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Robert Merrihew Adams

A Theory of Virtue:

Excellence in Being for the Good.

New York: Oxford University Press 2006.

Pp. 262.

US\$55.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-920751-0);

US\$30.00 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-955225-2).

Adams considers virtue and virtues as aspects of character, and not as a guide to action, though he does so not without attention to action: 'the value of what we *are* morally is important independently, to some extent, of the value of what we *do*' (136). This is an important and overdue topic for investigation. Virtue, according to Adams, is 'persisting excellence in being for the good' (6). This phrase is slightly awkward to construe at first glance, until one realizes that 'being for' goes together — a virtuous person is one who is *for* what's good in an excellent way that persists.

Rejecting the paradoxical Socratic theses about virtue, and steering clear of an Aristotelian approach to virtue (10), Adams offers what he sees as a Platonic-theistic approach instead. The *Meno* ends (100b) with Socrates deducing that 'virtue appears to be present in those of us who may possess it as a gift from the gods.' I always took that to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the preceding reasoning, forcing us to re-examine the lemma that virtue is not teachable. But Adams endorses the conclusion over and over (12, 162, 165ff). He is quite happy to talk of the good which the virtuous person is for as something very like the Form of the Good, or even God. And he freely uses religious terminology in his discussions such as 'idolatry' (76, 102, 190), 'grace' (29, 224), 'sin' (148), 'church' (228), and 'calling' (227). Yet he manages to use these terms in ways that enrich the discussions rather than narrow them. The discussions range widely over empirical evidence and case studies, and show a full engagement with the varieties of life and the place of virtue. So it is that religious perspectives must be a part of this discussion in any case, regardless of the author. And it is to the credit of this author that while his perspective is religious, this does not in any way dominate or narrow the discussion.

Adams does an admirable job of explicating and defending the notion(s) of virtue(s), drawing upon work that he has done over literally decades. While acknowledging his meta-ethical commitments as intuitionistic (26, 47, 73) and realist (45, 216), he does not defend these here, but instead sees this book as a work in 'substantive ethics' (4). In his extremely thorough-going fashion, Adams addresses all the main issues that arise in virtue ethics, clearly setting out his own views, and charitably considering possible objections. The discussion is very rich and almost always interesting and provocative, though the writing is not notable.

The most interesting parts of the book are Chapters 8 and 9, where Adams engages recent empirically-based attacks on the reality of enduring and effec-

tive character traits, for virtue seems to depend on the reality of such traits. This is partly a metaphysical issue: what does it take to be a real virtue, and does anything satisfy the requirements? Recent empirical investigations of human behavior have suggested that it tends to be most strongly influenced by external rather than internal factors, and that what internal influence there is tends to be weak, fragmentary, and unreliable. This has led some to doubt the reality of virtue.

Adams has two responses. One might expect his first response to be his main one — that virtue is an ideal, and whether people in fact achieve it is not really the point (124, 170). This would put virtue in the same realm as Plato's Form of the Good, accessible to only a few. But, on the other hand, Adams mainly resists this kind of elitism, and wants to understand virtue in such a way that it is generally achievable and in fact achieved (119-23). In pursuing this response he sometimes quibbles with the interpretation of the empirical evidence. But for the most part, he accepts the empirical evidence and argues for lowering our expectations of what it takes to be virtuous. The list of what virtue does *not* need to be is rather long: It is not all or nothing, but comes in degrees (37, 47). The standards for what it takes to be virtuous are not very high (25). It is not narrowly moralistic (26) and does not require pure altruism (78). Virtue is not invulnerable to luck (163). Virtue is not unified (171ff., as in the unity-of-the-virtues thesis), but fragmentary (120). Virtue is not overriding or absolute in its influence (122, 154-7), but can be probabilistic or conditional (137, 188). These last points are most responsive to the empirical material Adams addresses. Research indicates that character traits are very situation-specific. For instance, the tendency toward courage in one context may not be present in other contexts. Some take this to show that there really is no (instantiated) virtue of courage. But Adams is content to accept something like domain-specific courage (125-6), which is merely probabilistic in its effects (122-4).

This demonstrates how truly unSocratic Adams is. It is also reminiscent of discussions of reduction in the philosophy of mind. When reductivists are confronted with the so-called variable realizability of, say, pain in different species (real or imagined), they have sometimes responded by arguing for domain-specific reductions, involving multiple narrower conceptions of pain. Adams offers domain-specific virtues. Whether this is enough to *be* courage is somewhat arbitrary — a point he makes in a somewhat different context on p. 192 — but Adams does not suppose that we are forced to say that it is not enough. Unless one believes in a Platonic form of this virtue, which empirical skeptics about virtue do not, it is hard to see how one can reply to this strategy. It becomes almost a matter of taste how widespread we wish virtue to be. One would have thought that a good Protestant like Adams would expect it to be rare. But perhaps there are pragmatic reasons for not wanting people to feel they are falling short too frequently. It is hard to tell, but this seems to be his position. In any case, Adams seems to be willing to be somewhat revisionary of the concepts of virtue for the sake of saving the intuition that people are fairly commonly virtuous (119, 123). Perhaps what Adams has

shown is how far we can get in defending virtue if we are willing to lower our expectations enough.

James C. Klagge
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Paul J. J. M. Bakker and
Johannes M. M. H. Thijssen, eds.
*Mind, Cognition and Representation:
The Tradition of Commentaries on
Aristotle's 'De anima'.*
Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2008.
Pp. 266.
US\$114.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7546-3084-5).

Before Descartes, no philosophy of mind proper; so, apparently, goes the new consensus. Ever since Myles Burnyeat's 1992 essay on Aristotle's psychology of perception, there has been a broad agreement that the Aristotelian tradition has quite a different agenda from the Cartesian one when it comes to questions of mind, body, and soul. Crucially, where Aristotle's hylomorphism informs the whole of his psychology, including its cognitive component, Descartes labors under no such metaphysical burdens. Much has subsequently been made of the fact that Aristotelian psychology finds its rightful context in natural philosophy. Even Aristotle's treatise *De anima* (*On the Soul*), apart from a few nigh-impenetrable chapters dealing with the peculiar phenomenon of intellection, focuses on questions common to the purposeful life of organisms and is most readily understood in terms of Aristotle's biology.

The catch is that those few chapters (*De anima* III 4-5), impenetrable as they may be, also proved quite irresistible to commentators throughout antiquity and medieval times. For better or for worse — and some will spiritedly argue the latter — questions concerning intellectual cognition and the intellect were therefore central to the Aristotelian tradition, starting with Alexander of Aphrodisias in the second century and extending to the debates concerning the immortality of the soul in the sixteenth (expertly recapped by Lorenzo Casini in the volume under review). Even if the peculiar problems bequeathed by Descartes on the later tradition were not alive to the Aristotelians in quite the same way, then, it is still possible, *pace* Burnyeat, for materials mined from the Aristotelian tradition to excite the contemporary philosopher, especially one who is willing to let go of some long-held assumptions about the intractability of Descartes' mind-body problem and the like.

One way to avoid running into the problems raised by Descartes, this is to say, is to stop well before him.

Bakker and Thijssen's first-rate collection of essays illustrates the potential inherent in such an approach. Its contributions are of a philosophical, not antiquarian orientation; and though the essays typically deal in highly specialized materials and texts, they manage to introduce and discuss themes and problems that are of seminal importance in the history of Western philosophy. This is partly because while the writers wisely resist the temptation to portray their subjects as straightforwardly anticipating Descartes or some other favored modern thinker — an apologetic approach that is as short-sighted as it is transparent — they do follow two important imperatives. One is the desire to relate historical discussions to contemporary philosophical problems; the other is a shared determination to break down the caricatures portraying the late medieval period as intellectually sterile, or the Renaissance humanists as backward-looking, or the early modern thinkers as uninterested in their own Scholastic background.

In this the editors and authors of the volume under review are not alone. The easy periodization — medieval-Renaissance-early modern — has increasingly been called into question. (Another prominent example in a similar vein is the volume edited last year for Springer by Henrik Lagerlund, *Forming the Mind*.) It is hard to say whether political expediency has played a part in the fast spread of this kind of initiative — the European Science Foundation has noticeably supported work of this kind in recent times — but it is entirely welcome nonetheless, as it allows one to make much better sense of many long-range developments in the period spanning the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries. Nowhere is this more the case than in the history of Western psychology.

The essays in the collection can usefully be grouped under a couple of headings. One set of contributions concentrates primarily on the mind's ontological status or — to put it in more Aristotelian terms — the substance of the rational soul. It is here that the connections with Descartes' work are most readily apparent, and indeed drawn by a number of contributors. Under this heading we find an excellent opening piece by Robert Pasnau designed to show how, in light of the medieval discussions, the principal problem was not so much how mind relates to body as how mind relates to soul. The Peripatetics found it intractably difficult to incorporate Aristotle's immaterial intellectual cognition within the ambit of the soul, which is defined as the first actuality of the living body. This led to a number of different models regarding the way the rational soul and its powers relate to the other psychic functions and their subject, the human being as a whole. Guy Goldentops picks up where Pasnau leaves off, uncovering James of Douai's critique of Aquinas, while Olaf Pluta shows how Nicholas of Amsterdam surprisingly picks up Alexander's old position that the intellect emerges from matter even while its operations may achieve immateriality.

The debate concerning the soul's substance was picked up again in the Renaissance. Lorenzo Casini's article on the immortality of the soul in Pom-

ponazzi and before has already been mentioned; to this we may add Paul Bakker's brief entry on the curious doctrine according to which the science of the soul could in some way be called mathematical. Bakker shows how this is generally understood not as a Pythagorean allusion by the Renaissance commentators, but instead as referring to the fact that psychology does not neatly fit within the purview either of natural philosophy or of metaphysics.

Another group of essays tackles the representational and intentional nature of thought, again focusing on problems related to intellectual cognition in specific (as opposed to sensation and the workings of the 'inward wits' such as memory — each of these would merit a separate treatment in any full consideration of the Aristotelian tradition). Along these lines we may group together the contributions by Mary Sirridge (on Radulphus Brito), Henrik Lagerlund (on Buridan), and Tuomo Aho (on Suárez). Noticeable here is the extent to which issues in philosophical psychology cross-pollinate with questions concerning epistemology, the philosophy of language, and indeed the fundamentals of metaphysics. Because Jack Zupko's essay on self-knowledge and self-representation has to do mainly with how the rational soul may become an object of cognition for the late ancient Aristotelian, his contribution, too, falls under this rubric. Cees Leijenhorst concludes the volume with an investigation of how the problem of selective attention was treated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The essays in this collection are of a uniformly high quality. The figures they single out for attention are for the most part not known to a general audience: this may give the false impression of the collection being of use only to a small group of esotericists. This is quite far from the truth. While the volume is indisputably aimed primarily at specialists, presuming both a genuine philosophical interest in the source materials and a full historical understanding of the language and concepts in which they trade, the results that it presents should succeed in stirring up anybody's excitement about an oft-neglected time period and some lesser-known lights. It might just be that there are other paths to be taken between Aristotle and Descartes after all.

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David Boersema

Pragmatism and Reference.

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2008.

Pp. 279.

US\$36.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-262-02660-4).

Here Boersema explores the contribution of pragmatism to the current philosophical debate on reference. He presents pragmatism as an alternative to the dominant views on reference and argues that such an alternative is a useful corrective to the contemporary debate in analytic philosophy of language.

Chapters 1 and 2 introduce Searle's cluster theory and Kripke's causal account, which are commonly portrayed as irreconcilable views on reference. Searle's cluster theory is an amended version of Frege and Russell's descriptivism, which regarded names as equivalent to definite descriptions. Descriptivism entailed that, for reference to occur, the definite description underlying a name must be analytically true of the object to which that name refers. Searle, conversely, claims that names refer to objects by virtue of open-ended clusters of descriptions, the disjunction of those descriptions being analytically true of the object to which a certain name refers.

Kripke's criticism of Searle is consistent with his rejection of Frege and Russell's descriptivism. Boersema highlights that descriptive elements are incorporated in Kripke's causal account. This is not an unusual argument; indeed it is one which Kripke himself advanced. According to the causal account, reference is fixed by an initial 'baptism'. This secures a causal chain that stretches back to the original act of naming. Kripke explicitly allowed for the possibility of naming via a description, though he posed it as neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for reference. Similarly, Searle acknowledged that ostension, by virtue of the intentions of a pointer, fits the descriptivist thesis. Boersema states that intentionality appears to be the point of convergence of both accounts: in both cases 'intending to refer to a given object by the use of a name is a necessary condition for reference' (45).

In Chapter 3, Boersema explores Wittgenstein's view of names. He maintains that a pragmatic approach to reference is suggested in Wittgenstein's theory of family resemblance, which is often labeled as an antecedent of Searle's cluster account. Contrary to descriptivist and causalist accounts, Wittgenstein suggested that it is not possible to establish necessary and sufficient conditions for the applicability of words — including names — independently of their use. Thus construed, Wittgenstein's view of reference prepares the reader for Boersema's investigation of pragmatist accounts of reference.

Chapter 4 discusses the writings of classical pragmatist philosophers. Boersema's reconstruction of Peirce's view of reference shows that it eliminates many difficulties posed by the causal account. According to Peirce, a name, when encountered for the first time, is an index. This seems to suggest the purely denotative character of names, a point that has been interpreted as in line with the causal account and its emphasis on rigid designation.

However, considered as signs, names for Peirce mediate between an object and an interpretant — the interpreting thought that a sign determines in an interpreter's mind. The notion of interpretant is crucial to Boersema's argument, which successfully captures the spirit of Peirce's semiotics. Names in Peirce have the 'force to draw attention of the listener to some haecceity common to the experience of the speaker and listener' (*Collected Papers*, ed. C. Hartshorne, A. Burks and P. Weiss, Harvard UP 1931-5, Vol.3. §640), thus they cannot be rigid designators. Peirce's emphasis on the interpretant runs counter to the essentialist core of the causal account, as it hinges on the commonality of experience of speaker and listener. Boersema's insistence on the pragmatic and semiotic aspects inherent in Peirce's account of names clarifies his initially elusive appeal to intentionality as a point of convergence between descriptivist and causalist approaches, and it lays the foundations for his discussion of intentionality in the last chapters.

The conflation of pragmatism and the causal account is further corrected in the section on James' views of reference. Boersema examines James' notion of 'workings', which appeals to a series of empirical intermediaries between an individual belief and the object to which such belief refers. This is only superficially similar to the historical chain posed by Kripke at the basis of the causal account. The pragmatic concept of 'workings' entails a future-oriented understanding of the sociality of reference, which contrasts with the past-oriented chain of uses postulated by the causal account.

The sociality and purposefulness of language and reference are a central part of Boersema's discussion of Dewey. Language for Dewey encompasses our organic reaction to the world. Like James, he considers naming and reference as future-oriented processes which depend on the interaction and social cooperation of language users. Moreover, Dewey's view of naming as a purposive activity exemplifies once more the incompatibility of pragmatism and the causalist concept of rigid designation.

In Chapters 5 and 6, Boersema illustrates the views of six contemporary pragmatist philosophers. Hilary Putnam, Catherine Elgin and Richard Rorty figure as three American philosophers whose works display a pragmatist orientation. This is evident in the case of Putnam. Despite being often associated to Kripke in setting the agenda of the causal theory of reference, Putnam has insisted on the interconnectedness of semantics and pragmatics. Boersema shows that even the perceptual turn that characterizes Putnam's latest formulation of direct (or natural) realism draws on pragmatist insights and echoes James in its appeal to the interactive and transactional nature of perception.

The reader might find some difficulty in regarding Elgin as a pragmatist. Her constructionalism entails a holistic view of meaning and reference originating from her epistemological concern with the pursuit of understanding as opposed to the pursuit of truth. In her view, reference is fixed by language users' choices, and the act of drawing categorical boundaries cannot be determined by previous usages. Boersema stresses that Elgin's anti-essentialism, along with her views on the purposefulness of inquiry and the open-ended

nature of symbols, are 'all concerns held in common with the pragmatists' (118). Nevertheless, her emphasis on the symbolic nature of verbal and non-verbal representations (as opposed to their iconicity or indexicality) is reminiscent of her association with Nelson Goodman and his constructive nominalism. The reader (and Elgin herself) might struggle to consider this as fully compatible with pragmatism.

In discussing Rorty's pragmatism, Boersema highlights that his position, often labeled as irrational and relativistic, is not too distant from Putnam and Elgin. His arguments against a correspondence theory of truth are grounded in a concern with the nature and goals of inquiry. Yet, Rorty's rejection of realism raised concerns among pragmatists. Even more worrisome is Rorty's contempt of the problem of reference, which he defined as a pseudo-problem to be dissolved, rather than a question to be dealt with. Boersema's emphasis on Rorty's commonalities with contemporary pragmatists seems to overlook the consequences of such a strong position.

Chapter 6 presents Umberto Eco, Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas as 'continental' pragmatists. Drawing on Peirce, Eco proposed to define naming as a form of abductive inference. Boersema advances interesting considerations on the interconnectedness of abduction and evidence and insightfully stresses 'the ineliminability of evidence in relation with reference' (141). Yet, his emphasis on the commonalities between Eco and Peirce may prevent the non-specialized reader from grasping the import of Eco's strongly conventionalist position on language and reference, which often clashes with Peirce's philosophy.

Peirce's pragmatism is a central theme in Boersema's discussion of Apel's transcendental semiotics. Apel integrates the causalist emphasis on extensionality and designation with a pragmatic account of the mediated aspects of reference (intensionality) and its language-constitutive function (intentionality). Furthermore, in articulating a pragmatic concept of intersubjectivity against 'methodical solipsism', Apel provides a corrective answer to Searle's subjective account of intentionality.

The influence of Peirce upon contemporary pragmatists plays an important role in Habermas' account of reference. His theory of communicative action proposes a universal pragmatics as the basis for communicative rationality and draws on Peirce in characterizing reference as involving action and agency. Boersema points out that Habermas' rejection of the separation of semantics and pragmatics offers a valid corrective to purely semantic accounts of reference.

In the last three chapters, Boersema articulates his own pragmatic account of reference. He claims that descriptivism and the causal account are committed to a strongly realist view of two basic aspects of reference, namely individuation and similarity. As a consequence, they both share a commitment to essentialism and reduce reference to a private matter. According to Boersema, these commitments are misleading. He does not deny the existence of a world 'out there', nor does he embrace an idealist position on reference. Instead, he proposes that individuation and similarity are theory-

and interest-dependent in a pragmatic sense. Reference to states of affairs is mediated by our epistemic concerns: a pragmatic account insists on the interplay between the reality of phenomena and their conceptualization with respect to the purposes of a community of inquirers.

Contrary to the received views focusing on what names and reference *are* as part of a purely theoretical analysis, Boersema aims to show that a pragmatic understanding of reference discloses what names *do* with respect to context-dependent interests and goals. In this he is most successful. The non-specialized reader might struggle to approach the complexity and variety of views discussed in the book. Despite this, this book offers a genuine contribution to the literature and there is reason to believe that it will lay the foundations for further philosophical work on reference.

Chiara Ambrosio

University College London

**Stanley Cavell, Cora Diamond, John
McDowell, Ian Hacking, and Cary Wolfe**
Philosophy and Animal Life.

New York: Columbia University Press 2008.

Pp. 184.

US\$24.50 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-231-14514-5);

US\$18.50 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-231-14515-2).

This is a collection of papers with an arguably misleading title. 'These essays are not about animals', says contributor Hacking (140); McDowell contends that Cavell has misread the main emphasis of Diamond's lead paper in taking her central issue to be our treatment of non-human animals. As Wolfe helpfully puts matters in his introduction, *two* questions underpin this volume: 'philosophical scepticism and its consequences for ethics', as well as 'our moral responsibilities to non-human animals' (3-4). We have a substantial introduction to the volume by Wolfe, the lead paper by Diamond, and responses by Cavell, McDowell, and Hacking. Wolfe's 'Exposures' sets the stage, his title picking up on Diamond's use of Ted Hughes' poem 'Six Young Men'. (The poem features a photograph — 'a single exposure' — of six smiling young men, and indicates the agony in one's encountering something one cannot get one's mind around, a theme Diamond pursues in her paper.)

Wolfe gives a nice overview of Cavell's past treatment of philosophical scepticism, of Diamond's current essay and her previous contributions to philosophy (her contention that 'animal rights' talk obscures important issues,

and the relevance of our description of a philosophical problem to the depth of our response to it) (10). He conducts a comparison — one that, in fact, seems forced — between Diamond's work (her philosophizing in general and her current piece) and the work of Jacques Derrida, noting ways in which he thinks Derrida's work can extend and elaborate Diamond's (25). Wolfe describes Diamond as taking up the extent to which our two questions of scepticism and the treatment of animals are and are not versions of the same question (3). Diamond's paper ('The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy'), explores various phenomena, for example, the ideas of exposure, woundedness, and the notion of deflection, which Diamond borrows from Cavell. One of the examples from which she draws these phenomena (the first example is the Hughes' poem) is J. M. Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*, the South African novelist's Tanner lectures. These lectures assume a central place in the volume. *The Lives of Animals* takes the form of a story, almost a novella; it features Elizabeth Costello, an aging fiction writer who delivers a series of lectures on our treatment of animals at a small American college, and discusses the content of her lectures with various members of the college faculty. Overall, Diamond's is a paper that connects the thought of Hughes, Coetzee, and Cavell, in probing the ways in which the world can resist our thinking — try to grasp the deadness of Hughes' six young men, once so alive — and in pressing the question whether philosophy as 'we know it can avoid a deflective substitution of 'a painless intellectual surrogate for real disturbance' (as Hacking defines Diamond's notion of deflection [60]). Enter here Costello's woundedness in the face of our treatment of non-human animals, as compared to the academics' rational discourse about animal rights.

Cavell, in 'Companionable Thinking', comments directly on Diamond, and he does indeed focus on humans' duties to non-human animals. I agree with McDowell that this is a somewhat misconceived focus, one that shortchanges Diamond's treatment of Cavellian themes (128). While his contribution is somewhat meandering and tentative — it includes such phrases as 'I think that I have felt that way' (102) — he touches on some interesting ideas during his commentary. Cavell examines the relevance of Wittgenstein's study of 'seeing as' to the variety of human responses to the mass production of animals for food: to what should we attribute this variety? (93) To differences in sensibility? To differences in levels of knowledge about the industry? He also touches on the moral quality of the impulse to argue about animal rights (he shares what he takes to be Diamond's view that such an impulse is 'morally suspicious') (102).

McDowell ('Comment on Stanley Cavell's "Companionable Thinking"') nicely weaves together questions about our treatment of animals and questions about scepticism. As McDowell usefully relates Diamond's interest in Coetzee's Elizabeth Costello, Costello becomes unhinged by our dealing with other animals in the way one might become unhinged by the realization of how profoundly unknowable one is by others (136). Whether one ought to read Costello as unhinged is questioned in 'Deflections', by Hacking, whom

she struck as being nothing other than completely sane (152). McDowell also raises the spectre of (moral) realism and its attendant questions in describing Costello's vision of our dealing with animals and its relation to her own sense of isolation from others as a 'putative perception' (136). Hacking does not think that McDowell's use of 'putative reality' helps, because it leaves open the possibility that Costello's putative reality shows that *she* is unhinged, when in fact, as Hacking puts it, it is 'reality itself that unhinges her' (152-3). Hacking is similarly wary of Cavell's invocation of 'seeing as'. Here we have hard-nosed discussion of general questions of realism, and a nice bringing together of the various threads of the volume.

Does it all depend on how you see things? Hacking poses this question in the midst of discussing the animals-for-food industry (148). Not on McDowell's reading of Diamond. It is precisely this reading that drives one of McDowell's (justified) criticisms of Cavell. Cavell's contention that we have equal exposure to *information* about the meat industry, which leads him to frame Diamond's thought in terms of aspect seeing, precludes the recognition of Diamond's view that 'animals simply *are* our fellows' (127-8). One might also pose Hacking's question with respect to the power of academic philosophy to meet head-on these and the related questions of scepticism. Coetzee's overall story — his own lecture — is followed by responses from four academics in related fields (including Peter Singer, author of *Animal Liberation*). As McDowell so nicely characterizes Diamond's take on the commentators' contributions, those pieces 'provide an analogue for how philosophy in the academic mode avoids what is really at issue in its engagements with scepticism' (138). Standard philosophical argument, followed by comments on that argument, is not on offer here; exposing and troublesome questions are. Those up for the inconclusiveness of exploratory philosophizing will find a usually subtle, if not somewhat disjointed, meditation on the intersection of those questions.

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Ted Cohen

Thinking of Others: On the Talent for Metaphor.
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2008.
Pp. 104.

US\$29.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-691-13746-9).

This is a slim book on a focused topic; yet its implications stretch wider than its slight format and narrow scope might lead one to assume. The 'talent for metaphor' invoked in the book's subtitle is the 'indispensable' human ability to see one thing as another. Cohen's thesis is that the construction and comprehension of metaphors requires an ability that is the same as the human capacity for understanding one another. Indeed, without the talent for metaphor, our moral and aesthetic lives would 'scarcely be possible' (13).

Cohen assumes a very broad understanding of metaphor and does not intend his work to be a contribution to the literature on metaphor as such. His main concern is with what he calls 'metaphors of personal identification'. In these, either a general term is predicated of a specific person, or a specific person is identified with a proper name or definite description. 'Jane is bright, but her brother Jack is dull' are examples of the first type. Examples of the second include, 'Juliet is the sun' and Churchill's description of Mussolini in a 1941 speech as 'the merest utensil of his master's will' (5). Cohen draws on Arnold Isenberg's seminal paper, 'Critical Communication', to help explain the function of metaphorical language. In using metaphors, a speaker attempts to induce a 'sameness of vision' in listeners. To grasp the metaphor of Mussolini as a utensil is to see a new kind of compound and to see Mussolini in a specific relation to others. This sameness of vision may or may not be followed by a community of feeling. In grasping Churchill's metaphor and seeing Mussolini in this new way we may come to have similar feelings about him as Churchill did.

The creation and comprehension of metaphor thus involves thinking of one thing, say, Juliet, as something that it plainly is not, e.g., a large fiery orb. That same capacity is put to work in our understanding of others. Understanding other people frequently involves thinking of oneself as another. Note that this is not the same as 'putting oneself in another's shoes', to invoke a well-worn metaphor. The issue is not how you would respond in a given situation but how it would feel to be another person in that situation. The challenge is not to imagine, 'how would I feel if God commanded me to kill my child?' but rather, 'how would it feel to be Abraham, and to be commanded by God to kill my child?' Cohen concedes that mutual human understanding may not be possible. However we may nonetheless have an obligation to try to understand one another, all the while recognizing that it cannot be done with complete success. Related challenges include the difficulty of appreciating how others might see oneself, and of identifying with future versions of oneself.

Cohen uses many well-chosen examples to illustrate and defend his claims, drawing on movies, sports, poetry and novels. His central example is the sto-

ry of Nathan and David from the second book of Samuel in the Hebrew Bible. David sleeps with another man's wife, impregnates her, and then effectively has her husband killed by sending him on a dangerous military mission. David is unable to see the wrongness of his actions until the prophet Nathan tells him the story of a heartless rich man who sins against a poor man. When David expresses outrage at the rich man's actions, Nathan tells him, 'You are that man'. The success of Nathan's metaphorical identification of David with the rich man in the story is seen in David's self-disgust. Nathan succeeds in bringing about sameness of vision and a community of feeling between himself and David.

In keeping with much of his earlier work, including *Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts on Joking Matters* (University of Chicago Press 1999), Cohen maintains an anti-theoretical stance in this book. Although metaphorical identification with others is said to be incumbent upon some people at some times in some circumstances, Cohen claims that no rules can be given about this. While a reluctance to over-claim for one's position, especially in moral matters, is surely a philosophical virtue, it can also be frustrating. Sometimes I wanted Cohen to say more about the nature of moral thought as he conceives it, and the nature of the responsibilities inherent in our talent for metaphor. What is the nature of the person who fails to metaphorically identify with others, or who fails even to notice that such identification may be required? What kind of failure is the failure to realize the duty of metaphorical identification with others? Cohen also concedes to some earlier critics of his work that metaphorical identification is not risk-free, morally speaking. We may so strongly identify with others that we fail to appreciate their wrong-doing, and this would be a moral failure. While Cohen admits that we must take notice of this possibility, I would have liked him to say more. How do we take notice? Are there conditions under which it might be better not to attempt metaphorical identification? And while Cohen is likely correct in claiming that no formula can be given for grasping a metaphor, some indications of how we might do so would have been welcome.

Cohen might claim that the concerns I have brought up merely indicate that he and I have different temperaments. I admit that my own capacity for metaphorical identification may not allow me to put myself in the place of a 'largely unreconstructed advocate' (36) of ordinary language philosophy, as Cohen calls himself. Yet the frustrations I have indicated with this book do not lessen my high estimation of it. This is really philosophy at its best: clearly written and free from jargon, sophisticated yet unpretentious, and highly engaging.

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George Crowder and Henry Hardy, eds.
The One and the Many: Reading Isaiah Berlin.
New York: Prometheus Books 2007.
Pp. 335.
US\$28.98 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-1-59102-448-4).

Sir Isaiah Berlin is one of the twentieth century's greatest defenders of political liberalism. Since his death in 1997, there has been a flood-tide of literature concerning every aspect of his thought. This book, however, is the first comprehensive collection of critical essays on Berlin. The editors' avowed aim is to provide a systematic introduction to Berlin's work 'across its whole range' (9).

They have succeeded admirably in this superlative volume. Its thirteen essays, the majority of which were commissioned for this book, offer a road-map through an intellectual landscape which in its abundance, variety and fertility has rarely been matched in modern scholarship. As one commentator notes, Berlin is the 'Diderot of our age' (141).

All of Berlin's work can be read as a defense of liberal values. In particular, he sought to mount a philosophical defense of value pluralism against all forms of idealism, utopianism and absolutism, whether emanating from the political right or left, or from the philosophical speculations of Plato or Hegel. In a word, Berlin sought to defend the Many against the One. One of his leitmotifs was a saying of Kant's: 'Out of the crooked timber of humanity no straight thing was ever made.' The deep-seated tendency towards monism in Western thought — toward, that is, the idea that all genuine moral values must somehow fit together in a comprehensive and coherent whole — needed to be resisted, for it betrays one of the central facts about human beings. As Henry Hardy writes in the book's last chapter, 'Taking Pluralism Seriously', 'human nature is essentially flexible and self-transforming, and can accommodate a large variety of substantively distinct approaches to life without suffering violation' (284).

Moreover, as the twentieth century made abundantly clear, attempts to arrive at a definitive account of human nature, to posit the 'one true answer', the 'one best way' to live, or to derive a 'final solution' leads to fanaticism, political disaster and ultimately great inhumanity. As a young boy in Petrograd, Berlin had witnessed in the first days of the Russian Revolution a policeman being marched off by an angry mob — likely to his death. Berlin's life was ever after marked by 'his abiding fear of revolutionary violence and political extremism in general' (19). As David Miller writes, Berlin takes seriously the 'imperfections and the cultural diversity of the human species, and the resulting moral impossibility of laying down any single set of rules, any common framework of government, to encompass the very different ways human beings have chosen to live together' (182).

For Berlin, it is not so much that those who profess to 'really know the truth' will necessarily adopt illiberal and intolerant attitudes. There is no necessary connection between monism and a zealous authoritarianism; we

can always resist the temptation to impose ourselves on others, however just, noble or righteous we think our cause. But the empirical fact of the matter is that the conviction of truth and righteousness strongly disposes humans towards fanaticism, and makes it 'much easier to justify intolerance, coercion and despotism' (146). It is for this reason that Berlin provides his robust defense of pluralism and negative freedom ('freedom from') in 'Two Concepts of Liberty', his best known essay and among the most cited works in all of modern political philosophy. Mario Ricciardi provides an insightful reading of this classic paper in Chapter 5, 'Berlin on Liberty'.

Berlin is best known as a political philosopher, but others are drawn to his work for independent reasons. After the second world war, Berlin shifted his academic interests and famously abandoned philosophy, claiming thereafter that he was a historian of ideas more than a philosopher. But as several of the authors in this collection are quick to point out, whether or not we choose to accept his claim at face value all depends on how we understand the philosophical enterprise. While it is true that, like many before and after him, Berlin was frustrated by the ahistorical and abstract approach to philosophy as it was practiced in Oxford, it is probably more accurate to say that what Berlin abandoned was not philosophy per se, but rather *analytic* philosophy. In 'Berlin and History', Ryan Patrick Hanley avers that 'to read Berlin's later historical work is indeed to realize that he cannot be said ever to have "left" philosophy' (160).

Whatever his status as a philosopher, Berlin is among the foremost historians of the Enlightenment, that famously tangled web of revolutionary ideals, thoughts and aspirations. The Enlightenment, along with those movements which were a response to it — namely, the Counter-Enlightenment and Romanticism — forged the modern age. As Berlin's thought attests, in an important sense we are still living through many of the controversies of the eighteenth century. It is a period which Berlin found deeply sympathetic, and it is the era which more than any other forms the well-spring of Berlin's thoughts.

One of the fascinating chapters in the book is Graeme Garrard's 'Strange Reversals: Berlin on the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment'. As Garrard notes 'there are few individuals one can more easily imagine blending into the eighteenth century 'republic of letters' than Berlin' (141). Garrard points out that while Berlin applauded the Enlightenment's opposition to superstition and authority and its 'emancipatory drive to free minds' (144), Berlin's reading of such Counter-Enlightenment figures as Maistre, Haman, Sorel and Fichte, lead him to see in the Enlightenment project a new and very modern form of intellectual tyranny. The monist belief that 'some single formula can in principle be found whereby all the diverse ends of men can be harmoniously realized' (145) is transformed into the Enlightenment belief that scientific knowledge alone can save us. Science, rather than revealed religion was now to be our savior. So, '[w]hile he admired the Enlightenment for destroying one form of despotism, he condemned it for erecting another form in its place' (147), one which ironically exhibited 'many of the

same zealous and intolerant tendencies of the religious fundamentalism it opposed' (145). Despite the Enlightenment's concern for individual freedom and its insistence on such liberal virtues as self-restraint, tolerance and mutual respect, Berlin nevertheless sees in the Enlightenment a tendency to foster that very political despotism which it ostensibly sets itself against. As with other systems of thought, the Enlightenment's dogmatic insistence on a single method of understanding human nature — namely, the understanding brought about by employing the methods of science — is at bottom yet another statement of the singularity of truth.

How best to study human nature is, of course, a debate which continues to this day. If we reject the methods of natural science along with its corresponding value-neutrality as an appropriate methodology, then where do we turn? Berlin's answer draws heavily on Vico, who distinguished carefully between the methods of enquiry appropriate to natural phenomena and those methods most appropriate to studying history, culture, and the human condition. For Berlin, the forms of enquiry appropriate to the study of the human differ from the study of the natural sciences in two fundamental ways. First, unlike the vaunted value-neutrality of the natural sciences, human enquiry must reject such neutrality. Enquiry into human affairs inescapably requires one to judge and make hard choices, for one simply cannot indiscriminately examine everything. The abandonment of neutrality as a methodological desideratum has enormous consequences, and irrevocably puts paid to any specious comparison whereby the natural sciences are held as a model for enquiries into the world of human undertakings. Second, the study of human phenomena does not lend itself to the sort of exactitude and numerical accuracy we expect from enquiries in the natural world. Following Aristotle, we should look only for the precision and accuracy the subject matter allows. The study of human affairs, by its very nature, precludes the quantification and exactitude appropriate for enquiries into the physical world. Berlin writes, 'Where the natural sciences seek to demonstrate the truth of facts, in history we demand tolerance, and we demand it to a large extent because, whatever the quality is that we are looking for, it is not quite truth in the sense in which we demand it in these other more positive fields. What it is to be called I do not know — acceptability, plausibility' (164).

There is an odd convergence between Berlin's thought and his various personas. Just as he eschewed the One in favor of the Many, so too was his own life an amalgam of three constitutive parts: Jewish, Russian, and English. This was a unique and exotic inheritance, one which afforded him an unusual perspective on the world. These themes are examined more closely in chapters by Andrzej Walicki ('Berlin and the Russian Intelligentsia') and Shlomo Avineri ('A Jew and a Gentleman').

Berlin was doubtless one of the towering figures of twentieth-century political philosophy, one whose remarkably prolific enquiries left their mark in various arenas of human enquiry. Yet it is impossible to know how posterity will judge any man. In their introductory chapter, the editors ask: Is Berlin a thinker worthy of the acclaim afforded him? As the essays included in this

volume eloquently attest, the answer is a resounding 'yes', and Crowder and Hardy have provided a volume which does justice to their subject.

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Stanley B. Cunningham

Reclaiming Moral Agency:

The Moral Philosophy of Albert the Great.

Washington, DC: The Catholic University of
America Press 2008.

Pp. 306.

US\$79.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8132-1540-2).

In 1955 the eminent historian of medieval philosophy, Fernand van Steenberghen, pointed out that the chief merit of the thirteenth-century theologian Albert the Great is that he established, for the first time, the rightful position of learning in Christian culture. At first glance this might seem something of an exaggeration given the intellectual accomplishments of the early medieval monastic schools, not only in the Latin West, but in the Greek and Semitic East as well. It may also seem to overlook the various periods of Byzantine humanism as well as the liberal arts traditions among Armenian Christians and others. Yet, van Steenberghen's remark was made in the context of his discussion of the reception of Aristotle's works in the Latin West, and in this respect he was quite right to focus attention on Albert. Indeed, subsequent scholarship has made significant progress in detailing the ways in which Albert was a central figure in the thirteenth-century integration of Aristotelian naturalism and the Christian theological tradition derived from the ancient Church Fathers.

During the five decades following the publication of van Steenberghen's remark in his *Aristotle in the West*, scholarship has confirmed the importance of Albert in the Christian appropriation of Aristotle's naturalistic worldview. Much of this has been in the area of natural philosophy and metaphysics. James A. Weisheipl, for example, established Albert as the first to recognize clearly the distinctively Aristotelian conception of form as foundational to the study of nature. Weisheipl demonstrated that Albert's opposition to the mathematical reductionism of the School of Robert Grosseteste was grounded in a deep appreciation of the autonomous principles of physical nature. More recent scholarship has drawn attention to Albert's role in reviving Aristotle's long-dormant research programs in the natural sciences, especially in biol-

ogy. This new study by Cunningham extends this scholarship by arguing that Albert was the first thinker to combine systematically and comprehensively the naturalistic ethics of Aristotle with traditional Christian moral theology.

Albert, according to Cunningham, did much to change the landscape of moral philosophy in the Latin west. Prior to the reception of Aristotle's works, there existed no sustained effort to develop a science of ethics. This was largely due to lack of attention to the possibility of natural moral goodness. Following Augustine, most early medieval monastic writers had focused their attention on the necessity of divinely infused grace as a source for good human acts. Little attention was given to natural virtue and natural moral benefit. With the reception of Aristotle's ethical works, the natural human good became a central theme in moral philosophy, allowing significant development of both virtue theory and moral psychology. As the pivotal figure in this historic change, Albert provided a systematic account of naturally-acquired virtue as a foundation for a naturalistic conception of human happiness.

Cunningham opens his study by placing Albert's contributions to moral philosophy in the context of modern virtue theory. He goes on to detail the sources for a naturalistic ethics within Albert's massive literary corpus. Most important is the *De bono* which represents the first systematic treatment of virtue theory in the Latin West. This work is also the first to treat natural law in the context of a general account of moral goodness. In addition, Cunningham discusses Albert's two commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* as well as the ethical elements of Albert's various theological works. This is followed by a general account of Albert's significance for the history of ethics, extending earlier research such as Dom Odon Lottin's now classic study *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles*. From this account there emerges a clear picture of Albert's innovation in moral philosophy as well as his influence on other medieval thinkers, including his student Thomas Aquinas.

The remainder of the book is given over to a detailed study of the individual elements of Albert's moral philosophy. Cunningham begins with Albert's conception of moral science and its foundation in a metaphysics of the good. Turning to the virtues, he systematically sets out Albert's views on the causes, definition, and order of the virtues as well as his treatment of the passions. Cunningham also provides a treatment of Albert's contributions to the notions of natural law and *synderesis*, integrating this with the theory of virtue. Finally, Albert's views on friendship and ultimate human good are examined.

Especially important in Cunningham's account is his treatment of Albert's conception of the possibility of a moral science. Discussing this in the context of Albert's own insightful treatment of scientific method, Cunningham shows that a central element in Albert's innovative approach to the virtue theory is his grounding it in the methods and ontology of Aristotelian science. No less than the natural sciences, moral science is a search for causes, and it proceeds according to methods of causal demonstration. Moreover, the neces-

sity of actions in the moral world is suppositional, as are natural processes in general. These considerations nicely anticipate concerns of recent moral philosophers to ground virtue in biological function.

Cunningham's study of Albert's importance to the development of moral philosophy is to be recommended. Albert's place in the history of philosophy is still not generally appreciated and this book provides the sort of investigation needed to foster such appreciation. Earlier medievalists had considered Albert a scholar of great learning and enormous productivity, but of little philosophical originality. This view of Albert's place in intellectual history has changed radically in recent decades as scholars make progress in assimilating his massive literary output. Cunningham's study continues this process of recovery by disclosing Albert's importance for the development of Western ethics. The result is a significant contribution to the history of medieval moral thought as well as an important historical source study for those interested in modern virtue theory.

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Yuval Ginbar

*Why Not Torture Terrorists? Moral, Practical
and Legal Aspects of the 'Ticking Bomb'
Justification for Torture.*

New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Pp. 432.

US\$130.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-954091-4).

Occasioned by the events of 2001 and the ill-conceived 'war on terror', legal and philosophical interest in the ethics of torture has intensified. In my view Ginbar's book is the finest treatment to date. In part this is because of his unique background, which combines a PhD in law with substantial philosophical acumen and extensive practical experience working against torture as a representative both of Amnesty International and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel. The book reflects this synthesis of experience and expertise.

The central issue is the justification of torture. Should contemporary democratic states use torture, albeit only in supposedly extreme 'ticking bomb'

cases, or should it be absolutely prohibited? Apologists defend its use in supposedly carefully limited circumstances on utilitarian, virtue ethical and/or legal grounds. Ginbar's rejection of this is, to put it mildly, emphatic. He argues against torture under all possible circumstances. To achieve this aim, Ginbar employs a 'slippery surface' argument, maintaining that the same considerations that obligate agents to torture logically commits them to a much further range of evil actions (38). In doing so, he criticizes torture's defenders for their 'absolute anti-absolutism', the paradoxical belief that the torturer(s) is/are obligated to do anything, provided that the given action is perceived to be the least evil among the alternatives (40). As such, torture apologists lack *a priori* the all-important 'capping' principles that limit violence.

The book consists of four main parts. In Part 1 Ginbar introduces a 'pure' ticking bomb scenario (TBS) and explores the standard consequentialist arguments for torture. The TBS has the usual features: a bomb has been set in some arbitrary city; its explosion is imminent; there is no way to disarm the device without the bomber's aid; this 'terrorist' has been captured and interrogated by legitimate means, all of which have failed. In such circumstances, apologists argue, interrogators are obligated to torture. Failure to do so is choice of the greater evil and is morally blameworthy.

Ginbar acknowledges the hypothetical and extreme (and occasionally absurd) nature of these cases, but he insists on considering them, because a) thought experiments are legitimate in moral philosophy; b) the cases have some features in common with real world cases; c) some states (for example, Israel and the US) rely or have relied upon them in their defense of torture; and d) that it constitutes the strongest possible case for torture.

His main criticism of torture defenses concerns the uncapped nature of torture. It cannot be restricted and controlled in the way in which apologists desire; rather, 'if the catastrophe to be avoided is horrendous enough', then 'the torture of innocent persons, such as torture of members of the terrorist's family, would also be justified as a way of forcing the terrorist to disclose the life-saving information' (91). Likewise the arguments justify rape, suicide bombing and genocide. The same arguments that justify torture justify every other form of political violence and our humanity thereby gets swallowed.

Part 2 weds these slippery surface considerations to a detailed empirical assessment of the effects of torture. Here, Ginbar adds in slippery slope concerns that the permitting of torture in a TBS will inevitably lead to torture in other circumstances. Since torture will be used in non-TBS situations, and since the arguments for torture also entail suicide bombing, the employment of weapons of mass destruction on civilian populations and genocide, the arguments for torture exceed any supposed limitations. One result is that the introduction of torture risks its institutionalization. The implications for the legal and political culture of a democratic state are enormous, not to mention they are devastating for any target populations.

Parts 3 and 4 evaluate the legal consequences of torturing for the USA and Israel. According to Ginbar, Israel has tried to limit torture using two

different models: the first, a consequence of the Landau Commission, was employed from 1987-1999. Twelve years of experience demonstrated its abject failure. Significantly, Ginbar argues that this was a form of the 'torture warrant' model and thus constitutes empirical evidence of the inadequacy of Alan Dershowitz' famous suggestion that torture be controlled through a warrant procedure (199). Similarly, Ginbar evaluates the subsequent torture model developed following decisions of the Israeli High Court of Justice in 1999 and the USA's 'High Value Detainees' Model. The lack of success in all cases is clear.

Methodologically the book is excellent. Ginbar effortlessly weaves together interviews with torture survivors, writings of intelligence agents, and a sophisticated appreciation of moral philosophy and law. The bibliography is magnificent and displays the multi-disciplinarity and breadth of knowledge required to talk intelligently about torture.

While Ginbar's argument is extremely compelling, detailed attention to certain issues would improve it further. For example, although gender-related issues pervade his descriptions of actual tortures, he provides no analysis of the ways in which torture necessarily targets the gender of victims. The choice of torture techniques and the omnipresence of sexual insults and other humiliations are core to the attempted destruction of the self. Furthermore, the ways in which torture is experienced both by torturers and their victims, not to mention the sequelae experienced by survivors vary depending on gender. This is essential to understanding torture and would further support his analysis of its absolute wrongness. The same goes, where pertinent, for questions of race and class. Detailed discussion of the physiological, psychological and sociological impacts of torture would also be valuable. Furthermore, while Ginbar's analysis of the slippery slope and slippery surface nature of torture arguments is convincing, if anything he understates the absolute character of torture. Slippery slope arguments can leave the impression that institutionalization, for example, is a risk which careful attention to policy might mitigate. While I cannot argue the point here, there are good reasons to believe that state torture is necessarily institutional, and thus the choice to torture logically *entails* a wide range of sociological and institutional harms.

Ginbar has written the most important book to date on the ethics of torture. It is an essential and much-needed integration of the empirical and pragmatic concerns that should constrain any debate about the ethics of torture. Everyone interested in the ethics surrounding torture should read this.

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Ana Marta González, ed.

Contemporary Perspectives on Natural Law.

Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2008.

Pp. 334.

US\$124.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7546-6054-5).

This is a collection of papers delivered at a conference on natural law held at the University of Navarra in 2006, and it is a fitting collection to have come from the land of Suárez and Vitoria. Just as these and other great Spanish writers worked to elaborate Aquinas' brief discussions of law in the *Summa Theologiae* (principally I-IIae, Q 90-97) and elsewhere into a theory of law suitable for the emerging form of European state, so many of the contributions in this collection can be seen as reflections on natural law theory aimed at connecting it with intellectual traditions of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. However, those expecting that these elaborations will be of direct use in answering common current questions in jurisprudence, theoretical or practical, will be disappointed. The main concerns of much of the book are with issues that can properly be called foundational ones: questions about the metaphysical, psychological (in the philosophical sense), epistemological or anthropological (also in the philosophical sense) bases of natural law.

The tone is set by an introductory discussion by González on natural law as a 'limiting concept', i.e., one 'loaded with tensions, the understanding of which represents a true intellectual achievement' (13). In the Aristotelian tradition, including the Thomistic development of it, nature is an intrinsic determinant of the action (motion and rest) of a thing. Law, however, is commonly understood as an external determinant of action: it involves a command from a superior, and natural law is seen by Aquinas as an active participation in a fundamentally normative eternal law that good is to be done and evil is to be avoided. This participation involves our powers of practical reason and the ultimate orientation of natural appetite and will towards that which is good. Aquinas makes the connection through the habit of *synderesis*, a second nature tendency of guiding practical reasoning by the aim of achieving good, but he maintains that this habit will govern action properly only if our natural inclinations toward various goods are informed by acquired virtues. Moreover, the good consistent with the natural law may be recognized on the basis of natural inclination, but it may also be a condition merely not ruled out by natural inclination and sufficient to bring about some common good. On this basis, positive law and social institutions can be seen as embraced by the natural law, even when they do not arise directly from a correct understanding of the objects of natural inclination. In this discussion, González endeavors to connect a traditionally Thomistic theory of intellect, inclination and will with the concerns of some 20th century natural lawyers for the character of practical reasoning and ultimate human goods. She also aims to reconcile a doctrine of fundamental human uniformity with recognition of the variability of its expression.

The book then continues in three main sections. The first is historical, and it includes a discussion by Russell Hittinger of the social and intellectual context from which Aquinas' theory of natural law emerged. This is followed by an account by Juan Cruz Cruz of a central controversy among natural law theorists during the sixteenth-century golden age, responding to earlier disputes over the role of God's intellect and God's will in the constitution of natural law. As the tradition developed, natural law came to be seen as not only *indicative* of good and evil, but also as normative, i.e., as a rule prohibiting evil and commanding good, resting on God's role as legislator for creation, but present in people as a command of human reason to the will. While in one way it is outside the individuals it commands, it is nevertheless engraved in them, 'an *intrinsic proximate rule* of human acts' (58, quoting Suárez, *De Legibus*, Lib. II c.5 n.12).

The later chapters of the first section include a discussion by Knud Haakonsen of the two-sided Protestant development of the natural law tradition, first in the more voluntaristic stream represented by Hobbes, Pufendorf and Thomasius (and probably Grotius), and second in the more rationalistic form advocated by Clarke, Leibniz and Wolff. Haakonsen notes the tendencies of the former tradition to extreme forms of conventionalism about right and the state. Jeffrey Edwards, María Jesús Soto-Bruna and Alejandro G. Vigo write of Kant's response to, and selective appropriation of, certain aspects of natural law theory, particularly those developed by Hutcheson and Leibniz, while Montserrat Herrero discusses relation of freedom and nature in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*.

The second section of the book is entitled 'Controversial Issues about Natural Law'. These controversies seem to arise mainly in the tradition of natural law thinking associated with the Roman Catholic variant of Christian philosophy, although they should be of more general interest. Alfredo Cruz Prados asks what the practical value of the doctrine of natural law is (161), and he concludes that it tells us 'nothing new about practical or moral knowledge and throws no new light on practical reasoning' (165). What is more, it offers no genuine motive for action. Simply realizing that the action properly concluded to by practical reason is part of a *law* for us does not advance our decision to act because what our reason tells us serves the good in a particular case needs confirmation by a recognition that there is a command to serve the good in that case. It also works against the proper characterization of a truly free act as one done spontaneously because of the value of the action selected. According to Prados, Aquinas holds that God wants us to act according to our own good, because it is good (169). Prados concludes that the doctrine of natural law has no genuine practical value, and consequently does not belong to the domain of moral philosophy. Instead it solves a theoretical problem: how to reconcile our moral knowledge that we ought to do good freely because it is good with a central principle of theology, that God is the creator and lawgiver for all that exists (170). Prados then rejects the view of John Finnis that the 'natural law method' enables us to draw from 'basic

principles of practical reasonability' a set of moral principles to guide action (171, quoting Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, passim.).

Alejandro Llano has no particular difficulty with a role for first principles in practical philosophy; instead, he is in part concerned with the means by which we can come to know them. Christopher Martin maintains that goodness is relational while denying value relativism. This position fits nicely with one broadly Aristotelian tradition. In an aside he notes one of the real centers of controversy among writers on natural law, namely the split between adherents of the 'new natural law theory' and those of 'classical natural law theory' (188). The latter read natural law from considerations of the natural characteristics of humans and the environment in which they live. This requires a method for correctly discerning these natures. They draw conclusions about the correct application of practical reason largely from the results of applying the method. The former, best represented by Finnis and his associates, move from examining the normative character of practical reasoning to conclusions about human good. Only afterwards do they draw conclusions about what it means to be a deliberating actor oriented to achieving certain characteristic goods. While Martin displays some sympathy for the 'new' view — and the opinions of the historians would be difficult to determine from what they have written here — the other contributors to the volume seem to have a largely classicist bent.

One important, intriguing exception is Carmelo Vigna. His approach is *sui generis*, neither based on late developments of the medieval metaphysical tradition nor reliant on the techniques of analytic philosophy used by many 'new' theorists, but instead grounded in a phenomenological account of the human condition as *logos*, understood as an opening to consciousness of the world in which meaning is constituted intersubjectively in a manner that requires recognition of and by others. Vigna claims that the Golden Rule can be derived as a basic normative principle from this condition, and that its near universality can be explained by it.

The third section of the book addresses a key part of the classicist agenda. One objection to classicism is that, while it requires a teleological understanding of the world (with each kind of thing having as its natural aim a state of completion towards which it tends), it is no longer scientifically acceptable to explain things teleologically. Such goal-directedness may apply to human action and the reasons given for it, but cannot apply to the nature of things in general. Each of the contributions in this section tries make room for at least a limited kind of natural teleology. The most startling is David Oderberg's effort to defend a limited *inorganic* teleology.

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Paul A. Gregory

Quine's Naturalism:

Language, Theory and the Knowing Subject.

New York: Continuum 2008.

Pp. 176.

US\$143.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-9099-5).

W. V. Quine's naturalized conception of knowledge has been famously criticized as a circular, radical changing of the subject that fails to address the normative concerns of traditional epistemology. The central aim of this volume is to defend Quine's naturalized epistemology against these criticisms, while further arguing that it is both radical and philosophically significant. Gregory is unusually sensitive to the way this debate raises profound meta-epistemological issues concerning what counts as a legitimate conception of epistemology and what its proper aims should be. He presents a useful exploration of the commitments underlying both Quine's and his critics' contrasting perspectives on human knowledge, and he notes how they shape their divergent epistemological motives. A central element of Gregory's interpretation highlights Quine's radical conception of the 'knowing subject' as a Darwinian creature adapting to its natural environment and how this is related to his further views concerning meaningfulness, the connections between language and theory, and the normative elements of epistemology. The result is an insightful interpretation and defense of Quine's naturalized epistemology.

Gregory begins with a careful exegesis of Quine's programmatic remarks in his 'Epistemology Naturalized', showing how they have led critics to conclude that naturalized epistemology is circular, and nonnormative (6-18). These criticisms are interrelated: if Quine is interested in only describing scientific practice rather than evaluating it, then his use of scientific results in his account seems unproblematic. This further encourages the so-called 'replacement interpretation', where Quine's naturalized epistemology is seen as rejecting normative concerns in favor of a descriptive account of the links between stimulation and theory (22). Gregory first addresses why Quine is unmoved by the complaint that his view is circular. Here he discusses a central but frequently misunderstood theme in Quine's work: his view that philosophical and scientific inquiries always begin from within an ongoing set of theoretical commitments. This view is a consequence of Quine's well-known dismantling of the analytic-synthetic distinction, here characterized as a distinction between language as a neutral structure of expression and theoretical commitment to sentences of that structure (39). Quine's indifference to the circularity charge stems from the collapse of such a language-theory distinction. The result is that speaking a meaningful language comes with rudimentary, if still substantial, theoretic commitments, thus giving his position an admittedly circular structure.

Gregory further argues that the circularity criticism rests on the linear propositional support (LPS) norm, where justification of a theory or claim

must be non-circular and involve linear inferences from premise to conclusion (66-7). Quine's view that we must begin from within some theory involves an implicit rejection of the LPS requirement. From his perspective, the demand that we must avoid circularity is then based on a mistaken understanding of the relationship between language and theory. Gregory next addresses the replacement interpretation and its emphasis on the normative and descriptive as inferentially isolated categories (90-91). While Quine's epistemology does not seek a grounding of science, it remains concerned with describing procedures that best promote theories with successful predictions. Once we have accepted Quine's criterion that prediction is the test of theory, these descriptions yield further normative claims. Epistemic norms emerge as hypotheses concerning the effectiveness of methods in meeting the criterion of successful prediction, and these norms then permit the critical evaluation of epistemic practices (96-7). Quine then offers us an instrumental view of normativity emphasizing continual test, refutation and subsequent modification of theory. Gregory also addresses the worry that without an independent grounding for our theories, we cannot be sure if they correctly capture the objective truth (108-17). He explains how Quine's pragmatic stance emphasizes that all we can reasonably ask of our theories is that they be structured so to yield successful predictions. It is only with such a structure that we gain our sense of objects and objectivity.

Gregory concludes by responding to the claim that Quine's view is a philosophically uninteresting and irrelevant change of the subject (122-32). He argues that underlying the criticisms of Quine's epistemology is an interconnected group of presuppositions consisting of the LPS requirement, a language-theory distinction, and a view of the knower as an isolated intellect. By rejecting this group of presuppositions Gregory claims that Quine is radically changing the subject, but that this remains philosophically important because of its challenge to traditional epistemology. Interestingly, this does not, in his opinion, result in a stalemate between conflicting intuitions (130). Rather, it reveals the traditional view as resting on theoretical presuppositions that make it, like Quine's view, also circular. Given this broadly shared naturalist backdrop, Gregory suggests that we evaluate which view better conforms to our understanding of our ourselves and our relation to our environment — hinting, perhaps, that when seen in this light Quine's view has the upper hand. It remains unclear how far this analysis extends, and which critics are implicitly committed to these 'traditional' presuppositions. Take Carnap, for example, Quine's main critical target. While of course he accepts some version of a language-theory distinction, he would further reject the LPS requirement — he too accepts holism — and the view of the knower as isolated intellect (see Alan Richardson, *Carnap's Construction of the World*, CUP 1998). Nevertheless, he would remain critical of Quine's naturalized conception of epistemology.

Gregory's emphasis on Quine's view of the knowing subject as an adaptive creature is important, since it tends to be understated within Quine's work. In light of the assumptions found within the history of modern philosophy,

it is perhaps correct to further emphasize its radical nature. But, contrary to Gregory's claim, this view is not new (123). Dewey, James, and Peirce each in their own distinctive way stress that we view human knowers from this Darwinian perspective. Quine's view of the subject as 'an adaptive organism and the language/theory complex as a tool facilitating the organism's interaction with the environment' (129) highlights affinities with Dewey's instrumentalism, further suggesting that Quine should not be so reluctant in his pragmatism. But from the perspective of these classical pragmatists, Quine's view may not be radical enough. Gregory explains that, for Quine, adaptive pressure is exerted by the environment on individuals and theory (128), where this is achieved through sensory stimulation (or neural input) at our surfaces (107, 118). But as active agents in a Darwinian world, it is the interaction with the surrounding 'worldly' environment that provides the adaptive friction for attempts at problem solving. One might have thought that a truly radical empiricism would focus on this interactive environmental context of human inquiry.

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Ulrich Haase

Starting with Nietzsche.

New York: Continuum 2009.

Pp. 192.

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US\$19.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-1-8470-6163-8).

Haase has written a short, direct, and solid prose account of Nietzsche's writing which exposes Nietzsche's radical and historically essential ideas, and which thereby raises the possibility that his ideas will be properly understood by a new audience with the help of a compass which the works do not themselves offer.

At a point in history in which European humanity had lost its ground without having chosen to do so (4), Nietzsche saw himself as revealing the nature of that moment of history. The openness and clarity of Nietzsche's writing (10), the way his words are addressed to a wide audience, is a lure, however; he intends, as he says, only those who are strong enough, after understanding these ideas, and recognising the truth of our times in them, to afterward escape. Haase presents a Nietzsche who looked at history and

to the future, imagining an existence beyond decadent European humanity, knowing that only a new type of strong, differently constituted 'overhuman' would emerge from the nihilistic situation.

Haase begins the book by describing Nietzsche's positive creative response to our historical crisis by reading line by line the poem 'Roundelay', while announcing that he intends to give *Zarathustra* more consideration than is typical amongst scholars (1). These poetically expressed ideas are not the truth itself as 'the truth' has been understood from a metaphysical perspective, but are responses to the historical situation of the late modern period in which the major historical event is the death of God. Nietzsche sought to have his own truths made unbelievable, and knew that they had a historical value and not an eternal one (21). Rather than the transcendental, the supra-temporal and the ideal as the ground of truth and reality, Nietzsche proposes the depth of the world, the body, the 'greater history', and the material depth from which history is made, proposing that in the suffering of the world is also the joy of life and certain future in which we gain a taste for life (26).

Haase makes the original point that these ideas were the result of his reading Hegel (71), and that in the early emphasis on history in the *Untimely Meditations* and *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche makes this vision of history the theme and content of his thinking on the world (73). In those first works, Nietzsche sought to liberate Europe from idealism and an attachment to the facts of the world which depend on it; crucially, he saw the idealistic and monotheistic origins of science as ending in nihilism. He sought to find a way beyond these transcendentially grounded sciences by reviving the spirit of Greece in the manner of the renaissance (86).

The book's four chapters tackle four dominant preoccupations in Nietzsche's work. In the first chapter, the 'love of fate' or the love of history and the actual way of things is explained. To love history is to admit of self-contradiction and to a love of contradictory things, and it follows that if humans are results of history, then their distinct identity is necessarily a temporary illusion, as is the self-identity of facts (22). History is important because its story is our own personal story (31), and the material universe is not distinct from the material of our body. In his middle period and later, Nietzsche demonstrated this to himself by taking up perspectives beyond himself, contradictory ones, so that he was in the end able to say, 'I am all the names of history'.

Thinking after the Greeks can liberate us from fact and idealism, and introduce us into the more real reality of the body and its incipient strangeness. Pre-Platonic, the Greeks were not subject to believing in the facts. By contrast, with its science, its objective account of history and the past, Nietzsche's era is the era of the historical malady in which we have no past or future. We merely exist in the moment: this is the central critique of our own day. The Last Men (60), modern men, since the death of God, live in and only for the present and are unfree because they cling too much to deliberation, facts, and a superficial freedom which renders us, Hamlet-like, and at heart, without freedom to decide, and without freedom to be different from each

other (61). The Last Men consider human life to have infinite worth and absolute value, but they also see it as no more than a complex form of matter: a contradiction which cannot be resolved and is hardly observed by them.

Despite trying to overcome his own era and its transcendental roots, Nietzsche remains Platonic in his faith in self-determination. As Haase points out, Nietzsche is Platonistic in his programmatic advice that the state take part in selecting, breeding and educating children to become the overhumans of the future (62).

In Chapter 3 Haase follows Nietzsche as he turned to the study of science. Nietzsche saw his as a historically situated philosophy, and he insisted that he was of his age, and therefore that he was a nihilist and scientific thinker himself. He embraced science, particularly a scientific view of psychology backed up by the then current insights of biology, in order to understand atheism or the 'murder' of God (97). Science is the form under which man 'desires nothing' (122). In a time when philosophy must recognise that science is an art which has forgotten what it is, he wholeheartedly embraced it with the aim of recognizing its historical necessity (115) as the 'art' of a self-destructive age.

These thoughts, expressed through Nietzsche's early and middle works, were refined and fully achieved in three later notions: will to power, eternal return, and the overhuman. Chapter 4 discusses these with a clear and never turgid or difficult style and investigates Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return linking those who understand it with those who will the successor-breed of the human race to become real in some sense (146). Haase decodes passages from Zarathustra and other symbols which stud Nietzsche's works, such as the 'spirit of gravity' (147), and the dream of climbing toward knowledge of the eternal return. His discussions of these quasi-symbols are often quite new. The way in which an idea can change the ontological status of the person and the world is investigated (155). This final chapter is particularly deserving of careful reading. The book as a whole has a coherence and liveliness which more than fulfils its purpose of introducing students to Nietzsche.

Jason A. Powell

Gary Hagberg

*Describing Ourselves: Wittgenstein and
Autobiographical Consciousness.*

New York: Oxford University Press 2008.

Pp. 288.

US\$70.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-1992-3422-6).

In his Introduction, Hagberg writes: 'The voluminous writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein contain some of the most profound reflections of our time on the nature of the human subject and self-understanding — the human condition, philosophically speaking' (1). He continues by stating that one of his principal aims in writing the book is 'to help clarify that significance, while at the same time assessing and exploring the multiform implications of those writings for our understanding particularly of autobiographical (and more generally, self-descriptive) writing' (*ibid.*). Exploring the significance for autobiographical writing of Wittgenstein's reflections on the philosophy of mind and consciousness, Hagberg covers such diverse figures as Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Goethe, Dostoevsky, Iris Murdoch, and of course, Augustine. As suggested by the Introduction's title, 'Confronting the Cartesian Legacy', the book is written as a steady denunciation of the misleading metaphysical pictures inherited from the Cartesian philosophy of mind, pictures that Hagberg admits are easily read into the autobiographer's task if it is left unexamined: 'On this model — a model deeply enforced by this unanalyzed or semi-reflective conception of autobiographical *revelation* — autobiographical truth is thus construed in terms of correspondence, but correspondence turned inward: that autobiographical sentence or proposition is true which corresponds to the inward fact of the case as transparently known only to the writer' (132).

Hagberg's book is committed to disabusing us of these kinds of notions, principally along the lines that there need not be such an inward fact, typically viewed as a kind of 'mental process', to make this self-description true, and that the self need not be transparent to the self and the self alone. While much has been written on these two topics, their relation to specifically autobiographical forms of writing has certainly not been explored sufficiently, and Hagberg's book is a welcome addition here. Hagberg argues that the inherent sense found in diverse autobiographical writings, for which the many great writers he has selected provide ample evidence, should dissuade us from these metaphysically misleading tendencies at the root of the Cartesian picture of mind. In his discussion of Augustine, for example, he writes: 'As is now fairly evident, if the [pre-Wittgensteinian] picture of the self thinking that is in question here were accurate, such losses of self of the kind he retrospectively diagnoses, and such believed but false self-representation, would be extraordinarily puzzling if not metaphysically impossible. Indeed, if the self's epistemic circumstances truly were as this picture of the autobiographical situation suggests, phrases like "losing oneself" and "false self-representa-

tion" would be much like linguistic analogues to M. C. Escher's architectural drawings: drawable or sayable, but impossible' (135).

It is a worthwhile and timely pursuit, admirably carried out. There is, however, one persistent difficulty with Hagberg's text that is at times difficult to overcome. Ultimately, one has the impression that two parallel books are being written here, one about autobiography and the other about consciousness, and the problem is that it is very likely readers interested in the one will not be interested in the other. This is not because the two are unrelated — far from it. Rather, it is because the levels at which the two discourses are conducted are too divergent. On the one hand, the majority of readers interested in what Wittgenstein has to say about a topic as unorthodox as autobiography will not require such an in-depth and detailed treatment of the generally orthodox (though well-expounded) reading of Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind that Hagberg supplies. On the other hand, those readers interested primarily in Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind will most likely not find Hagberg's far-reaching references to the autobiographical writings of Augustine, Kierkegaard, and Dostoevsky any more enlightening than Wittgenstein's own examples, in *Philosophical Investigations* and elsewhere. Consequently, the issues brought out time and again throughout the book remain unfortunately at the level of analogy, and never seem to develop into a unique position on either autobiographical writing or the philosophy of mind. This gives the misleading impression that autobiography is just another literary form of writing with interesting consequences for a Wittgensteinian conception of language, which completely fails to acknowledge — even if it were to refute the idea — that there very well may be something *essentially autobiographical* about Wittgenstein's philosophy. This is a gross oversight, attested to by the fact that among the many examples of autobiographical writing Hagberg surveys, fictional as well as factual, Wittgenstein's own immense and philosophically loaded collection of explicitly autobiographical remarks never figures. Similarly, one could point to the fact that throughout the book, as the title of the Introduction makes abundantly clear, autobiography is meant to confront 'Cartesianism' in the philosophy of mind, but nowhere is it acknowledged that Descartes' own *Meditations on First Philosophy* was written precisely as an autobiographical tale, taking account of his own musing on the nature of self, mind, and God over a period of several days.

Details such as these attest to Hagberg's having squarely placed Wittgenstein and Descartes on one side of a line separating philosophy from art and autobiographical writings on the other. Though he demonstrates that there are many interesting parallels to be drawn here, there remains nothing connecting them on a more fundamental level. While this may give the book an unfortunate flavor of dilettantism, such a criticism would ultimately be an unjustified and undeserved critique of Hagberg, whose work on Wittgenstein's influence in aesthetics is genuinely remarkable. It is rather that a topic such as this, were it to genuinely move past the level of analogy, may simply have too much potential to force a radical reevaluation of an entire

genre of writing — a task that would be impossible to deal with in a book of this scope. That said, Hagberg's coverage of the autobiographical pieces in his book is interesting and enlightening and if, as he states, his aim was only to use autobiographical writing to help clarify the significance of Wittgenstein's reflections on the self, he has done so. If one wanted to investigate the relation between philosophy and autobiography at a more fundamental level as well, he has also provided a solid foundation on which more detailed investigation can proceed.

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Craig Hovey

Nietzsche and Theology.

New York: Continuum 2008.

Pp. 176.

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US\$21.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-567-03152-5).

In his autobiography, Nietzsche claimed that his first, youthful philosophical essay was a theodicy in which he blamed God for the evils of the world. That work no longer exists. However, each of his principal works includes numerous critical, often caustic treatments of religious topics. His ultimate work on religion, *The Antichrist*, ends with a call to destroy Christianity, which he calls 'the ultimate corruption' of European humanity. His case against Christianity is usually based on morality. Christianity teaches harmful morals: it sees weakness as a virtue, self-loathing as a virtue, dependence on the neighbor as a virtue, blind faith as a virtue, superstition as a virtue, resentment against science as a virtue, and so on *ad nauseam*. In addition to these charges of moral perfidy, Nietzsche repeatedly indicts theological 'scholarship' as an anti-scientific, repeat offender against the intellectual conscience. Other religions do not often compare favorably with Christianity, though several of them score a point or two, especially where they are compatible with moral teachings that Nietzsche favored, such as self-assertion and personal development. In general, metaphysical and superstitious modes of thought are abandoned and repudiated by Nietzsche, and no moral authority is spared his moral critique.

Given all of this, it is surprising to find a Christian author attempting to lead believers directly into Nietzsche's texts, as Craig Hovey does. What one would expect from religious writers are books that attempt to rebut Nietzsche,

such as John Figgis' work of 1917, *The Will to Freedom: The Gospel of Nietzsche and the Gospel of Christ*, and Stephen N. Wilson's *The Shadow of the Antichrist: Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity* (2006). In stark contrast to these authors, Hovey's work 'does not attempt a wholesale Christian critique of Nietzsche' (10). Rather, it aims to produce 'a constructive engagement that allows Nietzsche to assist Christianity to hone its own theological rhetoric, refine its felicity for proclaiming the evangel in harmonious rather than jarring tones, and fund an uncompromising and fearless self-criticism' (11).

This work is not to be confused with *Nietzsche and Theology: Nietzschean Thought in Christological Anthropology*, by David Deane (2006), which employed Nietzschean psychological terminology to create new descriptions of traditional theological concerns, such as sin and self-deception. Nor is Hovey's work a competitor with *Nietzsche's Philosophy of Religion*, by Julian Young (2006), which looked at Nietzsche as a cultural thinker attempting to find a proper place for religion in a modern, skeptical world. Unlike Deane, Hovey makes minimal use of Nietzschean terms. Unlike Young, Hovey's focus is on Nietzsche's understanding of the world, rather than his understanding of religion's place in it. In fact, theological writers are mentioned no more than are non-theological authors, such as Michel Foucault, Martin Heidegger and Jacques Derrida.

Like Deane, Hovey looks at Nietzsche as a resourceful Christian scholar probably should, namely by asking, 'What can we use?' He proposes that his efforts be thought of as a series of walks with Nietzsche. Along the way, he hopes to get Nietzsche to shed some of his unique light on such topics as the eucharist and the parables of Jesus, in addition to more traditional topics such as the nature of the being of the Deity.

The book contains a preface, a list of abbreviations, an introduction, seven chapters, extensive notes and a serviceable index. The first chapter is a brief biography entitled 'A Catastrophic Life'. After that, the major topics include knowledge, history, culture, nothingness, the good and being. These are followed by a brief final chapter, entitled 'Dancing and Singing', which can function as a conclusion to the volume.

Hovey is able to evoke some sparks of Nietzschean light. He begins by assuming that Nietzsche's consternation with religion is thorough and complete: there seems to be nothing Nietzsche said about religion that Hovey, as a believer, can use. But there are plenty of things Nietzsche said pertaining to non-religious concerns that can be of use. Lessons available to believers derive from Nietzsche's thinking on such general matters as good and evil, suffering, joy, human nature, the use and abuse of history, the foundations of civilization, the nature of normativity, the problem of being and becoming, the evolution of morality, the philosophy of action, the value of truth, and the concept of health.

Hovey applies these lessons to several topics of Christian concern including the book of Job, the nature of a church, of the soul, of love, and sacraments. I am not capable of assessing Hovey's results in these areas. However, I am prepared to assess his interpretation of Nietzsche, and I can say that

his use of the text is sound. However, he promotes some deeply questionable propositions about Nietzsche. He claims, for example, 'that Nietzsche's hatred of the last man is tied to his hatred of theology' (80). This deserves two question marks, because the claim that Nietzsche hates the last man is itself at least as questionable as the claim that Nietzsche, who matriculated as a theology student before changing to philology in his second year, hated theology. In a more trivial instance, Hovey claims that Nietzsche did not 'rejoice' at the news of the death of God (117), which ignores his claim that the death of god is 'the Saturnalia of all free spirits'. It also ignores his autobiography's claim that atheism brought him into philosophy through Schopenhauer. Much more seriously, Hovey contends that 'Nietzsche was certainly an ancestor to an emerging fascist ideology' (93). Hovey attempts to mitigate this last claim, but to little avail. Countless sources contradict him here.

On the whole, it is probably good to read a work like Hovey's. His approach does not lead from the text to the world and back to the text again. It leads from the world to the text and back to the world again, albeit in Christian colored glasses. But his approach prevents his spending much effort on characterizing Nietzsche, and affords plenty of space for his lively and very friendly theological lucubration.

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Kelly Dean Jolley

*The Concept 'Horse' Paradox and
Wittgensteinian Conceptual Investigations:
A Prolegomenon to Philosophical Investigations.*
Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing 2007.

Pp. 126.

US\$99.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7546-6045-3).

By the end of his book's first chapter, Jolley has made three claims that, to the overall benefit of the book, are either overstated or otherwise misleading. The first and most important is implied by the book's long title, but it is not made explicit until its fifth and final chapter, when Jolley asserts, 'We cannot fully understand Wittgenstein's philosophy, including the so-called later philosophy, without understanding how he appropriates the work of Frege' (79). In particular, Jolley claims that Wittgenstein appropriates the three principles of Frege's *The Foundations of Mathematics*, along with Frege's method for correcting a certain misunderstanding of one of these principles.

The third of Frege's principles, which insists on a sharp distinction between concepts and objects, generates the *concept 'horse' paradox*. In Chapters 1 and 2, Jolley discusses Benno Kerry's objection to Frege's insistence that concepts can never play the role of objects. Kerry offered as an apparent counterexample to Frege's principle the sentence, 'The concept "horse" is a concept easily attained'. In this sentence, the concept 'horse' appears to be playing the role of an *object* since the expression 'the concept "horse"' falls within the *saturated* segment of the sentence. In his essay 'Concept and Object', Frege responds to Kerry and tries to demonstrate how he (Kerry) has managed to violate all three of his principles by regarding this as a counterexample to the concept/object distinction.

Jolley explains that in getting Kerry, and the rest of us, to see his mistake, Frege employs a kind of therapy. Frege admits that a proper definition of 'concept' cannot be provided, because 'concept' is a logical simple. Instead, Frege talks of providing hints which Jolley insists 'should be taken quite seriously' (1). If successful, such hints will provide a sort of *knowledge-how*. Rather than being taught definitions or other sorts of facts through this method, we learn how to do something (2). Jolley argues that this method is modeled by Wittgenstein in his use of *elucidation* in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. In Chapter 3, Jolley discusses how Wittgenstein uses it to demonstrate the superfluity of Russell's theory of types. In the most difficult of the chapters, Chapter 4, Jolley examines two post-Kerry responses to the *concept 'horse' paradox* that 'fail instructively' (xi).

As Jolley explains in Chapter 1, all of these chapters set the stage for the fifth and final chapter in which he discusses the assimilation of the concept/object and the two other principles of Frege by Wittgenstein in the *Philosophical Investigations*. Jolley portrays Wittgenstein 'as striving to keep to Frege's principles' (97). Now, claims have been made for the influence of a variety of thinkers on Wittgenstein's philosophy. Jolley provides very little evidence for his claim, either textual or extra-textual. While many see Wittgenstein's so-called use-theory of meaning as an elaboration of Frege's context principle, Jolley thinks that Wittgenstein also adopts Frege's distinction between concept and object in his development of a method that Jolley characterizes as one that 'refuses to be a method of investigating objects' (5). This seems somewhat strained, but Jolley does correctly identify a type of misreading of the *Investigations* for which his interpretation is intended as a correction. Jolley makes clear, however, that the view of Wittgenstein as 'striving' to keep Frege's principles is offered only as a 'very useful way of thinking about Wittgenstein's philosophizing' (97). So, his explicit claim about Frege's influence is intended, as he stresses in the Preface, as merely 'convenient shorthand' (xii).

The relevance of Frege to understanding Wittgenstein is something that the so-called New Wittgensteinians have insisted upon, and the second claim Jolley makes is that his interpretation of the *Philosophical Investigations* models the 'resolute reading' of the *Tractatus* made by these commentators. Such a reading, for one, avoids attributing to the texts substantive

philosophical or other sorts of claims. Now, a resolute reading of the *Tractatus* remains controversial, but a resolute reading of the *Philosophical Investigations* has always been the preferred way of reading it. The problem has not been whether to read it resolutely, but *how*. There are two species of remarks in the work which pose a problem for such a reading. First, there are those that appear to be empirical claims about humans and their nature or practices (e.g., §244). There are also those that appear to be philosophical claims, such as the ones that make up the so-called private language argument, use-theory of meaning, and doctrine of family resemblance. Jolley has a few things to say directly about the last and perhaps least problematic. As to the rest, Jolley clarifies as soon as he makes his claim that he is offering only 'progress' toward a resolute reading of the *Investigations* (hence the book's subtitle). But it is overstated in another way. It might have the tendency to alienate readers who are not sympathetic to the New Wittgensteinians. It should not. Again, the reading towards which Jolley is trying to make progress has always been the preferred way of reading the *Investigations*.

However, the third claim Jolley makes might have a similar tendency. In Chapter 1, he warns us that he is 'writing this book under revocation' (6). This could make many readers uneasy. They might worry, for one, that the effort they expend in trying to understand Jolley's interpretation will be wasted. As it turns out, the revocation is not so much over the content of the book (as the apparent revocation in the penultimate remark of the *Tractatus* is); instead, it is over the expectations of some readers of Jolley's book. In particular, those hoping for an exposition of Wittgenstein's method will be disappointed. Like this method, Jolley's book is about how to do something, namely, how to read the *Investigations*. It provides an encouragement and a model for reading it in such a way that the putative claims of the work (which are often misunderstood as concerning certain types of objects) are actually part of Wittgenstein's conceptual investigations. Jolley explains that the '*Philosophical Investigations* is not written to change what we believe; it is written to change what we will' (104). Ultimately, the success of Jolley's book depends upon whether it influences the way some readers want to read the *Investigations*.

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**Nicola Mößner, Sebastian Schmoranzer,
and Christian Weidemann, eds.**

Richard Swinburne:

Christian Philosophy in the Modern World.

Frankfurt: Ontos Verlag 2008.

Pp.226.

US\$25.00 (paper ISBN-13: 978-3-86838-004-0).

The title of this book is somewhat misleading. It is a collection of essays from the eleventh iteration of a lecture series sponsored by the Philosophical Seminar of the Westphalian Wilhems-Universität in Münster. The format is as follows: A distinguished scholar is invited to deliver a lecture, and the next two days involve critical discussion, colloquium style, of various aspects of the author's work by faculty and students in the seminar. In 2007 Richard Swinburne was the distinguished visitor — other recent visitors include Robert Brandon, Bas van Fraassen, and Richard Rorty — and he spoke on the problem of evil, which is certainly a problem for a theist like Swinburne, and especially for a classical theist, which Swinburne also is.

At one time or another, Swinburne has written on almost every central philosophical and theological issue; but today he is probably best known as one of the most influential proponents and practitioners of the analytical philosophy of religion. More precisely, he is a 'traditional' (or 'classical') theist: he believes that there exists an eternal, uncreated and immaterial perfect soul called 'God', who is omnipotent, omniscient, completely free, morally perfect, and the creator and sustainer of the universe (15-16, 199-201). As a natural theologian, Swinburne also believes that this position can (and should) be argued for, not merely accepted on faith, which he has done in great detail in a formidable array of books, including *The Coherence of Theism* (1997; revision of 1993), *Is there a God?* (1996), *The Christian God* (1994), *The Existence of God* (2nd ed. 2004; 1st 1979), and *Faith and Reason* (2nd ed. 2005; 1st 1981), all published by Clarendon or Oxford University Press.

The reason that the title of the book is misleading is that many of the essays in it don't seem to have much to do with Swinburne's central project in natural theology or with the place of 'Christian Philosophy in the Modern World'. They may be divided into three broad categories: epistemological, metaphysical, and moral. Swinburne argues that we have to assume *a priori* epistemic criteria, like simplicity, in order to make sense of scientific as well as our everyday epistemic practice. The epistemologically oriented essays (1 through 3) challenge that claim and the claim, also defended by Swinburne, that simplicity is a truth-conducive virtue.

The metaphysical essays (4 through 7) challenge some of Swinburne's particular conclusions about God and human nature. Essay 4 argues against his conception of God as temporal but non-spatial, i.e., a being within time but outside of space. The fifth essay objects to Swinburne's 'fine tuning' argument for God's existence, arguing that the existence of a 'multiverse' is a simpler and more satisfactory explanation for the immensely improbable

occurrence of human life than is the existence of a divine creator. Essay 6 criticizes Swinburne's identification of metaphysical possibility with logical possibility, and seven does the same for his 'substance dualism'. (Substance dualism is the view that human persons consist of a body *and* an immaterial soul, only the latter part being essential for personal identity.)

The last four essays deal with broadly moral matters. The first, essay 8, objects to Swinburne's justification of God allowing us to suffer. (It is the only essay to address, if only in part [133-9], the subject of Swinburne's opening lecture.) Essay 9 challenges Swinburne's view that certain moral obligations are binding on us only because God wishes them to be binding and his belief that there are necessary moral truths. The tenth essay is critical of Swinburne's idea that we have a special obligation to God because God is our creator and benefactor, and essay 11 argues against his belief that we have a moral obligation to reject homosexuality and cure homosexuals.

As can be seen, this is a diverse array of subjects, and the editors make no attempt to show how they are related. An introductory essay, by Swinburne or one of them, would therefore have been welcome to place the other essays in a more coherent setting. The book provides useful, and sometimes insightful, critiques of *certain aspects* of Swinburne's thought, but it does not adequately explain how these aspects are related to his overall project. As a result, it is not a good introduction to Swinburne's often sophisticated defense of some would say 'time-honored' — others may prefer 'old fashioned' — philosophical doctrines (9).

The collection has other shortcomings. Strangely (since it is a commemorative volume), it has no biographical sketch of Swinburne. Nor are readers told anything about the other contributors, except that they are all faculty or students in the Münster Philosophical Seminar. But since all the essays, save one, have two to five authors, it would be nice to know who's who. Incredibly, there is no index (author or subject), so that one cannot, e.g., check to see how Swinburne's substance-dualism account of human persons is related to his concept of God as an immaterial perfect soul. (It turns out that none of the contributors, including Swinburne, address this matter, which is unfortunate, since I think that Swinburne's account of human personhood derives, via the *imago Dei* thesis, from his concept of God.) A number of essays — some more than others — would also have benefited from editorial reading by a native English writer.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the basic approach of the Münster Seminar seems rather limited and limiting. As one contributor put it, 'we usually try to offer internal and mostly constructive criticism to our guest' (170). There is much to be said for this approach to colloquia, since it can promote honest dialogue, the search for understanding, and can isolate areas of disagreement within a certain way of thinking. But it can also be constrictive, forcing seminar participants to reply within the confines of that way of thinking, which in Swinburne's case is the framework of classical theism. A noteworthy feature of this work is that none of the authors who address Swinburne's natural theology try to think 'outside the box' of his classical

theism. There is no mention of any 'neoclassical' philosophers of religion, such as Charles Hartshorne, John Haught, or Dan Dombrowski (cf. 127n2), who offer serious alternatives to the classical concept of God and to Swinburne's substance-dualist concept of human persons (cf., e.g., Dombrowski's *Analytic Theism, Hartshorne, and the Concept of God*, SUNY Press, 1996).

The importance of this omission is evident in Swinburne's lecture on the problem of evil, which summarizes the argument of his book-length discussion in *Providence and the Problem of Evil* (Clarendon 1998) and the response to it in essay eight. Swinburne confines his attention mainly to moral evil, and he struggles to reconcile the existence of libertarian free will in humans with God's omnipotence and omniscience, attributes understood, respectively, as 'able to do anything that is logically possible', anything that can be done, and 'knows anything that can be known' (15). His theodicy is largely Irenaean: God permits moral evil in order to promote a greater good (19), which He cannot achieve otherwise than by allowing his creatures libertarian free will. Evils are needed to provide the opportunities for goods (28-9) such as assisting and being responsible for others (19, 21) and character formation (20). The seminar contributors argue that it's irresponsible for God to allow humans libertarian free will, given that so many of them abuse it (137). In particular, they challenge the cogency of Swinburne's parent/child analogy (17, 25) for God's relation to humans. If we really take the parent/child analogy seriously, God should be 'paternalistic' and restrict human free will (139). Libertarian free will is a good, since it can be used to promote good, which is what Swinburne emphasizes; but it can be misused, causing bad effects, which is what the critics emphasize. So we have an impasse. Who's right? Well, it seems that both sides are! But both sides can't be right about what God should do — continue to allow or restrict libertarian freedom.

The existence of evil, both moral and natural, remains a problem for neo-classical theists, but they don't have to struggle with it as much as Swinburne does or in such an unconvincing manner. In one place, Swinburne is reduced to saying: 'When . . . one begins to take into account the great benefits . . . to the sufferer of being privileged by his suffering to give others the opportunity to help him and of himself having a free choice of how to cope with his suffering and form a holy character, there begins . . . to be considerable plausibility in the claim that the expected benefit of God allowing that quantity and degree of suffering to occur which actually occurs outweighs the evil of the suffering' (30). This seems to me insufficiently sensitive to the plight of (at least) innocent sufferers. In another place, Swinburne counters: 'I have lately become convinced that if God makes humans so that they have to suffer for a good reason, . . . God has an obligation to suffer with them' (219). This seems right, but it also seems to be a significant departure from classical theism, in which God does not suffer.

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C. G. Prado

Choosing to Die:

Elective Death and Multiculturalism.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2008.

Pp. 224.

CDN\$88.95/US\$85.00

(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-87484-7);

CDN\$24.95/US\$23.95

(paper ISBN-13: 978-0-521-69758-3).

This work extends Prado's earlier book, *The Last Choice: Preemptive Suicide in Advanced Age* (1990/1998), on the *rationality* of ending one's life. In both works, Prado insists that the moral permissibility of suicide (and, by extension, of assisted suicide and euthanasia) rests first on determining the rationality of suicide. But proving the rationality and hence moral permissibility of ending one's life has become more problematic in our postmodern age, which is dominated by multiculturalism and relativism. The problem these positions present, according to Prado, is that they relativize rationality itself to particular cultures, thus making cross-cultural claims about the rationality of ending one's life impossible. 'Contrary to this view, the book's objective is to articulate *cross-cultural* criteria to determine when . . . [choices to die by a variety of means] are rational and hence possibly socially, morally, and practically permissible options, and when each is chosen on the basis of sound reasoning and acceptable motivation' (12).

Prado distinguishes between four types of suicide and euthanasia: preemptive suicide, surcease suicide, assisted surcease suicide, and requested or voluntary euthanasia. This taxonomy is not commonly used and hence requires explanation. Essentially, the distinctions are based on deteriorating health over time with the concomitant consideration of what one is capable of doing oneself. Think, for example, of the famous Canadian case of Sue Rodriguez. Shortly after being diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis she petitioned the Canadian courts to be allowed assistance in her suicide at that time in the future when her disease would make it impossible for her to commit suicide on her own. *If* she had committed suicide before she began to feel the effects of her disease, but in anticipation of them, this would be a case of preemptive suicide. Had she waited longer, when she began to feel its effects but was still capable of committing suicide on her own, she would have committed surcease suicide. Assisted surcease suicide was actually what Sue Rodriguez requested (and eventually did despite losing her court case), namely, 'suicide deliberated and done with help when a condition advances to a point where the individual is incapacitated to a significant degree' (29). Requested or voluntary euthanasia would have occurred later when she was so disabled that she could not have committed suicide even with help and had to have her life ended by another.

Prado makes these distinctions in part because he believes that passing the bar set by the 'rationality criterion' can be given more 'latitude' as we

pass from preemptive suicide to, eventually, requested or voluntary euthanasia (Ch. 8). That is, very loosely speaking, the burden to prove that one's decision is rational is weightier for preemptive suicide than it is for euthanasia, because 'one's interest in survival declines in importance' (177) as one becomes more debilitated and closer to death. The distinctions are also made, however, because, as Prado says he came to see only after publishing *The Last Choice*, '[p]reemptive suicide is mainly the suicidist's own business, and so neither a social nor professional concern on the order of surcease or assisted surcease suicide considered and committed while under medical care' (5). I'll return to this point below.

The 'rationality criterion', which Prado discusses over several chapters, is ultimately formulated as follows: 'Autonomous self-killing as release from terminal illness is rational if the decision follows validly from true premises that include the pertinent facts and enacting it is judged in cross-cultural dialogue not to override interest in survival unduly' (132). Prado hopes that his criterion will allow a respect for difference between cultures while maintaining that cross-cultural assessment is possible. Briefly stated, he thinks we can do this by recognizing first that much of what is put forward as facts by people are actually culturally based beliefs. The rationality criterion requires that facts and beliefs be clearly differentiated and that only actual facts are put forward as such. Second, only people who can 'accept the priority of deliberately established cross-cultural principles over their own culturally determined beliefs and values' (132) are allowed to be 'judges' in 'cross-cultural dialogue'.

There is much of interest and value in this approach to the morality of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Prado's rationalistic approach does raise some overarching issues, however. First, consider again Prado's claim that preemptive suicide is 'mainly the suicidist's own business'. In insisting that surcease suicide, assisted surcease suicide, and requested or voluntary euthanasia need to be rational in order even to have their moral acceptability assessed, Prado loses sight of the *private* nature of choosing one's own death, by whatever means. In classic liberalism, this means that one doesn't have to defend the rationality of one's decision: one has, in liberalism, the right to make bad choices over actions that concern him or herself primarily. Of course, assisted suicide and euthanasia involve others in one's actions and hence aren't private in quite the same way that killing oneself is. But neither is abortion *purely* private either since one can't perform an abortion on oneself: and yet we don't require that women prove that their decision to have an abortion is rational before it is determined whether it is morally permissible in her particular circumstances.

Finally, it is unclear to whom this book is addressed. In the Preface, Prado discusses the disappointing reaction he received from medical clinicians when he presented his ideas about end of life issues at a conference. In general, they thought that his work was not relevant to theirs and that his material was far too abstract (ix). Prado claims that this book was written in part as a response to those criticisms. In this, I think he has failed: whatever its merits

— and it certainly has some — it will not appeal to health care practitioners working in the field. It is simply far too removed and abstruse for that. This is especially true as the physician-patient relationship has become less paternalistic. While health care workers need to ensure that their patients have sufficient information to make autonomous choices, they tend now to think that it is *not* their job to evaluate the value-laden choices of their patients.

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Anthony Preus

*Historical Dictionary of Ancient Greek
Philosophy.*

Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press Inc 2007.

Pp. 376.

US\$85.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8108-5487-1).

Ancient Greek philosophy represents such a dynamic and rich tradition in the history of philosophy, that the tasks of appreciating and understanding it are rather difficult. Preus' dictionary approaches it in this spirit. This extensively cross-referenced work is primarily for non-specialists, but it can also serve as an excellent reference tool for specialists. It covers the time period from 700 BCE to 600 CE, contains a comprehensive list of philosophical concepts with succinct and informative explanations, describes the various schools of thought, and introduces the reader to most of the important philosophers of the period (and not just the well-known ones).

The various sections of Preus' dictionary are designed to aid the reader's exploration of ancient Greek philosophy, and overall they accomplish their aim very well. The work begins with a list and explanation of the standard use of citations and abbreviations of ancient Greek texts, and then there is an explanation of the transliteration of Greek characters into English. The discussion of transliteration is important, since readers can understand what a word looks like in the Greek and how it would be pronounced. Both of these sections allow the reader to navigate through the dictionary quite easily. There follows a chronology of thinkers and of the major events in the lives of most of them, which also allows the reader to place the material in the dictionary into context and to get a good view of the relation and interaction of ideas in Greek philosophy.

The introduction to ancient Greek philosophy that follows is quite comprehensive, and it exhibits Preus' thorough and extensive knowledge of this philosophical tradition. It spans about twenty-five pages and covers the ma-

major figures, philosophical theories and developments from the pre-Socratics, through Plato and Aristotle in the classical period, the Hellenistic period, and the Roman imperial period. Preus also includes a brief discussion about the survival and transmission of Greek philosophy in the medieval period, which explains how far-reaching and influential the ideas of ancient Greek philosophy were on subsequent philosophical developments. The introduction also provides the overall framework of ancient Greek philosophy, so the details in the dictionary that follows make more sense.

Unlike some dictionaries that cover concepts discussed by ancient Greek philosophers, Preus' work refers the reader to the Greek term used for a concept instead of merely discussing the translation of the original term(s). For example, if one looks up the term 'nature' one will find 'NATURE. See *PHYSIS*' (178). If one then looks up 'Physis' one will find a discussion of the concept and its significance in the various schools of thought. When it comes to concepts that were widely used, such as 'physis', 'ousia', 'logos', or 'eudaimonia', Preus delves into further detail to provide the reader with a better view of how the ancient Greek philosophers used the concept, and of how the concept developed through the years in the various thinkers who came to employ it. For example, in his discussion of 'dynamis', which as Preus explains means 'power, potentiality, and capacity', we read: '[i]n early Greek literature, the word is applied to personal strength and to military power. In the **Hippocratic corpus**, *dynamis*, is also used of physical capacities, particularly those of medical significance. At *Theatetus* 185c, for example, **Plato** explicitly moves the significance of a *dynamis* from physical ability to mental ability; also in the *Theatetus*, in describing the theory of perception (**aesth sis**) at 156, he distinguishes active and passive *dynamis* present in the perceptual process. That is an idea that **Aristotle** developed significantly' (94). Preus goes on to explain how Aristotle and the Stoics employ this concept, but this brief quotation reveals his approach to explaining the use and development of concepts in ancient Greek philosophy. As we also see, Preus helpfully highlights in bold letters the various other terms for which separate entries are found in the dictionary. This prompts the reader to look up further related terms, and helps to establish connections between concepts and thinkers. And it also saves time.

Following a glossary listing all of the terms discussed in the dictionary (minus the proper names), Preus provides an extensive bibliography. This includes a clear table of contents separating it into several sections, which include dictionaries, encyclopedias, and sources on thinkers as well as on the various historical periods and schools of thought. Overall, Preus' dictionary allows the reader to gain familiarity with the concepts and intellectual figures of ancient Greek philosophy with ease, and it can serve as an excellent reference and companion to reading primary sources. I recommend it to all readers interested in ancient Greek philosophy.

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Hilary Putnam

Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life:

Rosenzweig, Buber, Levinas, Wittgenstein.

Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2008.

Pp. 136.

US\$19.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-253-35133-3).

Putnam is famously willing to change his opinions and preoccupations. This book is born of one such transformation: Putnam's turn towards Judaism. Its brief autobiographical introduction tells us that the process began when Putnam's older son announced that he wanted to celebrate his upcoming bar mitzvah, a request that brought the family to services held at Harvard's Hillel House and eventually resulted in Putnam's praying on a daily basis and teaching a course in Jewish philosophy. That course brought Putnam into contact with the works of three leading Jewish philosophers of the twentieth century, Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, and Emmanuel Levinas, and helped him 'reconcile' his apparently contradictory Jewish and philosophical 'sides' (6). He came to interpret the ideas of those thinkers in a manner sympathetic to the approach to religion he found in the later Wittgenstein. Inspired by his recently acquired yet profound appreciation for that triad of Jewish (and definitely continental!) philosophers, Putnam set out to write a book which would 'help the general reader, especially the general reader who would go and read one or more of these thinkers, to understand the strange concepts and terms that appear in their works, and to avoid common mistakes in reading them' (8). Considering how short the book is, Putnam can only be congratulated for the remarkable extent to which it achieves his goals.

The first chapter, 'Rosenzweig and Wittgenstein', argues that Rosenzweig shared Wittgenstein's distaste for systematic philosophy as well as his understanding that a religion should be thought of as a way of life rather than a theory about the world. Putnam explains how Rosenzweig rejected not only both essentialism and nominalism, but also the mindset that leads to the adoption of such doctrines. It is fascinating to see how he brings his analytic background into the discussion. If Derek Parfitt can be mentioned in connection with *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy* (a short book by Rosenzweig which Putnam suggests should be read before the magnum opus, *The Star of Redemption*), the Messiah's arrival must be nigh! Stanley Cavell's ideas are mobilized to explain that, for Rosenzweig, God's presence must be acknowledged rather than proven. The chapter goes on to explain Rosenzweig's call for a 'new thinking' that is organically connected with life as it is lived (and more particularly, with life as lived in a Jewish ritual framework). The chapter concludes with Putnam's criticism of Rosenzweig's negative opinion of religions other than Judaism and Christianity.

Discussion of Rosenzweig continues into the next chapter, 'Rosenzweig on Revelation and Romance', which takes on several major themes from the *Star of Redemption* and offers important advice about how it should be read.

As is the case with Buber and Levinas, Rosenzweig is concerned to square the universal ethical values that are foundational for Judaism with its more particularistic and communal aspects. Putnam may have slipped at one point in this chapter (44) by attributing great significance to what may have been a simple error in Rosenzweig's recollection of the biblical story of the binding of Isaac. For a moment he reads *The Star of Redemption* with the obsession for detail applied by Leo Straus to the *Guide for the Perplexed*.

Chapter 3 is largely devoted to getting people to interpret Martin Buber's *I and Thou* correctly. Putnam efficiently warns of various pitfalls that lie in wait for the novice reader, pointing out difficulties in the translation of several key terms from German to English. He reminds us that Buber is a 'moral perfectionist' rather than someone interested in setting down practical rules of conduct, and that Buber does not claim all 'I — Thou' relationships to be necessarily good or all 'I-It' relationships to be bad. He insists that Buber was not concerned solely with inter-human relations — he was serious when he wrote about God. Appropriately, Putnam supplies a neat reformulation of Buber's theology — in less than eighty words!

I remember reading somewhere that Putnam once said Levinas was an important philosopher, but that he suffered from a 'speech defect', i.e., a difficulty in expressing ideas clearly. The chapter on Levinas goes a long way towards resolving that problem by offering a clear restatement of some of his main themes, including the priority of ethics over metaphysics, radical responsibility towards the 'Other', and Levinas' relationship to Jewish tradition. Helpful comments are made regarding several of Levinas' more obscure tropes: 'face', 'trace' and 'height'. In a very clever expository move meant to help out analytic philosophers, Putnam attempts to demystify Levinas' relationship to Husserl and Heidegger by pointing out similarities and links between continental phenomenology and the ideas of Rudolf Carnap. It is refreshing to see that while Putnam has great respect for Levinas, he is also willing to conclude the chapter with some powerful criticisms of the master. Against Levinas' demand for asymmetrical 'infinite responsibility' towards the Other, Putnam reminds us that, '[i]t is Aristotle who taught us that to love others one must be able to love oneself' (99).

Like the Introduction, the Afterword to this book will be of special interest to Putnam-watchers. While pleading that 'I do not for one moment delude myself into thinking that my own reflections . . . are deep religious philosophy in the way that the writings I have been discussing are profound,' Putnam goes on to locate his own 'current religious standpoint' as 'somewhere between John Dewey in *A Common Faith* and Martin Buber' (100). While rejecting the standard supernatural elements of traditional Judaism, Putnam is unwilling to do without some picture of God as a person, 'which need not be "taken literally", but is still far more valuable than any metaphysical concept of an impersonal God, let alone a God who is "totally other"' (102). The Afterword concludes with a useful summary of the main differences of opinion between the book's protagonists, but it also points to their broad similarity when contrasted with the main competing strategy

for squaring Judaism with naturalism — Maimonides' program of negative theology.

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David Rodin and Henry Shue, eds.

Just and Unjust Warriors:

The Moral and Legal Status of Soldiers.

New York: Oxford University Press 2008.

Pp. 272.

US\$100.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-923312-0).

One of the most perplexing problems in the law of war is why the permission to kill enemy soldiers is the same on both sides, regardless of the justice of one's cause. This is the principle that Michael Walzer has dubbed the 'moral equality of soldiers'. On its face, it makes no sense. How can soldiers fighting on the wrong side be given the same rights to kill soldiers on the just side; this is like giving bank robbers equal right to kill police officers in a shoot-out between the two. Yet in law and practice, soldiers fighting on the unjust side are fully exonerated after the war (though with occasional exceptions for military leaders). This amounts to a morally dubious permission to kill innocent people (soldiers fighting a just war). Indeed, soldiers fighting a just war are just as innocent as civilians in a battle; yet we think it is a crime to kill innocent civilians but no crime at all to kill innocent combatants. This is the puzzle addressed in this book, a useful collection of essays on this topic. The editors' introduction is rather too self-important, declaring not once but twice that the book provides an 'authoritative treatment' of this issue (1, 17). Nonetheless the topic is certainly highly important and interesting and the quality of the essays is in general very high.

One of the persistent errors in this debate is to conflate Walzer's views, as expressed in his *Just and Unjust Wars*, with the position of the Just War tradition, for in fact Walzer departs substantially from the tradition, in insisting both on the 'moral' equality of soldiers and on a 'logical' separation between *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. The Just War tradition does not make any such moral or logical separation. One of the most useful elements of this book is the inclusion of essays by Anthony Coates and Gregory Reichberg debunking this common misconception; in Just War doctrine, only soldiers on the just side are justified in their actions. Unfortunately, Shue and Rodin seem to subscribe to the fallacy nonetheless, taking Walzer's views as their 'starting

point' and as standing for 'traditional just war theory' (6); even the title of the book is a direct reference to Walzer. But Walzer's extremely strong claim that the equal treatment of soldiers on both sides has a 'logical' and 'moral' status is surely implausible. If one's cause is unjust, how can one's means to that unjust end be morally legitimate? (As Judith Lichtenburg insightfully points out, Walzer himself cannot consistently hold to this view; his 'Supreme Emergency' exception implies that *ad bellum* and *in bello* are intrinsically connected [112]). In any case, it is not the traditional Just War position.

Morality would seem to be clear on this question: if one is fighting for an unjust cause, then any killing one does in furtherance of that cause is wrongful, indeed murder. Jeff McMahan correctly points out that the laws of war do not fit with traditional self-defense doctrine, which holds that there is no right of force against a *justified* aggressor, i.e., a police officer or a soldier in a just cause. Unfortunately, McMahan's essay assumes without argument his own problematic theory of self-defense (based on moral responsibility) and uses it to make the remarkable argument that it can be morally permissible to target even noncombatants if one's cause is just. McMahan's theory of self-defense is however effectively refuted by several of the other commentators, including Rodin (48) and Lichtenburg (115). Nonetheless McMahan is certainly correct that our policy of permitting soldiers on both sides to use force is at odds with basic moral standards. So what could explain this?

The contributors analyze a variety of well-known arguments for the equal treatment principle. One is the view that soldiers on the unjust side are not justified but are merely excused, either on grounds of duress or 'invincible ignorance'. The problem for duress is that it is generally not considered an excuse for homicide. (Lichtenburg does point out that a handful of state laws do allow it as such an excuse; still, the clear traditional and majority view is that it is not). Moreover, the duress excuse would prove too much, as it would allow killing civilians as well, as Ryan points out (139). Somewhat more plausible is the excuse idea, given that it is extremely difficult to judge whether one's own war is just, especially for the common soldier who does not have access to the means or methods on which the decision to war was taken by his leaders. There is certainly something to this argument, though Rodin and Lichtenburg make a good case that it is not ultimately satisfying, noting for instance that on this view we should apply higher standards to soldiers in a democratic regime than those in a totalitarian regime, and that only some combatants will be excused, whereas in practice we exonerate all soldiers equally (52, 121).

Another set of arguments discussed is the idea of collective responsibility or 'role' morality. Could it be that individual soldiers cannot be held individually liable for what is in fact a collective moral wrong? But this argument seems deeply counterintuitive; usually the idea of collective liability is used to implicate some for the crimes of others, but not to *exonerate* some members for the collective crimes in which they knowingly participate. Some contributors suggest that the soldiers are absolved in that it is their 'role' to engage in military activity, and not up to them to determine whether the activity as a whole is justified or not. Compare for example the executioner: it is not up

to him to determine whether the person being executed is in fact guilty or not; indeed, even if the executioner honestly believed the man was innocent, arguably he would be justified in carrying out the execution anyway. The idea of a role morality carries us back to the excusing conditions of ignorance; presumably the reason the executioner is not a murderer is that he ought not substitute his judgment for that of the fair process in what is likely a difficult judgment. However, role morality is problematic as well; indeed, we do expect soldiers to refuse to fight in a war that is clearly unjust, and we do recognize the right of conscientious objection. We do not want to turn the soldier into a mere automaton, blindly following orders.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of this debate is its very inconclusiveness, notwithstanding the editors' claim that it 'has the potential to profoundly change our understanding of the moral and legal status of warriors, wars, and indeed of moral agency itself' (1). The general pattern is that the contributors are unable to find a sound moral basis for treating soldiers equally, but fall back on 'pragmatic' or prudential or consequentialist arguments for doing so. It is variously claimed that any attempt to treat the two sides differently will have the effect of undermining the rules of war completely and producing chaos, or that the lack of an impartial arbiter means that in practice we will end up with 'victor's justice' in which whichever side wins is taken to have been in the right and hence can execute the soldiers of its enemies, or that it would be too complex, difficult, and time consuming to give trials to all of the soldiers on the unjust side to determine each one's level of guilt and criminality. Even McMahan, who makes the strongest case against equal treatment of both sides, hesitates to draw the logical conclusion that the present practice licenses mass murder and should be immediately abolished; he cites the familiar practical obstacles (though he offers a 'vision that [he] hope[s] is not altogether utopian' for impartial international courts to determine which side is just).

This conclusion is rather unsettling. The gist of the argument is that the current practice which in effect permits the mass slaughter of innocent soldiers is unjustified, but we will have to accept it anyway on 'practical' grounds. In C. A. J. Coady's understatement, this is an 'uneasy compromise' between profound moral facts and institutional realities (164). But one cannot have it both ways: if killing by unjust soldiers is murder, then one cannot appeal to practical grounds to permit it; that is the method of the Realist or consequentialist. One cannot help feeling that there is something missing in this discussion: it is not merely that soldiers on the wrongful side are merely excused, but that moral equality reflects an alternative, even chivalrous tradition according to which respect is due to the soldier who does his duty, fighting with honor even if in a wrongful cause (at least, so long as it is not too patently wrongful). How to make sense of this morally is of course another question, and the problem of unjust soldiers remains perplexing.

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T. M. Scanlon

Moral Dimensions:

Permissibility, Meaning, Blame.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2008.

Pp. 227.

US\$29.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-674-03178-4).

Following in the steps of *What We Owe to Each Other* (Harvard University Press 1999), this new, slimmer volume will garner plenty of attention in moral philosophy. It consists of four interconnected chapters, the last, on blame, substantially longer than the others, and an especially substantial contribution to the literature.

The first chapter criticizes the doctrine of double effect, arguing that it rests on a mistake about the role of intention in the permissibility of actions. The doctrine makes the following sort of contrast: in wartime, while it would be wrong to bomb an enemy with the intention of killing civilians in order to demoralize the populace in order to bring about a swifter end to the war, it would be morally permissible to bomb a military target such as a munitions factory, knowing that doing so would result in the deaths of an equal number of civilians. The contrast is between what we intend to achieve and what results from the foreseen but unintended effects of our actions. Scanlon holds that while the agent's intentions may be relevant to the moral assessment of some actions, they are not *directly* relevant. Scanlon's first criticism of the doctrine is that it is implausible to hold that the moral permissibility of a decision to bomb a munitions factory and thereby kill a number of civilians depends on one's intentions. He argues that it is not the intention that matters directly in central cases, but rather what one does and whether one's actions violate moral principles. He makes this argument by drawing a distinction between the *deliberative* use of a principle to decide whether an action is ethically permissible, and its *critical* use to assess how the agent made his or her decision. It is possible that a person's (or organization's) intentions will have an effect on how they carry out their actions, and how they would react in the case of changing circumstances. But when the action itself is fixed, and the effects of the action are known, then in assessing its morality, we need to look at the moral principles that apply. The distinction between intended effects and unintended but foreseen effects has no direct relevance, according to Scanlon.

The arguments in this first chapter are hardly conclusive, as they rest largely on unargued intuitions. Scanlon's opponents can insist that how we understand what an agent did crucially depends on what her intentions were. Scanlon has not provided enough analysis of the concept of an action, or indeed of the sources of moral responsibility, to show his opponents' view is incoherent. The main value of this first chapter lies in its statement of an alternative view, and Scanlon is right in saying that once one adopts that view, the claims of the doctrine of double effect look 'bizarre' when applied to familiar cases of trolley problems and of sacrificing one person to harvest

her organs to save the lives of five other people. However, we also have strong intuitions that one's intentions are relevant in assessing the permissibility of one's actions, and Scanlon needs to show that his view has a place for these intuitions, in order to avoid having his own view look bizarre too.

The second chapter goes further in setting out an argument for his position. Scanlon agrees that intentions are indeed central in determining what action a person has performed, but he insists that it is the action and not the agent's intent or understanding of morality that is crucial to the action's permissibility. Scanlon provides an array of cases where he agrees that a person's intentions make a difference, such as when a person who apparently does good is actually acting out of selfish or dishonorable motives. However, he argues that these cases can be explained by considering what he calls the 'meaning' of the actions. The meaning of an action does depend on the reason the agent did it, but it is not the same thing as the reason. One action can have different meanings for different people, but Scanlon emphasizes his view that the meaning is not purely subjective. People can be mistaken about the meaning of an action for them; they are not fixed by a person's emotions or beliefs, but instead depend on context. For example, Angela may regard Tom's action as a betrayal, but the actual meaning of Tom's action *for Angela* may in fact be different. To help explain his specialized conception of meaning here, Scanlon gives plenty of examples. Whether he succeeds in clarifying his concept of meaning is debatable.

The third chapter attempts to understand the idea that we should not treat people merely as a means to an end. Scanlon endorses a sense in which treating a person as an end can be used as a general criterion of moral rightness, but shows that this is different from the sense in which we generally mean that it is wrong to use people. He makes a strong case for this, and the chapter will be especially useful to those who work on the morality of using people.

The final chapter, on blame, draws on some distinctions from the prior chapters, but it largely stands alone. It not only has the most innovative and interesting claims of the book, but is also much clearer and supplies a stronger more sustained argument. On his view, blame is not simply an evaluative attitude or an emotion; rather, when one blames another, one judges her blameworthy and, crucially, takes one's relationship with her to be impaired; one's attitudes towards the blamed person change. To blame a person is not the converse of praising them; rather, it is closer to the converse of being grateful to another person. It follows, with some further argument, that it is reasonable to blame people for actions even in cases where they could not have done otherwise.

Paradigms of blaming on this account will be in cases where the blamer has a close personal relationship with the person she blames, and Scanlon focuses on blame in friendships and families. He spells out what dispositions are required for people in a good moral relationship. Yet it is possible to blame someone whom one has not met personally. To explain this fact, Scanlon holds that one has a relationship with everyone. Naturally, since one does not have

a personal relationship with that person, the impairment in the relationship is different from the blame that occurs between close friends

Scanlon argues that his account of blame explains several features. (a) Not every wrong action is blameworthy. For example, lack of ambition is a fault of character, but is not blameworthy in itself. (b) The blameworthiness of an action does directly depend on the intentions with which the action was performed, because the agent's reasons constitute his attitude towards others. (c) We apply blame to young children differently, because of the inequality of the relationship between adults and children, in which adults are teaching the children to become good. Scanlon's approach to blameworthiness is distinctive in focusing on the relationship between people, and particular actions are relevant insofar as they bear on those relationships. Indeed, blame can be independent of any particular blameworthy action. He acknowledges that this may be in tension with some common understanding of blame, but he argues that our ordinary intuitions are mixed, so no coherent theory can match them all.

People do not normally choose their characters, but since on Scanlon's view our relationships with them are largely based on their character, this lack of choice does not mean that we should not blame them. The fact that a callous killer had a terrible childhood may alter the way we treat her, but it does not make her exempt from blame. Scanlon considers arguments that we should not hold people morally responsible for their actions when they lack choice about their nature, but maintains that such views rest on the idea that there is a real self that would be uncovered under the right circumstances, and he can make little sense of this. He emphasizes that we have to base our relationships with people on how they actually are, not how they might have been under different circumstances. Whatever the causes of their current attitudes, those are the ones that constitute their relations with other people.

One could retain many of Scanlon's insights about blaming but reject his claim that the change in relationship is partially constitutive; instead one could say that blaming expresses an evaluative attitude towards a person's action that causes changes in our relationship with her. Nevertheless, the great value of his proposal is his emphasis on the importance of relationships in understanding blaming. This brings ethics closer to addressing our everyday interactions with colleagues, friends and family. Scanlon's writing style can make it difficult to pin down exactly how his arguments are meant to go or how they relate to other, well-known positions in this area, since he does not give much discussion of the relevant literature. Nevertheless, this book, and especially the chapter on blame, deserves and will repay careful study.

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Edward Skidelsky

Ernst Cassirer: The Last Philosopher of Culture.
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2008.
Pp. 288.

US\$35.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-691-13134-4).

In 1929, in the Swiss resort of Davos, Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger met for a famous and perhaps fateful debate, the former representing the best of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century humanism, the latter a form of radicalism that would later become associated with Nazism. Skidelsky's book, which opens with this momentous event, is both an intellectual biography of Cassirer (1874-1945) and a reflection on the limits and weaknesses of the philosophy of culture elaborated in Germany by Goethe, Humboldt and Kant, which was adopted by a sector of Germany's middle class and was particularly popular in the German-Jewish community. Skidelsky tellingly says that in his first draft, he had hoped to find in Cassirer's philosophy a remedy to the so-called 'continental divide' — which he identifies with the conflict between a scientific and a humanistic culture — that continues to afflict contemporary philosophy. But as the book proceeded, he had to revise his initial assumptions. He finally concluded that Cassirer's philosophy is unfit for the task because from a methodological point of view, his philosophy is 'inductive', working from different manifestations of culture and trying to apprehend them as an organic whole, whereas philosophy in both the analytic and continental varieties tends to be deductive and looks for a standpoint beyond the varieties of culture (6). Cassirer is also lacking a distinct coherent ethics and politics. Finally, we have irremediably lost the cultural sensibilities that underlie Cassirer's variety of liberalism — hence the reference in the subtitle to Cassirer as the 'last' philosopher of culture.

As an intellectual biographer, Skidelsky does a rather good job presenting the background for the development of Cassirer's distinct philosophy of symbolic forms. He introduces us to the Marburg School and to Neo-Kantianism, which he characterizes as a nuanced reaction to positivism and scientism and a rejection of irrationalism. Skidelsky devotes several pages to Herman Cohen's thought, which best exemplifies the complex connection between liberalism, Neo-Kantianism, and the German-Jewish heritage which both Cohen and Cassirer shared. But the synthesis between a scientific worldview, a belief in moderate and law-abiding government, and an open and liberal society did not survive Germany's defeat in the first world war. Cassirer's faithfulness to his teacher Cohen and to the ideals of the Marburg school explains both the strengths and the weaknesses of his work. Cassirer inherited from the Marburg school the 'concern for the unity of civilization', the fight against 'the positivistic alienation of reason', and a view of science as 'the highest and most characteristic achievement of human culture' (49). Later in his life he concluded that the unity of culture rests not on the unity of reason, but on our symbolic self-expression. Such a unifying principle is better suited to reconcile the plurality within civilization, but Skidelsky deplores its failure to resonate

with the younger generation which fought in the war and came of age in the turmoil of the Weimar Republic. Cassirer's system relied on a 'historicization' of Kant's transcendental subject, and it therefore 'possesses no domain of a priori forms to call its own' (50), lacking the authority that both the new forms of positivism and existential philosophy claimed for themselves.

A whole chapter is devoted to the confrontation between Cassirer and the new logic of Russell and Frege. While both the new logicians and the heirs to the Marburg school opposed positivism and empiricism, as Russell's program unfolded it moved closer to empiricism than to the Neo-Kantian project. Cassirer's response to the challenge was, according to Skidelsky, characteristic of many of his later interventions: 'a characteristic refusal to take sides in the debate between a narrow, scientific rationalism and a virulent irrationalism. By recasting the new logic as a transcendental logic, Cassirer was able to register both its achievements and limitation . . . [H]e wished neither to extend [scientific rationality's] . . . dominion over all areas of life nor to cast it off in the name of some primordial *Existenz*' (56).

With the publication of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1923-1929) Cassirer came into his own. Symbolism refers to a 'natural potency inherent in consciousness as such' (101), which precedes the development of the artificial signs that consciousness creates in language, myth and science. Culture is no longer reduced to reason, but expands to encompass all dimensions of human existence, and each one is now recognized and assigned its own 'symbolic form'. Skidelsky deals only briefly with the architecture of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, but he mentions Cassirer's 'reconstructive approach' (which he characterized earlier as 'inductive'), and Cassirer's belief in the 'liberating power' of symbols. Using symbols, man is able to organize his most deeply rooted instincts, his hopes and fears. But symbols tend to reify and obscure their human source, and thereby cause the bondage of nature to be replaced by the bondage of custom. It was the achievement of monotheistic religion and of natural science to extinguish the vestiges of myth's expressive power. The conflicts between different aspects of culture can be absorbed and refined by religion and art (109) and arbitrated by philosophy (122) but not totally mended. Skidelsky is skeptical that what he calls 'Goethe's familiar irony' could serve as an antidote to cultural fragmentation, and agrees reluctantly with Cassirer's contemporaries' judgment of his philosophy as a 'benign irrelevance'. This harsh judgment seems contradicted by the central stage given in the book to Cassirer's showdown with Heidegger in 1929, and also by the fact, pinpointed by Skidelsky himself, that Heidegger reviewed Cassirer's work, something he did not do often.

What should we learn from Davos? Skidelsky's reconstruction ends on a pessimistic note: 'it was the illiberal philosophy of Heidegger that won the day at Davos and went on to leave the deeper stamp in twentieth-century culture . . . [C]ontemporary liberals are faced . . . with the unpromising task of erecting a philosophy of radical hope on a foundation of cultural despair' (222).

Michael Maidan

Allan Stoekl

Bataille's Peak:

Energy, Religion, and Postsustainability.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota

Press 2007.

Pp. xxi + 247.

US\$60.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8166-4818-4);

US\$24.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8166-4819-1).

How to situate Georges Bataille, that excremental philosopher of unproductive expenditure and the festive wastage of energy, in relation to the energy crisis currently facing the contemporary industrialized world? Will the foreseeable and imminent drying up of the planet's fossil fuel resources not prove that Bataille had been naïve to the finitude of our energy resources? Under the present circumstances, should his philosophy not at best be remembered as a sort of ironic utopian/dystopian caricature of the most unrealistic presumptions upon which our society of mass consumption was founded?

In his brave attempt to save Bataille from the doomsayers, Stoekl begins to resolve this problem by interpreting the excess unproductive energy, which so fascinated Bataille, in the context of ideally interchangeable mechanical and thermal effects. While Carnot's principle presumed that the mechanical engine should be able to produce as much work energy as the heat engine converted thermal energy, Clausius observed that such an ideal equivalence could not be proven to be possible, and that in reality, a difference of intensity between thermal and mechanical forms of energy was a necessary consequence to the performance of any work. This could bring us some way towards understanding Bataille's linking of unproductive expenditure with the sacred in a more affirmative sense. The impossibility of a total transformation from potential energy into work, or the recognition of an energy which humanity cannot put to any productive use, is the recognition of a God who is not the slave of the human — herein lies the essence of the sacrificial act, as Stoekl sees it, and the relation between energy and religion which his book develops (xvii). What the festival affirms are not simply the excessive passions of the human, but more so the limitations of the human with respect to nature, over which humanity ultimately stands as a false master. Yet how to reconcile this implication with Bataille's apparent belief, inspired by his nuclear physicist friend Georges Ambrosino, that the splitting of the atom would unleash a limitless energy supply, presumably without any dire ecological consequences? Of what use is conceiving a sacred unproductive excess when a), the finitude of the immediate source of this excess, when conceived on the scale of the universe, is not acknowledged, and b), the ecological toxicity of certain forms of this excess is not acknowledged? The festival may affirm the limitations of the human, but what about the limitations of the natural resources which make the festival possible in the first place?

At least part of the problem can be traced back to the difference between considering the festival in the context of contemporary industrialized society,

and in its original sense in the "primitive" societies based upon gift exchange and reciprocity, as studied by anthropologists such as Mauss and Durkheim. The problem, which essentially becomes one of scale, emerges when the quantity and complexity of society exceeds to a point where the immediate ecological consequences of unproductive expenditure become impossible to ignore. Part of the problem, to be sure, can be traced to the abstract and impersonal nature of our globalized, monetary economy, which abandons the intimacy of reciprocity while assuming that all expenditure can be made productive. But how attuned was Bataille really to the irreversibility of accelerated ecological devastation? Does Bataille's general economy take it into account, and even if not, might it be possible to convincingly interpret it as though it did?

Stoekl admits that so long as general economy is posited on the scale of the universe, there is nothing to distinguish the limits of growth. It must be equally posited on the scale of the earth's ecological carrying capacity, or else expenditure will quickly cancel itself out (47). But would this not be to give priority back to the restricted form of economy, or at least some notion of an inescapable general scarcity, along the lines of what economist Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen develops in relation to the entropic nature of the economic process? The absence of any attempt to link Bataille up with Georgescu-Roegen and the theory of ecological economics he helped found is actually one of the most glowing omissions in Stoekl's undertaking.

The novelty of Stoekl's book is its attempt to re-interpret Bataille as though he were a sort of dark precursor to the deep ecology movement, except emphasizing the element of sacrifice as that which both links and distinguishes the animal from the human (177). The first half of the book (in fact more than half) offers a cohesive and systematic survey of Bataille's philosophy, most notably with its exposition of the difficult and esoteric *Summa Atheologica* trilogy. The second half of the book sets Bataille's thought into the contemporary context of fossil fuel depletion and geologist M. King Hubbert's theory of peak oil production, from which the book takes its title. Stoekl often picks easy targets with whom to engage Bataille's philosophy in this section, such as the autonomist ideologues of car culture or literalist fundamentalist Biblical scholars. As mundane as these engagements may seem at moments to become, they still succeed in conveying the practical implications of the sacred conceived as unproductive expenditure in a way which would be easily accessible to general readers, *à propos* consumer ideologies which probably provide a fair reflection of today's fashionable opinions.

Stoekl's attempt to give us an ecologically friendly interpretation of Bataille's general economy leads to a sort of generalized athleticism. The virtue of unproductive expenditure rests not so much in the senseless consumption which blinds us to the reality of ecological devastation, so much as the back-breaking human labour which reaffirms for us the sacredness of work. Indeed, Stoekl posits survival as the fundamentally unintentional consequence of expenditure, rather than its intentional purpose (46). Though what revolutionary potential will the barely surviving heterogeneous worker of the postsustainable, apocalyptic near future, athletic or not, be left with

after orgiastically squandering his payday loan? Do we in fact await a bicycle-powered, slave-driven feudalism and not a solar-powered utopia? If so, then is Bataille not ultimately like an ironic fortune-teller who has made a disaster sound like a fortune, to those who had never seen, as he had, disaster firsthand? And if so, did Stoekl ever part ways with the doomsayers after all?

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Galen Strawson

Real Materialism and Other Essays.

New York; Oxford University Press 2008.

Pp. 488.

US\$130.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-926742-2);

US\$50.00 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-926743-9).

This is a marvelous collection of controversial, challenging and sometimes infuriating essays. The book is a weighty tome: small print and over 450 pages, sporting a beautiful cover illustration by Rembrandt. The essays cover materialism, panpsychism, intentionality, self, narrativity, free will, determinism and responsibility. Two essays on Hume conclude the volume. The papers were written over twenty years between 1987 and 2008. The most well known papers in the volume are 'The Impossibility of Ultimate Moral Responsibility', 'Real Materialism' and the second essay 'Realistic Monism: Why Physicalism Entails Panpsychism'. Strawson argues for 'real materialism', taking a strong stand against the idea of the physical that excludes the experiential. The only fact we know with certainty is that experience exists, so if we are to be physicalists no acceptable concept of the physical could possibly exclude the experiential. And, as a physicalist, Strawson abhors dualism. He argues:

[0] That there is experience is a known certain fact
therefore:

[1] If matter is conceived as intrinsically-non-experiential (M), and if the existence of such M, puts the possibility of experience (E) in doubt, then naturalists should find M objectionable, not E.

[2] If M exists then E's possibility is in doubt.

Therefore

[3] Naturalists should reject intrinsically-non-experiential matter
and they should embrace:

[4] Intrinsically experiential matter, (and possibly panpsychism: that every concrete thing has experiential properties!)

Strawson's materialism is puzzling. Enlisting A. S. Eddington, he denies that we know much about the exact intrinsic nature of the physical, arguing that this ignorance ought to make us wary of arguments for property-dualism. The physical as we encounter it, both in experience and in science, remains elusive. The late David Lewis is therefore admonished for holding that friends of qualia are the physicalist's main enemy. The property-dualist must know much about the nature of the physical so that he can confidently claim that the experiential is nonreducible, or at least, incomprehensibly physical (as Nagel once claimed.) But given our state of ignorance about the intrinsic nature of the physical there is nothing, over and above intuition, that indicates that the physical is not experiential.

Strawson rails against the possibility of emergence, arguing that we cannot draw an analogy between the alleged emergence of experience from the non-experiential and the emergence of, say, liquidity from non-liquid atoms. He claims that 'what we do, when we give a satisfactory account of how liquidity emerges from non-liquidity, is show that there aren't really any new properties involved at all' (69). Liquidity has dissolved here, replaced with some set of properties that make it true that non-liquid atoms together constitute a liquid. Liquidity is nothing distinct from properties of the atoms structured appropriately. Appearances to the contrary, liquidity and non-liquidity are not fundamentally different in kind, thus there is a sense in which what we get is already found in the atoms themselves! As Strawson notes, we don't wish to say that an atom is liquid, so the commonality between liquidity and non-liquidity is some further (chemical) property that accounts for liquidity when the non-liquid individual atoms are brought together. Liquidity may have dissolved into chemistry but it hasn't thereby gone away.

If so, then why not use this model for the experiential too? Experience is not different in kind from physical properties or atoms, in complex arrangements, but individual atoms don't have experience. The model is paradigmatic for explanatory success and, for Strawson, for ontological frugality too, since experience would be nothing 'new' or distinct from some physical system. A physicalist would certainly *desire* to treat experience in such a way! This model of the origin of experience would, however, reject [2] which Strawson requires to conclude that there are intrinsic experiential properties of matter. So why doesn't Strawson take this path? He claims we don't have any idea of what would do the job in the case of the experiential (61), for it 'boggles the mind' and we 'need an analogy on a wholly different scale if we are to get any imaginative grip on the supposed move from the non-experiential to the experiential' (63). Really? What exactly is the puzzle, if it isn't one of the tired old puzzles inherited from the debate Strawson scorns: inverted spectra, zombies, bat experiences, etc.? Strawson shares [2] in common with 'qualia freaks' and 'zombieists', not to mention Descartes, and it is this very non-realistic, non-physicalist thesis that he requires to defend his view.

One suspects that Strawson has succumbed to a seventeenth-century doctrine about generation: that effects must be contained in their causes. Regarding *brute* emergence he writes 'emergence cannot be brute. One problem is that brute emergence is by definition a miracle every time it occurs . . . for it is true by hypothesis that in brute emergence there is absolutely nothing about X, the merged-from, in virtue of which Y, the emerger, emerges from it' (65). But this is an odd comment: brute emergence is as miraculous as the fundamental laws between the fundamental *physical* properties or forces. If fundamental physical laws between irreducible physical properties count as miracles then 'miracles' abound, and the brute emergence of experience is in company with the fundamental laws and properties. Fine company, really, and exactly what a dualist such as Chalmers could applaud. Worse, we may remind ourselves that dualist arguments allegedly suffer from our ignorance of the nature of the physical. We might wonder, therefore, how Strawson can argue (as a dualist would) for [2] and for the disanalogy between the emergence of liquidity and the emergence of experience. Panpsychists and dualists both believe in 'preexistence' (drawing upon another seventeenth-century idea). Both deny the possibility that nonexperiential matter could generate experience, hence they conclude that the experiential is a basic 'preexisting' property. The panpsychist adds 'and is physical'. They differ on numbers and location. The panpsychist places the experiential in the heart of the physical, claiming there's nothing else, just this one kind of thing. The dualist lets experience wander free from the physical, recognizing an ontological distinctness between them. But both agree that non-experiential matter could never bring about experience. I don't see how Strawson can have his cake and eat it too. As a really serious materialist, I would reject [2], while happily embracing [1] and the certainty of experience, [0]. Our ignorance of the nature of the physical should prevent dualists and eliminativists from holding [2], but it should also prevent Strawson from doing so as well.

Strawson's work on free will and responsibility is well known and he is to be credited for forcefully reviving an old-idea; that moral responsibility requires some form of self-causation. Genuine self-causation is impossible hence ultimate responsibility is impossible. Unlike those who worry about the lack of alternate possibilities in a determined system, Strawson notes that it is the actual sequence of events that presents a problem for moral responsibility. To be responsible for one's actions requires ultimate responsibility for one's mental states that cause that action. To be responsible for one's mental states requires that one have been in some former state that brought this about, for which one must have been responsible. The regress cannot be sustained; we are all shaped in childhood by environment and development over which we have no control. Thus, we cannot be held ultimately responsible for our actions.

But what is 'ultimate responsibility' (UR)? Strawson thinks one is ultimately responsible if it *makes sense* that one goes to either heaven or hell for what one has done. But I don't find this claim that helpful. The idea blurs issues we ought to keep separate. It is one thing to buy into retributive justice

such that it makes sense to think that people deserve punishment, but it is another to think that the kind of punishment possible could involve eternal torture. If the latter idea is part of what UR involves then its nonexistence comes as no surprise to many, and Strawson's particular argument isn't necessary. Moral reasons already rule out an account of responsibility that allows for torture as a just response. But if the idea is simply to note that many people hold onto retributivist justice, then bringing in heaven and hell simply confuses unreasonable punishment with retributivism. But does it matter? Strawson's complaint presupposes the idea that to be responsible for some action, one must be responsible for its cause (i.e. oneself), which leads to a regress impossible to satisfy. This moral claim *is* plausible, thus Strawson's argument that responsibility is impossible does reveal a puzzling premise of intuitive morality and deserves serious discussion.

Strawson has a few 'cheeky' things to say about the state of current philosophy. He remarks that debates over the reducibility of mind were done better in the seventeenth century than today. He notes the puzzling state of current publishing: 'the process of learned-journal peer-review, [is] a process that probably works reasonably well in knocking out papers below a certain level of basic competence, but seems otherwise close to random' (11). This comment might make the reader nervous since Strawson candidly admits that of six submissions to *Mind*, none were accepted. But readers will find Strawson's papers well-worth reading and refuting.

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Sor-hoon Tan and John Whalen-Bridge, eds.

Democracy as Culture:

Deweyan Pragmatism in a Globalizing World.

Albany: State University of New York

Press 2008.

Pp. 224.

US\$65.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7914-7587-4);

US\$24.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-7914-7588-1).

This collection stands out from what has come to resemble a cottage industry of volumes on global democracy and cosmopolitanism. Tan and Whalen-Bridge's collection has the distinction of exploring whether Deweyan democracy, or the account of democracy inspired by Dewey's writings and embraced by contemporary Deweyans, can be disseminated globally and

across diverse cultures. According to the collection's editors, the eleven essays share a single approach: 'By examining the implications for conceiving of democracy as culture, rather than as something that precedes or follows from cultural formations, the essays in this volume consider Dewey's adumbrations of democracy as one face of globalization' (1). Since the volume is dedicated to the late Richard Rorty, it is unsurprising that the relevance of Rorty's neopragmatism to Dewey's pragmatism also emerges in several of the essays.

In the first section of the volume, titled 'Universalizing Democracy Pragmatically', two pieces lay out the groundwork for how Deweyan pragmatists might evaluate the claim that Western democracy offers a set of universal moral norms and is therefore incompatible with culturalism, or the position that all cultures contain unique and incompatible moral norms. Larry Hickman's essay provides a multi-pronged explanation of the 'genesis of norms' from a pragmatist perspective: (i) through conventions, (ii) through testing, (iii) through agreement or consent, and (iv) through 'research into better ways to delegate certain tasks of [norm] enforcement' (26). In the process, Hickman draws a sharp contrast between Dewey's experimentalist approach to democratic norm proliferation and Chantal Mouffe's more agonistic alternative, based on mediated conflict rather than collaborative inquiry. Tan's piece, 'Reconstructing Culture: A Deweyan Response to Antidemocratic Culturalism', directly addresses the tension between democratic universalism and antidemocratic culturalism. By appealing to Dewey's distinction between a generic and a universal ideal, Tan navigates a way out of the conundrum. '[A] general ideal, in the sense of "generic", does not carry the same weight as a universal ideal when it comes to making a moral claim. . . . Every culture realizes the moral ideal of democracy in its own way, with its own characteristic institutions, practices, and theories, but the moral ideal is universal in being a humanistic ideal that is valid for all human beings if it is valid for any' (46-7). Rather than slipping into the quagmire of moral relativism or the myopia of moral absolutism, the Deweyan 'moral ideal' shows that any democratic norms ought to be tentative, experimental, generic and culturally sensitive.

Section 2, 'Imposing Democracy', brings Dewey's ideas about democracy into conversation with contemporary and historical ideas, including George W. Bush's National Security Strategy, adaptations of Dewey's educational philosophy abroad, Jane Addams' democratic ethic, and Randolph Bourne's pacifist pragmatism. Sun Youzhong's essay, appropriately subtitled 'A Deweyan Critique of Bush's Second-Term *National Security Strategy*', critically engages George W. Bush's unpopular approach to international relations through the prism of Dewey's philosophy. I believe that such Deweyan criticisms of the Bush administration's foreign policy can be fruitful, if only because they illuminate these far-reaching matters in ways that policy wonks are frequently unable to do. In 'Can Democratic Inquiry Be Exported?' James Scott Johnston argues that '[f]or a genuine democracy to occur, it must be home-grown' (64). Johnston's own inquiry touches on Dewey's trips to Japan and China, acknowledging that his political and educational 'theories had

little immediate impact beyond a select group of reformers and educators' (69), but over time had an immense influence on the broader Japanese and Chinese societies. The final two essays in this section address, respectively, the friendly relationship between Jane Addams and Dewey's visions of democracy (Judy Whipps) and the debate between Randolph Bourne and Dewey on the matter of whether America should fight the First World War (Bruce Robbins). Both essays are impressive in their scholarly depth, revealing the historical record of Dewey's involvements as well as the cross-pollination of ideas between him and his contemporaries.

In the third and final section, 'De-Centering Dewey', the volume steers widely into a variety of subjects, some directly related to Deweyan democracy and its adoption across different cultures and others indirectly, or only tangentially, related to the collection's overall theme. John Holbo gives a dizzying account of Richard Rorty and Hilary Putnam's attempts to overcome the analytic tradition in his essay 'Dewey's Difficult Recovery: Analytic Philosophy's Attempted Turn'. By the end of the essay, it is unclear exactly what Rorty and Putnam's connection to Dewey is, except that whatever it is it demonstrates that, in Holbo's words, 'you can only get to be like Dewey by trying to be like Plato and failing' (121). In 'Descartes, Dewey, and Democracy', Cecilia Wee deploys the most ambitious argument of the collection, viz., that Descartes and Dewey shared similar assumptions about the social preconditions for democracy. Although Dewey often criticized Descartes for embarking on a 'quest for certainty', the doomed attempt to discern the foundations of all knowledge and reality, Wee thinks that when Descartes was not engaging in metaphysics, he and Dewey had much more in common than most Dewey scholars realize. She writes: 'For both Descartes and Dewey, the individual in a right relation to her community will have a consciousness of the whole that invests actions with dignity and meaning' (134). The final three essays in this section, by Whalen-Bridge, Jessica Ching-Sze Wang and Roger T. Ames, compare Dewey's ideas about democracy, culture and aesthetics, with the similar ideas of important figures in Eastern philosophy (especially Lin-chi, Liang Shuming and Tang Junyi).

The volume offers such varied perspectives that it will likely entice readers from many backgrounds and with diverse interests. In my judgment, the lead essay by Hickman, the fourth essay by Johnston and the sixth by Whipps would be of greatest interest to the orthodox Dewey scholar. They represent a significant contribution to existing Dewey scholarship. Scholars concerned with how Dewey's ideas about democracy cash out in contemporary debates on global democracy and cosmopolitanism should devote their attention to the essays by Tan and Youzhong. For those scholars interested in comparative philosophy, especially Confucianism and Dewey's pragmatism, the final two essays by Whalen-Bridge, Wang and Ames will be of interest. If there is one problem with this volume (although admittedly a small one), it is the emphasis on East-West comparisons and the neglect of perspectives from other parts of the globe. Relief could have come in the form of an essay on Deweyan democracy, Gandhi, and Indian culture. Although I was left unconvinced by

Wee's ambitious argument and uncertain of the point of Holbo's essay, these and Robbins' essay round out the volume with the kind of diversity suitable for a collection titled *Democracy as Culture*.

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Mary Warnock and Elizabeth Macdonald

Easeful Death:

Is There a Case for Assisted Dying?

Toronto and New York: Oxford University Press 2008.

Pp. 224.

US\$26.00

(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-953990-1);

Cdn\$16.95/US\$16.95

(paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-956184-1).

This short little book — disregarding the Introduction, Notes, References and Index, it runs to some ten chapters and 139 pages — is an extended plea for changing the current UK law on homicide so that it would allow physician assisted suicide (and possibly euthanasia) under carefully controlled conditions. One might assume that, given this national focus, the book would be of limited interest; and, as far as I am concerned, that assumption is indeed correct. Even though non-parochial cases and data are adduced — considerations drawn from Belgium, Oregon, The Netherlands and Switzerland are particularly noteworthy in this regard — the overwhelming focus is on the UK scene, and in particular on Lord Joffe's 2006 Bill on assisted suicide.

However, that is not the real reason why this little book is of limited interest. After all, it is generally accepted in bioethics that parochial cases and considerations may well serve as the foundation of trenchant ethical reasoning because, their local origins notwithstanding, they may exemplify general and universal issues that transcend national boundaries and by that very token highlight problems that require generally valid solutions irrespective of their place of origin. Assisted suicide and euthanasia certainly fall into this category, and the difficulties that almost all jurisdictions have encountered in trying to develop an acceptable legislative response to the problem of how to deal with the fact that medical science can extend human life far beyond what the individuals whose lives are thus extended find acceptable, certainly suggest that the book deserves a wide audience.

The reason it does not, the reason it is of limited interest, lies in the level of the discussion — ‘analysis’ would be too strong a word here — and the validity of the reasoning that it contains. While it touches on many topics — *inter alia*, the Doctrine of Double Effect, the notion of irremediable suffering, the active/passive distinction and the concept of futility are subjects of consideration — none of them are really subjected to any kind of rigorous analysis, nor is there anything even approaching an adequate set of references. To be sure, this book is eminently readable. In fact, one almost has the impression that it was written as a set of BBC lectures, and as such it is eminently enjoyable (insofar as one can talk about enjoyment in reading works on this sort of topic). But by that very token it fails to be philosophically trenchant, and it certainly would be of limited use at best for anyone seriously interested in drafting any kind of legislative reform.

For example, the Doctrine of Double Effect is correctly identified as a common justification that physicians give when prescribing analgesics that will alleviate pain but that have the unintended and unwelcome side-effect of shortening the patient’s life. However, nowhere is there even a hint that the authors are aware that this doctrine may run into ethical problems because the so-called unintended outcome is necessarily part of the awareness of the prescribing physician. It has variously been argued that this means that the so-called unintended outcome cannot be separated from the prescribing physician’s overall intent, and that therefore the doctrine amounts to psychological *leger de main*. The authors should at least have acknowledged this objection because, if correct, it undercuts an important factor in medical end-of-life decision making.

Then there are logical infelicities. For instance, the authors maintain that ‘[t]he fact that experienced doctors (who after all understand thoroughly what dying entails) have been known to set aside their fear of legal repercussions in order to smooth the dying path for friends and loved ones implies that this assistance is inherently a moral and loving act’ (122). There is no such implication. If there were, then every time someone acts in a way that supposedly benefits their friends and loved ones, that action would be moral — which is dubious, to say the least. At best, what follows is that physicians are of the opinion that their acts are moral; but that is an entirely different kettle of fish.

Or, to take another example, the authors variously argue (e.g., 94 ff.) that ‘doctors are required to make value judgments’, and they illustrate this by pointing out that ‘unless the doctor swiftly evaluates the situation and makes a decision, and acts promptly, the patient will die in the immediate future. Doctors therefore . . . make life and death decisions.’ This sort of reasoning confuses two things: making value judgments in the sense of deciding which treatment option has greater moral cogency, and making judgments in the sense of deciding which of the various technical options that are open at this juncture most closely approximate the values that have otherwise been established. In the first instance, it is physicians who decide what values should apply in end-of — life decision making; in the second, physicians decide what

medical intervention most closely fits socially determined values. The difference is not merely logical. What is at stake is the fundamental question whether the values used in medical decision making are legitimately determined by the medical profession, or whether physicians are obligated to use socially determined values.

Many articles, books treatises and monographs have written about assisted suicide and euthanasia, so it may fairly be asked, 'What does this treatise bring to the discussion that otherwise would be missing?' The answer is, 'Not much.' It is an eminently readable piece of writing, but it is not, as the dust-jacket would have it, 'an authoritative volume'; nor is it 'an important contribution to the ongoing debate'.

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Peter Weigel

Aquinas on Simplicity: An Investigation into the Foundations of his Philosophical Theology.
New York: Peter Lang 2008.

Pp. 265.

US\$61.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-3-03910-730-8).

More than its title, the subtitle of Weigel's book describes its content and method. Weigel observes that Aquinas holds absolute simplicity to be 'the necessary equivalent to God being infinite and enjoying absolute perfection' (15). Simplicity thus stands as the radical feature that distinguishes uncreated from created being. Most of Weigel's book, however, is spent explaining the metaphysical background of the doctrine of simplicity rather than arguing for its primary role in Aquinas's metaphysics and philosophical theology. Weigel surveys and analytically reformulates the classic Thomistic arguments that employ the act/potency and existence/essence couplets with reference to the notions of finitude/infinity and composition/simplicity. Weigel also draws attention to the problems raised by divine simplicity, particularly the question of how a multitude of attributes such as wisdom, goodness, and justice can be attributed to an utterly simple God. Convinced that Aquinas's system is neither closed nor incompatible with an analytical approach, Weigel has in mind a philosophically trained audience, though not necessarily specialists.

Weigel begins and ends the book by addressing the issue of divine predication. He explains that the layout of the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*

shows that Aquinas granted pride of place to simplicity as the 'the ontological precondition' for all other divine predicates (37). Rather than making a positive assertion about God, simplicity first and foremost refers to the absence of metaphysical composition in the divine substance. Existing neither as a composition of essence and existence, substance and accidents, or matter and form, God and God alone is *omnino simplex*. Consequently, Aquinas's five ways of demonstrating the existence of God cannot be viewed in isolation from the rest of the *Summa*; rather, they prepare the way for divine simplicity as the concept bridging the study of God's existence with the unfolding of various predicates characterizing the unique manner of divine existence. To take but one example, God's perfection rests on divine simplicity, insofar as 'perfection' is that viewpoint which considers how complete or well actualized a thing is. Weigel points out that the order in which the divine attributes are treated in the *Summa* does not so much reflect the order in which they are known by the human intellect, but rather the very ontological structure of reality. Indeed, simplicity receives early treatment even though, epistemologically speaking, it is precisely the trait that makes divine substance so difficult to comprehend. Furthermore, Weigel continues, by placing simplicity at the beginning of the investigation, Aquinas intends to anticipate the 'end', i.e., eternal happiness, by alluding to the fact that the blessed souls in heaven experience God in a single apprehension.

Weigel dwells at length on the basic compositions that pervade the order of created being: act/potency, matter/form, substance/accidents, and essence/existence. Though Weigel's material is not especially original here, readers who prefer an analytically arranged argument may find his repackaging of Aquinas's scholasticism refreshing. Above all, he underscores the importance of act/potency for Aquinas's general theory of composition, drawing upon the *De ente et essentia* as the primary source introducing the basic existence/essence distinction. Weigel then focuses more sharply on how the act of existence relates to finite essence, so as to shed light on the necessary composition of essence and existence in all creatures. Thomistic scholars will immediately take note of Weigel's unambiguous position on the debated issue of the point at which Aquinas finally arrives at a real distinction between being and essence in the course of the *De ente et essentia*. Weigel rejects the 'softer' reading advocated by Joseph Owens and others who maintain that stage one of the argument succeeds in establishing only a distinction of reason, because Aquinas in fact 'needs a real distinction for the argument to do any real philosophical work' (83).

Since, in his eyes, the potency/act distinction is so crucial for an adequate grasp of ontological composition, Weigel examines its roots in Aristotle and its expansion through the Neoplatonic influences of Augustine, Avicenna, Dionysius, and others. He does not delve into the historical details, but stresses that Aquinas ingeniously discovered a way of applying act and potency to immaterial beings, thus assimilating these concepts into 'a metaphysics of infinity and limitation that makes existence the primary or peak expression of actuality' (96). It is precisely here that Weigel approaches the threshold of

current Thomistic scholarship, which strives to synthesize the aspects of self-sufficiency and overflowing superabundance so clearly and simultaneously present in Aquinas's metaphysics and decisive for his theology. This offers Weigel a golden opportunity to elaborate upon the role of divine simplicity in affecting such a synthesis; an opportunity he unfortunately does not seize. He explains that divine simplicity entails that God has no components which would limit divine act to this or that type, but he does not move to speculate on how this might expand our notion of divine plenitude.

Weigel has done a fine job of reformulating Aquinas's central metaphysical definitions and arguments, particularly his application of act and potency to immaterial being and the fundamental distinction between essence and existence. However, as he covers this terrain, simplicity, the alleged central concern of this book, lingers somewhere in the shadows, leaving the reader hanging in suspense for a satisfactory integration of the notion into Aquinas's overall metaphysical project. Just when it seems such integration is within reach, Weigel limits himself to suggesting a few possible ways in which simplicity might connect with other Thomistic metaphysical categories. The idea that simplicity plays a central role in Aquinas's metaphysics and theology is virtually indisputable, but just how it does so is not easy to articulate. Weigel wishes to take up the task, but the book reads more like a series of analytical studies in Thomistic metaphysics interspersed with some stimulating ideas about how simplicity underlies the larger whole. He summarizes the thesis quite nicely: 'as a bedrock claim of the doctrine of simplicity, pure act yields a simple ontology of infinite plenitude and superabundance, not a simplicity that a proper estimate can understand as thin and static' (224). But this is precisely the claim that begs for fuller elaboration.

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Richard Dien Winfield

Modernity, Religion, and the War on Terror.

Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2007.

Pp. 152.

US\$49.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7546-6056-9).

Winfield acknowledges that the so-called war on terror is not 'a war in any conventional sense' (1). Yet he defends the martial rhetoric as long as the enemy is properly identified. It is not just any group using terrorism to achieve circumscribed political ends, but 'a specific movement of Islamist religious

warriors' (2) inspired by the dream of re-establishing the 'empire of faith' (3) founded by Muhammad and extended by his Caliph successors in the seventh century. The 'saving grace' of religions such as Judaism and Hinduism was a 'particularism' permitting their military conquerors to accept geographic limitations, whereas the proselytizing demand of Muhammad moved Islam inexorably toward the goal of 'religious empire' (100). Muslim victory could only be secured by 'the successful conversion or extermination of all the "infidels"' (73). Contemporary Islamists consider this demand to be an essential feature of Islam. According to Winfield, therefore, they are only being consistent in trying to overthrow the socio-political freedoms that define modernity, in order to install the rule of a monotheistic will embodied in Shariah law.

Given their 'world-embracing fanaticism', Islamists could easily adapt the slogan of Robespierre's 'secular fanatics': not 'liberté et la terreur,' but 'la religion et la terreur' captures the spirit of their holy war that aims to universalize a pre-modern variety of civilization (102). Yet the United States and its allies do not fight back in the name of a different religion. The United States is actually a stand-in for modernity conceived as the 'normative project' that recognizes as rational only those practices that are consistent with 'self-determination' (12). Its aim is to embody 'a uniquely valid form of civilization' (71) in practices that 'are inherently capable of global, not to mention intergalactic realization' (73). All religions must conform — in theory and practice — precisely because this project is truly universal. The cogency of Winfield's overall argument turns on this oft-repeated, philosophically ambitious claim.

The immediate political implication is unassailable: long-lasting protection against the terrorism of religious (or secular) fanatics is best achieved when self-governing peoples are bound to constitutions not dependent on pre-existing cultural or religious ties. Winfield also provides a clear and concise account of why this innovation of modernity cannot be easily exported. First, a market economy is integral to its normative agenda. Historically, however, the logic of capitalism led to a virulent form of imperialism. So attention necessarily turns away from religion to other causes of contemporary terrorism, namely, the social, political, and economic horrors unleashed on pre-modern cultures when they were colonized by Western states (or their proxies) pursuing global industrialization. A set of post-colonial conditions perfectly suited for the growth of Islamist terror is the predictable consequence.

Second, Western democracies cannot repair the damage caused by such internal contradiction simply by helping to implement universal suffrage and appropriate models of governance in former colonies. For the normative infrastructure of modernity consists in the richly textured ethos and practices of civil society that have to be carefully cultivated from diverse, often resistant roots over a sufficiently long period of time. Ultimately, though, Winfield does not rule out using force as well as persuasion to effect the normative transition, because 'the genesis of the institutions of freedom can never conform to their actuality' (88). And this explicitly Hegelian language highlights the paradox of self-determination: a culture might have no desire to divest itself of its pre-modern character, but someone who forces a people to be free

is on the right side of history, especially if the phenomenon is 'indigenous' not 'external' (85).

Not surprisingly, then, Winfield's exemplar is Mustafa Kemal, who successfully brought his own people into line with the normative agenda of modernity by founding the Republic of Turkey. In the process of doing so, the Atatürk was required to engineer a 'religious reformation' (120) that turned Shariah law into a voluntary religious code that Muslims could follow within the bounds of parliamentary law. This did not just prove that Islam possesses 'the ability to reinterpret its dogmas' that apparently contradict modernity and 'sanitize all the specific rules' governing daily life accordingly (121). The Atatürk's 'privatization of religion' (130), Winfield insists, gave birth to true Islam. For religion is distinguished from art and philosophy by an inner 'feeling' (41), and the generic content of all religious piety 'is a feeling about what is most universal and unconditioned — the divine' (42). Genuine revelations of the divine 'cannot conflict with philosophical truth' (130). And philosophy has demonstrated that 'modernity brings to consummation' the 'supreme value of rational autonomy' (43), which is to say, the divine, unconditioned truth revealed in history.

Winfield's narrative line often echoes that of Jürgen Habermas in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Enlightenment thinkers, that is, believed 'the logic of justification is identical to the logic of foundationalism' (23), and disbelief in foundations led many post-Nietzschean philosophers down various paths to nihilism. By contrast, embracing 'the revolutionary insight' (23) into the self-validating and 'intersubjective character' of the emancipatory practices of modernity (32) lets us complete the Enlightenment project while transcending its philosophical limitations. Nevertheless, in aggressively pursuing his own 'Hegelian dream' (91), Winfield never mentions the philosopher who has championed the position that the concept of universal validity is essential to philosophy without foundations. On the other hand, the best-known opponent of Habermas on this issue does earn a single mention. But Richard Rorty's liberal irony is sarcastically dismissed in a footnote as a 'self-delusion' characteristic of 'irresolute post-modernism' (22). This is typical. Indeed, the book's most ambitious claim — the normative agenda of modernity is uniquely and universally valid — is seriously undercut by an insufficiently detailed philosophical context and frequent rhetorical posturing.

For example, Winfield uses Samuel Huntingdon and Bernard Lewis very effectively in clarifying his position on Islam and the war on terror, but these two figures play a far larger role in this book than any contemporary philosopher. This is possible only because Winfield is convinced that the key criticism of his core epistemic claim is vulnerable to a devastating, case-closing argument: if every form of life 'is conditioned by unjustifiable conventions' then post-modernism proves itself to be merely a 'perspectival ideology' that cannot be articulated without 'contradicting its own thesis' (22). What about the diverse array of unnamed philosophers who cannot simply be lumped in with 'post-modern fascists' (78) and pragmatist fellow-travelers such as

Rorty? Potential counter-arguments of anyone who might be hesitant about committing to Winfield's universally valid 'foundation-free standard of freedom' are pre-empted by his more negatively charged labels such as 'parochial Rawlsians' or 'communitarian particularists' (ibid).

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Roger Woolhouse

Locke: A Biography.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2007.

Pp. 558.

US\$45.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-81786-8).

Woolhouse's comprehensive biography of John Locke — the first such biography in fifty years — makes extensive and chronologically systematic use of Locke's correspondence, journal entries, and early drafts and versions of both his better and lesser known works: from his works in metaphysics and epistemology, to his works in political theory, theology, and education, to his lesser known forays into economics, debates over currency and recoinage issues, and even political intrigue. This biography is a fascinating read — of interest to both the student and scholar of Locke — and can usefully be considered in three lights: what it tells us about Locke, the man; what it tells us about the development of Locke's philosophical views; and what it tells us about the relationships between Locke's many intellectual interests.

Woolhouse's extensive use of Locke's personal writings gives the reader a very intimate picture of Locke, the man. Among other things, he appears to be a chaste and self-disciplined man who loves and seeks order. There is, perhaps, something of a romantic interest in Elinor Parry, a member of Locke's circle of friends at Oxford, but it never flowers into marriage. Two of Locke's other most intimate friendships — with Nicholas Toinard, on the one hand, and Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth's daughter, Damaris Cudworth (later Lady Masham), on the other — appear to have been purely intellectual. His self-discipline and love of order are reflected in many aspects of Locke's character. His extensive (obsessive?) note-taking includes everything from laundry lists and balance sheets, to culinary and medical recipes, to daily entries in a weather register begun in 1666, the first seventeen years of which appear in Robert Boyle's 1692 *The General History of the Air*. We also see Locke's self-discipline in the fortitude with which he bears his lifelong breathing problems. Out of a sense of public or professional duty,

Locke returns to London and its debilitating smog again and again only to be driven back to the country when his breathing becomes unbearable. Locke displays a similar fortitude when, in 1683, he is forced into political exile in Holland — then a hotbed of Whiggish political subversion. In trying to maintain the façade that his travels are of his own volition, Locke comically suggests that he is in Holland rather than France *for the beer*. As Woolhouse points out, however, this exile is instrumental in providing Locke with the time and focus needed to complete his philosophical investigations into human understanding.

Concerning the development of his philosophical views, Locke's empirical and commonsensical approach to philosophy is influenced by his early days at Oxford; indeed, as a member of Boyle's experimental circle, his weather register is just one instance of his attraction to natural philosophy. Locke's interests in medicine, for example, reflect not only a concern for his own health but also a recognition that the human organism is best studied, not through metaphysical theorizing, but through empirical investigation. It is, for instance, following experiments performed by Boyle and Robert Hooke, that Locke begins to consider the nature of respiration (resulting in the 1666 'Repirationis Usus'). More generally, Locke sets out his early philosophy of medicine in his 1668 'Anatomie' — 'a piece', Woolhouse writes, 'thoroughly imbued by (an) empirical, anti-theoretical methodology' (86).

Woolhouse does a nice job outlining some of Locke's earliest work on human understanding. Locke's interests in this topic go as far back as his earliest days at Oxford, and are closely related to his concern for understanding the relation between moral law and God's will. From questions of the relations between morality and religion (e.g., his 1664 'Essays on the Laws of Nature'), Locke concludes that it is first 'necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings (are), and (are) not fitted to deal with' (98), resulting in his 1671 *De Intellectu Humano*. Much later we see the significant influence of Locke's friend, the Dublin savant William Molyneux, on later editions of his *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*.

In a similar fashion, Woolhouse unpacks decades of development in Locke's views on the relation between religion and politics, from his 1667 'Essay concerning Toleration' and his four *Letters concerning Toleration* (1689-1704), to his *Tracts* (1660-62) and *Treatises* (1689) on government. Likewise, Woolhouse charts this childless bachelor's long standing interests in education, interests which culminate in Locke's 1693 *Some Thoughts concerning Education* and his 1698 tutorial, 'Elements of Natural Philosophy', composed for Lady Masham's twelve year old son Frank.

Finally, there are those insights that might be gleaned from considering the relations between Locke's various interests. In particular, we might wonder how his theological views relate to his metaphysics and epistemology. Woolhouse addresses in some detail Locke's controversial 1695 *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures* and, following heated criticisms from John Edwards, its subsequent *Vindications* (1695-7). Of particular interest is Locke's account of death and his commitment to bodily

resurrection, issues also addressed in his exchanges with Edward Stillingfleet (1697-9). However, much more could have been said about these lines of thought. Indeed, when considered in the context of his *Essay*, Locke's *Reasonableness* provides interesting insights into his understanding of the mind-body relationship. Edwards, in his various critiques of *Reasonableness*, suggests that Locke is, if not an atheist, at least a Socinian, a member of, or sympathizer with, the Polish Brethren who followed the theology of Faustus Socinus (1539-1604) and who espoused a number of heretical views. Whether or not Locke is a Socinian (see, e.g., the editor's introduction to the 1999 edition of Locke's *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures*, ed. J. C. Higgins-Biddle, Oxford: Clarendon Press), Locke's theological views help make sense of two of the most controversial and influential aspects of his *Essay*: his account of personal identity (2.27.1-29) and his suggestion of the possibility of thinking matter (4.3.6; see my 'Thinking-Matter Then and Now: The Evolution of Mind-Body Dualism', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 26, 2009, 43-61.).

Like his friend Isaac Newton, Locke's theology is, in many ways, heterodox. While Woolhouse does consider some of the important connections between Locke and Newton, he might have done more with regard to the similarities between their unorthodox theologies and how these views inform their positions on both the mind-body relation and personal immortality. Both men are Christian *mortalists*, holding that persons die with their bodies only to live again *after* bodily resurrection. Consequently, while neither accepts Hobbes' thoroughgoing materialism, both take persons to be necessarily *embodied* (see my "A Compound Wholly Mortal": Locke and Newton on the Metaphysics of (Personal) Immortality', forthcoming in the *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*). In *Reasonableness*, Locke defines bodily death as the complete 'cessation of sense and perception' (*Reasonableness*, 14), that is, the complete cessation of consciousness. Given Locke's view that persons are conscious things, bodily death is personal death. In his personal journal, Locke accordingly rejects the following Cartesian argument for immortality: since minds are immaterial, they are indivisible, and therefore, incorruptible. This sort of argument, Locke insists, misses the point, for *personal* immortality is not 'a state of bare substantial existence and duration, but a state of sensibility' (John Locke, 'Excerpt from Locke's Journal, 20 April 1682', *Life and Letters of John Locke*, ed. Lord King, London: H. G. Bohn, 1858, 128). In other words, even if we have an immaterial soul (which, he insists in his *Essay*, is not certain), and even if it is indestructible, this in no way guarantees the continuation of consciousness, the locus of personhood. Indeed, *experience* teaches us that we can and do lose consciousness every day, as in cases of 'swooning' or 'apoplexy', or most commonly, 'profound sleep' (ibid., 129). In these cases, changes in the body are systematically accompanied by changes in consciousness; thus, with a complete dissolution of the body, we should expect a complete cessation of consciousness. Hence, even if we have an immaterial soul over and above our material body, we should expect that upon death, 'both lie dead and inactive, the one without thought, the other

without motion, a minute, an hour, or to eternity, which wholly depends upon the will' of God (ibid., 130). In short, on Locke's view, having an immaterial soul is *neither necessary nor* sufficient for personal immortality; persons are conscious things, and while consciousness is not just matter in motion, it depends on the living body. The preservation of the person after bodily death, then, requires a new (resurrected) body, and this, Locke argues in his *Reasonableness*, is precisely the promise of Christ's crucifixion.

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Christopher D. Wraight

*Rousseau's The Social Contract:
A Reader's Guide.*

New York: Continuum 2008.

Pp. 136.

US\$95.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-9859-5);

US\$19.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-9860-1).

There is perhaps no work both so persistently important and vexing than Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract*. From the Jacobins' celebration of the text as the embodiment of Enlightenment progressivism to John Rawls's acknowledgement that it stands at the height of the social contract tradition, there is no contesting the book's practical and intellectual importance. Yet its blending of ancient and modern, its unfortunate placement of ambiguities, its grand scope in relatively few pages, and its employment of paradox have conspired to keep its readers boxing with shadows ever since its publication nearly two hundred-fifty years ago. So there can be no doubt of the need for careful readings of its pages to unpack these many obstacles that stand between Rousseau's pen and our comprehension. And what is most astonishing is the relative lack of such treatments in the market. The only other commentary in print today is Christopher Bertram's *Routledge Guidebook to The Social Contract*.

Wraight's book is clearly aimed more at a student audience than at a scholarly one — an approach marked by the presence of such devices as 'study questions'. As such, Wraight's book may be in more direct competition with Cliff's Notes or Spark Notes.com. This is not necessarily a problem with Wraight's book, but merely a statement about the genre.

The book reasonably includes an introductory chapter describing Rousseau's political and intellectual milieu, a second chapter overview of the *The Social Contract's* themes, a third dedicated to an analysis of the text, and a

fourth addressing the book's reception and influence. Of the four, the one-hundred page third chapter is the heart of Wright's book. It is broken into three broad sections, treating Book 1, Book 2, and then Books 3 and 4 (together) of the *The Social Contract* respectively.

Wright's analysis of *The Social Contract* is largely solid and even-handed in approach. Most of the controversial passages are treated sympathetically before being subjected to gentle questioning. This can be seen, for example, in his treatment of Rousseau's lawgiver. Wright dutifully spells out the qualities Rousseau seeks in a legislator (e.g., empathy at a distance, a keen understanding of human nature, and great intelligence) and then quickly acknowledges that the presence of such a genius is a 'bizarre departure' (76) from Rousseau's general commitment to the principle of equality, before modifying such 'outrageous claims' (80) with an appeal to Rousseau's tempered ambition of unifying the people to effect 'social and cultural change' (81). Along the way, Wright employs a useful metaphor of filmmakers who employ images to 'persuade without convincing', just as Rousseau asks of his legislator (77-8). Thereafter, he acknowledges the critical view that the legislator is rife with the possibility of unaccountable and potentially tyrannical authority. This pattern is typical of the analysis found throughout the book.

There is little doubt that these pages will be useful for many first-time readers of Rousseau's text. But it may have less utility for those coming back to the text a second, third, or tenth time. There are many missing elements that would otherwise bring readers back to this text as they revisit Rousseau. First, the book lacks an argument or point of view. Given its particular genre, this is not itself a sin. But it is a limitation that will make the book less appealing for scholars.

Second, although the book includes a chapter providing the context and setting, it is relatively brief and biographical in nature. Very little is said of the important historical, political, and philosophical contexts in which Rousseau wrote *The Social Contract*, including the momentous transition from feudal-monarchic societies to the commercial republics of the late Enlightenment. It is also unfortunate that Wright dedicates relatively little space to setting up the social contract tradition of Hobbes that, as Helena Rosenblatt has persuasively argued, was defining the political battles in Rousseau's beloved Geneva of this time. Finally, although passing reference is made to the *philosophes*, there is no sense conveyed of the striking differences between Rousseau and his former salon companions.

Third and related, although much attention is given to Rousseau's arguments, there is relatively little care after the first few pages to explaining what makes his arguments and substantive positions unique. How do Rousseau's approaches to contract, institutions, religion, property, natural law, and virtue differ from his explicit and implicit interlocutors, such as Hobbes, Locke, Machiavelli, and Plato? Wright makes an occasional reference to these figures, but rarely engages in what could be fruitful comparison — which would be useful for students in grappling with the question of why Rousseau is on the syllabus.

Fourth, Wraight's analysis is top-heavy. Of its approximately one hundred-thirty pages, only thirty are dedicated to Books 3 and 4. This is not an uncommon approach in the literature on *The Social Contract*, but it is a missed opportunity to explore a fruitful terrain of Rousseau's text. Whereas Books 1 and 2 are his most philosophic, Books 3 and 4 are his most political. Rousseau addresses many issues with surprising contemporary relevance, such as a rejection of the one-size-fits-all approach to institution design, as well as an exploration of the proper relationship between government and religion. To the latter, Wraight dedicates a mere four descriptive pages, without explaining how Rousseau meant to walk a line between the dogmatic atheism of the *philosophes* and the doctrinal Christianity of the Church.

All this being said, Wraight often displays a gift for making some of Rousseau's most difficult and perplexing passages less befuddling and intimidating. And in this regard, his primary audience will be well-served.

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Timothy S. Yoder

Hume on God:

Irony, Deism and Genuine Theism.

New York: Continuum 2009.

Pp. 176.

US\$130.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-1-8470-6146-1).

This book offers a combination of exegesis, contextual criticism, and analysis of some standard Humean texts on God and religion. Drawing principally on controversial passages from the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* and the *Natural History of Religion*, the author argues that Hume's many criticisms of 'vulgar' religion should not lead us to consider the Scottish philosopher an atheist, agnostic, or even a deist. Hume's many arguments on religious topics, we learn, were posed in the interest of defining a 'genuine theism'.

Yoder writes with an unabashed apologetic intent, and some readers will be surprised to discover a book on Hume that begins by thanking 'God for truth' (x) and ends by claiming to have sent 'a sobering message to a secular age' (146). But even the most intoxicated secularists will find much responsible scholarship in its pages, and Yoder's efforts advance a few aspects of Hume studies.

In a brief opening chapter the author signals his intention to overturn the 'conventional' non-theistic pictures of Hume. Focusing criticism particularly

on Hilary Gaskin and Anthony Flew, he claims that such scholars have had to dismiss arbitrarily the many 'affirmation texts', or passages in which Hume seems to assert theistic positions.

The second chapter, 'Hume and Irony', consists of a novel series of hermeneutic reflections concerning authorial attribution and the dismissal of texts as ironic or insincere. Yoder offers a set of informal rules for determining when a text can be read permissibly as ironic, and charges the standard Hume scholarship with haphazard practices in this regard. Of especial importance is the distinction he draws between private and stable irony, which later guides his interpretation of numerous difficult passages. While the author is not the first to note in print that a problem of ironic dismissal has been endemic to Hume scholarship, to my knowledge he is indeed the first to propose a systematic solution.

After a contextual discussion of eighteenth-century deism (Chapter 3) that interrupts the main argument, the fourth chapter defends the theistic interpretation of Hume by discussing both the *Dialogues* and the *Natural History*. He offers a 'two story' reading of the *Natural History*, according to which Hume did not take his psychology of superstition to explain the origins of all religious ideas. Hume accounted instead for two distinct sources of religious belief and two resultant species of religion: the anthropomorphizing superstition of the vulgar is rooted fear and ignorance, but the 'genuine theism' of a few reasonable philosophers derives from the observance of order in nature. This reading saves Yoder the trouble of having to dismiss or qualify the many affirmation texts in that work. It also explains well a few tricky passages, such as the one in which Hume allows that superstition may 'coincide, by chance, with the principles of reason and true philosophy' (NHR 6.5, Yoder 92). The treatment of the enigmatic final passages of the NHR, however, is less successful.

Regarding the classic question of which character in the *Dialogues* 'speaks for Hume', Yoder argues that Philo's reversal is an expression of sincere authorial intent. Here the previous analysis of irony becomes useful, and Yoder argues convincingly that if Philo is insincere, as some have alleged, then Hume is engaging in a rhetorically poor form of 'private irony'.

While those discussions vindicate Yoder's methodical approach to the affirmation texts, a pair of subsequent dismissals (119) of passages from the first *Enquiry* shows both that the author has pushed his agenda too far and that any attempt to categorize Hume's opinion on religion will meet with obstinate passages. In one further case (113) Yoder explicitly violates his own interpretive principle, attributing to Hume 'private irony' when the latter (as Philo) asserts that skepticism is essential to Christianity. There is in fact enough evidence to confirm Hume's assent to that opinion, but it would rest uneasily with the particular brand of theism under defense in this work.

I offer two further criticisms, the first of which concerns Hume's rhetoric. One of Yoder's frequent strategies is to show that in apparently iconoclastic arguments Hume specifies very carefully the object of his criticism, and so leaves room for alternative formulations of religious positions. In 'Of

Suicide', for example, Hume admits that his rejection of particular providence does not apply to general providence, the latter doctrine remaining unaffected by his efforts. Yoder wants to read this (134) as a commitment by Hume to general providence. It is informative, however, to compare those passages to an argument from *Letter from a Gentleman* in which Hume qualifies his critique of the cosmological argument by reminding that he has left the ontological argument untouched. In this case it is clear that the mention of positions not under discussion serves only to focus Hume's criticisms and prevent hyperbolic reaction by his opponents. As it stands there is little reason to attribute to him any view at all on general providence. I suspect that many of the alleged affirmations play a similar rhetorical role, and one could analyze the texts in this fashion without any appeal to private irony.

My final criticism concerns the scope and aim of the book. Yoder concludes that Hume's theism has 'meaningful implications regarding the viability of religious belief' (146), yet he gives little hint as to what those implications are. Certainly Hume is less sweeping in his conclusions on religion than are Nietzsche, Freud, and Russell (Yoder's contrasting examples). But even a theistic Hume would do no more to prove theism than does an atheistic Nietzsche prove atheism. Distance remains between his historical/contextual work and his ambiguous apologetic goals. The latter strike me as unwelcome intrusions into an otherwise fine piece of scholarship.

Yoder's attempt to introduce a methodological hermeneutic into Hume scholarship invaluablely eliminates careless interpretive moves. In this regard Yoder's book has a place in the vast Hume literature, even if his attempt to rigorously determine what Hume 'truly' believed is not entirely convincing.

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James O. Young
Cultural Appropriation and the Arts.
Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing 2008.
Pp. 192.
US\$74.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-1-4051-7656-9).

This is an informative and clearly written book on cultural appropriation and the arts, an issue that has been much discussed in academe but has not received sufficient philosophical attention. (Cultural appropriation: think of white jazz musician Bix Beiderbeck's appropriation of African-American mu-

sical styles.) Young specifically addresses the aesthetic and moral objections to cultural appropriation. His general position is that cultural appropriation is not necessarily a bad thing either aesthetically or morally, and that sometimes it is actually quite a good thing (as in the Beiderbeck case). Thus a large part of his project is involved in distinguishing between good and bad sorts of cultural appropriation. However, it could be argued that Young's overall perspective is typically Western, for example in assuming a Lockean view of property and an individualistic conception of artistic creativity. More important, he fails to give opposing non-Western positions adequate voice: a better book would have developed a stronger sense of dialectic. In the last lines of the book Young approvingly quotes R. G. Collingwood's plea to let artists 'steal with both hands whatever they can use, wherever they can find it' (158). Young believes this should be applied to cultural appropriation. In short, he thinks that Western artists should appropriate whatever they wish from indigenous and minority societies, as long as they show 'respect and politeness' (158) and do so to further their self-realization as artists in the spirit of disinterested inquiry (139). This may be reassuring for such artists but less so for people who feel that appropriation of their art and culture is theft.

At the beginning of the book Young focuses on defining such key terms as art, culture, appropriation, and authenticity. Most of what he says here seems adequate and useful given that the subject of the book is not actually the definition of these terms. He stipulates that, by 'art', he means the 'modern Western conception of art' (3), by which he understands artworks to be 'valuable as objects with aesthetic properties'. He admits that the nature of these properties may depend on cultural context. Somewhat odd, by contrast, is his definition of 'appropriation'. He bases this on a quote from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which he renders as, 'The making of a thing private property . . . ; taking as one's own or to one's own use' (4). Yet, the second phrase continues with 'esp. without permission'. When you appropriate something you take it *without the owner's permission*. Young's is essentially a re-definition, and it leads to the oddity of his saying that purchasing tourist art is a form of appropriation (6). Perhaps he does this to open up the possibility of positive as well as negative appropriation. Later, however, he says that he is skeptical 'that significant harm is done to cultures as a whole' and that 'much cultural appropriation is completely benign' (25). The first claim is not well supported by the second, given that he has significantly enlarged the category to include all outsider purchases of insider artworks!

Young distinguishes three types of cultural appropriation: object appropriation (both by theft and by purchase), content appropriation (both of entire works and of styles and motifs), and subject appropriation (which is when an artist uses another culture as his or her subject matter). He thinks that this last is not really a form of appropriation, since the artist only represents his or her own experience, and since insiders are left with theirs. However, he does talk in later chapters about ways in which subject appropriation can be morally wrong (as when stereotypes are perpetuated) (107). Subject appro-

priation is a very tricky question faced every day by artists in multicultural societies who almost inevitably portray figures and phenomena from other cultures. As for the term 'culture', Young is very aware of many of the complexities surrounding it, and yet he believes, rightly I think, that it is possible to speak of different cultures and hence of outsiders vs. insiders.

A central issue is whether cultures can be said to own artworks, styles or motifs. Young says that if there were a culture that legally specified that all works of art produced by individual members are owned in common, such a law would be unjust. He draws on 'Locke's belief that the creator of property . . . obtains a claim on property that is lacked by people who have nothing to do with its creation' (77). Yet, the phrase 'nothing to do with its creation' begs the question, since the opposing position is precisely that the artist's culture has a lot to do with his or her creative work, and it ignores the fact that (even if we grant that such a law would be unjust) there is a sense in which cultural products do belong to the culture as a whole.

How seriously should we take the demands of representatives of indigenous or minority groups to put limits on the creative activity of outsider artists with respect to their cultural phenomena? To answer this we must first ask how seriously we should take the arguments they use to support these demands. Many of these arguments depend on beliefs most Western academics would label as mythological. Young boldly asserts, without argument, that 'claims to have been given something by the gods or ancestor beings are false' and that '[t]o pretend that mythological beliefs are true, when one knows them to be false, is not to show respect. Rather it is condescending and demeaning' (78). Although I share Young's skepticism, I am skeptical about his certainty. I do not *know* that gods did not give artistic styles to indigenous societies. How could one have sufficient evidence for that? Moreover, I do not see what is 'condescending and demeaning' about pretending beliefs I consider mythological to be true (which I do whenever I attend a church wedding). Young also denies that a culture can own the artistic elements from which artists make their works. But perhaps it is true that there is some other sense of 'own' than the legal one, that there is a kind of moral ownership, and that violation of this constitutes a kind of profound moral offense committed by an appropriating artist that could justly be said, contra Young (Chapter 5), to be a kind of harm. In sum, this is a debate that is really important now, and Young's work will help to clarify the issues. (I would like to thank my artist wife, Karen Haas, who provided vigorous editorial comments.)

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