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**G. E. M. Anscombe**

*Faith in a Hard Ground:*

*Essays on Religion, Philosophy and Ethics.*

Ed. Mary Geach and Luke Gormally.

Exeter: Imprint Academic 2008.

Pp. 250.

US\$80.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-1-84540-143-6).

Anscombe was one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century. At least, this is what many people think, even if others pointedly disagree. Much depends upon how you describe her. One could say, 'On each topic she examines, she finds exactly the right way of putting things. And her works are illuminating on a variety of topics: intentionality, practical action, ethics, mind and self, metaphysics, time and causality, language and thought, religion. She is also a fine interpreter of Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hume, Wittgenstein. So, even if she does not develop a systematic philosophy — and one can understand why by reading her — she is a true philosopher.' But another could say, 'She is perhaps less clever than her admirers think. Like many non-deconstructed Catholics she was quick to diagnose corruption among those with whom she was not in agreement. According to her, Mill is "stupid", Sidgwick "vulgar", Butler "ignorant", Hume "sophistical", Kant "absurd"; and she is above all prone to caricaturing their conceptions. She presents herself as an analytic philosopher, but her works are not only difficult and puzzling, they are very often obscure and written with a sort of irritating affectation.' Were I to guess, this new collection of papers will not modify, but may even reinforce, these negative opinions.

There is a well-known three-volume collection of Anscombe's papers that appeared in 1981. Mary Geach and Luke Gormally edited another collection in 2005, wherein most of the papers are not easily available elsewhere, and some are previously unpublished (*Human Life, Actions and Ethics* [Exeter: Imprint Academic]). This new collection contains only three papers published in the 1981 collection. This is a good idea: it is useful for bringing out some of the main points of Anscombe's position, and some of her preoccupations; and it provides illuminating background for some of Anscombe's papers that were disseminated in little-circulated journals or unpublished manuscripts.

The present volume covers three main topics. The first is the question of testimony. A reductionist about testimony claims that one is justified in believing that *p* on testimony only if one has reasons to believe that *p* independently of this testimony. 'What Is It to Believe Someone' and other papers defend a non-reductionist account and apply it to some of the questions of faith, prophecy and miracles, and even of the immortality of soul and transubstantiation. How can one believe in such things?

The second topic is related to the paper 'Authority in Morals'. The forty-page paper, 'Sin', is certainly an important addition to Anscombe's reflections on morality. It contains an examination of *Meno's* passage on the apparent impossibility of wrong-doing. Anscombe is mainly interested in applied eth-

ics. 'Contraception and Chastity' will appear completely unacceptable to many of today's philosophers (and was perhaps unacceptable to many of the older ones). She defends the account of the Catholic Church — not on dogmatic grounds, but rather by examining what a Christian life must necessarily be. 'That we owe it as a debt of justice to provide out of our superfluity for the destitute and the starving', is in the current of the time, she says. But, she adds, 'the teaching which I have rehearsed is indeed against the grain of the world. The church teaches also those truths that are hateful to the spirit of the age' (101).

The last topic is contained in the final paper, 'Wisdom', a typically Anscombian piece. It opens with some remarks on the translation of the Greek word *nous* and a discussion of butter and margarine. It continues with remarks on the translation of Scriptures, and Anscombe is led to say that 'the divine Wisdom is the source and cause of human reason and speech in its essential working' and that it is a truth perceived by a wise intelligence. This truth is confirmed by a 'highly intelligent present day philosopher, who nevertheless has not perceived it' (261), namely Willard van Orman Quine. All at once, she moves to commenting upon Quine's pronouncement that 'To be is to be the value of a variable', and upon the Quinean take on ontological commitment, reference and intentionality. She then returns — without taking leave of Quine! — to the translation of the Scriptures, examining the meaning of *Fiat Lux*. Even if the reader is (like myself) completely lost, one gets the feeling that Anscombe knows where she is going and that she is saying something very important.

Some people would say that Anscombe should not be given the kind of credit she so often refuses to other philosophers. To convey a sense of profundity when saying crazy things is similar to the feeling conveyed by Derrida. But, as sometimes what was obscure in the first (or even fifth) reading of Anscombe appears illuminating in the end, it is perhaps wise to be patient.

'Twenty Opinions Common among Modern Anglo-American Philosophers' is a three-page paper containing precisely what the title announces. It presents twenty claims typically advanced by Analytic philosophers, and also, I think, by many Continental philosophers too. Anscombe does not refute them, but simply says that 'a seriously believing Christian ought not, in my opinion, to hold any of them' (66). For example: '[a] dead man — a human corpse — is a man, not an ex-man'; '[e]thics is formally independent of the facts of human life and, for example, human physiology'; and '[a] theist believes that God must create the best of all possible worlds.'

This is a very interesting list, for many reasons. Among them, some Christians will discover themselves to be holding non-Christian views. But also, some non-Christians will discover that they attribute to Christians ideas that Christians do not have — for example that ethics is not related to what we naturally are. We have completely lost the habit of this way of doing philosophy. First, there is truth. Second, truth is given. And third, philosophy is a way to understand this truth and what it implies. This does not mean that to do philosophy is simply to support Catholic doctrine. If a thesis is wrong, that

is not only because it is not Christian, but because it is inherently misguided. So, on a rational basis, you can find good reasons to avoid entertaining non-Christian beliefs! This is the reason that non-Christians may profit by reading Augustine, Aquinas, Newman . . . or Anscombe.

**Roger Pouivet**

Université Nancy 2, Archives Poincaré (CNRS)

**Aaron Ben-Ze'ev and Ruhama Goussinsky**

*In the Name of Love:*

*Romantic Ideology and its Victims.*

New York: Oxford University Press 2008.

Pp. 278.

US\$39.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-856649-6).

Ben-Ze'ev and Goussinsky (B and G) have endeavored to provide an illuminating and entertaining science book on romantic ideology, targeting both scientists and general public alike as a readership group. In its understandability the book can be compared to the writings of Richard Dawkins. By dealing with such extreme cases as wife killings as instances of romantic ideology gone wrong, and by illustrating the decay of modern marriages due to (for instance) the multiplication of possibilities for amorous relationships via the internet, a certain sensationalism enters the picture — yet this also is part and parcel of the fascination of this book. However, dealing with both of these issues also yields a refreshing and cutting-edge perspective on a topic which, although centuries old, is still of importance and interest for everyone. Hence my overall evaluation of this book is very positive.

When introducing their work, B and G state that their aim is not to give advice 'on how to love properly; rather, the book analyses love, its hurdles, and its challenges. Nevertheless, our analysis may help people to discover a way of loving that is more suitable for them' (xvi). As far as the latter goes, people may indeed learn new and better ways of dealing with love and the love relationships so central to our lives. With regard to its method, besides conceptual analysis and referring to many empirical studies on love, B and G illustrate problematic features of love with the help of semi-structured interviews of eighteen Israeli prisoners who were convicted of murder or attempted murder of their female partners. Eighteen is not a large number, so that one has to be cautious with regard to generalizing the results. However, B and G are well aware of this fact and therefore emphasize that they use these interviews just for illustrative purposes. The same holds with regard to

their references to popular songs and informal conversations with people on the topic of love and their love relationships.

As for the overall content of the book, here is a short overview. Chapter 1 establishes the basic tenets of romantic ideology: 'The beloved is everything to the lover and hence love is all you need; true love lasts forever and can conquer all; true lovers are united — they are one and the same person; love is irreplaceable and exclusive; and love is pure and can do no evil. According to this Romantic Ideology, love is comprehensive — there are no boundaries to such love; uncompromising — nothing can dilute or impede such love; and unconditional — reality is almost irrelevant to love and has scant impact on it' (xi-xii). In Chapter 2, the meaning of separation and love in the face of romantic rejection is discussed — in particular, it is pointed out how the exclusivity of love, i.e., the idea that one can't live without the other person, might have dangerous consequences, namely that the beloved in extreme cases is taken as a hostage or is even killed. Chapter 3 deals with the ambivalent nature of romantic love: one can love and hate the same person over time or even at the same time. This is a topic which has been rarely discussed in the scientific literature to date, with the exception of, e.g., Ledwig (2009) *Mixed Feelings: Emotional Phenomena, Rationality and Vagueness*, and Greenspan (1980) 'A Case of Mixed Feelings'. Ben-Ze'ev and Goussinsky rightly contend that typical romantic love, to its detriment, entails not only jealousy but also possessiveness.

Chapter 4 deals with crimes of passion; in particular it analyses the act of wife killing. B and G propose that wife murder differs from other manifestations of violence against women. In this regard, they claim that murder is '(a) rooted in a unique constellation of factors and circumstances, (b) an act in which the perpetrator intends to cause his wife's death, rather than one in which he temporarily loses control, and (c) the climax of a dynamic and gradual process culminating in an emotional experience in which one person seeks to destroy the other even at the cost of self-destruction' (xiii). Chapter 5 discusses the pivotal role imagination plays in upholding a loving relationship with another person. In particular, B and G address contemporary problems inherent in the manifold possibilities associated with the internet and cell-phones, possibilities for, e.g., finding someone even better than one's present partner. Chapter 6 points out the structural difficulties inherent in romantic love, such as that the beloved is supposed to be attractive and praiseworthy, virtues difficult to maintain constantly over time. Also, the fact that emotions change over time goes against romantic ideology, which states that love should be eternal.

Chapter 7 emphasizes the need to make compromises in order to make a loving relationship work. Compromises can take the form of postponing romantic gratification, diminishing romantic intensity, reducing the exclusivity of the romantic relationship; but serial monogamy and loving more than one person at the same time are also considered. Interestingly, B and G advance something like a bounded love in contrast to romantic love, an idea similar to bounded rationality in economics. Chapter 8 develops an alternative to ro-

mantic love, namely a nurturing approach to love, where not only the beloved but also the lover nurture their own inherent capabilities and possibilities, so that a more caring approach towards love results, and they can mutually profit from their relationship.

**Marion Ledwig**

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**Thom Brooks**

*Hegel's Political Philosophy:*

*A Systematic Reading of the Philosophy of Right.*

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2007.

Pp. 224.

US\$100.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7486-2574-1);

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According to Brooks, Anglo-American readers of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (*PhR*) are faced with two issues. The first concerns the *PhR*'s political commitments. Does Hegel favor liberal or conservative policies? The second has to do with the choice between systematic and non-systematic readings of the *PhR*, in other words, whether or not one must read it in the context of Hegel's system, and connect political philosophy with Hegelian metaphysics. Since the Second World War, the first issue has been decided in favor of a liberal reading of Hegel. Brooks agrees with Allen Wood, who maintains that Hegel is a theorist of the modern constitutional state. This is the view of the so-called 'Hegelian centre' now dominant in Anglo-America. With respect to the second issue, Brooks adopts a systematic approach. This time his 'principal target' (129) is Wood's influential non-systematic reading of the *PhR*. One should not assume that Brooks deviates here from Anglo-American interpretations. Both systematic and non-systematic approaches, by leaving out the historical context of Hegel's thought, follow the trail blazed by the school of philosophical analysis.

Brooks selects a series of self-standing topics — property, punishment, morality, family, law, monarchy and war — and analyzes them against the backdrop of Hegel's metaphysical system (10). He does so with lucidity, rigor and in a manner aptly supported by a sweeping review of recent Anglo-American literature. Brooks also rightly recognizes, albeit in a footnote, that logic is what allows Hegel 'to derive meaning from historical institutions' (166), and that his 'philosophy has an historical character, as our knowledge is conditioned by the times we live in' (167). But Brooks' adoption of an analytical stance prevents him from effectively taking into account the historical

context of Hegel's argument. This leads to an unnecessary contraction of the boundaries of discussion.

Hegel's views on property, in Brooks' view, may be analytically understood 'in full light of their place in the *PhR* and the place of the *PhR* within Hegel's larger system' (29). One can then see that Hegel's point of departure is an atomistic comprehension of persons which fails 'to include others' (32) and leads to his definition of proprietors as individuals relating only to themselves. One can also see that Hegel progresses from this individualist conception of persons to a social one grounded in mutual recognition (33). But only by placing the *PhR* within the development of modern philosophy, and 'within the context of' theoretical responses to the rise of the modern state, can one bring to light the ultimate aim of that progression, namely the strict separation of a liberal market society and the property arrangements it demands, from a conservative state. Rosenzweig was on the right track when he wrote that Hegel had the night of 4 August 1789 in mind when Hegel recognized freedom of property as a principle.

In his account of morality, Brooks goes beyond analyzing its place within the *PhR* and Hegel's system, and studies it in the context of Kantian morality. Here again one detects analysis-inspired shrinkage. For Kant, of course, the rational is actual. But the Ninth of Thermidor showed Hegel that the practical powers of reason extolled by Kant had reached a limit. History and tradition had to be taken into account because the actual is rational. Later, Sand's assassination of Kotzebue on 26 March 1819 confirmed his critique of an ethics of conviction, which he saw as a necessary derivation of the infallibility Kant attributed to moral conscience.

The inclusion of a historical perspective is arguably what is most needed to understand Hegel's conception of constitutional monarchy. Brooks is dead right, and much ahead of Anglo-American scholarship, when he describes the monarch as a strong authoritarian figure who is not a 'rubber stamp divested of any real power' (109). To prove this point, Brooks argues that Hegel justifies his conception of monarchy with the use of logic. The logical development of the concept of freedom leads to monarchy as the rational institution 'that helps best to cultivate freedom in the state' (100). Brooks claims that subjectivity of decision is an essential trait of Hegel's monarch. He criticizes Pelczynski's view that the monarch rules 'within a rational framework' and does not strive 'to establish it first' (106). This divergence is critical, for it implies that the monarch is not neutral but stands above the constitutional framework as a higher authority. Such is the hallmark of monarchical authoritarianism which makes a mockery of constitutionalism. On the basis of the monarch's enhanced subjective decision-making, Brooks examines the substantive role he is given in domestic and foreign affairs. In domestic affairs, the monarch, in conjunction with the bureaucracy appointed by him, retains legislative initiative and the right to pardon criminals. Proof of his substantive strength is that the monarch is unaccountable for his subjective decision-making (106-10). In foreign affairs, Hegel enhances the power of the monarch by granting him final decision on war and peace (110-13).

An authoritarian conception of Hegel's monarch represents a distinctive, and welcome, break with the conception shared by the majority of contemporary interpreters of the *PhR* in Anglo-America. Though Brooks makes his case in a fairly coherent fashion, he is unaware of what is ultimately implied in his disagreement with Pelczynski. *Hegel conceives constitutional monarchy* as inextricably conjoined to the so-called monarchical principle. Here his historical model is Louis XVIII's 1814 *Charte*, a document redacted by the French *doctrinaires*, whose conception of constitutional monarchy did not exclude monarchical sovereignty. Their aim — and Hegel concurs — was to make the polity impregnable to popular sovereignty and social contract theories, and thus to avoid the fate of the French Constitution of 1791. From the perspective of a liberal constitutionalist like Constant, the role assigned to the monarch by the *Charte* was that of a *pouvoir neutre et intermédiaire* who served merely to protect the constitution. Constant could place the monarch within the rational framework ensured by the constitution, because he accepted the sovereignty of the people. In contrast, Hegel postulates the monarchical principle, rejects democracy and adheres to the directives issued by the Congress of Vienna. As a higher authority, his monarch is more monarchical than constitutional. By omitting the historical context of the *PhR*, Brooks misses the full measure of Hegel's authoritarianism.

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*Merleau-Ponty.*

New York: Routledge 2008.

Pp. 261.

US\$100.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-415-33980-3);

US\$27.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-415-33981-0).

This book is a volume in the popular 'Routledge Philosophers' series, which aims to offer introductions to 'the great Western philosophers' that are suitable for 'those new to philosophy' while also providing 'essential reading for those interested in the subject at any level.' Writing such a diversely serviceable book on any major philosopher is a difficult task, and Merleau-Ponty is no exception. Although the general aim of his phenomenology is, as he once put it, to bring rationality 'down to earth', the philosophical transformation that it implies presents formidable challenges to any attempt to produce an accessible introduction that is both comprehensive and sound.

Carman has thus had to strike a compromise between scope and depth. His chosen tack is informed by the work of Hubert Dreyfus on the bodily foundations of intelligence. As stated in a brief introduction, Carman's interest lies in Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, taking perception to designate 'our most basic mode of being in the world', the bodily, perspectival, and self-concealing nature of which is 'in principle generalizable to all aspects of the human condition' (3). With this focus, the book unfolds through seven chapters that reflect the generic format of the series: historical contextualization, critical exposition of 'key arguments', and discussion of 'legacy'.

Opening with a perfunctory biography, Chapter 1, 'Life and Works', situates the subject matter in broad strokes. In particular, Carman discusses the general nature of perception for Merleau-Ponty, and considers the formative influences of Husserl and Gestalt psychology. Although this is all necessarily run through quite quickly, Carman takes special care to distance Merleau-Ponty from Husserl. In part he does this by singling out rationalism, rather than all approaches based on '*le préjugé du monde*', as Merleau-Ponty's 'abiding philosophical *bête noire*' (11, 27). What results is the tacit — but dubious — claim that Merleau-Ponty's account of perception actually owes more to Heidegger.

These points are elaborated in the next two chapters, 'Intentionality and Perception' and 'Body and World', where the bulk of the book's philosophical work occurs. Concerning intentionality, Carman reasserts that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is 'deeply antithetical' to Husserl's (37), and that, on the contrary, Merleau-Ponty 'embraced . . . wholeheartedly' Heidegger's notion of *In-der-Welt-Sein* (42). Although it glosses over important differences with Merleau-Ponty's own notion of *être-au-monde*, this discussion undergirds Carman's exegesis of the introductory chapters of *Phenomenology of Perception*. So while this reading uncovers 'the phenomenal field' as a transcendental condition of perception (66; cf. 82, 105), Carman still draws the conclusion that Merleau-Ponty, just like Heidegger, is doing ontology (74).

The picture gets filled in somewhat with the discussion of embodiment, in particular the notions of the body schema and motor intentionality, and their connection with the worldly character of experience. Carman does a commendable job in relating Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological descriptions. But a major concern is that in discussing the normativity of perception in terms of a body's 'best grip' on things, Carman writes as if that were the end of the story. Merleau-Ponty himself rejected any such view. For it would be tantamount to conflating, as Carman tends to do, the perceptual disclosure of 'a world' with the realization of 'the world'. This distinction is crucial for Merleau-Ponty, and it is why intersubjectivity, history, and politics are so important to him philosophically.

The next two chapters, 'Self and Others' and 'History and Politics', are thus the odd ones out. For given Carman's approach, the real work has been done at the level of the individual perceiving body. What remains is just to 'generalize'. Thus, although Carman recognizes that coexistence with others in a kind of primordial solidarity is one of 'the most original and impor-

tant' aspects of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology (135), what his discussion actually ends up highlighting is that the experience of others is 'perpetually enigmatic and destabilizing' (150). Left unaddressed is Merleau-Ponty's insistence that it is only through active engagement with others, not merely coexistence alongside them, that one can move from 'a world' of idiosyncratic corporeal perspectivity toward 'the world' of genuine sense and truth. This is the central idea in Merleau-Ponty's political thought, the philosophical significance of which is obscured by Carman's assumption that the latter rests on an analogical extension from the body to history (24, 162). What this overlooks is the extent to which, for Merleau-Ponty, the normative horizons of perception ultimately devolve from a commitment to the possibility of historical rationality.

Chapter 6, 'Vision and Style', engages in close readings of Merleau-Ponty's texts on aesthetics. It has a very different dynamic from the rest of the book, and it is certainly the best chapter, encapsulating nicely an overall view of Merleau-Ponty's work in terms of perception, meaning, and freedom. The main worry is that the pivotal ideas of expression and style, ideas to which Merleau-Ponty ascribed general phenomenological significance, are effectively reduced to narrowly aesthetic categories.

The last chapter briefly entertains some aspects of Merleau-Ponty's 'legacy and relevance'. Carman considers Merleau-Ponty's role in the emergence of structuralism, and links him to Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* (which he uses as a foil against Searle). Carman then points out Merleau-Ponty's role in arguments against behaviourism and cognitivism, drawing particular attention to Dreyfus' work. Finally, Carman turns to certain paradigms of embodied cognition (Varela, Clark, Noë) that variously diverge from the basic picture he has drawn. The point here is to *deny* any real connection to Merleau-Ponty. While the negative rationale is plain, it is disappointing that an introductory text wraps up on such a transparently polemical note.

Overall, it would be at most a slight exaggeration to say that the philosophical thrust of the book is to identify Merleau-Ponty — supposedly 'one of the most interesting and original philosophers of the twentieth century' (1) — as the go-to guy for the account of corporeality needed to shore up a Heideggerian theory of 'skilled coping'. To be sure, there is distinct merit in this effort, and it will appeal to many with specialized interests. But at the same time, the restricted view that results from locating Merleau-Ponty within such narrow horizons detracts from the book's suitability as an initial introduction to his thought.

**Bryan Smyth**

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**Antony Carty**

*Philosophy of International Law.*

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2007.

Pp. 272.

US\$110.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7486-2255-9).

The philosophy of international law has received increasing attention in recent years. On the one hand, philosophers like Allan Buchanan have started to think about key problems of international law from a normative perspective, with the intention of providing an analysis of the moral foundations for positive international law and of pointing the way to reforms that would improve the moral quality of positive international law. On the other hand, international lawyers like Martti Koskenniemi have developed a strong interest in a critical understanding of their discipline and its history, in order not to end up in complacent affirmation of an international status quo that is widely perceived to be unjust.

Unfortunately, the contributors to these two debates typically fail to engage with each other in productive ways. Carty's book is no exception to this regrettable trend. Carty is an international lawyer who subscribes to the project of 'philosophizing international law' (19) with a critical intent. Political, moral, or legal philosophers interested in questions of international law will have difficulty, however, recognizing how what Carty is doing in this book is a contribution to philosophical debate.

To be sure, Carty addresses topics that have also occupied philosophers interested in the normative foundations of international law: the sources and the status of international law, the state's claim to sovereignty, the use of force, the problem of secession, humanitarian intervention. But in Carty's book one looks in vain for any substantive discussion of the moral problems raised by these topics. Carty's approach, rather, appears to be based on the assumption that modern, state-centered international law as it presently exists (as well as modern international legal doctrine) is nothing but an instrument of unjustified imperial violence. As such, it needs to be exposed to postmodernist and Marxist denunciation, instead of being subjected to argumentative moral criticism with a view to reform.

Carty's denunciations follow a rather simplistic plot. According to him, just like the modern state, modern international law is based on a Hobbesian anthropology that allegedly glorifies brute power at the expense of any considerations of legitimacy. Not content with this misreading of Hobbes, Carty goes on to claim that contemporary liberalism rests on the same basis. In Carty's view, liberalism is nothing but 'a rapacious subjectivist individualism' which forms 'the anthropological foundation for the consumerist market economy that asserts itself globally through rhetoric about human rights and liberal democracy' (194). Small wonder, then, that authors like Buchanan or Fernando Teson are described as mere stooges of western (and in particular of American) imperialism. Their arguments, Carty thinks, need not be refuted or engaged. Rather, one must 'show how the rhetoric of uni-

versal democracy and the rule of law actually function on the international stage' (ibid.). Predictably, the answer, as in Carl Schmitt, is that the sole function of talk about human rights and democracy is to legitimize unjust imperial violence.

Normative theorists of international law like Buchanan and Teson are not the only ideological culprits in Carty's story, though. He also engages in thoroughly misleading attacks on positivist conceptions of the nature of law. The reader will be surprised to hear that H. L. A. Hart's legal theory is based on the view that 'all values are a matter of subjective preference' (200), and that Hart was 'attaching the epithet of legal validity to the concept of coercion' (ibid.). Oddly enough, Carty seems to take a more positive view of Kelsen, despite the fact that it was Kelsen, not Hart, who believed that every legal norm must make reference to a sanction. Elsewhere in the book, Hart's positivism is portrayed as being committed to the view that effective power is always legitimate. It is rather difficult to imagine a more profound misunderstanding of Hart's legal theory, or of legal positivism in general.

It would be possible, but tedious, to discuss further instances of such misrepresentation. The more important problem with Carty's form of criticism is that its positive proposals remain altogether too vague to give any practical guidance as to how to reform international law or rethink international legal doctrine. Carty demands that the Hobbesian anthropology of fear be replaced with an anthropology of 'tact in the face of perplexity' (237). At other times, Carty calls for an 'international public morality' (196) without saying anything about what its content might be. This silence is probably no accident. In order to be more concrete about the content of a public international morality, one would have to engage in actual moral argument. But to do that one would also have to give up the smug posture of the postmodern Marxist critic who already knows that all moral argument is nothing but a veil for exercises of power.

It is to be admitted that normative philosophical theorizing about international law sometimes tends to adopt views of the relationship between normative philosophical theory and international legal practice that unduly privilege ideal theory over practical application and that underestimate the normative importance of values internal to international legality. Contributions of international lawyers could form an important corrective to the problematic tendencies of philosophical theorizing about international law. Carty's book, however, fails to provide such a corrective. One can only hope that future philosophies of international law written by lawyers will make a more earnest attempt to address the philosophical problems of international law.

**Lars Vinx**

Bilkent University

### Quassim Cassam

*The Possibility of Knowledge.*

New York: Oxford University Press 2007.

Pp. 256.

US\$60.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-920831-9);

US\$35.00 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-956239-8).

People normally assume that they have knowledge, of various kinds. Philosophical reflection can challenge this assumption, by presenting 'apparent obstacles to (the) existence or acquisition' (v) of knowledge (or a variety thereof). These obstacles give rise to the question of how knowledge (either global or local) is possible. Skeptics accede to the obstacles. They do not have to answer the how-possible questions, since they abandon the initial assumption of the fact of (the relevant kind of) knowledge. Non-skeptical epistemologists do have to answer these questions. The 'multi-levels response' Cassam proposes starts out with a distinction between levels. Level 1: the non-skeptic has 'to show that we do have . . . genuine ways or means of knowing' (v). Level 2: the factors that the skeptic takes to be decisive obstacles in the way of the possibility of knowledge have to be handled. Level 3: it is explained why the means to knowledge supposedly identified at the first level really do explain our ability to have the knowledge in question.

Chapter 1 explains what how-possible questions are (both in epistemology and in other areas of philosophy) and it defends a multi-levels approach to them. At Level 2, which concerns the handling of supposed obstacles (e.g., to the possibility of human freedom; to the possibility of global or local knowledge), the anti-skeptic may offer 'an *obstacle-dissipating*' or 'an *obstacle-overcoming*' strategy (2). Dissipation consists in denying the existence of the obstacle. For example, the libertarian denies the causal determinist's claim 'that all actions are causally determined' (2). Overcoming, on the other hand, consists in recognizing the alleged obstacles but in denying 'that (they) are insuperable' (2). Work at Level 3 involves the provision of a positive epistemology, which consists in the identification of '*enabling conditions* (i.e.) the conditions under which' the means to knowledge identified at Level 1 can be sources of knowledge (9). Inspiration for Cassam's approach is drawn from Kant's account of synthetic a priori knowledge, and it is also influenced by Dray, Nozick and Peacocke (Chapter 1).

Over the book's six chapters, Cassam applies multi-levels responses to the questions of how the following are possible: knowledge (3); knowledge of the external world (4; Chapters 1-4); perceptual knowledge (6; Chapters 1-4); knowledge of other minds (155; Chapter 5); a priori knowledge (188; Chapter 6).

Chapter 2 argues that multi-levels approaches to such how-possible questions are better than approaches that employ transcendental arguments. Chapter 3 defends the claim 'that spatial perception is a background necessary condition for object perception' (122). Chapter 4 argues that 'categorical concepts' form 'a background necessary condition' for perceptual knowledge

(152). In Chapter 5, Cassim supports the thesis that knowledge of other minds is perceptual rather than inferential. The appeal to (allegedly) a priori knowledge is central to Cassam's accounts of the possibility of perceptual knowledge and of knowledge of other minds.

On Cassam's account, 'a priori knowledge is knowledge that has its source' in a 'non-experiential . . . way of coming to know' (191). An obstacle to its possibility is that it is meant to be knowledge of facts, and factual knowledge is taken, for example by Hume and Ayer, to have its source in experience (191-2). The source of the obstacle, then, is the sort of empiricism which holds to 'Hume's Thesis' that factual knowledge has exclusively empirical sources (192). The possibility of a priori knowledge is crucial to Cassam's project, given his claims 'that there are a priori enabling conditions for the acquisition of perceptual knowledge and knowledge of other minds' (194). For Cassam the a priori ways of coming to know are the rationalist's stock-in-trade: reflection, reasoning and calculation (194-210). When Cassam describes what he calls 'reflection', it seems that it is what Descartes and Bealer call 'intuition' (195). 'It's a fact about the mind-independent world', claims Cassam, 'that nothing can be red all over and green all over at the same time but this doesn't mean that our knowledge of this fact can't be a priori' (199). Hume's Thesis, realism, and the claim that a priori knowledge is of matters of fact, present an inconsistent triad in which any pair of theses is consistent. It is Hume's Thesis that ought to be relinquished. However, at Level 2 the obstacles presented threaten the credentials of the supposedly a priori means of knowledge-acquisition. Why do the a priori methods furnish *knowledge*, rather than mere belief? What entitles the rationalist to the claim that a priori sources really furnish us with 'knowledge of *matters of fact*'? Moreover, is it really the case that these allegedly a priori methods really are a priori? The rest of Chapter 5 sets about attempting to answer these questions. Let us address the second.

If the rationalist claims that 'the propositions which we can know to be true by means of reflection, reasoning, or calculation are all necessarily true,' then the objector may claim, with Ayer, that necessary truths are 'devoid of factual content' (206). Cassam offers the objector the following line of argument: 'if the statements in question are non-factual then we still haven't explained . . . how a priori knowledge of *matters of fact* is possible.' The problem with this attempt to play devil's advocate is that the line of argument offered to the objector, which includes endorsing non-factualism about modality, cannot support the form of skepticism about a priori knowledge that Cassam means to entertain. By the lights of the latter, 'a priori knowledge of matters of fact' is impossible. In committing to this, the skeptic about the a priori is not committing to non-factualism about modality, but rather to something that is inconsistent with it, namely, the thesis that it is a fact that a priori knowledge is impossible. This perhaps casts wider doubt upon Cassam's characterization of disputes between anti-skeptics and skeptics in terms of how-possible questions. Though investigating how-possible questions may be useful in the context of such debates, its scope does not seem to be all-

encompassing. While Cassam does not claim otherwise, it seems that either the workings of some skepticisms must be construed along lines different to those drawn by Cassam, or that local skepticism/anti-skepticism disputes resist being integrated into the kind of unifying project in epistemology that Cassam's multi-levels approach might otherwise aspire to be.

**Stephen McLeod**

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**Arthur C. Danto**

*Unnatural Wonders:*

*Essays from the Gap between Art and Life.*

New York: Columbia University Press 2007.

Pp. 384.

US\$22.50 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-231-14115-4).

Arthur Danto is not just a well-known philosopher of art; he has also become one of the most highly respected and influential art critics of our age. This book, his fifth collection of critical essays, brings together over forty essays written in the period 2000-2005, published mostly in *The Nation*. The critical essays, covering major exhibitions by a huge variety of artists, are framed by some more explicitly philosophical reflections on contemporary art and the activity of the critic, making the book move on two planes, as Danto puts it: 'the plane of direct critical engagement with bodies of art and the plane of conceptual analysis that traces a kind of philosophical map of how art has evolved' (ix).

Danto started his career as an art critic in 1984, and in the preface he recounts how 'privileged he has been to live through and react to' a new and revolutionary period of art history (x). Danto himself, as philosopher-cum-critic, has, as much as anyone, helped to define this period. Through his writings he has achieved a status in the art world comparable only to that of Clement Greenberg during the heyday of modernism. Danto's art criticism, like Greenberg's, is informed by a particular view of the history of art, but whereas Greenberg thought that the development of painting was driven by a 'historical imperative' to be modern and refine its medium, thus making only one kind of art historically correct at any given moment, Danto argues the counter-thesis, that the history of art has, in a sense, come to an end: free at last from 'the tyranny of art history', artists can now do anything they please. Thus Danto, in contrast to Greenberg, does not pontificate upon art, trying to tell us what kind of art is the right one; instead, he welcomes and embraces the 'post-historical' period and its extreme pluralism.

However, the pluralistic and globalized art world that is the result of this situation also imposes new kinds of demands on both the public and the critic. Danto's philosophical inspiration for the end-of-art thesis comes, of course, from Hegel, and, quoting his dictum that 'thought and reflection have spread their wings above fine art' (6, 344), Danto emphasizes that contemporary art has generally lost the power to communicate on its own; it is not enough just to look at a work and expect understanding to dawn. The art of our time is in need of commentary, and it is this kind of help that Danto's essays seek to provide. According to his general philosophical understanding of art, 'a work of art embodies a meaning, and the meaning must be grasped if the work is to be grasped' (352). Works of visual art exemplify 'visual thinking', and grasping them entails grasping a thought 'expressed through objects'. This can be a difficult task, and it is here the critic's duty lies, according to Danto, in 'mediating between artist and viewer, helping the viewer grasp the meanings that were intended' (18). Indeed, from this perspective all art is conceptual, says Danto, in the sense that it must be interpreted, and consequently 'writing about Leonardo or Artemisia Gentileschi does not differ from writing about Gerhard Richter or Judy Chicago' (18).

In keeping with this ideal, which means that an art critic must 'translate what the senses show us into thought, through interpretation' (6), Danto's essays often take the form of an extended *ekphrasis* of the works discussed, evoking the visual appearance of the work but at the same time explaining how these visual properties embody its meaning. Danto says that one of his goals in writing criticism is to get his readers to say to themselves 'I have to see that' (368), and he does, indeed, frequently succeed in evoking this response. So although images of most of the works discussed are easily found through a web search, it is somewhat frustrating that the book contains no illustrations — not even 'small illustrations for identification and mnemonic purposes' (271), as Danto thinks catalogs for exhibitions should have.

But what kind of thoughts does Danto think today's art can convey? In answering this question, Danto comes out not only as a lover of art, but as a champion of the utmost importance of art in our society against all efforts to dismiss it as either incomprehensible or an unnecessary luxury. Today's art, says Danto, 'has attained the level of pluralism that is needed to make vivid the thoughts about love, identity, fear, and hope that define modern life' (353). In a counter-Hegelian twist Danto thus claims that art today, paradoxically precisely *because* it has 'ended' and become global and pluralistic, 'addresses us in our humanity, as men and women who seek in art for meanings that neither of art's peers — philosophy and religion — in what Hegel spoke of as the realm of Absolute Spirit, are able to provide' (xvi). This, surely, amounts not only to a defense, but an apotheosis of the art of our time. However, this elevation of art also results in a rather hubristic apotheosis of the critic: if we accept the claim that art can show us the meaning of life, together with the tenet that the art of our time is incomprehensible without the art critic explaining the work, we should conclude that the critic becomes a kind of priest without whom the public cannot properly relate to art.

To be fair, it must be noted that Danto's critical essays in practice rarely reflect such a quasi-religious view; however, it does indicate that he thinks that writing criticism is important, because understanding art is important. Another thing that comes across clearly in these essays is that Danto is a New Yorker to the core, and that he loves both the city and its art world. This is especially clear in the two essays dealing with art after 9/11, as well as in his ironical and biting asides directed at former mayor Rudy Giuliani's infamous 'Decency Panel'. Danto vehemently defends art's duty and right to be 'indecent' and to take up subjects that are 'difficult' or repellant — he defends it even when, as in the case of Paul McCarthy, he cannot himself enjoy it. According to Danto, it is precisely by speaking from 'the gap between art and life' that art can deal with such themes, and this gap is necessary for art, even — or especially — when it tries to close it (as in the case of Dada or Fluxus, both of which are dealt with in separate essays).

Danto says that his critical essays are 'concrete corollaries' to a philosophy of art he has been developing almost from the time he became an art critic (x), but although his criticism is philosophy-driven and his philosophical presuppositions are potentially contestable, it must be stressed that his critical writings are not theory-dependent in the sense of demanding unconditional acceptance of his particular philosophical views. In fact, these critical essays are far more lucid and intelligent than the usual, often philosophically inane commentaries supplied by contemporary artists themselves and their 'post-modern' critical cohorts; indeed, Danto often seems to understand and be able to explain artworks better than the artists themselves. This collection of essays is required reading for anyone interested in making sense of contemporary visual art and appreciating the difficulties and 'unnatural wonders' it presents for the viewer.

### **Simo Säätelä**

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### **Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison**

*Objectivity.*

New York: Zone Books 2007.

Pp. 501.

US\$38.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-1-890951-87-8).

'Objectivity has a history, and it is full of surprises.' So claim Daston and Galison in this original and important contribution to the history and philosophy of science. They chart the emergence and development of scientific objectivity from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries by focusing upon scien-

tific atlases — the standard compendia of images used to train the scientific practitioners of each generation. These atlases define the ‘working objects’ of science and, through attentive historical analysis, one can see in them the developing ‘epistemic virtues’ guiding scientific thought. Daston and Galison argue that the ways in which scientists visually conceived and presented the objects of their researches reflects their implicit epistemological commitments. By examining scientific atlases, one can identify the implicit epistemic virtues embedded within them and the concepts of ‘objectivity’ they sustain. The interaction of virtues and objectivities is then used to provide an innovative account of the successive forms of the ‘scientific self’, the idealized moral and epistemic character of the scientist.

Daston and Galison provide not only a history of the concept of scientific objectivity but also new conceptual devices for understanding it. Their focus on visual representations in the physical and life sciences is original. Daston and Galison are concerned to identify the ‘regulative visions of science’ within which different modes of scientific thought and practice operate (378). These ‘regulative visions’ are not identified with top-down supra-theoretical structures, like Kuhnian ‘paradigms’ or Foucauldian ‘epistemes’, but are instead invested in distinctive forms of ‘scientific self’. A scientific self is the particular normative vision of the ‘ideal’ scientific inquirer as defined by certain epistemic virtues. For instance, the Enlightenment scientific self observed, described, and classified, exercising virtues of disciplined observation, as it sought to ‘exclude the accidental (and) eliminate the impure’ (59). This self’s aim was to identify the fixed forms underlying phenomenal variation and diversity, a process in which ontological and aesthetic judgments were essential. By contrast, later ‘mechanical objectivity’ rejected such judgments as unacceptable intrusions of subjectivity, hence its ideal was ‘purity of observation’, in which scientific observation and representation had to be ‘policed’ against the constant threat of the intrusion of subjective prejudices (161).

Across these two cases, epistemic virtues shifted, creating a new scientific self as an older one dissolved, whilst new conceptions of objectivity appeared as a result. Daston and Galison treat three such forms of objectivity: ‘truth-to-nature’, ‘mechanical objectivity’, and ‘trained judgment’. This pluralization of objectivity is itself radical enough, since by locating objectivity in certain epistemic virtues, Daston and Galison demand that we reassess its status as an automatic epistemic honorific, beginning with the acknowledgement that there was ‘nothing inevitable about the emergence of objectivity’ (197). Far from being a universal epistemic value prized by scientists across the board, objectivity is recast as a mutable concept, one which changes in response to evolving epistemic virtues. These changes can be diagnosed, they suggest, by examining both the scientific atlases themselves and the remarks made by those who produced them, including scientists, illustrators, and printers. The epistemic significance of modes of visual representation also expands the scope of history of science, as ‘objectivity’ is now a product as much of representational practices, technical constraints, and divisions of artistic labour, as of epistemology, experimentation, and empiricism.

An obvious criticism of this book is that it over-emphasizes the significance of visual representations in the constitution of scientific objectivity, one susceptible to criticisms of 'ocularcentrism' made by recent historians of the senses. However, this is unfair. Daston and Galison do not argue that the history of scientific objectivity is determined solely by visual representation, but that modes of visual representation are an obvious manifestation of the epistemic virtues underlying scientific thought and practice. Their claim, both methodological and epistemological, is that one can identify the epistemic virtues underlying scientific practice by examining the visual representations in which they manifest. 'Through each of these atlas images', they argue, 'shimmers an image of an ideal atlas maker' and, therein, 'a scientific self' (363).

The constitution of a 'scientific self' by a set of epistemic virtues lies at the heart of Daston and Galison's history of scientific objectivity. Unlike in previous philosophy of science literature, objectivity is no longer solely an epistemological phenomenon — one demanding value-neutrality, say — but also a normative one, because consisting in a certain 'ethos'. Different epistemic virtues promote different sorts of 'scientific self' and, with them, different conceptions of objectivity. This 'ethical' aspect explains the 'oddly moralizing tone' of scientific atlas-makers' accounts of representations; their 'admonitions, reproaches, and confessions' did not refer simply to epistemic errors, such as the intrusion of aesthetic judgments, but also reflected tangible moral failures: the patience, diligence, and discipline necessary for scientific activity were both epistemic and ethical virtues, and so 'objectivity' had implications for an individual's scientific and moral integrity (39).

This book provides a bold and original thesis, one which challenges the ambitions of history and philosophy of science as much as our understanding of scientific objectivity. The connections between epistemic virtues, objectivity, and the scientific self are complex but well established, supported by beautiful writing and illustrations, and they introduce new areas of investigation for future scholars. It brings together scientific biography, virtue epistemology, axiology, and the history of scientific illustration, creating new connections between ostensibly disparate areas, and the examples and discussions are numerous and extended enough to sustain debate no matter the particularities of one's historical and philosophical interests. Whether Daston and Galison's history of objectivity is supported by more specialized studies into particular disciplines is a matter for future scholarship, as is the applicability of their thesis to contemporary scientific practice. However, these points reflect the richness of their claims, rather than any weakness, and their work is sure to enrich history and philosophy of science for many years to come.

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**Shadia B. Drury**

*Aquinas and Modernity:*

*The Lost Promise of Natural Law.*

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield  
Publishers 2008.

Pp. 224.

US\$75.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-7425-2257-2);

US\$26.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-7425-2258-9).

Drury is no stranger to controversy. Her seminal works *The Political Ideas of Leo Strauss* (1990) and *Leo Strauss and the American Right* (1999) were met with both glowing praise and searing criticism. Reactions to her latest book, in which she engages in a 'critical dialogue' with Thomas Aquinas so as to 'deal with both the harmful and the salutary aspects of his legacy' (xxiii), will likely be no less spirited. Yet polemics aside, hers is a philosophical voice to be reckoned with. She attempts to articulate a serious argument for a 'minimalist version' of Aquinas' natural-law theory that can serve as a 'basis for moral discourse and dispute that transcends particular religions and their unique revelations' (9). She accordingly spends much of the book criticizing what she believes to have been, and continues to be, a dangerous alliance between revelation and reason, faith and politics. Rather than trying to uncover 'thick universals', her approach is to search for more modest, 'thin' principles which are easily recognizable and universally shared by people who otherwise differ.

After making an appeal for a balanced use of canonical texts, Drury proceeds to argue, in four successive chapters, that Aquinas betrayed the very natural law which he had set out to defend, subjected reason to faith, supported papal supremacy, and invited 'a host of institutional crimes' with his teaching on celibacy. She does not, however, suggest that Aquinas is without merit. To the contrary, she finds in him the seeds of a 'sunnier and healthier' conception of human nature whose growth was unfortunately thwarted by his staunch adherence to revealed Christianity and its concomitant theological propositions. It was John Locke, Drury claims, who 'managed to eke out' (9) the political implications of Aquinas' teaching on natural law by delineating principles for a separation between church and state, the prevalence of the rule of law, the protection of civil rights, the freedom of religion, and the need for the consent of the governed. Yet just how Locke was able to do this is not entirely clear, for Drury later writes that 'it is laughable to suggest that . . . Aquinas was a precursor of the Lockean idea of limited government' (52). Regardless of the extent to which Aquinas contributed, or did not contribute, to the shaping of modern political ideas, it is true that the (in)compatibility of his natural-law theory and modern liberalism is a highly debated topic. Drury's argument, however, oversteps the bounds of reasonable evidence when she claims that the legacy of modernity 'was anathema to the Catholic Church and her popes — *and still is*' (9: italics mine).

While it is true that the Catholic Church hesitates to embrace modernity *tout court*, no pope of recent history has come close to declaring it ‘anathema’. On the contrary, in his encyclical letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), John Paul II unambiguously asserted that ‘the Church respects *the legitimate autonomy of the democratic order*’ (47, italics original), that there is a ‘principle of the “rule of law” in which the law is sovereign’ (44), that the human person is ‘the subject of rights, which no one may violate’ (44), that citizens have a basic right to ‘religious freedom’ (47), and that ‘the Church values the democratic system inasmuch as it . . . guarantees to the governed the possibility both of electing and holding accountable those who govern them, and of replacing them through peaceful means when appropriate’ (46). Far from anathemas, these are virtually point-by-point correlations with the Lockean ideas listed above. While it may be true that Aquinas would have found it difficult to grasp modern formulations of rights and responsibilities, that the Church would consider them ‘anathema’ today is utterly false.

Drury dedicates a significant part of the book to the complex relationship between faith and reason and its importance for natural law. She accurately states that Thomas ‘did not intend to provide rational demonstrations for the doctrines of faith’; rather, ‘he wanted to show that the doctrines of faith do not come into conflict with reason’ (27). Fair enough. Yet once again, she overstates the point when she writes that for Aquinas, ‘faith trumps reason’ (29). Her conclusion is partly based on a gross misinterpretation of a key passage in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, a misinterpretation which fails to do justice to Aquinas’ nuanced position. In Book 1, Chapter 7, Aquinas states that ‘whatever arguments are brought forward against the doctrines of faith are conclusions incorrectly derived from the first and self-evident principles imbedded in nature’. Drury ultimately takes this to mean that, for Aquinas, ‘philosophy is true only when its conclusions do not contradict the dogmas of faith’ (29). Yet she fails to notice that, a few lines earlier in the same chapter, Aquinas clearly considers the relationship between faith and reason as a two-way street. He writes that those things divinely revealed and adhered to by faith cannot, in fact, contradict natural knowledge (*non possunt naturali cognitioni esse contraria*). In a certain — though equally exaggerated — sense, we could say that ‘reason trumps faith’.

In the final chapter, Drury gives us a sketch of the ‘minimalist’ version of natural law she wishes to endorse, explaining that it should at least allow us to recognize those things which need to be avoided. Among her examples are coerced abortion, a denial of the right to education, military conscription, and the Catholic Church’s requirement of celibacy (presumably for priests and consecrated persons). While I certainly grant her the first two, and perhaps the third, I find it hard to believe that the fourth could possibly constitute a violation of the natural law, seeing that the Catholic Church ‘forces’ celibacy upon no one, but simply invites those who wish to do so to embrace it. In the end, while pitting her theory against conventionalism and positivism, Drury concludes that the natural law ‘does not belong to any particular weltanschauung, it is a common denominator of all weltanschauungs’ (165). That seems

a reasonable way of expressing the 'nature' of 'natural law', which makes it all the more a pity that her arguments have to be couched in such hyperbolic and acerbic terms.

**Daniel B. Gallagher**

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**Fabio Akcelrud Durão**

*Modernism and Coherence:*

*Four Chapters of a Negative Aesthetics.*

New York: Peter Lang 2008.

Pp. 157.

US\$40.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-3-631-56949-8).

Any review of Durão's book must confront a daunting challenge posed by the text which, in the final analysis, the critic will prove powerless to meet if the contest is engaged directly. The standard protocols of book reviewing are dictated by an economy in which the critic reduces the reviewed book to a series of discrete propositions that are then evaluated and circulated within the secondary markets of academic scholarship. Such processes of 'overproduction in language', however, are precisely the target of Durão's book (9). In particular, Durão articulates and develops a project of negative aesthetics wherein 'aesthetic negativity is the enactment of determinate refusal of predication on the part of artworks' (12). A project of negative aesthetics then strives to draw out the ways in which its objects of analysis resist the political economy of critical scholarship. Through a sequence of close readings of texts by Adorno, Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, and James Joyce, Durão ably undertakes a demonstration of negative aesthetics as a critical project. Along the way, Durão himself has produced a text that itself exhibits many of the features of aesthetic negativity that he has skillfully elucidated. Consequently, this book resists any summary reduction of its argument, for its primary mode of exposition is not argumentation at all, but rather the production of gestures. The merit of Durão's work, therefore, rests not so much upon the strategically simple lines of argumentation that stitch together his text, but on the series of performative interventions made by his attentive readings of some of the most canonical figures of the modern tradition. In short, Durão's text is, by design, one that strikes the reader less for what it says and more for what it does, and what it does, in the end, is remind the reader of both the value and the rarity of theoretical scholarship that takes the time and expends the effort required for genuine engagement in aesthetic reflection.

In opening with the theoretical basis of his project, Durão offers a sustained reading of Adorno that is aimed at disproving the implicit claim, which Durão detects among much of contemporary criticism, that Adorno 'should no longer be read'. Rather than merely isolating a line of questioning or a set of themes that would support an argument for Adorno's continued relevance for today's academy, he convincingly demonstrates that Adorno continues to reward actual *reading*. For example, through a sentence by sentence analysis of the opening paragraph of Adorno's late essay 'Commitment', Durão walks the reader through the dialectical tensions of Adorno's thinking. In so doing, he performatively establishes, more convincingly than any constative argument alone would have done, that the value of Adorno's work cannot be reduced to a set of propositions, but can only be profitably realized through an intellectual investment in reading his work. Continuing in this vein, the chapter concludes with a reading of Adorno's monumental *Aesthetic Theory*. Durão emphasizes how the formal discontinuities that structure the text in turn construct a dialectical relationship with its critics wherein each round of criticism merely generates an additional layer of meaning that the text itself bears yet steadfastly withstands.

The next two chapters offer a series of readings of two of the most canonical figures in twentieth-century American poetry, Wallace Stevens and Robert Frost. In both cases, Durão manages to retrieve both of these poets from the mass of critical scholarship that has rendered them both so obscure in their familiarity, and he has returned them to the recalcitrant stance which is rightfully theirs. In the case of Frost, this is no small achievement, for, as Durão points out, Frost deliberately intended, in conscious contrast with his modernist counterparts, to become a public poet for 'all sorts and kinds'. Nevertheless, Durão provides a reading of Frost's 'The Wood-Pile' in which the poem ultimately resists the scholarly tradition's various means of rendering coherent the ideological tensions between the cultural politics of Frost's aesthetic populism and the conservatism of those within both the academy and publishing who, in large part, were responsible for making Frost so popular. Through an analysis that is somewhat reminiscent of the New Critics, Durão reads 'The Wood-Pile' as an allegory of the interminability of the poet's own artistic efforts to fashion a coherent poetical self.

As for Stevens, Durão builds the chapter around Stevens' phrase 'pressure of reality', which has become a *locus communis* for the critical scholarship. Durão takes the phrase up in his turn both as a means of focusing upon the various interpretive methods which the scholarship has deployed to generate various levels of coherence and as a cipher for the dynamics that mediate the relationship between poetry and society. This approach to Stevens is undertaken against the horizon of the class struggle and the ways in which the irreconcilability of that struggle is formally integrated within the space of Stevens' poetry as the tension between sound and sense.

Durão's book concludes with a chapter on James Joyce. As with the previous chapters, Durão frames his own intervention against an interpretive frame of 'coherence' that itself thematizes the transcendental conditions of

any meaningful critical gesture. By plotting the history of Joyce's critical reception into four figures of coherence, the chapter historically temporizes the dynamics of negative aesthetics. Each of the four figures that successively mark this history necessarily presumes an understanding of meaning which Joyce's *Ulysses* systematically dismantles. In the end, *Ulysses* is shown to have already inscribed its various readers within the drama of the text's own historical constitution.

In conclusion, Durão's book, as a debut work, introduces a scholar with considerable theoretical chops and a genuine appreciation of literary aesthetics. Those interested in rigorously philosophical approaches to the study of literature as an aesthetic and political practice should take heed.

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### **Roberto Esposito**

*Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy.*

Trans. Timothy Campbell. Minneapolis:

University of Minnesota Press 2008.

Pp. 304.

US\$67.50 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8166-4989-1);

US\$22.50 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8166-4990-7).

'Biopolitics' has been the buzzword in critical theory ever since Michel Foucault proposed it as a new regime of surveillance and control. Esposito acknowledges this debt in the opening pages of this book, and he opens with an exposition of Foucault's concept. It is in his second chapter, 'The Paradigm of Immunization', that he begins to formulate his key arguments.

Esposito's work posits a tension between two paradigms in modernity: immunity and community. All individuals have specific obligations to the community they inhabit. The relationship between individual and community hinges on the reciprocity of gift exchange, and immunity frees the individual from this exchange and obligation. Thus, immunity 'protects' the individual from the community. *Immunitas*, writes Esposito, 'is the condition of dispensation from such an obligation and therefore the defense against the expropriating features of *communitas*' (50). To be immune is the "non-being" or the "not-having" anything in common' (51). This is Esposito's central thesis about contemporary biopolitics. Immunity as the structural feature of modernity relies on a particular sense of sovereignty. If life is left to itself, notes Esposito, it is designed to self-destruct. It can preserve itself only by

'tear[ing] itself from nature' (58). Esposito argues that the mechanism that seeks to protect life against its own natural processes (decay, disease) is sovereignty, and sovereignty is an immunitary mechanism.

In Chapter 4, Esposito treats Nazism as an extreme example of the immunization paradigm. He proposes that the Nazi biopolitical apparatus was an attempt to immunize the German body politic — to cure it of its 'ills' — through the production of death. As Esposito puts it: 'between this therapeutic attitude and the thanatological frame . . . [is] a profound connection' (115). It was, he argues, a thanatopolitics relying upon three main articulations or *dispositifs*. The first was the absolute normativization of life where law (*nomos*) is biologized (i.e., rooted in the body) and *bíos* becomes a juridical concept and category. When Nazi doctors had to legitimize the Third Reich's political decisions, Esposito argues, we see a juridicalization of *bíos*. The Nazi concentration camp, writes Esposito, 'placed all life under the command of the norm' (140). The second Nazi *dispositif* was the 'double enclosure of the body' (141). Here the biological substrate, the body, was assumed to be the ultimate truth. Esposito detects two 'operations' here: one, where the self is incorporated within the body and two, the biological body folds into the body of the nation. 'Every corporeal body', argues Esposito, was 'incorporated into a larger body that constitutes the organic totality of the German people' (142). The body of every German was not simply flesh, but an 'incarnation of the racial substance from which life itself receives its essential form' (142). The third *dispositif* was the anticipatory suppression of birth. Sterilization and euthanasia were a form of biopolitics that suppressed life itself; Esposito notes (144) that the law on sterilization was the first legislative measure enacted after the Nazis came to power.

Esposito works through these three *dispositifs* in his chapter 'The Philosophy of *Bíos*'. He writes: 'each time the body is thought of in political terms, or politics in terms of the body, an immunitary short-circuit is always produced' (158). This closes off the political body on itself and within itself. Birth becomes the living force of history for the Nazis, and this is why they sought to prevent 'unwanted' births: this is the political view of life itself. It is, notes Esposito, a 'biopolitical relation between nation and birth' (171).

Esposito seeks a biopolitics that does not sacrifice either the individual or the community. Does the community have to be a threat to the individual (who will, therefore, seek immunity)? Esposito's response is to argue that we need to develop a conception of life where the individual is 'open' to others. Things that are different will co-belong. For this Esposito proposes a new version of immunization: the individual immunizes her/himself from attacking what is other or different. This is the new political form of life that Esposito envisages. He assumes that there is a stratum of life shared by all forms of life, a common *bíos*. This common *bíos* is the basis of individuation, providing the setting for the individual to flourish. In other words, there is no possibility of the 'individual' without a community. This process of individuation, argues Esposito, is about continuous rebirths. Esposito proposes an individuation as made possible by a *bíos* that is inscribed in the world.

The only problem with the present work is that one has to rely on the translator's commentary on Esposito's early, untranslated works. This book extends and often critiques the work on biopolitics by Giorgio Agamben, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. Esposito's chief contribution, as I see it, is a refusal to see biopolitics as simply negative or unjust. Esposito presents an alternate vision. When he concludes with the Deleuzian idea that 'an impersonal singularity . . . rather than being imprisoned in the confines of the individual' can open up to other forms of life (194), we see an affirmative biopolitics emerging.

At this point it must be noted that Esposito's work is situated within the context of a new development in critical thought, the posthumanities (also, incidentally, the series title from University of Minnesota Press in which *Bíos* appears). The recent writings of Donna Haraway on 'companion species' also proposes a continuum of life, moving across species and forms (cf. 'Encounters with Companion Species: Entangling Dogs, Baboons, Philosophers, and Biologists', *Configurations* 14 (2006): 97-114; her larger work, *When Species Meet*, has also appeared in this series on Posthumanities). This reaffirmation of the continuum and the connectedness of life is the affirmative biopolitics within which, according to Esposito, the individual can come to fulfillment. This (re)turn to community and the 'collectiveness' of life is a crucial move, and Esposito's work marks a new challenge and vision. Clearly, his early writing on immunity and community is necessary to a fuller understanding of this most recently translated work, and we look forward to the translations of these in due course.

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**James H. Fetzer**

*Render Unto Darwin: Philosophical Aspects of the Christian Right's Crusade Against Science.*

Chicago: Open Court 2007.

Pp. 220.

US\$24.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8126-9605-9).

The reconciliation of Christianity with science was made possible by the widespread abandonment of biblical literalism. In North America, however, this reconciliation has been under threat for several decades as resurgent hordes of fundamentalists and evangelicals committed to a literal reading of select Bible verses have proclaimed evolutionary biology anathema to Chris-

tian faith, and have thus exercised their political power to supplant science with a pseudo-scientific construct known, in its various guises, as creationism, creation science, young-earth creationism, and intelligent design.

Fetzer spends the first chapter of his book exploring the reasons behind the Christian Right's hostility to evolution. He is careful to note that some varieties of creationism may be compatible with science — that is, the fact that creationism (at least some varieties) is incompatible with evolution doesn't necessarily preclude it from being science. Even if creationism is not science, it does not follow that it is therefore nonsense. After all, the world abounds with perfectly sensible ideas beyond science's borders. Nor would it follow, if creationism were not science, that evolution was, for they may both be unscientific.

As a non-biologist's introduction to evolution, this book is, for the most part, a great success. Fetzer provides good explanations of the difference between Darwinism and neo-Darwinism — the modern synthesis that incorporates developments made since the 1850s. He also notes, for readers new to evolutionary biology, that there really isn't a 'theory of evolution'. There are, rather, many theories of evolution, which share some common evidence, assumptions, and conclusions. Furthermore, Fetzer provides an excellent explanation of the various causal mechanisms of evolution, many of which are frequently ignored by others.

Fetzer is a devotee of inference to the best explanation, a method by which we ask not, 'Is X true?' but rather 'Is X the best possible explanation of the evidence?' The best explanations are able to explain more than their rivals, spur further questions and developments, make the fewest unsupported assumptions, are testable, and are lawful (follow identifiable, somewhat predictable, natural processes). Evolution, he argues, is a better explanation than creationism, which ignores most evidence and has virtually no explanatory power.

Fetzer clearly demarcates science from other endeavors. Not everything given the label of 'science' is actually science, and not every science includes the word 'science' in its name (physics and biology, for example). Particular sciences, he notes, are distinguished from each other by their goals and their methods, which include some form of observation, experimentation, and inference to the best explanation. And for a knowledge claim to count as scientific, it must be conditional, testable, and tentative.

Furthermore, science is defined by its aim — the discovery of natural laws using the sorts of methods and knowledge claims mentioned above. This, he maintains, is where creationism fails most significantly. Distinguishing between three forms of 'Creation Science', Fetzer argues that one (CS-1) rests on three unconditional, untestable, and arbitrary hypotheses. The second form (CS-2) is nonspecific, ambiguous, and, depending on one's interpretation of it, either trivial, false, or question-begging. And the third (CS-3) is demonstrably false and absurd. In fact, Fetzer argues, it seems to be an argument for widespread *macroevolution*. Thus, he writes, 'it may, at best, be said that, to the extent to which Creation Science qualifies as *science*, it does

not support creation; and to the extent to which Creation Science supports *creation*, it does not qualify as science' (43).

Fetzer zeroes in on one of the key flaws of Intelligent Design — apart from its vacuous concept of 'irreducible complexity' and hostility to evidence — namely, its dependence on poor arguments from analogy. The rhetoric behind Intelligent Design, the tropes it uses to lull people into belief, are analogies that seem intriguing at first glance, then turn out to be laughable after a moment's reflection, for instance, the analogies between eyes and bacterial flagella, and between the Intelligent Designer (whom we must not admit is God, lest honesty endanger legal battles) and an oddly tool-less artisan.

The arguments for creationism fail because, for the most part, there are more differences than similarities. Creationism's best offering is simply the old Argument from Design, dressed up in pretty new clothes. That argument received its fatal blow in the eighteenth century, courtesy of David Hume. Fetzer does not rest with the Argument from Design, moving on to demolish several lesser arguments. Although he is not saying anything particularly new in his criticisms, neither are the creationists. He even pauses for a moment to examine the devastating legal defeat of Intelligent Design advocates in Dover, Pennsylvania, where much of their disingenuous, often blatantly dishonest, strategy was publicly exposed in a court of law.

There is, clearly, much to enjoy here. Yet, all is not well. Once Fetzer moves away from evolution and creationism into ethics, the book loses its charm. True, he adequately summarizes W. K. Clifford's ethics of belief, and applies it well to theological beliefs, before moving on to a welcome discussion of meta-ethical criteria. The problem is that neither Fetzer's beliefs regarding which criteria should be used to evaluate moral theories, nor the moral beliefs he lays bare over the next few chapters, would pass Clifford's test. He fails to justify his beliefs, in part because he refuses to entertain the possibility that his moral convictions could be wrong.

The inconsistency is intriguing. When writing about evolution, he performs well: his discussion is interesting, mostly accurate, mostly accessible. When writing about creationism, his standards begin to slip now and then, leading him into some caricature. When writing about ethics he loses sight of his standards completely. While I am sympathetic to many of his moral beliefs, sympathy is insufficient. It makes little sense to open the discussion with a positive take on Clifford, only to flout Clifford's argument from that point on. His suggestion that his standards for comparing moral theories are 'comparable to those for evaluating alternative empirical theories' serves merely to call his lapse into focus (101). Fetzer holds theories of morality to an arbitrary set of criteria that he does not even attempt to justify (102), declaring that any theory he holds unable to meet those arbitrary criteria is either indefensible or just less defensible than one which does.

Many of the eight moral theories that he presents will not be found in the ethics literature. They don't even seem to be moral 'theories' in any meaningful, robust, philosophically relevant sense. Apparently, we may use 'theory' in the sense of 'unsupported speculation' in philosophy, though not in science.

His conceptions of ethical egoism and 'limited utilitarianism' are both oddly formulated. 'Religious ethics' and 'family values' are both ridiculous pastiches of relativism, though he presents a vague sort of 'cultural relativism' as its own theory. These, along with 'subjectivism', are 'traditional theories'. And, yes, they do, as Fetzer claims, seem to 'make moral criticism, moral progress, and moral reform meaningless conceptions.'

After stacking the deck so that his favorite approach, a vaguely Kantian deontological theory, looks obviously superior to an audience unaccustomed to the complexities of moral philosophy and willing to be led by the hand, Fetzer declares the matter settled. As it turns out, this deontology is superior because it meets his arbitrary criteria — which is fortunate, since that theory also tells him what he wants to hear about stem cell research. In the discussion of stem cell research, Fetzer routinely confuses law and ethics, adds a rights-based morality without explanation, and postulates several 'rules of thumb' as key undefended assumptions to make his conclusions appear sensible.

Fetzer is not the first to believe that reason necessarily backs his moral assumptions, whatever they may be, but as even he recognizes when dismissing creationism, subjective feelings of certainty do not guarantee truth. Nor is it appropriate to ignore the details of a theory for the sake of expedience. At one point, when dismissing an argument identified as egoistic, he blithely ignores the ethical egoist's points, assumes the opposite, and claims victory.

Insofar as Fetzer is providing accessible explanations of complex natural phenomena for an educated lay audience — and there is ample evidence that this is the book's purpose — this is an excellent account. If the book were for an audience already well-versed in science, explanation of the different meanings of 'theory' would be condescending. Nevertheless, Fetzer sometimes presumes too much. Even many contemporary philosophers will be unfamiliar with some of the logical terminology used throughout the book unless they're rooted in the analytic tradition. At times, Fetzer takes pains to define every little term for the reader. Then he'll drop in a term like 'singular subjunctive conditional' without any explanation at all. Although there is a glossary at the front of the book, it doesn't define such terms. Is the book for educated lay readers well versed in logical terminology but ignorant of basic scientific concepts? How many such people could there be?

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**Steve Fuller**

*Science vs Religion? Intelligent Design  
and the Problem of Evolution.*

Malden, MA: Polity Press 2007.

Pp. 192.

US\$69.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-07456-4121-8);

US\$19.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-07456-4122-5).

This is another strange book from the prolific pen of Steve Fuller. A professor of sociology at the University of Warwick, and specialist in ‘science studies’, Fuller is a social constructivist. What this means is that in science, as in politics, reality is not discovered, but made up. So what counts as ‘science’ is determined by who has the institutional influence and power to get their views accepted. In biology, Fuller thinks, it’s the (neo) Darwinian establishment that sets the rules; so, given his view about the way science is constructed, one might think that he would accept that. But he doesn’t. He thinks that intelligent design (ID) theorists deserve equal time, in the academy and in the classroom, and that’s the case he argues in his book. Fuller’s thesis is that ID theorists, and their large religious following, have been marginalized by the scientific establishment, and that this needs to be corrected by advocates of ‘affirmative action’ like himself (97).

Ignore the fact that social constructivists like Fuller shouldn’t be concerned about whether ID has been spurned by a scientific establishment that doesn’t take it seriously. After all, if might makes right, why protest? But Fuller thinks that readers of his book *should* protest, for at least two reasons: first, because he thinks that evolutionary biology (EB) is usually presented as a monolithic ideology (‘Darwinian fundamentalism’, 83-5) that sweeps away all discussion of design; second, because he thinks that successful past science has been infused by the spirit of creationist design and that good science in the future should be as well. He writes: ‘I believe that the version of creationism nowadays called “intelligent design theory” (or IDT), which takes inspiration from the Bible but conducts its business in the currency of science, was responsible for the modern scientific world-view . . . I believe that to lose touch with the creationist backstory to modern science would be to undermine the strongest reason for pursuing science.’ And he concludes: ‘(C)ontrary to what advocates on both sides of the [creation-evolution] dispute appear to believe, IDT provides a surer path to a “progressive” attitude to science than modern evolutionary theory’ (2). Despite the scare quotes around ‘progressive’, this conclusion does not look constructivist, but normative. I return to this point shortly.

Today’s proponents of ID are cagier than their ‘60s and ‘70s predecessors at the Institute for Creation Research (Henry Morris, Duane Gish, et. al.), but Fuller is correct in calling them religiously motivated ‘creationists’, even if they deny the label (70, 95). His other claims are more dubious. Evolutionary biologists argue — rightly, I think — that evolution is a fact — as close to being proved as anything ever is in natural science. But there is some dis-

agreement about the mechanism and tempo of evolution. Are random variation and natural selection the only 'engines' of change? Most, but not all, say 'no'. Is evolution always gradualist, as Darwin thought, or does it sometimes (at least) proceed in spurts, as, for example, Niles Eldridge and Steven J. Gould argued in offering their 'punctuated equilibrium' model? No consensus here. Do evolutionary biologists invoke 'supernatural design' to explain the mode and tempo of evolutionary change? They do not. And rightly so. Instead — and whatever their religious orientation — they usually profess a commitment to 'methodological naturalism' (117, 123) in doing their science. Sometimes that profession looks pretty weak, like a thin veneer covering an explicitly religious agenda, as in the fundamentalist Christian members of the Discovery Institute, who campaigned vigorously, but unsuccessfully, to expose and destroy allegedly atheistic evolutionary biology in the Dover, Pennsylvania trial. These folks are no doubt chagrined that lawyers defending their position (the teaching of ID in public schools) enlisted the 'expert' testimony of Steve Fuller to support them. But rightly understood, evolutionary biology is not a monolithic ideology, much less a materialistic and atheistic one. Some evolutionary biologists are theists (e.g., Theodosius Dobzhansky), some are atheists (e.g., Richard Dawkins), many are probably agnostic. But few appeal to their religious stance, whatever it is, in the interpretation and justification of their results or import that stance into their teaching.

Should they? Fuller thinks they should, or at least there is no good reason why they shouldn't. He argues that much of Western science has its roots in 'traditional' ID, so modern ID creationism belongs in science curricula. According to Fuller, neither ID's proponents nor its critics really appreciate its significance for the development of science: '(B)oth friends and foes of [ID creationism] are profoundly ignorant of the centrality of intelligent design to the rise of modern science' (162; also 27-8, 98-9, 101). Fuller apparently thinks that this historical claim has the normative implication that science should continue to embrace ID, since design-based thinking puts one in a frame of mind that 'motivates the sustained pursuit of scientific inquiry' and 'fosters the context of scientific discovery' (101). Moreover, to deny ID a place in science classes amounts to an institutionalization of atheism (112, 119).

What are we to make of this? To begin with, this position (as noted earlier) does not look constructivist, since Fuller seems to think that Darwinian fundamentalism has blocked the road to discovery, while a commitment to ID has promoted it. He is certainly right in saying that many scientists of the past, especially before Darwin, saw themselves as deciphering divine purpose in the world, and thought that there was a profound connection between monotheism and the pursuit of a unified conception of nature. But this is not the startling revelation he seems to think it is. Religious motivation, then as now, is *one* reason for pursuing natural science. But Fuller's claim seems more dramatic: The doing of science presupposes that reality is intelligible, and built into the notion of intelligibility is the assumption that science's quest for greater unity 'would be pointless if reality were not the product of a unified intelligence, basically a mind that differs in degree, but not in

kind, from our own' (81-2). So a belief in ID is 'historically fundamental (and perhaps even conceptually necessary) for the emergence and *maintenance of rationality and science*' (27-8, my emphasis)! Does he then advocate replacing the hegemony of EB with a new (renewed?) ID hegemony? Maybe, since Chapter 5, 'Life after Darwinism', argues that EB may well be eclipsed in the twenty-first century in the way Marxism was in the twentieth. But if so, that would not sit well with his request now only for 'equal time'.

Perhaps, however, Fuller has something else in mind, something more in line with affirmative action. Perhaps he only wants ID to be given a chance, in academia and in the legal system, to prove its worth. That reading has a certain plausibility, since in discussing the Dover trial, he distinguishes between the *motives* for doing scientific research and the *methods* of that research, and rightly criticizes the ruling of the presiding judge that banned the teaching of ID because of the religious motivations of its advocates, instead of putting the focus where it should be: on the quality of ID-inspired science (94-6).

So the question becomes: Is contemporary ID-inspired science 'good' science? This is a tricky and contentious matter, in large part because of the longstanding controversy surrounding the 'demarcation problem', or problem of distinguishing between science and non-science, which I cannot begin to go into here. But one of the striking features of Fuller's book is its failure ever to come to grips with the *technical* arguments of ID proponents or their critics. He says that IDT 'differs most markedly from other versions of creationism by the emphasis it places on *complexity*,' and mentions in passing Michael Behe's notion of 'irreducible complexity' (29, 69) and William Dembski's idea of 'complex specified information' or 'specified complexity' (69, 82, 89-90); but he makes no serious attempt to explain these concepts or to spell out the arguments from complexity to ID. Or address the claims of ID defenders, disingenuous though they seem, that strong evidence of ID doesn't commit them to the 'God hypothesis' as the best explanation of it. And the criticisms of opponents, with a single undiscussed exception (83), are totally ignored. It is as if Fuller has not taken the trouble to get himself up to snuff on the current academic debate about ID before claiming that, on *scientific* grounds, it deserves equal time in high school science classrooms. (See Elliot Sober, *Evidence and Evolution: The Logic Behind the Science* [CUP 2008] for a good introduction to the debate.)

A final brief comment on the question that forms the title of Fuller's book. Are science and religion essentially and irrevocably at odds with one another? I think that Fuller would say 'no' (159), and I agree. But the way in which he goes about arguing their compatibility does not even mention, much less engage, the *enormous* contemporary literature on this subject. Indeed, he seems to know even less about that than he does about the contemporary literature on ID. Instead, he tries to bring science and religion together in his own way, by claiming that 'naturalistic' explanations are not radically different from 'supernatural' ones. There is 'continuity and overlap' between them, with supernatural explanations simply appealing to more 'theoretical'

entities, i.e., ones more difficult to bring to experimental test (102-3)! This is a strange proposal of which it hard to know what to make. Is divine action 'supernatural' because — *only* because? — it's harder to test for than, say, the existence of solar neutrinos? For a better account of the relation between religion and science, that nevertheless preserves the distinctive features of both, I recommend John Haught's *God After Darwin: A Theology of Evolution* (Westview 2000) or his *Deeper than Darwin: The Prospect for Religion in the Age of Evolution* (Westview 2003).

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**Sean Gaston**

*Starting with Derrida:*

*Plato, Aristotle and Hegel.*

New York: Continuum 2007.

Pp. 223.

US\$120.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-9785-7);

US\$21.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-9786-4).

**Simon Morgan Wortham**

*Derrida: Writing Events.*

New York: Continuum 2008.

Pp. 145.

US\$130.00

(cloth ISBN-13: HB: 978-1-8470-6247-5).

Gaston's book is to be welcomed both for its serious engagement with Derrida's oeuvre and for the invitation — Is this Derridean legacy? — to initiate over and over again, as if in perpetual challenge, sensitive new readings and re-readings of Plato, Aristotle and Hegel, all prompted by numerous Derridean suggestions.

In the first part, 'Histories — Of Literature', Gaston describes the initial occasion, in the early 1960s, that 'took Derrida back to Plato as a way of re-reading Husserl and Hegel and examining the Platonic inheritance in the work of Foucault and Lévinas. Challenging the prevailing tradition that had dominated French philosophy since Hegel, Derrida turns back again, once more and always more than once to Plato' (3). At the beginning, Gaston refers to the origin of philosophy and geometry, 'the strange history of the origin as the move from the sensible to the *exact*' (9); to the concept of *theoria* in Plato and Husserl; and to Derrida's celebrated reading of Plato's account of writing and speaking in the *Phaedrus*. Involving, later, Lévinas, Plato and

Plotinus, Gaston dwells upon the famous Parmenidean topic *being/non being* and glosses, '[t]his is the celebrated and much disputed birth of ontology. Derrida had already touched on this primal scene in "Cogito and the History of Madness", observing that Parmenides' poem demands a decision, a moment of madness, that is akin to the apparent *separation* of reason and madness in the *Cogito*' (15-16).

Gaston's book is constructed following a sort of red thread of the history of the *palintrope* (from Greek *pálin*: to move back, to go backwards; and also to do something again, to do something once more), as a distinctive feature in philosophy that starts with Plato. It deals with a kind of history-of literature. But what's the meaning of the dash ( — ) used here between history and literature? For Derrida the dash is a graphic mark, an instance of a 'break in sense', a moment of non-meaning, a graphic mark that Derrida places between history and literature to indicate something that is without place, something that can be displaced and re-placed. In the *Poetics* Aristotle argues that the poet's task is to describe not what has happened, but rather what might happen: 'history (*historia*) is concerned with "the thing that has been", poetry (*poiçsis*) with "the thing that might be". History traces singularities while poetry proclaims universals' (53). Derrida, on the contrary, believes that the gap between 'the history — of literature' *moves* — it oscillates, exposing history *to* literature and literature *to* history, without the one ever resolving itself entirely into the other, or without the one separating itself entirely from the other, without rest' (59).

In the second part, 'Histories — Of the Senses', Gaston addresses the "New" History' of the senses. Now the fundamental text is Aristotle's *De Anima*, a text annotated and glossed by Derrida for about forty years, right up to the publication of *On Touching* — *Jean Luc Nancy*. While exploring Aristotle's influence on the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and while studying the role of the *De Anima* in Hegel's work, Derrida has gone in his customary *palintropic* movement back and beyond. Aristotle, in his anatomist prose, writes that 'touch is the only sense that is essential to the existence of living as such. The other senses are not intended to ensure being of animal or alive, but only his *well-being*. But without the touch, the animal could not exist' (435b20-25).

At this point, questions arise: Is touching many senses or only one? What is the proper of the faculty of touch? Can we imagine a touching of something unextended? According to some scholars, touch is the first and the most important sense, since it is the only sense of *immediate* external perception; but it is other senses too. For both Derrida and Hegel, all begins with *De anima*: touch means the possibility of touching and not touching; touch is discrimination as mediation; touch is a simultaneous concussion of the external and the internal. And indeed in his readings of Aristotle, Derrida raises the possibility of a 'new' history — of the senses, and insists 'that such a history cannot avoid the "mighty shadow" (*ombre immense*) of Hegel' (101).

But let us reflect on the central focus of *Glas*. This is a difficult text, largely neglected by commentators, in which Derrida gives his longest treatment of Hegel. In the 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel starts

with the problem of beginning, and in his first lesson, he warns us not to assume that there is something prior to starting. In the *Science of Logic*, he speaks of 'Scholasticus who tried to learn to swim before he ventured into the water,' and he argues that 'to want the nature of cognition clarified prior to science is to demand that it be considered outside the science; outside the science this cannot be accomplished, at least not in a scientific manner and such a manner is alone here in place' (SL, 68). In the *Phenomenology* he uses the term *Aufhebung* in order to think difference. But, according to Derrida, the German *Aufhebung* has two meanings, one as simply word, the other as concept. Given that concepts exceed or outstrip words, the question of starting again is consequently a question of conceiving separately words and concepts. Put differently, Derrida — who privileges Hegel's method over his system — reminds us that Hegel absolutely requires the separation and the division, that he cannot do without the gap, the cut, and the bridge; that he never stops leaping. The spirit of philosophy lives by the restlessness of the break. Since Pythagoras, the triadic model has been held to be the first form in the universal, but Derrida asks: what happens if one deviates from the threefold? Hegel's reply is to start again 'from nature to spirit, from spirit to nature, to the spirits of nature, the rhythm of the seasons, the fermentation and drunkenness of the harvest' (157).

Some twenty-five years after *Glas*, in *On Touching — Jean Luc Nancy*, Derrida returns to the conviction that thought thinks only where the counterweight (*le contrepoids*) of the other weighs enough that it begins to think. He seems to tell us 'However old I am, I am on the threshold of reading Plato and Aristotle . . . we need to read them again and again . . . It is too late, and I'll have to start again' (164).

In the 'Introduction' of his book, Wortham writes that his task is to reflect on how one might 'write' the 'event', or how *writing the event* may come down to a very strange practice of conjuring citations from an archive of the future, as in Blanchot. Wortham adds: 'Derrida tells us the event — precisely in order to be worthy of its name — implies an irreplaceable and unmasterable singularity, a pure idiomaticity . . . that evades its own appropriation by any given language, discourse or context, and which therefore dislocates the interpretative horizon on which it is hoped or expected to appear' (4). In order to understand the event, in *Paper Machine* Derrida affirmed that we must distinguish the inside of the event, the printing and the impression, and their complicated relation.

In Chapter 2, 'Writing Obsession', Wortham, citing Sartre and Freud, describes writing as obsession, as a game of seduction and counter-seduction, as archive fever, and poses the idea of *the book to come* that interested Derrida a great deal, included the technicity of writing. Despite changes in physical form, Derrida maintains that the book, nonetheless, will survive: 'For what we are dealing with is never replacements that put an end to what they replace but rather, if I might use this word today, restructurations in which the oldest form survives, and even survives endlessly, coexisting with the new form and even coming to terms with a new economy' (47).

In Chapter 3, 'Writing Friendship: Agamben and Derrida', Wortham addresses the divergence between Agamben and Derrida on the topic of friendship. Agamben 'rejects the friend/enemy relation as the decisive categorical pair of Western politics', as one can deduce in *Politics of Friendship*, and he delegitimizes the motto 'Oh friends, there are no friends' which provides the leitmotiv for Derrida's book. The question calls for much more extensive thinking and reading. Wortham's conclusion is that 'Needless to say, the complex relationship of Agamben to Derrida . . . calls a painstaking excavation of the philosophical terrain upon which the two meet and disagree has only just begun within the academy' (69). This is a conclusion I accept, provided one also considers the interesting position of Jean Luc Nancy. Chapter 4, titled 'Anonymity Writing Pedagogy: Beckett, Descartes, Derrida', explores the notion of a radically anonymous origin — or indeed non-origin — at issue in Beckett's work, *Company*.

The topic of 'writing the events', and the remarks about the Agamben-Derrida relationship, could prefigure a way of getting over Derridean binarism. I cannot help thinking that more could have been done. It is my impression that the book develops hastily, as if the author's task is to point out themes that could be enlarged afterwards.

### **Francesco Tampoia**

#### **Hud Hudson**

*The Metaphysics of Hyperspace.*

New York: Oxford University Press 2008.

Pp. 223.

US\$85.00 (cloth ISBN-10: 0-199-28257-9);

US\$35.00 (paper ISBN-10: 0-199-54925-7).

This book brings together an array of topics that fall under the aegis of the metaphysics of material objects. While it is a largely disconnected affair, it does succeed in advancing discussion of these topics. Its success, despite its title, is not a product of a sustained inquiry into, or defense of, the reality of hyperspace — spatial dimensions over and above those most familiar to us. Rather, it succeeds in virtue of tracking and, in some cases, taming a menagerie of exotic metaphysical creatures like spanners, pretenders, entenders, incongruent counterparts (both spatial and temporal), many-brothers, and mirror-brothers. Hudson studies these entities in an effort to clarify and resolve debates concerning location, occupation, and composition, which are at the heart of Lewisian metaphysics. While he does not advance an overarch-

ing thesis regarding these matters, his facility with these topics makes for an enjoyable and even-handed tour. I'll survey his discussion here, focusing on what I take to be its prize exhibits.

Surprisingly, Hudson has rather little to say about the metaphysics of hyperspace *per se*. After an introductory preamble marking his most salient assumptions, he spends Chapter 1 assessing several philosophical arguments in defense of hyperspace. The discussion there indicates that purely philosophical arguments for hyperspace are rather thin on the ground. Beyond this, the most notable of these arguments — the argument from fine-tuning — provides only weak evidence in favor of additional spatial dimensions. (I omit the 'spatial' qualification from here on.) According to the fine-tuning argument, the existence of life-permitting conditions is more probable given the existence of a plenitude of dimensions than under the assumption that our world has only three dimensions; and since a plenitudinous hyperspace entails the existence of a vast number of regions, each with varying cosmic conditions, it makes the actuality of at least some life-favorable conditions far more probable. So, given a commitment to the evidential principle that we should favor the competing hypothesis that renders our observations most probable, Hudson holds that we have some evidence to believe in hyperspace.

I find the shortcomings of the fine-tuning argument significant. First, the evidence for hyperspace it provides is highly defeasible. This is because questions about the physical structure of the actual world are the sorts of questions best broached a posteriori. The provision of armchair evidence for hyperspace is, for this reason, largely uninteresting, since the deliverances of on-going physical inquiry could plausibly swamp any findings of philosophical cosmology. Additionally, if the fine-tuning argument does provide evidence for hyperspace, it also provides comparable grounds to accept other strange views about the universe. For example, if the world were infinitely mereologically complex in both directions, such that it had no maximal sum nor any minimal atomic parts, the probability of finding life-permitting cosmic conditions would be greatly increased. So, if we take seriously the form of Hudson's fine-tuning argument, we could just as well expand our cosmology without recourse to higher-dimensions. Although Hudson seems to accept that the fine-tuning argument does suffer from this shortcoming, it is disappointing that, in a book on hyperspace, the central argument for it seems to have nothing to say about hyperspace as a distinctive cosmological hypothesis. (Among the interesting issues regarding hyperspace not taken up in this book is whether philosophical grounds can be offered for belief in spatial dimensions other than an additional fourth one or the entire plenitude of dimensions in which Hudson is interested. On this score, worries about arbitrariness would seem to preclude the provision of a priori evidence for the existence of only, say, thirty-four spatial dimensions.)

Four subsequent chapters have few obvious points of contact with the hyperspace hypothesis. In Chapter 2, Hudson considers the metaphysics of receptacles and defends what he calls the liberal view, according to which any region is a receptacle, since any region can be occupied by a material object.

In Chapter 3, he discusses a number of accounts of what it is for material objects to come into contact. Here, and in Chapter 2, Hudson's discussion of thorny issues in topology is admirably clear and concise. In Chapter 4, he explores the metaphysics of location and surveys the extant proposals about the nature of mereological simples. While this chapter strays far from the topic of hyperspace, it is perhaps the best discussion of the metaphysics of simples — mereologically atomic objects — in a fast-growing literature. In Chapter 5, Hudson takes up a puzzle about the apparent inconsistency between certain views in mereology and the a posteriori denial of superluminal motion or causation.

In Chapter 5, Hudson returns to the topic of hyperspace by considering the threat of 'mirror determinism', according to which three-dimensional objects, like two-dimensional mirror images, are causally impotent reflections of higher-dimensional objects. This intriguing discussion provides a nice point of contact between hyperspace and classic philosophical concerns about freedom: if we are merely three-dimensional entities, then the actions of the four-dimensional entities we are parts of seem to preclude our own performance of free actions. Now, while one might pursue a libertarian stance and hold this as evidence against hyperspace, I take it to point out that, if the hyperspace hypothesis is correct, the challenges of accommodating agency in a hyperspatial world are more pressing than one might initially suspect.

The final chapters of the book take up theistic and distinctively Christian reasons to believe in hyperspace. Unsurprisingly, certain readers are liable to be uninterested in a defense of hyperspace on the grounds that it can explain miracles like the Virgin Birth or furnish us with a metaphysics of angels and demons or heaven and hell. But, if one is not moved by these considerations, the earlier failure of the fine-tuning argument invites the conclusion that Hudson has failed to rally any philosophical grounds for belief in hyperspace.

As Hudson notes, a significant amount of this book does appear elsewhere in the form of journal articles. But, given the diversity of its topics and ingenuity of its examples, any metaphysician would profit from perusing this book. It provides several noteworthy contributions to the metaphysics of material objects even while it does leave aside many of the issues posed by higher dimensions.

**Sam Cowling**

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**Douglas Husak**

*Overcriminalization:*

*The Limits of the Criminal Law.*

New York: Oxford University Press 2008.

Pp. 248.

US\$49.95

(cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-532871-4).

This is a book that should be required reading for every scholar of legal philosophy and criminal law and even of moral and political philosophy as well. The topic is of enormous importance, both theoretical and practical, and the treatment of it by Husak is clear, sophisticated, and sensible; the footnotes and bibliography alone make the book an essential reference tool. But especially significant is Husak's choice of method. He rightly chides legal specialists for being overly immersed in cases but ignorant of larger philosophical issues (one reason why utilitarianism remains so influential in legal circles, despite the decisive philosophical criticisms against it). But he criticizes philosophers for their infatuation with bizarre hypothetical cases, and for their overspecialization to the neglect of such an important topic as that of criminalization. Husak's method ought to be a model for anyone in this field; it is grounded in what he likes to call the 'real world', actual legal cases and controversies, but insistent on the need to develop a theory to explain, justify, and criticize those practices. For Husak, one result of the lack of a theory has been the extraordinary excesses of overcriminalization, especially in America, to such an extent that Husak thinks it even threatens to undermine the rule of law. The difficulty of reaching consensus on moral and political theory cannot be an excuse for scholarly neglect, for failing to engage with practical questions of the utmost importance.

What is criminalization? It is the determination as to what practices a society is permitted to criminalize, i.e., to proscribe and punish. This is a topic almost entirely neglected by philosophers and legal theorists as well. Without a theory, there is no constraint or guidance for legislatures, resulting in the shocking extent of overcriminalization in the United States. As Husak points out, overcriminalization takes many forms: excessive levels of punishment, excessive numbers of laws, and too many kinds of conduct being criminalized. Husak also points out a fact so patently disturbing yet rarely acknowledged: while the US Supreme Court applies the highest level of scrutiny to any law that infringes on such things as free speech or free exercise of religion, and while there are substantial guarantees to criminal procedure, there is essentially no review at all of substantive criminal statutes (with the limited exception of the prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment). Yet it is the criminal law by which the government exercises the most terrifying powers over individuals: the power to imprison for life, or even kill. Incredibly, greater protection is given to the right to commercial speech than to the right not to be incarcerated for life. Husak's book is full of

examples of such abuses, especially involving the war on drugs. One bizarre case involves the sale of drugs in a prison: it was held to be subject to extra punishment applied to drug sales in a school zone, as the prison was near a school.

Husak attempts to fill this egregious gap by presenting a theory of the moral limits of the criminal law. The scope and ambition of such a project can hardly be overstated, and is no doubt what has discouraged others from even attempting such a project. A theory of criminalization requires a moral theory, a theory of the state, a theory of crime versus tort, a theory of punishment, and so forth. Yet Husak does an extremely creditable job constructing a modest 'minimalist' account, one which avoids grand theorizing but does not shy away from controversy. He makes a plausible case for a number of internal moral constraints on what sorts of conduct society may criminalize, i.e., constraints that can be derived from our criminal and moral traditions. These include the harm constraints, the wrongfulness constraint, the desert constraint, and the burden of proof constraint. He then ventures to suggest several 'external' constraints that derive from political theory, in particular drawing on what he sees as the basic 'right not to be punished'. He ends up with a pluralist theory, incorporating both retributive and consequentialist values.

Notwithstanding the scope of this project, Husak remains appropriately modest in his aims, emphasizing that he is only trying to lay the groundwork for this project, and that there is an enormous future amount of work to do. What is most refreshing about this book is the sense of moral urgency and outrage it displays; Husak sees fundamental injustice in our society and insists it is the role of philosophers to try to deal with it by attending to basic issues in moral and political philosophy. This is in contrast to many current moral philosophers, who seem comfortable exploring hypothetical cases, or suggesting practical changes, with hardly any consideration of the real-life implications (as with one prominent philosopher who seems almost offhandedly to call for a return to the permissibility of private revenge).

There are of course a number of elements one might criticize in Husak's argument. His discussion of the distinction between public and private wrongs is rather thin; and there is much work needed to explain how the retributive and consequentialist values are to be combined. However, to criticize such points seems almost ungracious, given the enormous service Husak has provided in laying the groundwork for this urgent project. But the single biggest challenge is one that Husak himself brings up: even if we were to agree on a set of standards to constrain the criminalization of conduct, it is unclear how to implement and enforce these standards in a democratic society. Husak rejects the method of judicial review as unreliable (131), and argues that the standards ought to be applied by legislatures themselves. But will self-regulation in the legislature work any better than self-regulation on Wall Street? And, as Husak understates the point, legislatures 'have not tended to pay a great deal of attention to academic criticism in the arena of criminal justice' (132). Still, that is no excuse for the neglect of this immensely important

problem: if academics addressed themselves to this issue, their moral authority might begin to make a difference, however small.

**Whitley Kaufman**

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**Simon Keller**

*The Limits of Loyalty.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2007.

Pp. 246.

US\$99.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-87461-8).

When loyalty receives attention from contemporary philosophers, it is usually in the context of the debate between partialists, who think that moral commitments must ultimately reduce to commitments to particular individuals or communities, and impartialists, who think morality must be strongly universalistic. Keller attempts to take the philosophical investigation of loyalty beyond the narrow and potentially distorting confines of this debate.

Among the distortions Keller wants to avoid is the tendency to treat 'loyalty' as a single unified phenomenon. Rather, there are highly diverse forms of loyalty, distinguished largely by the question of what one is loyal *to*. One may be loyal to one's spouse, one's parents or children, one's city, one's country, one's favorite sports team, one's preferred brand of sneakers, and so on. In Keller's view, thinking about what could show up on this list should make us realize two things. First, 'loyalty is a fairly thin concept. The information that a person is loyal to something does not tell you as much as you might expect about how he is disposed to think and behave' (21). Second, 'loyalty is not an intrinsically evaluative concept. Without some substantive argument, there is no guarantee that if something counts as a loyalty then it counts as something good, or something that merits our approval or encouragement' (22). As he writes later, '[t]he bare fact that some action is the loyal thing to do, or that some attitude is the loyal attitude to have, does not guarantee that there is any reason to do or have it' (152).

Indeed, some forms of loyalty are, in Keller's view, inherently undesirable. Two chapters are devoted to showing that patriotism (almost) inevitably encourages bad faith, and is therefore morally objectionable. Patriotism involves believing one's country to be objectively valuable in certain ways, and because it is regarded as a virtue, the patriot takes herself to have moral reason to maintain those beliefs, even in the face of countervailing evidence. Thus, pa-

triotism encourages, perhaps even demands epistemic irresponsibility, and so undermines an agent's ability to make 'morally significant decisions: decisions about whether to support or fight in a war, about who should get her vote, about whether to make certain significant sacrifices, and so on' (83-4).

Interestingly, Keller finds a similar phenomenon at work in the context of friendship. '[W]hen good friends form beliefs about each other, they sometimes respond to considerations that have to do with the needs and interests of their friends, not with aiming at the truth' (24-5). A friend, for instance, should sometimes overestimate her friend's worth or chances of success, or take his side in a dispute where an objective observer would be neutral. So friendship, like patriotism, can conflict with epistemic norms: 'there are cases in which an agent cannot meet both the highest standards of friendship and the highest standards of epistemic responsibility' (26).

Does this make friendship a vice? No, Keller seems to think: while patriotism is rendered morally vicious by its conflict with good epistemic standards, friendship tends to lead us astray in less morally serious ways; and unlike patriotism, friendship 'does not involve any really profound form of self-deception' (88). Still, Keller is willing to conclude that 'there can be very good reasons not to be a good friend' and that therefore 'friendship is not something to be unreservedly embraced' (47).

Ultimately I think Keller is right to endorse this sort of pluralism about practical reason — to think, that is, that there are different types of practical reasons, and no guarantee that there will never be competition between them. I wonder, though, whether Keller might be insufficiently sympathetic to the possibility that there can be good *epistemic* reasons for being biased in favor of one's friends. Being open-minded and even, to a degree, pre-disposed to find something to like or admire can sometimes lead one to a kind of understanding or insight unattainable from a more objective, dispassionate perspective. (Perhaps ideally we would adopt such an attitude toward *everyone*; practically speaking, however, this is simply impossible.)

Taking seriously this possibility — that there can be good epistemic reasons for seeing people in the way that friendship requires — might considerably strengthen Keller's contention that patriotism is objectionable in a way that friendship is not. Indeed, it seems to me that the deepest difference between the two lies in the nature of the objects to which they are directed. Human individuals, in virtue of their moral standing, deserve certain sorts of sympathetic attention and allegiance, while countries — which are highly abstract, perhaps even essentially fictional entities — cannot be said to *morally* deserve any particular sort of treatment at all.

Let me be clear that these are at most minor reservations. On the whole Keller's intuitions seem to me reasonable, correct, and frequently insightful, and the arguments that back them up are consistently strong. Moreover there are other good things in the book I do not have the space to describe in detail. His criticisms of the three standard theories of filial duty, for example, seem to me decisive, and the alternative account he offers, the 'special goods' account, is both plausible and enlightening.

This is, then, a strong, frequently insightful, and on the whole satisfying book. Anyone interested in friendship, patriotism, filial morality, or any other form of loyalty will have to read it; many others would profit from it as well. Moreover it is in its unique way a refreshing book. Philosophers are so often concerned with convincing their readers that their chosen topic is wildly and earth-shatteringly significant that it is pleasing, somehow, to find a book whose main claim is that its subject is not, in fact, quite as important as it is commonly thought to be. Readers of this book may find their estimation of loyalty's importance mildly diminished; but they will certainly come away with their understanding of the topic significantly enhanced.

**Troy Jollimore**

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**Theodore Kisiel and Thomas Sheehan, eds.**

*Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His  
Early Occasional Writings, 1910-1927.*

Evanston, IL: Northwestern University  
Press 2007.

Pp. 534.

US\$99.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0810123021);

US\$34.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0810123038).

In a letter dated February 20, 1923, Martin Heidegger wrote to Karl Löwith: 'I publicly burned and destroyed the *Ideas* to such an extent that I dare say the essential foundations for the whole (of my work) are now clearly laid out' (372). Just a few months later, Heidegger further confides in Löwith that 'I now stand completely on my own feet. . . . There is no chance of getting an appointment (with Husserl's help). And after I have published, my prospects will be finished. The old man will then realize that I am wringing his neck — and then the question of succeeding him is out. But I cannot help myself . . .' (372). Provocative letters such as these reveal a young Heidegger who is clearly still under the shadow of his mentor Edmund Husserl but who is nevertheless beginning to assert his own philosophy, both publicly in his lectures and privately in his letters. Heidegger, of course, will go on to succeed Husserl in his chair at Freiburg, and will do so even with Husserl's own recommendation, despite Heidegger's reservations that he may have already burned this bridge. By 1923, at the age of thirty-three, the young and aspiring philosopher is already well on his way toward establishing a new

name in German philosophy, one that will become synonymous with many things, not the least of which will be new paths in philosophical thinking.

It is this story of Heidegger's early maturation that is told in the new collection from editors Kisiel and Sheehan. Both well-known Heidegger scholars and translators, they have compiled a volume of over six hundred pages of essays, letters, academic evaluations, impressions, as well as chronologies of Heidegger's lecture courses, both taken as a student and delivered as a professor, and an annotated glossary of key German terms. Readers familiar with Heidegger's early work will recognize many of the essays included in this volume since most of them have already appeared in print elsewhere, either scattered about in journals or, more notably, in a previous collection of early Heidegger writings, *Supplements* (SUNY Press 2002, ed. John van Buren). In fact, nearly all of the material found in *Supplements* has been re-packaged and incorporated into this book, but the new volume has the added edge of simply including much more. Among its advantages are the addition of previously untranslated essays; previously untranslated correspondence between Heidegger, Husserl, and others; the essential 1924 lecture 'The Concept of Time'; as well as other rare intellectual and biographical material. All twenty-two documents, along with the three appendices, editorial introductions, notes, bibliographies, and indices (not often available in Heidegger volumes), give this collection a much fuller account of the young Heidegger than has previously been available in a single volume. Altogether it provides a very useful compendium that is not only of academic interest but makes for entertaining reading as well.

As the title suggests, the book recounts the intellectual growth of Heidegger up until the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927. The collection is broken into three stages of his early career, beginning with his period as a graduate student followed by his first teaching stint in Freiburg and then later as a professor in Marburg. Though some of the correspondence creeps into Heidegger's second stage in Freiburg when he took over from Husserl following his retirement in 1928, the essays and documents in this volume chart only the early formative years.

The first part, 'Student Years, 1910-1917', consists of Heidegger's first publications in the fields of contemporary logic, medieval philosophy, and time. When Heidegger, late in his career, first published a collection of his early writings, *Frühe Schriften* (GA 1), he included only his 1913 doctoral dissertation 'The Doctrine of Judgment in Psychologism' and his 1915 habilitation dissertation 'The Doctrine of Categories and Meaning in Duns Scotus' (in a second edition two short essays would be added). Yet even if Heidegger felt that these writings alone were satisfactory for publication, recent archival discoveries have revealed a slightly more substantive body of work dating from this period. Despite this, however, Heidegger's earliest writings in logic and medieval philosophy are still among the least studied in Heidegger scholarship — mainly because the two dissertations noted above have not been easily accessible in English — so the nine short pieces from his student years provide a very good entry into his earliest philosophical concerns. Of

particular interest are the previously untranslated pieces, including a 1912 review essay, 'Recent Research in Logic', in which Husserl's *Logical Investigations* first appear for Heidegger as 'penetratingly profound' and with 'far-reaching significance' (33) in breaking the spell of psychologism. Also of note is a 1915 newspaper article, 'The War-Triduum in Messkirch', in which Heidegger submits the concept of meditation amidst his modern newspaper-reading peers. 'We moderns have in many ways lost sight of the simple', he informs his readers, but there is help to be found in meditation, 'the fathoming of sense (*Sinn*) down to its source and ground' (49). These short pieces do not disappoint.

The second part, 'Early Freiburg Period, 1919-1923', is dominated by two important albeit previously accessible essays: the critical review of Karl Jaspers' *Psychology of Worldviews* and 'Phenomenological Interpretations With Respect to Aristotle'. Perhaps more than anything else, however, this time period reveals how little Heidegger published during his early years as a lecturer, but how much he was developing as a philosopher. That he had published little since the completion of his habilitation is ultimately what precipitated the premature publication of the never-completed *Being and Time* in 1927. The story of these years, therefore, is more often than not the account of a young research assistant to Husserl who is known not through his writings but through his captivating lectures. This contrast is a common theme in many of the letters and academic evaluations found in the Appendices, particularly as Heidegger looks to secure his own position as professor. With not much to comment on by way of publications, discussion will often turn to his immense popularity as lecturer. For instance, in a letter of reference that Husserl wrote to Georg Misch in May 1922, he recounts how Heidegger's seminars draw an attendance beyond the usual cap of sixty to eighty students despite his dry lecturing style and the heavy demands he makes on his students. 'As a teacher', Husserl writes, 'Heidegger is already well known beyond Freiburg' (371). In many instances, Heidegger's lectures drew students away from Husserl, as in the case of Löwith who traveled to Freiburg in order to study with Husserl but ended up completing his dissertation under Heidegger. Löwith writes: 'His lecture was totally devoid of gesture and bombast. The one rhetorical device at his disposal, which he certainly did not forego, was an artful soberness and thesis-like rigor in the construction of his ideas' (426). By all accounts, his influence was certainly noteworthy, but it was not because of a flair for showy self-promotion. As much as people were captivated by his lectures, they were just as mystified by his personality, which frankly lacked any worldly popularism or friendly receptivity. Rather, students and colleagues were drawn by the clarity and radical freshness of his thinking. 'What I want in my teaching at the university is for human beings to *take action and become engaged*' (101), Heidegger writes in an early letter. His voice was a new one in philosophy, and this carries through his lectures just as much as it does in the few writings collected here.

The third part, 'Marburg Period, 1924-1928', provides a number of key essays and lectures, including 'The Concept of Time', 'Being-there and Be-

ing-True According to Aristotle', his essay on Dilthey, 'On the Essence of Truth (Pentecost Monday, 1926)', and a draft on 'phenomenology' that he and Husserl co-wrote for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. All but a few of these writings were delivered as talks and have survived as drafts in various states of completion. This takes nothing away from them, however, since each one provides insight into the stages of Heidegger's *Being and Time*. While 'The Concept of Time' and 'Wilhelm Dilthey's Research and the Current Struggle for a Historical Worldview' are without question essential reading — both provide dense yet accessible introductions to some of the main themes of *Being and Time* — it is the previously unpublished essays that are of interest in this volume. The talk on Aristotle was given to the Kant Society in Cologne — in the audience was Max Scheler, and a record of their brief question-and-answer exchange is included — and focuses on the Greek concept of truth, albeit as framed through his burgeoning philosophy of Dasein (the 'being-there' of the title). Keeping with the emphasis on being-true is the Pentecost Monday lecture, which informs our understanding of §44 of *Being and Time* and the disclosedness of Dasein's being-in-the-world. The Marburg period in particular informs our understanding of Heidegger's intellectual growth.

The final section of the book includes three appendices, one consisting of academic evaluations of Heidegger by his mentors and colleagues (i.e., 'letters of reference' for job applications), a lengthy appendix of correspondence between Heidegger, Husserl, and their associates, and a final appendix consisting of an illuminating, and at times scathing, 'fictional' account of Husserl ('Privy Councillor Endlich') and Heidegger ('Professor Ansorge') composed by Löwith in 1927. All of these appendices illuminate Heidegger's personality, which often lies concealed behind his writings. The editors have chosen compelling documents here and, as is the case with correspondences and reminiscences, they tell different and at times contradictory stories of the figures involved. In one such case, Heidegger privately revels in overcoming Husserl's rigid phenomenology while Husserl, at the very same time, extols his favored protégé to his colleagues. Heidegger, as a result, comes across as a dedicated professional but as a personally detached individual at the best of times. The appendices highlight this tension and 'the ambiguous discord pervading his life and thought' (426).

To round out the book, the editors have included a chronological overview of the courses that Heidegger took as a student and delivered as a junior faculty member, as well as an annotated glossary of some of the key concepts that Heidegger introduced. All of this encapsulates a very full book that is brimming with information. For some readers, not all of this information will seem necessary. Some will note that much of this material has been published before. This is true, though there is also much that hasn't appeared before, and not all in a single volume. Others may find that the editorial introductions to each document, right down to each letter, are too intrusive to the main material and clutter the overall appearance. In some cases, where the introductions are over half the length of the actual piece they introduce, these readers might be justified. Those not interested in the minutiae sur-

rounding each lecture, essay, or letter might feel overwhelmed by the wealth of details. But I did not feel this and believe that such editorial additions can easily be by-passed should one prefer to skip them. The guidance provided by Kisiel and Sheehan is particularly helpful in filling in biographical details that may not have been known otherwise. In short, they have managed to provide a more rounded picture. Their collection follows Heidegger's gradual movement through his early formative period in logic, Aristotelian ontology, and Scholasticism, through his associations with Husserl and phenomenology, and toward Heidegger's eventual break, both private and public, with his mentor. Implicit throughout is the maturation of his thinking that will eventually lead to *Being and Time*. For the moment, and I should think for some time to come, it stands as the best resource to Heidegger's early essays.

**Brett Buchanan**

Laurentian University

**Charles Larmore**

*The Autonomy of Morality.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2008.

Pp. 290.

US\$85.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-88913-1);

US\$24.99 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-521-71782-3).

This is a collection of ten essays and an introduction. Nine of the essays are revisions of previously published papers. Chapter 5, 'The Autonomy of Morality' is in print for the first time. Larmore continues to develop a line of thought defended in earlier work, most notably, *The Morals of Modernity*. His central theses include: liberal values must be defended as part of a moral doctrine; historical context is essential to understanding the content of and justification for liberal values; autonomy is not the source of moral norms; liberals should affirm externalism about theoretical and practical reason; and human flourishing has less to do with having a rational life plan than is typically claimed within the philosophical tradition.

There are many facets to Larmore's ambitious project. The most prominent is his attempt to provide an alternative to the Kantian liberalism which dominates contemporary liberal theory. This alternative consists of a moral realism that is conjoined to a contextualist epistemology. On Larmore's view, claims about value purport to be true and some are in fact true, including claims about basic liberal principles. Thus he objects to the pragmatism of Rorty as well as the freestanding political liberalism that Rawls advocates.

He asks: 'If we justify a view not only to our own satisfaction but also in a way that others find convincing, have we not all the more reason to think that it is true?' (28). At the same time, Larmore insists that '[a]ll our thinking is shaped by our historical context' (1). Values do not depend on agents; we discover instead of create them. Yet knowledge about values is shaped by historical and cultural context; our access to values is thus contextual.

Chapter 5, 'The Autonomy of Morality' presents the central thesis of the book. Larmore presents an alternative to the familiar Kantian thesis that moral reasons are self-authorized products of free and rational deliberation. His chief target in this chapter is Christine Korsgaard, whose *Sources of Normativity* presents a paradigm example of contemporary Kantian moral theory (112). Moral reasons are, on Larmore's view, discovered rather than legislated (110). Larmore's realism about reasons is expressed by his claim that '(a) reason is the possible object of a belief and not itself a mental state' (125). On this view, our moral competence consists of being able to discern features of our own and others' interests. This competence is acquired by initiation into a moral practice; luck and circumstance play a major role in determining whether one is initiated into the moral life; yet reason does not constitute the moral point of view. Larmore's conception of rationality is nicely stated in Chapter 2, 'Back to Kant? No Way': 'I believe, we must conclude, in a very un-Kantian spirit, that reason is a *receptive* faculty. It is the capacity to recognize and heed the independent validity of reasons' (44).

Chapter 6, 'The Moral Basis of Political Liberalism', presents an alternative to the Rawlsian and Habermasian conceptions of liberalism. Rawls defends a freestanding political liberalism that purports to be neutral towards all reasonable comprehensive doctrines. Larmore insists that liberalism requires a moral foundation in the ideal of *respect for persons*. 'Respect for persons must be considered as a norm binding on us independently of our will as citizens, enjoying a moral authority that we have not fashioned ourselves' (150). This conception of liberalism still qualifies as a version of political liberalism, however, because it does not espouse a comprehensive theory of human nature. Liberalism is a moral doctrine based on the ideal of respect for persons, and respect for persons is a norm that binds us because there are no alternative bases for liberal values in the modern world. Habermas also fails to grant moral respect the central role it deserves within liberal theory. On Larmore's view, Habermas' claim that human rights and popular sovereignty are co-original, such that neither is prior to the other, does not really fit Habermas' general conception of liberalism. Habermas in fact privileges self-rule over inalienable rights and thus privileges a feature of liberalism — popular sovereignty — that is in tension with a more central feature of liberalism — justice (154). Larmore's objection to Habermasian liberalism comes down to the conviction that liberalism's core value is a moral principle of respect which is presupposed by rather than a result of legitimate democratic procedures.

In developing his realism and contextualism, Larmore devotes a lot of criticism to Rawls, Habermas, and Korsgaard. Yet he spares no criticism for

those committed to a conception of rationality similar to his own. Chapter 3, 'Attending to Reasons', is a critical review of McDowell's *Mind and World*. Larmore agrees with McDowell's claim that making sense of normativity requires an explanation of the mind's capacity for receptivity to reasons. Yet McDowell is unwilling to embark on an attempt to characterize the nature of what it is that our minds are receptive to. Larmore claims that McDowell thereby fails to deliver a satisfactory account of how experience is 'truly a tribunal for belief' (62).

The final chapter, 'The Idea of a Life Plan', is arguably the most provocative. Larmore takes on what he claims is an unwarranted prejudice in the philosophical tradition, namely, that human flourishing is largely determined by whether an agent's life is guided by a rational plan. The roots of this idea are longstanding. Rawls' account, in *A Theory of Justice*, of a conception of deliberative rationality — i.e., an agent's good is identified by a process of rational reflection under idealized conditions — offers a recent defense of a position that was affirmed by the Greek rationalists (253). In developing his alternative, Larmore appeals to a view about the human condition: '(t)he idea that life should be the object of a plan is false to the reality of the human condition' (246). The prevailing view presupposes that a rational agent can apprehend goods that make life worth living 'prior to . . . actually living a life' (269). Larmore claims that this is false; agents do not have advance knowledge of all the goods that will enable them to flourish. The traditional view underemphasizes the role of unanticipated discoveries about the good life.

Larmore is not advocating irrationalism. Nor does he claim that agents that aspire to develop a rational plan will diminish their chances of leading a good life. In fact, his critique of the standard conception of a rational life plan is what we should expect from an externalist about value. For if value is something to which reason responds and does not create, then the values that make a life worth living are discovered rather than made.

Much of this book is presented as a survey of the intellectual landscape of liberalism and its relation to contemporary theories of rationality. Readers who look forward to a survey of ideas that animate large swaths of contemporary philosophy will enjoy this book. Readers who demand careful and detailed arguments in favor of such positions as externalism about reasons and moral realism can complain that many of Larmore's targets — e.g., Rawls, Habermas, Korsgaard and McDowell — for all their faults are more sensitive to details than is Larmore. Many readers of both stripes will concur that Larmore has made the case that philosophy is 'subject to a law we might call "*the conservation of trouble*"' (48).

**Jon Mahoney**

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**Michael Lewis**

*Heidegger Beyond Deconstruction: On Nature.*

New York: Continuum 2008.

Pp. 184.

US\$120.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-9779-6).

The obscurity and devastation of nature is one of the many problems which this book, almost a manifesto, addresses, along with investigations into the origins of man, the nature of things, the origin of consciousness, and the history of technology. The four thinkers discussed to elucidate these matters, besides Heidegger himself, are Lacan, Levinas, Žižek, and Marx. Lewis' counter-deconstructive intention is to reclaim Heidegger from Derrida (7) and from anthropocentric metaphysics.

Lewis does not make a standard pragmatic ecological case for taking care of 'the environment', and he offers no means of avoiding the apocalyptic collapse and self-revelation of our civilization he foresees when nature will give way and collapse under pressure of man's exploitation. Lewis points to Žižek, Marx, and Heidegger as thinkers who refused or refuse to intervene and to give direct commitment to politics (112). Žižek observes the course of history, seeing its iron necessity, yet refuses to offer a pragmatic counsel because he cannot do so without compromising the purity of his motives, the strength of desire, or his unacceptable though convincing insights. At any rate, following history's course, we see that if a collapse and catastrophe are coming, then actions to avert them by means of technological interventions or methods are pointless. Technology is said to be ruining the earth and to have reached an extreme limit. Soon, 'technology will have achieved the ultimate darkening of the earth' (68), and Lewis suggests no remedy, but rather, a recognition of what is happening at this point of history, and what, obscured for so long, may once more reappear. He writes so that we do not forget nature or put it from our mind at the decisive moment of revelation (4).

One of Lewis' many theses in the book, perhaps the central one, is that the Thing, a specially formed human artifact which was created as a response to the demands of being, and deeply rooted in nature, is the point around which our world appears as a world. In the first of four chapters on four different thinkers who can make Heidegger's ideas on nature and the Thing clearer to us, Lewis reads *Being and Time* with the aid of the ideas of Lacan, indicating, in a style which is far easier than Heidegger's own, that the question of being is the question of how a world arises, and how it becomes significant. This is a matter of the 'ground of signification' (11). As he shows, Heidegger found that Dasein, the subjective consciousness, gave meaning to beings by opening them up with its own openness so that, in effect, being was bestowed by the human subject. Particularly due to the events of 1933, Heidegger shifted his focus later in his life onto the Thing, something made by man which, full of the effect of being, lets other beings appear. This "Thing", by drawing on nature, lets beings be, bringing world, man, god and earth into the harmony of the Fourfold (35). In the Thing's character of object which opens up other

things, to let them exist and be gathered, for example in a jug (the typical earliest evidence of human culture), we also see a kind of empty void. Lewis holds that this void is an emptiness in which we glimpse being (78). In its emptiness it presents nature.

Origins, grounds, subjectivity, and things around which other things 'gather' are concepts which Derrida and his 'deconstruction' contested. Lewis writes in Chapter 2 that Levinas was anthropomorphic in his thought and his dismissal of Heidegger (81), and by arguing against Levinas, Lewis believes he can defend Heidegger against both Levinas' and Derrida's deconstruction. The defense rehearses arguments already made by Derrida himself in 'Violence and Metaphysics' in order to criticize Levinas. The mistake of using Derrida's own critique of Levinas as if Derrida had never himself known that he had made it is symptomatic of a general inattention in Lewis' reading. But Lewis is anxious to defend Heidegger against both Levinas and Žižek because these two had kept their distance, believing that Heidegger's ontology led in a direct way to Nazi politics. Lewis shows in Chapter 4 that, on the contrary, Heidegger's thought can have an emancipatory value for man and nature, and that it does not by any means result in a Nazi politics.

The re-evaluation of Marx which takes place in Chapter 4 is interesting, and significantly takes the place of a conclusion. The book ends with a political rejection of liberalism and capitalism — not in the name of the proletariat, but in the name of nature. In a valuable study of Heidegger's comments on Marx in the 'Letter on Humanism' of 1946, he points out that, according to Heidegger, Marx is the unavoidable historical philosophy of our time because Marx had a sense of our alienation and homelessness, and saw that this alienation is determinative of our existence (134).

Marx' man aims to return to a natural state without thereby becoming an animal. Man has to work to regain possession of himself because there is delay between himself and his satisfaction of himself. Thereby philosophy, politics, and history continually aim at returning to nature (139). Nature is thought of as the absolute Other which was left behind when men began to work (137). Over his history, man has moved further from it, and gradually gained mastery over it, though increasing his distance both from it, and from himself. Lewis proposes a neo-Marxist view of this history in which, just as the proletariat were expected by Marx to revolt, so nature will do so, and do so as part of historical necessity. It is for philosophy to watch and observe this, bearing in mind what to observe, and to hold onto the correct way of thinking (151).

This appears to be a personal book, emanating from a difficult love-affair with philosophical ideas that are generally unwelcome in philosophy departments in England. The author seems to say so himself (180). Despite faults, the book has a redeeming objective: it seeks to focus on nature rather than on human being in response to the exceptionality of a crisis.

**Jason Powell**

**Stephen Mulhall**

*The Wounded Animal:*

*J.M. Coetzee and the Difficulty of Reality in  
Literature and Philosophy.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2009.

Pp. 272.

US\$75.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-691-13736-0);

US\$26.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-691-13737-7).

This is a marvelous book. It gives a close, thoughtful reading of J. M. Coetzee's fiction, a reading that is rich in philosophical substance. It also grapples with much larger questions: how philosophy is related to literature, how both enterprises are linked to modernism in the arts, and ultimately, what goals philosophers today ought to have. This ability to balance the fine-grained and the sweeping is one of the reasons Mulhall is among the most interesting philosophers working today.

The book's first half focuses on a reading that Coetzee gave at Princeton University in 1997. Coetzee was invited to Princeton to give the Tanner Lectures on Human Values. Rather than giving a conventional lecture, however, he read two short stories about a fictional novelist named Elizabeth Costello. (The stories later appeared, with additional material, in the novel *Elizabeth Costello*.) In these stories, Costello — who shares striking similarities with Coetzee himself — travels to fictional Appleton College to lecture on the mistreatment of nonhuman animals. The stories present Costello as a 'wounded animal'. This phrase comes from Kafka's 'Report to an Academy', in which an ape named Red Peter — injured by a hunter's 'wanton shot' (55) — lectures on his assimilation into European culture. Costello identifies with Red Peter since, as a novelist addressing academics, she also feels out of place. More importantly, she feels 'branded or marked, wounded' (55) by her knowledge of animal suffering. It pains her to know that animals are being harmed all around her, and she fails to understand why other people are not similarly pained. She cannot help thinking that 'most of the people she encounters in the world are morally insane, or psychically wounded, with polluted souls' (57). The stories explore how Costello's wound disrupts her life, leading her to antagonize her hosts at Appleton, and complicating her relationship with her children.

When Coetzee gave the Tanner Lectures, several prominent philosophers commented on them. Their comments tended to treat Coetzee's reading 'as a frame or container for philosophical arguments' (22). Amy Guttmann, for example, attributed two arguments to Coetzee: a 'critique of philosophy's supposed tendency to privilege the mind over the heart' (22), and an analogy between the human treatment of animals and the Nazi treatment of Jews. Her fellow commentator Peter Singer did likewise: he responded with a short story of his own in which a philosopher named Peter discusses Costello's arguments with his daughter. Guttmann and Singer apparently assumed

that a literary work's relevance for philosophy 'can be at once demonstrated and exhausted by identifying and abstracting from it a sequence of self-contained elements that uncontroversially fall under an essentially uncontroversial category called "arguments" ' (22). Mulhall sees this strategy as flawed, since it 'directs us away from both the literariness and the concrete responsiveness that are jointly essential to Costello's stance' (23). According to Mulhall, literary works in general, and Coetzee's stories in particular, are not ersatz arguments. If Coetzee's stories are philosophically interesting, it is because they *show* us something: namely, 'the necessary embeddedness of any set of ideals in reality' (161). They reveal philosophical arguments to be 'embodied in a variety of ways to which they should not be reduced, but by which they are significantly conditioned, and often in tangled, mutually conflicting ways' (183). This is not a trivial point. Arguments can be embodied and entangled so severely as to 'complicate evaluation to the point of putting definitive conclusions beyond our reach' (183).

It is significant that these lessons are taught through stories dealing with animals. Mulhall thinks that our tendency to see literary works as mere vehicles for arguments is closely linked to another tendency: that of viewing animals as potential containers for some morally significant property. Philosophers often claim that nonhuman animals deserve our moral consideration because they possess some property humans also possess — sentience, for example. These philosophers assume that 'a creature's credentials for claiming a status undeniably attributable to human beings must be grounded on their possession of a certain metaphysical property or capacity' (44). As Mulhall sees it, both tendencies embody a distressing move away from the concreteness of our forms of life. Moral thinking must be responsive to this concreteness, and so must involve much more than 'valid inference . . . Our moral thinking (and our thinking more generally) can also be sentimental, shallow, cheap, or brutal, in itself, as such; and we cannot identify such failures of thinking except by utilizing our own affective responses to them' (9). By the same token, reading a literary work philosophically involves much more than looking for arguments. It involves seeing things that become visible only when our affective responses are engaged. It is therefore unnecessary for philosophers to construct abstract arguments demonstrating why the head should care about the heart. On the contrary, 'complete detachment from the heart (is) one way in which thinking can exhibit deficiency qua thinking' (6). These claims seem to be informed by a broadly Heideggerian picture of human existence, one in which our thinking is conditioned by its status as a founded mode of our being in the world. Mulhall goes so far as to suggest that this picture gives a better explanation of animals' moral status than do competing positions. Other people matter to us because they are fellow creatures with whom we share a form of life; similarly, 'nonhuman animals, too, can be seen as our fellow creatures in a different but related sense of that term' (32).

The second half of the book consists of a more wide-ranging discussion of Coetzee's work, a discussion framed by the notion of modernism. Coetzee's

writings are clearly modernist in some sense, but Mulhall asks us to think carefully about what this means. Modernism is often contrasted with realism. Traditional novels, the story goes, try to depict reality faithfully, while modernist novels 'subject their inheritance of realistic conventions to critical questioning' (145). In Mulhall's view, however, there is no antithesis between realism and modernism. The novel has *always* been 'antigenericist' (142); it has always rejected older literary conventions in order to depict the world more realistically. The modernist novel simply continues this practice. Literary modernism is born from a conviction that 'human embodiment exceeds the grasp . . . of all human sense-making systems' (202), including the sense-making system we call literature. But modernism represents this fact *by enacting it*: that is, by making the excess manifest within literary texts themselves. Modernist texts thereby strive to offer a fuller, more 'realistic' picture of the human condition than do more traditional literary works. Mulhall argues convincingly that a realistic modernism runs through *Elizabeth Costello* and helps explain its distinctive features, especially its fragmented, episodic structure. He also draws intriguing parallels between Coetzee's modernist realism and the state of philosophy today. Mulhall suggests that an important task for contemporary philosophers is to ask how philosophy might be 'both realist and modernist — committed to achieving a lucid grasp of reality, and willing to put in question any prevailing philosophical conventions concerning that enterprise that appear at present to block or subvert its progress' (252). What is in question here is how philosophy might relentlessly criticize its own claims and procedures, despite — and in fact because of — its desire to grasp reality properly. Mulhall has raised similar questions before, notably in *Inheritance and Originality*. But his discussion of it here is fresh and important.

Mulhall asks a lot of his readers, but he asks even more of himself. He resists the temptation to give a pat, stand-alone theory of how theories are embedded in forms of life. Instead, he writes in a way that embodies his position. Mulhall presents himself as entangled in a long conversation about the competing claims of philosophy and literature, a conversation in which Plato and Kafka, Thomas Nagel and Onora O'Neill are all participants. This strategy is sometimes dizzying, as it forces us to navigate readings of readings of readings. It is easy to get lost while trying to determine what Mulhall thinks about Stanley Cavell's discussion of Cora Diamond's reading of Coetzee. Given Mulhall's position, however, 'embedded argumentation' (33) *is the only strategy available. It also gives Mulhall the opportunity to make fascinating asides about a wide range of thinkers.* The brief discussion of Heidegger in Chapter 6, for example, is among the best parts of the book. So while Mulhall leaves many issues unresolved, to complain about this would be to miss the point. This book not only makes a compelling case that certain problems are harder to solve than we might think; it suggests that the desire for neat solutions is one we would do well to abandon. Crucially, however, it insists that abandoning this desire — and so acknowledging the 'diffi-

culty of reality' (70) — is not a refusal of philosophy. It is a way of pursuing philosophy's deepest aims.

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**Yujin Nagasawa**

*God and Phenomenal Consciousness:*

*A Novel Approach to Knowledge Arguments.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2008.

Pp. 162.

US\$85.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-521-87966-8).

Knowledge arguments derive ontological conclusions from epistemological premises. In this book Nagasawa critiques knowledge arguments against traditional theism and physicalism.

In his first chapter, which constitutes Part 1, Nagasawa introduces the arguments he will examine, making a case for regarding them as knowledge arguments. The second part of the book consists of three chapters on knowledge arguments in philosophy of religion. Nagasawa first examines Patrick Grim's argument against traditional theism from knowledge *de se*. Grim argues that no one, including God, can have knowledge *de se* of another person. Ergo, divine omniscience is not omniscience *simpliciter*. So God does not exist (17-18). Nagasawa's strategy in response to the argument is first to restate statements about divine omniscience in terms of epistemic powers. Epistemic powers *qua* powers are subsumed by omnipotence. On the most widely accepted view of divine omnipotence, God's failing to be able to do what is necessarily impossible to do does not undermine divine omnipotence. If God could know what another person knows in having knowledge *de se*, then God would be that person. But since God is distinct from that person, it is necessarily impossible for God to have the epistemic power necessary to have such knowledge. This does not undermine God's omnipotence. So Grim's argument fails (21-5).

Nagasawa next critiques versions of the argument from concept possession against theism. Versions of the argument assume the truth of concept empiricism on which full understanding of a concept requires that one have a relevant experience. The argument attempts to show that God cannot exist from premises about God's attributes. Specifically, divine omniscience is not omniscience *simpliciter* because the other attributes of God (e.g., om-

nipotence) preclude God's fully understanding certain concepts such as fear, despair and frustration (36-7). Therefore, God does not exist.

In his reply, Nagasawa first critiques concept empiricism. He argues that, 'the standard version of the argument from concept possession is vulnerable to the traditional counterexamples to empiricism' (72). He considers a modified version of the argument that relies on having the *ability* to have certain experiences without actually having them, and he argues that the modified argument 'fails to show that God cannot comprehend fully what fear is' (72). Assuming that divine knowledge is non-discursive and 'intuitive', Nagasawa claims that, 'God can just intuit what fear is accurately without possessing or exercising an ability to fear' (71).

While Nagasawa's reply is provocative, I find it difficult to understand how anyone could simply intuit what fear is and fully understand the concept without at least being able to experience fear. This is not to suggest that concepts are abilities. But full understanding of some concepts might reasonably be thought to require certain abilities. So fully understanding a concept like fear, i.e., being able to accurately use the concept of fear to describe a state of mind, may require that one can actually experience fear. I fail to see how an omnipotent God could do this, and how appeals to 'intuitive' knowledge are satisfying.

Part 3 of the book focuses on knowledge arguments in philosophy of mind. Thomas Nagel's bat argument is considered first. Nagasawa argues that there are two arguments, the first of which goes from the premise that if something is not a bat-type creature it cannot have a bat's point of view, to the conclusion that Nagel, not being such a creature, cannot know what it is like to be a bat. The second argument goes from the premise that anyone who is physically omniscient about bats is omniscient *simpliciter* about bats, to the conclusion that because Nagel cannot know what it is like to be a bat, he cannot be omniscient *simpliciter* about bats. Nagasawa's strategy in response to this argument is similar to his reply to Grim's knowledge *de se* argument against theism. He claims that Nagel 'tries to derive an apparent difficulty for physicalism by appealing to a necessary impossibility' (98). Nagasawa argues that the requirement that a person *qua* non-bat-type creature know what it is like to be a bat is a pseudo-task. The inability to do such a necessarily impossible task does not result in a loss of epistemic power, any more than God's inability to have knowledge *de se* about what is going on in my mind diminishes God's epistemic power.

Nagasawa devotes two chapters to Jackson's Mary argument. First, he introduces the argument and considers responses that he argues fail and then offers his own argument against it. Interestingly, he argues that the Mary argument is not good news for dualists, 'because if it *were* successful in undermining physicalism, it would be equally successful in undermining at least one form of dualism' (115). The Mary argument goes from the premise that Mary, a scientist whose experiences have only been in black and white, is physically omniscient about humans, to the claim that physical omniscience is not omniscience *simpliciter*, since Mary learns something new when she

sees a red tomato for the first time. Nagasawa's response to the argument breaks from many past responses that grant that Mary has complete propositional knowledge but lacks knowledge by acquaintance or knowledge how. Rather, he denies that Mary can be physically omniscient on the basis of what can be learned through textbooks and television. Even if Mary knows the complete physical theory that describes the physical world, 'she still does not know the ultimate reality of the physical nature of the world because she does not know how the fundamental properties are arranged' (128).

The final section of the book concludes on a speculative note. While he endorses versions of both physicalism and theism, Nagasawa says little in defense of either or in defense of their compatibility. But he claims that some version of theism is compatible with 'nontheoretical physicalism'. Nontheoretical physicalism differs from standard physicalism in denying that theoretically communicable physical omniscience is physical omniscience, while holding that physical omniscience is omniscience *simpliciter* and requires 'an instantiation of extraordinary epistemic powers to intuit relevant propositions' (136). Unfortunately, his defense of nontheoretical physicalism is brief, and the extension to a version of theism with which it may be compatible is even quicker.

Anyone interested in knowledge arguments will find much of value in this volume. The arguments are original and rigorous, and the prose is clear and precise. It deserves the attention of both philosophers of mind and philosophers of religion.

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**Susana Nuccetelli and Gary Seay, eds.**

*Themes from G. E. Moore:*

*New Essays in Epistemology and Ethics.*

New York: Oxford University Press 2007.

Pp. 348.

US\$90.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-19-928172-5).

Nuccetelli and Seay have produced a very useful collection of new essays on Moore's epistemology and ethics, adding to the growing list of titles devoted to perhaps the most neglected of the recognized fathers of the analytic tradition. This volume serves as a very good indicator of the current state of play

in Moore scholarship. As the title suggests, the collection is divided into two parts, the first devoted to themes in Moore's epistemology, the second to his ethics.

The collection opens with three papers on Moore's infamous proof of an external world. Crispin Wright starts off by taking issue with James Pryor and Martin Davies who have recently employed a relaxed notion of epistemic warrant in their attempts to resurrect Moore's argument. On their 'liberal' view, Moore does not beg any questions in the course of the argument because one does *not* need a prior reason to believe that sense-experience has evidential force in order to accept Moore's initial premise. For the assertion 'Here is a hand' to be warranted, they say, all that is required is that one lack any reason to disbelieve it. Wright argues that these dogmatic reconstructions of the argument ultimately fail if they are meant to address the concerns of those still engaged in what he calls the Traditional Epistemological Project. But as Ernest Sosa points out in the next chapter, the argument was intended not as a refutation of external world skepticism, but as a challenge to idealism. Sosa maintains that the argument does establish what he calls 'animal knowledge' of the intended anti-idealistic conclusion, but ultimately fails to provide 'reflective knowledge' of the same. Finally, Ram Neta employs the distinction between persuasive proofs and display proofs to save Moore's blushes, suggesting that Moore's argument is meant only to display knowledge we already have, rather than transmit a warrant from the premises to the conclusion. However, none of these papers asks perhaps the most puzzling question about Moore's proof of an external world. Moore maintains that common sense beliefs neither require nor are capable of proof. So why does Moore try to provide a proof for something which by his own lights cannot be, nor need be, proven? This question arises whether one takes the intended target of the argument to be skepticism or idealism.

In the next two papers William Lycan and C. A. J. Coady focus more broadly on Moore's anti-skeptical strategies, the attention eventually settling on Moore's important differential certainty argument. It is a shame that this argument receives relatively little sustained discussion in this collection, since it is the best argument Moore provides for his commitment to common sense. Lycan and Coady recognize this, but neither has space to build on this insight at sufficient length.

The final three papers in this section deal with other aspects of Moore's epistemology. Paul Snowdon points out, correctly, that Moore has little to teach us about the nature of perception, despite the sustained attention this received throughout his career. More promisingly, Michael Huemer shows how reflection on Moore's paradoxes (statements of the form 'P but I don't believe that P') can help in our efforts to provide an analysis on knowledge, the first casualty of the exercise being Nozick's counter-factual tracking condition. He also suggests that many traditional skeptical arguments rely on assumptions regarding knowledge — assumptions that Moore's paradoxes can show to be misguided. Finally, Roy Sorensen employs the same paradoxes to throw light on the nature of assertion, his target being the

coherence of post-mortem assertions which have been characterized as deferred utterances.

The section devoted to ethics opens with Stephen Darwall's study on the comparative merits of Sidgwick and Moore on the issue of the fundamental concept underlying all ethical judgments. Moore maintained that all ethics is based on the notion of *good* at the level of concepts, while Sidgwick argues that the fundamental notion is the *normativity* implicit in our attempts to justify our attitudes. Darwall contends that both hold unsupportable views on this matter, but that Sidgwick is preferable to Moore. Terry Horgan and Mark Timmons then show how Moore's ethics can be useful in the development of a moral phenomenology. They claim that an account of the what-it-is-likeness of concrete moral experience is important because normative and metaethical theories ought to be grounded at least in part in such a phenomenology of moral experience. This is an important and exciting project; but it is undercut somewhat by the authors' subsequent insistence that the phenomenology they begin to develop is neutral with respect to the realist dispute in metaethics. A more positive conclusion drawn on the strength of their phenomenological insights would have been welcome.

There then follow three papers on Moore's Open Question Argument (OQA). As this set of papers illustrates, there is no consensus as yet on how this argument is best construed. What is uncontroversial is that Moore claims that the term 'good' cannot be defined, and *a fortiori* cannot be defined using any non-moral terms. He justifies this claim by pointing out that it is always an open question as to whether what is good really is desirable, say, and that this would not be the case if 'good' really were definable by 'desirable'. What is controversial is precisely what, if anything, can be inferred from this semantic point. The common view has been that Moore claims that the semantic point has ontological implications, namely that good making properties cannot be identical to any natural properties. Richard Fumerton maintains that, if this is what Moore was trying to establish, there is no good version of the argument, but that it is valuable nonetheless because it forces one to consider fundamental metaphilosophical questions about the nature of analysis. Charles Pigden, on the other hand, argues that Moore has two arguments for the view that 'good' denotes a non-natural property: the Barren Tautology Argument derived from Sidgwick, and the OQA proper, which was Moore's invention. Pigden maintains that the OQA is sound when revised to take account of the synthetic identity of some properties. Nuccetelli and Seay continue in this supportive vein, arguing that there are two versions of the OQA, the first targeting semantic naturalism, the second metaphysical naturalism, and that both are successful. These papers show that there is still mileage left in the OQA, but perhaps the most important question remains one of interpretation: Is there a successful version (or versions) of the OQA that has ontological implications, or does it merely establish a semantic point? Fumerton is right that the OQA leads directly to important methodological questions concerning the nature of analysis.

Robert Shaver then offers a defense of non-naturalism, arguing that it is not metaphysically or epistemologically extravagant, as usually maintained. Nor is it fair to say, as many have, that non-naturalism contributes nothing to metaethical theory. Shaver argues that this objection presupposes that there are problems which naturalism is meant to solve. Shaver maintains that there simply are no such problems, and so the objection fails. Shaver's case is persuasive; but, as he recognizes, it comes at the cost of depriving non-naturalism of much of its interest. Shaver's non-naturalism does not advance exciting ontological views, but rather more modest epistemological claims regarding the self-evidence of certain moral judgments.

This section along with the collection ends with two further contributions. Joshua Gert offers a reworking of Moore's key ethical doctrines, maintaining that most can be defended. However, he argues that Moore's doctrines are inconsistent. He maintains that if Moore is right that 'good' names an unanalyzable property, that there is a diversity of things which are in fact good, that anything which is intrinsically good is always intrinsically good to the same degree, that intrinsic goodness depends only on the intrinsic nature of that which possesses it, and that we cannot calculate the value of the whole by adding up the value of its parts; then he ought to reject the utilitarian view that the right action is the one that will produce the most good. Jonathan Dancy then revisits Moore's fascinating account of vindictive punishment, claiming that it serves as a test case for two views on the question of part/whole relations as these pertain to the calculation of intrinsic value. Moore maintains, while Dancy wishes to deny, that it is impossible for one and the same thing to possess a kind or degree of value in one circumstance and not possess the same value to the same degree in another.

This brief overview does not do justice to the full range of issues that receive a well-deserved airing in this collection. The editors are surely right that a 'revisionist consensus' is emerging according to which Moore is seen not simply as an influential figure whose best arguments were eventually rejected, but as a philosopher whose ideas and methods have enduring value, despite having passed from favor for much of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A final point about the collection as a whole. The editors rightly point out that Moore is best remembered for his work in epistemology, ethics, and philosophical method. It is a shame, therefore, that the collection focuses on only the first two aspects of his thought, with remarks on method appearing only in passing. Of course, one collection cannot cover everything, and editors have to make decisions based on their interests and the available papers; but something on his philosophical method and meta-philosophy would have been welcome, particularly since they shape his thought in other areas. The editors are fully aware of this, and indeed they raise some pointed questions about Moore's method. In particular they point out that Moore's commitment to common sense raises some obvious questions: 1) What precisely are the elements of a common sense view of the world? and 2) Why should we believe that common sense beliefs are true? Since every-

one agrees that Moore did not adequately answer these questions himself, it would have been fascinating to see some contemporary efforts to make Moore's case for him. In fact, without such a case, one might suspect that the newly rediscovered interest in other aspects of Moore's work will ultimately prove short lived.

**Stephen Boulter**

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**Pauline Phemister, ed.**

*John Locke: An Essay concerning  
Human Understanding.*

Toronto and New York: Oxford University  
Press 2008.

Pp. 576.

Cdn\$21.95/US\$17.95

(paper ISBN-13: 978-0-19-929662-0).

Oxford World Classics offers yet another abridgment of Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. Do we really need another? Yes, when it's as well done as Phemister's. When compared to Nidditch's critical edition (Clarendon Press 1975) and the available non-critical editions, Phemister's stands up quite well.

The text is based on Nidditch's, which followed the fourth edition (1700), the last to be published during Locke's lifetime. It's lightly abridged, with only about ten per cent of Locke's text excised. Rarely have whole sections been dropped. Instead, Phemister truncated many sections. (Beware: she refused to signal omissions.) The dropped material consists largely of Locke's illustrations, references to 'travel literature' and citations, alternative explanations or restatements of an argument, and chapter summaries. Packaged with the text are a thirty-five-page introduction, a select bibliography, a chronology of Locke's career, and a large set of quite useful explanatory notes. But most significantly, Phemister also included many of the footnotes from the *Essay's* fifth edition (1706). Although Locke did make some changes to the fifth edition, he probably did not authorize the inclusion of the footnotes, which consist largely of passages taken from his 1697-98 correspondence with Bishop Stillingfleet. Nonetheless, the footnotes are Locke's own words, indeed often his final words, on current topics of philosophical and scholarly interest: the legitimacy of the idea of substance; skepticism

and the possibility of the reality of knowledge; sensitive knowledge; the doctrine of real essences; the possibility of thinking matter; etc.. The value of their inclusion lies in the relative inaccessibility of Locke's correspondence with Stillingfleet. There is no modern edition and not many libraries own *The Works of John Locke* wherein it is reprinted. Although no substitute for the whole, Phemister's inclusions (thirty-two pages worth) are a valuable resource.

But why buy this edition rather than Nidditch's or one of the others? For historians of philosophy, Phemister's is no substitute for Nidditch. Philosophers exploring Lockean themes, however, might prefer Phemister's edition because of the abridging, but because so little is abridged, the gain seems slight. Yet, relative to the non-critical editions, Phemister's clearly ought to be their choice. It is better than Woolhouse's (Penguin Classics 1997) and Ott's (Barnes and Noble 2004) because it is based on Nidditch rather than a modernized fifth edition or Alexander Fraser's nineteenth-century edition. It ought to be preferred over Fuller, Stecker, and Wright's (Routledge 2000), which omits over seventy-five per cent of the text, simply because so much more of Locke's thought is retained. And it ought to be preferred over Winkler's (Hackett 1996) popular abridgment for both reasons. Winkler cut away a sizeable portion of Locke's text (approximately 60%), including much philosophically significant material (e.g., I.iii.7-8, 21, 23, and 26; II.xxix.3, 5-9, and 12; III.v.4-6, 9-11, and 13-15; IV.iv.13-17; all of IV.xix, 'Of Enthusiasm'; etc.). And Winkler's is a partially modernized fourth edition containing in addition the fifth edition additions to II.xxi, 'Of Power'.

Considered for classroom use, it is less obvious that Phemister's is preferable to Winkler's (the usual choice) edition. For surveys, where Locke is studied for only a few weeks, Winkler's slimmer abridgment is probably preferable. But for courses wholly devoted to the *Essay*, the reverse seems true. First, there is considerably less loss of philosophical content in Phemister's abridgment. Second, Phemister's introduction is clearly superior. It is conventional in its scope and content, with subsections devoted to Locke's life, the *Essay*'s composition, innatism, ideas, qualities, substances, language, general terms and abstraction, real and nominal essences, knowledge, certainty, the extent of knowledge, and the *Essay*'s legacy. But, befitting a more massive abridgment, it is much more detailed than Winkler's. Yet it is Phemister's contextualization that really stands out here. She identifies the intellectual background and connects Locke's thought to that of his contemporaries, including some lesser-knowns like Malebranche, Arnauld, Norris, and Reid, among others. Third, Phemister's explanatory notes are more extensive and helpful than Winkler's glossary and notes, going beyond his biographical details, translations of Greek and Latin, and citations of Biblical passages. Finally, I prefer the unmodernized text. The argument for modernizing is that students can't handle the orthographic irregularities of seventeenth-century English. That seems specious, however; working through that is far less taxing than the difficulties the philosophical ideas themselves present, and students expected to be able to wade through the latter ought

to be able to wade through the former. Wherever possible, I prefer that my students read the original.

Much as I like Phemister's edition, there are points to criticize. In her introduction, for example, nothing is said about judgment or religious faith, which comprise the latter third of Book IV. And no connections were drawn between the *Essay's* contents and religious toleration, despite its emphasis in Phemister's description of the intellectual background and the scholarly consensus that Locke's project was motivated by the question of toleration and that its aim is to prepare the ground for his arguments for toleration. The abridgment is criticizable too. Occasionally material not merely redundant or insignificant is omitted. For example, in II.xiii.2 Phemister retains 'I shall begin with the *simple Idea of Space*. I have shewed above, *c.4*. that we get the *Idea* of Space, both by our Sight, and Touch,' and omits 'which, I think, is so evident, that it would be as needless, to go to prove, that Men perceive, by their sight, a distance between Bodies of different Colours, or between parts of the same Body; as that they see Colors themselves: Nor is it less obvious, that they can do so in the Dark by Feeling and Touch.' Unfortunately, II.iv does not provide any empirical derivation of the simple idea of space. Locke probably had II.iv.3 in mind, but there the idea of space derives from a thought-experiment concerning the possibility of motion. This is an important point because Berkeley made so much out of the lack of a perception of space. In the omitted material Locke clearly asserted that we do perceive space, which readers of Phemister's edition might not realize. But such significant omissions are rare, and overall Phemister is to be commended for her careful and judicious editing.

### **Benjamin Hill**

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### **David Reisman**

*Sartre's Phenomenology.*

New York: Continuum 2007.

Pp. 150.

US\$144.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-08264-8725-4).

Reisman offers a clear and detailed exposition of key elements of Sartre's philosophy as it is found in *The Transcendence of the Ego* and *Being and Nothingness*. Specifically, these elements include personhood, pre-reflective consciousness, perception, reflection, the psyche, the Look, and bad faith.

Somewhat surprisingly, and before contextualizing the problems and scope of the entire text, Reisman opens directly with a chapter on 'Sartre and Strawson' and begins by addressing the question, 'What is a person?' This question may be taken as central to Reisman's study.

The reason for approaching Sartre via Strawson is that Strawson's *Individuals* 'is particularly apt for comparison with Sartre's phenomenological work because the concepts he [Strawson] intends to analyze are so very basic that he feels that he "must abandon his only sure guide", namely, the actual use of words' (2). In other words, 'both philosophers are concerned with the most basic components of what might be called our *scheme of meaning*, namely, persons and things' (3). Reisman observes that he does 'not want to overemphasize the similarity between their views, or their ultimate concerns' (4), and it becomes clear that the aspect of Sartre's phenomenology that most concerns Reisman is a description of 'what is involved in apprehending, experiencing, or perceiving something as a person' (15-16). An account of this, Reisman suggests, goes beyond 'the scope of Strawson's investigation' (19), 'so we can think of Sartre's work as beginning where Strawson leaves off' (20).

A Sartrean inquiry into personhood leads to a consideration of pre-reflective consciousness, which is the topic of Chapter 2. Along the way, Reisman shows how Sartre's analysis at this level has points in common with both the ego-subject (or Cartesian) view, which attributes 'mental and physical states . . . to different subjects' (6) and the no-subject view, which holds such attributes to be ownerless (25), but it is clear enough that 'the most basic level of self-constitution' is 'consciousness' constitution of itself as a relation to an object of consciousness, and its apprehension of itself as such' (26). What does this mean? Does it mean that there is a core self — or 'person' or 'subject' — that is found at the level of pre-reflective consciousness? Reisman explains Sartre's criticism of Husserl on the nature of consciousness and the principle of intentionality, which shows that 'consciousness has no "subjective stuff" inside it' (29), so that any attempt to found a 'pure subjectivity' is misguided. As is well-known, the central thesis of Sartre's *The Transcendence of the Ego* is that the ego or the 'I' is a transcendent object for consciousness, and the pre-reflective field is 'impersonal or pre-personal'. Given this, it makes sense to think that we are forever at a distance from ourselves. Nevertheless, Reisman 'is interested in Sartre's account of the relation between this minimal apprehension of oneself and the world to an apprehension of a world in which one is a person among other persons and physical objects' (40). Reisman understands how 'troubled' this relationship is and that, quoting Sartre, 'the world's belonging to the *person* is never posited on the level of the pre-reflective *cogito*' (43). Thus, the constitution of the person will have to be found on the plane of reflection, which is a central theme of Chapter 3, 'Impure Reflection and the Constitution of the Psyche'.

At the beginning of Chapter 3 Reisman observes that 'on Sartre's view consciousness constitutes itself in levels', with 'the end-product' being 'a physical object who is a subject of experience' (45). In this and the following chapter, 'The Look and the Constitution of Persons', Reisman provides

a careful exposition of these levels. He explains that for Sartre the ego is a psychic object 'constituted and apprehended in the act of reflection' and that it is ultimately a self-contradictory blend of activity and passivity (55). Given that the ego never appears at the unreflected level, and that at this same level the 'I-concept is "destined to remain empty"' (57), one may well wonder how we can understand the end-product that is 'a subject of experience' (i.e., a self) given that the most basic foundation of this end-product is completely inaccessible. But, as Reisman will explain in Chapter 4, 'while pre-reflective self-consciousness and reflection cannot provide the intuition of oneself as an independently existing consciousness, the Look can' (75).

Overall, Reisman's relatively short work is primarily expository and might have included more critical analyses of Sartre's positions. Most of the limited critical comments are found in the notes and could have been further developed. For example, note 5 to Chapter 1 considers a more far-reaching discussion of whether Sartre was actually addressing the question of personhood at certain points (131-2), and note 1 to Chapter 2 considers the notion of 'being-in-itself' and how this should be understood (132-4). Such discussions develop our thinking on Sartre's phenomenology in more significant ways than an exposition that is occasionally heavily laden with citations from Sartre's texts (see, e.g., the closing pages of Chapters 4 and 5 where over half of the text is lengthy citations from Sartre) and may make readers wonder why they shouldn't just read the original work. Reisman concludes his study by 'considering the topic of bad faith . . . because . . . it is best understood after considering Sartre's account of self-constitution, but also because [he, i.e., Reisman] find[s] uplifting the discussion of pure reflection that inevitably accompanies it' (129). Here it would be very interesting to read an elaboration of the way Sartre's thinking can be uplifting (perhaps involving a detailed discussion of the related notions of freedom and nothingness, which is surprisingly lacking in this text), but instead the book closes with another lengthy citation from *Being and Nothingness*.

Thus, while it is interesting to compare Sartre's phenomenological ontology to Strawson's descriptive metaphysics, and while this may have the effect of bringing Sartre's views to the attention of philosophers specializing in the analytic tradition, it would be more beneficial to engage the problems of Sartre's phenomenology addressed by other contemporary philosophers. (Regarding personhood, the recent works of Stephen Priest and Dan Zahavi come to mind.) Lastly, although this may be a lack due to the publisher rather than the author, a work such as this should have a bibliography. Oddly, according to the Continuum website, it has a bibliography and a completely different table of contents.

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**Richard Rorty and Pascal Engel**

*What's the Use of Truth?*

Trans. William McCuaig.

New York: Columbia University Press 2007.

Pp. 96.

US\$13.95 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-231-14014-0).

This short book — the main text is just sixty pages — is an English translation of a debate between Rorty and Engel at the Sorbonne in November 2002. The debate centered on two central questions regarding truth: 'What is truth? and What value should we see in it or attribute to it?' (x). The debate was between a minimal realist (Engel) and a pragmatist (Rorty). It is hard to say who won, though they did a good job of delineating their points of contention. The book consists of main statements from both Engel and Rorty, several brief responses by them, and an appendix, which contains Rorty's previously published review of Engel's book *Truth*.

Engel begins his main statement with a sketch of Rorty's positions on truth. Among the positions attributed to Rorty by Engel are several that Rorty objects to. These include: the idea that 'truth has no explanatory use and does not . . . designate any profound substantial or metaphysical property' (6), the idea that traditional realist notions of truth are devoid of meaning, and the claim that the debates between realism and antirealism are hollow. Engel admits that there are several points over which he and Rorty would likely agree. For example, he agrees with Rorty 'that the classical theory of truth as correspondence runs up against considerable problems and that none of the contemporary conceptions that attempt to revive it (like those of Australian metaphysicians) is satisfactory' (11). However, these areas of agreement with Rorty are few. For Engel, the fundamental difference in their respective positions centers on the question of whether or not we can really remove the 'objectivist implications' from our conception of truth.

Regarding his own conception of truth, Engel argues that there are some important conceptual relations between belief, assertion, and truth. He calls these relations 'the belief-assertion-truth triangle' (13). The relations he has in mind are as follows: (1) When we make an assertion by means of a statement, we are asserting our belief that the statement is true. (2) Truth is the norm of assertion. (3) Truth is the norm of belief. Engel also maintains that truth is more than just a norm of inquiry. Truth also has virtues (veracity, sincerity, exactness, trust). Engel then suggests that Rorty would likely hold that there is either only a contingent connection between the conceptual role that truth plays and the virtues of truth or no connection at all. This leads Engel to ask, 'how do we analyze these virtues? Are they, as Rorty seems to think, purely instrumental (they are useful) and fully exposed to competition from other virtues such as creativity, interest, and relevance?' (27). Engel finishes his main statement with a final question for Rorty: 'If everyone came to the conclusion that truth is not an intrinsic value to be sought for its own

sake and that its value is only instrumental, would truth survive even as a mere means to other ends?' (29).

Rorty begins his main statement by clarifying the positions attributed to him by Engel. For example, Rorty suggests that the question to be asked regarding the realism-antirealism debates isn't whether the debaters are using words that are devoid of meaning, but 'whether the resolution of that debate will have an effect on practice, whether it will be useful' (34). Rorty also objects to Engel's suggestion that Rorty would view truth as not designating a property. Rorty suggests that he would not use such an expression. Rorty writes, 'In my view, all descriptive expressions designate properties' (32). He goes on to suggest that even expressions like *square circle* designate properties. All you need to do to indicate what a term designates is add a *-ness* (or its equivalent in other languages) to a term (e.g., square-circleness). He goes on to claim that it is useless to attempt to determine 'which adjectives have a purely expressive function and which designate a property' (32).

Regarding Engel's question about whether we can strip truth of its objectivist implications, Rorty writes, 'If we do things the pragmatist way, we will no longer think of ourselves as having responsibilities toward nonhuman entities such as *truth* or *reality*' (40). He suggests that we should stop acting as if we are looking for truth and instead we should be looking for what is useful. Rorty responds to Engel's question regarding the 'virtues of truth' by suggesting that 'it is just as easy to inculcate these virtues by reference to justification as by insisting on the importance of truth' (42). His point seems to be that we can encourage habits like exactness and the like without appealing to the notion of truth. Rorty also addresses Engel's concern that if we redescribe truth, people will stop caring about it. He argues that questions about the difference between intrinsic and instrumental goods are not really worth asking. He goes on to say, '*Intrinsic* is a word that pragmatists find it easy to do without. If one thinks that sincerity and exactness are good things, I do not see why we should worry about whether they are means to something else or good in themselves. Which reply one gives will have no bearing on practice' (44).

This book's main weakness is its brevity. Those who want to a deeper understanding of Engel's position may do better to read his book *Truth*. Those interested in a more complete understanding of Rorty's theory will probably find it elsewhere, perhaps in his *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers, Volume 1*. That said, this book provides a concise look at the views of two important philosophers. It is probably best suited for the serious philosopher. It assumes too much in the way of prior knowledge for the casual reader. At the same time, however, the serious philosopher might be disappointed. The book is too short to allow either Rorty or Engel to really shine. Perhaps it should be looked at as a piece of history, a souvenir from a lively debate.

**Benjamin Gorman**

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**Josephine Russell**

*How Children Become Moral Selves:  
Building Character and Promoting Citizenship  
in Education.*

Brighton: Sussex Academic Press 2007.

Pp. 239.

US\$45.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-1-84519-175-7).

Although divided into two main parts this book is perhaps better viewed as consisting of three parts: one part moral theory, one part moral psychology, and one part case study. Each of these components play a role in the study that was conducted on the nature and extent of the moral awareness of a group of Irish school children, beginning when they were between seven and eight years old and ending when they were between twelve and thirteen. The group's moral development was gauged by the responses they gave during 'Thinking Time' sessions. A Thinking Time session is essentially a form of class discussion on moral issues facilitated by the teacher. Through these discussions, Russell draws conclusions about children's ability to reason from various moral frameworks (e.g., justice, care, fairness, etc.) as well as whether their moral development is consistent with many of the leading psychological theories on children's moral development, particularly those of Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan and Vygotsky.

In Chapter 1 Russell lays out her approach, beginning with a description of the Thinking Time methodology along with the questions and goals of her study. Her primary purpose is to examine the effectiveness of Thinking Time discussions as a means of fostering moral development and determining 'its [Thinking Time's] effectiveness in enhancing children's moral thinking, enabling them to become more thoughtful, respectful and responsive to others, and fostering traits of character that are central to democratic citizenship' 5).

Chapter 2 examines the current debate that surrounds children's moral development. It surveys the literature on Piaget's two stages of development, Kohlberg's highly influential and controversial moral stage theory, and Gilligan's care reasoning approach. The views of each are fairly presented along with critical assessment culled from more recent studies on children's moral development.

Chapter 3 discusses the nature of morality and addresses the different possible approaches to moral education. The chapter's goal is to draw upon a number of moral theories as a way of developing an adequate theory of moral education. Russell examines the pros and cons of four main theories: 1) Kantian liberalism, 2) virtue ethics, 3) mainstream communitarianism, and 4) ethics of care. She provides a clear and concise, albeit standard examination of these views. Where her presentation really shines is in its integration of what are often presented as contrary positions in the literature. Thus, the moral attributes we want to cultivate in children are not synonymous with a particular moral theory, but may in fact take a number of elements from each.

According to Russell, this form of moral education is desperately needed for a renewal of civil society: 'Post-modern pressures need to be counteracted by more autonomy for individual moral selves and more vigorous sharing of collective responsibilities. In short the autonomous citizen needs to be part of a fully-fledged, self-reflective and self-correcting political community' (68).

Chapter 5 concludes Part 1 of the book by presenting the techniques that will be utilized in gauging the test group's moral development through moral dialogue with both the teacher and each other. Russell believes that children can engage in a form of philosophical reasoning — perhaps better termed meta-philosophical reasoning — whereby the moral conversation can lead them to other forms of philosophic and abstract reasoning, while also encouraging care for others and a sense of justice. Engaging children in philosophical discussion helps them internalize the sorts of cognitive processes and moral sentiments that will be necessary to engage in more abstract philosophical reasoning, such as that found in Piaget and Kohlberg, while at the same time encouraging social, empathetic, caring relationships.

Also included in Chapter 5 is Russell's foreshadowing of data to be presented in Part 2, along with recent research with regard to gender differences in moral reasoning. Russell claims that the current literature on moral development does not support the idea that boys and girls demonstrate significant differences in their moral dispositions. Both boys and girls tend to gravitate to same-sex groupings where girls in such groups emphasize protecting personal relationships, and boys tend to focus on solidarity, rules and hierarchy, by ten to twelve years of age both develop a capacity for empathy and care exhibited in altruistic action.

Chapters 6 and 7 comprise the heart of the second part, which mainly deals with the conversations with the children in the study. In this part Russell both confirms and contradicts the findings of the moral theorists and researches discussed in the first half of the book. She notes the development in moral reasoning, beginning with the first dialogues with the children at age five. By establishing a community of enquiry where the children felt comfortable expressing their views, reflective thinking (inferring, deducing, defining, making distinctions, classifying and generalizing) began to develop as students, guided by the teacher, interacted with each other. Contra Kohlberg, Russell notes how children's reasoning vacillated between pre-conventional and post-conventional thinking, depending upon the situation. The children also demonstrated the ability to reflect on their own views and to let go of fixed positions in light of the arguments of others. What the dialogues in Chapters 6 and 7 demonstrated was both development of children's moral reasoning capacity as well as a confirmation of Vygotsky's theory of social development.

In Chapter 7, Russell focuses on the ways the children dealt with issues of justice or fairness, moral obligation and responsibility, truth telling, theft and friendship, moral judgment, attitudes and values, and gender specific friendships. In the case of friendship, Russell notes some of the salient differences between boys and girls concept of friendship and what it entails.

This book has much to recommend it. Russell's overview of the various theories of the moral psychology of children, and her take on competing notions of moral education, do a nice job of encapsulating the debate within these two areas. While the material in Part 1 will prove informative to anyone interested in this topic, Part 2 is more of a mixed bag. On the one hand, Russell's conversations with children are enlightening, in that they indicate that children are capable of moral reasoning that is far more complex than most adults have recognized. With the proper encouragement, children can develop moral reasoning skills much in the same way they develop other sorts of cognitive ability. On the other hand, since Russell did not utilize a control group, it is difficult to discern from both her presentation and the conversations whether this moral development would have occurred even if the children had not engaged in Thinking Time activities. She notes at one point that a student who had transferred into the class she was studying seemed to integrate easily into the group, even though he had not been an original participant. This point would perhaps be less problematic if Russell didn't draw the conclusion at the end of the book that Thinking Time should be incorporated into Irish education in general.

Russell's book is an important contribution to the literature on both children's moral development and children's rights. With regard to the former, Russell clearly shows that children are far more morally aware, and that through thoughtful discussion with adults they can actually advance in their moral reasoning ability. With regard to the latter, if children are capable of thinking in ways we have normally associated with adults, it may be time to re-think the age at which we extend certain rights and responsibilities to children.

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**Michael Taylor, Helmut Schreier and  
Paulo Ghiraldelli, eds.**

*Pragmatism, Education, and Children:  
International Philosophical Perspectives.*

New York: Rodopi 2008.

Pp. 248.

US\$75.00 (paper ISBN-13: 978-90-420-2342-0).

The title of this collection is as clear an indicator of thematic intent as you can find. The book, part of the Studies in Pragmatism and Values (SPV) series, which is itself part of Rodopi's Value Inquiry Book Series (VIBS), aims to explore 'the intersections between pragmatism, education, and philosophy with children.' Though the book fails to consistently sustain the theme, several selections will likely interest a broad range of interdisciplinary readers.

The book is comprised of a brief preface, thirteen new essays, one interview, and a helpfully detailed index. The contributors' areas of expertise range from philosophy to psychology, to education, and several contributors claim expertise in pedagogy related specifically to children. The title's reference to the international scope of the book is certainly not in jest: authors are from Australia, Brazil, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, Turkey, and the United States. The contributions are divided into four sections: 1) Lessons from Classical Pragmatists (three essays), 2) Learning from John Dewey (four essays), 3) Philosophy for Children (three essays), and 4) Recent Pragmatist Theories (three essays and one interview).

The first two sections provide welcome insights. In Section 1, Phyllis Chiasson's 'Pierce's Design for Thinking: A Philosophical Gift for Children' offers one of the clearest discussions of Pierce I have encountered in some time. Though I would have been hard pressed to agree before reading her essay, I am now convinced that 'Pierce's philosophy . . . [is] simple and practical enough to be used at the pre-reading level' (26). In Section 2, Gordon Mitchell's 'The Sacred in the Everyday: John Dewey on Religion in Public Education' provides a compelling argument for reexamining a neglected element of the Deweyian corpus. He celebrates and interrogates the notion that 'one of the principles of dialogue between peoples of different religions and world-views is the recognition of the "incompleteness" of each. Openness to discovery is therefore central to such dialogue' (120). Rather than playing skeptic, Mitchell charts the complicated path by which 'religious ways of knowing' might be integrated into the process of education.

The third section is the most cohesive. With the inclusion of several additional essays — including, perhaps, slightly revised versions of Mitchell's essay as well as Helmut Schreier and Kerstin Michalik's 'In Pursuit of Intellectual Honesty' (from Section 2) — it could have been an entire book of the same title. The focus of this section is clear from the start. Matt Lipman's essay, 'Philosophy for Children's Debt to Dewey', charts out the clear parallels between his and Dewey's approach to teaching. Lipman, professor emeritus and founder of The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children

(IAPC) at Montclair State University, guides and informs the essays that follow. While it is clear that Rosalind Ekman Ladd's 'Dewey and Lipman' is meant as an *encomium to both*, it would have been helpful if she had more carefully pointed to some of the primary sources at her disposal. In referencing Lipman's essay in the volume and relying substantially on *The Collected Works of John Dewey*, Ladd obscures the fact that one of Dewey's first detailed discussions of 'indeterminist or problematic' situations (154) occurred in *How We Think* (1910). Philip Cam's 'Dewey, Lipman, and the Tradition of Reflective Education' corrects this oversight. In addition, Cam opens up points of connection between Lipman and Mitchell by noting the role of *dialogue* in a Deweyian approach to education.

Section 4 is a bit of a puzzle. One author struggles to hold to the book's stated premise. Michael A. Peters' 'Acts of Education: Rorty, Derrida, and the Ends of Literature' discusses little specific to children. Indeed the stated foci are the university and democracy, with democracy being given the more substantial and postmodern treatment. When Peters ends by arguing 'that Derrida helps us to rethink politics in an age of globalization' (202), readers might well applaud the value of the inquiry but question its relationship to the theme of the book. Another contribution suggests more than it provides. Paulo Ghiraldelli's 'Richard Rorty and Philosophy of Education: Questions and Responses' offers up an interview with the late philosopher. But one must struggle to find many clear connections to the subject of children. What's more, the reader comes away with a better understanding of what Ghiraldelli finds interesting, given that the questions are often far longer than the answers. Another author's contribution inadvertently points to the work needing to be done to remedy the breaches between international and interdisciplinary conceptions of rhetoric. Tarso Mazzotti's 'The Rhetoric Turn', while also light on anything germane to children, offers up an interesting discussion of rhetoric. Mazzotti touches on a host of figures — Gorgias, Aristotle, Marx, and Hegel among others — whose work has influenced the study of rhetoric. What is missing, though, is any sense of the work that has been conducted for decades in departments of Speech Communication/Communication Studies. His claim, then, that 'it remains to recognize that the arts and knowledge of argumentative and rhetorical procedures needs to be taught so that students can have the minimal instruments necessary for the sort of dialogue and debate that avoids altercation' (222) is a point well taken. So well taken that a host of scholars interested in both rhetoric and philosophy (not to mention pragmatism) — Robert Scott in 'On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic' (1967) and Lloyd Bitzer in 'The Rhetorical Situation' (1968) to name but two classic works — have been carrying out this work on campuses across the United States.

There are also a couple of errors which suggest some editorial slack. The table of contents incorrectly lists Mazzotti's essay as 'The Rhetorical Turn'. This mistake is corrected on the Rodopi website, but it brings to light another: where is John R. Shook's editorial foreword? This omission relates to a more general suggestion. The book's tripartite thematic focus might have

been made clearer by reference to a longer and more detailed preface from the book's editors. Given these issues, this book is moderately successful in sustaining an international approach to a 'variety of investigations' (ix). Like children, readers are likely to pick and choose those resources that strike their fancy. The parts, in the case of this book, are often more compelling than the packaged whole.

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**Jim Vernon**

*Hegel's Philosophy of Language.*

New York: Continuum 2007.

Pp. 161.

US\$132.00 (cloth ISBN-13: 978-0-8264-9438-2).

Vernon seeks to articulate a schematic theory of language that is specifically Hegelian — that is, a philosophy of language that is consistent with a wide range of Hegel's texts, and remains true to his overall philosophical project. I have little reason to question its success as such. However, frankly, I am in a comparatively poor position to judge: I work on contemporary philosophy of language, not history of philosophy; worse, my training therein was pretty narrowly Anglo-American. Thus the works Vernon focuses on — Hegel's *Logic*, *Philosophy of Mind*, and *Phenomenology of Spirit* — are by no means central to my canon. My emphasis will thus lie elsewhere. For, in addition to straightforward exegesis, this book sets itself the task of uncovering a distinctively Hegelian contribution to philosophical theorizing about language. My question will be: Is such a contribution genuinely on offer?

Some background. With the very notable exception of the rich body of work on the Mediaeval period, the history of philosophy of language has been sorely neglected. I find this a pity. First, the topic is valuable per se — no less so than the history of ethics, or the history of epistemology. Second, even if he or she does not address our questions (e.g., whether complex demonstratives are quantifier phrases, whether 'know' contains a hidden indexical), almost any major historical figure stands to enrich and invigorate contemporary philosophy of language by (re)introducing debates. To anticipate, Vernon's Hegel is no exception.

Vernon highlights a great number of issues about language that preoccupied Hegel. For the sake of brevity, however, I will focus on those which pertain to the Hegelian quest for objectivity. First, explains Vernon, language

undergirds *individual* objectivity. Hegel's account of perception and mental content introduces the threat of subjective idealism. Vernon writes: 'Objective content is not really given to us from the outside, for without the attentive activity of mind there would be no determinate experience at all' (48). In particular, continues the story, agents actively deploy the formal 'I' — in order, for instance, to abstract particular objects from a continuous 'field' (50). The worry, of course, is that a given individual's forms of experience may not be valid and universal. This is where language comes in: the agent can externalize her internal forms, placing them in space and time for others to consider; she can, that is, synthesize something with the necessary dual aspect of 'internal' image/idea and 'external' intuited object. (An aside: though Vernon does not say so, given this solution, Hegel's concern cannot have been anything approaching Pyrrhonian skepticism.)

These externalized (proto-)linguistic signs provide the initial bulwark against subjective idealism. As Vernon sums it up: 'Language arises as an inter-subjective medium employed to demonstrate the objectivity of our (determining forms of) experience' (3). To my mind, this is already a very substantial contribution to philosophy of language: Hegel raises here, in a very novel way, the question of why we humans speak. And, if Vernon's reading is correct, he offers a bracingly novel answer: one speaks for broadly epistemic reasons.

But now, how can our seeker of objectivity trust that her words mean the same? This conundrum, familiar at least since Locke, 'reintroduces the problem of subjective idealism at the linguistic level' (13). The Hegelian response is elusive, especially to a non-specialist such as myself. But the main thrust is this. As a beginning, one encounters something 'out there' *as meaningful*. This recognition of genuine signs succeeds because we humans can 'express interiority corporally' (e.g., by babbling and giggling) and because, qua activity, all speech arises from the spontaneous mind. So, already the seeker of objectivity can establish some connection between found 'outer sounds' and 'inner ideas'. It is the next steps in Vernon's 'just so' story that are the most intriguing. He draws on Hegel's lectures on classical studies, dated September 1809, interpreting them as urging that comparative study, especially of classical tongues, provides the necessary evidence that grammar does not vary (cf. 41ff.). Because human grammar is universal, the individual can take yet another step towards intersubjectivity. Finally, unlike ephemeral sounds, writing (in a suitably broad sense) allows for stable, 'accent-less', lasting signs, governed by official standardization — 'particular to none, graspable by all' (72).

Hegel's circuitous route leads him, in the end, to a position that is strikingly contemporary: a cognitive/communitarian view, such that each individual internalizes a shared language. It is this which affords the public, communal safeguard of objectivity at the level of ordinary, individual experience.

In short, learning and reflecting upon language play an important role, at the level of the individual, in the Hegelian project of securing objectivity. But there is more. Philosophers such as Hamann, Maimon and Herder

launched an important and underappreciated critique of Kant. These 'Metacritics' insisted, *pace The Critique of Pure Reason*, that philosophy cannot be undertaken a priori, in 'pure thought'. Instead, thought is only determinate within a particular language. And, they continued, the contingency and historical specificity of human languages threatens *philosophy's* objectivity and universal necessity.

Patently, this is a problem for Hegel as well. However, whereas Kant seems to have sidestepped it, Vernon finds in Hegel's texts some insightful replies. As noted above, Vernon's Hegel maintains that only lexical content varies. Grammar is universal. Already, then, Hegel can give a partial response to the metacritical worry: language is not nearly as contingent as Hamann et al. make out. But Hegel goes further, urging that even this lexical source of variation can be tamed. On the one hand, grammar has a powerful impact upon the lexicon: words are by their very nature ordained to combine by means of formal rules. As a result, there is a '[d]ialectical relation between linguistic form and content, grammar and lexicon' (16) which importantly reduces the variability of word meaning. Finally, in yet another move away from linguistic contingency, Hegel proposes that philosophy abstract from connections between ordinary language words, formulating atomistic 'names as such'. Through these, it can develop something more universal.

My question was whether Vernon's Hegel makes a novel contribution to philosophical theorizing about language. It should be clear by now that my answer is an emphatic 'yes'. Contemporary philosophy of language stands to be tremendously enriched both by Hegel's concerns, and by his manner of addressing them. We owe a substantial debt to Vernon for bringing these to our attention.

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### **Gudrun von Tevenar, ed.**

*Nietzsche and Ethics.*

New York: Peter Lang 2007.

Pp. 318.

US\$77.95 (paper ISBN-13: 978-3-03911-045-2).

This is a collection of essays on Nietzsche as a moral philosopher, edited from papers first given at the conference on this topic by the Friedrich Nietzsche Society in 2004. It covers a number of core areas of interest in Nietzsche's thought which have in recent times attracted attention either as specific

strengths, or as especially controversial aspects (and potential weaknesses) of the great iconoclast's distinctive contribution to moral philosophy.

Among Nietzsche's strengths are his critique of human agency, selfhood and the related notions of will (free, unfree or otherwise) and will to power. These are discussed by Ken Gemes in 'Nietzsche on the Will to Truth, the Scientific Spirit, Free Will, and Genuine Selfhood', a close reading of Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morality*; and by Henry Staten in 'Toward a Will to Power Sociology', an attempt to dethrone Brian Leiter's influential interpretation of how Nietzsche would have us understand human agency and the mind-body relationship in action. The other aspect of Nietzsche's ethical thinking singled out as positive is his questioning of the origin of values and of the nature of value creation and re-valuation. I include here Herman Siemens' 'The First Transvaluation of all Values: Nietzsche's *Agon* with Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy*', as well as contributions that address the question of Nietzsche's moral philosophy as a whole and search for its governing principle or idea, such as Robert Guay's 'How to be an Immoralist', or Edward Harcourt's 'Nietzsche and Eudaemonism'.

The controversial topics or potential weaknesses of Nietzsche's ethics are said to be his critique of egalitarianism, analyzed and criticized in turn by James Wilson in his 'Nietzsche and Equality'; and Nietzsche's devaluation of pity and compassion, addressed (largely in defence of Nietzsche's position) in two essays, first by Rebecca Bamford in 'The Virtue of Shame: Defending Nietzsche's Critique of *Mitleid*', and second by editor von Tevenar, in 'Nietzsche's Objections to Pity and Compassion'. All the above are overtly argumentative pieces and in the collection they are complemented by three contextualizing, historicizing essays: Robin Small's 'Nietzsche's Evolutionary Ethics' on the influence of nineteenth-century evolutionary theorizing on Nietzsche's ethical thought and especially on his notion of the will to power; Carol Diethe's 'Nietzschean Sexual Ethics', which discusses Nietzsche's views on sexuality, the war between the sexes and female sexuality, and their reception in various circles at the *fin de siècle*; and finally, Thomas Brobjer's essay on 'The Development of Nietzsche's Ethical Thinking', which describes this development in terms of the dynamics of Nietzsche's continual 'overcoming' of moral theories based on principles such as duty or utility, principles that Nietzsche himself seems to have believed in at crucial points in his life and writing.

As I cannot hope to give all the essays the critical attention they deserve, I will here focus primarily on those that I find most insightful or provoking or both, and run the risk of seeming to unjustly overlook the rest (especially those by Gemes and Siemens). Henry Staten's 'Toward a Will to Power Sociology' is the centrepiece of the collection. How do we think about the role of consciousness in action, and what can Nietzsche contribute to this debate? Staten suggests a picture of human agency that remains firmly anchored in naturalism, and yet ascribes to consciousness a causal power that it cannot possess in Leiter's reading of it as an epiphenomenon of bodily processes. Consciousness in Staten's conception is not the property of an individual

but of a culture. Its causal power is tied to actions that members of that culture habitually learn to master and practice. It inheres in the equally habitual, neither strictly conscious nor unconscious 'thoughts' and 'pictures of the consequences of actions' (151) that accompany these practices as if they were another muscular reflex. Using that picture Staten then tries to tackle a possible objection to it: how is something new created in action, especially if this something is not just a new kind of object but a whole shift in a cultural practice? Where lies the power that can effect such a shift and what gives it direction? Is it 'in' the individual (even if it is not in his or her consciousness but in the bodily drives, in their will to power endowed with a special kind of intentionality — Staten reads Nietzsche alongside Richardson, as a Romantic ultimately unable to give up on genius and teleology); or somewhere else? But where? Staten tries to convince us that this power is a combination of nothing other than the quantum of energy supplied by the human being in action and the potential inherent in the form of a cultural practice that is being actualized through action. Will to power in this reading is primarily a social, not a biological phenomenon.

Next it is Robert Guay's 'How to be an Immoralist' that deserves a special mention. Guay argues it is a mistake to see Nietzsche as attempting to secure certain ethical commitments (even if these might be radically different from various traditional moralities) by referring them to their ultimate ground (even if this ground should newly be a type of body, e.g., Leiter's collection of physiological-psychological type-facts, rather than God or the good etc.). Guay reads Nietzsche's critique of morality as targeting precisely the idea that a particular way of life (or particular actions) may be legitimized by reference to 'some kind of special, unconditional authority' (58) which, as the value of values, would be set above all supposedly non-ethical aspects of life and practical concerns. It is part of the immoralist's way of examining one's practice that one becomes aware that 'we have concerns that transcend goodness of character, adherence to principle, or general welfare' (73). According to Guay, what ultimately matters most to Nietzsche is something like this: 'The point of Nietzsche's substantive ethics is not to explain how to be good, but to explain something more basic: how to be engaged' (72).

Finally, I want to mention two essays that deal with the supposed liabilities of Nietzsche's ethics, i.e., with his attacks both on egalitarianism and on the value of pity and compassion. I do not find Wilson's Kantian defence of egalitarianism against Nietzsche convincing. This is at least partly because of Wilson's misreading of what Nietzsche means by affirmation, and hence of the difference between slave and master moralities (231); and partly because of a certain lack of tangibility in the notion of dignity that Wilson proposes as the grounding for the equal value of all human beings (232-3, note 23). And yet I do think he raises important questions, less about Nietzsche's elitism than about the prevalence of egalitarianism in contemporary ethical thought and in our instinctive response to many ethical dilemmas (if not, contra Wilson, to all).

Von Tevenar addresses with perspicuity the other liability of the ethical Nietzsche, namely his low estimate of pity and compassion. She is able to show convincingly that Nietzsche does distinguish, under the label of *Mitleid*, between pity and compassion as two qualitatively different responses to suffering. She further discusses the reasons Nietzsche might have for denigrating pity, and for fearing and devaluing compassion. Her approach is complemented by Bamford's somewhat roundabout discussion of the possibility that Nietzsche's denigration of pity has to do with his insight into the power dynamic between the sufferer and the passerby arrested by the spectacle of suffering: i.e., that the supposedly passive sufferer's appeal to pity is really an active attempt to deprive the spectator of his activity and to turn him into a passive sufferer.

Von Tevenar's book is a somewhat looser collection; it is more diverse and divergent as a whole — and often less tightly argued and less well written within individual contributions — than its main competitor in the field, Leiter's and Sinhababu's *Nietzsche and Morality* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 2007). It does have, nevertheless, a lot to say about Nietzsche, and it even has one distinct advantage over its rival: it seems to have better avoided the respective dangers of treating Nietzsche's writing first and foremost as an intellectual puzzle, and of dealing with Nietzsche as 'one of the most insightful and creative figures in the history of moral theory' (Leiter and Sinhababu) rather than as an insightful and creative human being or even just a man, writing for other men and women.

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