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Resolute Readings of the *Tractatus*

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1   Introduction

A spectator of the passing philosophical scene, recently encountering the current controversy about "resolute readings" of the *Tractatus*, might be forgiven for finding it difficult to figure out what the debate is supposed to be about and who exactly is on which side and why. A superficial glance at the debate, if viewed from a considerable distance, might yield the impression that it involves two major parties: those who represent some sort of new movement in which they advocate a (so-called) "resolute reading" of the book (whatever that is), and those who represent an old guard and take themselves to oppose any such reading. If the spectator moves only slightly further in and takes a closer look, the debate will begin to seem to involve at least three kinds of protagonist: the old sort of reader, the allegedly newfangled sort, and those who take themselves to occupy an alleged middle ground between "traditional" and "resolute" readers of the book. A yet closer look, however, ought to begin to cast doubt on the assumption that the parties to this debate can properly be sorted along a single spectrum – say, a spectrum of those who are comparatively traditional, those who are comparatively revolutionary, and those who are simply somewhere in the middle between those two extremes.

Our aim, in this chapter, is not to attempt to strengthen the case for any particular approach to the *Tractatus*, but to demonstrate, through a reconstruction of some relevant features of "the" debate, that at this point there are in fact several orthogonal debates taking place, confusedly cast as contributions to a single debate. In so doing, we will indicate some of the respects in which the term "resolute reading" has come to acquire different meanings – and sometimes even (what one might term) a different logic. By thus tracing the shifts in the meaning of the term "resolute reading" and the related family of cognate and contrastive expressions, and thereby also tracing correlative shifts in the contours of the ongoing debate, we hope to remove certain obstacles to genuine progress and mutual understanding and to discriminate and pinpoint some of the existing *loci* of genuine disagreement.

2 The Original Concept of a Resolute Reading

Cora Diamond and James Conant are often presented as the main proponents of a "resolute reading" of the *Tractatus*. We will begin, in this section, by characterizing the sense in which they employed the term "resolute reading" when they first adopted it. Before we do that, it is worth pausing for a moment to note how the term "resolute" was introduced into the debate and why it was considered, fairly or unfairly, by those who introduced it to be an apt term for marking a certain sort of difference among commentators of the *Tractatus*. The term was coined by Thomas Ricketts (1992). Warren Goldfarb is the person who officially introduced it into the secondary literature to characterize an approach to the interpretation of the *Tractatus* that at that time had been advocated by Diamond and Conant, among others (Goldfarb 1997, p.64). It is a hallmark of this approach that it seeks to take the penultimate remark of the book (TLP 6.54) as seriously as possible. In that remark, the author tells us that his sentences (*Sätze*) are meant to serve as elucidations and that the reader understands *him* only when he comes to recognize those sentences as *nonsensical*, throwing away the ladder of elucidatory sentences of which the book (largely) consists after he has climbed up it. What it meant to be resolute had to do with avoiding a certain sort of irresolution in one's interpretation of this remark. On the originally proposed employment of the antonym of the term, to be *irresolute* in one's understanding of that remark is to pay lip-service to the idea that the elucidatory sentences of the *Tractatus* are to be recognized as nonsensical, while continuing to treat those sentences as nonetheless managing to do something very much like what non-nonsensical sentences do – namely, convey propositional or quasi-propositional contents or insights from speaker to hearer: contents or insights about which it is then claimed that, though they cannot be "said," they can be "shown." (The Tractarian distinction between saying and showing is thus wheeled in as the key to understanding 6.54.) According to this original terminology, a reading is irresolute when it claims that some or all of the sentences of the *Tractatus* are nonsense, while at the same time taking back the apparent implications of any straightforward construal of what that claim might have been thought to mean. This is usually marked by commentators by their flagging in one way or another that, according to their interpretation, the relevant sentences of the work are actually only "strictly speaking" nonsensical. Only "strictly speaking": for they are to come into view for the reader as trying but failing to say something – something that cannot be said – where the "something" in question (though never fully said) turns out to be nonetheless intelligible and conveyable by other means (than that of saying) by that very same bit of nonsense. By contrast, to be *resolute* in one's reading of 6.54 – and in one's reading of the book as a whole – is to claim that the elucidatory sentences of the *Tractatus* must ultimately be recognized as *simply* nonsensical, i.e., as forms of words that neither say nor quasi-say anything.

When Diamond and Conant took over the term "resolute" from Ricketts and Goldfarb as a fitting description of their own approach to the *Tractatus*, they were careful to specify what they meant by it. They emphasized, in particular, that the commitments that make a reading resolute, in the sense in which they wished to use the term, "say something about how the book ought *not* to be read, thereby still leaving much undetermined about how the book ought to be read" (Conant and Diamond, 2004, p.43). Moreover, they were explicit about the fact that a resolute reading, as they conceived of it, "is better thought of as a *program* for reading the book, [...] because conformity to the

basic features of such a reading leaves undetermined exactly how a great deal of the book works in detail" (p.43). One could reformulate these two points in the following way: the logical grammar of the term "resolute reading" should be understood to be both *logically posterior* and *highly generic*. Logically posterior, in as much as the contours of the concept of such a reading are taken to be defined in relation to those of the sort of reading that Conant and Diamond then sought to reject. (An understanding of what it is to be resolute in this sense presupposes some prior understanding of the specific character of the sort of irresolution here under indictment.) And highly generic, insofar as the bare concept of such a reading is a highly determinable one, admitting of a wide variety of specifications. (The concept of a resolute reading thereby denotes a family of programmatically overlapping but in other respects possibly highly divergent readings.)

In addition to its logically posterior and highly generic character, there is a third logical feature that belongs to the concept of a resolute reading originally employed by Diamond and Conant. It is a feature which may seem to be so obvious as not to be worth mentioning – namely, that the concept in question is a concept of how best to read the *Tractatus*. That is to say, it is the concept of an *exegetical* proposal for how to make the best possible sense of *one particular work* of philosophy – and, in the first instance, only this one work. In particular, it is not the concept of a possible philosophical position or a conception of how philosophy as such ought to proceed. Thus one can endorse the proposal in question without thereby endorsing the conception of the practice of philosophy that one thereby ascribes to the author of that book. (Indeed, Conant and Diamond were originally motivated to put forward such a proposal in order to understand better wherein the later Wittgenstein's critique of the *Tractatus* should be properly understood to lie – a critique that they themselves endorse; see for example Conant, 2007.)

As we are going to show in the subsequent sections, what happens in the later stages of "the" debate is that the term "resolute reading" comes to be used in ways that gradually shed each of these three features of its original grammar. It goes from being the logically posterior member to being the logically primary member of a pair of related terms. It goes from being a fairly generic concept to being one that involves a whole raft of further commitments. And it goes from being a concept that concerns the exegesis of a particular book to being one that applies to other books; and eventually to being a concept whose primary meaning, as far as we can see, has nothing to do with matters of exegesis at all. In a way, this is all fine, of course. No one owns these words and everyone has a right to use them in whatever way they like. But tremendous unclarity is bound to result when someone thinks she is using the term in the same way as someone else, but is not.

Let's proceed for the moment with our elucidation of the concept of a resolute reading as it figures in the work of Diamond and Conant. For this purpose, some terminological stipulations will prove helpful. We shall refer to the concept of a resolute reading that is to be found in their work – that is, one that exhibits the three aforementioned logical features – as the *logically posterior concept of a resolute reading*. A reading is "resolute" in this sense if it *rejects* certain positive tenets of what Diamond and Conant called "standard readings," which they saw, at the time they began writing about this issue, as dominant. On their original understanding of how this pair of terms ("resolute"/"standard") relate to one another, the concept of a standard reading is logically prior and the concept of a resolute reading is logically parasitic upon that prior

notion: the latter is simply defined as involving the rejection of certain commitments that characterize the former. We shall henceforth refer to *that* concept of a standard reading – that is, the one upon which the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading is constructed – as the *logically prior concept of a standard reading*.

It is worth noting that the term "standard reading" has become an awkward one since the time it was originally employed by Conant and Diamond to refer to the readings they were reacting against. While those readings had in fact been dominant during roughly the previous two decades of *Tractatus* scholarship, from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, they no longer clearly represent a prevailing scholarly orthodoxy, and thus are no longer "standard" in the originally intended sense of the term. Our use of the term "standard" in this chapter should not be taken at any point to involve a claim on our part as to what sort of reading, if any, constitutes a currently prevailing orthodoxy among contemporary scholars of the *Tractatus*. (What is the currently dominant view among *Tractatus* scholars is a sociological issue about which we take no view.) When we talk about the "logically prior concept of a standard reading," we simply want to refer to the concept of a reading identified by certain commitments (namely, the commitments in terms of which Conant and Diamond originally defined the concept of a resolute reading), without suggesting that readings with such commitments continue to enjoy their former ascendancy. A reason for our retaining the term "standard" is that in much of the tertiary literature on the *Tractatus* this term has come to be employed simply as the complement of the term "resolute" (whatever that is taken to mean) and so, as the debate itself has shifted focus, the intertwined senses of these two terms have undergone parallel shifts in meaning – an evolution that we will discuss later in this chapter.

We said a moment ago that the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading is defined as involving the rejection of certain commitments that characterize the logically prior concept of a standard reading. Which commitments? We may distinguish four positive commitments that Diamond and Conant considered to qualify a reading as "standard" in their originally intended sense. These in turn correspond to four negative commitments that Diamond and Conant originally understood as jointly characterizing the sort of reading that they termed "resolute." These four negative commitments are closely interconnected. More specifically, the last three are commitments that one incurs when one tries to think through the consequences of the first. We shall henceforth refer to these four negative commitments as the *core commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading*.

Since the various commitments at issue here are closely interrelated, there is a certain arbitrariness to what one counts as constituting a separate commitment and what one counts as constituting an internal aspect of a particular commitment. In their co-authored paper (2004), Conant and Diamond individuated and counted "the core commitments" in a slightly different way. For the purposes of this chapter, we have found it helpful to organize the issue in slightly different terms; but we do not take this to represent anything more than a difference in mode of presentation.

(i) The first core commitment of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading has a general methodological character. It involves a rejection of the once widely held interpretative assumption that the *Tractatus aims* to put forward a particular sort of philosophical theory or doctrine. As an exegetical proposal, it suggests that various aspects of the text can come into view in a new and illuminating way for the reader, if she takes seriously the *Tractatus*' insistence that "philosophy is not a theory but an activity," and specifically a form of activity whose object is not to think philosophical

thoughts but rather to offer a logical clarification of thought – and whose result is not "a number of 'philosophical propositions,'" but rather simply "*das Klarwerden von Sätzen*" (TLP 4.112). This first exegetical proposal arises from dissatisfaction with the manner in which interpretations falling under the logically prior concept of a standard reading dealt with these and similar remarks in the *Tractatus*. Actually there are two sorts of standard readings at issue here – a less interesting sort and a more interesting one. The less interesting sort simply tried to solve the problem by *fiat*, by stipulating that in rejecting philosophical theories the *Tractatus* is not rejecting most of what most people would understand as cases of such theories. On the contrary, according to this first sort of standard reading, the *Tractatus* does indeed aim to argue for a number of substantive philosophical positions (about ontology, language, thought, ethics, etc.) and to take a theoretical stand on a whole host of recognizably classic philosophical issues. Then there is the second and more common sort of standard reading. These commentators simply bite the bullet and claim that there is a gross inconsistency between the *Tractatus*' official account of what is going on in the book and what is actually going on in the book. Peter Hacker is helpfully explicit on this point:

> To understand Wittgenstein's brief remarks about philosophy in the *Tractatus*, it is essential to realize that its practice and its theory are at odds with each other. The official *de jure* account of philosophy is wholly different from the *de facto* practice in the book. (Hacker, 1972/86, p.12)

It is this idea, above all, that Diamond and Conant originally sought to disagree with as a matter of exegesis. The proposal was to see how far one could get in making sense of the book if one assumes the negation of what Hacker here claims is the case. The logically posterior concept of a resolute reading therefore takes its point of departure from the idea that one ought to first see if it is possible to construe the *de facto* practice of philosophy in the book in such a way that it can come into view as an attempt to realize the official *de jure* account of philosophy it espouses. The subsequent three core commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading simply involve a further working out of this idea: that the *Tractatus* does *not* aim to put forth any form of philosophical theory or doctrine. (This commitment, as we shall see in the last section, is compatible with the claim that the *Tractatus* in fact *failed*, in various ways, to do philosophy in a way that lives up to its own aspiration.)

(ii) The second core commitment of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading is the rejection of the idea that the *Tractatus* seeks to convey an *ineffable* theory or doctrine. By an "ineffable doctrine" we mean a body of propositional or quasi-propositional contents – a set of contents that be conveyed from speaker to listener by having the listener work out what the sentences of the book *would* say if they were meaningful. More specifically, according to the logically prior concept of a standard reading, the *Tractatus* puts forth a philosophical theory which entails its own inexpressibility: the very sentences that are used to formulate the theory, in light of the standards of meaningfulness laid down by the theory, must be regarded as nonsensical. This is what some standard readers have called the "paradox" of the *Tractatus* (see e.g., Williams, 2004). A central commitment of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading is therefore the following: whatever else it might be right or wrong to say about 6.54, that passage should *not* be understood as saying that the propositions of the book convey, or are used to convey, a body of doctrines that are "ineffable" in this sense.

(iii) The third core commitment of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading is that the *Tractatus* rejects (what has come to be called) the "substantial" conception of nonsense and endorses (what has come to be called) the "austere" conception of nonsense. This commitment follows from the first, in as much as it refuses to see the *Tractatus*' entitlement to deploy "nonsense" as a term of philosophical criticism as resting upon anything like a prior philosophical theory of meaningfulness. The capacity to distinguish sense from nonsense is one that must come together with the reader's capacity to think and speak. These are interrelated capacities that the reader must bring to an encounter with the book and which are then refined over the course of the activity of reading the book and climbing its ladder. These are not capacities that are in any sense first conferred upon the reader only upon her having been persuaded of the truth of a particular theory of some sort. This is rather obviously true of the reader's capacity to understand and speak – and thus to grasp and traffic in the expression of thought. But a central point here is that this is no less true, for the early Wittgenstein, of the reader's capacity to detect cases of only *apparently* grasping and trafficking in the expression of thought. We are able to recognize some things as nonsense even before we learn from the *Tractatus*. The office of the book is not to confer this capacity upon us but to deepen and sharpen it. More specifically, the austere conception of nonsense holds that a sentence is nonsensical, on a particular occasion of use, if and *only* if we have failed, on that occasion, to give a meaning to its constituent words (cf. TLP 5.4733). There is no such thing as substantial nonsense, i.e., nonsense that arises when meaningful words are combined in a way that transgresses the bounds of significant discourse, as those bounds have been demarcated in accordance with the terms of a particular theory of what can and cannot be said. Indeed, it is essential to the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading that the *Tractatus* itself involves an attack on the very idea of a theory of meaningfulness of such a sort – on the very idea that it is possible to codify, in advance of the exercise of our capacity of thought and speech, some putatively prior set of rules that off their own bat determine when units of thought or speech are meaningfully combined in legitimate (i.e., fully significant) or in illegitimate (i.e., substantially nonsensical) ways. Nonsense, according to the austere conception, always arises from a failure of determination of sense (a failure to put words to logical use), rather than from putting words to a fully determinate, but nonetheless illegitimate use (a *logically wrong* kind of use; cf. TLP 5.473–5.4732). From this it follows that the *Tractatus*, when it states that the reader must recognize the author's elucidatory sentences as nonsensical, does *not* mean (as the logically prior concept of a standard reading maintains) that the reader must apply to those sentences a theory of meaningfulness – one which is to license the inference that what those sentences are trying to say, in virtue of the meanings that *have* been assigned to each of their constituent parts, is nonsensical. Instead, according to the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading, the reader is meant to be brought to the point at which she realizes, contrary to her impression that she has conferred a fully determinate method of symbolizing upon the elucidatory sentences of the *Tractatus*, that in fact she has done no such thing – that there is only an illusion of understanding here. This realization, this dissipation of the illusion of understanding, is what is involved in climbing up and throwing away the individual rungs of the ladder of sentences of which the book is largely composed. The reader, in other words, is not meant to come to realize that she has been wandering beyond the limits of significant discourse, but rather that she has been subject to *illusions* of meaning – including the illusion that what lies beyond significant discourse can be characterized in logically positive terms. The austere

conception of nonsense that underlies the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading therefore is not a self-standing theory of nonsense, but merely a way of expressing a rejection of an apparently tenable form of philosophical theory that the *Tractatus* seeks to show rests upon an illusion.

(iv) The fourth core commitment of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading is that the role of a proper logical notation or *Begriffsschrift* in the activity of the logical clarification of thoughts is *not* to serve as a test for determining whether the sentences of ordinary language comply with the proscriptions of some theory of meaningfulness putatively laid down in the book. According to the logically prior concept of a standard reading, the *Tractatus* understands a logical notation as a codification of the requirements of such a theory, so that translatability into permissible formulae of the notation is the ultimate arbiter of meaningfulness. The test is supposed to proceed in the following way: we first identify the logical units that compose the sentence under interrogation, as well as the logically relevant ways in which those units are put together; we then translate those units into symbols of the *Begriffsschrift* and combine them in the same way in which the units of the original sentence are supposedly put together; finally, we establish whether the resulting formula of the *Begriffsschrift* is well-formed or ill-formed. In the former case, the sentence has passed the test and is significant; in the latter case, it has failed the test and is *therefore* nonsensical. This account of the role of the notation in the logical clarification of thought turns on the idea that a sentence can be nonsensical *because* the logical units of which it is composed are combined in an illegitimate way. It presupposes, in order words, the possibility of substantial nonsense. The logically posterior concept of a resolute reading must hold that the role of the notation is not to be understood along these lines.

Individual resolute readers, in their writings on the *Tractatus*, have of course gone well beyond merely offering a defense of these four negative exegetical claims that constitute their core commitments. The point of these four commitments is simply to articulate a framework within which one can try to go on and make sense of the whole of the book. Hence the highly generic nature of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading. Each individual resolute reader has gone on to offer more determinate answers to any number of pressing exegetical questions, such as: How does the *Tractatus* conceive in detail of the activity of philosophical clarification? What is the overall point of the *Tractatus*, if it is not to put forth effable or ineffable doctrines? How is the manner in which the book is composed supposed to lead the reader to realize that she has in fact failed to assign a determinate meaning to the words of some of the sentences of the *Tractatus* that she initially takes herself to understand? How in detail should we understand the role of a *Begriffsschrift* in the context of the logical clarification of thoughts? What is the role of the specific forms of notation that Wittgenstein introduces for this purpose, such as the truth-table notation, the N-operator notation, the bracket notation in TLP 6.1203, etc.? If the *Tractatus* did not *aim* to put forth any doctrine, how should we understand the evolution of Wittgenstein's thought and his later criticisms of the *Tractatus?* If the *Tractatus* rejects the idea of ineffable (propositional or quasi-propositional) contents, how should we understand the saying/showing distinction?

The four core commitments surveyed above introduce significant constraints on how such questions are to be answered, but they do not dictate any specific answer to these questions or to any of a great many other intimately related exegetical questions. In fact, such questions have been taken up and answered in remarkably different ways by different resolute readers.

3 Two Sorts of Criticism of "Resolute Readings"

A first significant shift in the meaning of the term "resolute reading" is already to be detected if we survey the criticisms that have come to be mounted against interpretations that the critics in question have thus classified. (For an overview of the relevant literature, see Bronzo, 2012.) These criticisms divide in fact into two very different kinds. On the one hand, there are criticisms that are meant to involve a rejection of the negative commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading, and thus a defense of some version or other of the logically prior concept of a standard reading. Using the term "standard" in the above-explained sense, we could refer to criticisms of this first sort as *standard criticisms*. On the other hand, there are criticisms that are not meant to involve a rejection of any of those negative commitments. Criticisms of this second sort we might call *nonstandard.* They involve no defense of any of the four constitutive commitments of the logically prior concept of a standard reading. They are directed instead against further particular positive commitments which are alleged to be held by some or all "resolute readers," where what now allows for the subsumption of some commentator under the concept of a resolute reader goes well beyond any understanding of the term "resolute" that can be funded by the logically posterior concept elucidated above. When these criticisms are understood as criticisms of resolute readings *qua* resolute readings, the term "resolute" has shifted its sense: the concept of a resolute reading is no longer understood to have a logically posterior grammar and its content has become considerably more determinate.

In the next section, we will look at a criticism of so-called "resolute readings" that illustrates this sort of shift in meaning. It is a particularly interesting case, because it has been put forth by some commentators as a standard criticism, and by others as a nonstandard criticism. Thus, where there appears to be a single criticism, corresponding to a single form of words, there are in fact two different criticisms. By examining this case we will explore an example of a phenomenon to be encountered in a number of different forms in the secondary literature about resolute readings: we come to see not only how the term "resolute reading" undergoes a shift in its meaning, but also how self-described critics of such readings who take themselves to be on the same side of some supposed single battlefield are sometimes merely in apparent agreement with one another.

4 Shedding the First Two Logical Features

There is a widespread tendency among critics of resolute readings to characterize their target as someone who claims that the *Tractatus* does not aim to convey any insight or understanding, but only to engage in an exercise of "therapy," where this is taken to mean, to put it crudely, that the only point of the book is to lead us to throw away the book. Roger White, for example, has written that in the *Tractatus*, for resolute readers, "nothing is shown, no insights are vouchsafed, other than that we have been led on a wild goose chase," which leads him to conclude that the resolute approach is an "immensely trivializing account of Wittgenstein's work" (White, 2011, p.46). In a similar vein, some critics have characterized the resolute approach as "nihilistic" (Emiliani, 2003; Stern, 2004, p.45) or "post-modernist" (Hacker, 2000, pp.356–60) or "purely therapeutic" (McGinn, 1999, 2006; Hutto, 2003), where each of these

epithets is supposed to be justified by the fact that the *Tractatus*, according to resolute readers, does not aim to communicate any insight.

This sort of criticism – call it *the no-insight objection* – has been put forth by commentators who differ greatly from one another in their interpretations of the *Tractatus* and in their stances toward resolute readings. There are in fact two rather different forms of objection here entered – where much confusion is caused by the fact that each is entered by calling upon exactly the same form of words to make the objection in question. On the one hand, there are commentators who have put forth the no-insight objection as a way of defending some version of the logically prior concept of a standard reading of the *Tractatus* (and thus as a *standard criticism* of resolute readings, in the sense defined above), assuming that the *only* way in which the reader can be meant to gain insight or understanding from the *Tractatus* is by grasping a body of propositional or quasi-propositional truths. On the other hand, there are commentators who have put forth the no-insight objection without wishing to disagree with any of the core commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading (thereby entering the objection as a form of *nonstandard criticism* of resolute readings).

Commentators belonging to the first camp, such as Peter Hacker (2000, pp. 356–60), in effect argue that the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading in the very moment that it embraces its core commitments thereby deprives itself of the resources required to make sense of the idea that the *Tractatus* seeks to confer some sort of insight or understanding upon its reader. This is not obviously true. All that such a resolute reading deprives itself of is the right to make sense of that idea *in the way someone like Hacker does* – namely, by claiming that the *Tractatus* aims to convey a body of propositional or quasi-propositional contents (see the list of the putative Tractarian insights in Hacker, 2000, pp. 353–6). This does not show that such resolute readers cannot make sense of the very idea that in reading the book we make a form of genuine and valuable intellectual and existential progress. Most resolute readers, after all, do emphasize throughout their writings that the *Tractatus* is interested in the achievement and conferral of forms of *clarity*. Depending upon what one means in speaking of "insight" or "understanding," the claim that this is what we achieve may remain more or less consistent with something that resolute readers are happy to say about what happens to us as we read the book and make progress with it. The question therefore is not well posed in the following terms: do resolute readers oppose the very idea that the *Tractatus* seeks to confer "insight" or "understanding" on any possible specification of what the words "insight" or "understanding" might be taken to mean? The question rather is: what sort of "insight" or "understanding" can the *Tractatus* be said to confer? If expressions such as "insight" or "understanding" are spelled out in terms of grasping bits of propositional or quasi-propositional knowledge, then, yes, in *that* sense, resolute readers are indeed committed to denying that the *Tractatus*, through its elucidatory sentences, seeks to "convey insights" or "impart understanding." But there are, of course, other no less natural and intelligible things to mean by those terms. According to most resolute readers, to understand the book requires, among other things, "understanding its aim," "understanding its author" (following 6.54), "understanding and mastering its logical notation," "understanding the logical differences in the modes of symbolizing expressed through different sorts of signs in the notation" (to mention just four of the forms of "understanding" that resolute readers make much of). Depending upon what is meant by terms such as "understanding" and "insight," resolute readers may or may not wish to allow for additional forms of insight and understanding.

It is worth emphasizing that we do not see these remarks as involving any sort of repudiation of what was originally maintained by Diamond and Conant. Consider for example this passage from the conclusion of a relatively old paper of Conant's, in which he summarizes his understanding of the method of the *Tractatus*:

> The *Tractatus* seeks to bring its reader to the point where he can *recognize* sentences within the body of the work as nonsensical, not by means of a theory that legislates certain sentences out of the realm of sense, but rather by *bringing more clearly into view* for the reader the life with language he already leads – by *harnessing the capacities* for distinguishing sense from nonsense [...] implicit in the everyday practical mastery of language that the reader already possesses. [...] The work seeks to do this, not by instructing us in how to identify determinate cases of nonsense, but by enabling us to *see more clearly* what it is we do with language when we succeed in achieving determinate forms of sense [...] and what it is we fall short of doing when we fail to achieve such forms of sense [...]. (Conant, 2002, pp.423–4, emphases added)

This passage speaks of what the reader is brought to recognize by the book, what is brought clearly into view for the reader by the book, the forms of mastery which the reader achieves through reading the book, and so on. Metaphors of "sight," "improvement," and "mastery," and references to the forms of clarity and recognition that come with such forms of vision and mastery, pervade this whole passage and much of the rest of the essay from which it is drawn. It hardly seems a stretch to paraphrase what is at issue here in terms of the idea that the *Tractatus* seeks to enable its reader to attain certain forms of *insight*. Everything depends simply upon what is meant by that last word. (It is true that at many points in that paper the author denies that the *Tractatus* seeks to convey "insights," but in those contexts the author is using the term "insight" for the specific form of grasping inexpressible truths that belongs to the logically prior concept of a standard reading. He is taking over the term as employed by such standard readers and simply using it as they do.)

The core commitments of the original, logically posterior concept of a resolute reading in no way *demand* an account of "Tractarian insights" along the lines that Conant allows in the previous passage. That passage is part of an early effort on his part to fill in the schema of a resolute reading in a particular way. Other commentators have retained the aforementioned core commitments but have attempted to fill in the schema in sometimes subtly differing ways, in sometimes radically different ways. What matters for our present point is simply that those core commitments, taken by themselves, in no way force one to conclude anything remotely resembling the following: "There are *no* insights to be gained from reading the *Tractatus*," or "The only point of the book is to lead us to throw away the book." It is true that nothing in the four commitments taken by themselves necessarily precludes that conclusion either. In that sense, a no-insights thesis is an exegetical extra that a resolute reader *qua* resolute reader may, but need not, endorse. But that is true of a great many other things that must go into any textually satisfying account of the *Tractatus*.

The commentators who form the second camp mentioned above (namely those who take the no-insight objection to be a criticism of resolute readers, but do not wish to disagree with any of their core commitments) have come to regard the supposed no-insight thesis to be constitutive of what it means to be a resolute reader. They then often go on to ascribe further commitments to resolute readers to make sense of their initial supposed commitment to the no-insight thesis. They thereby introduce a great deal of

additional content into the concept of a resolute reading. Some of these commentators then turn around and represent themselves as far more moderate or measured than the other parties to the debate in seeking to occupy a *middle ground* between standard and resolute readers. Such commentators claim to agree with resolute readers and disagree with standard readers when it comes to the core commitments of resolute readings, but to agree with standard readers as against resolute readers when it comes to the question of whether the *Tractatus* is concerned to confer forms of insight and understanding. However, the latter idea, so specified, does not necessarily suffice to identify a ground of disagreement with a given resolute reader. This does not mean that in such cases there is no ground of disagreement. What some of these middle-way commentators go on to say about the logical character of the insights conveyed, as well as about the means by which they are to be conveyed, may well strike a resolute reader as either exegetically implausible or philosophically confused and sometimes both. Readers such as Conant, Diamond, Goldfarb, and Ricketts, insofar as they continue to employ the term "reso-lute" in its original sense, do generally take themselves to be disagreeing with such mid-dle-way readers about how best to fill in the exegetical schema specified by the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading. On this understanding of the disagreement, the question is not one of *whether* to be a resolute reader, but rather one of *how* to be a res-olute reader. But, in the revised use of the term "resolute" that self-avowed middle-way readers tend to prefer, the nature of that disagreement frequently is described in the following terms: as a disagreement between a resolute reader and a non-resolute reader. Their deployment of the terminology depends on their having conferred a self-standing grammar on the concept of a resolute reading – one that allows one to classify a reader in this way on grounds that are no longer logically posterior to the concept of any other sort of reading. The logically prior concept is now that of a resolute reading (defined by the supposed commitment to the no-insight thesis), and the logically posterior one is that of a non-resolute reading (defined by the rejection of the no-insight thesis). Moreover, an interpretative approach thus classifiable as a "non-resolute" reading may come in either of two flavors: "standard" or "middle-way." When such commentators employ the term "resolute reading" they mean something significantly different by it than what it was supposed to denote on its original employment: the first two logical features of the original concept of a resolute reading (i.e., its logically posterior and highly generic character) have been shed. It is now the highly generic concept of a "non-resolute reader" that is the logically posterior one, and the concept of a "resolute reader" has become far more determinate – in some cases building into the very idea of such a reading some form of commitment to a self-evidently implausible ("nihilistic," "postmodernist," etc.) exegetical thesis.

These considerations apply, for example, to the "middle-way" interpretation pro-posed by Marie McGinn (1999, 2001, and 2006, especially preface, ch.1, and pp.251–4). She wants to agree with resolute readers about the fact that the *Tractatus* does not seek to convey any metaphysical doctrine, and in particular does not seek to communicate any *ineffable* metaphysical truth about a language-independent reality. But she takes herself to disagree with resolute readers because she holds that the *Tractatus* does seek to give us insights into what is involved in a full mastery of our language. At this point, McGinn has her own story about how such forms of insight should be construed. The elucidatory propositions of the *Tractatus*, McGinn argues, do not purport to give us any sort of genuine information or metaphysical insight, but do serve to *remind* us of what we already know in virtue of our being competent language-users, in analogy with the

"grammatical remarks" to be found in the works of the later Wittgenstein (see McGinn, 1999, pp.499, 512; 2001, pp.26–7, 33–4; 2006, e.g., p.33).

It is not immediately clear whether McGinn's positive proposal about how to understand the character of the insights that the *Tractatus* seeks to convey is or is not compatible with all four of the negative commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading. (For different views on the matter, cf. Read and Hutchinson, 2006 and Kuusela, 2007.) It is not our aim, here, to try to resolve this issue, but only to make the following conditional point: *if* McGinn's proposal is compatible with those negative commitments, then it will simply appear to resolute readers who employed the term "resolution" in its original sense as an attempt to develop *a* particular form of resolute reading of the *Tractatus*, rather than as an attempt to trace a third way between standard and resolute readings, as she herself would describe the situation. This is not to deny that Conant, or Diamond, or Goldfarb, or Ricketts could still find much to disagree with McGinn's positive proposal; but this disagreement would represent a new front in the debate about resolute readings – one which is not concerned at all with the question of whether the *Tractatus* should be read "resolutely" in the original sense of this term, but rather with how to fill in the interpretative schema such a reading proposes.

Proponents of middle-way interpretations do not exhaust the second camp of commentators mentioned above – namely, the camp of those who put forth the no-insight objection as a *nonstandard* criticism. There are in fact commentators who resemble the proponents of middle-way interpretations in taking the no-insight thesis to be constitutive of what it is to be a resolute reader, but who do not describe themselves as occupying a middle position between resolute readers and standard readers. This is because for them the term "resolute reader" has simply come to name someone who thinks that there is no way to make sense of the idea that the *Tractatus*, through its artful employment of nonsense, is aiming to lead its reader to a state of greater insight. Moreover, for them the term "standard reader" has now simply become the logical complement of "resolute reader," on this new understanding of the term. So to think that there is some way to make sense of the idea that the *Tractatus* through its artful employment of nonsense is aiming to lead its reader to a state of greater insight just *is* for them what it is to be a standard reader. We now have reached the point where a complete reversal has been effected in the logical dependence of the two complementary terms. In the parlance of such commentators, the concept of a resolute reading is the logically prior concept and the concept of a standard reader is the logically posterior one. To be a standard reader is to reject the supposedly essential and defining feature of all resolute readings – the no-insight thesis. At this point, we have shed the first two logical features of the original concept of a resolute reading, as well as the correlative logical features of the original complementary concept of a standard reading.

One example of a commentator many of whose remarks suggest that he schematizes the controversy in these terms is Roger White (2006, 2011). Like McGinn, White rejects the no-insight thesis and understands such a rejection as the repudiation of any resolute reading. For White, as for McGinn, the no-insight thesis is a constitutive feature of resolute readings. However, unlike McGinn, White does not purport to occupy a "middle ground" between "standard" and "resolute" readings; he purports instead to be defending a version of the "standard" or "orthodox" reading. Indeed, White claims to be in substantial agreement with "orthodox" readers such as Hacker (White, 2011, p.47). This serves to obscure the extent to which White is in fact in considerable disagreement with commentators such as Hacker on at least some of the issues that were originally

deemed to be essential to the debate between standard and resolute readers. White himself tends to relegate his discussion of these points of disagreement with commentators such as Hacker to footnotes and asides, as they do not represent for him the essential front of what he takes to be his own disagreement with resolute readers. This, however, in no way alters the fact that the concept of a "standard" or "orthodox" reading that White employs is actually quite different from the one canvassed at the outset of this chapter. This does not make White's terminology correct or incorrect. He has the right to classify commentators in any way he likes. But it does make for considerable confusion if one takes the terminology itself to already indicate the manner in which his disagreement with resolute readers aligns with those of other recent commentators (such as McGinn) with such readers.

In some of the aforementioned footnotes and asides, White appears to reject at least some of the core positive commitments of the logically prior concept of a standard reading, and thus to endorse at least some of the core negative commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading. This applies, in particular, to the second and third commitments of the respective sorts of reading. White, in explicit disagreement with Hacker, claims the following:

> We cannot present Wittgenstein as holding that [for example] the sentence 'Objects form the substance of the world' is nonsense, and hence that one could not say 'Objects form the substance of the world', but that nevertheless *that* was what he thought. (White 2011, p.53)

For White, the resulting philosophical position would not only be inconsistent, as Hacker concedes, but would also be "so absurd that it is not credible that it should have ever been Wittgenstein's actual position" (White, 2011, p.65, n.71). This was one of the main points of the original resolute criticism of standard readings. Moreover, White explicitly denies that the insights that the *Tractatus* wishes to communicate are propositional in nature (2011, pp.44–5), and the way in which he describes what Wittgenstein is doing in the *Tractatus* – an "exercise in Socratic midwifery" which consists in "drawing attention to something he believes is already implicit in our mastery of language" (p.44) – suggests that he wants to deny that the "insights" communicated by the *Tractatus* should even be *modeled* on propositional contents. (Indeed, his account of what is shown by the *Tractatus* here is very close to Conant's and Diamond's account of what is shown; as evidenced, for example, in the long passage from Conant quoted several pages above.) If one focuses just on these moments in White, one might be inclined to think that he would be happy to accept the second negative commitment of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading. There are also passages that suggest that White would be equally happy to accept the third negative commitment of such a reading – namely, the attribution to the *Tractatus* of the austere conception of nonsense (see, e.g., 2011, pp.33–5). However, if one focuses instead on various details of his own positive account of what the *Tractatus* seeks to accomplish by specifying the general form of the proposition – for example, his contention that the nonsensicality of certain linguistic constructions, including the propositions of the *Tractatus*, *follows* from the specification of the general form of the propositions (White, 2006, pp.83, 125) – it is difficult not to be left with the impression that White's positive account of these matters in fact commits him to a rejection of both the first and the third commitment of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading.

It is therefore a delicate task to determine whether White's overall interpretation does or does not fall under the logically prior concept of a standard reading. Moreover, it is at least equally difficult to determine whether White's positive account of the character of the insights that the *Tractatus* seeks to convey is or is not compatible with the four negative commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading. Like McGinn, White has a very particular and idiosyncratic take on the issues involved here. For White, the first step in seeing how nonsensical utterances can convey that special sort of insight while lacking sense is to come to appreciate how metaphorical utterances work – which, for White, also may be said to convey insight while lacking sense (White, 2011, pp. 35–45). The question is what the idea of "lacking sense" comes to here. White has his own very particular way of making this out. According to White's extremely inclusive way of employing the term "nonsense," metaphorical utterances are to be counted as species of the genus *nonsense*. White's proposal is to model the non-sensical but insight-conveying propositions of the *Tractatus* – not on the platitudinous grammatical remarks that occur in the works of the later Wittgenstein, as McGinn suggests, but rather – on the complicated form of marshaling linguistic resources involved in the making of a metaphorical utterance.

This is not the place to attempt to lay out the details and assess the merits of White's own fascinating and original positive account of how Tractarian nonsense conveys insight. (For a more extensive discussion, see Conant and Dain, 2011.) Our aim, here, is simply to emphasize the following two conditional points: (1) *If* White's interpretation is consistent with the four negative commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading, then he is not disagreeing with commentators such as Conant and Diamond about whether the *Tractatus* should be read "resolutely." Merely insisting that the *Tractatus* seeks to communicate "insights" does not amount to the rejection of "res-olute readings," as this term was originally understood; it all depends on how the nature of the form of insight here in question is to be construed. (2) *If* White rejects (or if his reading is implicitly committed to rejecting) some of the core negative commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading, then he and Conant and Diamond may well be able to agree that he should be classified as a "standard" rather than a "resolute" reader in the original sense of the expression, but the ground of that classification would rest on features of White's reading that have nothing to do with anyone's supposed commitment or rejection of a no-insight thesis.

If the first alternative obtains, resolute readers such as Conant, or Diamond, or Goldfarb, or Ricketts could still find much to disagree with in White's positive account of how the elucidatory sentences of the *Tractatus* seek to convey insights. But this would be, once again, a completely new front of the debate. It would coincide neither with the original disagreement between "standard" and "resolute" readers, nor with the dis-agreement that obtains between some self-described resolute readers and self-avowed middle-way commentators (such as McGinn) even if their proposal for how to read the book turns out to be consistent with the four negative commitments of the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading.

Once we put aside White's and McGinn's respective forms of misleading rhetoric about "no insights," the genuine differences between their respective interpretative proposals and the various readings that fall under the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading may come more sharply into relief. It is here that there are a number of genuinely interesting exegetical questions to be further debated and resolved. But these differences will generally be obscured if we employ, following White and McGinn,

a logically prior concept of a resolute reading defined by a commitment to the no-insight thesis – a thesis that is not part of the original concept of resolution, that has remained largely unclarified, and that many self-avowed resolute readers (such as Conant or Diamond or Goldfarb or Ricketts) do not endorse.

5   Shedding the Third Logical Feature

So far we have discussed ways in which the original use of the term "resolute" has shed its first two logical features. Now we come to the third logical feature, which one might have thought to be the most stable of all: the idea that a "resolute reading" is an exegetical proposal about how best to read the *Tractatus*.

There has been a tendency in the secondary literature to extend the term "resolute" in a variety of ways, including to other texts and to other matters. The term is sometimes applied to exegetical questions extending far beyond the interpretation of the *Tractatus* (so that some now speak, for example, of a resolute reading of the *later* Wittgenstein), or to matters altogether beyond the merely exegetical (so that some now speak, for example, of certain philosophical positions *qua* forms of philosophy as being more or less weakly or strongly resolute). We will conclude by mentioning some examples of each of these developments and the further forms of confusion they have helped to introduce.

We now have to do with entirely new fronts of controversy that have recently opened up in the secondary literature. While the focus of the debate has thus shifted, the terminology has remained confusingly uniform, with each new front being characterized as a dispute between a supposedly "resolute" and "anti-resolute" point of view on the topic in question. For example, there are some who wish to defend and others who wish to criticize what some parties to the dispute in question now term "a resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein." Thus Stephen Mulhall (2007) has defended a "resolute reading" of the private language argument, and Genia Schönbaumsfeld (2008) has criticized it. Now, there may be some justification for calling certain readings of the later Wittgenstein "resolute" – for instance, in order to highlight significant forms of continuity between the views that those readings attribute to the later Wittgenstein and those that resolute readers (in the original sense of the term) attribute to the *Tractatus*. What is essential, in this case, is that one makes clear what one means by a "resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein." This is not usually done. Not surprisingly, people on either side of the resulting debate can be found to be talking past one another. For instance, Schönbaumsfeld objects to Mulhall that there is no *prima facie* rationale for a "resolute reading" of the *Investigations*, because "the *Investigations* does not declare itself, like the *Tractatus,* to be nonsensical" (2008, p.1109). But it is hard to believe that Mulhall wishes to disagree with Schönbaumsfeld on this point. How could he have failed to notice that in the *Investigations* there is nothing strictly analogous to 6.54? Much more plausibly, the attempt to read 6.54 resolutely is not among those features of the original concept of a resolute reading that Mulhall wishes to retain as part of his newly introduced concept of a resolute reading of the *Investigations*. Similarly, according to Schönbaumsfeld, Mulhall regards as non-resolute "*any* reading [...] that regards Wittgenstein as advancing a non-empty view, or some form of argument" (2008, p.1110). The concept of a resolute reading that Schönbaumsfeld here attributes to Mulhall is analogous to the logically prior concept of a resolute reading (of the *Tractatus*)

that we discussed in the previous section, insofar as it is essentially characterized by a commitment to something analogous to the no-insight thesis: a reading of the *Investigations* is resolute, according to Schönbaumsfeld, if it maintains that the book does not aim to put forth any argument or any nonempty view, on any possible construal of these notions. But Mulhall might in fact be working with a different concept of a resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein – for example, one which denies, more limitedly, that the book aims to put forth a body of propositional or quasi-propositional theses or arguments aiming to establish the truth of such theses (e.g., arguments aiming to establish the truth of the putative philosophical claim that "a private language is logically impossible"). Be that as it may, misunderstandings could be avoided if one were to make clear what exactly is meant by a "resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein," rather than assuming that there is some single way of projecting the term "resolute" into this further context of controversy.

Perhaps more surprising still is what has become of such terminology at the hands of Rupert Read and his co-authors. Their employment of the terminology takes its point of departure from a very particular moment in an intramural exegetical disagreement among self-declared resolute readers of the *Tractatus*. The intramural dispute at issue is focused on the question of whether the *Tractatus* is committed to the idea of a canon of analysis (and thus to the correlative idea of a perfect *Begriffsschrift* – one which makes absolutely perspicuous what we are saying whenever we succeed in saying anything at all). This issue, in turn, is seen as having implications for how we should understand the evolution of Wittgenstein's thought and, in particular, his later criticisms of the *Tractatus*. In this dispute, there are commentators such as Conant and Diamond, on the one hand, arguing that the *Tractatus* is indeed genuinely committed to the idea in question. They see it as playing an essential role in the early Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical clarification. For these commentators, the early Wittgenstein's conception of the role of a logically perspicuous notation in philosophical clarification brings with it a host of substantive metaphysical views which the author of the *Tractatus* was unable to recognize as such at the time of writing that book, but which the later Wittgenstein gradually came to target as the philosophically most suspect aspects of his early conception of philosophy. (See e.g., Diamond, 1991, especially pp.18–22 and ch.6; Conant and Diamond, 2004, pp.80–7; Conant, 2007.) The dispute also involves commentators such as Juliet Floyd, on the other hand, who argue, *pace* Conant and Diamond, that the *Tractatus*' conception of clarification does not bring any such commitments with it – indeed, that it is already self-consciously concerned to criticize such ideas. Thus, on Floyd's reconstruction of Wittgenstein's thought, the discontinuities between the early and later Wittgenstein must be construed otherwise than along the lines suggested by Conant and Diamond (see Floyd 2001, especially pp.176–80; Floyd, 2007; cf. also Ostrow, 2002, especially pp.9, 71–2). We have here, yet again, a case of a further front in the family of controversies surrounding resolute readings – with the important difference that in the case of this disagreement all parties to the dispute take themselves to be one or another kind of resolute reader.

Warren Goldfarb has introduced some nomenclature that has proved influential in schematizing the landscape of this dispute. He refers to commentators of the former sort (such as Conant and Diamond) as "Girondists" and to commentators of the latter sort (such as Floyd) as "Jacobins" (2011, p.19; an earlier version of that paper has been in circulation since 2000). While issues may be raised about the exact nature of this dispute, this much about it seems to be clear: (a) it is an *exegetical* dispute about how to

read the *Tractatus*, and (b) it is not – as characterized thus far – a dispute between commentators committed to two different "degrees" of resolution. While Goldfarb's terminology does suggest the idea of different degrees of radicalism in one's reading of the *Tractatus*, the forms of radicalism in question do not concern a reader's degree of "resolution." On the contrary, in accordance with the logically posterior concept of a resolute reading elucidated above, resolution is here understood to be an all-or-nothing affair: either one claims that the aim of the *Tractatus* is to convey, through its elucidations, a body of propositional or quasi-propositional contents (in which case one's reading is irresolute), or one doesn't (in which case one's reading is resolute).

When Rupert Read and Rob Deans first step into the dispute between Girondists and Jacobins, they purport to side with Floyd and dub the approach they favor "strong resolutism," in contrast to "weak resolutism" (Read and Deans, 2003). This distinction was originally meant to be basically equivalent to Goldfarb's (Read and Deans 2003, p.267, n.27). But the newly introduced terminology, with its insinuation of grades of strength of "resolutism," already signals the beginning of a shift from the original intramural debate between Girondin and Jacobin resolute readers. The term "resolutism" (which is modeled on terms such as "idealism," "realism," "quietism," etc.) appears to designate a philosophical position, rather than an exegetical proposal; and the modifiers "weak" and "strong" appear to indicate that there is a spectrum of ways of developing or inhabiting such a position or orientation, from the less optimal to the more optimal.

As the dispute evolves, these appearances turn out to be more than mere appearances. Thus, in a subsequent contribution, Read characterizes the disagreement or "struggle" between "resolutists" such as Floyd and himself on the one hand, and "resolutists" such as Conant and Diamond on the other, as being about "the *kind* or *degree* of 'therapeutic' philosophy to ascribe to Wittgenstein, and to practice" (Read, 2006, p.81). According to Read, "resolutism" is, in the first instance, something that comes in degrees, and in the second instance, something only *accidentally* tied to an exegetical proposal for how to read some particular philosophical work or other. Resolutism is something that one may practice, to a greater or lesser degree, and that one may then also (but not necessarily) go on to ascribe to the particular conception of philosophical practice to be found in the *Tractatus* or some other philosophical work. These logically novel features that differentiate the concept of "resolutism" from the prior concept of "resolution" are even more evident in a yet more recent publication by Read and Deans, where they try to demonstrate, in their response to various criticisms, that "strong resolutism" is *also* viable "*as a reading* of the *Tractatus*" (Read and Deans, 2011, p.149). Indeed, even though Read and Deans argue in this essay for a certain way of reading the *Tractatus*, they openly declare that the exegetical matter is only of secondary importance for them. What really matters, for them, is that "strong resolutism" (or, as they now sometimes prefer to call it, "resolute resolutism") is "what philosophy *needs*" (Read and Deans, 2011, p.165):

> If our reading turns out to be wrong [...] then in the end this is not that important. For what is more important is: to be on the path to doing philosophy aright. And that path is what [...] the resolute (as opposed to irresolute) application of 'the resolute reading' [...] does for us. [...] In the end, whether or *not* this was Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* – whether or not he was a resolute resolutist – it is where philosophy needs to go. And that is where we want to be. (Read and Deans, 2011, p.166)

"Strong resolutism" indicates here a certain way of doing philosophy (and perhaps of leading one's life), occupying one end of a spectrum of forms of resolutism that differ from one another in relative strength or resolution. Whatever the issues are that have now been placed at the center of the discussion, they have come to have remarkably little to do with the original controversy discussed in the earlier parts of this chapter.

6   Conclusion

At this point in the history of Wittgenstein scholarship, if someone tells you that they or someone else is a "resolute" reader of Wittgenstein, or asks you if you yourself are, our advice is to get that person first to tell you what they mean by the term. To give one example of how one will sort matters differently depending upon whose terminology one is using, the authors of this chapter would say of themselves, if they are using the term as Ricketts or Goldfarb or Diamond does, that they *are* resolute readers; using the term as McGinn or White does, that they are *not*; and using it as Read and his co-authors sometimes do, that they have simply *lost track of what the topic is* and thus that they do not know, but they strongly suspect that it is not a topic on which they ever previously meant to take a position.

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