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Translated by Robert M. Connolly

NATURALISM, in recent usage, is a species of philosophical monism according to which whatever exists or happens is *natural* in the sense of being susceptible to explanation through methods which, although paradigmatically exemplified in the natural sciences, are continuous from domain to domain of objects and events. Hence, naturalism is polemically defined as repudiating the view that there exists or could exist any entities or events which lie, in principle, beyond the scope of scientific explanation. In all other respects naturalism is ontologically neutral in that it does not prescribe what specific kinds of entities there must be in the universe or how many distinct kinds of events we must suppose to take place. Accordingly, naturalism is merely compatible with the various forms of materialism it has been confused with; materialism is logically distinct from naturalism and requires independent support unless (as is not the case) materialism is the sole ontology compatible with the ubiquitous employment of scientific method. There is thus room within the naturalistic movement for any variety of otherwise rival ontologies, which explains the philosophical heterogeneity of the group of philosophers who identify themselves as naturalists: it is a methodological rather than an ontological monism to which they indifferently subscribe, a monism leaving them free to be dualists, idealists, materialists, atheists, or nonatheists, as the case may be.

The tenets of naturalism. Despite the official toleration of ontological diversity, the typical naturalist is likely to endorse, with whatever individual refinements he might require, most and perhaps all of the following tenets:

(1) The entire knowable universe is composed of natural objects—that is, objects which come into and pass out of existence in consequence of the operation of "natural causes." A rock, a cloud, a frog, a human being, are all instances of natural objects, however they may otherwise differ and however important these differences may be. Every natural object exists within the spatiotemporal and the causal orders. The universe *may* in addition contain

one or another sort of *nonnatural* object, but we have no reason for allowing the existence of nonnatural objects unless they have impact on the observable behavior of natural objects, for natural objects are the only objects about which we know directly, and it would be only with reference to their perturbations that we might secure indirect knowledge of nonnatural objects, should there be any.

(2) A natural cause is a natural object or an episode in the history of a natural object which brings about a change in some other natural object. Each natural object owes its existence, continuance, and end to the constant operation on it of natural causes, and it is solely with reference to natural causes that we explain changes in the behavior of natural objects. This may require reference to objects we cannot directly experience, but these will nevertheless still be *natural* objects, and we need never go outside the system of natural objects for explanations of what takes place within it. Reference to nonnatural objects is never explanatory.

(3) A natural process is any change in a natural object or system of natural objects which is due to a natural cause or system of natural causes. There are no nonnatural processes.

(4) The natural order—or nature—is not simply a collection of all the natural objects but a system of all natural processes. Nature is in principle intelligible in all its parts, but it cannot be explained as a whole. For this would presumably require reference to a natural cause, and outside nature as a whole there are no natural causes to be found. Or else it would require reference to a nonnatural object, but such reference is never explanatory. Nature is self-contained as a system with reference to the furnishing of natural explanations, which means not that there will ever necessarily be natural explanations of everything but only that there are no intrinsic limits placed on which natural processes can be naturally explained. Thus, they are *all* in principle naturally explainable.

(5) Natural method is simply (a) explaining natural processes through identification of the natural causes responsible for them and (b) testing any given explanation with regard to consequences that must hold if it is true. Truth is merely a matter of consequences, and nature is in each of its parts susceptible to the natural method. The natural method is the way in which one set of natural objects—men—operate upon the rest of nature.

(6) Nature could not be both intelligible everywhere and random everywhere: no natural process could be intelligible if in each instance it were produced by dissimilar natural causes or if each natural process were dissimilar to every other. The thesis that nature is intelligible is equivalent to the claim that natural processes are *regular*. The natural method seeks, accordingly, to establish natural laws. Human beings, as natural objects, are no less subject to natural laws than are other parts of nature, and the natural processes that make up the mental and social life of human beings are equally with the rest of nature subject to the application of the natural method, within the scope of the natural laws it seeks to establish.

(7) Whatever may be their official persuasions, all philosophers must function in the natural order as other humans do and, in order to do this successfully, must sponta-

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