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Table of Contents • Table des matières

Gernot Böhme, <i>Ethics in Context</i>	1
Timothy Chambers	
Janet Broughton, <i>Descartes's Method of Doubt</i>	3
Deborah Boyle	
Joan Cocks, <i>Passion and Paradox: Intellectuals Confront the National Question</i>	5
Richard Matthews	
Harvey Cormier, <i>The Truth is What Works: William James, Pragmatism, and the Seed of Death</i>	7
Matthew Stephens	
Leon Harold Craig, <i>Of Philosophers and Kings: Political Philosophy in Shakespeare's Macbeth and King Lear</i>	10
William Mathie	
John Deely, <i>Four Ages of Understanding: The first postmodern survey of philosophy from Ancient times to the turn of the twenty-first century</i>	12
Nevena Ivanova	
Robert J. Dostal, ed., <i>The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer</i>	14
Edward Tingley	
Rainer Forst, <i>Contexts of Justice: Political Philosophy beyond Liberalism and Communitarianism</i>	18
Shaun P. Young	
Hans-Georg Gadamer, <i>Gadamer in Conversation: Reflections and Commentary</i>	21
Graeme Nicholson	
Graeme Gilloch, <i>Walter Benjamin — Critical Constellations</i>	26
Brendan Moran	
Keith Graham, <i>Practical Reasoning in a Social World: How we Act Together</i>	28
Adrian M. Viens	

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Robert Hahn , <i>Anaximander and the Architects: The contribution of Egyptian and Greek architectural technologies to the origins of Greek philosophy</i>	31
Costica Bradatan	
Daniel Howard-Snyder and Paul K. Moser, eds. , <i>Divine Hiddenness: New Essays</i>	33
Klaas J. Kraay	
Hud Hudson , <i>A Materialist Metaphysics of the Human Person</i>	35
Peter Loftson	
Doreen Kimura , <i>Sex and Cognition</i>	39
Wendy Lynne Lee	
Leszek Kolakowski , <i>The Presence of Myth</i>	42
Patrick Quinn	
John Llewelyn , <i>Appositions of Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas</i>	44
Jack Reynolds	
J.E. Malpas and Jens Kertscher, eds. , <i>Gadamer's Century: Essays in Honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer</i>	14
Edward Tingley	
Giuseppe Mazzotta , <i>Cosmopoiesis. The Renaissance Experiment</i>	46
Massimo Verdicchio	
Carolyn McLeod , <i>Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy</i>	50
Karen Houle	
Christopher McMahon , <i>Collective Rationality and Collective Reasoning</i>	53
Joseph Heath	
Tom Regan , <i>Defending Animal Rights</i>	56
Margaret Van de Pitte	
Rob Reich , <i>Bridging Liberalism and Multiculturalism in American Education</i>	59
Jeff Spinner-Halev	
Christopher Rickey , <i>Revolutionary Saints: Heidegger, National Socialism and Antinomian Politics</i>	61
Jonathan Salem-Wiseman	
Louis Roy , <i>Transcendent Experiences: Phenomenology and Critique</i>	63
Karl Simms	
James P. Scanlan , <i>Dostoevsky The Thinker</i>	66
İtir Güneş	
Irving Singer , <i>Explorations in Love and Sex</i>	69
Julian Friedland	
Irving Singer , <i>Feeling and Imagination: The Vibrant Flux of Our Existence</i> . .	69
Julian Friedland	
Michael Slote , <i>Morals From Motives</i>	72
Leanne Kent	
Richard Tuck , <i>The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order From Grotius to Kant</i>	75
Antonio Franceschet	

Gernot Böhme

Ethics in Context.

Trans. Edmund Jephcott.

Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag 1997 (cloth); Malden, MA: Polity Press 2001 (paper). Pp. vii + 189.

US\$59.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-7456-2638-6); US\$23.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7456-2639-4).

(I) '[P]hilosophical ethics', Gernot Böhme worries, 'is in danger of becoming an arcane meta-ethics ... a professional game for specialists in ethical discourse' (163; see also 1-7). Hence Böhme's aim: to 'drag ethics out of ontological, analytical, and meta-ethical discourse and place it radically within reality' (106).

So sweepingly stated, Böhme makes it easy to misgauge his concern. After all, contemporary academic ethics comprises more than 'meta-ethical' studies (i.e., treatments of 'the structure of deontic statements ... the speech-act of imperatives ... and the possibility of moral arguments' [2]). We need only type 'abortion', 'adultery', or 'famine' into the *Philosopher's Index* to turn up a wealth of non-'meta-ethical' treatments of (if I may) 'radically real' normative matters.

But Böhme's worry is more subtle — and plausible. Academic ethics' practice, Böhme charges, 'does not have to affect the philosopher, or his listeners, at the personal level at all' (2). On *this* point, Böhme will find allies. 'Traditional ethics courses', Judith Boss laments, 'avoid any attempt to make students better people ... [S]tudents are able to memorize theories ... long enough to pass the final exam ... [but w]hen confronted with real-life moral issues, most students simply revert back to their earlier forms of reasoning based on cultural norms or self-interest' (*Ethics For Life* [Toronto: Mayfield 2001], vii). The challenge ethics instructors face is to surmount (let's call it) the *undergraduate irony*. North American students pay boundless verbal homage to the perceived virtue of 'being unique' and 'expressing oneself'; yet in considering moral questions, few students progress beyond parroting slogans imparted by popular culture ('If they're not hurting anyone, who's to say they're doing something wrong?'). If Böhme has found a way to press students toward a more reflective ethical plane, then he will have dispatched a very vexing bugbear, indeed.

(II) But of course, the devil lurks in the details. In Böhme's terminology, academic ethics fails to enable students to appreciate, and confront, *moral questions* — where, by his definition, a 'moral question' engenders 'seriousness ... [i.e., the conviction that how the question is decided] decides what kind of person I am, or what kind of society we live in' (163; 105). The former questions are those of individual-ethics (74-114), and the latter belong to social-ethics (115-62). Moreover, insofar as my actions are tacitly 'pushed along' or 'regulated by customary practices' (75), then those actions fail to reflect 'what kind of person I am' (save, perhaps, that I'm the 'kind of person' who mortgages my agency in favor of doing '*what* [other] *people do*' [18]).

(A) Contingent upon articulating what constitutes 'seriousness', the foregoing account might seem plausible enough. Yet Böhme marshals his definition to narrow, strikingly, the scope of rightful moral inquiry. 'Honesty', Böhme declares, 'is not of central interest to a philosophy of ethics'. Why not? Because it is 'customary to tell the truth' (19). Yet this inference is unsound on two points. First: if 'customary' means '*what [most] people do*' (18), then Böhme's premise has looming exceptions. In the United States, for instance, internet-aided plagiarism has sadly become an increasingly prominent problem. (Ironically, part of the reason students are less repelled by the practice's dishonesty is precisely because such plagiarism is increasingly 'what many students do'.) Moreover, Böhme's conclusion fails to follow from his premise; for the mere fact that truth-telling is 'customary' doesn't entail that a chance to lie won't engender self-searching seriousness. Witness Rousseau's famous account of the pilfered ribbon (*Confessions*, Book 2), or poet Adrienne Rich's remarks on lies' 'serious' effects ('Women and Honor: Some Notes on Lying' in her *Poetry and Prose* [New York: WW Norton 1993]).

Böhme offers further, off-hand, dismissals: of sexual morality ('The value placed on virginity ... [kept] the birth-rate relatively low. ... [So] contraception ... has made sexual morality largely superfluous' [27-8]), of euthanasia (which 'has nothing to do with individual morality, but is concerned with social regulation' [10]), and of fidelity (18-9). Unsurprisingly, the arguments for banishing these topics from philosophical inquiry — when, that is, arguments are offered — rest upon similar flaws as the grounds for dismissing honesty.

(B) Now then: just what is this 'seriousness' Böhme appeals to? The notion echoes Kierkegaard; so, unsurprisingly, 'the concept cannot be defined' (104). Then again, a glimmer of elucidation appears in the offing when Böhme ties 'seriousness' to the Greek concept of *aretē* — of 'being-human-well' (13, 53). Matters 'become serious', we might say, if our being-human-well is at stake in how we decide such matters. Unfortunately, Böhme quickly drains the *definiens* of potential content by rejecting *aretē*'s classic articulation; the result is a tight circle: '[b]eing-human-well ... [is] an endeavor to engage fully in being human and to disown nothing which forms a part of it' (89).

(C) Böhme's closing chapter treats social ethics, defined as matters which 'decide ... what kind of society we live in — or how we understand society' (163). Böhme's choice of issues could hardly be faulted: abortion (136-41), genetic engineering (141-8), and the rights of citizenship and asylum (150-6). Yet these issues' treatments are disappointing. Each discussion is long on summary of international conventions (the Geneva Convention; the UNESCO Convention on bioethics), or national law (§218 of the German Penal Code), at the expense of considered articulation of moral principles, and evaluation of arguments.

(III) It's unclear what audience Böhme envisions for this text. By his own lights, it can't serve as a text for students or laypersons; for it trades in the selfsame 'specialists' reasoning *about* ethical judgments which Böhme lambastes. The text's poverty of argument, however, makes it ill-suited for

academics. This is unfortunate; for Böhme indeed diagnoses a significant malady attaching to contemporary ethics-education. Yet his prescription for rehabilitating ethics is, for the most part, opaquely expressed ('Human beings are entities in whose existence their being is at stake' [111]); and on the occasions where clarity reigns, the cure Böhme recommends threatens to thin moral inquiry's scope to a skeleton of its former self.

Timothy Chambers

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Janet Broughton

Descartes's Method of Doubt.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University

Press 2002. Pp. xv + 217.

US\$26.95. ISBN 0-691-08818-7.

According to one common reading of the *Meditations*, Descartes is involved in a search for absolutely certain knowledge, and he employs the method of doubt in order to clear away all that is less than certain and thereby, ultimately, achieve such knowledge. In *Descartes's Method of Doubt*, Janet Broughton turns this interpretation on its head, suggesting, instead, that Cartesian doubt explains Cartesian knowledge. In this clearly written and engaging book, Broughton argues that the method of doubt is in fact constructive, a strategy for uncovering the first principles of philosophy by showing that the truth of certain beliefs is a condition for the method of doubt.

This interesting thesis is not fully developed until Part Two of the book. Part One is a series of chapters about the identity of the meditator and the ways in which Descartes' use of skepticism differs from ancient skepticism. In the course of these chapters, which seem at first glance to be unconnected to the larger issue of the strategic and constructive role of the method of doubt, Broughton manages to lay the groundwork for the arguments of Part Two as well as to make a number of intrinsically interesting arguments about the First Meditation.

In Chapter One, Broughton raises the question of the identity of the meditator, offering compelling reasons against taking the meditator to be either an ordinary person of common-sense (Harry Frankfurt's reading) or a scholastic philosopher (John Carriero's reading). Instead, Broughton argues, the 'I' of the First Meditation has already been invested with a Cartesian view of cognitive development; as Broughton points out, if this is right, 'then no ordinary person, untutored in Cartesian metaphysics, would ever have a good reason for suspending judgment about something simply by considering the radical grounds for doubt' (32). Thus we will not be surprised to see that

on Broughton's reading, Descartes' method of doubt turns out to be a highly artificial project, not just an extension of the ordinary standards that any thoughtful person should employ.

In Chapters Two through Five, Broughton contrasts Descartes' use of skepticism with Academic and Pyrrhonian skepticism. She gives a particularly interesting analysis of the various roles that dreaming plays in the arguments of Academic skeptics, Pyrrhonist skeptics, and the First Meditation, as well as a helpful discussion of the common structure of what she calls the 'skeptical scenarios' of the lunacy, dreaming, omnipotent God, and 'fate' arguments in the First Meditation. Again, she addresses the role of common sense, comparing Descartes' view of the relationship between philosophy and common sense with the views of both ancient skeptics and contemporary philosophers.

Broughton then turns, in Part Two, to her claim that the method of doubt is constructive, insofar as it enables the meditator to identify and establish the truth of various first principles. As Broughton points out, Descartes suggests in various passages that one should 'use' doubt to establish absolutely certain knowledge. Thus, in Broughton's view, it is misguided to see Descartes as employing radical doubt because of a prior commitment to a conception of knowledge which requires ruling out such doubts. Broughton's case against the standard reading is that it 'gives us a mistaken impression of Descartes' concerns and strategies' (9). And, indeed, her alternative interpretation is not only supported by a number of Cartesian texts, but also offers a more unified and elegant account of what Descartes is doing in the *Meditations* than the standard reading can provide.

In Broughton's account, Descartes is offering 'dependence arguments' which show that the truth of some of his clear and distinct ideas are conditions of using the method of doubt in the first place. (Although these dependence arguments are similar in some respects to transcendental arguments, Broughton explains in the last chapter of the book why she thinks they are not in fact transcendental.) The clearest case of this strategy occurs in the Second Meditation, where Descartes discovers that his existence is a necessary condition of his doubting; Broughton thus rejects the view that the meditator's certainty that he exists derives from a prior certainty that he thinks. On the reading Broughton rejects, which has the meditator beginning the Second Meditation with certainty that he thinks, it is hard to see why Descartes would spend so much time in the rest of the Second Meditation elaborating what is included in thinking. Broughton's reading provides the resources for a richer account of the Second Meditation.

Other dependence arguments that Broughton identifies concern the causal principles of the Third Meditation and the premise that the meditator has an idea of God. Reading the *Meditations* as offering such dependence arguments does allow Broughton to explain why the meditator does not take mathematical ideas to be indubitable: although mathematical ideas are clear and distinct, they are not conditions of doubt. But Broughton is unfortunately silent about various other non-mathematical ideas which the meditator claims to

perceive clearly and distinctly — indeed, which he claims to perceive by the natural light. For example, the meditator asserts that it is ‘evident by the natural light’ that ‘the distinction between preservation and creation is only a conceptual one’ (CSM 2:33; AT 7:49), and that ‘it is manifest by the natural light that all fraud and deception depend on some defect’ (CSM 2:35; AT 7:52). Are these truths also conditions for the method of doubt, or does Broughton’s account not extend that far? If not, how would Broughton explain their indubitable status for Descartes? If some other interpretation is necessary to explain why these propositions are indubitable, then Broughton’s account will perhaps turn out to be less unified than she had hoped.

Deborah Boyle

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Joan Cocks

Passion and Paradox: Intellectuals Confront the National Question.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University

Press 2002. Pp. xi + 220.

US\$44.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-07467-4); US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-07468-2).

Joan Cocks’ *Passion and Paradox: Intellectuals Confront the National Question* is a wide-ranging multidisciplinary book crossing the bounds of liberalism, Marxist political thought, literature, critical theory, political science, and history. This makes it hard to classify. The book constructs no unified closely knit apparatus of concepts. Nor does it develop any single model of nationalism. But this does not diminish its value. Cocks is avowedly opposed to the notion that *any* model, however sophisticated, can capture the significance of nationalism. In Cocks’ view, nationalism is unavoidably paradoxical, having different meanings in different times, places and cultures and always involving the interplay of multiple opposing and often incoherent ideas, interests, and forces. For this reason, no single framework could suffice even in principle. In place of close conceptual argument, Cocks adopts an approach to her subject matter that is incomplete and better seen as a fascinating series of reflections on the influence, vitality, violence and political and ethical conundrums thrown up by various nationalisms.

Passion and Paradox has a strong rhetorical edge that I find attractive. Cocks writes about nationalism and politics in an engaged, passionate manner entirely consistent with her commitment to the impossibility of a neutral intellectual stance towards politics. Furthermore she is committed to pluralism, difference and cultural specificity while at the same time highly worried by the more violent and destructive features of nationalism. For

example she describes with considerable perspicuity the ways in which nationalism's dangerous kinds of identity politics are directed ultimately at the destruction of cultural difference both within the so-called nation, and towards the exclusion of those who are not citizens.

The choice of authors also reflects Cocks' pluralism. Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Isaiah Berlin, Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, Tom Nairn, V.S. Naipaul, and Edward Said all occupy important positions here. As disparate as they are, the common thread between them all Cocks identifies as their passionate engagement, their status as Socratic gadflies involved in the attempt to confront and challenge the ambiguities and perplexities of nationalism and thereby they 'light a way for themselves and others through the semi-darkness of political life'. They provide metaphors and suggestions which might offer the hope of a more refined cosmopolitan view that will provide some protection against the pressures leveled by aggressive capitalist economics on small and oppressed cultures. Simultaneously they warn against the dangers of homogenization and ethnic exclusion that arise when small and oppressed cultures adopt nationalism as a vital and useful defense against such political and economic forces.

It is with respect to the list of authors that I have some reservations. Feminist concerns about nationalism are neither raised nor addressed. Furthermore Cocks' discussion of 'liberal nationalists' and other secondary figures (in terms of the subject matter of this book) such as Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor is very cursory, yielding hyper-general one paragraph summaries of their views. As far as I can see these are designed only to provide instantiations of the kinds of arguments about nationalism that concern her. But surely they deserve more consideration than she provides, if for nothing else than to avoid possible straw-person accusations. As it stands, she does not really give them the space to defend themselves. I would also have loved to see some discussion of some of the 'radical conservative' thinkers of the Germany of the first half of the century such as Martin Heidegger, Carl Schmitt, and perhaps Ernst Juenger. Their work represents alternative strands of thought on nationalism which require evaluation and criticism in their own right.

Nonetheless, the strength of the book lies in its acknowledgement of the paradoxically dangerous and vital character of nationalism, while still counseling both moral and political hope. Here she raises the kind of dilemma which deeply concerned Albert Camus, for example: a response is morally required by some situation of oppression, and yet the response itself constantly threatens to turn into a new form of oppression. How do you fight the obvious injustices against which nationalism so often is a tool without engaging in political exclusion and the violence which often arises therefrom? Cocks maintains that this paradox offers more hope than might be apparent and that the thinkers she studies offer ways for us to think about the problem. For instance, an imaginative response to nationalism *might* spin off possibilities that are as yet unfulfilled but which might be achievable. For instance, we are able to identify values that require protection, such as the

human need for belonging and a cosmopolitan delight in human variety within political unity. The trick is to avoid the twin traps of ethnic exclusion and political/economic homogenization. *Passion and Paradox* finishes on a note of cautious optimism: there are grounds for concern arising from nationalism, but not for despair or indifference.

Richard Matthews

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Harvey Cormier

The Truth is What Works: William James, Pragmatism, and the Seed of Death.

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc. 2001.

Pp. xv + 187.

US\$63.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8476-9272-8);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8476-9273-6).

The title of the book is taken from a comment of Peirce's, and one would expect to see that member of the pragmatist family looming large in this book. Truth be told it is Kant, and James' Kantian interpreter, Hilary Putnam, who jointly constitute the company Cormier seeks to engage. This is a very Kant-concerned book, not unheard of in James scholarship, and this should not be taken as a criticism, as Cormier's use of Kant is quite innovative. *The Truth is What Works* explores James' pragmatism in detail, including its relation to his radical empiricism and his political views, and the question that endlessly troubles James scholars, viz., what exactly does pragmatism entail, if anything?

Cormier has a good grasp of James' views, and ranges widely over his oeuvre in making his case. Each chapter tackles a specific charge frequently leveled against pragmatism, though not in the most direct fashion. The first chapter does plunge right in to the relation of pragmatism to idealism, and nicely lays out the concept of pragmatism as a kind of general approach to philosophical inquiry that might accept many differing proponents. This topic will recur, and the question 'is pragmatism *wholesome* enough, philosophically, to be called a form of realism?' gets an affirmative answer from Cormier. Still, the worry that it shows too much ankle surfaces more than once in the later chapters.

The second chapter compares James' work on truth to Nietzsche's, though there is little engagement with the considerable secondary literature to flesh out this comparison. While Chapter One tackles the charge of idealism, this chapter addresses the question of whether pragmatism devolves into an

aggressive kind of subjectivism. Cormier does avail himself of the opportunity to rebut Bertrand Russell, who thought James' pragmatism was a little too *Übermenschlich*, but this was a passing concern in the chapter's conclusion. Strangely, the political and domestic aspects of pragmatism, which Cormier advertised in the preface as central to his presentation, get peripheral treatment as part of the summing up of a particular idea. This is much more the work of standard epistemology than Cormier apparently realizes. (The latter half of the fifth chapter is a worthy exception to this, though the technical matters preceding it may cause some readers to overlook it.)

Cormier's third chapter addresses Peirce's worry advertised in the title. That is, by connecting the concept of truth to varying human interests (instead of the traditional, disinterested verifications of science), James has planted 'the Seed of Death' in pragmatism's soil. Cormier uses this opportunity to turn the tables on Peirce, casting him as an anachronistic Kantian, and James as championing the ontological neutrality of the pragmatic method. Thus we find this chapter addressing the question of whether pragmatism ought to have been extended beyond its original, scientific, context. James' adaptation of Peirce's method is a matter of continuing debate, but Cormier does not concede the high ground to Peirce. Speaking for Peirce, he says of James 'if only [James] had understood the meaning of beliefs or concepts in terms of patterns and generality, or in terms of the way in which beliefs provide practical results *in general*, he would have seen that the truth of thoughts ... is likewise a matter of generality, potentiality, and ideality' (74, emphasis in original). This is a point developed with great force (here ironically) by Cormier: James' *engagé* account of beliefs and truth is the correct one, not the static, abstract version put forward by logician-critics like Peirce, Russell and Putnam. In an interesting moment, he employs this worry of Peirce's about relativism to a sizable tactical advantage. After speaking for Peirce, he adds: 'Notice something strange, though. Peirce, the legendary pragmatic realist, here reproves James, the pragmatic "relativist," for *paying too much attention to reality*, or at least part of what most people would recognize as "real"' (ibid.). Cormier occasionally shows real bravado (if also some slight-of-hand) in redacting shop-worn debates about pragmatism, and this makes his work worth our notice.

The next chapter does something interesting and new: here Cormier champions James as the designer of a kind of 'updated Pyrrhonism', which leads to a discussion of the relation of pragmatism as an attitude to philosophical accounts of volition, desire and cognition. The discussion left much to be desired in terms of scholarly depth, but raising the issue itself is of service. Chapter Five is an attempted refutation of Putnam's influential reading, in which James is cast as a neo-Kantian epistemologist. Interestingly, Cormier suggests the affinity between James and Kant involves the latter's moral theory, rather than his epistemology. This chapter (the largest in the book) includes a lengthy discussion of James' 1878 essay 'Remarks on Spencer's Definition of Mind as Correspondence', which is a welcome divergence from the norm. Cormier argues that, in James' view, the formation of

our beliefs is guided less by categories of the understanding than by something akin to the categorical imperative (Cormier wisely notes James' use of the very phrase). The impact of our subjective needs on our perception of (and beliefs about) the world around us is further explored, and as noted this is one of his strengths. Cormier correctly notes a major difference between Kant and James, viz., the latter does not view morality and science as deserving of strict separation. (This is one area of weakness for the Putnam-style interpretations of James, but the issue is not dwelt upon.)

Establishing the epistemological and metaphysical respectability of pragmatism are the goals of much of this book, but concerns about pragmatism's political respectability get their innings at the end of this volume. While the preface promises this will be a politically engaged book, it is only the last chapter and a half that clearly fits this description. Here Cormier engages in a discussion of the shortcomings of the Marxian critique of pragmatism by Antonio Gramsci and Cornel West. Along the way there are some interesting reflections on James' under-noticed oration on Robert Gould Shaw, but certainly there was more gold to be mined here, for the relationship between classical pragmatism and progressive/socialist politics is a rich and complicated one.

The tendency to cite exclusively from the popular, joint paperback edition *Pragmatism and The Meaning of Truth* (1975) seemed a bit odd. Why not cite the more accepted Harvard Edition of James' collected works? Another frustration was the style of footnoting: rather than citing direct quotations, indirect references, paraphrases or interpretations are given textual anchors via the notes, and as most readers will be expecting notes to illuminate either quotes or authorial tangents, this could prove frustrating. Many times I found myself flipping pages in expectation of an example or useful source, only to find an unadorned cross-reference.

One final point should be stressed: this is not a historical examination of the debates between Peirce and James, despite the allusion in the title. This book is interesting and has some new ideas, but the engagement is with James' readers and commentators of the nineteen-eighties, which is when debates about pragmatism had their renaissance.

Matthew Stephens

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Leon Harold Craig

*Of Philosophers and Kings: Political Philosophy
in Shakespeare's Macbeth and King Lear.*

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2002.

Pp. 406.

Cdn\$/US\$70.00. ISBN 0-8020-3571-X.

Craig claims that our greatest dramatic poet was also a great political philosopher — one whose poetry served his aims as a political philosopher. Craig defends his claim masterfully against its implicit denial by much contemporary Shakespeare scholarship, employs it to examine five of Shakespeare's plays — *Macbeth* and *King Lear* at some length, *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, and *The Winter's Tale* briefly — and shows finally how to reconcile it with Socrates' famous attack upon the poets in Plato's *Republic*. What does Craig mean by his claim? To call Shakespeare a philosopher is not to identify him as the author of particular philosophic doctrines but rather to say that he participated in the 'activity of thinking for the primary if not sole purpose of understanding, or better still, in [the] way of life in which this activity is the dominant organizing principle' (12). It is to identify him as a seeker of wisdom who poses the most fundamental metaphysical questions: for example, those questions about the extent and meaning of human freedom that face us when we seriously reflect upon the fact that human beings live in time, and those that arise when we try to think through how, and how far, the natural enables us to judge human conventions. But why and how is Shakespeare a *political* philosopher?

Answering this question is, in a sense, the work of Craig's book and — he claims — the work of the plays he explores. Political philosophy is not what those within the contemporary academic division of labour generally suppose: a part or branch of a larger enterprise named philosophy, perhaps an especially inferior division of philosophy given the dubious character of what it philosophizes about. What is it then? A variety of answers to this question emerge in the course of Craig's study.

Political philosophy is the prudential politics of those philosophers who, as successors of Socrates and pupils of his pupil, Plato, have proceeded so as to avoid suffering Socrates' own fate while considering carefully what it teaches us about politics and philosophy. Political philosophy is the enterprise of philosophers concerned to protect and promote their own way of life — saving the potential philosophers for philosophy, for example — while recognizing the necessary conflict between political life and philosophy. The political philosopher when he writes — as he does because he is guided by the fact that Plato wrote, rather than by the warning against writing Plato attributed to Socrates — will address himself to those who do, or could, share in his way of life so as to avoid disturbing the beliefs upon which even decent political regimes depend.

Did Shakespeare proceed this way? This is just what Craig seeks to show us. The fate of Macbeth suggests that 'life is a tale told by an idiot' precisely

for one who has done and proceeded as he has, and so Craig can concur 'in the final analysis' with the view that Shakespeare's play warns against 'living by an amoral Machiavellianism in the serve of nothing higher than one's own vanity' (38). On the other hand, as Craig shows, Machiavelli also supplies a clear account of the very mistakes that led to the Macbeths' failure and of the disastrous consequences piety may have in the failure of Macduff to protect his wife and infants. And attending carefully to the mysterious roles played by the Thanes of Ross and Lennox, Craig enables us to notice two less conspicuous Scottish nobles, who do use 'Machiavellian duplicity' successfully, the former as a survivor, the latter for a nobler purpose. Similarly Craig shows how and why Shakespeare himself has misled his audience and most of his critics into mistaking the shrewd and majestic hero of *King Lear*, whose subtle solution for the problem of succession that confronts him and his kingdom is undone by Cordelia's failure to recognize the political situation within which her father demands a profession of her love, for a vain and foolish old man (116-18, 188-9).

Calling Shakespeare a political philosopher, Craig means also to suggest a close and complex relationship between the political questions posed by the two plays he examines at greatest length and the metaphysical considerations to which he is finally led. So Craig's discussion of *Macbeth* moves 'in the natural way' from the political story, whose theme is tyranny, to the philosophic story, whose theme is time. Craig turns, he says, from 'a *strictly political* to a metaphysical consideration of the play' (emphasis added) because the issues posed by the political story — especially by the opposing religious views displayed in the play, or more precisely by the evident absence of the divine support for justice and mercy that those views assert or deny — 'can be resolved, if at all, only in light of a comprehensive understanding of the permanent nature of things' and ultimately only when we have fully understood 'the workings of Good and Evil in the natural ordering of things' (51-2).

May we also say that for Craig the political and philosophical are linked in the sense that a comprehensive understanding of the nature of things would resolve or eliminate the political problems: turn Macbeth away from the path to tyranny, enable Othello to withstand the villainy of Iago, or overcome the succession problem in Lear's kingdom? What we can say is that Craig urges us to think of Shakespeare as somehow engaged in a dialogue with Plato — exactly how is an issue not entirely resolved in Craig's book (215, 266-7, 377, note 45) — and certainly as an explorer of the famous Socratic claim in Plato's *Republic* that the problems that beset political and individual life will be overcome only when philosophers become kings, or kings philosophers (194). In *King Lear* we are invited to think through the complexity of the human condition as this expresses the ambiguously natural, and we accept that invitation only when we follow the path of the old king as he (very nearly) becomes a philosopher and so discover 'a story about the origin of philosophy and the making of a philosopher' (188). In Edgar, we observe a philosopher becoming a king. And in *Measure for Measure's* Duke

Vincentio we see a philosopher who discovers how to pursue his philosophical interests by discharging his political responsibilities (251).

Was the poet Shakespeare a political philosopher? Craig shows us much that we may never have seen before by proceeding on this assumption. He surely demonstrates for attentive readers the 'logographic necessity' in Shakespeare's works, and that the most perplexing problems that confront us as human beings are posed and explored to a startling depth in his plays. And to be sure, much that is said by Plato's Socrates against the poets in the *Republic* cannot touch Shakespeare, and much of Socrates case must be seen as deeply ironic — as Craig shows (257, 260-6). And yet we may ask whether the quarrel between poetry and philosophy is wholly disposed of. Craig notes that Homer was the educator Socrates denied him to have been, but he also admits that Plato found it necessary to replace Achilles with his own reinvented Socrates. Supposing Shakespeare the wisest of human beings who took pen to paper, must we conclude that for him dramatic poetry ministers to the aims of philosophy? Can we treat his plays as confirming the prejudices upon which all regimes rest, while inviting careful readers to pursue a very different direction? May we treat as secondary the dramatic consequences that would have resulted had Lear completed the path to philosophy before he reached Dover? Or be sure that philosophy can dispel the terror invoked in and by Macbeth?

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John Deely

Four Ages of Understanding: The first postmodern survey of philosophy from Ancient times to the turn of the twenty-first century.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001.

Pp. xxxiii + 1019.

Cdn\$/US\$95.00. ISBN 0-8020-4735-1.

Four Ages of Understanding is an innovative, thorough history of philosophy, which suggests that we are on the edge of a new and constructive paradigm shift in interpreting human thought. The book presents ancient Greek, medieval, modern and postmodern thought, but the accent falls on the discovery of the central role of the sign in understanding nature. Deely's thesis is that the whole intellectual culture can be understood only as mediated by signs, that the action of signs is so general that it gives structure to our sensations, perceptions, and understanding, to our experience as a

whole. The book is the first project presenting a consistent theory of knowledge from the point of view of postmodernism. The doctrine of signs, as presented by Deely, overcomes the gap between idealism and empiricism, culture and nature, the distinction between inward and outward experience. Such a point of view is challenging and throws down the gauntlet to classical history of philosophy. Deely overturns this outlook, presenting the postmodernism as a logical successor of the highest speculative achievements of Medieval Latin thought. In a chapter called 'The Road Not Taken', he analyses the intellectual atmosphere at the dawn of the Modern Epoch, showing that the road taken by modern philosophy was just one of the possible alternatives at the end of the Late Latin Age.

By taking the way of ideas, Descartes has chosen a speculative path according to which nothing in the nature of ideas links them up with what is beyond the subjectivity of the knower, in contrast to the way of signs, according to which the very existence of an idea presupposes sensation. From this point of view, modern philosophy can be thought as having its origins in the abandonment of semiotic consciousness achieved over the centuries from Augustine to Poincaré. The signs belong not to the class of subjective accidents but to the class of relations, which are 'suprasubjective' (546). They mediate between the physical and the objective, where the object represents itself in knowledge and the sign always represents an object other than itself. According to Deely, by forgetting the crucial point that ideas depend on mind-independent relations, modernity lost the highest development of Latin thought on the doctrine of signs, which was not to be regained until Peirce. 'By taking up where Latin thought left off on this point, semiotic consciousness constitutes a definitive break with modernity and, at the same time, manifests a continuity with the early-modern milieu out of which modernity first took rise. The doctrine of signs restores continuity to philosophical tradition and history, something that have been lost for three hundred years in the wake of Descartes' (692). Thus, Peirce's premise that 'the highest grade of reality is only reached by signs' (451) gives rise to a new science: semiotics, as knowledge, developed by studying the action of signs. It unified in a single instrument or medium (the sign) the otherwise diverse products of speculative knowledge. The sign consists not in a type of sensible thing but in a pure relation, irreducibly triadic, indifferent to the physical status of its object and to the source of its immediate origin, nature or mind. 'The notion of signs,' Deely says, 'is relevant, directly or indirectly, to all four ages of understanding so far: to Greek philosophy by transcendence of restriction to nature; to Latin philosophy for its foundation; to modern philosophy by its neglect; and to postmodern thought by its centrality' (216).

All told, *Four Ages of Understanding* is a stimulating and at the same time intellectually sophisticated book. Absorbing, intelligible, and faithful to texts, Deely creates impressive and convincing metaphors, and displays an elegant sense of humor. And the method is impressive, offering extensive citations and sophisticated engagement with issues of translation from Latin and Greek languages. The book is a survey of the history of philosophy, not

a detailed work; it provides all the important facts and ideas, but omits some details and even some principal authors whose philosophy is not relevant to the doctrine of signs. With its comprehensive footnotes, references, index, tables and demonstrative schemes, Deely's work is an indispensable reference for students and scholars in the history of philosophy, epistemology and semiotics.

With its impressive synthesis of history of semiotics and history of philosophy, *Four Ages of Understanding* offers the foundation for a novel postmodern paradigm for philosophy and its future development.

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Robert J. Dostal, ed.

The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer.
New York: Cambridge University Press 2002.
Pp. 344.
US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-80193-1);
US\$23.00 (paper: ISBN 0-521-00041-6).

J.E. Malpas and Jens Kertscher, eds.

Gadamer's Century: Essays in Honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer.
Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2002.
Pp. xiv + 363.
US\$70.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-262-13403-9);
US\$25.00 (paper: ISBN 0-262-63247-0).

'We come to understand a text,' writes Richard J. Bernstein in the Cambridge volume reviewed here, 'by learning how to question it and how it poses questions to us' — in the words of Gadamer: 'That a historical text is made the object of interpretation means that it puts a question to the interpreter' (278). Gadamer's work, the subject of these two books, is certainly an historical text, and the authors chosen to write about it presumably understand that work — one guesses that the editors who convened them did so with a sense that these were people capable of rendering a well-considered judgement on Gadamer's thought. Notice, however, that giving such an account is not Gadamer's understanding of understanding. Do these authors respond to Gadamer as if they had been questioned, as if they were giving themselves over to a conversation with the real? Hardly at all. And that raises

the paradox of all standard works of philosophy on the subject of Hans-Georg Gadamer.

Gadamer believed that philosophy is largely lost, having become a full participant in our alienation from reality, primarily by accepting the stance of effectiveness: speak rather than encounter, engage one's expertise rather than engage with the claim of the text to say something true. Describe, summarize, contextualize, compare — yes — but don't become ridiculous by speaking the words 'That is so' (or 'That rings false compared to this').

But who cares, you might answer. One could justifiably ask, 'Since when did Gadamer become the authority on what it means to understand? Can he really rule out the relevance of helping people grasp what he is saying — as a way of *facilitating* the understanding that mattered to him?' Well, maybe we don't need to judge these books by his standard, but I have made my point: Gadamer probably would have looked askance at many of these essays and it repays any prospective reader to bear that reservation in mind in relation to the work of 'experts', a notion at which Gadamer often looked askance.

Gadamer's Century: Essays in Honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer was conceived to mark Gadamer's one-hundredth birthday in 2000. Its essays are stated to 'provide a measure' of Gadamer's work 'by showing the breadth of engagement his ideas have provoked.' In fact the book provides a very poor measure because, like any thinker, Gadamer has provoked a great many off-topic responses, as we saw at length in *The Philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer* published in 1997 in the Library of Living Philosophers. A less evasive approach is taken in *The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer*, whose essays 'present and assess Gadamer's philosophical achievement from a wide variety of perspectives' (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of language, etc.).

Of such books we tend to expect any of the following: (i) clear summaries of the philosopher's ideas, providing economical introductions; (ii) applications of that work to problems not addressed by the philosopher; (iii) clarifications that help the reader over pitfalls in the work; and (iv) criticisms of the work, indicating weaknesses or raising unanswered questions. What we don't expect is something the MIT book devoted three essays to: discussions of other philosophers or ideas that have a tenuous connection to the name on the cover. The essays on Nietzsche, history, and dreams never connect with Gadamer — that is not my assessment: the authors say so themselves (mentioning Gadamer once and moving on). Unfortunately the editors did not see fit to warn the reader that this 'measure' of Gadamer's work was partly a kind of *Festschrift*. In fact the attention to Gadamer's work is unusually light; excluding the authors who ignore him completely, seven of the remaining thirteen authors make fewer than eight references to his work in the course of their entire essay. But that is not the only irritating feature of *Gadamer's Century*.

The book is deeply marred by the number of essays that make Gadamer a kind of puppet or spokesperson for what their authors take to be 'hermeneutics' or Gadamer's 'hermeneutic theory', the engine of a 'hermeneutic

account' (What's that?, Gadamer would have asked) that affords us 'strategies' which are 'hermeneutical and interpretative'. That philosophy is evidently represented by such 'crucial' insights as 'the discovery of meaning is always a circular movement ... between parts of texts and the whole that comprises them' (106), or 'things are what they are only within an interpretation' (304), or 'we understand within a framework' (318), or the encounter with others teaches us that our reading is just 'one among other possible forms' (295). As if banalization were not enough, putting words in Gadamer's mouth is far too common here: 'Gadamer's idea would be that modernist ... art requires us to come to terms with our modernity' (67), which is just to tack Gadamer's name onto your own ideas, or 'Gadamer suggests that we ... test our prejudices ... by assuming the truth of that which we are trying to understand' (322), a remarkably crude methodologism for which, naturally, no reference is given. It is as if 'Gadamer' were just a philosophical rubber-stamp for views or projects that draw on some aspect of interpretation, however trite. And that reminds me of nothing more than Gadamer's charge that modernity, through what it calls expertise, is riddled with institutions in which *not* listening — expecting nothing deeper from your interlocutor than your own truistic thinking — is just business as usual.

Several of these authors seem almost oblivious to the philosophy they are expounding. Gerald Bruns states that to understand Cubist painting 'means entering into the ... art world in which the Cubist work emerges as a work of art according to its own theory of what counts as art' (64); he is echoed by Jens Kertscher, who concludes that, 'in the last instance, it is the practice of ... embedding utterances in their specific context [that] makes understanding possible,' though this idea of 'the delimitation of contexts' (153) entirely ignores Gadamer's view of the essential historicity of understanding (a context formed by two horizons). In an application-type essay, Georgia Warnke 'uses' Gadamer as a way of rebutting the charge that understanding gender identity as a mere social imposition leaves no opening for the critique of such constructions. Her conclusion? Gadamer enjoins us to 'eliminate' categories like 'male' or 'female' on the basis of their invalidity — 'because they answer no meaningful questions' — which turns Gadamer into a tool for the kind of social engineering that horrified him. What Gadamer meant by the logic of question and answer was a one-on-one encounter from which no Humean fork for purging social behaviour could be fabricated.

No fewer than three essays give attention to Donald Davidson — not pursuing the hint (dropped by Gadamer) that there is a truly 'astonishing' distance between these two philosophies, but to show analytic philosophers (as John McDowell puts it here) the 'riches' of Gadamer's principal work, *Truth and Method*. But to make such philosophers appreciate him you have to take up their projects, and employing Gadamer in the polemics of analytical philosophy eliminates more than it communicates. In his examination of understanding as a *fusion of horizons* — 'a new and different model' that 'shows promise of carrying us beyond the dilemma of ethnocentrism and relativism' — Charles Taylor takes up the Davidsonian problem of compre-

hending the completely foreign (Aztec ritual sacrifice) but ignores the fact that what Gadamer means by understanding would not be achieved by getting an answer of the form 'seeing why someone holds belief *x*, which is alien to me.' As *Truth and Method* states in its title, Gadamer's issue is the importance, in understanding the alien, of responding to the truth-claim of *x* as a truth claim — something the analytic approach can neatly detour.

This volume has one high point, however. Alasdair MacIntyre's contribution is a rare effort to build upon Gadamer — to extend truly Gadamerian thinking on the power of a text to 'talk back' to the reader 'in its own terms rather than in those of the interpreter' (165). The 'it-is-all-interpretation' brand of hermeneutics (fully present in this book) does not grasp that possessing something of 'its own' that is not up to us *is* what Gadamer is saying about otherness. What is more, MacIntyre clarifies an important point about historicity: that not every *historical standard* is *relative to a time*. At the same time he presses Gadamer, questioning his reliance upon the concept of *phronēsis* in absence of the issue of the *telos* — a key part of its meaning for Aristotle. This is a truly important question, for there is a tension between the Aristotle and the Heidegger in Gadamer's work — between the insistence that hermeneutics is ethical (oriented to recognition of the Good) and the Heideggerian reminder that revelation also conceals (a defect). But what is deficient about an apprehension of the Good that guides a finite life to its proper end? In an essay of exemplary clarity, MacIntyre shows that Gadamer's hermeneutics is an ongoing project.

The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer is a rather better book in that every essay is actually about Gadamer and most of its authors seem, like MacIntyre, to have some philosophical use for the man. Oddly, two of the essays in the MIT volume are reprinted here with only minor stylistic variations (those by Charles Taylor and Robert Pippin). That means that, except for the MacIntyre essay, there is nothing in the MIT volume a student of Gadamer could not live without.

The best of the Cambridge volume is Fred Lawrence's truly outstanding examination of Gadamer's work as the extension of a reaction to a modern epistemology that subjectivizes experience and turns understanding away from the question of 'the right way to live' (183). This is the best article on Gadamer I have read anywhere; it brings together many themes and conveys difficult thinking with real clarity. Valuable also are editor Robert Dostal's contribution on Gadamer's life, which was refreshingly new; the expository essays by Richard Bernstein, whose comparison of Gadamer with Habermas and Derrida is less rewarding than his characterization of Gadamer's thought; and the clarifying essays by: Jean Grondin, offering a helpful differentiation of four senses of the term 'understanding' in Gadamer (why could one not have a book full of this workmanlike work?), Günther Figal, who explores the idea of understanding as an event (though Figal's signal is interrupted by blistering bursts of abstraction), and J.M. Baker, Jr., who gives a reading of some difficult passages in Gadamer's work on pure poetry. The bibliography in the Cambridge volume is considerably more useful.

Yet not all the essays surpass the level of MIT's offering. In different times one might have been able to give more credit to the Cambridge volume, but that is particularly difficult this year, the year of Gadamer's death. New books published as he passed — books by Gadamer 'scholars' that purport to assess the 'significance of his work' — have a fairer-than-average chance of being picked up by readers who would like to know more about the one-hundred-and-two-year-old philosopher we have just lost. And that is a rather galling thought, because you can find scant trace in either of these works of excitement about the ideas of a truly important thinker. You could read both books cover to cover and be startled to find that *Truth and Method* 'is considered one of the great philosophical works of the twentieth century' (Malpas et al., ix).

The book we need is one written by more people like MacIntyre and Lawrence, who hear something in Gadamer they want the reader to know about: a unique contribution to the understanding of modernity. Only sentences dropped at random through these reams of text tell you anything about *that* Gadamer. Generally, it is still true that one does better to read Gadamer than readers of Gadamer.

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Contexts of Justice: Political Philosophy beyond Liberalism and Communitarianism.

Trans. John M.M. Farrell.

Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 2002. Pp. xii + 346.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-520-21408-0);

US\$22.50 (paper: ISBN 0-520-23225-9).

The now famous debate between liberals and communitarians dominated the discipline of political philosophy during the 1980s and continues to be a focus of analysis (on a greatly reduced scale) in the twenty-first century. It is a debate that has engaged some of the most prominent and respected political philosophers of recent time, including Bruce Ackerman, Ronald Dworkin, Jürgen Habermas, Charles Larmore, Alasdair MacIntyre, John Rawls, Michael Sandel, Judith Shklar, and Charles Taylor, to name only a few. *Contexts of Justice: Political Philosophy beyond Liberalism and Communitarianism* is both an analysis of the debate and, as its subtitle suggests, an attempt to move beyond it. Specifically, the aim of *Contexts of Justice* is to reveal certain

fundamental flaws that undermine liberal and communitarian arguments about justice and in so doing explain how it is possible to develop 'a morally justifi[able] theory of political and social justice' (1).

Forst's study is animated 'by the conviction that a critical analysis of the controversy between liberalism and communitarianism offers the possibility of making a systematic contribution to the clarification of the basic concepts of a theory of justice' (1). To this end, the first four chapters are devoted to 'reconstructing and disentangling' the communitarian critique of liberalism, and the liberal countercritique of the communitarian argument. This task is accomplished by analyzing four issues that are at the center of the liberal-communitarian debate: namely, the constitution of the self (Chapter One), the neutrality of law (Chapter Two), the ethos of democracy (Chapter Three), and the idea of a universalist morality (Chapter Four). In Chapter Five, the concluding chapter, Forst brings together the central determinations of the preceding chapters and explains how the resulting proposal can be intersubjectively justified, in a meaningful way, using particular conceptions of practical reason and reciprocal recognition. Each chapter entails a complex of arguments that defy effective summarization within the confines of this review; I will restrict my efforts to reiterating only those conclusions essential to gaining a general understanding of Forst's theory.

According to Forst, an examination of liberal and communitarian arguments about justice reveals that both positions are undermined by an analytical myopia. In striving to safeguard individual freedom and equality and ensure the primacy of the right over the good, liberal-deontological theories, in effect, negate the validity of 'community' as a framework, or *context*, for questions of justice. Such theories are, Forst argues, guilty of being 'context-forgetful' (3, 5, 253). Conversely, by presenting one's community, its traditional values, practices and institutions, as the inescapable and superceding framework within which questions of justice must be posed, analyzed, and answered, communitarian theories of justice are 'context-obsessed' (3, 5, 253).

What the liberal and communitarian approaches both fail to recognize is that questions of justice 'pose themselves in *different* contexts and require answers that are justified differently' (291). Forst identifies four connected yet distinct 'normative contexts', or 'levels of debate', which, in turn, 'correspond to four different conceptions of person and community' (230); for all, the categories of distinction are *ethical*, *legal*, *political*, and *moral*, and each has a 'different meaning and a different relation to the problem of justice' (3).

In order to respond to questions of justice in a valid manner, it is necessary to first identify which type of person and community is under consideration. The answer to the question 'What does justice demand?' will differ in important ways, depending upon whether one is referring to an individual and/or community in an *ethical*, *legal*, *political*, or *moral* sense. This approach requires that 'the person at the center of questions of justice ... be comprehended not solely as an ethical person, a legal person, a citizen, or a

moral person, but as a person in all these dimensions of community' (292), something that liberal and communitarian arguments fail to do.

Beyond embracing the necessary differentiation of contexts and the corresponding understanding of the person and community, a viable theory of justice must also satisfy the demands of practical reason, which, Forst argues, requires that the values and norms comprising the public conception of justice 'be intersubjectively justified' (291); which is to say, the principles of justice that regulate public behaviour must be 'generally and impartially' justifiable to all subject to them. Forst believes that the theory he develops in *Contexts of Justice* satisfies the above criteria and offers 'a conception of morally justified political and social justice' that clarifies 'the normative conditions on which the basic structure of society can be called just' (xi-xii).

The preceding summary offers only the briefest of thumbnail sketches of Forst's arguments. The level of detail and analysis presented by Forst is impressive; however, it also frequently makes the text more demanding than it need be. Though Forst's arguments are generally clear, they are often quite lengthy and nuanced. While such characteristics can at times be necessary or desirable, arguably, the essential claim(s) associated with each chapter could have been developed in a more succinct manner with equal clarity and force. At minimum, these features render the text notably less attractive to non-specialists. (Of course, such a consequence may be neither unexpected nor undesirable.)

In addition, it is regrettable that Forst never substantially engages the issue of the practical implementation of his proposed theory. How might his recommended approach be institutionalized or otherwise embodied either in a society's governing framework or its public culture? To what extent do contemporary societies either possess the conditions required to realize Forst's theory or provide the promise that the necessary environment might someday be established? Though there is certainly no requirement that theorizing address or be tempered by considerations of sociopolitical practicality, the text would have been even more interesting (and provocative) had Forst seriously confronted such 'practical' questions.

Nevertheless, when all is said and done, *Contexts of Justice* constitutes a very interesting, original and useful contribution to the existing literature, both with respect to the liberal-communitarian debate and the broader discourse surrounding the development of a viable theory of sociopolitical justice for contemporary pluralistic societies.

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Hans-Georg Gadamer

Gadamer in Conversation: Reflections and Commentary.

Richard E. Palmer, ed. and trans.

New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2001.

Pp. viii + 174.

US\$22.50. ISBN 0-300-08488-9.

The life of Hans-Georg Gadamer, up until the 1960s, was one of study and reflection, his time divided between the library and the seminar, with some lecturing and administration, in the classic mould of the professor. All this study brought forth excellent fruit in 1960, *Truth and Method*, now seen to be one of the century's great works of philosophy. What is so unusual in the life of Gadamer is the turn it took after his retirement in 1968. He became a public figure. At the time of his death in March, 2002, he was very well known around the world. His fame was not like that of his teacher and friend Heidegger, consisting in equal parts of adulation and notoriety. Nor was it like that of philosophers such as Russell and Chomsky, whose public fame derived from activities quite remote from their philosophical work. Gadamer became well known because he continued to offer to wider and wider circles the results of his long years of quiet study. *Truth and Method* remains the magnum opus, but now it has been extended, *ergaenzt*, and further developed, *weiterentwickelt*, in many essays and short books (I refer to the descriptions offered in Gadamer's *Collected Works*, *Gesammelte Werke*) and as well in innumerable public lectures, broadcasts and published interviews that do not appear in the *Collected Works*. This record of thirty years of public activity and witness — Gadamer in the *agora* — is the confirmation of the thought by the life, an inspiring example of authenticity.

Truth and Method deserves its stature because it takes on directly a dilemma that is central to modernity and post-modernity: what is the role for us of our literary heritage? What do we make of art? And the history of art? Indeed, what role does our history actually play in our existence? More than anyone else, Gadamer has been able to clarify what the humanities are *for*.

The present book is the most recent collection of interviews to become available in English, and has already appeared not only in German but in French, Italian, Spanish and Japanese. The first three chapters are interviews conducted in 1993 by Carsten Dutt, a Heidelberg philosopher. They constitute the heart of the book, and are arranged under the topics of Hermeneutics, Aesthetics, and Practical Philosophy. They throw a great deal of light on *Truth and Method* as well as later works of Gadamer on aesthetics and politics. In my review, I'll call attention to some of these pointers.

In the first interview, Gadamer shows how hermeneutical philosophy maintains an appropriate awareness of history. It leads us not to render the past into an object of various specialized researches, but to acknowledge how

history is already moving within ourselves even as we think and study. Gadamer's own way of speaking gives abundant evidence of the tacit and operative presence of history within his thinking: as he speaks, we always sense the presence of Heidegger and Husserl, Nietzsche and Dilthey, Hegel and Kant, Descartes and Augustine, Aristotle and Plato. See pp. 64-5 where Hegel's presence looms over the discussion.

But Dutt poses a series of questions to Gadamer, drawing upon some of Gadamer's critics, and the course of the discussion leads to further clarification of Gadamer's claims. 'You have compared the form in which the fusion of horizons takes place with the form of a conversation' (49). Dutt notes that critics have found here a false personalizing of historical tradition, making the past into a kind of 'super-subject', as if it were putting questions to *us*, and entering into a conversation.

In reply, Gadamer clarifies that it is not some super-subject called tradition that is interrogating us or putting us into question, but in each case a single work. No doubt a work that was produced long ago was conditioned by its own world, and very likely this work has left a legacy as well that mediates the work to us in our own time. Thus our studies may well bring to light the continuity of the past. There is no reason why interpreters should not try to 'reconstruct' the work's determining environment and at the same time the legacy it has left (see pp. 48 and 41). But it is still the single work that reaches us with its continuing appeal or provocation. Scholarly reconstruction is by no means the essence of interpretation (this thesis is developed at length at the conclusion of the First Part of *Truth and Method*). Responding to the address that the work issues to *us* is always the root event of an interpretation properly so called. '... What comes to meet us from the tradition poses a question to us that we have to answer. Something from the tradition *addresses* us ...' (49). Gadamer has been making the point all along that what gives a guarantee to our work in the humanities is not an ideal of objective knowledge that might be shared with the natural sciences, but rather the discovery of something that bears upon our own lives, that we want to share in, and that matters to all of us. (see pp. 40 and 55)

This point is developed more fully in Dutt's second interview that is devoted to aesthetics. The work of art 'says something to someone'. Gadamer stresses our vulnerability to the address of a work, our *Betroffenheit*. 'In this assertion is contained the dismay of finding oneself directly affected by what was said by the work ...' (70). Here the interview is a helpful pointer to Gadamer's treatment of 'The Retrieval of the Question of Artistic Truth', a major section in *Truth and Method's* First Part. Both in the interview and in the corresponding section of *Truth and Method*, Gadamer is arguing against the formalism that we associate with Kantian aesthetics, with the pre-eminent position Kant assigns to judgment and to taste. Nevertheless, Gadamer is also able to add here, with great subtlety, a vindication of the formal character of the work of art, the autonomy of form, in a way that surmounts the Hegelian 'aesthetics of content' which took the work of art as the sensuous shining of the Idea, the thesis that submits the work ultimately to the

philosophical Idea. The resistance to Hegel that Gadamer shows in this interview affords a good introduction to his later writings on aesthetics, which are abundantly referenced in this book.

As in the Second Part of *Truth and Method*, so here, Gadamer is a great and salutary corrective to the forgetting of history that is surely the greatest danger that education confronts in North America (and here I include post-secondary education). His work matters because he combats the alienation between history and the existing self: he shows it to be not an object of study (and it is usually made terribly boring when it is so conceived) but the dimension in which we are all immersed, the beating heart of the existing self and the community. I am led to imagine a form of education in history that would resemble French immersion, in which the language is not an object of study but a medium of instruction.

Dutt brings a second objection from some of Gadamer's critics (Manfred Frank is mentioned on p. 51) — namely, that Gadamer has tended to diminish the autonomy of the free modern self, merging it into the movement of the vast process of history. (In earlier decades, it was virtually the opposite criticism that was brought against Gadamer — namely, that he had *elevated* this 'modern self' to a status all too great: E.D. Hirsch, Jr., and E. Betti did not want the 'reader' to participate in constituting the meaning of the text, as Gadamer had it: meaning had to be 'objective.' Habermas worried that Gadamer's emphasis on our prejudices would introduce egoism and irrationalism into interpretation.) In reply to Frank, Gadamer shows that in every case it is *our own* language by which and in which we interpret and understand what has been addressed to us. 'The conversation with the tradition is a genuine conversation, ... in which the one who is encountering the word plays an active role. The language of the interpretation is *his or her* language, not just "the language of the text" ... ' (51). This account throws light on Gadamer's famous notion of the 'horizon of our understanding'. Everything that we understand is conditioned by the 'horizon' that is projected from ourselves, from our own time. Within this projected horizon, there is the language we inherited, the prejudices of our time, the present stock of scientific and social knowledge, all the interconnected motifs and icons whereby each of us can locate him or herself as the citizen of a given place and time. Our horizon is precisely not native to what is past, but it brings it about that what we read has meaning for us. As Gadamer says (47, see also pp. 37-8), '... the person who is understanding is himself or herself *right there* in the understood meaning.' A bit further on we'll have more to say about the constitution of this horizon. The present point is that the horizon whereby we make the world and the past intelligible to ourselves is the central condition for being a self at all, having an ego or an identity.

The first interview also made it plain that hermeneutics affords a suitable way for thinking about *language*. We find on p. 56 a quotation stemming from the second-last page of the Second Part of *Truth and Method*: 'the fusion of horizons which takes place in understanding is language's great accomplishment'. This indicates the step that is to be taken in the Third Part, the study

of language that reveals its ontological dimension: hermeneutical experience prompts a re-appraisal of the powers of language. To put the matter briefly, we can say that history operates within our understanding, thinking and interpretation in the form of language. History is manifest *as* language, that is, (a) one mother tongue, and (b) a translation-power of this tongue in relation to all other languages. Translation and exposition occur by virtue of the projection of the mother tongue and the native conceptuality upon the moving event of the original text. What becomes fused is our mobile horizon with the mobile horizon of the original, an encounter that brings something new into being, an understanding, an interpretation, a translation. Yet it is important to acknowledge that this event does not spring from the wilfulness or subjectivity of the interpreter. The horizon did not first spring from us intentionally, in such a way that we as individuals consciously endowed it with its contents. The horizon is an expression of our *being*, it expresses the locale that we as finite selves occupy. There is much more contained in the horizon of our understanding than we are consciously aware of. It is projected by our *being* rather than by our consciousness, for this understanding *is* our being. Since the pre-understanding that shapes interpretation is rooted in our being, it is not only a rational openness to the other. It incorporates as well our own self-assertion, and that yields a struggle and effort in our cognitive life, the mobile turbulence of understanding. Dutt quotes here from an untranslated article of Gadamer, 'The Incapacity for Dialogue', in which he brings together two conflicting factors in the constitution of our horizon. On the one hand, there is a commonality of reason by which our comprehension can be expanded beyond what is individual and particular to ourselves. On the other hand, '... our reason remains powerless against the blindness that our individuality nourishes in us.' Here perhaps we can see into the depth of the problems that open up to Gadamer's view, for they give expression to the complexity of our being insofar as our understanding is constituted by horizons, prejudice, and finitude, all expressed in our language.

The remaining three interviews bring us further understanding of Gadamer's life and the context in which his thought took shape. 'The Greeks, Our Teachers' (1994) features a scholar of Classics, Glenn Most of Heidelberg, and clarifies how Gadamer proceeded from his initial work on Plato with Natorp, in 1920-22, to do further work on Aristotle, partly with Heidegger, then returned to Plato, working with Friedlaender and writing his habilitation thesis in the discipline of Classics which became his first book, *Plato's Dialectical Ethics*. The discussion 'On Phenomenology' (1995), with the British scholar Alfons Grieder, charts the pathway Gadamer took through Husserl to Heidegger, and informs us about the numerous outstanding individuals he encountered in Marburg, Leipzig, Frankfurt and Heidelberg.

The concluding interview, 'The Real Nazis had no Interest at all in us ...' (1989) is more of a cross-examination conducted by an aggressive journalist. Doerte von Westernhagen was in search of documentation on the role played by philosophers during the Third Reich. She sought from Gadamer information on figures who may have had stronger or weaker ties to Nazism

(Wolfgang Schadewaldt, Arnold Gehlen, Erich Rothacker and Hans Freyer are some of the more prominent ones), but at the same time she accuses Gadamer himself of collusion with the Nazis during the 1930s. On her first aim, she does elicit some documentation recorded both in the text and the notes of the interview, which will be of interest to those who do research on this history. [Unfortunately, the material contains some errors and incomplete documentation. Note 9 on p. 162 confuses Walter F. Otto, who had Party connections, with Rudolf Otto, author of *The Idea of the Holy*, who did not. For certain surnames mentioned in Notes 19 and 20 (Wienzierl, Simon and Woehl) there is no documentation in any of the bibliographies.] But the second agenda of the interviewer fizzles out. Apparently Gadamer's signature appeared (along with hundreds of others') on a 1933 petition to withdraw Germany from the League of Nations. And it seems he attended a 1934 summer camp meeting for academic teachers organized by the government. That's about all she can throw up to him, making her indignation seem forced and improbable in the end.

If that was an unfriendly interrogation, it is not so easy to find a term for the earlier *Gespraeche*, as they are called in the German text. 'Conversation' does not seem right for an encounter for which a questioner came prepared with an agenda and supporting documents. I've been calling them 'interviews', but the difficulty is that this does not capture the sense in which the word *Gesprach* is used throughout these discussions to describe the whole atmosphere or milieu of Gadamer's philosophy. 'Dialogue' seems the most suitable term for this, and it is notable that this translation shows up in contexts in which the whole spirit of Gadamer's philosophizing is under discussion and being contrasted with other kinds of work. By contrast with Gadamer, we read, Derrida is unwilling to engage in dialogue. (61ff.) Perhaps our translator sensed a tone too elevated, too ideal, in that word for the purpose of describing these get-togethers that took place in a room equipped with tape-recorders, so that it would not be suitable in the title of the book. If that was the reasoning, I have no quarrel with it. I might propose the term 'discussions' (I've used it in this paragraph), for which the German would be not *Gesprach* but *Besprechung*. A discussion is more focussed, I think, than a conversation, more intellectual than a journalistic interview, less elevated than a dialogue. Even Derrida can discuss. Though discussion might be a more appropriate book-title than the present one, there is no reason to avoid the term 'dialogue' where it occurs during the discussions to express an ideal of philosophy.

This book in English translation will be a good introduction to Gadamer and to hermeneutics — not only for beginning students but also for our 'non-continental' colleagues in philosophy. The Dutt interviews are highly readable and entirely reliable. Perhaps they are outweighed somewhat by the heavy apparatus at the beginning of the book and at the end. But, bearing in mind Richard Palmer's goal, shared no doubt by Yale University Press, of getting people started in the study of Gadamer and hermeneutics, all the

introductions, bibliographies and appendices add up to a good frame for a lovely picture.

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Graeme Gilloch
Walter Benjamin — Critical Constellations.
Malden, MA: Polity Press 2002. Pp. xi + 304.
US\$62.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-7456-1007-2);
US\$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7456-1008-0).

Attempting 'immanent criticism' of Benjamin's work in the manner of Benjamin's own interventions in the 'afterlife' of works, Gilloch hopes to provide a reading 'appropriate' to the work 'itself' and to the changing circumstances in which it now appears. This reading offers 'close, careful interpretation' rather than a 'definitive Benjamin' or the 'final judgements' presumed by 'the exclusively philological scholarship' that seeks 'the "true" Benjamin.' Gilloch maintains a relatively non-dogmatic approach throughout, despite his concern with legitimizing Benjamin as a 'Frankfurt School'-figure, a concern that seems a little overwrought (particularly in frequent invocations of what 'Critical Theory' or 'Critical Theorists' should do) for a study of writings by someone as productively wayward as Benjamin.

Concentrating on Benjamin's 'critical engagement with the cultural phenomena and experiences of modernity,' Gilloch examines major works by Benjamin with regard to three interrelated 'key notions': afterlife, engineering, and constellation. First, afterlife (*Nachleben*) or 'afterhistory' (*Nachgeschichte*) pertains to the 'continuing existence of the text as an object open to reconfiguration and re-evaluation'; it is the phase in which superficial, yet prominent, features of a text can become less influential, and thus enter a process of ruination. Second, the 'engineer' is to facilitate this process by promoting — through measures such as translation, criticism, remembrance, and reproduction — the less obvious, the 'disparate and despised', drawing them into 'critical contemporary constellations'. Third, 'constellation' is 'constituted by a plethora of points' together composing 'an intelligible, legible, though contingent and transient, pattern.'

Gilloch is sometimes surprisingly selective in giving voice to Benjamin's accounts of these three terms (especially constellation), but he hopes to demonstrate the three concepts as well as elaborate them. In *engineering* an

afterlife of Benjamin's corpus, he claims to take Benjamin's advice on forming a 'critical constellation'. He does discuss Benjamin's 'montage' approaches, the role of digression and exception within them, and the attempts or calls by Benjamin to break with readily coherent styles. Yet there is little exemplification of stylistic possibilities opened by the notion of 'constellation'. Overall, the organization and structure of the book are quite conventional.

Gilloch criticizes Buck-Morss' simplistic distinction of 'early' and 'late' (post-*Trauerspielbuch*) Benjamin, and suggests instead a continuity of 'early' and 'late' in terms of 'immanent critique'. Immanent critique entails both the dissolution of what — through 'myth' — resists ruination and the fostering of works that purposefully ruin. Gilloch celebrates, nonetheless, the turning point represented by *One-Way Street*, referring to criticism that is no longer simply a 'literary' but also a 'political' undertaking. This is a slight understatement concerning what preceded *One-Way Street*. *One-Way Street* does indeed represent a turn to consideration of 'commodity culture, the new mass media, and metropolitan architecture and experience', but even Benjamin's earliest 'Romanticism' advises sober attention to contexts such as the *history of labour* and calls for a transformation of *harmless, private Existenz* into something *harmful* and *public*. Benjamin's Romanticism-study (1920) and his letters of the time (Gilloch does not use the *Gesammelte Briefe* issued volume by volume since 1995) indicate, moreover, an anti-aestheticism more pronounced than Gilloch acknowledges. Benjamin resists the Romantics' *cult of the infinite*, objects to the notion that in criticism the unity of art — its invisible work — can seamlessly absorb the visible work, and opposes the lack of distinctions in the Romantic alliance of all *concepts of art-theory* with the absolute. Ignoring this, Gilloch claims that Benjamin adopts a Romantic approach of — what Gilloch calls — *Gesamtkunstwerk*. He also presents the *Elective Affinities* essay as somewhat more 'Romantic' (and indeed more Goethean) than conceived by Benjamin.

In relation to the *Trauerspiel* book, there are small interpretative problems (for example, Benjamin does not endorse, so much as criticize, Paracelsus' view of melancholy) but also more fundamental oversights. In presenting Benjamin's advocacy of 'mourning play', Gilloch neglects the extent to which Benjamin is criticizing the German baroque variant by contrasting it with dramas by Shakespeare and Calderón and by rejecting the presumption to unmediated expression in certain operatic tendencies (a criticism also extended to Nietzsche's celebration of Wagnerian opera).

Although not without tiny informational mistakes, Gilloch helpfully traces influences (such as Surrealism, Siegfried Kracauer, Brecht, Marxism, Proust, Baudelaire, Franz Hessel, photography, film, and radio) on works written by Benjamin from the mid-1920s until his death in 1940. On the basis of the persistence of 'immanent critique' in Benjamin's 'later' works, Gilloch defends the Benjamin of this period (the 'urban,' 'polytechnical', as well as 'literary', 'engineer'), particularly in objections (sometimes heavy-handed, sometimes careful) to Adorno's Benjamin-critiques. Outlines are given of Benjamin's reflections on epic theatre, memory, urban culture, photography,

film, and radio and eventually of Benjamin's historiographical approach to Baudelaire, capitalism, Paris arcades, and to the concept of history. Gilloch's interest in 'Urgeschichte', translated as 'pre-history' (better translated as 'primal history' or even 'Ur-history'), make it surprising that he did not consider Benjamin's Kafka-writings with regard to 'Urgeschichte' and related terms, such as 'Vorwelt'. Gilloch may also overburden the motif of 'at last sight' (the notion of engineering an afterlife as it is about to disappear). This motif is imaginatively used on some Benjamin-formulations, but appears forced in its application to others.

References to notions such as 'disclosing truth content', 'self-disclosure of the truth', 'revolutionary truth content', are frequently too rudimentary or unnecessarily lacking in elaboration. There are over-simplifications concerning Benjamin's view of truth and of philosophy. Extreme or exception is sometimes formulated by Gilloch as a kind of ethical imperative rather than as *also* a *necessary* breakthrough of inherent incompleteness in conceptualization. Additionally, there are almost no modifications of available (contested) translations. German terms, such as *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis*, are used in ways that sometimes confuse, if not contradict, Benjamin's usages (and some of Gilloch's own elaborations).

In accordance with the series in which it appears ('Key Contemporary Thinkers'), the book concludes with a 'gesture' towards some 'contemporary constellations', giving tolerant nods to Derrida and others, and suggesting intersections of Benjamin's work and Baudrillard's.

The book highlights some major motifs of Benjamin's work and will probably be of interest, above all, to students of media and related aspects of social history or theory.

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Keith Graham

Practical Reasoning in a Social World: How we Act Together.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2002.

Pp. xi + 202.

US\$55.00. ISBN 0-521-80378-0.

Did you realize that the simple act of reading this review could have some important causal implications not only for your life, but the lives of others? At least, that is what Keith Graham argues in his new book, *Practical Reasoning in a Social World*. A good proportion of the material, at least

antecedent versions of the arguments presented, has been previously published in journals and edited volumes.

Graham insists right from the beginning that he uses the term *practical reasoning* in a 'wholly non-technical sense', and merely seeks to advance the view that 'a (normative) reason for acting is a consideration either about agents or about their circumstances which ought to incline them in a direction of acting in a particular way' (1). He takes it for granted that agents have reasons for acting and ignores some of the metaphysically problematic questions associated with this view. This account is much more concerned in dealing with the socio-cultural implications of how we reason and how we ought to act, rather than seeking to establish or defend a particular account of practical reasoning.

Graham contends that if we begin with uncontentious facts about society, and the individuals that compose society, we will see that individualism is in a precarious theoretical position and ought to be replaced with a form of sophisticated collectivism, or at least a framework with an anti-individualistic bent. On his view, there are two uncontentious facts about society; first, *the fact of causal interconnection*, which states that 'everything a person does carries causal implications for the lives of other human beings', and then *the fact of collective agency*, which states that 'some of the things a person does gain their significance from being part of some collective action' (4). By examining the implications of these facts in how we reason about practical matters, the intended upshot will be the recognition of the untenability of the distinctness of persons doctrine maintained by many liberals and instrumentalists about practical reason. In addition to important considerations concerning theoretical reasoning, Graham hopes his argument for the 'indistinctness of persons' could have interesting implications for issues such as nationalism and citizenship.

In Chapter Two, Graham attempts to debunk an interpretation of the notion of the separateness or distinctness of persons as the idea that individuals are distinct from one another in society by arguing for his *fact of causal interconnection*. Graham's avowed platitude that all human actions transmit causal implications for the lives of other individuals seeks to act as the thin edge of the wedge in Mill's account of the justification of intervention to the lives of others. If it cannot be established that there are no states of affairs in which the actions of human beings fail to be separate from the lives of others, then the distinction between unjustified and justified coercive interference into one's life begins to disappear. Graham goes further and argues that not only should causal *consequences* be taken into account when examining human action, but causal *preconditions* too. Graham is eager to make the leap that once it can be established that actions thought to be self-regarding, and thus deserving of a sphere of protection from external intervention, are in fact somehow 'casually implicated' with other agents, and it could very well provide a 'rationale ... [that] may be extended beyond mere personal choice into the arena of collective control of individual behaviour' (63). The fact of the existence of particular causally implicated actions as a

potential justification for dissolving the self-regarding/other-regarding distinction will be seen as lacking by many readers.

In Chapter Three, Graham seeks to further investigate the plausibility of the notion of the distinctness of persons, however, in this case as the idea that individuals, considered as a species of entity, are distinct from other entities. He seeks to establish this by arguing for his *fact of collective agency*. Graham argues that 'collectives entities ... are an irreducible part of the social world we inhabit' (66) and attempts to demonstrate that there are certain individualist characteristics that are to be found in collectivities. Indeed, much of the success of Graham's account will depend on his ability to situate collectives, such as committees or even nation states, within the moral realm. The success of this account is largely built upon the strength of his argument for the 'indistinctness of persons' (covered in Chapters Two and Three), and informs how collective identification and dissociation affects our reasoning and actions. In my mind, much of the plausibility of Graham's subsequent account will hinge on whether one find his truisms or facts of interconnection and collective agency necessary and sufficient to warrant abandoning concepts, such as the distinctness of persons.

In the remainder of the book, 80 pages of which I am unfairly lumping together, Graham explores the ramifications of his argument for the 'indistinctness of persons' with respect to normativity and morality, for instance, whether reasons for acting can be derived from social circumstances or human nature, as opposed to specifically moral reasons. Much of this discussion naturally takes place in reference to how the individual is situated in collectivities and how such facts both constrain and obligate certain states of affairs in the conduct of one's life.

Part of Graham's method in this book is to '[begin] from universal truths about human beings which would be assented to whatever cultural background or philosophical assumptions one began from, and arguing from them to far more contentious conclusions' (102). However, one, at times, gets the impression that Graham is working the other way around and attempting to justify particular political or philosophical assumptions couched in an impartial account of reasoning. While Graham raises important critiques of many of the suppositions underpinning liberalism and instrumental accounts of rationality, the plausibility and success of these criticisms do not seem sufficiently convincing to adopt an anti-individualist framework. That is not to say that Graham is wholly unsuccessful in his project. He raises important challenges to traditional conceptions of social relations, and their connection to morality, politics, and the law that certainly deserves closer investigation.

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Robert Hahn

Anaximander and the Architects: The contribution of Egyptian and Greek architectural technologies to the origins of Greek philosophy.

Albany: State University of New York Press

2001. Pp. xxiii + 326.

US\$81.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-4793-6);

US\$28.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-4794-4).

Robert Hahn's *Anaximander and the Architects* offers an ingenious and bold interdisciplinary approach to the origins of Greek philosophy. The book, as Hahn states in its 'Preface', explores 'the relation between the early philosophers and craftsmen and it investigates architectural technologies and traces their transmission from Egypt to Greece' (xvii). More specifically, it invites us to 'connect Anaximander's (and Thales') efforts in geometry, astronomy, and terrestrial and cosmic cartography to those technologies, and it attempts to place these activities within the social and political framework of archaic Greece' (xvii). Hahn's interdisciplinary approach is a bold one insofar as it does not resort to the usual philological or archeological/historical tools, customarily employed in the study of Greek philosophy, but to such a remote domain as *architecture* and the related fields (art history, architectural history, etc.).

Why is Hahn, when dealing with the origins of the Greek philosophy, concerned precisely with the architects, rather than, for example, with the blacksmiths, or the weavers, or — say — the midwives? Because there was something in the character, methods, tenets of the Ionic philosophies (especially in Anaximander) that, in his view, had much in common with the archaic Greek architecture, as it was revealed (especially) by the monumental temples to Apollo in Didyma, Artemis in Ephesus, and Hera in Samos. Through their doings, through all their innovations, devices and techniques, the Ionic architects proved 'that nature had a definite and determinate structure, and that mortals were indeed able to come to know it and control it' (84). In other words, there was nothing *mysterious* in nature, her ultimate 'secrets' and 'powers' were within man's reach. And this process of *demystification* had an enormous importance for the rise and maturation of Greek philosophy as, by their doing, the architects 'contributed to a transformation in the public mentality ... so that the community became increasingly ready to listen to and support those such as Anaximander, the Eleatics, the Atomists, Sophists, the students of Academy and the Lyceum, who offered to explain nature's structure' (85). The architects needed (and resorted to) clear, simple rules and principles, based on which they were able to solve precise practical problems posed during their building the monumental temples. The logic of their approach was derived from, so to speak, the logic of nature — otherwise the buildings they were erecting would have collapsed — and this fact made them 'promoters of rational discourse in their Ionic communities'

(85). They had the privilege of dealing with the 'things themselves', away from any mythological speculations or vague abstractions. And the buildings they erected were visible proofs that they were doing it properly. Ultimately, as Hahn expressively puts it, 'the architects, and their monumental projects ... powerfully supplied exemplars of a rationalizing mentality' (17).

In order to make his main point (that Anaximander's 'philosophical imagination drew upon architectural techniques' [10]), Hahn is undertaking in this book an impressive scholarly enterprise, with a tremendous employment of bibliographical and methodological resources from several academic fields (art and architectural history, history of technology, history of science, cosmology, classical philology, etc.), which is extremely difficult to sum up within the limited space of this review. The book has five ample chapters dealing, each of them, with a particular 'facet' of the problem approached: 1) 'Anaximander and the Origins of Greek Philosophy'; 2) 'The Ionian Philosophers and Architects'; 3) 'The Techniques of the Ancient Architects'; 4) 'Anaximander's Techniques'; and 5) '*Technology as Politics*: The origins of Greek Philosophy in its Sociopolitical context'. Chapter Four seems to be the very center of the book. Here Hahn follows in much detail the parallelism between what the architects were doing and Anaximander's ideas about how the cosmos was 'built up': 'Anaximander identifies the shape and size of the earth with a column-drum. It is quite surprising that in the numerous articles and books that have been written on him, no study appears to have investigated the techniques of preparing column-drums' (149). Following this clue (the precise way the column-drums were prepared), Hahn reaches the amazing conclusion that, even at the most detailed level of his cosmological thought, Anaximander was in some way or other marked by the architectural techniques then current in Ionia. Let us take only one isolated example: 'In the image of column-drum *anathyrōsis*, a technique employed to keep the drum motionless in its place, Anaximander found a complexly suitable image for his Earth that also remained motionless in the middle' (197). And this way of searching for, and looking into, seemingly insignificant details and then making them signify something is one of the factors rendering Hahn's book so interesting.

The only important criticism I nevertheless have about Hahn's book is related to his (un-understandable) omission to refer to, or even to mention *en passant*, a writing so profoundly akin to his own — namely, Erwin Panowsky's immensely influential book *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (first edition: 1951). Here Panowsky follows closely the relationship between the development of scholasticism and the maturation of gothic architecture in High Middle Ages (both being marked, in his view, by the same 'mental habit'), and based on which a cluster of fundamental and insightful considerations about the *general* (abstract) relationships between architecture and philosophy could be developed. Had Hahn used (some of) Panowsky's arguments, his book would have massively benefited in (at least) two ways: first, he would not have had to dedicate so much to the mere justification of a possible connection between philosophy and architecture

(Panowsky had already done that), and, second, he could have taken Panowsky's thesis as his own starting point, further developing, creatively and self-confidently, the notion of such a connection, applying it to the archaic Greek context, then putting it in a wider theoretical context, and so forth. This criticism notwithstanding, Hahn's work remains an excellent piece of scholarship, and I am certain that his achievements in this book, which are outstanding, will be recognized as such.

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Daniel Howard-Snyder and

Paul K. Moser, eds.

Divine Hiddenness: New Essays.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2002.

Pp. 242.

US\$84.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-80353-5);

US\$30.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-00610-4).

Many objections to traditional theistic belief take a common form: they urge that a God-actualized world would exhibit certain features and lack others, and they suggest that since the actual world fails (or seemingly fails) to conform to these expectations, theism is correspondingly disconfirmed. One such objection begins with the claim that if God exists and is perfectly loving, God's existence is beyond reasonable nonbelief. It is urged that the consequent of this conditional is false (or probably false), and so it is concluded that theism is false (or probably false). This is often referred to as the *argument from divine hiddenness*, though a better term might be the *argument from inculpable nonbelief*. (The latter formulation is preferable since the former tends to give the impression that the one who is hiding *exists*, which is, of course, just what is under dispute. On this point, see J.L. Schellenberg's contribution, pp. 34-6). The leading proponent of this argument is Schellenberg, whose *Divine Hiddenness and Human Reason* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 1993) precipitated recent interest in this issue. The present volume consists of a new paper by Schellenberg, and ten new replies to his position by influential analytic philosophers of religion.

In certain respects, discussion of divine hiddenness parallels the contemporary discussion of the problem of evil, but opinions diverge sharply on exactly how these topics are related. For some contributors (Michael Murray, William Wainwright, and Jonathan Kvanvig) the argument from inculpable

nonbelief just is a particular specification of the argument from evil, while for others (Daniel Howard-Snyder, Paul Moser, and Peter van Inwagen) the problems are more distinct. While it is clear that there could be a problem of evil without divine hiddenness, it is less obvious that the converse is true, for on many construals of theism, inculpable nonbelief itself counts as an evil, and, even if this view is rejected, it remains plausible to suppose that the suffering experienced by those who want to believe but cannot counts as an evil.

Theists often reply to the argument from inculpable nonbelief by suggesting that God might have a morally sufficient reason for permitting this state of affairs to obtain. Thus Laura Garcia's contribution concludes with the following suggestion: 'It could be that God seeks a complex set of goods, some of them good in themselves and some of them instrumentally good ... and that the level of divine hiddenness that exists in our world is part of a total plan for realizing these goods that is as good as any other total plan' (95). While appeal to this bare possibility (if plausible) is sufficient to counter arguments that seek to establish that God's existence and divine hiddenness are *logically inconsistent*, this strategy fails against (more persuasive) versions of the argument from inculpable nonbelief that suggest only that this phenomenon provides *evidence against* theism.

Theists sometimes develop more specific accounts of goods the sake of which God might permit inculpable nonbelief, such as morally significant freedom and 'soul-making'. Relatedly, it is often urged that God hides in order to stimulate humans to seek him more diligently, and that God hides in order to prevent a human response based on improper motives. Schellenberg's 1993 volume criticizes these and other proposals, and several contributors (Michael Murray, Laura Garcia, Jamie Ferreira, Jacob Ross) engage Schellenberg's criticisms. A more radical response to the problem denies the existence of the allegedly troubling phenomenon: inculpable nonbelief. Schellenberg thinks that the Calvinian proposal that all nonbelief is due to sin 'is falsified by empirical evidence' (52), but others disagree. William Wainwright's contribution considers Jonathan Edwards' denial that there is inculpable nonbelief, and he defends a modified Edwardsian position against objections.

This approach is unlikely to impress nonbelievers, as is a certain refusal to engage the philosophical discussion that mars some of the contributions. Paul Moser's paper, for example, seems addressed exclusively to believers when he diagnoses 'cognitive idolatry' in philosophically-minded objectors to theism, writing that '[t]he secular wisdom of philosophers, however sophisticated, does not offer the freedom that humans need. It lacks the needed power to set us free from self-defensive fear, to transform us from the inside out toward God's character of all-inclusive love' (137). While Nicholas Wolterstorff's contribution is also addressed to theists, it defends the seriousness of the problem of divine hiddenness, suggests that the problem is philosophically insoluble, and exhorts believers to always 'join the divine battle against all that goes awry with reference to God's intent' (227).

Perhaps because the argument from inculpable nonbelief has only recently generated much discussion in analytic philosophy of religion circles, several contributors discuss the role that this argument should play in one's *overall* assessment of the case for and against theism. Schellenberg urges that an appreciation of the force of this argument can tilt a theist or agnostic to atheism (54-8). Kvanvig flatly denies this, suggesting that on an objectivist epistemology, if the evidence for and against theism is counterbalanced, divine hiddenness cannot rationally tilt anyone, since this problem is just a special case of the problem of evil, which has already been included in the (allegedly) counterbalanced evidence (158-61). Paul Draper takes a different tack, defending the rational tenability of agnosticism against Schellenberg. Draper finds arguments for both theism and naturalism persuasive, and, since he holds that no precise determination of the probabilities of each can be made, even if divine hiddenness constitutes additional evidence for naturalism, this evidence cannot rationally require a shift to atheism.

In closing, one general comment. Many papers in this volume tend to assume that the problem of divine hiddenness can be defused by suggesting that the theistic God has no *obligation* to reveal himself to creatures, and *harms* no-one by hiding. But, as Schellenberg himself notes, even if this is true, it might be argued that a hiding God is nonetheless *surpassable*, and this too is inconsistent with traditional theism (37). Hopefully, future work on this problem will address this important point more directly. On balance, however, this volume offers a representative selection of views on divine hiddenness. It contains valuable discussion of both classical and contemporary treatments of the problem, and would be suitable reading for a mid- or upper-level course on this topic.

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Hud Hudson

A Materialist Metaphysics of the Human Person.

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2001.

Pp. 202.

US\$39.95. ISBN 0-8014-3889-6.

The book under review is an essay in mereological metaphysics. Its purposes are to solve what Hudson takes to be a particularly taxing conundrum — called the Problem of the Many — by means of a four-dimensional theory of object-identity, which is then refined for the special case of human persons. The proposed theory of human personal identity is materialist (at least, of a sort). It is then brought to bear on ethical issues involving the treatment of

humans or their parts or protoforms and 'post-forms' (e.g., corpses). Finally, it is used to make a case for the compatibility of materialism-with-regard-to-humans and Christianity.

The discussion of a supposed Christian materialism is more interesting, and fruitful, than the applications of Hudson's theory to ethics. The latter is chiefly a matter of formal gerrymandering — more on this theme, and complaint, below — which does not really help anyone concerned with the ethics of abortion, or the treatment of non-human animals, or human corpses, at all. The idea of a (partial) Christian materialism is more imaginatively explored. Hudson argues that God could continue the spatiotemporal reality of a material-object human, even with temporal gaps between its stages and states, by ensuring that both stages and states were causal consequences of earlier ones (and with the right sort of psychological connectedness). Perhaps omnipotence could achieve some such thing. Hudson neglects, however, to take up two issues that his 'Christian materialism' clearly must confront. First, we are told nothing, even sketchily or speculatively, about what the physics of our heavenly bodies, or the route to our acquiring them, might be like. It isn't clear that we really have anything deserving the name of materialism without at least *some* detail, within *some* theoretical housing, with this lack. Second, Hudson limits his materialism to human persons. Unlike Hobbes (apparently), Hudson seems not at all drawn to the idea that God is a material person. And if He is not, then the total resulting metaphysics is dualist, however it may be with us lowly humans.

I turn now to the Problem of the Many, which is meant to be the foundational issue for Hudson's book, at any rate what launches his own preferred theories. This (supposed) problem is supposed to be got going by having accepted the idea that all mereological aggregations exist, and constitute real objects, together with a thesis that standard physical objects, among them human persons, are comprised of something like material *minima* or atom-like simplest parts, central identifying traits of the object supervening on such parts. The problem is supposed to be that these parts individually make so little difference — one way or the other — to the constituting of an object of the relevant kind, that we ought to believe — we should see ourselves as saddled with a powerful argument to believe — that there are vastly many objects, and not just one, of that relevant kind, in the spatio-temporal vicinity of any given case.

I am frankly unable to see that 'the Problem of the Many' is a real problem, or worth any philosopher's attention to it. If an F-object has parts all of which are F-parts, and the whole set of which are the complete parts of the F-object, then it should be evident that some other object lacking one of the F-parts and having some non-F part will neither be that F-object nor an F-object. It won't matter how small the parts in question are, nor where they may be located. If by hypothesis the part in question is a non-F part then the object formed by conjoining or aggregating it to the F-parts of the F-object in question, whether or not it is displacing a current F-part, won't be an F-object.

The at least apparent vacuity of 'the Problem of the Many' seems implied at least indirectly, by Hudson's own account of human and personal identity, in the later stages of his book. 'Let us take it as demonstrated', he in due course tells us (102), 'that even such a minor, unimportant thing as a solitary simple can make the difference between personhood and its lack.' Indeed so. Whence then those knitted brows and oceans of ink over the so-called '*Problem of the Many*'?

Not that Hudson's treatment of (human) persons and their identity over time is without difficulty. He sets up a framework of stages that is — apparently — intended to be helpful and maximally neutral as to the temporal borders of a human's ontological span. They go from the first appearance of a zygote, following conception, to the final disintegration of a corpse, with stages spatio-temporally continuous and adjoining between. Hudson says (115) that he has 'deliberately left open the question of whether these are five distinct individuals or whether these are ten stages in the career of a single individual.' But this allegedly helpful neutrality is loading (the) dice. The view that many — indeed, very many — philosophers would want to defend is that there is a single human individual in the sequence Hudson sets forth, but that it begins months, at least, after the zygote, which was an individual that 'became' a human individual (a human being) without having itself been one.

There is in addition the fact that it is more difficult than Hudson seems to see to be non-neutral about individuals and stages. Part of the challenge is, to be sure, (merely) semantical. Suppose infant Iggy goes straight from infancy to school, and thereafter to employment in the legal profession. We have, then, the successive stages of identities of infant, student, and lawyer. Each is a 'continuant', and indeed, a genuine object. Is *student* a 'proper, temporal part' of either of the others; or of a human being, or their life? But this is absurd; or at least unnecessarily confusing. The infant *is* the student, who in turn *is* the lawyer. All three *exactly* occupy the same region of spacetime. Distinguishing objects and their properties (including properties that apply to stages or phases of the existence of the objects), and availing oneself of the *de dicto/de re* distinction, seem both necessary and sufficient for clarity, and, conclusion, on the metaphysical issues in these territories; but neither can be had neutrally.

Particular claims that figure essentially in some of Hudson's arguments are also contestable or problematic. For example: 'Suppose that Hannah freely claps her hands at T and that Hannah is not God. But in every metaphysically possible world in which Hannah freely claps her hands at T, God permits Hannah to clap her hands at T' (42). But some of the worlds in the set the previous sentence refers to are ones where Hannah's hand-clapping produces morally impermissible results so heinous that even though the profound goodness of both God and free choice almost always involves the first accepting consequences of the second, in *these* cases it will not. (The idea that God's high valuation of free choice involves his being prepared to live in general, or in most cases, with consequences of free choice even when morally

repugnant, does not of course imply that this will hold for all cases. Some consequences might be *so* bad that God wouldn't permit *these* choices to be made. At any rate there is nothing about the supposed vast goodness of God and free choice that will incontestably ensure that this may not be the case.)

Another infelicity: on p. 50 we find discussion of examples involving a human individual's left hand and that individual's left-hand complement. As usually understood, an object's complement ought to be the set, or the mereological aggregation, of everything other than that object. So a human's left-hand complement should consist of the entire universe except for the human's left hand. Obviously this will involve lots of things quite far from the individual, and definitely no part of him/her. But then it will be untrue that the individual's 'left hand and his left-hand complement compose him' at some region and time, contrary to Hudson's claim (50). Hudson evidently intended to be using a complementarity notion that would be limited to parts of an object; and should perhaps have said so.

Many components of the formal analyses can certainly be quarrelled with. Examples: one would have thought that 'material atomless gunk' (86 and frequently elsewhere) ought to be a stuff — an item in the same ontological neighbourhood as *snow* or *gold* — not a (countable) material object. Some of course have argued that stuffs are analyzable as countables; others contest the (universal) prospects of such reductions. Hudson doesn't raise the issue; or seem to see it entering his logical space. Another (85): intuitively, being maximally continuous might seem *necessary* for being materially simple; it is hard to see how anyone would be drawn to the idea that it would be *sufficient*.

Another analysis that seems wrong is (ICPO) (136F.):

(ICPO) Necessarily, if a person, S, persists across an open temporal gap limited by T and T*, then (i) S's temporal part at T is a partial cause of S's temporal part at T*, and (ii) there is no set of conditions present at some time between T and T* causally sufficient by itself for the presence of S's temporal part at T*.

Apart from having neglected to specify, as it needs to, that $T < T^*$, the second clause of the consequent seems faulty for its intended purpose. For *any* object, hence any person, there will be, in a causally closed world (or just a world where the states of the object issue deterministically from its earlier states), a set of conditions at every earlier state that is causally sufficient for a given later state. Hence — apparently — there will always be (in such circumstances) *a* set of conditions present at all times between T and T* causally sufficient (indeed, in lots of devisable circumstances, by themselves so) for the presence of S's temporal part at T*.

Some general comments on this book as an instance of a species of work in metaphysics (its parallel may be found in other areas of philosophy): Under the guise of rigour and precision, results are 'proved' that were the results Hudson wanted in the first place, and only achieve the rigour and precision of proof by investing complex formal principles with an anchorage that different desired results would have afforded a basis to unseat. This is in part

the increasingly familiar fact that one person's *modus ponens* is another's *modus tollens*. But it is, further, that we are presented with a problematic and misleading methodology for doing metaphysics, one that has, I would say, things reversed. Some of the ingredients of a sounder methodology are there: a concern to be sensitive to, weigh, and involve, fundamental folk-intuitions about the world, a similar concern with respect to latest and best physics, and an at least reasonable involvement of the or a historical tradition of metaphysical taxonomy, and problem-setting-taxonomy, which is — perfectly reasonably — specially tilted or skewed towards western philosophical preoccupations and themes of the last fifty to sixty years, or so. A new component of more recent ontologizing, a particularly highlighted *biological* angle of vision on what there is, is less evident in Hudson's work. In any case, why is it a good idea to conjoin to some measure of the foregoing a goal of producing formal principles which are neither intuitively evident, nor clear, and which may or may not conform to the complex and nuanced first conjunct, and ring the changes on what they yield, taking them, if suitably refined, to force or drive substantive metaphysical outcomes?

Some of the preceding may be partly unfair to Hudson. He is — altogether reasonably — interested in mereology. What happens when things we take to be standard, or anyway *bona fide*, objects, are combined, or divided? What about the object-like *parts* of such objects; and what about aggregations or fusions of such objects? Still, one would like firmer assurance than the author generally provides that his work offers much beyond 'philosophical games for me and my friends'. Too many premises are unclear, or resistible. This occurs alongside an illusion of precision and rigour. Some of the games are, to be sure, clever, or fun for those with relevant taste or enthusiasm.

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Doreen Kimura

Sex and Cognition.

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 1999. Pp. 217.

US\$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-262-11236-1);

US\$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-262-61164-3).

In the opening of her book *Sex and Cognition*, Doreen Kimura writes that 'the aim in science must be to find the truest explanation we can; that is, the explanation that best fits all the current facts, regardless of current dogma' (2). Fair enough. Anticipating a reader skeptical of the nativist argument she is preparing to defend, Kimura moves directly to the claim that the virtue of egalitarian government is that it functions despite inequalities of 'strength,

health, temperament, or intelligence' (3) among its members. Such claims are debatable with respect to how well such systems function, but let us take it as given that she is correct about inequalities. The issue here is whether such inequalities have a sex or race.

It is the next paragraph that solicits pause. Insisting that 'egalitarian ideology' often goes too far beyond 'equal right to just treatment before the law', Kimura claims that there are 'important biological contributions to the variations we see in cognitive pattern from one person to another', that these contributions are sexed and raced, and that anyone who fails to acknowledge this fact has 'stopped being a scientist and has become an ideologue' (3). An ideologue, for Kimura, is someone committed 'to a system of belief without empirical support' (3). These are fighting words, and perhaps justifiably so, but only if Kimura can give a good argument for the impartiality of the science she defends. She does not, and makes it clear that she need not: 'Facts are neutral' (8). This is the sum of her defense of the objectivity of science, delivered in a smug and dismissive tone amid a rhetoric that spends more time attacking her would-be critics than giving reasons to accept this claim. She writes, for example, that the fact that women scientists are 'on the whole less productive than comparable male scientists' (75) cannot be accounted to science as an institution, for science she insists is not the 'white male bastion' that feminists claim, but 'a manifestly egalitarian discipline' (76). The reader is left to infer that lower productivity must accrue to something in the women themselves. But to draw such an inference on the basis of little and loaded evidence is, well, ideological. Ironical is that while Kimura accuses others of shrinking from the truth about the evolution of sex differences, she refuses to consider empirically defensible arguments, feminist and nonfeminist alike (Kuhn, Harding, van Fraassen) that dispute whether 'facts are neutral'.

More troubling, however, is that Kimura appears to accept without argument the deterministic view that presumably universal behavioral differences between the sexes are caused by a 'very long history of division of labor' encoded and reinforced through natural selection. The trouble here is not merely that Kimura disregards the possibility of cultural variation across history in skills such as throwing projectiles or caring for infants, she fails to acknowledge that the alleged causal connection between genes, chromosomes, neurons and the like to specific behaviors is scientifically suspect. None but the devoutly Cartesian doubt that biology is a significant predispositional factor in behavior, but to claim more for it than this without an argument that shows the relative irrelevance of cultural conditioning, and then claim that *only* a biological approach counts as real science, is more ideological than scientific. One need not denounce a fundamentally materialist bent in order to include the effects of culture, government, religion, social and sexual practice as key to the best explanation.

Kimura's biologism is consistently reinforced in her comparison of human and nonhuman behavior (cognitive ethology its own problematic endeavor). She suggests, for example, that the prenatal hormone variation that can affect some aspects of 'masculinization' in male rats may explain aspects of

human homosexuality 'where gender identification and many other behaviors are sex-typical, but partner preference is not' (27). Here, Kimura is just wrong. As many feminist psychologists have shown, the relationship between gender, sexual identity, masculinity, and femininity is far more fluid, complex, and changing than Kimura's view could account for. Moreover, although her reference to masculinization assumes that all homosexuals are male, this is not only, of course, false, but belies the fact that lesbians frequently report their homosexuality as chosen. Kimura could respond that a feminist view is by definition ideological, or that lesbians who make this claim are deluded. The first, however, is a dismissal, not a response; the second belies the fact that the male homosexuals of her own examples are identified via self-disclosure.

The balance of *Sex and Cognition* is spent detailing a number of claims about the relationship between cognition, perception, motor skill, and verbal ability, each differentiated by sex and some also by race. No doubt, Kimura's findings are interesting. In the end, however, 'interesting' raises far more questions than it can hope to answer given Kimura's presuppositions. For instance, when Kimura writes that '[i]t is generally believed that women are more attuned to cues such as facial expression or tone of voice' (89), and that this belief has objective support although its statistical relevance remains in dispute, what should we take away? How do we measure attunement to cues quantitatively? What would constitute statistical relevance? On the assumption that objective studies could be done, what would this evidence mean? Can we get from this to other claims about women's behavior? Would it imply anything about the ability to nurture or respond to need? Perhaps. But this leaves open the question whether such an attunement is native or learned, and it is surely folly to think that if the answer turns out to be irreducible to an exclusive reliance on nature or nurture that the practice of science has been impugned. Complex creatures that we are, sometimes culture will be the best explanation of human behavior. Sometimes not.

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Leszek Kolakowski

The Presence of Myth.

Trans. Adam Czerniawski.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2001

<1989>. Pp. iii + 138.

US\$25.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-45041-4);

US\$13.00 (paper: ISBN 0-226-45057-0).

This short but classic study of the nature of myth was first published in Polish in France in 1972, and, in his Preface to the English Edition in 1989, Kolakowski acknowledges the stylistic heaviness of the work which is very evident in its English translation. The book has now been reissued in paperback. The book is indeed very densely written and demands considerable effort and close attention from the reader. It undoubtedly needs to be re-read more than once in order to distil the essence of Kolakowski's thinking on the importance of myth as a permanent presence in human thought and experience. All that being said, and demanding though it is to read and understand, this study of myth is an extremely important and fascinating exploration which affirms the necessity of the mythical dimension as an indispensable feature of human experience.

At the heart of the book lies a contrast between what might be described as our empirical biological existence on the one hand, and our continuing need for myth and the transcendent, on the other. Kolakowski aims to demonstrate that what he calls a 'mythological longing' underpins human life and indicates that reality is ultimately situated in the domain of the transcendent and must be respected as such. He warns against the temptation to explain away or to reduce myth to some redundant form of unscientific irrationality that is no longer welcome or useful in our present technological age. Instead, he claims that we need the mythical since it is only this that enables us to appreciate how bound we are to the unconditioned and to that which transcends us. This is also why we will be forever frustrated in our attempts to rationally explain it. Instead, it is only by fully participating in the mythical through faith and trust that we can come to appreciate its value. This is why scientific, technological, psychological, anthropological or any other empirically based analyses can never adequately probe the core of myth although Kolakowski is also careful to say that we should not wholly dismiss the latter interpretations of mythic consciousness either since they can provide us with some understanding of how myth functions. However, they are limited in scope since it is only from within the mythic itself that the latter can become fully meaningful for us. It is clear, if sometimes implicit, in Kolakowski's account that his exploration of myth is fundamentally religious in tone and he concludes by suggesting that the tension between our rational-empirical technological need to master and possess our environment, and our mythological longing, is never-ending and remains the source of creative activity and value. It is difficult too not to notice a Kantian resonance throughout the work, especially in relation to the essential

unknowability of the mythic-religious and the limitations that operate on various kinds of technologically based analyses which attempt to explain the manifestation of this in our human world.

The book is written in short chapters, many of which can be read as 'stand alone' accounts of the mythic in relation to different areas of human experience such as to the realm of values, logic, love, existence, freedom and the contingency of nature. Chapter 8 on the world's indifference constitutes a particularly important section of the work which addresses Kolakowski's belief in the value of the mythic as that which can combat the alienation, anxiety and fears that we all have at an ontological level about the indifference of what is other and over and against us. It is fair to say that this chapter discusses a central issue concerning myth for human life, which Kolakowski identifies as our inability to accept the indifference of our world despite the ability of our technological culture to control our environment in so many ways. The chapter that follows is also fascinating in its description of the narcotisation of human life by means of mass culture which relates to the unrealistic expectations of so many people that conflict can, in principle, be wholly eliminated from the human condition. The inability of many to accept the reality of suffering, coupled with the hope that there is a solution for everything, fails to take into account such factors as the nature of our existence, human perversity and the opportunities that difficult experiences may offer for human development both individually and collectively. The penultimate chapter on the permanence and fragility of myth restates Kolakowski's conviction that we need myth in order to deal comprehensively with our way of being and that we must accept an existential state of tension between the mythic and the empirical realms which we straddle and inhabit. It concludes by advocating a true participation in the mythic while remembering that we live in the 'in-between' marked by a continual tension that can only to be resolved by death.

These thoughts would have adequately served as a suitable ending to the study. However, Kolakowski provides us with a concluding chapter that may weaken the force of what he has written up to that point. Having briefly summarised his ideas, he adds in his Conclusion that it is this tension between the mythic and the empirical which is the source of creativity. That seems logical as a consequence of his thesis, but it does imply that it is ultimately the aesthetic rather than the ontological that provides some answer to the human existential dilemma between the mythic and the biological-empirical. Perhaps, it might have been better to have ended with the discussion in his penultimate chapter at the level of the ontological. By doing so, he would have located our existential dilemma in the unanswered and unanswerable tension which in turn poses us with questions about the ultimate teleological direction of our way of being in reality. This is a major concern of religious interpretations of mythic reality, though perhaps Kolakowski's own reservations about the historical theological exploitations of the mythic may have prevented him from acknowledging more extensively and explicitly the importance of the relationship between myth and the religious.

As a study of myth, Kolakowski's account is original and challenging, given contemporary suspicions about the inherent usefulness of such a form of communication in the world in which we live. By writing about mythic consciousness in the way he does and confirming its importance as a permanently present feature of human life, Kolakowski has succeeded in pointing out its value as an indispensable way of thinking about the human condition.

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John Llewelyn

Appositions of Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas.

Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana

University Press 2002. Pp. xiv + 279.

US\$27.95. ISBN 0-415-21362-2.

John Llewelyn has been an eminent scholar in the field of 'continental' philosophy for more than twenty years, with numerous publications on the work of Derrida and Levinas. In *Appositions of Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas*, Llewelyn brings his enduring interest with these two philosophers together. His juxtaposition attempts to make a coherent book out of previously published essays dating from 1983-2001. Even for a book on deconstruction — which for obvious reasons resists any overly easy closure — the test of any such project is whether it comes together as a whole. Ultimately I am not sure that Llewelyn's latest effort achieves this, but let me outline what his book sets out to accomplish.

Llewelyn's apposition of these two thinkers does not privilege the one philosopher at the expense of the other. Rather, it focuses upon the ways in which Derrida's and Levinas' respective paths cross each other, although do not necessarily coincide with one another, and this means that his book is characterised by a certain ambivalence. For example, in his 'Introduction' Llewelyn is suspicious of Levinas' fundamental insistence upon the priority of ethics over ontology. At the very least, Llewelyn argues that 'when faced with the question whether ontology is beyond metaphysics or metaphysics is beyond being (*ie. Levinas' ethical metaphysics*), we may be at a loss for words' (16). Towards the end of Llewelyn's book though, it is Derrida's tacit rejection of the idea that ethics is beyond ontology that is being questioned. This is not to suggest that there is a linear progression in Llewelyn's text. Rather, Llewelyn more frequently presents these kind of questions about fundamen-

tal philosophy as insurmountable (79), or as ineffable and leading to silence (16).

This ambivalence aside, Llewelyn is very successful in situating Levinas' work in relation to the history of philosophy. In fact, his book's greatest accomplishment is that it consistently uses the work of Descartes, Kant and Heidegger (as well as Austin, Jankelevitch, Defoe, Plato and Saussure) to show precisely where Levinas is offering original thoughts and where he is relying upon the tradition that has preceded him. If it is granted that Levinas' work is coherent (and this is sometimes denied because of Levinas' equivocations regarding the distinction between the 'is' and the 'ought'), it is usually assumed that he turns the entire philosophical tradition on its head. By showing us that many of Levinas' ideas have important historical antecedents, Llewelyn presents a nuanced and detailed understanding of Levinas' notions of infinity, of the wholly other, of happiness, and of ethics. The second major achievement of Llewelyn's book is to foreground the problem of language and translation. While these issues are obviously pertinent in relation to Derrida's philosophical concerns, they are rarely so persuasively and intelligibly associated with Levinas.

One recurring figure that Llewelyn uses to discuss his methodology is that of the chiasm, or chiasmus — the term 'chiasm' derives from the Greek letter chi, or X (xiv). The chiasm functions as a metaphor for the way in which Derrida and Levinas are deployed in this work, but an interesting thematic use of this figure is also made when Llewelyn applies it to the famous distinction between JewGreek and GreekJew (see Chapters 4, 10 & 15). Much has been written about these themes since Derrida discussed the issue in his early essay 'Violence and Metaphysics'. Basically, the Greek attitude towards philosophy is associated with the 'Love of Wisdom' (one interpretation of *philos sophia*) and the Jewish attitude towards philosophy is represented by the 'Wisdom of Love' (76, 226). To present the problem crudely, the Greek conception of philosophy prioritises knowledge, whereas the Jewish conception is envisaged to be more ethical/spiritual. Llewelyn acknowledges that Levinas himself often tried to keep these two conceptions of philosophy apart from each other, by insisting that his phenomenology and his Talmudic works remain separate. Llewelyn, however, insists that there is a chiasm or 'chialogue' that obtains between these two conceptions of philosophy (79). While Llewelyn implies that Derrida remains a little more Greek than Levinas, the overall implication of his book is that the apposition of these two thinkers shows us a way to understand the interrelation of these themes (JewGreek and GreekJew) in a more productive manner than simply hierarchically privileging the one conception of philosophy over the other.

Derrida's 'Violence and Metaphysics' is of vital importance for Llewelyn. In this essay, Derrida problematises Levinas' various criticisms of Husserl, Heidegger and Hegel, and at least three chapters of *Appositions* address this essay at length. However, more attention could and should have been accorded to other aspects of Derrida's work. In fact, Llewelyn's book contains very little material on Derrida when compared with the proliferation of

essays on Levinas. Moreover, many of the essays that are on Derrida, including Chapters Two and Three, seem like digressions in the light of the main concerns that are set out in the 'Introduction'. This problem is reinforced by Llewelyn's lack of sustained engagement with Derrida's more recent work. Llewelyn makes little reference to Derrida's eulogy, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, and he also largely ignores Derrida's increasing preoccupation with themes like the messianic and the wholly other (*tout autre*) that are intimately related to Levinas' work. The controversial issue of the status of femininity in Levinas' work is considered, but Derrida's own writings on this issue in *Adieu* are only alluded to.

When Llewelyn explicitly considers some of the differences between these two theorists, he is often moved to ask questions like 'how can the semiotics of Derrida allow room for even limited responsibility, let alone the infinite responsibility of which Levinas speaks?' (205) In other words, does Derrida's grammatology necessitate an impersonality that precludes responsibility? These are important and valid questions, as it is clear that Derrida's early emphasis upon textuality is not concerned with the 'humanism of the other man' in the same way that Levinas' work is. That said, it seems to me that Llewelyn's book would have been improved via a more sustained examination of Derrida's later work, since it is here that the convergences between Derrida and Levinas become more apparent than the dissonances.

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Giuseppe Mazzotta

Cosmopoiesis. The Renaissance Experiment.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001.

Pp. 98.

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Cdn\$/US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8020-8421-4).

Three of the chapters in this book were lectures delivered at the University of Toronto under the sponsorship of the Emilio Goggio Visiting professorship, while the fourth on Poliziano was added later. The volume, by one of the most renowned Italian scholars writing today, exemplifies the breadth and depth of his knowledge as well as the originality of his work, unique, I think, in Italian Studies today. Mazzotta revisits the Renaissance and its key figures in an attempt, successful I believe, to redraw the boundaries as well as the epistémé of this much debated literary period. Mazzotta is not only very

knowledgeable, but he brings to his analysis a close scrutiny of influential texts that varies from attention to the affinities and differences amongst the most disparate and opposite texts, as well as a singular ability for discerning linguistic textures and resonances.

As the title *Cosmopoiesis* indicates the main focus of this work is the Renaissance myth of world-making: 'the invention of the world and the notion of making through utopias, magic, science, art, and the theatre' (xiii). These elements characterize the paradigm shift from the middle ages to the modern era. They characterize the new world of the Renaissance, through Don Quixote's mad dream or Prospero's imaginary world as a 'human world' whose emblem is the work of art (xiii). At the same time they question the rupture between these two periods in terms of *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa*. 'They argue for the necessary interlocking of the two distinct modes of seeing and making' (xiii). Mazzotta's underlying project of cosmopoiesis, which groups various thematic strands from Alberti's theory of perspective to Giambattista Vico, is the possibility of correlating making and knowing, or in Vichian terms, philosophy with philology, or politics with science, rhetoric and imagination. A project, however, which unfolds under the specter, or the 'scandal' of Machiavelli, the realist who questions the imaginary forms of world-making. Some thinkers try to exorcize him, some to condemn him, some attempt somehow to integrate him, some to challenge him. All of them have somehow to come to terms with him. In a sense this is also the challenge of Mazzotta's book.

The first essay, 'Poliziano's *Orfeo*: The World as Fable', is the paper that was added later and for good reasons. It provides the necessary cultural and political background to the rest of the book. Poliziano dies in 1494, and with him ends an important part of Florentine culture and politics that his pessimism was capable of foreshadowing in his most important work *La fabula di Orfeo*, essentially a fable of transgression. 'Orpheus stands for the despotic transgression of all limits' (22). Some of these limits are political and some are philosophical in the way they denounce the limitations of Lorenzo de' Medici's politics as well as of the philosophical-poetic myths of Ficino. 'Poliziano's *La fabula di Orfeo* — made of formal symmetries, weights and counterweights — unveils the limitations of both the politics and the philosophical-poetic myths that surround Lorenzo's politics. The myth of Orpheus involves Ficino, Lorenzo and Poliziano himself' (22). *La fabula di Orfeo* anticipates the imminent crisis in Florentine politics, the dissolution of Lorenzo's circle and of Ficino's own break with Pico and Benivieni.

La fabula di Orfeo is the sober divination of the imminent crisis. By the drunkenness in the final scene, it narrates that foundations shake and that we are no longer in the firm land of understanding. It recalls a myth that plunges us into a world of evanescent shadows. It tells of transgressions and violence that eerily resemble the violence of the historical world. (23)

Yet out of the tragedy of this play, the crisis and the chaos that it foreshadows, Mazzotta sees the beginning of the world of words, the emergence of the world as fable. 'Poliziano writes a text in which history and imagination overlap: Each reaches into the other, each is the dream and the truth of the other' (23).

The second chapter 'Ariosto and Machiavelli: Real Worlds/Imaginary Worlds', discusses the two major figures of the Renaissance and the most antithetical. Theirs is a tale of exclusion and reintegration. While it would seem that the *Orlando Furioso* is a text which excludes Machiavelli, for Mazzotta he is 'everywhere in the *Furioso*' (27) but reformulated to the point of offering 'a deeply divergent alternative' (28). Whether Ariosto read Machiavelli or not, his scandalous presence makes it necessary that an author of Ariosto's importance take position against his radical views. The '*Orlando Furioso* would be neither possible nor necessary apart from Machiavelli's political scheme' (28). He is always present, writes Mazzotta, but only to be left behind, 'yet he can't but be left behind' (28).

Ariosto and Machiavelli square off on the field of power. 'Simply put, for Machiavelli everything is drawn within the inexorable orbit of power and is shaped by it' (28). Mazzotta shows how Machiavelli demythologizes power and brings it within the boundaries of man, at the same time that he constructs 'a new and more frightening demonology of power' (30), a vision of history viewed in terms of 'the black magic of power' (31). Ironically, his political realism, dependent on a conception of the world in a fallen state of nature, makes force and simulation inevitable as conditions of existence. Power entails that it be perfectly visible because its substance is paradoxically determined by the appearance of power. Thus the emphasis on spectacles and ceremonies of power so as to intimidate or manipulate appearances. The prince must *seem* pious, because to seem pious is preferable to *being* pious. So while the magic origin of power are refuted on rational grounds, writes Mazzotta, 'the world of simulacra takes over and reality grows dim while the prince, as if he were a real sorcerer, turns into the lord of appearances, tricks, and illusions' (31).

There is, however, another side to the prince who can summon by the power of his will (or his magic) a 'generalized political organism' and political stability. The other side of the equation is that the prince is subject to the randomness of Fortune whereby, despite his efforts, he can be defeated. 'There is an overt imbalance between man's will and the capricious, forever shifty dominion of Fortune' (33). Political events are not controlled entirely by man's will but are ultimately subject to the arbitrariness of Fortune. This is Machiavelli's tragic vision that, in Mazzotta's view, is 'inadequate' when viewed from the perspective of the Elizabethan stage and from Ariosto's viewpoint, since he is not capable of transcending his tragic sense of the nature of power. Thus, the *Prince* is understood by Mazzotta as a text that straddles two rhetorical genres. 'It is both a text of absolute political action and an aesthetic representation of the failure to carry out political plans and visions' (33).

Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, accordingly, is read as a critique of power. As an epic, it tells what is essentially 'the central Machiavellian myth of the city,' namely, how new cities are founded and old ones destroyed, how empires are established and given legitimacy. Yet Ariosto, whose views Mazzotta reads back to Seneca and the Stoics, has a different view of power. For him the pursuit of power in the outside world is 'madness', '*furor*', 'the implacable force unlocking the grim gates of war' (38). This is the madness reflected in Orlando's madness which is 'tantamount', writes Mazzotta, 'to an unlimited, absolute power, and from this viewpoint is the obverse side of the Renaissance myth — and of the Machiavellian prince — of boundless self-assertion' (42). Orlando's madness, for Ariosto, is what is to be found in the 'war raging in the outside world of history; in the self-absorption of the mind; in the fascination with an idolatry of power, which invests the world with a substantiality it does not otherwise possess' (44).

Ariosto's alternative to Machiavelli's tragic Realpolitik lies in the last instance in his poetry. His ironic art of double vision is what necessarily counters the values of War. 'Ariosto makes poetry, which in its ambivalences and irreducibility to a single literal viewpoint always recognizes the discourse and view point of the other, the absolute model of ethics and harmony' (50). In acknowledging the contradictory impulses in our perception of the real, Ariosto's vision points to the centrality of poetry to restore our sanity. 'What invests poetry with such value is the fact that poetry playfully shares even in the values it denies' (50). Ariosto summons us to let our imaginations run loose at the same time that we should be 'mindful to retrieve, like Astolfo, one's rationality and return to the world' (51).

The third chapter, 'Adventures of Utopia: Campanella, Bacon, and *The Tempest*', discusses the utopian discourses of Campanella's *City of the Sun* and Bacon's *New Atlantis*, and their different ways of positioning themselves in opposition to Machiavelli's critique of utopia. Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, however, is the text that best exemplifies how to escape the logic of power characterized both by Machiavellian practices and Platonic utopias. *The Tempest* does not limit itself to harmonizing Plato and Machiavelli, or science, magic and politics, as Campanella and Bacon do. Prospero, at the end of the play, by abandoning his secret and his magic provides an 'extraordinary insight' writes Mazzotta, into world-making or life as theater', or in cosmopoiesis. While Pico, Machiavelli, Campanella and Bacon saw that 'the world that matters is the world we bring into existence, like magicians, out of nothing,' Shakespeare saw unreality at the heart and as the outcome of making. 'If we are chameleons who become all we touch, then, we may really be nothing of our own' (74). Making becomes 'the mask of non-being or nothing' (74). Over and against Vico and Bacon, Prospero understands that 'to conquer "nothing" one has to submit to it' and in so doing he helps us to rediscover 'the interdependence of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*' (75).

In the last chapter, Mazzotta addresses 'The Ludic Perspective: *Don Quixote* and the Italian Renaissance', and Cervantes' real concern in this work, namely, 'exposing the limitation of Renaissance perspective as a way

of knowing; recovering a "world-vision"' (86). The main outcome of this inner critique is the emergence of, what Mazzotta calls, 'the modern project' (97). In this project political power is neither a productive nor a contemplative art. 'What is truly political is Cervantes' novel itself as the reservoir of the language of a nation and of the Latin American imagination' (97). With this novel, Mazzotta concludes, 'with the work of art as prose, the modern age begins, and with it begins the novel of the future' (97). Cosmopoiesis rests on this 'shaky', 'dangerous' Renaissance world-vision and world-making on which the modern world thinks itself and experiments itself. 'Only by drawing from this imaginative and spiritual reservoir will there be once again a rebirth of myths and memories for the future' (97).

And Machiavelli? Have we left Machiavelli behind? Has the scandal of Machiavelli been transcended and forgotten in these literary utopias? While the answer is in some sense affirmative, Mazzotta, rightly, intimates that we could never be rid of him and his scandal. Even though we may not see him, in the hope that we have done away with him, all we need to do is what Ariosto should have done, according to Mazzotta: 'Had he [Ariosto] got closer, he probably would have seen Machiavelli in the cheering crowd.' Mazzotta does not say, however, whether Machiavelli himself was cheering.

Mazzotta's *Cosmopoiesis*, is a work that deserves study and reflection. The originality of this study and the new directions he takes the reader are certainly to be evaluated and, to be sure, followed.

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Carolyn McLeod

Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy.

Basic Bioethics Series.

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2002.

Pp. xiii + 199.

US\$29.95. ISBN 0-262-13408-X.

How women come to have, lack or misplace trust in themselves while seeking to become mothers with the help of Assisted Reproductive Technologies (A.R.T.'s), and what ethical mandates follow by way of adjustment are the two central questions in Carolyn McLeod's *Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy*. These practical concerns are explored in tandem with a highly nuanced theoretical investigation of just what it means to trust and to trust oneself.

The book begins by drawing upon 'prototype theory' to make the case that 'self-trust' is a moral concept which can be understood by extension of the

salient features displayed by the more basic conceptual prototype: 'trust'. McLeod's alignment with prototype theory — a break from classical analytic philosophy's articulation of necessary and sufficient conditions — is a crucial move which accomplishes two things: it saves the idea of a self trusting from incoherence, and it guarantees that the epistemic locale or character of trusting isn't strictly interior or cognitive. McLeod must make the first argument to get the book off the ground. And, as a feminist thinker who wants to read the experiences of women in A.R.T.'s for this factor, she needs a moral psychology, a non-presocial and non-unified self, and an epistemology which open onto the social dimension, onto the precise ways that the systematic forces of oppression can and do work their ways into how things work, inside and out.

There are two particularly notable features of McLeod's explorations. First, she never lets privilege out of sight. She repeatedly confirms the relevance of sociopolitical questions to an epistemology of trust. Consider that one of the processes by which we come to know ourselves as competent and reliable judges of character or of situations (that is, how we come to establish one of the prototypical conditions of trust) is by having had successful interactions with others, over time, and accurate feedback about how we understood them and acted in them. McLeod gives ample evidence of how that key feedback loop can deviate from 'the normal conditions' that a reliabilist epistemology assumes: When, for instance, it is reasonably unsafe to engage others if those others are disinclined to offer you a medium for the 'uptake' of your emotions, observations or actions; when the feedback anticipated from or received from others about oneself is distorted by stereotypes, or when one simply does not have the luxury of a reasonable tempo and continuity of relations (in this case, with a health practitioner) to generate this confidence. McLeod draws from a broad range of academic studies, and from her own hands-on clinical experience in obstetrics to build the specific case that there are many and massive obstacles to women's self-trust in and around natality. These gender- and situation-specific 'obstacles', far from being incidental to questions of patient autonomy, or falling outside of the scope of health practitioners' duties, precisely map those blocks and their corollary duties. In this account, McLeod further complexifies the story of autonomy that feminist bioethicists have offered to date.

Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy is also valuable for the philosophical knot it fingers and unravels. What is trust? Is it an internalist (belief) state with a propositional structure amenable to cognitive assent? Is it a pattern of behaviour? If so, is it best described as a behaviour predicated upon a rational, instrumentalist calculation of the intersocial costs and benefits of displaying it; that is, is it no more than a social device among techniques of species' fitness? Is it a pattern of perception and emotion which alights upon evidence of moral depth and optimism about its deployment; a kind of intra-social ethical flow which engenders reliability, dignity, honour, respect, and affirmation? McLeod makes good use of her excellent analytical capacities to distinguish 'self-trust' from two other 'self-regarding' attributes:

'self-reliance', 'self-confidence'. She distinguishes these according to the distinct phenomenologies that the thwarting of trust, as compared with the thwarting of confidence or reliance, entails. Using these distinctions she decides just what 'trust' is: When one is reliant one has banked directly upon the presence of a particular skill and the disposition to use it without mobilizing an assessment of moral intention (30-1). When one fails to execute, the reaction is helplessness (51), disappointment or embarrassment. When one has confidence, one is working with a kind of certainty (not an optimism) that one will act competently and adequately. When one falters, the reaction is shock or surprise. But when one has trusted and that trust turns out to have been misplaced or broken, the distinct phenomena of vulnerability (52), betrayal, shame or guilt (42-3) appear. McLeod uses these facts to make the strong case that 'within' what we call trust is the active assessment and affirmation of moral competence, and an affirmation of a particular kind of morally-constitutive relation between persons which, when misplaced or trumped, produces its own peculiar losses or harms. Following a concept with fine-tweezers pays off enormously when we come to the question of what exactly is going-on (epistemically, emotionally, morally, ontologically) when we trust ourselves and are 'let-down' or made vulnerable by our own selves. McLeod's exploration suggests, though does not explicitly sketch, something strange and wonderful about that very 'self': that the kind of affirmation offered in trusting amounts to having gifted (even oneself), in that very assessment, the will and/or means to do something good and beautiful. Whether clinical medicine fosters or thwarts that in women and whether indeed sexist, racist and classist society fosters or thwarts that in certain kinds of people, are two working questions from the point of view of politically-motivated bioethicists. What McLeod's exploration of the epistemology and phenomenology of trust further points to, though, is the fact that whether we can and do, do that to ourselves and to the people we are in all manner of relation with, is a highly localized relation of moral import which locates a universal site for making good.

In the seventh and final chapter of *Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy*, however, McLeod squares her shoulders and makes a significant admission: 'In many ways', she says, 'the whole paradigm of medicine and the epistemology that underlies it are opposed to the creation of an optimal environment for the development and expression of patient self-trust' (133-4). Throughout *Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy*, we have been privy to a number of psychologically and physiologically-detailed vignettes which, in a myriad of ways, unhappily built toward this admission. For many North American readers, who, like myself, are feminist, female and fecund, these case studies and McLeod's lucid analysis merely sharpen an already-held picture about the deep theoretical and practical murk encountered at the intersection of medicine, technology, the female body and the making or not making of babies.

Since, as McLeod painstakingly argues, full autonomy and self-trust are reciprocally related conditions, since self-trust plays a distinct role among

those self-regarding attitudes in the exercise of human autonomy, and since, as anyone with the barest of exposure to ethical theory knows, *autonomy* (whether in the classical senses we discover in Mill and Kant, or in the reworked feminist and communitarian versions of *relational autonomy* such as McLeod herself fleshes out) continues to occupy centre stage as that state or circumstance which all morally-accountable practice must aim for or foster, then the admission McLeod makes inadvertently casts a serious pall over the entire field of 'bioethics'. If what medicine is, what medicine does and what we know about what medicine knows, is built upon a theoretical basis and runs upon practices which do not aim to, or tend to, foster what McLeod isolates as the 'self-trust' of patients, then, *ipso facto*, clinical medicine itself — regardless of the reach of our ethical evaluation of it; perhaps regardless even of apparent 'enhancement' of autonomy through the 'increasingly available means' and on the 'informed consent' fronts — works at a deep level against this key principle. This is the radical thesis that finally breaks out of the tightly measured pages of *Self-Trust and Reproductive Autonomy*, perhaps in spite of its airtight argumentation, its careful optimism, its helpful suggestions for 'how the practice of medicine can be conceived differently to allow for the preservation or promotion of [justified] patient self-trust' (139). The book is exciting for how it manages to embed both a radical and a practical perspective, to play sceptical and utopian tendencies off against one another. The reader is neither inclined to overlook the merits of dogged, minute suggestions for micro-improvements of a very localized section of contemporary medical practice yet never is s/he tempted to dismiss the big, impossibly messy picture as a 'merely political' distraction.

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Christopher McMahon

Collective Rationality and Collective Reasoning.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2001.

Pp. ix + 251.

US\$54.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-80462-0);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-01178-7).

This book takes everyone's favorite social interaction — the prisoner's dilemma — as its point of departure. It then proceeds to consider how individuals might escape such dilemmas, staking out a position somewhere between David Gauthier, on the collective rationality side, and Jürgen Habermas, on the collective reasoning front.

Gauthier, it may be recalled, distinguishes between two types of agents: those who are broadly compliant and those who are narrowly compliant. The former are disposed to do their part in any cooperative scheme that gives them a benefit above and beyond the suboptimal non-cooperative equilibrium. The latter are only prepared to cooperate if the outcome approximates the one that would be selected through a process of ideal bargaining. Thus they are only willing to participate in cooperative schemes that are optimal and fair. McMahon argues that narrow compliance is, in effect, too narrow. This conclusion is based upon his oddly unmotivated claim that fairness is just another value, which must compete on all fours with the other values at stake in the interaction. According to this view, using fairness to mediate a conflict of values would be unacceptable, since it would not satisfy those who happen not to value fairness.

Against this backdrop, McMahon introduces a 'Principle of Collective Rationality' (PCR) which is essentially equivalent to Gauthier's conception of broad compliance: individuals should cooperate if the anticipated outcome of cooperation is better than non-cooperation (and they should defect if the anticipated outcome is worse). This leaves the field pretty much wide open for different types of cooperative arrangements. Thus McMahon is in need of something like an equilibrium-selection mechanism to privilege one of these arrangements. This is where collective reasoning comes in.

But first a few remarks on the PCR. The PCR gives agents reason to participate in any cooperative enterprise that gives them any benefit whatsoever. Thus the cooperative schemes 'need be neither optimal nor fair.' However, McMahon goes on to say that if it is possible for participants to organize another scheme that is preferred by all, then the PCR recommends this scheme over the first. Thus the PCR turns out to require optimality after all. In fact, the PCR starts to look like just the Pareto principle in disguise — combined with the insistence that when individual utility-maximization conflicts with Pareto-efficiency, priority should be assigned to efficiency.

The suggestion that Pareto-efficiency should trump utility-maximization naturally brings out all of the usual concerns about motivation. Why should agents do their part in bringing about a Pareto-improvement, when they can do even better by free riding? This is of course the pickle that Gauthier tried so unsuccessfully to wrangle. McMahon's response is to set aside this problem, appealing to the tried-and-true method of 'reflective equilibrium'. He argues that we are, as a matter of fact, disposed to do our part in cooperative projects, and that his PCR is simply an attempt to articulate the moral intuitions that inform our choice.

This is legitimate, as far as it goes. Philosophers should not be forced to write about moral skepticism if they don't want to. However, the armchair method of reflective equilibrium has its limitations. The biggest problem, in McMahon's case, is that there is a substantial empirical literature in experimental game theory that deals with precisely the types of interactions that concern him. And what this literature shows, unequivocally, is that agents participating in cooperative schemes are not concerned with just efficiency.

(For example, if McMahon's characterization of the PCR were correct, then we would expect the overwhelming majority of experimental subjects to accept any offer in an ultimatum game, no matter how low.) Unfortunately, McMahon's account does not take into account any of these findings. Greater attention to the empirical literature might have provided a better sense of what moral intuitions the theoretical account needs to be brought into equilibrium with. And this might in turn have led to a somewhat narrower construal of our cooperative dispositions.

However, McMahon's very broad conception of the cooperative disposition does generate some interesting proposals when he goes on to discuss more concrete social institutions. In particular, two of the more successful chapters in the book (3 and 4), use the PCR to derive an account of promising, authority and governments, then use this as a foundation for a discussion of deliberative democracy.

It is this discussion of deliberation that introduces the theme of the final half of the book, which is collective reasoning. Here, McMahon sets himself up quite early as something of a skeptic about the 'social' turn in epistemology. He asks, quite astutely, precisely what the 'collectivity' contributes to 'collective reasoning'. In other words, what are we able to do through public deliberation that we could not also do in private? McMahon begins by helpfully distinguishing between a *piecemeal* consensus, in which people work together to arrive at a conclusion that each could, in principle, have arrived at independently, and an *integral* consensus, in which the fact that some agreement is accepted by everyone is a condition of its being acceptable by anyone. He then points out the tensions that exist between a cognitivist account of judgment and the claim that a socially achieved consensus is anything other than piecemeal. After all, if the conclusion is accepted because it is justified, then it must follow from some set of reasons. But if these reasons are good, then they must be good independent of the number of people who happen to accept them. Thus the conclusion reached must be one that is available also to any individual reasoning alone.

So then what does the collectivity contribute to reasoning, if not a validity-conferring consensus? McMahon argues that collective action generates a pool of reasons, which are then available to anyone who might like to draw inferences on their basis. Thus the social character of reasoning comes into play at the beginning, rather than at the end of the process. Once the reasons are in place, getting more people involved merely improves reliability.

The connections between this material and the earlier sections of the book are somewhat tenuous. The PCR reappears only briefly, when McMahon considers the question of whether making a contribution to the pool of reasons might not also be vulnerable to free riding. Unfortunately, he seems to conceive of collective reasoning along the lines of a university seminar, in which participation is costless and everyone is eager to get a word in. Again, greater attention to the empirical research on how knowledge-production occurs would suggest quite a different perspective. In the case of scientific or

medical research, for instance, making a contribution to the pool of reasons that is available for inference can be an extremely costly business.

The book then ends somewhat abruptly.

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Tom Regan

Defending Animal Rights.

Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 2001. Pp. xii + 179.

US\$24.95. ISBN 0-252-02611-X.

Regan's 1983 book, *The Case for Animal Rights*, is a pivotal work in normative ethical theory, irrevocably bending as it does analytic ethics to the practical level. It also provides, arguably, the deepest and most sustained defense of the view that some animals are inherently valuable and thus that their interests must figure in our moral calculations regarding them. *Defending Animal Rights* is, in considerable part, Regan's defense of *The Case for Animal Rights* from its numerous critics, philosophical and otherwise. It is also a reflection on the perils of putting one's theory to practice.

On the face of it, this book is not what a philosopher well-grounded in 'animal ethics' might have hoped for — Regan's systematic reconsideration and revision of his original arguments on the basis of heavy philosophical criticism, much of it decidedly hostile. It is in fact a potpourri of reflections on animal rights, most originally delivered as public lectures, some to non-philosophical audiences. Its accessibility and economical summaries of vintage Regan, however, do not prevent Regan from making some of his key arguments tighter and stronger. This suggests that when he claims he would write *The Case for Animal Rights* differently were he writing it today, the differences would be stylistic and philosophically strategic rather than substantive. He feels strongly that he is right, knows that his arguments for the cogency of his position are better than the counter arguments, and remains squarely at the front of the political fray concerning animal liberation.

The first of the nine essays is Regan's contribution to the 'Animal Welfare/Rights' section of the *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*. It gives an overview of the debate about whether we have direct or only indirect duties to animals and of the consequent competing views about reforming, abolishing or leaving as is our current cultural attitudes and practices in relation to animals.

This essay is an excellent introduction to the animal rights issue in moral philosophy.

The next essay, though based on an address to the RSPCA, does some heavy philosophical work. a) Regan exposes the question begged (about what sort of beings animals are) by those who oppose cruelty and advocate the welfare of animals without affirming their rights. b) He argues that if one decides that animals have rights, then one must be an abolitionist (scrap our present practices toward animals in favor of respecting their inherent value) rather than a reformist (make current practices more humane, as SPCA ideology has it). c) He shows that the anti-cruelty and welfarist positions depend on the stock, morally suspicious, utilitarian view that undeserved injustice to some is okay if many benefit. d) By failing to recognize that animals have rights, he claims, the theories underpinning the anti-cruelty and welfarist positions can be co-opted by the animal industry to justify a more discrete form of harming as usual.

The third article is the most philosophically interesting in that it is a concise response to two camps of Regan's philosophical critics. The first group is made up of orthodox moral theorists and includes Jan Narveson, R.G. Frey and Dale Jamieson. Regan shows Narveson and Frey to be careless readers, Narveson naively construing 'intuition' as quite other than the Rawlsian reflection Regan meant by it, and Frey putting words into his mouth by understanding Regan's 'subject of a life' criterion for moral considerability as sufficient rather than necessary. In response to Narveson and Jamieson, Regan reminds us of his caveats about the rationality but not (necessarily) truth of his position, and about its incompleteness. The second group of critics, feminists all, want to reinvent moral theory, freed of masculinist and hence rationalist, etc., bias. Regan takes somewhat embarrassingly defensive potshots at Carol Gilligan before making his simple yet valid point — emotion, caring, and so on are very important but with an emotionally torrid topic such as animal rights, rational inference is going to be more efficacious with dissenters than emotional inference. One would like to have his thoughts on those feminist theorists (Plumwood, Pluhar, Birke, *et al*) who are not interested in countering Regan's views so much as in providing quite different approaches to the same end (rethinking Nature, otherness, critiquing the science behind the construction of the human-animal difference, etc.)

The next article is a deconstruction of Carl Cohen's celebrated (by researchers using animals) repudiation of the hypothesis that animals have rights. It is useful in bringing together the most philosophically interesting stock arguments and showing that they are insufficient to establish that animals lack rights, though demonstrating their insufficiency does not establish the counter thesis. The essay, 'Putting People in Their Place', puts Regan's most powerful arguments in their clearest and most succinct form. It is suitable for a philosopher wanting an overview of Regan's position as well as for introducing students to the animal rights debate. As always with Regan, it will not impress those who do not share his Kantian concept of a

person, or utilitarians comfortable with harming the innocuous for the greater good.

The last four articles are more historical/political than philosophical, and still of interest to the philosopher assaying the debate. One acknowledges the differences between the racism, sexism and speciesism issues, but teases out the parallels using the parallel outrageous justifications of oppression of blacks and women offered by religion and 'objective' science. This historical line is continued in 'Understanding Animal Rights and Violence', where the earlier arguments between gradualists and abolitionists concerning slavery are shown to mirror those between reformists and abolitionists concerning animals. Regan's solution to the problem of acting on one's convictions concerning animal liberation is to progressively abolish categories of animal use (e.g., for cosmetics testing) until none are used, rather than using fewer and fewer animals for the usual nefarious purposes. The last two essays are rather personal. One reflects on the relation between theoretical and practical ethics, how to square one's civic and professional obligations, and on the progressive 'normalization' of the once 'medicalized' proponent of animal rights. It gives an understated sense of what Regan endured from Congress, the meat industry, the academic community, and from 'mainstream' moral philosophers. The final essay is poignant for philosophers who believe animals are of a kind that requires us to compute their interests in our moral deliberations. How can we support ourselves by working for research universities whose practices toward animals are profoundly immoral in light of our philosophical theories? Though Regan touches upon the idea that there may be no lack of integrity or no hypocrisy in being a thorn in the side of the University that pays you, he himself thinks that the politically responsible moral philosopher is constrained to live with dirty hands — enjoying academic freedom and a tainted paycheck as the price for helping animals as we ought. In any case, both animals and analytic moral philosophy have much benefited from North Carolina State University's long-term subvention of Regan's subversion of the arguments that justify our most egregious practices in relation to animals.

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Rob Reich

Bridging Liberalism and Multiculturalism in American Education.

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Pp. viii + 271.

US\$60.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-70736-9);

US\$21.00 (paper: ISBN 0-226-70737-7).

Well-versed in both the empirical and philosophical literature on education, Reich strikes the right balance between theory and practice in education in this engaging, smart, and well-written book. Like many books by political theorists on education, Reich is concerned with the meaning of autonomy. Unlike some of these other tracts, however, Reich takes his starting point to be the autonomy of children, not the need for citizens to be autonomous, though Reich does not neglect civic education.

Reich's main task is to show how a liberal and multicultural education can complement one another. The early chapters introduce us to the topic, and set the framework for the rest of the book. The first chapter is a concise history of cultural conflicts in American history. In the second chapter, Reich joins the many recent voices challenging the idea that liberalism can be neutral among competing conceptions of the good, as Rawls and others argue. In the third chapter Reich shows how some multicultural theorists predicate much of their argument on the right to exit from one's group, but then undermine this right by granting these groups the right to educate their children, which is rarely used to encourage the sort of autonomy needed for a realistic right of exit.

In Chapters Four and Five, Reich presents his own substantive theoretical contribution to the debate about education. The core idea is that children should be educated to achieve what Reich calls a 'minimalist conception of autonomy'. Reich rejects the demanding notion of autonomy put forward by Kant as both unobtainable and undesirable for most people. People need not be self-creators or generate moral laws binding on themselves and humanity to be autonomous. Reich argues that it is enough for people to be 'self-determining, in charge of their own lives, [and] able to make significant choices from a range of meaningful options' (100). People ought to have the capacity to make thoughtful decisions about their lives, even to live a life of obedience. While some may dispute whether Reich's account of autonomy is minimal — an account of autonomy that falls short of Kant's version is not necessarily minimal — Reich's argument is carefully and persuasively laid out.

Learning how to be autonomous entails a multicultural education. By this Reich means that students ought to learn about and 'engage intellectually with the history, traditions, and values of a diversity of cultures' (131). Students should not learn only about their own cultural identity, but others as well. Reich sees in multicultural education an important aid to autonomy.

While some political theorists take their principles to rule out certain kinds of schools — parochial schools, for instance — Reich instead takes his

principles to be used as guidelines for how schools should be influenced or regulated. Thankfully, Reich spends little time rehearsing two well-known court cases, *Wisconsin v. Yoder* and *Mozert v. Hawkins* (which center around the Amish and around Christian Fundamentalists) that have been much discussed. Instead, Reich devotes an interesting chapter to homeschooling, which is increasingly popular in the U.S., and briefly discusses vouchers and charter schools in Chapter Seven.

Reich argues that homeschooling should be allowed, but regulated to both ensure that multicultural curricula are used, and that homeschooled students are educated to be minimally autonomous. Yet multicultural education is not just about what you learn, as Reich argues earlier in the book, but who you learn with. Indeed, Reich says that this latter aspect of education is the most powerful aspect of multicultural education (131). Yet it will be lost on homeschooled children. Moreover, curriculum oversight is hardly enough to ensure that parents will teach from a multicultural perspective. Parents can show state officials one thing, and their children another; or they can use textbooks selectively, downplaying any multicultural aspect they dislike. It may be that if we accept homeschooling we simply have to admit that some parents will do a good job of it and others will not. It also may be that many multicultural textbooks are not very good. Reich has very telling criticisms of some leading multicultural education textbooks. Simply put, these educators say things that would be dismissed as silly and laughable if they weren't so influential. To the extent that these multicultural educators have influence on multicultural education and on textbooks, Reich implicitly shows that we ought to be quite worried about much of what passes as multicultural education in the U.S. today.

Reich's book also implicitly raises the question about the role of schools in creating autonomous people. There is certainly reason to worry about secluded children, living only within an insular world of like-minded people. What about those who are homeschooled (or who attend parochial schools) in a narrow way, but who live among others? In a long and interesting footnote (248 n35) Reich poses a similar question, but does not quite answer it. Perhaps, though, the Sengpiehl case that Reich briefly discusses can help. In this case, a judge ordered the parents of a sixteen-year-old Jennifer Sengpiehl to allow her to attend public school, as she wanted (after Sengpiehl vandalized her bedroom and brandished a knife, her parents called the police in order to teach her a lesson). Though Reich does not say this, Sengpiehl learned about ways of life beyond the Mennonite life she was leading from other teenagers in her neighborhood; she acted out to rebel against her parents and protest being homeschooled. Reich admits that Sengpiehl is autonomous when he argues that the judge rightly took her views heavily into account when rendering his decision (165). Yet it seems hardly likely that she learned to be autonomous from her education. The multiculturalists that Reich criticizes would certainly seize on this case to show that Reich's criticisms of them are unwarranted.

I doubt that the Sengpiehl case can be used to conclusively prove anything about homeschooling one way or the other, though it does show that the route to autonomy is not only a matter of education. And as Reich well knows, many of our public schools do a poor job educating for autonomy. This makes the task of providing a principled guide for our educational policy and practices a hard one, but despite my quibbles with some of his arguments, Reich's excellent book is certainly up to the task.

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Christopher Rickey

Revolutionary Saints: Heidegger, National Socialism and Antinomian Politics.

University Park: Penn State University Press

2002. Pp. xvi + 296.

US\$45.00. ISBN 0-271-02163-2.

A quick glance through the bibliography of *Revolutionary Saints* [RS] reveals that there are already nine book titles wherein Heidegger is conjoined with Nazism, National Socialism, *das Dritte Reich*, or the Holocaust, and many more that promise discussions of Heidegger's politics more generally. If articles are thrown in too, we are soon confronted with a mountain of scholarship that has been steadily accumulating since the Heidegger scandal broke — for the second time — in 1987. It is thus with a sense of belatedness that Rickey joins this crowded, if not exhausted, debate. But what novel thesis could justify even more piling on?

According to Rickey, neither Heidegger's sympathetic readers nor his foes have adequately attended to the religious dimensions of Heidegger's philosophical and political life. Although attention has been paid to the 'mystical elements' of Heidegger's thought, and arguments relating his conservative Catholic upbringing to the debacle of 1933 have been kicked around for years, Rickey is the first to offer a comprehensive study of the pervasive and unsettling role that a radical Lutheran theology has played *throughout* Heidegger's various periods. The celebrated twists and turns of Heidegger's destruction of Western metaphysics are thus read as philosophical extensions of his earlier religious conversion to a mystical brand of Protestantism, undertaken in the name of concrete, lived experience. Common to both is a radical rejection of theoretical, abstract systems which cover up the meaning

of our historical lives and block off our access to God (or being). In fact, *RS* boldly claims that the 'factual ideal' of authentic Dasein is religiosity — a religiosity that is certainly neither conservative nor Catholic but is rather, as the title implies, both saintly and revolutionary. From here it follows that 'Heidegger's attachment to National Socialism is the concrete political expression of his factual ideal of authentic religiosity' (176). The old 'Luther to Hitler' story is thus recapitulated here as one man's intellectual biography.

From the early lectures on the phenomenology of religion to the existential analytic of Dasein to the attempts to reorganize the German university to the unrealized hopes for National Socialism, Rickey is able to show that for Heidegger, simply put, meaning can only be found in the whole. Consequently, just as we cannot grasp the meaning of a hammer outside the network of significations that make up the world, we cannot understand the life of an individual outside of his or her national community. Heidegger's communitarian politics are rooted in phenomenology, and phenomenology itself is rooted in genuine religion. 'Everything as part of the whole' could virtually function as the slogan of Heidegger's entire philosophical life.

The novelty and interest of *RS* lies in its ability to gather these Heideggerian strands together in a coherent, clearly argued narrative. Ironically, however, 'everything as part of the whole' seems to serve as Rickey's own hermeneutical key for deciphering Heidegger's religious and philosophical development. In contrast to the usual strategy of finding ruptures and discontinuities in Heidegger's work, Rickey finds continuities everywhere, even and especially between 1927 and 1933. This is both the great strength and the great weakness of the book. Take, for instance, the case of what authenticity means. It is no secret that in certain texts of the 1930s, authentic life is increasingly the privilege of elite world-disclosers, but to read this back into 1927 lacks the textual support of *Being and Time*. When Rickey claims that 'to be authentic is to be the site of a revolutionary revelation of being that acts by founding worlds' (70), he raises the bar absurdly higher than what the existential analytic demands. Furthermore, there is no warrant in *Being and Time* for conflating authenticity with genuine religiosity, despite what his own correspondences or his later texts might indicate. This is not to say that the confusion rests squarely with Rickey, but the continuity thesis developed in *RS* conceals almost as much as it reveals.

If, at times, Rickey's conclusions are somewhat overstated — perhaps an effect of overcompensating for what previous scholars have neglected — there is much to recommend in many of the discussions here. The most valuable sections of *RS* delve into Heidegger's idiosyncratic, Christian-inflected appropriations of Greek philosophy, especially his ongoing dialogue with *phronēsis*, *deinotes* and, of course, *technē*. There are also valuable analyses of leadership and community in the final chapter (although I think the supporting references back to *Being and Time* are much more problematic than Rickey acknowledges) and some genuinely interesting connections made between religion and the project of hermeneutic phenomenology. Heidegger has been read before as a Nietzschean Kant and a Kierkegaardian

Husserl; both his immediate and background philosophical influences are breathtakingly wide. Rickey's attempt here to read him as a Lutheran Aristotle is partial and limited, but it does shed new light on a number of different texts and reaffirms the importance of Heidegger's work prior to *Being and Time*. It is odd, then, that from out of this generally even-handed, careful treatment of very difficult works, Rickey allows himself in the end to pick up the usual rant, asserting that 'Heidegger's antimodern, antiliberal politics stem from his apocalyptic fanaticism' (265). Even Rickey's own commentary suggests a much more complex story than this Heidegger-as-Bin-Laden sound-bite suggests.

In the conclusion, there is finally an explicit discussion of 'antinomian' (literally, the rejection of law and rule) politics. Here we learn that antinomianism is 'the key to understanding Heidegger's thinking' (266), the ground underlying a life-long preference for revelation over reason, *Augenblick* over Aristotelian *phronesis*. In a final flurry of intellectual finger-wagging, Rickey argues that postmodernists, and indeed most of today's antiliberal communitarians, are antinomian, which means that even those left-Heideggerians who want 'to think with Heidegger against Heidegger' have unwittingly mistaken the poison for the cure. Heidegger's political legacy, then, is a new generation of thinkers who seek, like Heidegger, to overcome technical, bureaucratic modes of existence with ever-new brands of antinomianism, but who end up transcending the limits of the political altogether, and are thus, to borrow Rorty's cute phrase, pretty much useless when it comes to politics. The *polemos* continues.

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Louis Roy
*Transcendent Experiences:
Phenomenology and Critique.*
Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001.
Pp. xiv + 219.
Cdn\$/US\$60.00. ISBN 0-8020-3534-5.

Louis Roy's latest book is an argument in support of the proposition that there can be a human transcendent experience, an experience of an infinite dimension that 'goes beyond the limits of "normal" life' (4), that is non-illusory, and that is a valuable component of the human condition. Working within the phenomenological tradition, Roy sees 'human intentionality [as] an intersubjective capacity for reaching out to what exists', and argues that 'when such intentionality feels that it is in the presence of the mystery, it

does encounter a reality' (xii). Moreover, such a feeling being precisely that — a feeling, and thus not in the sphere of the rational — constitutes an enhancement of the subject's knowledge of the transcendent, rather than being ammunition for the counter-claim that such a feeling is delusory.

According to Roy, there are six elements comprising a transcendent experience: the *preparation* (whereby the subject becomes, through lifestyle, personality, etc., predisposed to having such an experience); the *occasion*, or trigger, for the experience (an action, a person, a painting, etc.); the *feeling* (which is properly speaking *aesthetic*, insofar as during it the world is felt rather than represented); the *discovery* (an insight of 'cosmic import' to the subject); the *interpretation*, or reflection by the subject on what has just occurred; and finally the *fruit*, 'the benefit that a person obtains from [the experience], in terms of knowing, wisdom, attitude, and motivation' (8).

Through readings of Kant, Schleiermacher and Hegel, Roy 'advance[s] the hypothesis [that] Kant has stopped too short and Hegel has gone too far' (78). Kant's importance lies in his setting up reason as a mediator between experience and what is experienced. However, this leaves Kant 'ontologically neutral' with regard to the status of the sublime (which Roy more or less equates with the 'infinite'): belonging to the realm of freedom, reason is able to determine the *idea* of the infinite as a ground of experience, while remaining, within its own limits, unable to *perceive* the infinite as an object of experience.

Hegel, meanwhile, 'has an edge over Kant when he points out that, far from standing alongside each other, the finite and the infinite are intrinsically related', and this is because 'the very dynamism of the human spirit requires an uninterrupted movement back and forth' between them (78). Nevertheless, Hegel has not 'adequately grasped the transcendent character of the infinite' (79): his making of the world internal to God tends, through its dialectical synthesis, to impose finitude on the Absolute as much as it grants infinitude to the human intellect as manifested in Spirit. 'Hegel's point that the infinite must include the finite', says Roy, 'is not valid absolutely but only conditionally, that is, once the finite has been created' (81). Moreover, Hegel misinterprets Schleiermacher's term *Gefühl*, by which the latter means not a subjective 'feeling' or an emotional quality, but rather a mode of self-consciousness that is shared by everyone who is aware of the world and of God: *Gefühl* 'transcends the usual gamut of human affectivity' (51). His animosity towards Schleiermacher causes Hegel to locate religious experiences in the realm of prereflective feeling, belonging to the lowest rather than the highest rank of consciousness. In Roy's laconic phrase, 'obviously [Hegel] has no esteem for the ineffable' (88).

Roy also discusses the work of William James, Rudolf Otto, Joseph Maréchal, Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan. He chides James for 'overlooking the influence of cognitive elements before and during religious experiences, and not only after those experiences have occurred' (103). Otto is praised for the insight that religious feelings have a *sui generis* quality 'that sets them apart from ordinary emotions' (123); however, this insight is

marred by losing Schleiermacher's distinction between 'feeling' and 'emotion', thus leaving Otto open, rightly, to the criticism Hegel wrongly made of Schleiermacher. Maréchal, Rahner and Lonergan are each praised for their extensions of the (Husserlian) understanding of intentionality into the realm of the spiritual, Maréchal in terms of the intellectual and Rahner and Lonergan in terms of the affective.

Roy's own answer to the question, Can there be an experience of the infinite?, is delayed till the final part of the book. In answering, he utilises Gadamer's definition of experience as *Erlebnis*, a single occurrence that has the character not of a mere episode, but of an adventure, insofar as it interrupts the customary course of events, is related to the context which it interrupts, and has a subsequent significance. Transcendent experience thus has the character of a narrative, and moreover one which bears 'witness to an apprehension of the infinite through feeling' (151). Roy follows Lonergan in claiming that 'the foundations of transcendence are performatively exhibited in the ordinary workings of human intentionality' (152), and Heidegger in claiming that not only intentionality, but also transcendence, 'belongs to the Dasein's own most peculiar structure of being' (153), so that the concept of transcendence can only emerge out of a process of self-transcendence.

This returns Roy to the typology with which he started, analysing the six stages of transcendence according to the lessons of the philosophical critiques thus far. The *discovery* is revealed to be nothing other than a *Gefühl* in the Schleiermachian sense. This succeeds the affective *feeling*, and is distinct from it insofar as it derives from the imagination, *pace* Kant: '*Feeling* gives rise to a hunch that something is at stake in a particular episode of one's life. ... On the other hand, the *discovery* is the unsettling unknowing-knowing gained in the encounter with the infinite' (182). The *interpretation*, meanwhile, depends on an interplay with experience conceived as *Erlebnis*. This interaction constitutes 'a self-correcting dialectic in the mind's efforts to employ ideas in order to articulate experience more accurately', a form of intentionality resolving the potential contradiction within the 'essential fact' that 'the reality to which we relate in transcendent experience is both unknown in itself and nevertheless truly known as different' (182).

Its demonstration of a thesis through both close original argument, and through critique of significant texts within its tradition, makes this a likeable book, although it is frustratingly coy in some respects. The spirits of Marcel and Barth smile benignly over the whole proceedings, and so why is each only mentioned in passing? The omission of Kierkegaard seems extraordinary given that his entire *œuvre* is written in opposition to Hegel's position on precisely the questions discussed here. But most frustrating is Roy's declining to say whether he has had a transcendent experience himself. Given the philosophical orientation of the book, a phenomenological description of transcendent experience of the sort only a first-person authorial account could supply is wanting — the exemplary narratives Roy presents are all oddly by *other people*. This reticence leaves the question concerning the

relation between transcendent experience and religious belief — is the former necessary to the latter? — unanswered.

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James P. Scanlan

Dostoevsky The Thinker.

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2002.

Pp. xiii + 251.

US\$29.95. ISBN 0-8014-3994-9.

In *Dostoevsky The Thinker*, James Scanlan attempts to study Dostoevsky as a philosopher expressing and argumentatively defending his views, rather than as a novelist whose work has a philosophical grain to it. The problem with such an undertaking is that most of the time, it is rather difficult to distinguish between the authorial position (the ideas presented in a fiction), and the position the writer herself defends. To overcome this discrepancy, Scanlan carefully studies both literary and nonliterary works of Dostoevsky (published articles on social, political, philosophical themes, *Writer's Diary*, notebooks, etc.) in which Dostoevsky clearly voices his own opinions (many of which concern basic philosophical problems) and presents arguments in defense of them.

The book has six chapters and a summative conclusion. The first chapter begins by examining the metaphysical framework of Dostoevsky's philosophy, namely, the dualistic character of human nature — consisting in matter and spirit, the latter being the ground of reality and the higher half of human existence. Scanlan focuses on two interconnected questions, the existence of god and the immortality of the soul, significant problems that dominate Dostoevsky's understanding of the spiritual world. Scanlan argues that even though Dostoevsky assigns an epistemically superior position to faith over reason (for only faith can generate a genuine consciousness of reality by revealing the truth of Christian belief), he also appreciates the importance of rational reflection. Although Dostoevsky contends that reason cannot generate the perfect certainty that emanates from faith, he also believes that any relevant evidence and argument will make one's claims more convincing. Scanlan critically examines a variety of writings in which Dostoevsky employs logical forms or presents premises to prove god's existence and immortality of the soul. Scanlan carefully points at certain strengths and

weaknesses in Dostoevsky's reasoning, though some of Dostoevsky's arguments could do with a more detailed critical evaluation than Scanlan provides.

In the second chapter, Scanlan focuses on Dostoevsky's attack on rational egoism to further prove Dostoevsky's skills in constructing logically sound arguments in defense of his views, especially in *Notes from Underground*. Scanlan argues that despite some critics' contention that Underground Man is a wholly irrational character, in fact, a close reading reveals that his attack on rational egoism is logically compelling and well-developed. Scanlan clarifies the main theses of the proponents of rational egoism, and distinguishes the sort of egoism Underground Man defends. As opposed to the strict determinism of rationalist egoists, Underground Man emphasizes the importance of free will and freedom of action. At this point, Scanlan correctly emphasizes that although Dostoevsky himself shares Underground Man's arguments against rational egoism, he parts company with the famous protagonist on the issue of boundless freedom. Unlike Underground Man, Scanlan contends, for Dostoevsky freedom is not freedom of choice as such (which will certainly induce evil), but free acceptance of Christian moral law.

The third chapter concentrates on the positive side of Dostoevsky's ethical thought, which was dominated by Christian values (especially the law of love) and Christ as the ideal figure. The source of morality is religion; even though conscience can guide us in finding the truth, without religion, it will deviate from god's commands. For Dostoevsky, Scanlan suggests, the greatest conflict is between an individual's egoistic inclinations, and the law of altruistic love. Egoism is a violation of moral law, which needs to be overcome by moral purification through suffering, and free acceptance of moral responsibility, guilt and punishment. Dostoevsky favors instincts over intellect as the relevant means to attain knowledge of moral law and, as a moral absolutist, he thinks that the moral value of a particular act depends on its conformity with the objective ideal, which he believes, is quite obvious most of the time. Yet as Scanlan correctly points out, the epistemic problem with Dostoevsky's position is the lack of universal agreement on what actions are religiously favorable in each situation.

The fourth chapter is devoted to Dostoevsky's theory of aesthetics and to explicating the tight link between his ethics and aesthetics. Scanlan suggests that for Dostoevsky, art, far from serving any extra-aesthetic purposes, is valuable in itself. It reveals inconspicuous, deep levels of reality, pictures potentialities, and provides grounds for prediction. In this respect art provides knowledge of reality independently from the sciences. However, Scanlan emphasizes that for Dostoevsky, knowledge is not an end but a by-product of artistry. The moral and social value of art is indirect for in good art, the idea that arises out of artistry must be normative, must reflect an ideal. Only to the extent that art is in conformity with moral beauty (which is identified with the unity and harmony of mankind as expressed in the Christian law of love), does it have moral and social significance. Scanlan not only lays out Dostoevsky's arguments against his opponents, but also presents the con-

structive side of his thought by examining the range of his ideas and arguments regarding the nature of beauty and art.

The last two chapters scrutinize the most controversial part of Dostoevsky's intellectual outlook: his social and political thought. Scanlan states that for Dostoevsky, an ideal society is the Christian community of brotherhood and mutual love. Dostoevsky thinks that even though today's societies, in which egoism prevails over altruism and love, are far from the ideal, societies will eventually evolve toward it through a dialectical movement. This, however, can only be realized by the leadership of Russian society, which is superior to other societies in being closer to the ideal Christian community. Scanlan here suggests that Dostoevsky, disregarding much historical evidence showing contradictions within Russian society, argues for Russia's mission to teach Christian values to the rest and unify all other nations and all humanity under itself, without sufficiently explaining what produces the superior Russian character. Scanlan thinks that Dostoevsky's nationalism is flawed; nevertheless, he notes, it is not inconsistent with Dostoevsky's Christian ideal. For although mutual love and brotherhood are paramount traits of the ideal society, they do not exclude hierarchy, meritocracy and social stratification. In fact, Dostoevsky regards autocracy as the ideal form of government in which mutual love between the monarch and the citizens will replace a pre-established constitution. Scanlan also examines Dostoevsky's critique of socialism and his anti-revolutionary arguments, and concludes that despite the strong tone of patriotism and chauvinism present in Dostoevsky's social-political thought, this does not invalidate the rest of his philosophy.

Scanlan's book situates different aspects of Dostoevsky's thought in a larger context and provides a wider perspective for interpreting certain themes and ideas in Dostoevsky's works. Perhaps the greatest weakness of the book is that Scanlan spends considerably less time critically examining Dostoevsky's arguments than explicating them and presenting textual evidence from his literary works. Scanlan does, however, successfully integrate Dostoevsky's particular arguments into a coherent theory, and displays a legitimate reading of his *œuvre*. Individual chapters of the book are interwoven skillfully, with ideas introduced in the earlier chapters developed and elaborated in subsequent ones; readers are left with a sense of the close connections between various concepts, ideas and themes in Dostoevsky's corpus.

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Irving Singer

Feeling and Imagination:

The Vibrant Flux of Our Existence.

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2001.

Pp. 240.

US\$35.00. ISBN 0-7425-1234-7.

Irving Singer

Explorations in Love and Sex.

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2001.

Pp. xiii + 239.

US\$29.95. ISBN 0-7425-1238-X).

In *Feeling and Imagination: The Vibrant Flux of Our Existence* (FI), Singer attempts to 'show how we create our world, in part, through what we call our "feelings" ' (ix). In so doing, he constructs a general theory of affect that supplies his *Explorations in Love and Sex* (ELS) with broad metaphysical footing. Singer's central thesis in FI is that 'affective attachments' continually alter personal and public attitudes about everything from art to science, testifying to the individual's capacity to instill 'meaning' into life and world. ELS is essentially an extension of this perspective with particular emphasis on the reciprocal nature of romantic and erotic attachments in which each of us faces the problem of according the pursuit of love with the pursuit of being loved. While each work stands alone, both illuminate each other, conveying the comprehensive theoretical vision of an accomplished philosopher at the height of his powers. Singer's refined yet effortless prose is meant to engage the curious neophyte as well as the seasoned expert. Unfortunately, this approach may lead the more critical reader into frustration with a style often comprised of elusive literary-historical nuance in lieu of thoroughgoing argumentative precision.

FI begins by laying out the metaphysical role imagination is held to play. Hostile to scientific reductionism, Singer's main and most provocative thesis is that imagination allows the will to affectively 'bestow' value above and beyond the initially 'appraised' value of any person, object, or ideal. This primordial human activity is thus taken to testify both to the existence of individual free will as well as to the 'vibrant flux' of our collective cultural experience. Throughout the rest of the book, Singer offers a psychological theory of how this is done through the processes of 'idealization', 'consummation' and 'affective failure and renewal', devoting a fully chapter to each aspect. There is also a chapter on 'the aesthetic', which addresses how this affective continuum operates on the greater cultural and artistic levels, as opposed to the more interpersonal level on which Singer spends most of his time in other chapters. Once the main thesis of the role of imagination is elaborated in Chapter One, the rest of the book develops a plausible account of the affective life according to which imagination creatively constructs idealized goals that, hopefully, become 'consummated' by a harmony between

self, other, and world. But along the way, there is bound to be 'affective failure and renewal' which provides an opportunity for the will to discover new 'meaning', by essentially overcoming disappointment and / or disillusionment. Singer's speculative explorations paint an attractive theoretical picture complimented by many insightful illustrations culled from his broad humanistic background. He makes deft use of countless thought experiments while aptly drawing-in the ideas of such literary and philosophical giants as Plato, Proust, Nietzsche, Mann, Schopenhauer, Freud, Hume, Kant, Bentham, Mill and Santayana.

However, what is perhaps most disappointing about this work is that the underlying thesis — nothing less than a bold attempt at reviving romanticism — is ultimately supported by very little argument. And the arguments that are provided refer chiefly to the rather antiquated psychological paradigms of Plato, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Freud. Indeed, so much space is dedicated to arguing where these thinkers went wrong that the work often reads like an introductory level historical survey course in affective studies. This would not be a problem were Singer not attempting to advance an original theory very much directed against contemporary reductive trends. It thus seems awkward that he almost never discusses the relevant contemporary literature that might best challenge his overarching metaphysical position. And though he is clearly in good company among such noteworthy twentieth-century thinkers as Williams, Wollheim, Goodman, Dreyfus and especially Wittgenstein, whom he cites as a major influence, specific references to any of these are conspicuously absent. It seems Singer wants most to argue, as do these philosophers, against those rationalists who 'neglect the service imagination provides' (FI, 31). According to him, imagination is the only thing impelling us for example, to 'pounce on the absence of contradiction in a tautology' and the *manner* in which this is done is taken to be this supplemental faculty without which reason cannot be articulated (FI, 29). But apart from offering a few cryptic allusions such as this one, Singer never actually demonstrates why reason alone cannot, say, distinguish universals from particulars as well or better than any imaginative faculty. In fact, nowhere is there any explanation of precisely how we are even to differentiate between 'reason' and 'imagination'.

In short, Singer's project will make most sense to those who already accept some version of Hume's view that 'reason is the slave of the passions.' Once this is accepted (or bracketed) his psychological explorations into the interrelation of affect and free agency proceeds insightfully in a style at once pleasant and sure-footed. A particularly valuable section on this subject is the ELS chapter on the nature and pursuit of love in which Singer replies to numerous 'critics and friendly commentators'. The article is taken from a 1991 conference centered on his philosophy of love, the proceedings of which previously appeared in *The Nature and Pursuit of Love: The Philosophy of Irving Singer* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus 1995). This passage is a rare and invaluable instance in which Singer defends his views against the thoughts of contemporary philosophers. At the center of these debates is Singer's

notion that the will is to a certain degree free to choose to value any person, object, or ideal. One of his critics on this point, Paul Gooch, argues that Singer's view therefore makes love and friendship into undeserved gifts (115-16). Singer adroitly turns this criticism on its head by simply embracing the undeserved gift thesis. This move seems actually more consistent with even Gooch's account since, as Singer also shows in FI, 14-15, undeserved gifts are precisely what make authentic personal commitments possible, as profoundly 'meaningful' acts of genuine freedom. Singer thereby seeks to solve an important Aristotelian problem, arguing that the 'imaginative response' is not merely the product of entirely predictable successions of desire-based appraisals. Although this account seems intuitively much more appealing than the determinist alternative, no evidence is given that our intuitions really do represent the facts. Indeed, the dissenting view is after all never directly addressed.

Most of the rest of ELS consists of critical assessments of various canonical philosophers' thoughts on love and sex from the vantage point of Singer's 'sexual pluralism'. Throughout, he shows convincingly how the two are intertwined, spending most of his time distinguishing his thoughts from those of Plato, Kant, Schopenhauer, Freud, Hume, and Ortega y Gasset. There is also some discussion of compassion including a revealing chapter on Bergson's 'sympathetic intuition', providing a fruitful perspective from which to re-explore the ideas of FI.

In sum, these latest books constitute a revealing updated account of Singer's general philosophy. They are at once accessible to those unacquainted with his thought and to philosophy in general, while offering a great deal of new material that even those most familiar with his work will certainly not want to miss. Still, one yearns to see more discussion of contemporary thinkers. And those with limited interest in metaphysical speculation will have to bracket certain passages if they are to profit from the considerable psychological insight and breadth of philosophical history Singer's writing affords.

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Morals From Motives.

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford

University Press 2000. Pp. xv + 216.

US\$42.00. ISBN 0-19-513837-6.

In *Morals From Motives*, Michael Slote departs from the neo-Aristotelian tradition with which his previous works were aligned. Slote's latest work contributes an unorthodox agent-based ethical theory to the growing literature on virtue ethics. It is frequently claimed that a defining feature of virtue ethics is that virtue is taken as primary. It has also been claimed that concepts of a good life and a moral exemplar are both necessary and defining features of virtue ethics. Slote claims that there is an inconsistency between basing a theory on the concept of a good life and taking virtue as primary. Slote holds that if the good life is the grounding concept, then virtue is not, in fact, primary. Thus, Slote endeavours to develop a pure agent-based ethical theory — a theory whereby all ethical evaluations are wholly a function of the internal states of the moral agent. While Slote recognizes and accounts for some conception of a good life or flourishing, this does not conceptually ground his theory.

The structure of *Morals From Motives* reflects Slote's conviction that accounts of human good, while important to ethical theory, are derivative from virtue or internal states of the agent. Slote's book is divided into two parts. Part One seeks to develop and defend a pure agent-based ethical theory based on the moral motivation of care. Part One also suggests how this theory can be extended to provide an account of social justice. Part Two seeks to give an account of agent-based rationality and the human good.

In Part One of *Morals From Motives*, Slote contends that the motivation of care provides the resources on which to base a comprehensive agent-based ethical theory. It is a pure agent-based theory in that the ethical status of an act is wholly a function of the ethical status of its generative motive. For Slote the relevant ethically good motive is the motive of care. An act is good, right, or admirable if and only if the act exhibits or expresses the inner virtuous state of care. For Slote, the motivation of care provides the basis for a complete ethical theory.

Slote anticipates the charge that such a theory can provide neither a satisfactory account of social justice nor an account of what is owed to both the proximate and distant stranger. To address this Slote names three categories of care: care for intimates, care for humanity and care for *polis* or other appropriate political unit. The moral agent is required to achieve a *balance* between her intimate and humanitarian cares. Thus one cannot forsake humanitarian efforts for the sake of one's intimate cares nor can one forsake intimate cares in order to engage in exclusively humanitarian causes. A balance relation is also required for intimate care. Given that a moral agent will have numerous intimate cares, their balance is a necessity. Thus, one cannot devote all one's energies and resources to one intimate at the expense

of another intimate. Slote claims that the psychology of care will naturally impel this balance. Slote goes on to argue that a plausible account of social justice can be derived from the basic motivation of care. He argues that laws and policies can be seen as the acts of society. Thus, if a law or policy is enacted from good motives on the part of the legislators then it can be said to be just.

Slote devotes Part One of *Morals From Motives* to explicating how a complete ethical theory can be developed based solely on the motivation of care. The second part of the book aims at explicating the connection between wellbeing and virtue, giving an agent-based account of rationality, then showing why it is rational to be moral. Slote argues that every element of human wellbeing must involve at least some part of virtue. These virtues, however, are not limited to the moral virtues of care for intimates, humanity and *polis*. Slote posits a number of agent-based rational virtues which describe the structure of certain internal states. These rational virtues are: non-insatiability, strength of purpose, non-self-deceptiveness, and self-concern. Each of the virtues — both moral and rational — corresponds to an element of basic human goods. By appeal to self-concern, Slote argues, we have reason to be moral. If we have concern for our selves (which we must if we are rational), we would then be concerned to live a full and good life. Since a full and good life includes friendship and love, and since friendship and love stem from the motive of care, we thus have reason to be moral.

Slote's theory has two overarching strengths. First, it is not overly intellectual. One need not carry around a bag of high-minded ethical principles from which to act in order to be a fully functioning moral agent. One simply needs to respond directly to the other out of the motivation of care. Thus, Slote's theory is not elitist. The second attractive feature of Slote's theory is its recognition of partial tendencies towards intimates as morally praiseworthy. The praiseworthiness of these relationships is embedded within the theory itself.

Despite these attractive features of Slote's theory, there remain critical points which require further development. Most notably, Slote's description and explanation of the balance relation is insufficient given its centrality to the theory. Slote claims that the balance relation cannot be quantified. He claims further that the balance relationship requires that one care not be wholly dismissed for the sake of another care, and that the psychology of care will naturally impel an appropriate balance between one's intimate cares. Yet there is little explanation as to why this is the case, or what might constitute appropriate balance. Given the amount of work the balance relation plays in the overall theory, much more needs to be said about how, exactly, this balance relationship works. As it stands, it is unclear how one could assess the appropriateness of one's own or another's distribution of resources to various cares. There can be many distributions, but no clear way to determine which one is better.

Not only has the balance relation not been sufficiently explained, but there are also other connections which have not been explicitly made. Both the

origination of the rational virtues and the relation between the rational and moral virtues are unclear. Slote begins by stating that care is intuitively known to be good in its own right and then proceeds to develop a moral theory based on this intuition that care is good. We are asked to accept one seemingly plausible intuition on which to base a moral theory. This, itself, is not overly problematic. However, in Part Two of the book Slote seeks to develop an agent-based account of practical reason. At this point intuitions abound. Slote posits a number of intuitively known rational virtues. However, Slote's rational virtues are rather odd, including as they do, virtues such as 'non-insatiability'. If intuitions are the starting point for a theory, then the strength of the theory relies, in part, on the strength of the intuitions. If these intuitions are unique to one person and are not shared by many, then this seems immediately to call into question the strength of the intuition and thereby the strength of the theory. Non-insatiability is not the first thing of which most people think when considering rational virtues.

Despite Slote's overuse of intuitions, failure to explicate key points, and cumbersome prose, this book makes an important contribution to the growing literature on virtue ethics. Slote has departed from the dominant neo-Aristotelian tradition and attempted to develop a comprehensive ethical theory which truly takes virtue (or internal states of the agent) as primary. In *Morals From Motives*, Michael Slote has taken an entirely new approach to virtue ethics. This in turn demands that the reader evaluate both Slote's complaints about neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics and Slote's novel approach to doing virtue ethics. That imperative, itself, makes *Morals From Motives* a worthwhile read for anyone interested in virtue ethics.

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Richard Tuck

*The Rights of War and Peace:
Political Thought and the International
Order From Grotius to Kant.*

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford
University Press 1999. Pp. i + 243.

Cdn\$79.50: US\$60.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-19-820753-0);

Cdn\$34.50: US\$19.95

(paper: ISBN 0-19-924814-1).

There has been much talk in recent decades about the apparent decline of the sovereign state. The strength of global capitalism, the growth of information technology and communications networks, and the increased density and complexity of international regulatory frameworks and laws have led to this talk. As a result of these economic, technological, and institutional developments, states no longer possess the radical external sovereignty (or autonomy) they once claimed; this is putatively a positive development because there is less chance of war in a heavily policed, if not domesticated, international order. One of the things the September 11 terrorist attacks on the USA demonstrated, however, was that greater global economic integration, technological and communications sophistication, and legal regulations have not changed some of the fundamental precepts of the modern states system. When attacked (even by non-state actors that had exploited the new global information, communications, and transportation networks), the powerful American state responded in a way that leaves little doubt that traditional state sovereignty is still largely intact and robust. Indeed, the essential elements of modern international law and natural jurisprudence that Tuck analyzes with care in this book were used to justify the swift response. The USA claimed first a right to defend itself, then a right to punish, and now even a right to preemptively strike if it should fear other attacks (even from other actors like Iraq). Few nations have challenged the legitimacy of these claimed entitlements, especially the first, although it is clear that American claims undermine the logic of multilateralism and collective responsibility that had been held up as emerging norms of the international order after World War II.

Conceived and written well before the September 11 attacks, *The Rights of War and Peace* wonders whether the traditional, 'natural' entitlements that states have claimed in an anarchic international order have perhaps grown obsolete. Tuck concludes, perhaps prematurely, that the rights once claimed by states in the 'state of nature' have been weakened because 'the idea of sovereignty [is now] unpopular' (234). This conclusion, however, is not something the preceding analysis in Tuck's book works very hard to establish. Indeed, the real aim of the book is to trace the implicit development of individual autonomy in relation to international politics. Tuck claims that liberal moral subjectivity (specifically, the ideal of personal autonomy) is in

large part the result of the innovations to Western political thought spurred by the reflections of philosophers from Grotius to Kant on international affairs. The chief innovators in Tuck's story are Grotius and Hobbes: The former enunciates a legal doctrine that states are identical to men in natural society and thus morally entitled to expand, colonize, fight, and punish other states in order to ensure self-preservation. The latter pushes this analogy between the individual and the state further to explain both the distinct moral role of the sovereign within a civil, as opposed to natural, society, in addition to the war-like dynamics of inter-state relations. With few exceptions, Tuck believes the Grotian-Hobbesian view dominates Western legal and political thought on international politics, with even Rousseau and Kant (in contrast to their reputations) concurring on the essential rights of war among robustly sovereign states. Tuck stops with Kant and only implies what happens subsequently in what he views as the inter-related story of individual autonomy and international relations in Western thought. (This implication is simply that individual autonomy may be difficult to conceive if state sovereignty is entirely diminished, but he does not substantiate this point.)

Tuck is a first-rate historian of political ideas. In this book, his command of particular details about each philosopher and his context (gender is regrettably not at all discussed) are cumulatively more impressive than the thesis of the book. Nearly all of the philosophers of war and peace analyzed had some important connection, investment, or position on the key international political issues of their day. Grotius, for example, was keen to develop a theory of international law that could justify the colonial and commercial adventures of the Dutch in the East Indies. Hobbes and Locke were defenders of, and even investors in, colonial settlements in North America. As Tuck notes, the roughly two hundred years that his history of ideas covers were a time of tremendous violence and upheaval, and the international rights that the philosophers carved out were founded on practical issues that involved everything from navigation of the seas to the conquest and enslavement of non-European peoples. Tuck's method of putting ideas and philosophic innovation into historic and practical context is immensely rich and indeed helps put to rest many misconceptions about the underlying ('purely philosophic') motives conventionally attributed to theorists like Grotius, Locke, and Kant.

Nonetheless, as suggested, Tuck is less successful in defending his thesis about individual moral autonomy as the product of Western conceptions of sovereign states engaged in aggressively defending rights to wage war. There are two reasons for this: first, although nearly all from Grotius forward make some connection between the autonomous individual and the sovereign state, the textual evidence is in some cases weaker than Tuck's thesis would suggest. Indeed, in some cases, Kant particularly, there are suggestions that sovereign states are fundamentally unlike natural individual human beings precisely because they are corporate entities that represent the interest of individuals. Second, Tuck's conception of autonomy is itself problematic. Throughout most of the text his default definition of autonomy seems to be

the freedom to preserve oneself in a way that seems appropriate under conditions of fear and insecurity (i.e., the state of nature). By his conclusion, however, Tuck speaks of autonomy in richer terms: as ‘agents constructing their ethical environment’ (231). The former notion seems like an essentially negative conception of freedom and the latter seems closer to a positive one (to use Isaiah Berlin’s distinction). What is missing in Tuck’s book, then, is an account of how liberal rights (for both individuals and states) evolved from being justified almost exclusively in terms of negative freedom to being also an essential part of positive self-realization.

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Contributors: Julia Annas, David Hahm, Thomas Hurka, Brad Inwood, Lawrence J. Jost, Glenn Lesses, Phillip Mitsis, David Sobel, L.W. Sumner, Stephen A. White. *Intro:* Lawrence J. Jost

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