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READING WITTGENSTEIN'S *TRACTATUS*

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Abstract: This Element presents a concise and accessible view of the central arguments of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Starting from the difficulties found in historical and current debates, drawing on the background of Russell's philosophy, and grounded in the ladder structure expressed in the numbering system of the book, the Element presents the central arguments of the *Tractatus* in three lines of thought. The first concerns the role of the so-called 'ontology' and its relationship to the method of the *Tractatus* and its logical symbolism, which displays the formal essence of language and world. The second deals with the symbolic "formal unity of language" and its role in the 'ladder structure' and explains how and why the book is not "paradoxically self-defeating." The third elucidates Wittgenstein's claim to have solved in essentials all philosophical problems, whose very formulation, he says, rests on the "misunderstanding of the logic of our language."

Keywords: Wittgenstein, Tractatus, resolute reading, formal unity of language, ladder metaphor

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Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1 Readings of the <i>Tractatus</i> and How to Read It | 1 |
| 2 Method, Analysis, and Ontology | 19 |
| 3 Ladder Lessons 1: Formal Unity, Symbolism, and No Self-Defeat | 39 |
| 4 Ladder Lessons 2: Problems of Philosophy Solved in Essentials | 52 |
| References | 68 |