Ethics and the *Tractatus*: A Resolute Failure

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1. For several years Cora Diamond and James Conant have articulated, individually and largely independently of one another, original approaches to many puzzling features of the *Tractatus*.[1] Perhaps the most perplexing of these features is the second to last remark of the book, §6.54, where Wittgenstein retracts his own propositions as nonsense. Diamond's and Conant's interpretations of the book have much in common and these interpretations are now sometimes referred to collectively in the literature as the 'resolute' reading of the *Tractatus*.[2] In addition to providing a framework for dealing

[1] See Cora Diamond, 'Criss Cross Philosophy', Unpublished manuscript; 'Ethics, Imagination and the Method of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*' in *The New Wittgenstein*, Alice Crary and Rupert Read (eds.) (London: Routledge, 2000) 149–73; 'Frege and Nonsense' in *The Realistic Spirit*: *Wittgenstein, Philosophy, and the Mind* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991) 73–93; 'Throwing Away the Ladder: How to Read the *Tractatus*' in *The Realistic Spirit*, 179–204; 'What Nonsense Might Be' in *The Realistic Spirit*, 95–114. The second paper given appeared originally in *Bilder der Philosophie*, Richard Heinrich and Helmuth Vetter (eds.), *Wiener Reihe* **5** (Vienna: R. Oldenburg Verlag, 1991), 55–90. All references here are to the 2000 printing. See also James Conant, 'Must We Show What We Cannot Say?' *in The Senses of Stanley Cavell*: *Bucknell Review*, Richard Fleming and Michael Payne (eds.) (Associated University Presses Inc, 1989) 242–83; 'Throwing Away the Top of the Ladder,' *Yale Review*, Vol. **79** (1989–90) 328–64; 'Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein, and Nonsense' in *Pursuits of Reason*, Cohen, Guyer, and Putnam (eds.) (Texas Tech University Press, 1992) 195–224.; 'Putting Two and Two Together: Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein, and the Point of View for Their Work as Authors' *in Philosophy and the Grammar of Religious Belief*, Timothy Tessin and Mario von der Ruhr (eds.) (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995) 248–331; 'Two Conceptions of *Die Überwindung der Metaphysik*.' In *Wittgenstein in America*, T. G. McCarthy and S. C. Stidd (eds.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001); 'The Method of the *Tractatus*' in *From Frege to Wittgenstein*, E. Reck (ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 374–462.

[2] Discussions of the resolute reading are not, however, restricted to their work alone. See, for example, Peter M. Sullivan, 'On Trying to Be Resolute: A Response to Kremer on the *Tractatus*' *European Journal of*

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with the text of the *Tractaus*, however, the resolute reading has also served as a backdrop for various writers, Diamond and Conant among them, who try to make sense of Wittgenstein's claim in a 1919 letter to *Der Brenner* publisher Ludwig von Ficker that the point of his book (*der Sinn des Buches*) is an ethical one.[3] What Wittgenstein says to von Ficker is enigmatic in its own right. Taken together with remarks such as §6.54 it present any interpreter of the *Tractatus* with a formidable challenge. For it is very unclear how a book consisting of nonsense could have an ethical point.

My aim in this paper is not to defend the resolute reading of the *Tractatus*. Nor is it to suggest what, exactly, the ethical point of the *Tractatus* might be. Rather, I wish to show why, given what I take to be the basic correctness of the resolute reading, the *Tracatus* cannot fulfil its ethical aim. As we will see, on the resolute reading, the ethical aim of the *Tractatus* is intimately connected to Wittgenstein's understanding and practice of philosophy as an activity whose goal is clarity rather than the establishment of philosophical truth or the refutation of philosophical theories. Indeed, the idea that Wittgenstein had as little desire to advance any sort of philosophical doctrine in the *Tractatus* as he did in his more mature philosophy is a point that resolute readers are particularly keen to emphasize as an important part of the continuity of his thought. Moreover, if one thinks, as I do, that Wittgenstein approached all of his writing throughout his life with essentially the same moral seriousness, then one would be justified in assuming that his later work, too, will have been written with an 'ethical point.' Given, then, the important *differences* between the *Tractatus* and Wittgenstein's later work, gaining a better understanding of what it is that obstructs the

[3] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Prototractatus : an early version of Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, B. F. McGuinness, T. Nyberg and G. H. von Wright (eds.), D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (trans.) (London: Routledge, 1996) p. 16.

Philosophy, vol. **10**, no. 1 (April, 2002) 43–78. To my knowledge, 'resolute' first appears in connection with *Tractatus* interpretation in a paper by Warren Goldfarb, who there attributes it to Thomas Ricketts. See Warren Goldfarb, 'Metaphysics and Nonsense: On Cora Diamond's *The Realistic Spirit*' *Journal of Philosophical Research* **22** (1997): 57–73. 'Resolute' is clearly not a neutral term, since its opposite, 'irresolute' is hardly a term that anyone would want applied to him or herself. I use the term here simply to pick out a particular line of thought, and not as a way to gain some sort of rhetorical advantage for those who, like myself, happen to agree with that line of thought.

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Tractatus from achieving its ethical aim will be an important step in appreciating whatever ethical point a work like *Philosophical Investigations* may have.

2. I begin by presenting a line of interpretation that, in one form or another, has been adopted by some well-known scholars of the *Tractatus*. This account relies on a particular understanding of the distinction between saying and showing in the *Tractatus*. One place where this distinction plays a particularly significant role is in the remarks that run from §4.12 to §4.124.[4]

> §4.12 Propositions can represent the whole reality, but they cannot represent what they must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it—logical form.
> In order to be able to represent logical form, we should have to be able to station ourselves with propositions somewhere outside logic, that is to say outside the world.
> §4.121 Propositions cannot represent logical form: it is mirrored in them.
> What finds its reflection in language, language cannot represent.
> What expresses *itself* in language, *we* cannot express by means of language.
> Propositions *show* the logical form of reality.
> They display it.
> §4.1212 What *can* be shown, *cannot* be said.
> §4.122 In a certain sense we can talk of formal properties of objects and states of affairs, or, in the case of facts, about structural properties: and in the same sense about formal relations and structural relations.
> (Instead of 'structural property' I also say 'internal property'; instead of 'structural relation' 'internal relation'.
> I introduce these expressions in order to indicate the source of the confusion between internal relations and relations proper (external relations), which is very widespread among philosophers.)
> It is impossible, however, to assert by means of propositions that such internal properties and relations exist: rather, they make themselves manifest in the propositions that represent the

[4] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* , D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (trans.) (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961) I have omitted §4.1211, §4.1213 and §4.123 for reasons of space. I do not believe this adversely affects my discussion. See also the discussion of formal concepts from §4.126 to §4.1274.

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> relevant states of affairs and are concerned with the relevant objects.
> §4.124 The existence of an internal property of a possible situation is not expressed by means of a proposition: rather it expresses itself in the proposition representing the situation, by means of an internal property of that proposition.
> It would be just as nonsensical to assert that a proposition had a formal property as to deny it.

It appears that the conclusion we are to draw from these passages is that trying to say with a proposition what can only be shown by a proposition produces nonsense.

Readers of the *Tractatus* have rightly found this kind of conclusion baffling. In his introduction to the book, Russell expresses 'some hesitation in accepting Mr Wittgenstein's position.... What causes hesitation is the fact that, after all, Mr Wittgenstein manages to say a good deal about what cannot be said...'[5] Russell's concern can be put this way. In the remarks quoted above, Wittgenstein seems to argue for certain conclusions about what can and cannot be said with propositions. But his arguments imply that these very conclusions are themselves nonsensical. The upshot is that we appear to be left with the paradox that these conclusions are somehow true but inexpressible.

Some commentators have attempted to deal with the question of the role of nonsense in the book by introducing a distinction into the very idea of nonsense itself.[6] Such a distinction can be seen as having its textual basis in remarks such as §4.122, which I have quoted above. There we find Wittgenstein telling us that 'It is impossible, however, to assert by means of propositions that such internal properties and relations exist', an assertion that only appears to convey to us that we may not speak of internal properties and relations by doing so. These commentators argue that nonsensical sentences such as §4.122 serve as guides to what one can say through the quite particular ways in which they themselves fail to

[5] Ibid, xxi.

[6] There is more than one distinction one may try to introduce. P. M. S. Hacker, for example, makes a distinction between 'overt' and 'covert' nonsense. Overt nonsense is nonsense that can be immediately recognized as such. Gibberish is an example of overt nonsense. We may require philosophical analysis, on the other hand, to recognize something as a bit of covert nonsense. As far as Hacker's work is concerned, my discussion here touches on his attempt to introduce a distinction in the latter category alone. See P. M. S. Hacker, *Insight and Illusion* (revised edition) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) p. 18.

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say anything. By drawing a distinction between plain nonsense and nonsense sentences like Wittgenstein's, such interpreters have tried to take the edge off the apparent paradox that he wants to convey inexpressible truths via this nonsense. Concerning such 'truths' Elizabeth Anscombe writes,

> [[A]]n important part is played in the *Tractatus* by the things which, though they cannot be 'said', are yet 'shown' or 'displayed'. That is to say: it would be right to call them 'true' if, *per impossibile*, they could be said; in fact they cannot be called true, since they cannot be said, but 'can be shewn', or 'are exhibited', in the propositions saying the various things that can be said.[7]

Anscombe goes on to suggest that we can perhaps see that a different kind of nonsense results from attempts to contradict certain would-be statements which, though nonsense, are somehow correct. These attempts result in nonsense too, but since they, so to speak, try to deny the deeper truth about things, they contain as she says 'more error, or more darkness' than attempts to say what is 'quite correct'. As an explanation for Wittgenstein's motivations for presenting his reader with nonsense in the first place, Anscombe suggests that

> It would presumably be because …Wittgenstein regards the sentences of the *Tractatus* as helpful, in spite of their being strictly nonsensical according to the very doctrine that they propound; someone who had used them like steps 'to climb out beyond them' would be helped by them to 'see the world rightly'.[8]

P. M. S. Hacker develops an approach to this problem that is similar to Anscombe's in many respects. He holds the view that the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* believed there were inexpressible truths: 'Wittgenstein did think, when he wrote the *Tractatus*, that there were ineffable metaphysical necessities.'[9] Moreover, like Anscombe, Hacker argues that we can better deal with the problem of nonsense in the *Tractatus* by making a distinction in the way we talk about it:

> Philosophers try to say what can only be shown, and what they say, being nonsense, does not even show what they try to say. Nevertheless, even within the range of philosophical…nonsense we can distinguish, as we shall see, between what might (somewhat confusedly) be called illuminating nonsense, and misleading

[7] G. E. M. Anscombe, *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's* Tractatus (London: Hutchison Univ. Library, 1959) p. 162.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 54.

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> nonsense. Illuminating nonsense will guide the attentive reader to apprehend what is shown by other propositions which do not purport to be philosophical; moreover, it will intimate, to those who grasp what is meant, its own illegitimacy.[10]

'Misleading' nonsense, often a result of unreflectively practising traditional philosophy, indicates a lack of insight on the part of the speaker into the nature of language. On the other hand, by intentionally 'violating' or 'flaunting' the laws of logical syntax, one person might employ illuminating nonsense to guide another to understand these laws and thus to 'see the world aright'.[11] Hacker writes,

> The source of the error of past philosophy lies in its failure to understand the (unstatable) principles of the logical syntax of language which are obscured by grammatical forms.[12] (my parentheses)

Accordingly, Hacker concludes that we need not attribute any serious confusion to the author.

> Wittgenstein was quite correct and consistent; the *Tractatus* does indeed consist largely of pseudo-propositions. Of course, what Wittgenstein meant by these remarks…is, in his view, quite correct, only it cannot be said. Apparently what someone means or intends by a remark can be grasped even though the sentence uttered is strictly speaking nonsense.[13]

[10] Ibid, 18.

[11] Diamond and Conant believe that while it might be correct to attribute such a conception of logical syntax to Carnap, it is a mistake to attribute it to Wittgenstein. In a recent paper, P. M. S. Hacker has argued that resolute interpreters have misrepresented Wittgenstein, Carnap, and Hacker himself. Although Hacker directs most of his criticisms at Conant specifically, he no doubt believes that many of them apply in spirit to Diamond as well. See P. M. S. Hacker, 'Witgenstein, Carnap and the New American Wittgensteinians,' *The Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. **53**, No 210 (January, 2003) 1–23.

[12] Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 19.

[13] Ibid, 26 Here is a more recent statement by Hacker of the same basic view.

> There are…many positive claims about the nature of logic made in the wake of [Wittgenstein's] criticisms of Frege and Russell....These claims, and many more too, are backed with solid argument…But none of these important claims is a bipolar proposition with a sense. All of them involve the use of formal concepts, and by the lights of the *Tractatus* they are illegitimate in as much as they try to say something that can only be shown. (my brackets)

P. M. S. Hacker, 'Was He Trying to Whistle it?' In *The New Wittgenstein*, 369.

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The resolute reading of the *Tractatus* goes against the sort of interpretation given by Anscombe and Hacker.[14] As we have seen this way of interpreting the *Tractatus* carries with it the assumption that Wittgenstein thought that there are two *different kinds* of nonsensical utterances, and that one of these kinds can be identified by *internal* features of the sentences that are used to make them. Resolute readers of the *Tractatus* think that such a position is openly incoherent and believe that ascribing it to Wittgenstein is a poor interpretative starting point.[15] Accordingly, Cora Diamond has argued for what she calls an 'austere' view of nonsense in the *Tractatus*.[16] The austere view of nonsense requires us to abandon the idea that different types of nonsense can be distinguished from one another by attention to internal features that one of these types exhibits.[17] On this issue, the resolute reader is content to take Wittgenstein at his word when he states in the preface to the *Tractatus*,

> (I)n order to be able to draw a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides of the limit thinkable (i.e. we should have to be able to think what cannot be thought). It will therefore only be in language that the limit can be drawn, and what lies on the other side of the limit will simply be nonsense.[18]

There is no intimation here on Wittgenstein's part that nonsense can be divided into a deep variety which gestures at sublime truths,

[14] One more commentator whom I might mention here is D. F. Pears. Though Pears does not address the question of the role of nonsense in the book, he does puzzle over the fact that 'In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein offers only a metaphysic of experience deduced from the existence of factual language, but not expressible in it.' (6–7) Like Anscombe and Hacker, Pears also ascribes to Wittgenstein a belief in ineffable truths:

> When Wittgenstein made his selection from his copious exploratory notes and put the *Tractatus* together, his leading idea was that we can see further than we can say. We can see all the way to the edge of language, but the most distant things that we can see cannot be expressed in sentences because they are the pre-conditions of saying anything. (146–7)

See D. F. Pears, *The False Prison*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

[15] This part of my discussion draws mainly on Diamond's work. While their terminology or emphasis occasionally differs, I take Diamond and Conant to be in substantial agreement with each other on the issues I touch on in this brief sketch of the resolute reading.

[16] Diamond, 'Ethics,' 153 Diamond's *insistence on* an austere view of nonsense amounts to the same thing as a rejection of what Conant calls a 'substantial' characterization of nonsense. See Conant, 'Method,' *passim*.

[17] Cf. Footnote 11.

[18] *TLP*, 3

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and garden variety nonsense. Diamond writes in this vein, '(H)is statement that what is on the other side of the limit is simply nonsense seems to be meant to rule out exactly the idea that some of our sentences count as nonsense but *do* manage to gesture towards those things that cannot be put into plain words.'[19]

One very important consequence of the resolute reading is that after we have obeyed Wittgenstein's injunction at §6.54 to throw away the ladder of elucidatory nonsense that makes up the main body of the *Tractatus*, we should see that the only sentences with which we are left are *ordinary* sentences.[20] That is to say, we should see that the only sentences remaining with which we might *try* to say something are sentences that actually *do* say something, i.e. sentences all of whose constituent signs have been given a meaning.[21] And, as Wittgenstein tells us, these sentences will have 'nothing to do with philosophy', and so nothing to do with traditional ethics.[22] If, however, Wittgenstein rejects *both* traditional philosophical ethics *and* the idea that there can be inherently 'important nonsense' that manages somehow to 'convey' or 'gesture at' ineffable truths of ethics (or ineffable truths of logic or metaphysics), then, how can we read the *Tractatus* as having an *ethical* point?[23]

[19] Diamond, 'Ethics,' 150.

[20] Diamond, 'Ladder,' 200.

[21] Cf. *TLP*, §5.473, §5.4733 & § 6.53. This means that even the sentences of the *Tractatus* are not *essentially* nonsensical. On the resolute reading, there is no such thing as a sentence's being essentially nonsensical. There is only plain nonsense that results from our not giving a meaning to certain signs in our sentences. If we want to say that there is a 'problem' with the sentences of the *Tractatus*, then we would have to say that those sentences are written in such a way so as to tempt us to think that we have given each of their constituent signs a meaning when in fact we have not done so. I have been helped here by discussion with Michael Kremer.

[22] *TLP*, §6.53 See also Ludwig Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics,' reprinted in *Philosophical Occasions, 1912–1951*, James C. Klagge & Alfred Norman (eds.) (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co, 1993).

[23] Even if resolute readers are right in rejecting the sort of reading given by Anscombe or Hacker, it can be difficult to see how Wittgenstein thought he could achieve *anything*, let alone anything ethical, by writing a book consisting mostly of plain nonsense. This is a large and difficult issue that I will not take on here. Without pretending that they amount to a detailed response, I think a framework for addressing this question within the context of the resolute reading can be seen in the following two remarks. This one, by Conant, concerns the overall conception and strategy of the *Tractatus*.

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3. I now want to give a brief sketch of two attempts, one by James Conant, and a more recent one by Michael Kremer, to articulate what the ethical aim of a book consisting of plain nonsense might be.[24]

Conant has argued for a reading of the *Tractatus* according to which we see it as sharing important goals with much of Kierkegaard's work, in particular with the works published under the pseudonym Johannes Climacus.[25] Conant focuses most of his

[24] I have argued elsewhere that early Heidegger's concept of authenticity provides a helpful way to think about this question. In the same paper I point out what I take to be potential problems with the connections that Kremer wishes to draw between the writings of St. Paul, and St. Augustine and the work of the early Wittgenstein. See 'The *Tractatus*, Ethics, and Authenticity'. Forthcoming in *Journal of Philosophical Research*.

[25] I should say that while I agree with Conant's overall approach to the *Tractatus*, I do not intend here to endorse his interpretation of Kierkegaard, which is very different from mine. The main difference between us concerns what realization Kierkegaard wants to bring about in his reader. For Conant, this is the discovery by the philosopher that he has avoided making the commitments that a Christian life requires of him, and

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> The guiding assumption of the *Tractatus* is that the philosopher typically suffers from an illusion of understanding, from the projection of an illusory sense onto a (pseudo-) proposition which has not yet been given a clear sense. The task, therefore, is not to disagree with what he thinks, but to undo his illusion that there is something which he is thinking—to show that what he imagines himself to be thinking fails to amount to a thought (that there isn't a 'what' there for him to think). The method of the *Tractatus* relies upon the thought that under such circumstances the only procedure that will prove genuinely elucidatory is one that attempts to enter into the philosopher's illusion of understanding and explode it from within. (Conant, 'Top,' 346)

Michael Kremer describes below how, on the resolute reading, Wittgenstein intended to carry out the strategy which Conant depicts above.

> We [the reader] start under the illusion that we understand certain strings of signs. Under this illusion we manipulate these strings 'logically' so as to arrive at other strings, relying on apparent 'structural' similarities to sensible argumentation. As we are led along by the seeming logic of the 'argument' we come upon (illusory) 'conclusions' that so puzzle us that we lose our grip on the idea that we were ever making sense at all, so also that we were following an 'argument'. (my brackets)

Michael Kremer, 'The Purpose of *Tractarian* Nonsense,' *Nous*, vol. **XXXV**, no. 1 (March, 2001) 4.

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attention on the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, and in addition to reading the *Postscript* and the *Tractatus* as having similar goals, he also claims that the two books have quite similar methods as well.

> [W]ittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* can be seen to have both the same aim (one of providing a mirror in which the reader can recognize his own confusions) and the same method (one of having the reader climb up a ladder which in the end he is to throw away) as the [*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*].[26]

Each of these books is said by Conant to employ an 'indirect method', and he explains both books having this method as a function of their substantially similar aims.

In a well-known passage from the *Postscript*, Kierkegaard's pseudonym Climacus describes how two different modes of relating to an object, subjectivity and objectivity, are correlated with distinct spheres of existence.

> In the ethico-religious sphere the accent is not on the 'what', but on the 'how.' But this is not to be understood as referring to demeanor, expression or the like; rather it refers to the relationship sustained by the existing individual, in his own existence, to the content of his utterance. Objectively the interest is focused merely on the thought-content, subjectively on the inwardness. At its maximum this inward 'how' is the passion of the infinite, and the passion of the infinite is the truth. But the passion of the infinite is precisely subjectivity, and thus subjectivity becomes truth.[27]

This passage and others like it in his work have prompted both defenders and attackers to view Kierkegaard as an extreme irrationalist, in particular when it concerns the claim that he appears to be making here that in an infinitely passionate relationship to the

[26] Conant, 'Putting Two and Two Together,' 249.

[27] From *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, Walter Lowrie (trans.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941). Reprinted in *Existentialism: Basic Writings*, Charles Guignon and Derk Pereboom (eds.) (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995) 83.

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has instead taken the 'reflective detour' of speculative philosophy. I take Kierkegaard, on the other hand, to be trying to bring his reader to see that the self lacks the resources to *make* any genuinely meaningful commitment, and so that what the self needs is some object in the world that would *confer* meaning and value on its life and at the same time *solicit* a commitment from it.

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paradox of the god-man, subjectivity becomes truth. According to Conant, such interpretations depend on reading Kierkegaard as pleading for a category of "higher nonsense', belief in which is supposed to be crucial to becoming a Christian.[28]

> Since no ordinary form of belief seems to suffice to effect the transformation of oneself into a Christian, one assumes it must require some extraordinary form of belief: a form of belief that requires something extraordinary of the intellect—that one strive to believe against the grain of one's understanding, that one attempt to hold fast to the absurd.[29]

This, however, is an interpretation of Kierkegaard that Conant wishes to resist. Rather, exploding the illusion that there is any kind of 'extraordinary belief' to hold on to is what, on Conant's view, Climacus' manipulations of terms such as 'the absolute paradox' is supposed to effect. Indeed, this is one of the most important methodological features he sees the *Tractatus* and *Postscript* as sharing: 'These works exhibit certain nonsensical (yet apparently innocent) propositions and build on them until the point at which their full nonsensicality will (hopefully) become transparently visible.'[30]

Conant believes that interpreters of Kierkegaard who ascribe to him a doctrine of 'higher nonsense' fail to see that he is not arguing that becoming a Christian involves attaining any special knowledge that could serve as a foundation for faith. Echoing Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus*, Conant writes,

> [Kierkegaard's] aim is to show [the philosopher] that where he takes there to be a problem there isn't one. The solution to what he takes to be the problem of life is to be found in the vanishing of the problem.[31]

He adds,

> The problem is not one of teaching the reader something he does not know but rather one of showing him that, with respect to the activity of becoming a Christian, there is nothing further he needs to *know*.[32]

Instead, he is trying to get the philosopher to see that the belief that such special knowledge is vital for becoming a Christian is the result

[28] Conant, 'Must We Show,' 261.
[29] Conant, 'Putting Two and Two Together,' 283.
[30] Conant, 'Must We Show,' 262.
[31] Conant, 'Nonsense,' 205.
[32] Ibid.

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of taking a distorted view of the ordinary or everyday, a view in which their real significance as the starting place for becoming a Christian is concealed. And so typically, the philosopher interested in understanding Christianity only engages the ordinary in his life in terms of a philosophical theory and a confused view of genuine religiousness.

> His eagerness to be able to represent his knowledge to himself as an intellectual achievement forces the philosopher to come to know 'the simple' (i.e. what we otherwise all already know) by means of a reflective detour.[33]

According to Conant, Kierkegaard thinks that normally the philosopher who seeks to understand Christianity as an abstruse doctrine flees the everyday, what we otherwise all already know, because he can't see how *this* could provide him with the kind of justification he thinks he needs in order to become a Christian. But on Conant's understanding of Kierkegaard, the real problem is not one of epistemic justification at all:

> The philosopher interprets the task of becoming a Christian to require the cultivation and application of his understanding, postponing the claim that the Christian teaching makes upon his life, deferring the insight that what is required is the engagement of his will—the achievement of resolution.[34]

On Conant's view, then, the philosopher flees 'the simple' in his life, because he cannot envisage how it, with all of its contingencies and uncertainties, could serve as the kind of foundation he imagines he needs for making the commitments essential to becoming a Christian. Conant's point, however, is that the foundation the philosopher seeks is simply irrelevant to this task, and that what is needed is, as he says, the achievement of resolution. Conant connects this account of Kierkegaard with the *Tractatus* in an effort to get us to see that for Wittgenstein, once our attraction to philosophical theories has been exposed as an attempt to evade the requirements life makes on us to act, then perhaps we will be in a

[33] Ibid, p. 206.

[34] Ibid. Elsewhere he writes,

> The attack in Kierkegaard is on a form of reflection which subserves a strategy of evasion—a form of reflection that offers the promise of enlightening us as to the nature of the ethical or religious life but in fact prevents us from ever arriving at the performance of a decisive action and hence from properly embarking on such a life. Conant 'Putting Two and Two Together,' 311, fn 35.

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position to commit ourselves to acting with resolution. His understanding of the ethical aim of the *Tractatus* is thus one with his understanding of Kierkegaard's goals in works like the *Postscript*:

> It is, I believe, against the background of such a vision of us in flight from our lives (and hence ourselves) that one should first attempt to understand what Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard each might have meant by the claim that what he had written was a work of ethics.[35]

In 'The Purpose of *Tractarian* Nonsense', Michael Kremer has argued that an appreciation of the discussions of justification and faith in the writings of St. Paul and St. Augustine can bring us closer to understanding the meaning of Wittgenstein's claim that the *Tractatus* has an ethical point.[36] Kremer cites St. Paul's argument in the letter to the Romans that obedience to the Mosaic Law cannot provide justification before God, but only condemnation. Justification is not through works under the law, but through faith.[37] Kremer aptly points out that Paul is not advocating in the letter that we merely subjugate ourselves before God in faith rather than doing so through obedience to the law, for that might suggest that what we need for faith is a particularly strong act of willpower.

> [T]his superficial reading, suggesting that faith is something we can do, a work we can perform in accordance with a new commandment—'accept Jesus Christ as your personal savior, and you will be redeemed'—misses the point entirely. The repentance Paul calls for is not something we can do by obeying some or other command; it is an inner conversion that has to be brought about in us by God's grace. The law condemns us not just

[35] Conant, 'Must,' 254. Conant writes elsewhere,

> Kierkegaard sometimes describes his pseudonymous writings as works of ethics. What these authors have in mind here seems to be accurately captured in the claim that they thought of their works as ethical deeds...The vigilance they call upon us to exercise in our use of language (and hence the vigilance with which they ask us to live our lives) can be justifiably termed an ethical demand...The ethical purpose that guides them lies in nothing more, and nothing less than their hopes of changing one or another of their readers. Conant, 'Putting Two and Two Together,' 278, fn. 25.

[36] See also Michael Kremer, 'To What Extent is Solipsism a Truth?' Forthcoming in *Post-Analytic Tractatus*, Barry Stocker (ed.) (Ashgate Press, 2003).

[37] Kremer, 'Purpose,' 47 New International Version (Barker, 1985) cited by book, chapter, and verse.

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> because we are unable to obey it, but because our need to justify ourselves through obedience to it is itself a sign that we are sinful.... Justification before God, a setting things right in which harmony and peace are restored, is accomplished not through 'faith' in the sense of 'voluntary assent' but rather through God's grace, which transforms our lives by bringing faith into them.[38]

Kremer finds similar themes in Augustine, for example in his criticisms of the attempts by pagan philosophers to formulate ethical theories and systems that could serve as justifications for action. As Kremer points out, for Augustine such philosophers are guilty of the sin of pride: 'They represent the false hope that human beings can on their own power discover how the universe must be ruled and put this into effect.'[39] Kremer connects these considerations with the *Tractatus* by making what I think is the very interesting suggestion that one of Wittgenstein's fundamental goals in that book was to expose as illusory all attempts for ultimate justification in logic, metaphysics, and of course, ethics.

In fact, Kremer sees the very notion of *ineffable truths*, which interpreters like Hacker claim Wittgenstein was trying to express in the *Tractatus*, as one that in fact Wittgenstein wants to expose as empty. In the search for ultimate foundations for a theory, whether in metaphysics or ethics does not matter, we often find that whatever propositions we arrive at to serve as our foundation have further conditions that they rely on for their truth or intelligibility. In this case, we are faced with the threat of an infinite regress:

> To stop the looming regress we seem to need something sufficiently like a proposition to serve as a justification, an answer to a question, yet sufficiently different from a proposition to need no further justification, to raise no further questions in turn. The doctrine that there are 'things' that can be shown—and so can be 'meant', 'grasped', and communicated, and can also be 'quite correct'—but which cannot be said—and so cannot be put into question— seems to fit the bill. The thought is that by appeal to such ineffable 'things' we can solve our problems of justification once and for all.[40]

Kremer argues, persuasively I think, that far from being what Wittgenstein is trying to get his reader to grasp, the idea that ineffable truths might ground a philosophical theory is instead a

[38] Ibid, 47–8 Cf. Romans, 7.

[39] Ibid, 49 Cf. St. Augustine, *City of God*, H. Bettenson (trans.) (London: Penguin Books) 852.

[40] Ibid, 52.

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sort of last ditch effort in the search for justification, in particular for ethical justification: 'The *Tractatus* aims to relieve us of this need for ultimate justification by revealing that all such justificatory talk is in the end meaningless nonsense.'[41] The connection with Paul and Augustine that Kremer draws from this revelation is that with it we see that we are finite creatures who are unable to provide ourselves with the foundations of knowledge and right action. Kremer concludes,

> [W]e will find what we sought only by abandoning the search for justification altogether, and with it the prideful hope that we can give meaning and value to our lives.[42]

While there are of course differences (perhaps of interpretation, at least of emphasis) between these two accounts, the point of presenting these sketches has been to bring out how, on both of them, the success of the *Tractatus* in achieving its ethical goal is dependent on at least two ideas. The first idea is that Wittgenstein's employment of elucidatory nonsense is intended to achieve a change in the reader's self-understanding through a change in her relationship to language. The second idea is that this change in self-understanding that Wittgenstein wanted to effect in his reader is not primarily of a cognitive nature, not, that is, the sort of change we tend to associate with accepting the truth of a theory. It would be characterized primarily by how we do and do not act, not by what we know. I should make clear at this point that for the rest of the paper I will be taking Conant's and Kremer's accounts of the ethical point of the *Tractatus* as representative of the kind of account that one can expect on the resolute reading. That is to say, I will assume that the two ideas mentioned above, or ideas very close to them, will be part of any attempt to articulate the ethical point of the *Tractatus* on the resolute reading. With this in mind, I want to show where I think there is a serious problem.

4. In the remainder of this paper I will argue why I think that the *Tractatus* is ultimately unsuccessful in making its ethical point or achieving its ethical aim. I hope to carry out this criticism in some of the same terms as Wittgenstein himself used when he came to mistrust his earlier work. I should make clear that in speaking of Wittgenstein's later criticisms of his earlier work, I do not mean to suggest that his later writing marks a clean break with his earlier

[41] Ibid, 51.
[42] Ibid, 56.

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philosophy. In particular, many of the early remarks in *Philosophical Investigations* can be interpreted as aiming at a straightforward refutation of philosophical theories that Wittgenstein held in the *Tractatus*.[43] Though certainly tempting, I believe such an interpretation is misleading. While, however, there is a high degree of continuity in Wittgenstein's philosophy, it remains true that there are very significant differences as well, and indeed, ones that are relevant for understanding why I think the *Tractatus* fails in its attempt to effect the change in its reader's relationship to language that I claimed above is necessary for its achieving its ethical aim. Wittgenstein is critical of his earlier philosophy, at times in ways that are fairly unambiguous, and it is one of these criticisms in particular that I wish to stress here.

The main shortcoming of the *Tractatus* that I wish to examine concerns a central aspect of its method. According to James Conant, Wittgenstein came to believe that the book's reliance on what Conant calls a 'strategy of deception' made it ineffective because such a strategy will almost inevitably lead the reader to believe that philosophical theses are being put forward.

> When Wittgenstein himself criticizes the *Tractatus's* mode of philosophical presentation it is not simply ... on the grounds that its doctrine is flawed, but on the grounds that its *method* is flawed: it is inherently dogmatic—the work cultivates the impression that things are being dogmatically asserted. This way of putting the criticism is meant to suggest, I take it, that the procedure employed is not well suited to the task of remaining neutral in a dialectical conflict.... The *Tractatus* does, of course attempt to address this problem. It attempts to insist about its own sentences that they are not meaningful propositions but only elucidations. But Wittgenstein's later criticism of his work seems to be that this declaration will almost always come too late.[44]

Conant contrasts the earlier method with that of the *Investigations* by emphasizing Wittgenstein's practice in this later work of keeping in closer contact with his reader through the frequent exchanges with his interlocutor. He notes in this regard, 'Wittgenstein's later method is to round on his interlocutor at every point, to press at

[43] This view is forcefully given by Norman Malcolm in his *Nothing is Hidden* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

[44] Conant, 'Putting Two and Two Together,' 297. Among remarks on philosophical method that he recorded in 1931, Wittgenstein himself writes, 'All reflections can be carried out in a much more homespun manner than I used to do.' See 'Philosophy' in *Philosophical Occasions,* 180.

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every juncture the question whether the words he is attracted to in his philosophizing can be entered as a claim.'[45] This procedure spares the reader the mental contortion of having had the impression all along of following a long and complex chain of arguments intended to establish certain truths, only to have the author try to remove this impression all at once in the space of a few remarks.

Conant is certainly correct in pointing out this problematic aspect of Wittgenstein's method in the *Tractatus*. But I think to leave matters there is to go too easy on Wittgenstein. It seems to imply that the most important defect in the *Tractatus* is that in composing it Wittgenstein did not take a psychological limitation of his readers into account. It's almost as if to say that the book could have accomplished its primary task if only most of us had longer attention spans: as though we were the kind of people who were only capable of understanding short jokes, since with lengthier ones the long wait for the punch line made us think we were hearing a narrative instead. At any rate, I take the *Tractatus* to be more deeply flawed than that, and Wittgenstein to have made more than a tactical error in writing it as he did. I believe that the *Tractatus* fails in its ethical aim because it remains too intellectualist in nature. The book can succeed only if its attempt to clarify and right our relationship to language can, to paraphrase the *Investigations*, get its reader to *look* at the phenomenon of language and *not think* about it.[46] But given Wittgenstein's own distorted view of language at this time, this is precisely what it is unable to do.

Let us look at two remarks that must play a central role in any interpretation of the *Tractatus*. There is first this passage from the preface:

> (T)he *truth* of the thoughts that are here communicated seems to me unassailable and definitive. I therefore believe myself to have found, on all essential points, the final solution of the problems.[47]

Next there is the second to last remark of the book, §6.54, where we read

> My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond

[45] Conant, 'Putting Two and Two Together,' 302.

[46] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, G. E. M Anscombe and Rush Rhees (eds.), 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1989) §66.

[47] *TLP*, 5.

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> them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)
>
> He must overcome these propositions, and then he will see the world aright.[48]

On the resolute reading of the *Tractatus*, we understand the author when we see at the end of the book that we have been taken in by his nonsense, and that we have imaginatively taken his propositions for philosophical theses about the nature of logic and the structure of the world as a whole. On recognizing that we have been so taken in, we are to realize further that what we took for propositions (or pseudo-propositions expressing ineffable truths) were in reality *einfacher Unsinn*; all that we are left with are ordinary sentences. Recall, however, from my sketches of Conant's and Kremer's accounts of the ethical aim of the book that this recognition was supposed to lead us to abandon our search for philosophical foundations when we become clear about the futile nature of such attempts. It was also supposed to have a profound effect on how we understand ourselves and lead our lives.

Now what I am most interested in looking at here is the nature of this transition from metaphysical confusion to this 'ethical' clarity. On coming to the end of the *Tractatus*, an astute reader will not have forgotten Wittgenstein's promise in the preface to have provided a final, definitive, solution to the problems dealt with in the book. He will likely connect these words with Wittgenstein's injunction at the end to overcome his propositions so as to see the world aright. What, after all, could be more tantalizing to a philosopher than the prospect of seeing the world aright once and for all? But just here I have serious doubts about whether Wittgenstein has really given his reader the resources required to 'throw the ladder away'. For right there, in holding out the hope that one could free oneself once and for all from metaphysical confusion through gaining clarity into *the* nature of language, there seems to me to be the commitment to the view that this clarity consists in being clear about one thing, in having one insight into the nature of what sort of thing a sentence essentially is and how a sentence really means what it means. And I want to suggest that this false hope itself rests on a confusion on the part of the author of the *Tractatus*, and that

[48] *TLP*, §6.54 Pears and McGuiness translate the German 'überwinden' as 'to transcend' 'Transcend', however, may carry with it a transcendental flavour that is not necessarily warranted by the German, since the usual way of translating 'transcend' is simply as 'to overcome'.

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it finally must undermine what he took to be his own ethical aim in writing the book.

Consider first two remarks from the *Philosophical Investigations*. After listing a number of different language games which often go unnoticed in philosophical accounts of language, Wittgenstein notes

> —It is interesting to compare the multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used, the multiplicity of kinds of word and sentence, with what logicians have said about the structure of language. (Including the author of the *Tractatus-Logico Philosophicus*.)[49]

A bit later we read:

> The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to.—The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring *itself* in question.—Instead, we now demonstrate a method, by examples; and the series of examples can be broken off.—Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a *single* problem.
>
> There is not *a* philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies.[50]

Wittgenstein's claim in the preface of the *Tractatus*, 'to have found, on all essential points, the final solution of the problems', more than suggests that he understands his book as providing an example of *the* method for overcoming philosophical confusion.[51] I understand the import of these remarks from the *Investigations*, on the other hand, to be that this enormous assumption, built into the very structure of the *Tractatus*, is itself based on a distorted view of language. I mean that Wittgenstein came to realize that his own method in the *Tractatus* presupposes a view of language and philo-

[49] *PI* §23.

[50] *PI* §133.

[51] Wittgenstein writes in the preface of the *Tractatus*, 'Here I am conscious of having fallen a long way short of what is possible. Simply because my powers are too slight for the accomplishment of the task.—May others come and do it better.' I take this as an admission by Wittgenstein that perhaps another writer could have employed the method of elucidatory nonsense more skillfully to lead the reader to the same insight concerning the nature of language that Wittgenstein himself tries to impart in the *Tractatus*. I do not take him to be questioning either that method or that goal.

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sophical confusion that is far too narrow, and that this view in turn is what drives the method of the book. In the above remarks, we can see him attempting to undermine this very assumption in the attention he gives to the multiplicity of language games, as well as in the emphasis he puts on different philosophical methods for resolving different types of confusion that are liable to arise.

Consider further the pride of place that Wittgenstein gives to the work of Frege and Russell in the composition of the *Tractatus*. The conception of a proposition of which each of these philosophers is trying to get a correct account in his work is one dominated entirely by the idea of truth-valuedness, in effect a conception associated exclusively with indicative sentences. Even if we read Wittgenstein as employing aspects of this work as part of an imaginative activity intended to bring his reader to see its shortcomings, it is nonetheless true that the language of the new logics developed by Frege and Russell, along with the biases built into their conception, is crucial for that activity. So crucial, in fact, that Wittgenstein's focus in the book on the kind of activity with which Frege and Russell were involved suggests that he thought that this was essentially *the* right place to engage metaphysical confusion. James Conant summarizes this point well when he remarks of the early Wittgenstein:

> Thus our predicament (as captives to an illusion) can be rendered visible through the construction of a single large mirror in which the entire etiology of our confusion is depicted. Wittgenstein ... comes to distrust this strategy of authorship. But he also recants its underlying conception of the etiology of our confusion. For the later Wittgenstein, the etiology of philosophical confusion is as complicated—and as difficult to survey—as are our lives and our language. So the procedure of uncovering our individual confusions must remain a piecemeal one—one of constructing lots of little mirrors in which the reader can come to recognize himself in each of his moments of being tempted to insist emptily.[52]

If one abandoned the idea of there being one method for the removal of all philosophical confusion, one would naturally employ

[52] 'Putting Two and Two Together,' 303. Diamond writes in a similar vein, 'It ...marks a great change in Wittgenstein's views that he got rid of the idea that you can replace philosophical thinking by carrying out a kind of complete analysis of sentences in which the essential features of sentence sense as such are totally visible.' Diamond, 'Ladder,' 184. I think we find this change in Wittgenstein's attitude reflected clearly at *PI* §593: 'A main cause of philosophical disease—a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example.'

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many examples without the assumption that any one of them would necessarily accomplish the task; and this is exactly what Wittgenstein does.

Now it may well be true as resolute readers argue that Wittgenstein did not intend to put forward any philosophical doctrines in the *Tractatus*, and that it is therefore deceptive at the very least to attribute a 'picture theory of the proposition' to him as is often done. Nevertheless, I think that a good argument can be made for the claim that the method of the *Tractatus* envisages only something like the *picturing function* of propositions.[53] We read at *Tractatus* §6.53.

> The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. propositions of natural science—i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy—and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions.

The implication here seems to be that the essential function of propositions is to state facts, to be true or false, and that this is done by sentences where meanings are given to every sign that makes up the sentence: but not a word about what this amounts to, *how* a meaning is given to a sign. And I am tempted to say that Wittgenstein is mute on this point because, in envisaging only one kind of use of language, he himself is not yet in full contact with the richness of the phenomenon at hand.

So when we are to throw away the ladder at the end of the *Tractatus*, it would seem that to see the world aright we are required not only to realize that we have been taken in by the author's nonsense, but that we must also see *exactly why* his nonsense is nonsense, why exactly it is the essence of a sentence that it cannot do what we imagined it might, and so we must see *essentially what kind* of a thing an ordinary sentence is, instead of seeing the various ways we make sense with ordinary sentences.[54] And I am suggesting that this seeing *the kind* of thing a sentence is contains an implicit commitment to the very metaphysical conception of necessity which, in

[53] This claim must be qualified somewhat because the *Tractatus* indicates uses for other types of sentences such as tautologies, equations, and sentences expressing the laws of mechanics. Nevertheless, it remains true that these other uses are fundamentally dependent on the use that I am calling the 'picturing function' of sentences.

[54] Here is how Diamond describes Wittgenstein's view at this time: '[A] sentence is a sort of sign such that *which* sign it is of that general sort is tied to its maintaining truth-valuedness throughout any variation in truth values of some range of sentences.' Diamond, 'Ladder,' 190.

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spirit at least, the *Tractatus* sets out to expose as illusory. The suddenness with which the *Tractatus* ends, the finality of its proclamations, demand that something essential and necessary should have been grasped by the reader if he has understood the author.[55] And it is only fair to say that these senses of 'essential' and 'necessary' are ones which the later Wittgenstein sees as all too traditional.

I said above that the reason why I believe the *Tractatus* cannot succeed in its ethical aim is that it is too intellectualist. This is manifest in the way the book tries to lead us to see how it is the very essence of language that thwarts our attempts to make sense when we try to say something in ethics. Its attempt to set our intellects at peace relies on its giving us a synoptic view of what a sentence is. But because such a view is *itself* an illusion, this peace will never come; and so we can never understand the author's ethical intention in writing the book. We are left instead to ponder how the view of the sentence with which we are supposedly left, really is capable of achieving *everything* contained in what we call language. Indeed, the *Tractatus* can be seen as an example of the very 'craving for generality' and 'contemptuous attitude towards the particular case' in philosophy that Wittgenstein would later bemoan.[56] The following remark is interesting in this regard. Written 25 years after the publication of the *Tractatus*, it comes amidst a discussion of different uses we might make of assertions, in particular the role assertions play in our language-game of talking about fate as opposed to when we make an ordinary assertion of fact. Arguably written with *Tractatus* §6.53 in mind, Wittgenstein is criticizing his earlier work on the very grounds I have been elaborating

> Why now am I so anxious to keep these kinds of uses of 'Assertions' separate from one another? Is it necessary? Did people before really not correctly understand what they wanted to do with a sentence? Is it pedantry?—It is merely an attempt to do justice to each kind of use. That is to say a reaction against the overvaluation of science. *Using the word 'science' for 'everything*

[55] M. O. C. Drury recorded Wittgenstein remarking once in conversation how the *Tractatus* might be read in light of such considerations: '[C.D.] Broad was quite right when he said of the *Tractatus* that it was highly syncopated. Every sentence in the *Tractatus* should be seen as the heading of a chapter, needing further exposition. My present style is quite different; I am trying to avoid that error'. Rush Rhees (ed.) *Recollections of Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) 159 (My brackets).

[56] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Preliminary Studies for the 'Philosophical Investigations', Generally Known as the Blue and Brown Books* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969) 17–18.

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> *that can be said that is not nonsense' already expresses this overestimation*. Because in reality this means dividing assertions into two classes: good and bad; and therein already lies the danger. It would be similar to if one were to divide all animals, plants, and rocks into useful and harmful. But of course the words 'to do justice to them' and 'overvaluation' express my position.[57] (my italics and translation)

So long as we remain in search of something like a *final* vision, which invariably will be an intellectualist vision, we will not be able to 'overcome' Wittgenstein's propositions. To use his own metaphor, we shall be unable to throw away the ladder because we will still be standing on it, thinking.

The *Tractatus* hinders us from having precisely the relationship to language that it seeks to secure for us. If the ethical aim of the book consists in trying to lead the reader to a kind of self-understanding gained through a proper relationship to language, then this is only attainable if its method is true to the phenomenon of language. And this means that it must connect up with the many different ways language functions in our lives. Wittgenstein's attempt to overcome the attraction philosophy exerts on us fails exactly on this point because its method, the best intentions to the contrary notwithstanding, will in the end divert our attention in the wrong direction, looking for the nature of the sentence ('This is how things stand.'): the ethical aim of the book must remain unfulfilled.

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[57] MS 134 145 (14 Apr, 1947). *Wittgenstein's Nachlass: The Bergen Electronic Edition. Text and Facsimile Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) The reference given here reflects the standard numbering system devised by G. H. von Wright. See G. H. von Wright, 'The Wittgenstein Papers' in his *Wittgenstein*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982) 35–62. I give the original German below.

> Warum nun bin ich so ängstlich, diese Verwendungsarten der 'Behauptungssätze' auseinander zu halten? Ist es denn nötig? Haben die Menschen wirklich früher nicht recht verstanden, was sie mit einem Satze wollten? Ist es Pedanterie?—Es ist nur ein Versuch, jeder Art zu ihrem Recht zu verhelfen. Also wohl eine Reaktion gegen die Überschätzung der Wissenschaft. Die Verwendung des Wortes "Wissenschaft' für "alles, was sich ohne Unsinn sagen läßt', drückt schon diese Überschätzung aus. Denn dies heißt in Wirklichkeit, Aussagen in zwei Klassen zu teilen: gute und schlechte; und schon darin liegt die Gefahr. Es ist ähnlich, als teilte man alle Tiere, Pflanzen und Gesteine ein in nützliche und schädliche. Aber natürlich drücken die Worte 'zu ihrem Recht verhelfen' und 'Überschätzung' meine Stellungnahme.

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