crucial element of practice as a cooperative form is that it implies that practices can always be critically commented on by those partaking in the practice and others. This is something that subjective custom may lack, in case we understand it is a kind of mere behaviour. This demonstrates that McDowell is mistaken in treating the expressions "custom", "practice", and "form of life" interchangeably.

This leads to a larger point: namely that the rule-following paradox presupposes a tacit form of *methodological individualism.* Methodological individualism claims that social phenomena have to be explained, ultimately, in terms of actions or mental properties of single individuals (Schumpeter 1970, Hayek 1942, Popper 1944, cf. Epstein 2015 for a recent critique). We should rather understand Wittgenstein's thought as pointing out that the word "rule" can be understood in two ways. First, "rule" can mean an instance of a single subject following a rule. If we understand the notion of rule to be entirely on this level, we have committed to a form of methodological individualism. And once this methodological individualism is in place, the rule-following paradox ensues. McDowell actually adumbrates this mistake in pointing out that the master thesis is about what a person "has in mind", i. e. as in one's personal mind. This conundrum can be avoided, however, if one is reminded that there is a second sense of "rule", namely rules understood as the form of cooperative, subject-transcendent practice just mentioned.[51]

The second necessary suggestion touches upon the notion of training which is used to initiative a being into some practice, according to McDowell and Wittgenstein. In this context, Gilbert Ryle offers some helpful cues. Just like before, there is some conceptual differentiation obfuscated by the single term "training". Ryle distinguishes drilling in mere habits of doing something, "injecting" propositions, and teaching abilities as critically different forms of teaching and learning (Ryle 1971, 468 ff.). Ryle argues that drilling in mere habits and injecting propositions are both unsatisfactory models of understanding how a student is initiated into a given practice, like following a rule, as the present example requires. Ryle settles for the notion of teaching abilities as the proper understanding of how students learn something. Teaching abilities is done through the teaching of a

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method; a method is a general way of doing something (Ryle 1971, 473).[52] In order to give a more complete appreciation of Wittgenstein's hints towards initiation into a practice, these threads just brought into play would have to be developed further. Developing these threads would most likely not be an instance of developing quasi-scientific theories, and thereby not violate the quietist constraint. It demonstrates, at the very least, that the mere pointing towards a vague notion of practice and training can be, perhaps must be, systematically elaborated.

A reconstruction of the argument for the regress as construed by Kripke might help elucidate the movement of thought so far:

1. Master thesis: What one has in mind can only sort extra-mental things by virtue of having one of many possible interpretations, such that every instance of understanding a meaning requires an interpretation.
2. If the master thesis is true, then the rule-following paradox obtains.
3. If the rule-following paradox obtains, then rule-following and thought are impossible.
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4. Rule-following and thought are impossible.

The idea is that if one endorses the master thesis implicitly or explicitly, then the rule-regress starts and cannot be stopped because every interpretation would require another interpretation. The rule-regress, as shown above, then makes intentionality impossible. All involved in the debate agree that once the first premise (the master thesis) is accepted, then the rest of the argument against intentionality is sound. The expression "intentionality" here figures as a blanket term that can be specified as meaning, understanding, conceptuality or thought as such. Some interlocutors of the rule-following debate famously rejected premise 3. As previously mentioned, Saul Kripke did not think that intentionality would be made impossible, but that intentionality would still be possible if underwritten by the notion of mere correctness constituted by ratification-dependent agreement (in contrast to objective contents). McDowell himself does not accept this for two reasons; first, because a certain objectivity of mental units is just obvious, according to him (McDowell 1984, 341 f.), and second, because this reflects a misreading of Wittgenstein's argument.

McDowell's account of the rule-following issue and his therapeutic treatment can be further systematized by bringing it into accord with the pattern of diagnosis and reconception. First, McDowell's Wittgenstein offers a diagnosis of

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[52]   The concept of ability has recently been put to work by the so-called Neo-Aristotelian capacity accounts regarding certain concepts: McDowell (2011) and Rödl (2010a, 2010b) utilize this notion in the philosophy of perception and Kern (2006, 2007, 2008) in epistemology.

the issue – people have been led to believe the false master thesis – and then a reconception of the issue, namely that there is nothing mysterious about rule-following and thought once we are reminded of the fact that we are initiated into customs which are part of second nature.

This is the argument that challenges the assumption of the regress, the premise which codifies the master thesis:

1. If it is true that what one has in mind can only sort extra-mental things by virtue of having one of many possible interpretations, such that every instance of understanding a meaning requires an interpretation (master thesis), then every form of understanding requires an interpretation.
2. There are forms of understanding (custom, practice, form of life) which do not require interpretation.

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3. Hence, not every form of understanding requires an interpretation.

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4. Therefore, it is false that what one has in mind can only sort extra-mental things by virtue of having one of many possible interpretations, such that every instance of understanding a meaning requires an interpretation (i.e. the master thesis is false).

McDowell does not argue for the key idea of this argument, namely premise two, apart perhaps from some further remarks about the concept of second nature.[53] Instead, mentioning the content of premise two is intended to be a mere reminder of something that may have been forgotten. McDowell takes this idea as something that does not need another argument but as an unproblematic idea that we all know already, and this is not an unreasonable assumption to make.

McDowell's preferred example to illustrate this matter is the signpost example introduced by Wittgenstein. Take a signpost at a forking path, pointing to the right, and the name of a town it directs to. In the thought framework presented by Kripke, a signpost like this only means something by virtue of an interpretation, e.g. "a signpost pointing to the right means 'go right'". It does not mean something by itself *outside* of our usage or practice. An essential point of McDowell's reconception of the rule-following considerations is that the signpost is

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[53] An anonymous referee has objected to this pointing out that McDowell – or Wittgenstein for that matter – does not argue in favour of premise two on pain of not being self-defeating. Yet, this seems to be misguided to me. While I would agree that premise two may not have to be argued for, it would still be possible for McDowell to argue in its favour without contradiction, for example, by providing cases of forms of understanding which are not interpretations. It seems misguided to me to think that premise two must itself remain un-interpreted, otherwise it would be defeated. The truth of premise two does not depend on whether premise two itself requires an interpretation or not in the form of further argument.

actually itself a bearer of meaning that does not have to be assigned an extra interpretation by an individual thinker, given the practical context within it is situated. There is something about the signpost itself that means "go right" which is not contingent upon an interpretation (McDowell 2009, 369). Assuming that the signpost needs an interpretation amounts to taking the signpost to be something that by itself means nothing (has no "life" on its own), but that we imbue it with meaning through a "quasi-magical performance" (McDowell 2009, 368).[54, 55]

The Object of Wittgensteinian Quietism

Wittgensteinian quietism raises an important question that might turn out to be its greatest challenge. What is the object of Wittgensteinian quietism? What should one be quietist about? *Prima facie*, there can be two differing views on this matter. The first I call the *piecemeal stance*. The piecemeal stance attributes

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[54]   One more note on exegesis. It is no coincidence that the role of the idea of practice here appears to be similar to the concept of second nature. The two concepts do analogous work in their respective contexts. The introduction of the concept of practice serves to prove that the tacit commitment to the master thesis is false, and not without alternative. The introduction of the concept of second nature discloses that the tacit commitment to a notion of nature espoused by scientific naturalism is false, and not without alternative. The concept of practice is not as broad as that of second nature, as such, one may state that the idea of practice is a precursor to the idea of second nature in McDowell's thinking.

[55]   McDowell offers one of the most thorough and trenchant assessments of the rule-following problematic and critique of Kripke's erroneous reading alike. Nevertheless, McDowell's critical account presented thus far does not go far enough. McDowell's most crucial shortcoming in this context lies in the fact that he does not emphasize the status of rule-following as essentially social. Moreover, McDowell fails to point out that the master thesis erroneously uses the rhetoric of "having something in mind" as sorting extra-mental things. The master thesis implies that meaning, and subsequently understanding, is something in one's mind, something to be determined about oneself. (This view has come to be called meaning internalism, as defined by its counter-thesis externalism, championed most notably by Hilary Putnam 1975a). The paradox, which the master thesis ultimately incurs, uncovers the fact that the notion of meanings and interpretations as thought to be "in the head" or "in one's mind" expresses a category mistake. One central consequence of rejecting the master thesis and fully appreciating the rule-following problem is that meaning, content and understanding are to be found "between" the speakers (or rule-followers), to use another spatial metaphor. This is a sense in which rule-following is essentially social. It is, however, not to be appropriated to Kripke's sceptical solution because Kripke's sceptical solution implies that there are no meanings in a robust sense. But if we draw the central conclusion from McDowell's remarks, then it becomes obvious that there is, in fact, meaning, it just is something which is not to be found in a thinker's "head" since the thinker "having something in mind" has limited effect on whether a rule is followed correctly or not.

extraordinary significance to the observation that Wittgenstein himself gives *mere* examples of problems or theses to reject; examples given without a specification as to whether they belong to a certain class. This motivates the conclusion that one has to go case-by-case when applying Wittgensteinian quietism and the subsequent therapy. The second, opposing view can be called the *principled view.* The principled view states that there can be a principle as a norm of guidance for what to be quiet about. The piecemeal stance can be attributed to (apart from Marie McGinn and Warren Goldfarb) Conant (2010) and McDowell (2009). On the other hand, the principled view seems, for example, to be supported by Crispin Wright (1993) or David Finkelstein (2000). I will present the piecemeal stance and its challenges first, and then demonstrate how my construal of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory supports the principled view.

The central aspect of the piecemeal idea is that there can be no general principle which could be applied to *all* philosophical questions *a priori*, so to say. We can start by noticing that Wittgensteinian quietists at least do not purport to be quietist about *all* issues discussed in philosophy. McDowell has clarified that this is not the case:

> What I mean is that we need not hold Wittgenstein to the idea that whatever our topic may be, there are only two things for philosophy to be, either succumbing to an illusion of producing important structures of thought or else assembling reminders as therapy for intellectual pathologies involved in falling into such illusions. That idea seems seriously questionable in connection with much of what we call 'philosophy'. (McDowell 2009, 367)

So, it is not true that all philosophy is either the result of illusions or the therapy thereof. Then what questions are genuine, legitimate philosophical questions? We can recall here the same quotation used above:

> Think, for instance, of reflection about the requirements of justice or the proper shape for a political community. I know no reason to suppose Wittgenstein would have insisted that everything that happens in political philosophy, to stay with that *example*, falls under that 'either/or.' And I doubt that he would have seen any point in defending an generality for remarks like §127 and §128 [of the *Philosophical Investigations*, TJS] in the only alternative way such a generality could be defended, that is, by denying such activity the title of philosophy. In those remarks, he is talking about a *particular mode of philosophical activity.* We do best not to take him to be making pronouncements about just anything that counts as philosophy. (McDowell 2009, 367; emphasis TJS)

Two things are important here. First, McDowell only provides us with further examples to add to the examples we have already discussed (intentionality and meaning). Second, he then does say that there is a "particular mode of philosophical activity" that deserves a quietist treatment, but again: no hints at what that particular mode consists in. We can assume that this mode can be seen as

something like a specific method in philosophy, a way of approaching and answering a philosophical question. We can also gather from McDowell's remarks that these considerations are topic-neutral: the therapeutic impetus of Wittgensteinian quietism does not discriminate based on philosophical area. That "particular mode" of philosophy can be found, it seems, in different regions of philosophical thought.

The idea of the piecemeal approach for the present context is: one cannot decide which philosophical questions to be quietist about in advance, prior to actually having come in contact with and having thought about that question. The piecemeal approach proceeds case-by-case. McDowell acknowledges that "[t]here is no question of quickly dismissing a range of philosophical activity from the outside" (McDowell 2009, 372). He goes on to say the following:

> Wittgensteinian quietism involves being suspicious of philosopher's questions, before we even start interesting ourselves in the specifics of how they are answered. If someone invites us into substantive philosophy by, say, asking something of the form, "How is such and such possible?", we should not embark on trying to give a positive philosophical account of such and such, whatever it is. First we should ask why we are expected to find a difficulty in the possibility of such and such, whatever it is. Often the best answer that can be given will seem to carry conviction only to the extent that it induces us to forget something obvious. Revealing such a defect in the supposed pretext for the "How possible?" question, and so entitling ourselves not to have to bother with it, at any rate if that is the ground on which we are invited to find it pressing, is a distinctive kind of philosophical achievement. (McDowell 2009, 371)

This attitude operates by looking at every philosophical question anew without the guidance of a generalized principle. And instead of taking up the "invitation" to do constructive philosophy, the philosopher should rather check first whether the question posed just makes something seem mysterious which is not at all mysterious, if looked at with a mindset uncorrupted by philosophical training. Only then can one figure out whether this issue warrants a quietist treatment.

This is to say that one cannot specify a criterion that decides for all possible cases whether one should be quietist about them.[56] For that reason, it would not be possible to censor philosophical projects before they emerge. Instead, one can decide to be quietist about something only when presented with a given question. This would be in line with the so-called *resolute reading* of Wittgenstein developed by James Conant and Cora Diamond:

> Wittgenstein, early and late, rejected a wholesale conception of how progress in philosophy is to be achieved – philosophical clarity must be won piecemeal, one step at a time – thus *not* through the application of a *general philosophical account* to a class of instances

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[56]   This is related to Wittgenstein's rejection of the idea that concepts function as "rails to infinity", cf. Wright (2001).

that fall under the categories catered for by the account, but rather through a procedure of philosophical clarification that requires the case-by-case interrogation of genuinely felt individual expressions of philosophical puzzlement. (Conant 2010, 74; emphasis TJS)

A piecemeal approach eschews the notion of a general philosophical account that would determine, in our case, what to be quietist about, because that very approach might turn out to be incompatible with a quietist stance in the first place.[57] This is tempting and in line with the practice of McDowell's way of defending quietism, and the unwillingness to spell out such a criterion. One important aspect of this piecemeal approach is that it qualifies as a *stance* or *attitude* rather than another *thesis*. Consequently, this would grant the whole idea of therapy in the context of Wittgensteinian quietism the character of an attitude, too.

The principled view, on the other hand, states that there can be a principle to guide the application of Wittgensteinian quietism. It is perhaps of interest to note that, at least *prima facie*, there is an element of the principled view in some of McDowell's thought alongside his endorsement of quietism as an attitude. This element of generality can be developed out of the insistence on the relevance of the so-called "how possible?" questions. Such "how possible?" questions are obstacle-dependent questions (Cassam 2007, 2). This means that "how possible?" questions imply that there is an obstacle to the existence of whatever phenomenon they are about. Paradigmatic "how possible?" questions are about intentionality, knowledge, or perhaps free will. Adding to McDowell's remarks on "how possible?" questions it is possible to tentatively formulate something like a general normative principle: *for any philosophical question which suggests that the possibility of a given concept is mysterious or questionable, one should investigate the legitimacy of this question before engaging in constructive philosophical work.* Investigating the legitimacy of a particular "how possible?" question thus requires the inquirer to explain why there is an obstacle to understanding the phenomenon in question. For example, asking "how is knowledge possible?" requires to first motivate this question by demonstrating what would threaten to make knowledge impossible since the phenomenon of knowledge is too familiar to be easily discarded. This principle is, of course, normative because it articulates how one ought to deal with philosophical questions. The central point is that phenomena like meaning and knowledge are real phenomena. If they are real, they are possible. Asking how meaning and knowledge are possible thereby requires of the asking person to justify the doubt. Only then can the asking person bring suggestions into play of how these phenomena are to be understood in a different way.

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[57]   Note that in this context I want to stay uncommitted about which readings of Wittgenstein are or are not faithful interpretations. Here I am primarily interested in McDowell's construal of Wittgensteinian quietism.

Which view is correct then: the piecemeal view or the principled view? I suggest an irenic view: there are elements of both a principled view *and* a piecemeal approach in McDowell's account of Wittgensteinian quietism. This can be perceived as a tension internal to McDowell's theoretical commitments. The perceived tension between this principle and the piecemeal approach consists in the claim of generality: the piecemeal approach suggests that philosophical questions are to be examined without appeal to a preconceived general criterion, but the "how possible?" principle seems to establish such a general criterion; a criterion determining *a priori* how to deal with philosophical questions before they arise. We should, it suggests, ask ourselves first why the phenomenon in question seems dubious. However, such remarks merely appear to go contrary to the spirit of the piecemeal stance view. The point is that these remarks merely shift the question of what warrants the "how possible?" question, i. e. where it would be proper to pursue this line of doubt and where it is not. As such, one can reiterate the question of a guiding principle at this level of specification yet again.

McDowell seems to assume that an answer to the "how possible?" question is simply obvious.[58] If this principle were, in fact, obvious we should accept it. There are two reasons, however, that cast doubt on the acceptability of this suggestion. Firstly, this metaphilosophical principle is not without alternative. It states that we should only investigate philosophical questions whose legitimacy is proven after ascertaining whether or not they are based on falsehoods. One alternative to this metaphilosophical stance is found in David Lewis's reflection on philosophical methodology. This methodology is concisely crystallized in Robert Brandom's following statement:

> He [i.e. Lewis, TJS] thought that what philosophers should do is lay down a set of premises concerning some topic of interest as clearly as possible, and extract consequences from them as rigorously as possible. Having done that, one should lay down another, perhaps quite different set of premises, and extract consequences from them as rigorously as possible. The point was not in the first instance to endorse the conclusions of any of these chains of reasoning, but to learn our way about in the inferential field they all defined, by tracing many overlapping, intersecting, and diverging paths through the terrain. That is how we would learn what difference it would make, in various contexts, if we were to endorse some claim that figures as a premise in many of the inferences, and what might entitle us to a claim that shows up as a consequence in many of the inferences. Actually plumping for and defending any of these theses is then a subsequent, parasitic, and substantially less important stage of the process. The principal aim is not belief, but understanding. (Brandom 2008, 225 f.)

These remarks hold that it is legitimate to investigate any philosophical question just for its own sake, regardless of whether it is correctly or incorrectly motivated.

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58   John McDowell has confirmed this in conversation.

This amounts to the idea that in philosophy, one simply does not need a special justification for pursuing a philosophical investigation, rather it seems that it comes down to a question of mere taste, preference, or interest perhaps. While this Lewisian *laissez faire* approach is also not to be accepted without further argument, it is apt to demonstrate that McDowell's metaphilosophical stance here is not without proper alternatives, and hence, needs to be weighed against competing options of which Lewis's idea is just one example.

The second reason why one can be doubtful about the "how possible?" principle lies in its evaluative implication. More specifically, this principle tacitly operates with a notion of value or goodness of philosophical questions. It does so by distinguishing questions *worth* being pursued from questions that fall short of this standard. The problem is that it is left unclear how exactly we are to understand this evaluative notion. Wittgensteinian quietism seems to be compatible with interpretations that differ significantly in force. For example, the considerations informing the evaluative standard may turn out to be moral, aesthetic, or considerations about mere usefulness. Some specification of a proper criterion pending, this evaluative implication remains without bite.

What we are looking for is a criterion that would govern the application of the therapeutic stance of Wittgensteinian quietism towards questions in philosophy. In other words, a criterion for when to apply the machinery of McDowell's Wittgensteinian quietism. The principled reason stance worries that Wittgensteinian quietism might turn out to be toothless if it is never clear what we should be quietist about. It is, however, possible to introduce a robust principle, one that has not been apprehended in previous reflections on this matter. The notion of quasi-scientific theory as the target of quietism can act as such a guiding principle. It is possible to simply supplement the notion of Wittgensteinian quietism with the concept of quasi-scientific theory as a principle for its application. The fundamental point would then be: the therapeutic approach of Wittgensteinian quietism is triggered by the encounter of quasi-scientific theories. This would thereby make obsolete the more cautious piecemeal stance.

This is further supported by the fact that the main example (meaning) used in clarifying Wittgensteinian quietism can be brought into accordance with quasi-scientific theory and their rejection as a principle at the foundation of Wittgensteinian quietism. As mentioned, McDowell's Wittgensteinian quietism does not reject all philosophical thought about meaning, but only a specific treatment thereof, namely so-called "full-blooded" explanation. Such full-blooded explanation aims to explain language reductively in a way that is situated "outside" of language, which means that such approaches aim to understand meaning in terms which themselves do not require mental concepts. Full-blooded explanations typically come into play through the construction of quasi-scientific theories, that is, the introduction of abstract unobservables which are, in this case, phenomena not requiring the concept of intentionality and which still make

meanings calculable as discreet entities. (This is why theories of meaning figured as a prime example of quasi-scientific theory in the introduction of this idea.) If Wittgensteinian quietism is supplemented with quasi-scientific theories as a criterion to trigger the "how possible?" question, then it becomes obvious how Wittgensteinian quietism can be viewed as a specific form of the more general form of quietism, i.e. as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory, which I have suggested so far.

Some Challenges for Wittgensteinian Quietism

McDowell's Wittgensteinian quietism has received a fair amount of attention, negative and positive. The secondary literature on McDowell's metaphilosophical remarks have evoked more critical reactions than I can account for here. I shall demonstrate that at least some of these objections rest on misunderstandings of Wittgensteinian quietism and are therefore not to be given further attention. For this reason, the discussion is confined to a few exemplary objections.

The Argument from Self-Defeat. One common charge against Wittgensteinian quietism is that, even if it is a valid position, there would still be "constructive" work to be done, especially regarding meaning. The version discussed here is more tailored to McDowell's construal of Wittgensteinian arguments about meaning which merits, for the sake of clarity, its own short appraisal.

This charge is, for example, represented by Claudine Verheggen's and Charles Larmore's objections respectively. Verheggen argues the following: even though McDowell's analysis of the so-called "sceptical paradox" is correct, there is still constructive philosophy to be done about meaning. This constructive work consists in, as it were, explaining the normative aspect of meaning and explaining how meaning consists in use. She further propounds the interpretive claim that Wittgenstein aims to motivate an externalist theory of the mind, and does not intend be quietist about meaning (in the way Verheggen seems to understand quietism) (Verheggen 2000, 204–206). Verheggen holds that Wittgenstein (and McDowell as an extension) merely wants to change the question about meaning. Having shown that an internalist image about meaning does not get us anywhere, Wittgenstein concludes that we must look "outside", leading him to consider the concept of custom and practice as a set of traditions into which one is initiated, or so Verheggen thinks. In what way does this shift the meaning question? According to Verheggen, the question: "How is meaning possible?" still stands and is not rejected by Wittgenstein. Instead, Wittgenstein is taken to be committed to "elucidating" it (Verheggen 2000, 209 f.). What has changed is essentially the frame of acceptable answers to the meaning question. The former, incorrect image of meaning-as-internal requires one to give an explanation of mechanisms of the

mind and its relation to signs. But according to Verheggen, Wittgenstein is taken to shift the trajectory of a prospective answer: Giving a proper answer to the meaning questions entails giving a description of the conditions of human language acquisition that should, for example, exclude the role of non-living environment (externalism) and the social aspects of teacher-student relationships (sociality) (Verheggen 2000, 210 f.). In particular, the question is not "which extra-linguistic facts must signs be associated with in order to be meaningful?", but instead: "what conditions must be fulfilled for someone to possess the kind of language we do?" (Verheggen 2000, 211). Note that this distinction is in accord with the difference of explanation versus description. While the former way of asking the question about meaning called for an explanation of relations between minds and signs, the reformed way only allows for descriptions of practices. Verheggen concludes that Wittgenstein is actually not a quietist since he is still concerned with the meaning question. Only his stance towards what is a philosophically acceptable answer has shifted. This shift in stance would, as her objection implies, commit McDowell (and Wittgenstein) to provide further positive answers, while his metaphilosophical stance would force him to remain silent.

Upon closer inspection, it turns out that Verheggen's objection is not substantial, namely because she does, in fact, agree with McDowell's Wittgensteinian quietism. Verheggen seems to be confused about the related terms "quietism" and "theory". Her confusion consists in thinking that quietists have to remain silent about all matters in philosophy. This is a view that even McDowell does not countenance, and is not committed to (cf. McDowell 2009, 367). In fact, Verheggen's insistence on the elucidatory work still to be done is very much in line with what the Wittgensteinian quietist still allows as genuine philosophical activity (which is further explored in the third chapter). The confusion surrounding the term "theory" is responsible for this shortcoming: under a very general understanding of "theory", virtually all systematic intellectual activity counts as a theory, thereby overlooking the significant differences between these activities. In this context, proponents like Verheggen seem to count both elucidation and quasi-scientific theory as "theory". However, the elucidatory ambitions surrounding the concept of meaning are not themselves in the form of a theory that the quietist rejects, namely quasi-scientific theory. This is a context where the unqualified usage of the expression "theory" – as roughly meaning "philosophical thought about something" – engenders more confusion than clarity. In the end, it turns out that Verheggen is more in line with Wittgensteinian quietism than she herself seems to realize.

Charles Larmore offers a similar criticism of Wittgensteinian quietism. He argues that the position of Wittgensteinian quietism inevitably incurs a paradox, as it were. The paradox is: exposing a given theory's confused assumptions, which generate the felt need for theory, thereby requires replacing these assumptions with another view. But replacing mistaken assumptions does involve con-

structing "positive theory" about the same subject. Hence, the Wittgensteinian quietist's intention to merely "therapizing" away the need for theory necessarily involves constructing theory of the vicious kind. Therefore, Wittgensteinian quietism is paradoxical (Larmore 2002, 194). (Note that Larmore, too, does not specify what is meant by "positive" or "theory" at all.)

McDowell denies doing constructive philosophy, i.e. putting forward theories. In his *Mind and World*, one of his main goals is to describe experience, utilizing the concept of second nature. Second nature "identifies the means by which the mind is responsive to reasons" (Larmore 2002, 195). But McDowell resists further questions about the nature of reasons, yet, Larmore contends, he needs to provide an explanation how the world can accommodate reasons that are both objective and laden with normative force. Larmore concludes that accounting for experience in this way necessitates to "wrestle with understanding how reasons can form part of reality" (Larmore 2002, 196). According to Larmore, this entails that McDowell is actually committed to provide a theory he does not want to construct due to his quietist approach: he has to, but does not explain what reasons are (Larmore 2002, 205). In a nutshell, McDowell's rejection of constructive philosophy "is [belied] by his actual practice" (Larmore 2002, 200). This is at least what Larmore propounds.

Larmore's objection can be formulated in a more general manner to make it a stronger claim. I wish to call his point in a generalized form the argument from the structure of rationality. The structure of rationality seems to forbid Wittgensteinian quietism. The structure of rationality essentially consists in reasoning, i.e. the mutual exchange of reasons. In a quietist setting, if you want to merely remind someone, you cannot utter more than an assertion and hope that it is universally accepted, Larmore thinks. However, interlocutors are always able and entitled to ask for more reasons: "Why is p common-sensical? Why it is a mere reminder?" It seems that the quietist's only option here is to remain quiet. For if the Wittgensteinian quietist engages in explaining why we should take the assertion as a reminder, he or she is already concerned with incipient theory building. If the quietist, on the other hand, sees the threat of unwillingly engaging in theory and remains quiet, the reminder has not met its purpose of reminding others, that is, of changing their mind about a subject and curing the audience's confusion. Therefore, quietism does not seem to be a stance one can firmly assume, for one either self-contradicts in the face of intellectual resistance (expanding on the reminder, turning it into theory), or one remains quiet with the cost of not having taking others on board.

McDowell himself answers, in his reply to Larmore, that what he claims about signposts does not amount to an interesting, that is: substantially informative, thesis that would deserve to be called a theory, it is, instead an attempt to make the issue uninteresting in the sense that McDowell's construal dispels the felt need to provide further "theory". Accordingly, revealing confusions which

engender the need to construct theories, McDowell states, are themselves not in the form of theory (McDowell 2002, 294).

McDowell's defence here is not as strong as it could be. Larmore exhibits a misunderstanding similar to Verheggen's alluded to above. This misunderstanding again concerns the expressions "theory" and "quietism." Larmore, too, uses a non-specific notion of "theory" that seems to include all forms of philosophical reflection on a given topic. And again, it is important to point out that quietism is best understood as rejecting quasi-scientific theory specifically while not explicitly rejecting all forms of philosophical thought. This way, it becomes clear that Larmore ascribes to McDowell a notion of theory, and its rejection, that is too broad. Responsibility for this misunderstanding can, of course, be partly attributed to McDowell, too, because he has not been very vocal about the exact forms of philosophical "theory" he takes issue with. In any case, Verheggen's and Larmore's very similar charges can be dismissed as a misunderstanding predicated on an insufficient differentiation of the forms of intellectual inquiry hiding behind the blanket term "theory".

Objectivity and Quietism about Meaning. Another charge against Wittgensteinian quietism is brought forth by Jonathan Loeffler. I am going to fully cite Loeffler's objection since his charge is sufficiently concise:

> One worry is that quietism begs precisely the questions that McDowell wishes to reveal as inappropriate. For example, McDowell insists on the objectivity of meaning. According to him, even though linguistic meaning exists only *for* competent speakers engaging in linguistic practice, meaning is at the same time ratification-independent. Particular linguistic performances, or regularities thereof, never *set* standards of correctness, and it is, accordingly, possible for an entire community to go wrong […]. Yet it seems legitimate to ask just how this is possible. What is it about semantic normativity in virtue of which such normativity is both an essential surface-feature of language, in direct view of the competent participants, and such that it is possible for an entire community of competent participants to misperceive it? If semantic normativity is indeed such a surface feature, it is not obvious how some, leave alone all, competent participants may be wrong about it. Put differently, if competent participants may be wrong about it, this seems to indicate that semantic norms are more detached from linguistic performances than McDowell's anti-interpretationism seems to allow – just what the regularity theorist or the supporter of practice-independent meaning suggest. Yet however sensible such questions may seem, they apparently call for substantial theory building – precisely the move McDowell resists. (Loeffler 2009, 208)

Loeffler's argument is best understood as a *reduction ad absurdum*. The important part of his argument is the supposed incompatibility of meaning being a surface feature of language, and the objectivity of meaning which entails, *qua* ratification independence, that all participants of linguistic practice could "misperceive" meanings.

However, Loeffler's argument is a *non-sequitur*. It is not entirely clear what "to go wrong" would be in the context of meaning. Does it mean that all speakers can go wrong in using the word "dog" correctly? After all, one can maintain, like McDowell does, that meaning is a surface quality directly to be perceived, and still maintain that meaning is objective such that we can all be wrong about it. Meaning being directly perceivable is very well compatible with everybody being in principle able to misperceive. From meaning being directly perceivable without interpretation, it does not follow that one has to be infallible about every particular instance of word-meaning one grasps; this is simply a *non-sequitur*. Put in more principled phrasing: Loeffler confuses the question about what meaning is, or where meaning's "place" is, with the question how one can be certain to have used a given word correctly. The "anti-interpretationism" does not imply that intentional performances are always correct. One can describe meaning as a certain feature of linguistic expressions without thereby undergoing an epistemological commitment, contrary to what Loeffler implies here. Furthermore, Loeffler's charge seems to miss the more important point McDowell as a Wittgensteinian quietist is on about: stating that meaning as such is a surface phenomenon which primarily serves to remind us that meaning, being rooted in practice, does not need further explanation through quasi-scientific theories. Loeffler's question how meaning, being a surface property, accounts for misperception, misses its mark.

A minor Conclusion

Systematizing and making sense of later Wittgenstein's metaphilosophical remarks is a demanding task. I have mainly followed John McDowell's interpretation of this matter culminating in Wittgensteinian quietism. The focus has been on reconstructing this view and filling in some blind spots which tend to evoke criticism. One critical blind spot is the lack of positive remarks on what kind of philosophical practice is still permissible. This leads some interpreters to conclude that Wittgensteinian quietism is a global ban on philosophical thought. I have tried to demonstrate that this is not the case: Wittgensteinian quietism does not put a global ban on philosophy, but is instead sceptical about a certain mode of explanation and the associated kind of theory, i.e. quasi-scientific theory. This misunderstanding is mainly caused by the failure to use the expression "theory" as a blanket term for any kind of systematic remark or comment in philosophy. While McDowell does not go into detail, he does drop at least one hint that, for example, philosophical reflections on the proper shape of a political community are untouched by any quietist constraint. This also ensures that Wittgensteinian quietism is not self-refuting.

§4 Pragmatist Quietism

Having offered a reconstruction of Wittgensteinian quietism, and the way it relates to the idea of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory, this section offers the same treatment for the other greater "branch" of quietism, namely those quietist approaches rooted in the neo-pragmatist tradition. Pragmatist quietism rejects theories in philosophy by rejecting both representationalism and (a specific kind of) metaphysics.[59] The two main figures of pragmatist quietism are Richard Rorty and Huw Price. Rorty can be understood as laying the foundation for pragmatist quietism, and Huw Price as the one who further develops and systematizes the view. The *locus classicus* in this context is Richard Rorty's critique of representationalism in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (see also Rorty 1972, Rorty 2010) and Huw Price's recently developed *global pragmatism* in his *Descartes Lectures*.[60] The fundamental operative idea is that the rejection of representationalism is not like rejecting any other philosophical idea: rejecting representationalism radically transforms the practice of philosophy, regarding what philosophy is *about* and how philosophy is to be *done.*

The following investigation makes one interpretive claim and one systematic claim. The interpretive claim is that Rorty and Price in fact do present (what I call) pragmatist quietism, and that Price's account offers a further development of Rorty's ideas. This will become clear over the course of the elaboration of their respective convictions. The systematic claim is that anti-representationalism entails the rejection of a specific kind of metaphysics, i.e. the kind of metaphysics that posits unobservables as theoretical entities which aim to make their explananda calculable. This demonstrates how pragmatist quietism is linked to the general phrasing of quietism. Analogous to the previous construal of Wittgensteinian quietism, this identifies pragmatist quietism as a viewpoint which (among other special characteristics) rejects quasi-scientific theories.

In spite of their similarities, there is a key difference between Rorty's and Price's versions of quietism, however. They differ regarding their justification of anti-representationalism. Rorty's rejection of representationalism is mainly based on a historicist diagnosis of the social and political circumstances in which representationalism came about as a master idea. Noting that this practical context no longer obtains, Rorty declares representationalism obsolete (Rorty 2009, ch. 6).[61]

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[59]   Macarthur slightly deviates from this title by referring to Rorty as a "pragmatic quietist" in Macarthur (2017).

[60]   For more on the relationship between Rorty's and Price's pragmatism see Michael Williams (2009).

[61]   There is a different way to understand Rorty's rejection of representationalism. Robert Brandom argues that Rorty's reason for rejecting representationalism is that its internal connection to realism necessarily begets external world scepticism. This scepticism is irrefutable by

In later writings, this stance is supplemented by a criterion, the criterion of relevance to cultural politics. The idea is that one should reject philosophical questions and projects that are *not* relevant to cultural politics (whatever that may turn out to be). This criterion can perhaps be understood as a development of (the versions of) the pragmatist maxim formulated by Peirce (1878) and James (1975). Huw Price, on the other hand, uses more systematic arguments to reject representationalism. On his account, anti-representationalism is essentially a result of global expressivism. Therefore, Rorty and Price use different means to arrive to the same anti-representationalist conclusion. While Rorty's oeuvre is relatively well-known, the relative recency of Price's mature form of global pragmatism makes necessary a more lengthy reconstruction.

Before starting with Rorty's views, a few words on the idea of representationalism are in order. It is difficult to pin down what representationalism. On the one hand, it "merely" amounts to the well-know and seemingly trite claim that mental and linguistic items feature intentional *aboutness*, i.e. states like beliefs or linguistic items like expressions refer to things (objects or states of affairs) "outside" of themselves. On the other hand, the exact nature of the representation relation has been a source of contention. This difficulty is exacerbated by the fact that representationalist theories have been part of philosophical discourse almost since its inception first formulated in Aristotle's work[62] through the early modern period with thinkers like Descartes, Locke, and Hume up until the 20th and 21st century philosophy of mind. There certainly are influential non-representationalist accounts in different areas of thought. The most notable example is perhaps the umbrella of approaches – often inspired by the phenomenological and pragmatist traditions – under the label of 4E: enactive, embodied, extended, and embedded cognition (e.g. Gallagher 2020, Hutto & Myin 2017). Yet, different variations of representationalism constitute, arguably, nearly received opinions at least in certain debates on intentionality, consciousness, the philosophy of cognitive sciences, theories of linguistic meaning or theories of scientific modelling. At the very least, representationalist approaches in these areas are far from niche positions to inhabit. The whole history and systematic impact is, of course, a much more complex, much more delicate issue. However, this characterization shall suffice for the purpose of giving the neo-pragmatist critique of representationalism a necessary context and background.

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design. As such, one can understand the coming about of external world scepticism as sufficient reason to apply a reduction to its preconditions (Brandom 2013, 92–93).

[62]   This is at least one common reading of *De Anima*; for a heterodox reading of *De Anima* cf. Esfeld (2000).

Rorty's Neo-Pragmatism

Richard Rorty's oeuvre is vast and diverse. Here is not the place to offer a complete appraisal of his legacy. Instead, this part focuses on those elements of his thought that are relevant to the topic at hand.[63] For this purpose, I shall focus on the issues of representationalism, metaphysics, and his alternative vision of philosophy, insofar as these subjects relate to quietism. Representationalism is a doctrine about the relation (of the concepts of) mind and world.[64] The general idea of representationalism is that the mind is a structure that mirrors parts of the world. This general formulation allows for fine-grained specifications of how representational relations are to be conceived. Such specifications can be divided into mental and linguistic items, e.g. ideas, mental images, truth, reference, and meaning. As such, representationalism can be viewed as an all-encompassing master doctrine that is closely related to the dichotomies between mind and world, subject and object. These dichotomies require a representationalist view of language and mental capacities to function in the first place (Rorty 2004). According to Rorty, the systematic origin of representationalism lies in early modern philosophy, Descartes being the main culprit. Descartes reinvents the concept of mind as a substance marked by consciousness, where consciousness is understood as "incorrigible knowability" (Rorty 1972, 654; see also Rorty 1988). This new concept of mind, as it were, paves to way for representationalism as a master idea to conceptualize the relation between mind and world in philosophical thought.

The concept of representation is one of the most widespread and dominating assumptions in philosophy. Douglas McDermid, for example, states that "[f]ew philosophical theories initially appear as ingratiatingly down-to-earth, as soothingly and delightfully trite, as this" (McDermid 2006, 7). This may incur further problems. Consider the following case as an example of how the presuppositional representationalist assumption leads us to problems and determines our picture of the world in the first place. Michael Loux writes that Sellars' metalinguistic nominalism is "intuitively implausible" because it reconstructs talk about universals (courage, redness) as really just a way of speaking about words ("courageous", "red") (Loux 2006, 78). It is likely that Loux finds this "intuitively implausible" because he has the implicit notion that (standard) linguistic items

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[63]   I will, for example, omit considerations and self-reflections whether and what methodology Rorty employs outside of what can broadly be called neo-pragmatist. For example, some commentators ascribe to Rorty historicism as a method (cf. Williams 2009, xvi). While such debates may be worthwhile on their own merits, they are not relevant to the trajectory this section takes.

[64]   Refer to Tye (2002), Revonsuo (2009), Dretske (1995), Locke (1975) for influential accounts of representationalisms.

do or should represent things that lie outside language. This is intuitively plausible to perhaps most philosophers. In the section cited, he does not give an argument, but just alludes to the alleged intuitive implausibility. This is but one example of the way in which representationalism has become something like a background assumption, a state Rorty (and subsequently Price) bemoans.

It is not easy to pinpoint a single master argument Rorty provides against representationalism. However, two lines of thought can be made out to play a major role in his strategy of rejecting representationalism. The first strategy to reject representationalism lies with Rorty's *pragmatic behaviourism*. The idea of pragmatic behaviourism is twofold. First, the concept of human thought and knowledge are essentially public, and involve the third-person standpoint. The second ingredient is a variation of the Peirceian pragmatist principle: differences without practical import should make no difference to philosophy. Both of these commitments imply a rejection of representationalism. This is, in the first instance, because representationalism requires representational contents, as required by thought and knowledge so conceived, to be first-personal and, to a degree, subjective. And in the second instance, representationalism is among those doctrines in philosophy which do not pertain to practical endeavours as a matter of principle, according to Rorty.

The second way to reject representationalism features a more complex dialectic. Brandom identifies a dilemma for representationalism as a framework. Representationalism results in either scepticism or epistemological foundationalism. Representationalism begets scepticism because this framework opens up a gulf between representational contents and their respective represented objects. The problem is that this form of scepticism becomes unavoidable because every attempt to introduce another theoretical element to fill this gulf has to come, *ex hypothesi*, in the form of another representational act or representational content. It thus becomes impossible to make sure against all and any kind of doubt that our representations are, in fact, accurate. In this argument, the result of scepticism is reason enough to reject the assumption that makes it inescapable, that is, to reject representationalism (as mentioned above) (Brandom 2013, 93). Foundationalism, the other horn of the dilemma, posits that there must be some representations that are semantically unproblematic, i. e. have bridged the gulf, and the ensuing philosophical task is to show how these privileged representations confer their status of being unproblematic to other representations. The most basic and well-known version of such a supposedly unproblematic representation would be Descartes' *cogito* (Descartes 1992, II, 3.) The modern candidates for such privileged representations which Rorty identifies are the notion of semantic analyticity and the immediate contact with phenomena in Husserl's phenomenology. Rorty assumes, however, that both of these candidates have been successfully discredited by Quine, Austin, and Sellars respectively. Quine (1980) is taken by Rorty to have successfully debunked the analytic-synthetic distinc-

tion, leaving us with the result that there is no notion of analyticity to be had.[65] Similarly, Sellars (1997) is taken to have successfully argued against the notion of immediate givenness itself. Given this dialectic, it turns out that both horns of the dilemma – scepticism and epistemological foundationalism – are untenable. Therefore, representationalism is to be rejected.

However, the main trajectory of Rorty's attack transcends the boundaries of representationalism itself, and applies to all of philosophy. One of his goals is to show that we ultimately have rational freedom to accept or reject any philosophical worldview, and *a fortiori*, representationalism is not forced upon us either (Williams 2009, xxii). Philosophical problems, on this view, are not perennial, but are historically contingent and may just come out of fashion.

It was already noted above that representationalism is linked to the distinction of mind and world, and subject and object. But Rorty asserts that representation is more fundamentally linked to the notion of metaphysics itself: "representation requires realism, and realism requires representationalism" (Rorty 2004, 134). Rorty specifically attacks the notion of "the world" that figures in representationalism. "The world" is typically assumed to be a "hard, unyielding, rigid" structure "which stands aloof, sublimely indifferent to the attentions we lavish upon it" (Rorty 1972, 661). Rorty's argument for why it is not apt to conceive of the world in this way is that this presupposes a disengaged view from nowhere which is not available to us. The problem Rorty sees is that the world and our language are so intermeshed that it is not possible to take such a stance (Rorty 1993, 43). He even suggests that the philosophical notion of "the world" is a secularized replacement for the idea of God, insofar as both figure as a non-human authority to which humans can turn (Rorty 2004, 135). Rorty judges that belief in such a structure is an "obsession rather than an intuition" (Rorty 1972, 661).

Rorty traces the inception of metaphysics back to Plato, suggesting that Plato characterizes the concept of being by using the concept of representation (ἰδέα) which results in classical metaphysical dualisms (subject-object, sensuous-supersensible, fact-value, and mind-world) (Rorty 1976, 294). The details are not important here, merely the fact that Rorty seems to suggest that the notion of

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65   I disagree with this assessment even though this view has become something like accepted philosophical lore. Instead, I sympathize with an argument to the effect that Quine merely demonstrated that there is no fine-grained, principled distinction between analytic and synthetic, which does not mean that the distinction is without merit. We have, for example, no principled way to decide whether someone is bald or not bald in every single case. But this does not entail that the property of being bald never obtains or is unintelligible. Another alternative reading of Quine states that Quine's argument against the analytic-synthetic distinction is directed only against the Carnapian conception of analyticity, but not against a distinction of analytic statements (understood as mere definitions like "bachelors are unmarried") and synthetic statements (understood as synthetic *a priori* propositions as such).

representation is prior to the notion of metaphysics, such that without the former, the latter disappears. Thus, the rejection of representation means at the same time, as it were, the rejection of metaphysics, including ontology, and epistemology (Rorty 1972, 661; see also Rorty 2004). The ultimate goal here is not to keep arguing against metaphysics, but to simply cease doing it. Rorty approvingly quotes Heidegger in this context: "A regard for metaphysics still prevails even in the intention to overcome metaphysics [as done by Rorty and Price, TJS]. Therefore, our task is to cease all overcoming, and leave metaphysics to itself" (Heidegger 1969, 25; quoted in Rorty 1976, 300).

What is then Rorty's alternative view? This is where practice-based considerations inspired by American Pragmatism come in. Rorty proposes the following: once the notion of representation and metaphysics are done away with, the aim of developing the human mind, (collective and individual), is re-centred on achieving greater happiness, progress, and practical successes (Rorty 1972, 665). Rorty has given this view different names over time: historicism, philosophy as cultural politics, and historicist pragmatism (cf. Rorty 1989).

Given this framework, Rorty suggests a different way to conceive of language and the way we are in the world. This alternative focuses on coping with the world (instead of mirroring it in representations) and the notion of warranted assertability (instead of truth). Taking a cue from Wittgenstein, language then is viewed as a toolbox, not a mirror of nature, available for a variety of purposes (Wittgenstein 1953, §11 f.). We can read Rorty as implicitly suggesting that this view of language is prior to representationalism. This is because, according to Rorty, representationalism offered, at a certain point in history, a vocabulary that was useful for coping with certain practical, i. e. non-philosophical, issues. Since this vocabulary has become outdated, we should aim to embrace and develop ones that are more aligned with the current state of affairs.

The notion of warranted assertability takes as basic the notion of performances acknowledging other linguistic performances as correct. Correctness is conceived as conformity with current practices. A critic will ask how we even come in contact with the world itself in this view? If mental states and linguistic utterances do not feature *aboutness*, it seems that we have to assume a strawman-like version of subjective idealism or radical lingualism or a form of extreme relativism. Such views do not allow for the notion of being constrained by the world, with the undesirable result, a critic will hold, that anything goes. A Rortyean answer to this worry is to suggest that such critics misunderstand the notion of being constrained by the world. The world, as it were, does not constrain us through representational relations in our language, but through its mere material being-there. The notion of constraint then turns out not to be one of semantic constraint, but practical constraint. The relation of linguistic practices to the world is already built into these practices by design, without the representational-

ist surplus (Rorty 1988, 222).**66** This is the view of linguistic and conceptual activity as *coping* rather than representing. Developing the promissory note of replacing representation with a concept of conceptuality that is thought to provide direct contact with the world, without the intermediary of a representational foil, would require a drawn-out appreciation of pragmatist and phenomenological contributions to theories of intentionality in the 20th century. This is better left for a different occasion.

How is Rorty's brand of pragmatist quietism to be put into proper relation with quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory building? Unlike McDowell's case, the connection at hand is less straightforward. It seems that Rorty's elaboration of a criterion for what constitutes permissible philosophy is key.**67** He divides philosophical problems into those that "retain some relevance to cultural politics and those that do not" (Rorty 2010, 64). That is in principle Rorty's interpretation of Peirce's pragmatist method, the idea that only that which makes a difference to practice should make a difference to philosophy. Those problems which do not make such a practical difference with regards to cultural politics are those problems which we can remain quietist about. Rorty wants us to reject those philosophical concepts that turn out to be useless for human practice. It is not clear how or whether the criterion of cultural politics can be aligned with the criterion of quasi-scientific theory. For there might be ways of doing philosophy which do not employ quasi-scientific theory, but are nevertheless not of interest outside of philosophy. Whether this is possible depends on what exactly the concept of cultural politics or human practice includes. But it is likely that Rorty will deem at least some metaphysical questions, whose answers do not involve quasi-scientific theory, as irrelevant to cultural politics, for example, metaphysical questions about the metaphysics of time and space. Therefore, Rorty's neo-pragmatism cannot be neatly subsumed under the concept of quietism developed here although the programs do exhibit crucial similarities. As such, Rorty may perhaps still be duly situated in the camp of quietism, yet his project is not one that is in line with the idea of rejecting quasi-scientific theories.

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66   Note that Stanley Cavell uses a similar idea to reject external world scepticism in his *Claim of Reason*. Scepticism claims that we cannot have *knowledge* about the external world, but Cavell suggests that our relation to the world is always already more intimate and primordial than through our representational mental and linguistic states, see Cavell (1979, 241).

67   Interestingly enough, Kraugerud & Ramberg (2009) argue that Rorty is actually not quietist for two reasons. First, Rorty rejects the "wholesale" spirit of Wittgensteinian therapy quietism because the goal of peace of mind makes philosophy "immobile", i.e. unable to engender progressive change of any sort. Second, Rorty himself has, despite assertions to the contrary, put forward substantive theses about the concept of truth.

Price's Global Pragmatism

Wittgenstein is the philosopher most commonly associated with quietism. Other than Wittgenstein, Rorty is often cited as a proponent of some form of quietism. Why then is Huw Price's recent work relevant in a debate about quietism? Price's recent work can be construed as a form of quietism which builds upon certain insights due to Wittgenstein and Rorty. First, one can acknowledge that Price himself sometimes uses the term "quietism" to refer to a part of his pragmatism (Macarthur & Price 2007). Secondly, his pragmatism offers another variation on the themes of pragmatism and naturalism which both tend to be associated with quietism in some manner, or at least this is the case with Wittgensteinian quietism. The following reconstruction demonstrates how this tentative relation becomes explicit and manifest in Price's global pragmatism. Price's global pragmatism (sometimes as a term interchangeably used with "global expressivism", e.g. Price 2015a, 144) offers a fundamental alternative to the current standard framework of analytic philosophy, as one defined by the tacit background assumptions of scientific naturalism ("object naturalism," in Price's terminology) and Representationalism. Global pragmatism deals with those two concepts in addition to (global) expressivism, metaphysics, and subject naturalism as a developed view of linguistic primacy.[68]

It is not clear, unfortunately, how exactly these ideas are related in their order of presentation and their order of justification. The development of Price's global pragmatism ranges over a number of different writings. Different stages of the development of his thought stress different aspects of his account. As a result, there are different ways of construing Price's global pragmatism. I distinguish a *therapeutic reading* and a *systematic reading.* The therapeutic reading suggests that subject naturalism as a view about language is a fundamental stance which, Price recommends, we should adopt against its competitor, object naturalism.[69] On this reading, global expressivism figures as an add-on, but not as a justifier for subject naturalism. This reading suggests that Price offers a form of diagnosis of the reasons of so-called "placement problems" in philosophy. What is causing these problems is an adherence to representationalism and the resulting view of metaphysics. This reading construes Price's global pragmatism as being relatively close to Wittgensteinian quietism. The systematic interpretation, on the other hand, suggests a different structure of Price's global pragmatism. On this view,

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68   In some places, the idea of semantic deflationism, or minimalism, seems to play a predominant role for Price. However, I do not find this element necessary or helpful in reconstructing or assessing the plausibility of global pragmatism. Hence, I shall simply omit deflationism.

69   This interpretation is fueled by programmatic statements like "Pragmatism = Linguistic priority without representationalism" (Macarthur & Price 2007, 97).

global expressivism is used to reject representationalism. The rejection of representationalism entails a rejection of metaphysics, and the rejection of both representationalism and metaphysics motivates and justifies subject naturalism as an alternative view about language and nature. This interpretation posits Price closer to Rorty, insofar as the rejection of representationalism is pivotal for establishing the other elements of the account, especially for the reconception of the framework in which philosophy is to be done as specified by subject naturalism. Price can then be seen as taking up and further developing Rorty's approach.

Obviously, there are elements of both Rorty and Wittgenstein to be found in Price's account. There is no point in arguing whose influence is to be emphasized in a supposedly faithful reading of Price's view. I contend, however, that the systematic interpretation is more interesting and stronger because it develops an argument for subject naturalism instead of simply positing it as an alternative picture to representationalism and object naturalism. Therefore, I shall focus on reconstructing and exploring the systematic interpretation of global pragmatism. Further questions about interpretation in this context shall be set aside.

Naturalism, Representationalism, and Placement Problems. I mentioned that broad strands of analytic philosophy operate under two basic assumptions: representationalism and scientific naturalism. This constellation provides the motivation and explanatory starting point for global pragmatism. Price explains that the conjunction of representationalism and scientific naturalism leads to *placement problems* (cf. ch. 1, §2).

According to Price, scientific naturalism in conjunction with representationalism yields placement problems, making a tacit assumption of representationalism a necessary ingredient.

Representationalism does its part to force placement problems in the following way: In philosophy, causation, morality, or modality first appear as terms or linguistic items. Under the representationalist assumption, these terms stand for non-linguistic things in the world to which they refer. Metaphorically speaking, there is a metaphysical bridge between the term "causation" and a certain set of phenomena in the world to which "causation" refers us. However, some concepts like the aforementioned ones turn out to be problematic in that they do not seem to have referents recognized by science. In other words, we cannot "place" the purported referents of those concepts in our picture of the world dictated by scientific naturalism. However, representationalism forces us to assume that there must be such referents if those concepts are to be meaningful. Price calls this assumption about the nature of terms and the objects they (supposedly) refer to the *material conception*.

On the other hand, scientific naturalism's part in creating placement problems lies in restricting the "places" referents of linguistic expressions like "goodness" or "cause" can be assigned to. As Price puts it: "Placement problems stem

from a presupposition about the ontological scope of science – roughly, the naturalist assumption that all there is, is the world as studied by science" (Macarthur & Price 2007, 94). Such candidates do not seem to fit neatly into a naturalistic worldview, insofar as the naturalistic worldview holds phenomena to be not unsuspiciously natural which are not direct objects of the natural sciences, most notably physics. Such phenomena then appear to be without a "place" in nature, at least in a naturalistic framework.

Expressivism. The reconstructive remarks so far were supposed to set the stage for Price's subsequent justification of global pragmatism. This order of justification begins with expressivism. Expressivism originally stems from debates in meta-ethics about the status of moral vocabulary and assertions. Note that there are different varieties of expressivism, not necessarily inspired by the kind of expressivism Price has in mind.[70] The main point or purpose of this kind of moral expressivism is to "avoid metaphysical puzzles about the nature of moral facts or properties" (Price 2015a, 135), namely some of the placement problems. This is because moral judgements, if they are true, are difficult to account for using truth makers, given one assumes a naturalistic worldview. This motivates a separation of two different class of assertions: judgements that have a truth-value and represent states of affairs, and those judgements that do not, and are merely expressive of the thinker's attitudes. This has been called the *bifurcation thesis.* The bifurcation thesis shrinks the number of statements which require states of affairs (as "bits" of the world) to make them true (Price 2013, 28). And by shrinking this number in just the right way, one presumably avoids metaphysical puzzles because there are no true statements over and above the truth-makers that can account for them or that "fit" them. Thus, the bifurcation thesis raises the question whether a moral assertion is about (or represents) a fact in the world. Expressivists hold that moral assertions do not state facts, but instead express the attitudes of the speakers making the assertion. Hence, moral assertions only mimic the form of regular declarative statements that do state facts. Robert Kraut provides a list of features the bifurcation thesis ascribes to these two fundamentally different kinds of uses of language (Kraut 1990, 158 f.):

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[70] There is, for example, Robert Brandom's rationalist expressivism which states that "discursive practice makes us special in enabling us to make explicit, in the form of something we can say or think, what otherwise remains implicit in what we do." (Testa 2003, 561). Price (2011) further discusses this doctrine (which he calls) "Hegelian pragmatism".

First class of declarative sentences	Second class of declarative sentences
describe the world	express commitments or attitudes
ascribe real properties	manifest a 'stance' (praise, condemnation, endorsement, etc.)
are genuinely representational	are expressive rather than descriptive
are about 'what's really out there'	do not 'picture' the world
have determinate truth conditions	lack truth conditions, but possess 'acceptance conditions' or 'assertability conditions', i.e. are true (or false) by convention
express matters of fact	do not express 'facts of the matter'"
limn the true structure of reality	merely enable us to 'cope' with reality

Note that the bifurcation thesis itself does not determine how classes of assertions are carved up, i.e. which assertions fall into the first list and which assertions belong to the second list. It just states that there is such a bifurcation. According to naturalism however, the left-hand side of this list is supposed to line up with vocabulary countenanced by scientific naturalism: naturalism determines that only those assertions which are expressed in, or reducible to, scientific vocabulary can represent a piece of the world. The latter list yields the features that can be ascribed to moral discourse in an expressivism setting such that the bulk of the latter list can be ascribed to moral claims. The two most central features of this list are that such statements: express attitudes or commitments, and that they do not express facts of the matter.

To further illustrate expressivism, consider the following examples: the assertion "some men have beards" is usually taken to state a fact: that the states of affairs in the world make the statement "some men have beards" true. Now consider the moral assertion "It is unjust to leave murderers unpunished." Its form is just like the former example, and so one could think that it also is about a fact, i.e. the fact that it is unjust to leave murderers unpunished. But according to the expressivist, the assertion only serves to express the speaker's attitude that they are against leaving murderers unpunished. What is different here is that there is no notion of correspondence to be entertained when analysing moral discourse. Moral statements, and subsequently moral vocabulary, do not have the same "grip" on the world as regular a-moral statements; they do not pick out a certain feature in the world because, according to the expressivist, there is no such feature in the world, e.g. justice or goodness. In summary, expressivism about morality claims that declarative moral claims do not express facts of the matter, but rather express attitudes or commitments about the speaker.

One common variety of expressivism is Simon Blackburn's quasi-realism. The point of quasi-realism is to make plausible the idea that talk about moral

discourse is possible in terms of the "slender, projective basis" (Blackburn 1994, 315). As such, it is directed against both realists and anti-realists about moral discourse. While the realist asserts that moral discourse is fact-stating (that is, part of the first fork of the bifurcation), the anti-realist (or error-theorist) maintains that there are no moral properties at all, and hence no fact-stating feature of moral declarations. Common to both is a rejection of an expressivist analysis of moral discourse. I shall, however, omit quasi-realism. Quasi-realism is Blackburn's further developed version of expressivism, applied to other domains than morality. Price seems to have some interest in appropriating Blackburn's quasi-realism to his pragmatism. At the very least, Price regards quasi-realism to be the most complete form of expressivism (Price 2013, 29). In the discussion of global pragmatism, to focus on quasi-realism as a species of expressivism is not inherently systematically useful in this context. This is why the following discussion will not treat quasi-realism specifically, but employ the generic expression "expressivism".

Global Expressivism. Moral expressivism is merely a starting point for Price's pragmatism, however. Price aims to extend its area of effect beyond the confines of just moral discourse. In fact, Price argues that expressivism can be modified in a way that it applies to *all* of our discourse, not just moral. The upshot would be that none of the assertions a speaker can make state facts. Rather, all declarations, claims and assertions merely express the attitudes of a speaker. Expressivism has to go global, so to speak. Expressivism thus becomes *global expressivism*:

Global expressivism: All assertions express attitudes or commitments of their utterers; no assertions refer to states of affairs.

Note that global expressivism is incompatible with the bifurcation thesis. For the point of the bifurcation thesis was to pose a principled distinction between two different sorts of declarations. But global expressivism aims to get rid of the first fact-affine fork by claiming that all declarations have the features found on the second non-factual fork. Hence, one cannot at the same time hold global expressivism and the bifurcation thesis.

How is the step from expressivism to global expressivism justified? Price offers two arguments for applying expressivism to all declarative discourse: the argument from minimalism as an external challenge, and an internal argument from expressivism's own strength. The external challenge consists in the suggestion that the concept of semantic minimalism dissolves the bifurcation thesis because it deflates the notion of truth. Minimalism is the view that every occurrence of the term "true" can be understood in a disquotational manner which also renders appeal to truth-makers superfluous. Yet, Price argues, the bifurcation thesis

relies on a more substantial semantic notion of truth. I will only focus on the internal argument since I consider it to be the stronger one. For its success does not depend on the introduction of further ideas outside of expressivism itself, like disquotationalism. In the case of the external challenge, a critic may perhaps just bite the bullet and reject semantic minimalism.

The second argument for globalizing expressivism is based on drawing out implications that come with the view itself. For this purpose, Price hints at a distinction between easy and hard cases which come up when trying to account for declarative discourse in an expressivist manner. The easy cases are the classical *topoi* of the non-cognitivism debate: aesthetic and moral statements. Hard cases, on the other hand, are most other varieties of declarative discourse, e.g. scientific statements or linguistic expressions of mental states like beliefs. Price notes that expressivist accounts of such cases can be shown to work, most notably in the form of Blackburn's quasi-realism (Price 2015a, 136). The point of the internal argument is that if expressivism can be shown to work for the easy cases, there is no reason not to attempt applying expressivism to the hard cases as well. Once the hard cases are solved, assigning representational properties becomes "an idle cog, not needed to explain the relevant aspects of the use of the statements in question [...]" (Price 2015a, 141). The main reason why it is hard for the expressivist to resist this consequence is that any attempt to further qualify a privileged class of declarations would undercut the original goal, namely to establish that "nondescriptive discourse can earn the right to talk in realist terms" (Price 2015a, 141; see also Macarthur & Price 2007, 104 and Price 2011).[71]

Anti-Representationalism. In the framework Price develops, one can discover two routes to arrive at anti-representationalism. The first is via the priority of subject naturalism over object naturalism. If you adhere to scientific naturalism, you have to reject representationalism, because representationalism cannot be countenanced from a naturalist standpoint, according to Price. The upcoming part on subject naturalism shall make more lucid how this transition from the priority of subject naturalism serves to establish anti-representationalism. The second path to anti-representationalism is to establish global expressivism. This second path is more secure because it does not assume as much by not necessarily involving a commitment to naturalism. For this reason, I shall focus on explaining how exactly global expressivism is utilized by Price to cash out anti-representationalism.

Establishing global expressivism is a key point for global pragmatism because global expressivism entails the rejection of representationalism. The connection between these commitments is fairly straightforward. On a representa-

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[71]   Price entertains two counterarguments a local expressivist can make in Price (2015, 141 f.). These are, however, not of importance in the present context.

tionalist view, assertion or declarative sentences correspond to facts in the world. The same goes for the sub-sentential terms which make up these declarative sentences: terms like "goodness" or "cause" must represent something in the world. As shown, this creates placement problems, when taken in conjunction with scientific naturalism. But in the global expressivist framework, declaratives do not represent facts or thoughts which would have to be related to the world. They are, instead, merely expressive of the attitude of respective speakers ("expressive" in a sense that can be further specified). Thus, for no possible declarative does the question arise of how to place the concepts that figure in them, as those concepts do not represent parts of the world. If all declaratives are merely expressive of the speaker's attitude, then no declaration represents parts of the world. Placement problems are thus avoided.[72]

However, Price does not jettison all talk of representation. He distinguishes between e-representations and i-representations. This distinction aims to replace the original bifurcation thesis about declarative sentences by a bifurcation of kinds of representations (Price 2013, 35 ff.). Though e- and i-representations are usually just generically referred to under the expression "representation," Price suggests that they can be kept apart conceptually.[73] This distinction is then assumed to replace the former notion of "mere" Big-R Representation.

E-representations are environment-tracking, they centrally involve the notion of covariation. Covariation means: a feature of the representing system varies "in parallel with some feature in the represented system" (Price 2013, 36). For example, a fuel gauge and a fuel tank: the position of the needle on the fuel gauge changes in accordance with the level of gas in the gas tank. E-representation takes place between a representational system (or parts of that system) and the environment (or a piece thereof) of that system.

I-representations concern an internal functional role of a representational system. Items that figure as i-representational do so "in virtue of [their] position or role in some cognitive or inferential architecture" (Price 2013, 36). I-representation is a relation between a part of a representational system and the whole of

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[72]   Global expressivism is Price's most developed argument for anti-representationalism. Yet, he introduces further outside considerations that entail the rejection of representationalism. The focus shall still remain on the argument from global expressivism because it takes centre stage in Price's overall account. Two such considerations are: the reflexivity argument in Price (2013, 14 ff.); and the argument that functions of language and concepts are more diverse than representationalism can account for, which is adumbrated in Price (2013, 20).

[73]   In doing this, Price draws consequences from Robert Brandom's inferentialist project. In his opus magnum *Making it Explicit* (1994), Brandom starts with the notion of inference (i-representation) to explain (or "express", as he puts it) the notion of reference and truth. Price intends to keep these two kinds of representation more separate for his purposes.

the representational system – the external environment is excluded from this relation. The paradigmatic case of i-representation are inferential relations.

The main advantage of positing this distinction is that Price can maintain a quietism about e-representation – the target of Rorty's original criticism – while maintaining an openness to the terminological apparatus of Brandom's inferentialism. It is also safe to assume that Rorty would agree with this way of carving up two different sorts of representation, given his positive attitude towards Brandom's inferentialist project in *Making it Explicit* (Rorty 2010, 64 f.; Rorty 2004, 131). At the same time however, Brandom suggests that Price does away with too much in his anti-representationalism because representational vocabulary, like "true" or "refers," still plays an "essential, expressive role in making explicit a discursive representational dimension of semantic content […]" (Price 2013, 186). It is important to Price to retain the centrality of assertion. While there may be a lot of variety and differentiation, assertion is still the "downtown of language".

Again, the question may arise whether and how we are constrained by the world. Price will be committed to a variety of constraints that we saw operative in Rorty's framework. Since for Price, too, representational states are not what keeps us in contact with the world, he must be committed to a form of causal and practical constraint by the world, manifest in e-representations. Again, the point is that anti-representationalism discloses a kind of relation between the thinker and the world that is more fundamental than and prior to representational relations.

Having argued against the bifurcation thesis and having established anti-representationalism, there is no differentiation left in the field of assertoric language, because all kinds of assertoric speech acts are used in the same way: none of them refer (Macarthur & Price 2007, 112). There is no difference anymore between genuine description and "as if" description. Yet, Price wants to combine this uniformity of assertion with some sense of differentiation. This seems to be a requirement to appease his opponents: claiming that assertion is uniform is counter-intuitive, because human linguistic behaviour, and specifically assertion, seems to fulfil more than one purpose; language just seems to be more diverse in kind. While assertions are sometimes thought of as tools for mere fact-stating, there are more purposes to assertion beyond that. Assertions most notably differ regarding force. This variety of assertion has been explored by speech-act theory. For example, if I assert that "there is a chair in the other room", I could perhaps be merely stating a fact (if my interlocutor wants to compile a list of all chairs in the philosophy department). But the assertion "there is a chair in the other room" might also imply a request (by way of implicature) of a student to go fetch that chair because we are short on chairs in the seminar. Price seems to aim to satisfy this need for diversity while still retaining the uniformity of assertion (which is connected to the desired anti-representationalism, and the rejection of metaphysics).

Subject Naturalism. The globalization of expressivism and the subsequent rejection of Big-R Representationalism result in a different view of language and the practice of philosophy itself: subject naturalism. Subject naturalism can be understood as the conjunction of different aspects. The most important aspect of subject naturalism is the *primacy of the human standpoint.* This term gives expression to the principle that according to the sciences, humans are "natural" creatures, and every philosophical view which is in conflict with this principle needs to be abandoned. Subject naturalism states that we ought to retain a scientific attitude towards human beings. The primacy of the human standpoint is closely connected to the *primacy of language.* The primacy of language stresses the difference between linguistic and material approaches. The material approach to linguistic analysis is engendered by representationalism, meaning the view that our linguistic expressions are in some way to be matched with material objects in the world (Macarthur & Price 2007, 95). The linguistic approach, on the other hand, stresses that once we understand the commitment to representationalism is unwarranted, the *usage* of our vocabulary takes centre stage. In seeking to understand expressions like "good," "cause," or "belief," we ought to look at the role these expressions play in our language instead of looking for a material referent. Price calls this method linguistic *genealogy* (Macarthur & Price 2007, 94). This idea of genealogy is arguably inspired by Nietzsche's project in the *Genealogy of Morality*, offering non-metaphysical, non-psychological understanding of morality by tracing back the history of the use of the term "morality" itself (Nietzsche 1997). Subject naturalism replaces the metaphysical question "what does 'goodness' refer to, i. e. what is goodness?" with the anthropological question "What are ordinary speakers doing, when they use a term such as 'good'?" (Price 2011, 108). The relevant difference here is that subject naturalism is not an essentially historical affair, instead it seems to be content with synchronic use-assessment regarding a certain term, not needing a diachronic study of its significance. In this sense, the word "genealogy" is perhaps a bad fit for the idea it tries to convey.

Having established global expressivism, Price can apply this approach to all possible philosophical vocabularies. Elucidating philosophical vocabulary through the means of genealogy accounts for the concepts associated with them in a way which does not allow placement problems to come up in the first place (Macarthur & Price 2007, 95). The terms that on the object naturalist view seem problematic just turn out to be part of the "lives of natural creatures in a natural environment" (Price 2013, 14). Subject naturalism thus amounts to a quasi-scientific, sideways-on, third-personal stance on issues of linguistic behaviour. Subject naturalism is a third-personal inquiry of language use from the theoretical stance of the sciences (most notably, biology or anthropology), whereas the subjects studied do not need to know or understand their own linguistic usage themselves.

One example of a subject naturalist treatment of a controversial term is given in Price's own *Truth as Convenient Friction.* Price's point is that the concept of truth can be made sense of by evaluating the role it plays in assertoric dialogue between speakers. According to his proposal, truth as a norm of discourse is what makes assertoric dialogue centred around a common goal, thereby distinguishing it from the voicing of mere opinion: "Truth is the grit that makes our individual opinions engage with one another" (Price 2003, 167). The metaphor of "convenient friction" in the title of the article should be understood, I think, in exactly the same manner: truth is what makes assertions *convene* to create *friction* between them. In this manner, Price accounts for the concept of truth without resorting to representationalist notions, by exploring which role truth plays in human intersubjective speech. Furthermore, consider Price's account of truth in the context of the notion of quasi-scientific theory. Quasi-scientific theory is the form in which the scientific mode of explanation is transposed onto philosophical subject matter. It is important to note that the role Price assigns to the concept of truth is independent from quasi-scientific theory and its respective mode of explanation. Therefore, Price's subject naturalist treatment of the concept of truth as rational friction is not an example of quasi-scientific theory. This is because in saying that truth is what makes assertions come into rational contact, Price is neither introducing unobservables which could be reified through a "realist" reading, nor does this characterization make the concept of truth or the truth-bearers calculable somehow. Ultimately, this renders Price's subject naturalist account of truth compatible with quietism, at least *prima facie.* Price himself refers to this account of truth as an example of subject naturalism; and this is an important signpost supporting the reading that explanations in accordance with subject naturalism are not quasi-scientific theories.

To further understand the idea of subject naturalism, we should turn to the view of nature Price rejects, i.e. object naturalism (which is equal to scientific naturalism in my preferred terminology). Object naturalism, on Price's view, is comprised of three core claims. The ontological thesis says that "all there *is* is the world studied by science," the epistemological thesis says that "all genuine knowledge is scientific knowledge," and the methodological thesis states that "philosophy is not a different enterprise from science, and that philosophy should defer to science where the concerns of the two disciplines coincide" (Price 2013, 3–5). So, object naturalism starts with question what fundamentally exists, while subject naturalism purports to start with the primacy of the human standpoint. Price further views the relation between subject naturalism and object naturalism structured by the *priority thesis* and the *invalidity thesis.* Regarding the priority thesis, Price writes:

> Subject naturalism is theoretically prior to object naturalism, because the latter depends on validation from a subject naturalist perspective. What do 'priority' and 'validation'

mean in this context? As I noted earlier, subject naturalism directs our attention to the issue of the scientific 'respectability' of the claims and presuppositions of philosophy – in particular their compatibility with the recognition that we humans are natural creatures. (Price 2013, 6)

This quote is fairly obscure (at least considering Price's otherwise crisp writing). It can perhaps be made more lucid by bringing Price's treatment of representationalism into play here: the naturalist assumption is logically prior to representationalism. But representationalism is an integral part of object naturalism. Price's point is that the representationalist assumption underlying object naturalism is not respectable itself by scientific-empirical lights, and since the naturalist assumption (understood as the primacy of science) is more fundamental than the representationalist assumption, representationalism can in principle be jettisoned. Since subject naturalism is a naturalist view minus representationalism, subject naturalism is prior to object naturalism.

The invalidity thesis is underwritten by three arguments. The first two arguments involve considerations from semantic deflationism (Price 2013, 11–13), and the third is an argument against the coherence of representationalism with object naturalism itself. I deem the third argument strongest because it is internal, that is, it does not have to adduce an external consideration of semantic deflationism. The idea is that representationalism as a semantic notion is incompatible with naturalism, or "invalid" by naturalist lights, specifically because object naturalism has, in order to stay coherent, take an empirical attitude towards representationalism as a semantic notion. And, without going into the details here, Price suggests that no such attitude can be made sense of. He concludes that the "semantic presuppositions of object naturalism are bad science, a legacy of an insufficiently naturalistic philosophy" (Price 2013, 21).

Subject naturalism can be understood to offer two different ways in which the relation between philosophy and science is to be reconceived. The first aspect here is the preservation of a form of methodological naturalism as a metaphilosophical view: "philosophy needs to begin with what science tells us about ourselves" (Price 2013, 5). This grants the scientific third-person standpoint a certain authority over the way philosophy is to be conducted. Object naturalism itself also shares this commitment to scientific authority as a methodological guide for philosophical practice.[74] But the point is that object naturalism's wedding

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[74]   Note that the negation of naturalism does not imply the assumption that science as an institution is never to be deferred to as an authority. There are, of course, circumstances when scientific standards serve as a perfectly fine guide and authority for our general orientation. One of the most obvious examples is the pedagogic conflict between creationism versus the theory of evolution as subjects in school. This is just one case in which it is the right choice to accept scientific standards as an authority.

to representationalism cannot be countenanced by the scientific standpoint that naturalism itself adopts. The second aspect, however, serves to restrict the authority of science in a way that is not commonly done by philosophers who deem themselves naturalist:

> Subject naturalism suggests that science might properly take a more modest view of its own importance. It imagines a scientific discovery that science is not all there is – that science is just one thing among many that we do with 'representational' discourse. […] If we do science better in philosophy, we'll be less inclined to think that science is all there is to do. (Price 2013, 21)

Price points out here that in the subject naturalist framework, science itself is just one of many linguistic practices. Subject naturalism and the scientific standpoint do share the notion that human beings are thoroughly natural. But this does not imply that scientific practice has absolute priority over all areas of discourse. Hence, subject naturalism avoids the ontological compulsion of object naturalism, having to reduce every concept to another concept respectable by natural science.

An important caveat is to be mentioned. Someone may want to liken subject naturalism to the concept of second nature we encountered in the assessment of Wittgensteinian quietism, to the effect that one would just reduce one to the other. Indeed, subject naturalism and the concept of second nature share the view that there is nothing "unnatural" about humans, especially the human mind. Both demystify such concepts by showing, *contra* scientific naturalism, that they are not outside of what counts as nature. More specifically, scientific naturalism's implicit conception of nature renders an 'ordinary' understanding of the mind as unnatural because it does not automatically fit into the vocabulary of the natural sciences (especially physics, chemistry, and biology). Subject naturalism and the idea of second nature, conversely, accept mental and normative properties as always already part of nature in virtue of a more 'relaxed' conception of what "natural" amounts to. Yet, there are two significant differences between these views which makes it worth keeping the distinction between them. The first difference is one of scope: McDowell's concept of second nature is restricted to normative concepts, i. e. those concepts combined under the rubric of the space of reasons, like rationality, meaning, and understanding. Subject naturalism, on the other hand, is broader insofar as it applies to *all* concepts, not only normative ones, expressed in language. This includes concepts of modality, arithmetic items, or causality for which it is difficult to offer a construal that would appropriate them to a notion of second nature.

The second caveat concerns scientific vocabulary. Price's construal of subject naturalism involves the view that the genealogical treatment of any concept, including normative concepts, has to succeed with the exclusive use of vocabulary respectable by natural sciences. In contrast, the whole point of McDowell's con-

cept of second nature is to bypass or reject the primacy of natural science's vocabulary when thinking about distinctively human concepts. It is a further question whether we cannot put forth a version of subject naturalism which does not involve this restriction to scientific vocabulary. It seems that it is in principle possible to allow the genealogical use-theoretic treatment of vocabularies in question without the restriction to natural science vocabulary.

Some Challenges for Pragmatist Quietism

Price's global pragmatism has been met with a number of objections. Price himself has responded to a few of them. Arguments have been made that deflationism and expressivism are incompatible (Macarthur & Price 2007, 104–110), that the bifurcation thesis requires a substantial notion of representation, one which Price rejects (Price 2011, 101 ff.), and that global expressivism cannot make all the different forms of language usage intelligible, and that global expressivism is self-refuting because its statement itself would be a mere expression of opinion without further objective claim (Rydenfelt 2011, 79). These arguments concern mainly the complex architecture of Price's philosophy over and against its competitors in current analytic philosophy. As such, these objections are not of chief interest given that our topic here is naturalism and quietism. There are, however, some objections which do pose interesting challenges for Price's overall project and the concerns of the present inquiry regarding quietism.

Friction with the World. The framework of pragmatist quietism may be seen to reiterate the problem of the relation of mind and world. As noted, the rejection of representationalism can be a crucial tool in preventing external-world scepticism, yet this theoretical setup still holds on to a substantive, i.e. more than pragmatic, distinction between minds and world. We could still, as it were, face the predicament that language and thought never come into touch with "the world". Price and Rorty achieve the rejection of representationalism by bifurcating the mind into a coping faculty and a linguistic or mental faculty. But the problem is then shifted to this new distinction: how are coping and the linguistic or mental faculty related? One would want them to be unified under a higher order conception, perhaps in the sense that they are both conceptual trappings. Concepts are those things with which we think, and we would want to assert that coping with the world as well as linguistic activity are a conceptual affair. The introduction of the concept-world distinction (or scheme-content distinction) and its possible (dis-) solution is a key question of philosophy. As such, I do not purport to give an answer here. I merely point out that the proponents of pragmatist quietism need to address this point, namely the reconciliation between mere coping and fully human thought.

Pragmatist Quietism, Metaphysics, and Quasi-Scientific Theory

It is, at first glance, not obvious in which sense pragmatist quietism is a form of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory. The central issue is that neither Rorty nor Price are entirely clear on what it is they reject. Rorty believes all philosophical questions which are not relevant to cultural politics should be abandoned. Price's global pragmatism aims to establish subject naturalism. The route to subject naturalism leads, as Price stresses, through a rejection of metaphysics. One may wonder how pragmatist quietism can be understood as somehow subsumed under this conception of quietism.

It is difficult to pin down in which way exactly Price rejects metaphysics, and metaphysics of what kind. Over the time of the development of global pragmatism, Price has offered different flavours of rejecting metaphysics. This uncertainty is aggravated by two factors: firstly, the fact that the most recent work on global pragmatism does not openly draw out many consequences for a stance towards metaphysics (e.g. Price 2013). Secondly, the fact that Price does not explicitly clarify what he means by "metaphysics". Price's understanding of metaphysics is less rich than an exhaustive treatment of metaphysics would usually suggest. In the context of his project, metaphysics is inextricably linked to the creation of placement problems. It can become easily visible that Price does in fact not reject all metaphysics, just metaphysics pertaining to placement problems. This understanding of metaphysics thereby seems to mainly revolve around question of existence. It is reasonable and, in fact, charitable to assume that Price must make a distinction between kinds of metaphysics which are permissible and those we have to reject. This also aligns with Price himself commenting on metaphysical issues in other contexts, most prominently the metaphysics of time (Price 1996).

Traditionally, metaphysics is understood as comprised of, on the one hand, the topics of traditional metaphysics (like God, the soul, substances), and, on the other hand, questions about the true nature of things, for example, questions of existence, reality, space and time, necessity, and possibility. Price unfortunately provides only a very minimalistic understanding of metaphysics: metaphysics is understood as being comprised of "what is x?" questions. So, it seems what Price has in mind are questions like "what is reality?", "what is meaning?", "what is causality?". But the central problem with this construal is that there can be perfectly intelligible "what is x?" questions which are not metaphysical in any interesting sense. For example, questions like "what is a table?", "what is democracy?" or "what is justice?" can be given coherent, non-metaphysical answers. It is not the question, but rather the type of answer given to that question which determines whether some subject matter qualifies as metaphysical. The problem then is that "what is x?" questions can us only give a sense of metaphysics that is too vague in order to be interesting at this point.

Nevertheless, one can perhaps unveil the relevant notion of metaphysics by analysing the way that Price rejects metaphysics. Price distinguishes three ways of being anti-metaphysical: anti-realism about all metaphysical concepts, subjectivist metaphysics, and metaphysical quietism. The third variety is the one he subscribes to, distinguishing global pragmatism from the first two. Anti-realism about metaphysics "disallows a certain kind of positive metaphysical inquiry" (Macarthur & Price 2007, 98). The most common form of this anti-realism is moral fictionalism, the view that moral values do not truly exist, but are merely useful fictions we have created for ourselves. This anti-realism about metaphysics does not reject metaphysics as a whole but is directed against positive ontological claims regarding certain entities. Anti-realism is still a metaphysical affair, precisely because it makes the negative ontological claim that, for example, moral values do *not* exist. The second way of being against metaphysics is being a supporter of subjectivist metaphysics. Subjectivist metaphysics locate traditional metaphysical phenomena or concepts in the human mind. Thus, subjective metaphysics reject the idea that certain metaphysical items are an objective part of the world, but at the same time subjective metaphysics offer a positive metaphysical, albeit subjectivist theory of familiar metaphysical topics. A prime example would be the claim that colours are not an objective feature of the world but a subjective function of the mind (Macarthur & Price 2007, 99).

What then is the metaphysical quietism Price advocates? Given that his understanding of metaphysics focuses on existence questions, this kind of quietism probably does not extend to all of metaphysics, but rather to questions pertaining to ontology. This anti-ontology reading of metaphysical quietism aims to reject any ontological discourse which goes beyond ordinary language. This is in line with how his colleague and commentator Macarthur construes Price's metaphysical quietism: "[…] nothing counts as an absolute perspective (certainly not science!) from which to conduct the traditional metaphysical inquiry of ontology" (Macarthur 2014a, 74). To clarify this, one can distinguish between the first-order and second-order status of existence statements. First-order statements belong to common sense, merely asserting that something is the case or something exists, like "tables exist." First-order discourse comprises the ordinary, not yet philosophical way of using terms like "colour," "moral," or "causation" – terms that philosophers typically take to warrant a separate metaphysical treatment. Second-order statements add a level of ontological qualification to first-order statements, like "tables *really do* exist" or "tables fundamentally exist". Price gives the following example: take the statement "there are ways things might have been." This statement is an example of a first-order folk view. Then consider "There *really are* ways things might have been." This, in contrast, is a second-order statement which is already a metaphysical claim. The former is an unqualified statement, the latter uses the phrase "really are" to further qualify the claim as ontological. It is a second-order view because it aims to state something about

the ontological status of existents, thereby taking a stance on the ordinary first-order statement; it can thus be interpreted as a claim about the nature of reality itself. According to the anti-ontology reading, the central point of metaphysical quietism is to reject such second-order talk wholesale.

So far, this leaves the question untouched in what sense Price's pragmatist quietism is concerned with quasi-scientific theory of the kind developed in the preceding chapter. To begin, Price does have theory as an important issue in view. Using a more Rortyean phrasing, Price writes:

> For present purposes, quietism about a particular vocabulary amounts to a rejection of that vocabulary, for the purposes of *philosophical theory*. This may or may not involve a rejection of the vocabulary in question for other purposes. (Macarthur & Price 2007, 116; emphasis TJS)

Price rejects metaphysical vocabulary for the purpose of giving a "philosophical theory". It is again unclear what exactly is meant by "philosophical theory". It seems that in this context, Price means that (for example) the expression "cause" itself is a dubious piece of vocabulary, but only in the context of metaphysical theorizing. Unfortunately, Price, just like the vast majority of thinkers on this matter, does not expand on what a theory in philosophy is. I mentioned that the concept of quasi-scientific theory cuts across different areas of philosophy, e.g. such theories can be found in metaphysics, aesthetics, epistemology, and so forth. Hence, quasi-scientific theory bifurcates metaphysics into metaphysics related to quasi-scientific theory and metaphysics unrelated to it. I contend that Price's quietism can be said to be a rejection of metaphysics related to quasi-scientific theory. If this construal is correct, then Price's metaphysical quietism can indeed be appropriated to the general form of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory.

This can be established by taking into consideration his own most developed example of a subject naturalist account of a "metaphysical" philosophical concept: truth. In *Truth as Convenient Friction*, Price offers an account of the concept of truth that is decisively non-representational. I have already stressed that Price's subject naturalist treatment of the concept of truth is careful to avoid the positing of (abstract) unobservables to act as theoretical entities that would make the concept of truth calculable in the way I described. Of course, Price does not consciously avoid such abstract unobservables as explainers. What leads him to this construal of truth is primarily an anti-representationalist goal, not an insight or intuition about the nature of theories in philosophy, although he seems to be aware of theory as a phenomenon in need of further elucidation (as seen in the quotation above). Yet, his approach seems to align with the general phrasing of quietism I offered. This conclusion is also in line with Price's favoured notion of subject naturalism because subject naturalism seeks genealogical-use explana-

tions. Explanations of this kind do not, however, involve abstract unobservables, since it purports to give only such surface level explanations. Therefore, subject naturalism rejects quasi-scientific theories by definition. Hence, Price's subject naturalism, despite its differences can be at least brought into close proximity to the generic phrasing of quietism as the rejection of quasi-scientific theory.

I began this chapter by noting that just like in the case of naturalism, "quietism" is a notoriously difficult label, used for sometimes very disparate ends. I have sorted out the uses of the label that seem to strike into the heart of the matter and can serve as a foundation for more philosophical work. The most important phrasing is in Blackburn's characterization of quietism as the rejection of theories in philosophy. On the face of it, it is unclear what that means. It cannot be *all* kinds of positive philosophical activity as this would render quietism simply an incoherent statement. Dissatisfied with the fact that Blackburn (and others like Hutto or Horwich) do not sufficiently clarify what theories in philosophy are, I have suggested that the kind of theories rejected, at least in some pivotal quietist writings which take their inspiration from the later Wittgenstein, are theories which offer a certain kind of explanation. Namely a kind of explanation which aims to mimic the sciences. This I have used as a link between scientific naturalism and quietism: quietism then is the rejection of quasi-scientific theory.

This is at least a generic phrasing. I have further reconstructed two specific versions of philosophical quietism: Wittgensteinian quietism and Pragmatist quietism. How exactly do these forms fall under the general phrasing? Wittgensteinian quietism falls under this generic phrasing because it rejects constructive philosophy, and "constructive philosophy" is a way of describing philosophy that employs quasi-scientific theories. The way in which Wittgensteinian quietism rejects theories in philosophy is via a therapeutic approach. How does the pragmatist quietism of Huw Price and Richard Rorty fall under the description given here? One central feature of pragmatist quietism is anti-representationalism, i.e. the rejection of any substantial conception of representation as mediator between thought and world. It, too, rejects a specific form of metaphysics, namely the metaphysical worldview espoused by scientific naturalism. One of Price's main points is that the conjunction of scientific naturalism and representationalism excludes a variety of phenomena as unnatural, and – in my terms – creates the need to construct quasi-scientific theories in order to integrate them into the naturalist worldview. As such, pragmatist quietism implies, among other things, a rejection of quasi-scientific theories.

Does this entail that quietism poses a threat to philosophy? It only poses a threat to philosophy if one thinks that quasi-scientific theory is all there is to philosophical practice. Some may be left dissatisfied with such a purely negative result. Hence, the last chapter deals (among other things) with the question what

kind of philosophy would still be compatible with the constraint that quietism poses.

3. The Threat to Philosophy

> We must do away with all *explanation,* and description alone must take its place. – Wittgenstein (1953, §109)

The purpose of this last chapter to tie up some loose ends left by the respective investigations into quietism and naturalism. In other words, this seeks to tease out some implications of the points examined in the first two chapters. First, I shall go into more detail about the relationship between quietism and naturalism which has so far only been briefly adumbrated. The second part deals with the question whether the supposed threat for philosophy posed by quietism and naturalism is real and whether they put an end to philosophy in some sense. The third and the fourth part deal with where to go from here. Part three provides an overview of alternatives to scientific naturalism, namely liberal naturalism and near-naturalism. While these views pose an improvement over scientific naturalism, I shall briefly sketch a version of naturalism that I find preferable: minimal naturalism. The fourth part deals with the question how quietism can be understood more positively: if quietism eschews quasi-scientific theory, what kind of theorizing is still permissible in philosophy? My suggestion is that Dilthey's notion of understanding (*Verstehen*) (as the complement to explanation) can be supplemented by reflections on the idea of *description* as a mode of philosophical activity.

§1 Naturalism and Quietism – an Unhappy Relation

While some readers may find it obvious by now, this section is devoted to spelling out whether, and how, quietism and naturalism relate at all. So what is the relation of quietism and scientific naturalism? Quietists – McDowell, Price, Rorty – concern themselves with the topic of naturalism, albeit in different ways. This already suggests, yet does not demonstrate in detail that there might be an intrinsic connection between these metaphilosophical positions. I already mentioned that Rorty views the situation as a stand-off between quietism and naturalism. Similarly, Price and McDowell each comment on or even discredit certain forms of naturalism in their respective projects which I have qualified as quietist. Price rejects what he calls "object naturalism" while one of McDowell's main tar-

get is "bald naturalism", yet neither of them is explicit about the putative relation between naturalism and quietism. These observations of the relationship between quietism and naturalism are more from a birds-eye perspective. Most commentators have not provided a more detailed elucidation of how quietism and naturalism are related beyond such implicit allusions. Based on the work of the preceding chapters, I shall try to fill this gap by suggesting the sense in which quietism and naturalism are conceptually related. This relation essentially involves naturalism's connection to the construal and motivation of quasi-scientific theory. There are two ways in which naturalism features this connection. One such way hinges on the methodological commitment, the other one is in terms of the ontological commitment. Both of these connections between naturalism point to the same result: quietism and naturalism are incompatible positions.

The connection *qua* methodological thesis of scientific naturalism is straightforward. The perhaps weakest and most innocuous form of the methodological thesis states that philosophy ought not produce statements which conflict with the best science available where their subject matter clashes. A somewhat stronger, albeit still weak form of the methodological thesis states that philosophy ought to be oriented towards the sciences. I have suggested that this orientation towards the sciences is often understood in the sense that philosophy is supposed to emulate a putative mode of scientific explanation, i.e. quasi-scientific theory. In this way, the methodological thesis automatically motivates the construction of quasi-scientific theories in philosophy in order to be methodologically as close to science, or as "scientific" as possible, as it were.

The second connection – *qua* ontological thesis – is somewhat less obvious. Scientific naturalism operates tacitly with a specific conception of nature. This conception, I argued, implies a faulty presupposition of the concept of nature as a sortal to be cashed out in three modes: causalism, the subject matter of the natural sciences, and materiality. This conception of nature then excludes everything else as unnatural, and therefore mysterious. This exclusion engendered placement problems. However, the excluded phenomena are still an integral and essential part to human life. This is motivation enough to try and assign them some place in the natural order. This reintegration of seemingly problematic phenomena is achieved, so the naturalist hopes, through theoretical explanation by way of introducing quasi-scientific theories in philosophy.

Therefore, both the methodological and the ontological thesis of naturalism motivate the construal of quasi-scientific theory. Quietism, I suggested, is the rejection of quasi-scientific theory. Therefore, quietism and scientific naturalism are incompatible metaphilosophical views. One cannot be a quietist and a naturalist at the same time, because endorsing naturalism inevitably entails the felt necessity to construct quasi-scientific theory, i.e. the very same practice quietists reject. It also entails that any argument against naturalism – like the argument

from incoherence and the argument from the concept of nature – can potentially be counted as arguments for quietism.

This has a rarely noticed implication for the dialectical status of scientific naturalism. Scientific naturalism – *qua* ontological thesis – is metaphysical. As a metaphysical thesis, it can be compared to its metaphysical competitors regarding its advantages and disadvantages, like dualism and idealism. However, dualism and idealism, as mentioned, currently tend to suffer from a lack of attention next to scientific naturalism. It seems that the popularity of naturalism has condemned its competitors to be viewed as failed or debunked ideas, despite the shortcomings of naturalism itself. Given the current context, one can hold that one crucial point that separates naturalism from both dualism and (subjective) idealism is that it introduces quasi-scientific theories. The crucial difference seems to be again the conception of nature. Dualism as a metaphysical view does not feature an explicit view of nature which would exclude certain things as unnatural, only to be recovered again as natural through some sort of quasi-scientific explanation. The same seems to be true for (subjective) idealism. Forms of (subjective or objective) idealism do not, *prima facie*, feature a restrictive notion of nature that would necessitate a form of explanation of disenfranchised phenomena like scientific naturalism does. Barring any further argument that would demonstrate an equal use of theories in dualism and (subjective) idealism, one can conclude: the lack of a need to construct quasi-scientific theories puts dualism and (subjective) idealism in a dialectically stronger position than scientific naturalism. This may provide further incentive to devote the same kind of attention to those metaphilosophical competitors of scientific naturalism.

§2 An End to Philosophy?

The starting point of this investigation was the question whether philosophy is under real pressure by naturalism and/or quietism to cease existing, at least in its traditional form as a self-standing, self-justifying discipline. Both quietism and naturalism are sometimes taken to threaten the status of philosophy. Philosophy was threatened at first by the surge of naturalism that aims to make philosophy obsolete, to subordinate philosophy under the sciences in a way that there is no notion of genuine philosophy to be had anymore. On the other hand, some may say that quietism potentially threatens philosophy. For quietism rejects a form of explanation, i.e. quasi-scientific theory, which is widely used within philosophy, which some may even take to be the only legitimate mode of philosophy. Opponents of quietism object that this leaves nothing for philosophy to do or say, forcing philosophers to be quiet.

It should be clear by now that naturalism does threaten to end philosophy by making it *obsolete* by virtue of the methodological thesis. The content of the

doctrine has the potential to make philosophy obsolete by aligning it with the empirical sciences. Even on less extreme interpretations of naturalism, philosophy would lose its status as an autonomous, self-standing discipline. A prominent example is the question of what the mind is, which is often just assumed to be answerable by cognitive science, and supposedly not subject to philosophical debate anymore once an ideal form of cognitive science is advanced enough. This scheme can be then potentially applied to all philosophical questions if one is sufficiently enthralled by the scientific worldview according to which the ideal natural science can account for anything and everything. It is a separate question, however, whether naturalism will *actually* make philosophy obsolete (or has already succeeded). This latter point may be beyond the scope of philosophy itself to ascertain. It rather seems to bleed into the subject matter of the sociology of science. Therefore, I shall not attempt to speculate whether naturalism will actually make philosophy obsolete. However, the defeat of naturalism would *ipso facto* mean abolishing all claims to these explanatory ambitions. And hence, philosophy can be saved from naturalization once naturalism is averted and discarded. Therefore, philosophy does not have to come to an end, at least if the case against naturalism is strong enough.

It can be difficult on the abstract level to convince philosophers of the problems of naturalism due to the status of naturalism as a worldview. One further way, not explored in more detail, is to apply a form of Wittgensteinian therapy in the face of the dominance of naturalism. This may become plausible if one thinks of a naturalist as a thinker wearing glasses of a certain strength and tint with the added conviction that these glasses cannot be taken off whatsoever. The aim of a (philosophical) therapy is then to convince the patient, i.e. the proponent of naturalism, that nothing stops her from taking off these glasses. This is not to say that there is an "unideological", fully value-free or neutral philosophical standpoint to be had. Or, following the analogy, that the non-naturalists do not wear tinted glasses of a certain strength. It is simply that regarding most philosophical theses, philosophers tend to be aware that holding them is not compulsory. Worldviews tend to be harmless as long as one is aware that they are mere worldviews, that is, that one can have doxastic mastery over that worldview. Naturalism, however, seems to have become a worldview that has achieved mastery over *us*.

Fortunately, there might be actionable steps philosophy as a discipline can undertake towards correcting this imbalance. Firstly, it is necessary to retrieve naturalism from the background of philosophical assumptions that are not considered to be in need of serious justification in order to bring it onto philosophical centre stage for it to become subject to rational and controversial debate again. Secondly, it is worth considering on the level of institutional organization of research to perhaps stop proclaiming and continuing so-called naturalization projects, at least until considerable hermeneutic and inferential progress in the

debate on naturalism has been made. Thirdly, it might be appropriate to bring certain metaphysical positions which present competition to naturalism back into focus again, yet have been assigned niche positions in contemporary philosophy.

So naturalism *does* threaten philosophy such that a rigorous application of methodological naturalism would spell the end of philosophy as an autonomous practice insofar as it renders philosophy the *ancilla* of the natural sciences in some way or other. Luckily, philosophy can be vindicated by challenging the naturalist orthodoxy, either by giving arguments against scientific naturalism as a thesis, or – more effectively – by calling attention to the special logical and perhaps ideological status of naturalism. There is no real absolute compulsion to endorse scientific naturalism or the naturalist worldview, and philosophy is "safe" for now.

On the other hand, it stands to reason whether quietism truly poses a threat to philosophy like its competitor naturalism, as some may hold. I have suggested that this is a misreading, as it was never the intent or consequence of quietism to confine philosophy to strict silence. The reason why quietism does not mean putting an end to philosophy is that it is essentially negative in content: it only states what should be avoided or rejected. However, avoiding or rejecting an explanatory mood mimicking the sciences does not amount to a rejection of philosophy simpliciter, as there are other forms of theoretical engagement. An argument to the effect that quietism as it has been developed here amounts to a rejection of all philosophy will have to demonstrate first that the only legitimate form of philosophy involves quasi-scientific theory (or other forms of explanation that bind philosophy to the sciences). Such arguments pending, it can be concluded that quietism does not threaten to put an end to philosophy.

§3 Liberal Naturalism, Near-Naturalism, and Minimal Naturalism

Scientific naturalism has been criticized over the last few decades by a few dissonant voices, developing into a growing, yet not mainstream resistance. Next to Huw Price's subject naturalism, certain non-reductive forms of naturalism have been suggested: *liberal naturalism* (combining a host of different criticisms of scientific naturalism) and Lynne Rudder Baker's *near-naturalism*. The strategy of these alternative accounts is interestingly not to offer a self-confident rejection of naturalism as such, but rather retaining the "label" naturalism in order to suggest a remaining familiarity to the scientific naturalism they reject. Liberal naturalism and near-naturalism are views which have sublated naturalism in the sense that naturalism is negated, but parts of it at the same time conserved. This means views of this kind are not a return to an entirely pre-naturalist time, i. e. not a re-

enchantment of nature, but rather a development of what philosophical practice looks like without the need to assimilate itself to the natural sciences. However, I think that both liberal naturalism and near-naturalism incur unnecessary metaphysical and epistemological baggage, and suggest that an even more *minimal* form of naturalism can be formulated which captures what draws thinkers to the "naturalism" label in the first place while avoiding any such baggage.

One may ask why the positions to be outlined still willingly retain the moniker "naturalism". The reason is to be found in the orthodoxical status of scientific naturalism stressed throughout this work. Somewhat facetiously one can hold that why these authors call their alternative positions liberal *naturalism*, subject *naturalism*, and near-*naturalism* (and why I introduce the term "minimal *naturalism*") is that they engage in a kind of *linguistic guerrilla warfare.* Since the pull of scientific naturalism is so strong, philosophical opponents wanting to criticize the orthodoxy have to at least conform to the vocabulary insisted upon by the overpowering opponent. Hence, calling these alternative positions "naturalism" in conjunction with an extra qualifier has the advantage to grasp the naturalist's intuition that there is nothing "spooky" in this world (since hardly any serious philosopher believes there to be "spooky" things), yet contends scientific naturalism has to be incorrect. While these "naturalisms" seem to conform to the lexical shape of the scientific naturalist discourse, they try to "smuggle" in positions which are in direct conflict with the strict beliefs a scientific naturalist typically cherishes.

The idea of *liberal naturalism*, appears in different denotations throughout the last few decades: Peter Strawson's (1985) *soft naturalism*, Jennifer Hornsby's (1997) *naïve naturalism*, John McDowell's (1996) concept of *second nature*, Mario De Caro's (2010, 2011, 2015) *liberal naturalism*, Sebastian Gardner's (2007) *rich, non-reductive naturalism*, Huw Price's (2013) *subject naturalism*, Stroud's (2004) *soft naturalism* (so called independently from Strawson), David Macarthur's (2004, 2015a, 2015b) *humanized naturalism.* While the names are different, these accounts more or less feature the same critique of scientific naturalism and offer roughly similar reconceptions.[75] Liberal naturalism is characterized by three liberalized aspects in analogy to the strict aspects of scientific naturalism (with the addition of an epistemological tenet) (De Caro 2014, 23 f.)

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75   Hutto & Satne (2018, 59) strongly disagree, calling this grouping a "motley crew" of philosophers who, in their view, express very different commitments. Their other main concern is that liberal naturalism does not have a criterion for what counts as "supernatural", just like it is the case for scientific naturalism. Dissatisfied with liberal naturalism and scientific naturalism, they propose yet another form of naturalism: relaxed naturalism in the "Goldilocks zone" situated between these two options.

Liberalized ontological aspect:	There are non-supernatural entities which are irreducible to and ontologically independent of entities which are solely explainable by science.
Liberalized metaphilosophical aspect:	There are issues of inquiry about which philosophy is not continuous with science.
Liberalized epistemological aspect:	There are legitimate forms of understanding which are neither reducible to scientific understanding nor incompatible with it.

These aspects are phrased inclusively in order to allow for normativity and the human mind to figure as unproblematic, natural parts of the world not in need of further explanation by way of quasi-scientific theory. Liberal naturalism is thus the view that everything which is not supernatural is part of nature. Thus, the concept of nature includes but transcends the entities apt for causal explanation of the sciences. Liberal naturalism thereby includes into the concept of nature also norms, the mind, numbers, people, action, art, reasons, human history, and ordinary objects (the so-called middle-sized dry goods) which caused placement problems for scientific naturalism.[76] Note, however, that liberal naturalism still eschews supernatural entities, most specifically religious ones like God, angels, or transubstantiation.

Lynne Rudder Baker's recently proposed *near-naturalism* is very similar to liberal naturalism. Her near-naturalism can be understood as a conclusive upshot or wider framework of her work in other areas in philosophy, e.g. her philosophy of mind (Baker 2013), philosophy of religion (Baker 1987), and artefact philosophy (Baker 2004). Baker (2017, 15 f.) endorses all three aspects of liberal naturalism in a rejection of scientific naturalism. Yet, her near-naturalism differs about the treatment of supernatural entities. Near-naturalism does, by stipulation, not exclude the supernatural entities of the religious kind – a rejection of which is common to both scientific naturalism and liberal naturalism. This modification turns the liberalized ontological aspect into a *super*-liberalized ontological aspect:

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76   The idea of liberal naturalism has received some criticism and defense. It has been challenged, for example, by Neta (2007) and Gardner (2007). A defense against Neta's charges is found in De Caro & Voltolini (2010). Regarding arguments in favor of liberal naturalism, any anti-reductivist argument in, say, the philosophy of mind can be interpreted as an argument in favor of liberal naturalism. More direct arguments for liberal naturalism have been developed in Macarthur (2015, 29; 2004, 33).

Super-liberalized ontological aspect: There may be non-supernatural entities
(including transcendent ones) which are
irreducible to and ontologically indepen-
dent of entities which are solely explain-
able by science.

And indeed, one may be perplexed that the rejection of transcendent religious
entities in De Caro's rendition of liberal naturalism may be somehow *ad hoc*: if
one is to reject the reductive character of scientific naturalism, what is the reason
to share its rejection of religious entities instead of including God, angels, or tran-
substantiation in the list of things that *might* exist? Such a principled reason
missing, one may indeed hold that Baker's near-naturalism is the more stringent
alternative to scientific naturalism.

Note that the phrasings and presentations of liberal naturalism and near-
naturalism are usually not accompanied by arguments *for* these ideas. This may
seem insufficient to someone actively invested in scientific naturalism or a neu-
tral bystander. There are two things to be said here. First, the dialectical situation
of the debate is such that at this point any argument *against* scientific naturalism
can be viewed as strengthening its competitors, i.e. liberal naturalism or near-
naturalism. This is because any argument against the reductive character of sci-
entific naturalism plays into the hand of the ontologically more inclusive view of
liberal naturalism and near-naturalism. Second, the mere construal of something
as inclusive as liberal naturalism will have many philosophers up in arms. For an
example, consider Ram Neta's rebuttal to McDowell's brand of liberal naturalism:

> What if digestion, or respiration, or reasoning are natural kinds, their nature consisting
> simply in the mechanisms that enable them to occur? Is the liberal naturalist committed
> to denying this possibility? If so, then I confess I can see no good reason to accept Liberal
> Naturalism. And if not, then I confess I do not understand just what Liberal Naturalism
> is. (Neta 2007, 662)

Neta thinks that reason (and by extension other hard-to-place phenomena) can-
not be other than natural in a way that supports scientific naturalism and dis-
credits liberal naturalism, admitting that he then does not "understand" what lib-
eral naturalism could be. Neta (and certainly many others) seem to simply have
unlearned the kind of sheer *imagination* to consider something which is ontolog-
ically, methodologically, and epistemically less restrictive than scientific natural-
ism and the scientific image. Against this backdrop, the first step of a critic of
scientific naturalism has to be to simply *open up* and *point towards* areas of the
logical space which may seem almost unfathomable to some. Perhaps then, in a
second step, once something other than scientific naturalism has been accepted

as a logical alternative which is not unreasonable from the outset, one can aim to provide positive arguments for liberal naturalism.

Yet, liberal naturalism and near-naturalism are not without problems. One worry is that both liberal naturalism and near-naturalism grant scientific naturalism by conceiving some restriction of what can exist. There is still some logical space left for a position that is less ambitious than even liberal naturalism and near-naturalism, yet seems to capture the genuine motivation for adopting the label "naturalist" in the first place. At the most fundamental level, whatever is called "naturalism" seems to be motivated by a "science first" attitude. This "science first" attitude is therefore the minimal requirement for anything to be called "naturalist". This "science first" attitude consists in giving the preference to science as the arbiter of what is true whenever science and ordinary opinion overlap in certain practical matters. This may not be called for in all matters, most decisively metaphysical matters: giving unquestioning preference to natural science in metaphysical (and epistemological) matters is what sets the stage for the problematic scientific naturalism. I call this pragmatic adherence to a "science first" attitude a *minimal naturalism*.[77]

While there may be some problematic cases, the advantages of such a minimal methodological kind of naturalism become clear when considering a paradigmatic example. Think, for example, of the trending anti-vaccination movement. Regarding the question whether vaccinations are efficacious and safe, it just seems that medical science has been the best available, while not infallible, way to answer this question. Some may ask why scientific inquiry here trumps the "intuition" or conviction of anti-vaccination advocates. One can perhaps only reply something mundane along the lines that medical science has proven to be the best way to find out about issues like these and trumps merely "personal" experience. It seems that hardly any more justification can or has to be given. Another timely example is global warming. Similar to the case of "anti-vaxxers", some global warming "sceptics" tend to rely on their own "intuition" as to whether global temperatures are increasing or decreasing (conveniently confounding weather and climate). Minimal naturalism prescribes to look at the best available scientific research and scholarship on the matter, instead of relying on one's gut.

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[77]   This view is not unlike what Hutto and Satne have dubbed "relaxed naturalism" as the idea that there are some instances in which empirical sciences can and should inform philosophical practice, for example the idea of second nature by "synthesizing findings from, *inter alia*, anthropology, developmental psychology, comparative psychology, cognitive archaeology, and social neuroscience" (Hutto & Satne 2018, 71). Or in Barry Smith's words: "if philosophers need empirical input they do best to turn to practicing scientists" (Smith 2014, 296). The reason why I resist adopting this nomenclature is that Hutto and Satne wed the idea of relaxed naturalism closely to Wittgenstein which I deem not necessary nor helpful.

Why should one adopt this idea of minimal naturalism? In treating the relation of ordinary practice and science pragmatically like this, the minimal naturalist is "on board" with the sciences, yet does not need to commit to any strong views on the nature of reality, the nature of knowledge or the nature of philosophy which might incur difficult challenges like the placement problems. To be on board with the sciences, one does not have to commit to any *a priori* existence constraints. Minimal naturalism is, then, a reasonable alternative to scientific naturalism, liberal naturalism, and near-naturalism which avoids the problems those positions seem to incur, yet retains the core point of what makes the adherence to the term "naturalist" so attractive to many. I have not given an exhaustive account or air-tight principle of what practical matters the "science first" attitude of minimal naturalism is to be applied to. I find it doubtful whether such an *a priori* account can or has to be given. The practical domains to which minimal naturalism can be reasonably applied is itself a practical matter. In other words: jettison the questionable philosophy dogmatically chained to natural science, keep the reasonable adherence to science.

§4 Explaining, Understanding, and Describing

In philosophy there are no deductions; it is purely descriptive. – Wittgenstein (1998, 106)

Some may throw their hands up in the air insisting that giving up the ambition to conceive of philosophical practice in some analogous way to the natural science is akin to giving up any claim to clarity and rigour. From the perspective of thinkers within the naturalist framework, quietism *must* look like the end of philosophy. This is because quietism rejects the form of explanation most central to the naturalist framework, i.e. attempts to line up philosophy as much as possible with the methodologies of the sciences. Some may have become so accustomed to providing explanations of the kind in line with methodological naturalism (consciously so or not) that any critique of this mode of explanation seems to spell disaster for philosophy as such. If one's gaze is restricted by naturalism in the way that quasi-scientific explanations are the prime form of philosophical thought, then quietism simply looks like the rejection of philosophy as a whole. Perhaps quietists themselves are also at least partly to blame for this misleading impression. One could perhaps hold that it was ultimately detrimental to Rorty's well-intentioned ambitions in the closing sections of his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* to announce the end of philosophy, at least the kind of systematic and historical philosophy which does not serve edification (Rorty 2009, ch. VIII). However, the goal here is not to dictate a full picture of how philosophy ought to be done properly. The aim is much more modest: it is to dispel concerns that the

rejection of quasi-scientific theory threatens philosophy as a whole. I want to stress that philosophy is far from over once quietism is correctly understood. For better or worse, philosophy goes on. What kind of philosophy – positively speaking – is then still permissible or recommended under a quietist constraint to reject quasi-scientific theory?

This section aims to provide an answer to this question that is as reasonable, and hence unsurprising, as possible. I have used Dilthey's distinction between explanation (*Erklärung*) as the mark of natural science and understanding (*Verstehen*) as the mark of the humanities as a foundation to develop the idea that some parts of philosophy have introduced a putative sense of explanation in philosophy in an attempt to mimic the successes of the natural sciences. My introduction and treatment of quasi-scientific theory hence mainly dealt with one side of Dilthey's distinction: explanation. This section now deals with the other side: understanding. Just like with the idea of explanation, Dilthey remains somewhat vague about what shape understanding (*Verstehen*) takes. He is clear that only that which is human, i. e. that which comes "from us", can be understood (*verstanden*) at all. But how can this idea be made more concretely graspable, especially when the question is how it could be applied to philosophy in a way analogous to Dilthey's notion of explanation?

Dilthey's *Verstehen* can be further elucidated with the notion of *mere description*. That which is understood (*verstanden* in his technical sense) is a description of the way things are. Mere description "leaves everything as it is" (Wittgenstein), in opposition to explanation which can potentially reconceive the object of inquiry. Mere descriptions do not posit abstract entities in order to make the object of understanding intelligible. They rather describe something that is already intelligible by itself. The suggestion then is that Dilthey's understanding (*Verstehen*) and mere descriptions are coeval, two sides of the same coin.[78]

There are a number of different approaches in philosophy which one could subsume under the rubric of merely describing something: some forms of phenomenology, hermeneutics, or ordinary language philosophy. For example, Daniel Hutto suggests that even classical conceptual analysis falls under the notion of mere description: "In what sense is it right to think of such analyses as a kind of theorizing? In what sense could they potentially yield explanations? At best, it seems the products of traditional forms of conceptual analysis are descriptive, as opposed to genuinely explanatory" (Hutto 2003, 199). In what follows I shall briefly single out two kinds of methodological reflections to exemplify the idea of mere description: Strawson's idea of *connective analysis* (in line with the

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[78]   This, in turn is also in line with Wittgenstein's scarce remarks on description and the "plurality of descriptive practices" (Smith 2018, 214).

more famous term "descriptive metaphysics") and Ryle's notion of *logical cartog-raphy.*

First, Strawson's idea of a "soft naturalism" which I have subsumed under the broader label of "liberal naturalism" already adumbrates that Strawson has metaphilosophical and metaphysical quarrels with scientific naturalism. While not exclusively directed against scientific naturalism, Strawson's idea of descriptive metaphysics (in opposition to revisionary metaphysics) fits with the current theme of merely describing what one is interested in understanding without "changing" it. While the term "descriptive metaphysics" is much more prominent in the philosophical canon, Strawson has developed related ideas under the rubric of "connective analysis". The pivotal aim of Strawsonian connective analysis is to engage in positive systematic "analytical theory" without resorting to reductive analysis or revisionary metaphysics (Strawson 1992, 17). The purpose of connective analysis is to non-reductively, non-atomistically describe certain concepts of interest such that each concept can only be understood through its relation to other concepts (Strawson 1992, 19). The result of connective analysis is not a "rigidly deductive system, but a coherent whole whose parts are mutually supportive and mutually dependent, interlocking in an intelligible way […]" (Strawson 1985, 25). Similar to the ideas of ordinary language philosophy and the kernel of conceptual analysis, Strawson outlines, in an abstract manner, that one way to do philosophy (if not the *only* correct way) is to reconstruct the semantic relations between concepts in a surveyable system.

Second, Ryle's idea of logical geography has been treated with some neglect by the philosophical community.[79] Ryle uses "logical geography" to denote the *result* of a certain philosophical activity: proper philosophical thinking results in logical "maps". Maps of this kind linking the relations between different concepts are supposed to yield an overview of conceptual relations as a relevant kind of knowledge. Arguably, Ryle's most cherished and enduring contribution to philosophy is the distinction between knowing-how and knowing-that. The idea of conceptual cartography is connected to this famous distinction as well. Ryle mentions that the mastery of stringing together concrete assertions requires only knowing how, whereas mastery of the relations of abstract assertions requires knowing that (Rao 1994, 149). Ryle's incentive for introducing the idea for conceptual cartography is for philosophy to be able to deal with and account for abstract concepts, that is, concepts of the kind which are the subject of philosophical thought.

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[79]   One may wonder why the occasion of what I call "mere description" does not call for Ryle's more well-known idea of "thick descriptions". Ryle introduces the idea of thick descriptions as a way of interpreting human behaviour that includes context in the broadest sense possible (cf. Ryle 2009b). Acclimating this idea to philosophical practice in general might just not be possible, and is certainly a better fit for the anthropological disciplines.

While the examples of Ryle, Strawson and Hutto's rendering of classical conceptual analysis neatly bring into view what it is that is understood in understanding (*Verstehen*), not all kinds of philosophical practice which defy methodological naturalism's prescription can be neatly subsumed under the label "mere description". Think, for example, of classical works of *Critical Theory.* Certainly, Critical Theory does not employ quasi-scientific theory. In fact, Critical Theorists have traditionally been opposed to the scientific image of the world, even though this dismissal is somewhat misguidedly couched in the critique of "positivistic philosophy" or logical positivism (Marcuse 1994, ch. 7). Critical Theorists, paradigmatically Adorno or Horkheimer, tend to spend at least some effort on describing certain states of affairs. Yet, such description is only the setup for mounting a critique of the social practices targeted, a good example of which may be Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectics of Enlightenment.* This demonstrates that broad revisionary ambitions can avoid both more simplistic mere description and quasi-scientific theory alike.

In a weird ironic twist, this kind of descriptive activity has been deemed a form of naturalism as well, namely a form of "Wittgensteinian naturalism" (Pears 1995, 411). Hutto & Satne (2018) state that supplying "illuminating descriptions that clarify the facts of our situation is at the heart of Wittgenstein's brand of naturalism" (Hutto & Satne 2018, 63). This characterization of descriptive, non-explanatory activity, exemplary in Ryle and Strawson, as naturalistic is again indicative of the fact that the term "naturalism" as the label of a club has such a strong allure. Needless to say, I wish to strongly resist calling this kind of mere description "naturalistic" – for the simple reason that it would completely blur again what "naturalism" even means. If this could be called naturalism, anything can be called naturalism.

In closing, here is a statement that might be contentious but ought not to be: it may be hopeless to adjudicate a single correct way to conduct philosophy. It is possible to isolate and criticize unhelpful or illegitimate ways to do philosophy, but it seems either intellectually disingenuous or outright megalomaniac to posit one single permissible method. The end of alignment of philosophy with the natural sciences does thus not spell the end of philosophy.

§5 One Threat Avoided, one Threat Remaining

This investigation asked the question whether the discipline of philosophy is threatened by two major developments in the 20th and 21st century: scientific naturalism as a theticformulation of the scientific image, and a kind of anti-theoretical quietism developed on the back of the later Wittgenstein. These threats are *internal*, meaning that philosophy as a discipline brought naturalism and qui-

etism about herself. Scientific naturalism – I suggested – threatens to bring philosophy to an end by making it the *ancilla* of the natural sciences (at best) or by making it obsolete (at worst). Quietism – a number of philosophers suggest – threatens philosophy by adjudicating that there should be no theory in philosophy. The conditions then are as follows: scientific naturalism *only* brings philosophy to an end if it is true. And quietism *only* brings philosophy to an end if the end of theory is the end of philosophy.

Over the course of the main chapters I developed the following answer to the question whether philosophy is under threat. First, I tried to demonstrate that scientific naturalism and the corresponding naturalist worldview is problematic in a number of ways, developing concerns regarding the coherence of the thesis, the notion of nature involved, and the logical status of the naturalist worldview as an ideology. I take it that scientific naturalism, as it stands, is fraught with weaknesses that diminish its sense of urgency (which some may feel) and uncompromising claims. Second, dissatisfied with the definitional chaos surrounding the term "quietism", I have developed further the account of quietism which views it as a rejection of theory. Dissatisfied with the fact that what is meant by "theory" is rarely substantiated, here I have developed an account of theory in philosophy that self-avowed quietists seem to have in mind when criticizing them. I have suggested that the kind of theory that quietists take issue with is a kind of theory that aims to offer explanations mimicking the natural sciences: quasi-scientific theory. Furthermore, I have tried to demonstrate how this rejection of such explanations is found in ideas attributed to Wittgenstein and developed by neo-pragmatists like Richard Rorty and Huw Price respectively.

The two theses of scientific naturalism and quietism that previously seemed disconnected (having only their perceived status as threats in common) turn out to be connected. I have thereby developed the claim that there is a kind of internal unity to scientific naturalism and quietism as the two perceived threats to philosophy. Yet, their connection is different to what some may think: scientific naturalism and quietism are incompatible: scientific naturalism motivates quasi-scientific theories while quietism is the rejection of such quasi-scientific theories. The answer to the question whether philosophy remains under threat is therefore negative. Scientific naturalism *does* threaten philosophy as a discipline. Yet, quietism, it turns out, does not threaten philosophy as a discipline, but rather the influence of the naturalist worldview on philosophical practice. As such, the threats are avoided.

The ensuing chapter then tied up loose ends: one regarding naturalism, one regarding quietism. The loose end regarding naturalism was an appraisal of contemporary alternatives to scientific naturalism, namely liberal naturalism and near-naturalism. I have added my own preferred, even less restrictive version of naturalism into the mix: minimal naturalism. The loose end pertaining to quietism dealt with the fact that quietism as I developed it here is a negative thesis; it

only states how philosophy ought *not* to be done. The word "theory" is fraught with positive associations for many, such that some may assume that philosophy has nothing to say if the mouth of quasi-scientific theory is sewn shut. Luckily, philosophy is a head with many mouths – and quietism as I have presented it here only sews shut the one mouth which spews quasi-scientific theory. I have dropped a reminder that there are ways of doing philosophy which aim to be *merely descriptive*, not explanatory, and have pointed to Strawson, Ryle, and classical conceptual analysis as examples of such descriptive ambitions. This is not an exhaustive treatment of what philosophy is still "allowed" to do once quasi-scientific theory is rejected. It is simply to demonstrate that the main game of philosophy remains intact, and that other forms of theory are untouched by quietism.

In the introduction, I distinguished an internal and an external threat. As the two perhaps most recent internal threats, quietism and naturalism (*qua* methodological thesis) have been avoided, or at least they can be diffused. The perceived threat of quietism turned out not to be a true threat once quietism is reconceived in the manner I suggested. This is a threat easily avoided. Naturalism, despite the arguments against it, remains. For better or worse, the naturalist worldview and the scientific image of the world are here to stay. There is no conclusive argument against this worldview as the logical status of worldviews eludes rational deconstruction. Imagining the scientific image and the manifest image on two sides of a scale, the scales have been tipped in favour of scientific naturalism for a long time now. This work has focused on trying to rebalance the scale by "lowering" the weighing pressure of naturalism. Yet, the scientific image of the world is likely to remain of prime philosophical importance until its relation to the manifest image is brought into an acceptable conceptual equipoise between the two sides of the scale. On the other hand, the external threat remained untouched by the arguments proposed here. The external threat to philosophy as a practice comes from outside the discipline itself, most commonly as the duress to justify its own existence and worth in terms of utility. This utility is per usual measured as either monetary value or the provision of services to a wider, public audience. This external threat to philosophy remains.

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