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Pragmatist and Non-reductionist Conceptions of Naturalism

Workshop within the project APVV-18-0178

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ONLINE via MS Teams (QR kód)

Pragmatist Conceptions of Naturalism

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Non-reductionist Conceptions of Naturalism

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**Critical Remarks on Pragmatist and
Non-reductionist Conception of Naturalism**

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- **PhD in Philosophy**

University of Sheffield, September 2010-June 2013

Conferred: 20th January 2014.

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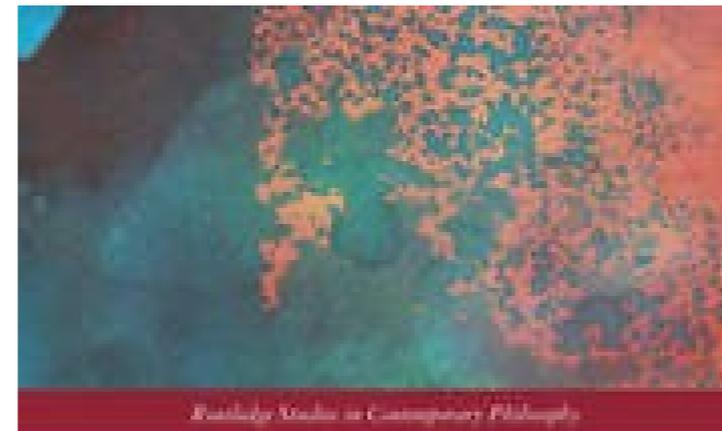
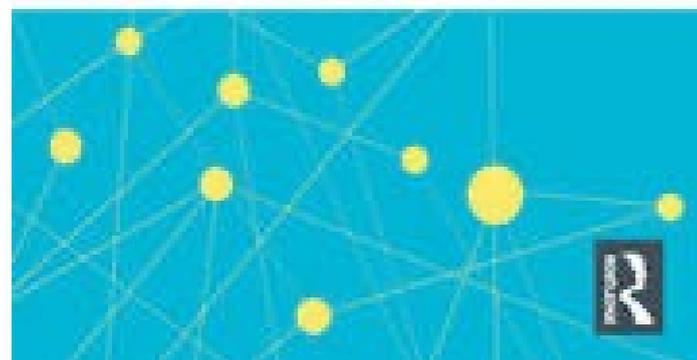
Dr. Paul Giladi



HEGEL AND THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

TRADITIONS IN DIALOGUE

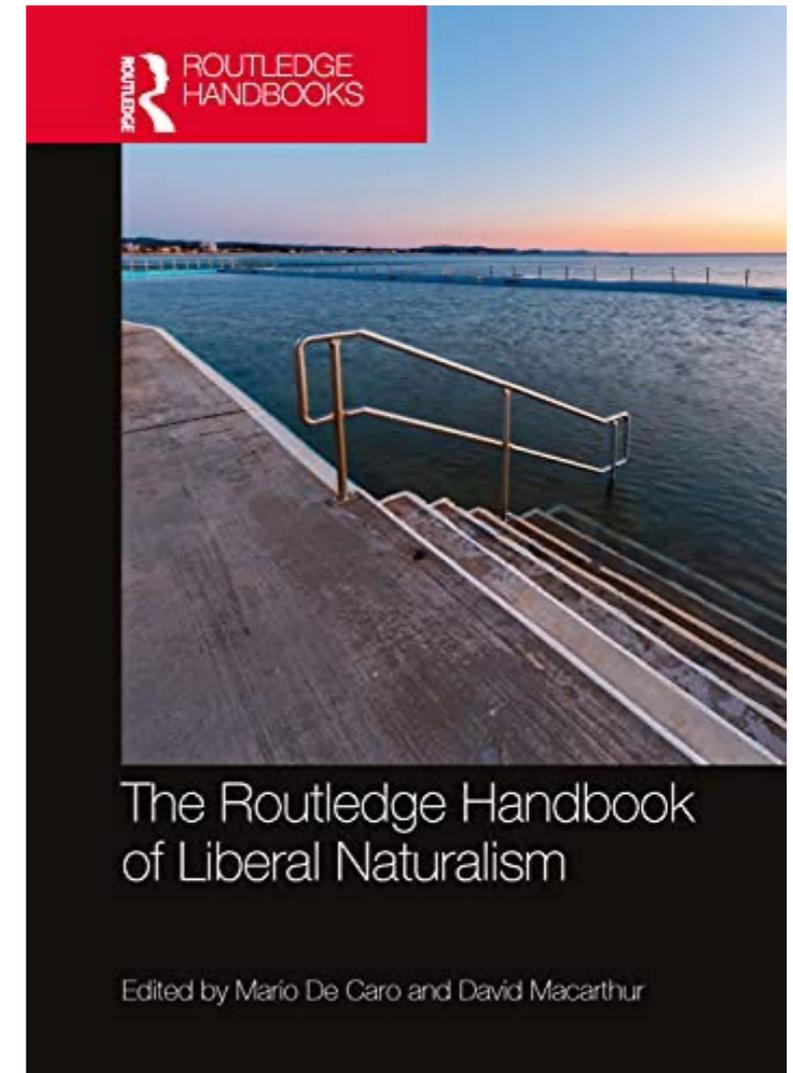
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Paul Giladi



RESPONSES TO NATURALISM

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM IDEALISM
AND PRAGMATISM

Edited by
Paul Giladi



The Routledge Handbook of Liberal Naturalism

Edited by Mario De Caro and David Macarthur

Emil Višňovský

Global Non-Reductive Naturalism

1. Introduction
2. Aim of my talk
3. Global
4. Non-Reductive
5. Naturalization
6. Culture
7. Normativity
8. Wilfrid Sellars
9. Pragmatism
10. Conclusion

1. Introduction

- **Paul Giladi (2014)** defines non-reductive naturalism:
- **1. rejection** of the idea of 1st philosophy as pre-Kantian metaphysics
- **2. belief** that philosophy is continual with science including humanities with their special methods
- **3. rejection** of super-natural entities/processes
- **4. emergent** physicalism in the theory of mind
- **5. opposition** to non-naturalism in ethics and axiology
- **6. rejection** of apriorism/speculative non-scientific approach

2. Aim of my talk

- **My aim:** An outline of the non-reductive naturalism — “liberal naturalism” (soft, social)
- **The 4th** historical variety of naturalism following:
 - 1. Ancient natural philosophy, 2. Ancient/modern metaphysical naturalism, 3. Modern scientific naturalism (hard, reductive, scientistic, restrictive)
- **Transcending** traditional philosophical antinomies — natural/cultural, mental/ physical,

3. Global

- **Why “global”** (full-fledged, holistic) — not local or partial?
- **No problem** — to be a naturalist in the philosophy of nature or physics or philosophy of natural sciences... NON-HUMAN reality
- **The problem** — to be a naturalist in the philosophy of culture or ethics, or philosophy of mind or philosophical anthropology or social philosophy or humanities... HUMAN reality
- **Ontology**
 - culture is not nature
 - mental is not physical
 - subjectivity is not objectivity
 - norms are not natural laws
 - reasons are not causes
 - humanities are not “hard sciences”
 - human artifacts are not “natural kinds”, etc.

4. Non-Reductive

- **Why non-reductive?**
- **Reductionism (Rorty)** — a false way to look for unity — unification via reductive thinking and vocabulary based on: commonalities, common denominators, equivalency, similarity, resemblance, substitution, “monomania” — eliminativism, privileged vocabularies, universalism, scientism — reduction to one and only one vocabulary
- **How not to be a reductionist?**
- **To be a pluralist** — Not a monist — PLURALIST NATURALISM (?)
- **Irreducibility** — irreplaceability of specifics, of special ontological status — diversity, differences
- **Attributes** of such naturalism: antidualism, anti-essentialism, holism
- **Non-reductionist vocabulary** — irreducible to other naturalist vocabularies (physicalistic, evolutionistic)
- **Anthropological** and socio-cultural phenomena

5. Naturalization

- **Traditional sources of anti-naturalism:**
- **1. Super-natural** (created by “higher powers”, not by nature)
- **2. Non-physical**, mental, spiritual, non-empirical (mind, psyche, spirit, consciousness, values)
- **3. Cultural** (human-created — arbitrary, subjective, artificial, linguistic, verbal...)
- **To naturalise:**
- **1. Localize it in nature** — in space and time including social space and time (history), but *not necessarily in a causal nexus*
- **2. Describe/interpret** in a naturalist vocabulary as a natural phenomenon (object, entity, relation, complex, area), but *not necessarily as a “natural kind”*
- **3. Explain** by human cognitive powers, but *not necessarily by natural science methods*

6. Culture

- **Culture** — as “continuation of nature by other means”:
- **All cultural phenomena** (science, religion, ethics, arts, philosophy, norms, values etc.) belong (are placed) in nature — are “natural” — even though results (products) of human practices
- **Culture naturalized** — the 2nd culture (Aristotle, Marx, McDowell)
- **Hans Fink, “Three Sorts of Naturalism”:**
- *“The manmade, the artificial, the cultural, the historical, the ethical, the normative, the mental, the logical, the abstract, the mysterious, the extraordinary, are all examples of ways of being natural rather than examples of ways of being nonnatural. Nature is never mere nature. That which is more than mere nature is nature, too”* (Fink 2008, 67).

7. Normativity

- **Normativity — naturalized?**
- **Norms** — social, cultural — regulative, predictive
- **Causal** vocabulary of Normativity? — are norms causes?
- **Wilfrid Sellars:** normative vocabulary — intentional vocabulary — “space of reasons”
- **1) specific,** non-reductive, irreplaceable
- **2) functionality,** continuity, embeddedness of normative vocabulary in human (linguistic) practices — and practices in nature

8. Wilfrid Sellars

- **Philosophy:** ““how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term” (Sellars 1963, 1)
- “**Philosophy** as an ongoing enterprise of understanding how we fit into the world of which we are a part” (deVries 2005, 8)
- ***Scientia mensura:*** “Science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not.” (Sellars 1997, 83)
- **Two images** — scientific and manifest: mutually irreducible — both integrated into one “synoptic” (“stereoscopic”) image (Sellars 1963).

8. Wilfrid Sellars

- **New naturalism** — Non-reductive understanding of human being (human behavior/action)
- **Roy Wood Sellars (1922)** — “evolutionary naturalism” — includes “organic and social behavior” — non-reductive
- **Human behavior/action — Two vocabularies** (nature vs reason/mind) — **irreducible, pluralistic:**
- **1. Space of (natural) causes** (physical, biological, neurophysiological)
- **2. Space of (rational, intentional) reasons** — normative order
- **Social norms** — moral principles, legal rules, technological standards — human-created, quasi-causally functional
- **Reasons are causes** — of human behavior/action
- **Human practices** — social, intentional, intelligent — create and apply norms

9. Pragmatism

- **1. John Dewey** — *evolutionary naturalism* (naturalized Hegelian) under the influence of Darwin and W. James — nature and experience
- **2. Richard Rorty** — *metaphilosophical naturalism* “synthesis of Enlightenment naturalism and romantic creativity” (Brandom 2021, xii) — we are natural creative beings
- **3. John McDowell** — liberal naturalism (*Mind and World*, 1994) — Kantian realm of “spontaneity” (reason) is a part of nature as a phenomenon *sui generis* even though does not submit to natural laws — concept of “second nature”
- **4. Huw Price** — *object/subject naturalism* — “*naturalism without mirrors*” — priority of subject naturalism — the key: understanding human linguistic practices — irreducible to other social practices and non-representational “tool”: functions creative, practical therapeutic, pluralistic vocabularies

10. Conclusion

- **1. No radical discontinuity** between nature and human (nonhuman and human)
- **2. No reduction** of human to natural
- **3. No privileged** status of human in nature
- **4. No nonhuman** authority over human
- **5. Humans** are natural creative linguistic beings
- **6. Normativity** is human-created form of social-intentional causality
- **7. Human practices** are transactions between non-linguistic (causal) and linguistic (normative)
- **8. Naturalism** of one of our human vocabularies
- **9. Philosophy** is human creative linguistic practice