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**Maeve Edith Albano**

*Vico and Providence.*

New York: Peter Lang 1986. Pp. xxxii+169.

US\$37.50. ISBN 0-8204-0331-8.

Since his death two hundred and fifty years ago, Vico has been largely an unknown figure within Anglo-American philosophy. In the twentieth century, first Collingwood and then Isaiah Berlin have championed his cause, and the last twenty years have seen an attempt to raise him to the status of a major philosophical figure. Central to this attempt have been a number of recent books arguing in different ways that Vico's ideas are not only of historical interest but of great contemporary relevance. Albano's book is the latest of such efforts. It is a series of five essays with an introduction and epilogue. Each essay investigates a different topic concerning Vico, including the interpretation of Vico's epistemology, the Homeric problem, the problem of scientific progress, Vico's mode of explanation and his relation to Hegel and Marx, his notion of necessity, and the relevance of his ideas to problems of modern culture. The essays can largely stand on their own, although an attempt is made to connect them thematically. Still, the book lacks an apparent thesis that builds from chapter to chapter.

In new books on Vico, a reader might look for three different, though not mutually exclusive, purposes. A book might provide new interpretations of Vico, either introductory or more scholarly. It might use ideas from Vico to address questions of general interest concerning, for instance, cultural, artistic, linguistic, psychological or educational matters. Or it might attempt to demonstrate Vico's philosophical interest and importance. How well does *Vico and Providence* fulfil these three purposes?

The book is not systematic enough to serve as a general introduction to Vico. A reader knowing little or nothing about Vico would have difficulty following much of the discussion. As a more advanced work of interpretation, the book does have more success, especially in relation to important Vichian concepts such as imagination and Providence, although even here there are many points that require further clarification and argument.

But *Vico and Providence* is not intended solely as a work of Vico interpretation. Rather, Albano is interested in exploring Vico's analysis of the nature of a human individual and a human culture to gain insight into the dilemmas of our age. 'What does one learn from Vico's powerful theory of explanation for social orders that could be of use to us today in understanding and perhaps improving our own cultures and civilizations' (xvii)? In relation to this purpose, the book once again is not entirely successful. The discussion, mostly in chapter five and the epilogue, of problems of contemporary culture is too



general and vague either to deepen our understanding or to demonstrate Vico's relevance.

Finally, how well does the book make a case for Vico's importance to contemporary philosophy? If Vico is to be made interesting to the majority of English-speaking philosophers, his ideas have to be connected to present debates and concerns, particularly to what can still (if only loosely) be called analytic philosophy. Ideally, the connections made between Vico and analytic philosophy would be mutually illuminating. Vico, for instance, would be shown to have methodological insights that cast new light on current analytic problems, and analytic results would be used to provide new interpretations of Vico. This task is a difficult one, given the apparent dissimilarities in both style and content between Vico and analytic philosophy.

While Albano does not state this as one of the explicit purposes of the book, she nonetheless is to be credited with trying to draw out some of these connections. She has read widely in the analytic literature. Among the major analytic figures mentioned in the book are Kripke, Lewis, Stalnaker, Putnam, Kuhn, Laudan, Van Fraassen, and Danto, an impressive and promising list. However, the book largely fails to offer much mutual illumination. This failure is most apparent in the discussions of two questions of interest to analytic philosophers: the discussion of the problem of the progress of science in chapter three and the discussion of Vico's relation to Kripke's theory of necessity and possible worlds in chapter five.

To expand only on the latter, Albano attempts to demonstrate that there is an interesting similarity between Vico's theory of historical necessity and Kripke's conception of necessity in his semantics of possible worlds. But given Albano's discussion, it is not evident that she has a firm grasp of either the point or details of Kripke's arguments. If there are any useful connections to be drawn between Kripke's thesis about metaphysical necessity and language and Vico's views on historical necessity, and I am skeptical that there are, Albano's discussion does not draw them clearly and convincingly. For instance, her attempt to show an analogy between a Kripkean natural kind and a particular culture in Vico seems wrong (128-9). If any analogy of this sort is to be drawn, the analogue in Vico to a Kripkean natural kind would be a theoretical stage of cultural development. It could not be a concrete instance of such a stage or of several stages as embodied in a particular historical culture, for it is only the theoretical stage that can figure in Vichian lawlike statements.

*Vico and Providence*, then, fails to satisfy adequately any of these three purposes. There are valuable points of interpretation and information to be learned from reading the book, especially for those

familiar with Vico and the Vichian literature. On the whole, however, the book is disappointing.

**Lawrence H. Simon**

Bowdoin College

**A.H. Coxon**

*The Fragments of Parmenides.*

Wolfeboro, NH: Longwood Publishing Group  
(for Van Gorcum) 1986. Pp. viii+277.

US\$30.00. ISBN 90-232-2117-6.

As Coxon makes clear in his preface, the origin of this book lay in his interest in clarifying the text of the fragments of Parmenides and in providing both a fuller critical apparatus than is available elsewhere and also a full list of epic parallels. Not surprisingly, then, the strength of this book is the philological information it provides as a basis for philosophical interpretation rather than the philosophical interpretation itself. The text with apparatus, parallels drawn from the epic tradition, parallels from the Presocratics, Plato and Aristotle, and a translation occupies fifty-four pages. This is followed by sixty pages of untranslated testimonia and about one hundred pages of commentary on the fragments. There is a brief appendix dealing with some of Zeno's and Melissus' arguments. All of this is preceded by a forty page introduction which deals with the textual tradition and the form of the poem as well as providing an overview of Parmenides' philosophy along with a sketch both of his influence on later philosophers and also the interpretation of his philosophy by the later tradition.

Coxon has collated the relevant portions of the most important manuscripts of Simplicius' commentary on the *Physics* and of Sextus Empiricus. He also collated the passages referring to Parmenides in Proclus' commentary on Plato's *Parmenides* both in Greek and in the Latin translation of William of Moerbeke. His collations provide us with a full and useful apparatus but in the end do not radically alter the text from that found in Taran. Coxon does print epic and Ionic forms rather than tragic or Attic wherever the former are attested in the manuscript tradition and even restores these forms where only tragic or Attic forms are found in the manuscripts because of the close connection he establishes between Parmenides and Homer. Other than in these matters of dialect there are only two places where Coxon



differs significantly from Taran as a result of new manuscript information. In line 3 of Fragment 1 Coxon's collations establish that there is no manuscript authority for the reading πάντ' ἄστη (a point he first made in *CQ* 1968) and he now prints Heyne's πάντ' ἄνην. In line 19 of Fragment 8 Coxon again establishes that there is no manuscript evidence for the reading πέλοι τὸ which is reported as a manuscript reading by most editors and prints the true manuscript reading which is πέλοιτο. In addition he argues that at Fr. 8, 36 οὐδὲν γὰρ which is read by most editors is Simplicius' paraphrase and that the only reading with manuscript authority is οὐδ' εἰ χρόνος which he emends to οὐδὲ χρόνος. Besides these important clarifications what is most useful about Coxon's text is the format in which it is presented. The reader is provided with a text, followed by full parallels from the epic tradition, followed by parallels from other Presocratics, Plato and Aristotle, and finally a very full apparatus. This format will make Coxon's text the natural starting point for any close work with the Greek.

Coxon's book will also be a valuable scholarly tool because of the collection of testimonia and the commentary. The collection of testimonia seems comprehensive and is considerably more extensive than that found in DK. The commentary is full of fascinating information, particularly in the form of parallels between P's poem and the literary tradition. Thus, the description of mortals as δίκρανοι at Fr. 5,5 is argued to be an allusion to the fabulous small snake called ἀμφίσβαινα which is mentioned in Nicander but also in Aeschylus and Aristophanes. The description of being in Fr. 8,26 as 'changeless in the coils of huge bonds' is said to be a certain reference to Prometheus.

One of the odd features of the book is its lack of reference to the scholarship on Parmenides and particularly to the extensive work of the last thirty years devoted to the explication of the argument of the fragments. There is no bibliography. Owen, Mourelatos, and Taran appear once in the index and Kahn does not appear at all. The author's own 1934 article in *CQ* is never mentioned. This can be frustrating since the reader would like to know how Coxon would respond to arguments that have already been advanced against some of his positions in the literature. Because of lack of space I will mention dogmatically just one point of disagreement. On page 19 Coxon asserts that 'It is *certain* (my emphasis) in any case that he [sc. Parmenides] was deeply influenced both by Pythagorean theory and by the Pythagorean way of life.' Diogenes Laertius does mention a Pythagorean Ameinias as a teacher of Parmenides but apart from this questionable evidence the internal evidence that Coxon cites leaves it very far from certain that Parmenides had any connection with Pythagoreanism. For example, Coxon says that Parmenides' as-

sertion that the real is determinate (limited) is Pythagorean but our best evidence for early Pythagoreanism, the fragments of Philolaus, invoke limiters and unlimiteds as equally necessary. Likewise, the fact that Parmenides presents a dualist cosmology need not tie him to the Pythagoreans of the table of opposites (whose date is far from clear – see Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, 51) but has its background in the prominent role of opposites in Parmenides' predecessors such as Anaximander and Heraclitus.

Even with these limitations, anyone who attempts to develop a serious interpretation of Parmenides' argument will find Coxon's book an invaluable philological tool.

**Carl A. Huffman**

(Classics)

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**Ruth Gavison, ed.**

*Issues in Contemporary Legal Philosophy*

Don Mills, ON and New York:

Oxford University Press 1987

Pp. vii + 357. Cdn\$92.50: US\$59.95.

ISBN 0-19-825517-9.

This book contains the papers from a conference in honour of H.L.A. Hart at Jerusalem in 1984. The main papers all to various degrees pay respect to Hart. The contributors are all friends and colleagues or former students. The book is thus a moving testimony to one of the great minds of jurisprudence. It also includes a valuable bibliography of Hart's writings to 1985.

The book features symposia with main papers and normally two commentaries. Several of the main papers are distillations of work which in its final form appeared after the conference but before publication of this book. Ronald Dworkin circulated to the conference a draft of chapters 1-3 of *Law's Empire* (Cambridge, MA 1986). The present book contains a summary statement, entitled 'Legal Theory and the Problem of Sense.' Legal positivism claims sense is determined for legal propositions by shared factual conditions of historical origin: consequently, for positivism, a legal dispute can only be a disguised factual dispute. Dworkin thinks such a view impoverished. Lawyers can legitimately disagree about what the conditions are that determine sense. For this reason law, Dworkin insists, is an *interpretive*



concept; conflicting legal claims are conflicting interpretations of actual legal practice. Moreover, legal claims are claims to offer the *best* interpretation of legal practice, to make legal practice as coherent as possible with the best political morality inherent in that practice. He anticipates the objection that his account is relativistic and content-independent (and therefore no better than positivism), because it is satisfiable by even the most wicked regime. He claims that one will find in even the most wicked regime some law which embodies a respectable moral ideal like justice. Ruth Gavison argues in reply that positivism is not a 'semantic theory,' as Dworkin asserts, nor is the job of legal philosophy simply to discover the 'sense' of propositions of law. She urges a more traditional grand-explanatory conception of legal philosophy. She also claims that, unless 'interpretation' is taken so broadly as to be meaningless, there is so much that goes on in legal practice which cannot sensibly be regarded as 'interpretation.' Hart himself focuses on Dworkin's recognition of a 'pre-interpretive' conception of law, and claims that analytical jurisprudence can be thought of as the analysis of that conception. He also urges the 'relativism' objection which Dworkin formulated his paper to anticipate. Unhelpful responses by Dworkin are included.

Philip Soper adapts a chapter from his *A Theory of Law* (Cambridge, MA 1984). Soper's positive claim is that, provided security is successfully provided by a system of coercive orders, then a good faith attempt by the officials of the system to act in the interest of all grounds a *prima facie* obligation to obey the orders. He also argues negatively against other theories of legal obligation. The book has been much reviewed and criticised. Here, Kent Greenawalt, while accepting the negative part, claims that the positive thesis, if taken to be in underlying justification consequentialist, produces a *prima facie* obligation too weak to deserve the name, and if taken to be deontological is simply implausible – there is no such duty as the duty to respect the feelings of those in power. Chaim Gans essays, contra Soper, to outline a plausible utilitarian account of the obligation to obey the law; the paper is sketchy and unclear.

Sanford Kadish's 'A Theory of Complicity' is an abridged version of a paper appearing in full elsewhere (*California Law Review* 73 [1985] 329-410). The theory is a complex balance of four elements – the kind of liability, the accused's action, the accused's intention, and the result occurring. Notably absent is causation – Kadish claims it to be enough for complicity that *possibly* but for the accused's action the result would not have occurred. The theory is subtle and challenging; however, the full version should be studied. Miriam Gur-Arye raised at the time some convincing technical difficulties with the part of Kadish's account concerning liability which led him to



include that part of the paper for publication here only because otherwise her paper would dangle.

Joseph Raz' 'Autonomy, Toleration and the Harm Principle' has been incorporated into his *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford 1986: see *C.P.R./R.C.C.P.* 8.4 149-52). Raz argues that, while the value of autonomy [unsurprisingly] provides a powerful grounding for toleration, it [surprisingly] does so only within limits. Autonomy-based toleration, Raz argues, allows perfectionist policies (and thus a degree of intolerance) on the part of governments as long as they do not require a resort to coercion in conflict with the Millian 'Harm Principle.' The latter is construed therefore as a principle about how to enforce morality properly, rather than as a principle forbidding governments to enforce morality at all. C.L. Ten suggests Raz is too kind to his own case by considering toleration only in relation to situations where we recognize plural legitimate moral views. As Ten points out, liberalism values toleration even when, as in numerous matters sexual and religious, one is convinced other views are quite mistaken. Here, perfectionism makes stringent demands which the Harm Principle cannot help with. Raz' view is too liberal for Leon Sheleff's more activist tastes. He urges the construal of 'harm' as including economic harm, and the relevance to autonomy of a just distribution of goods, services and rewards. He challenges liberalism to accept the consequences of allowing the perfectionist camel's nose to enter the societal tent.

Of the new material, the session with Gerald Postema on 'The Normativity of Law,' Neil MacCormick and David Lyons responding, is the most heavyweight in the book philosophically. Postema's long, careful and rich paper has three themes. First, he compares and contrasts Hart's discussion of how the internal point of view relates to normativity in *The Concept of Law* (Oxford 1961: henceforth *CL*) with that in the later *Essays on Bentham* (Oxford 1982), to the credit of the latter and its notion of 'detached legal statements.' Second, he shows that there is still a conflict between the idea that it must always be possible detachedly to state the law, and the idea that a proper legal theory incorporates the point of view of the committed participant. Third, he sets up a complex three-way problematic between a simple positivism, a law-as-convention positivism (such as he himself defended in his well-know *Journal of Legal Studies* [1982] paper), and Natural-Law Theory (NLT). The latter each have sound objections to simple positivism – the conventionalist shows adaptation on the part of officials and citizens to each other's views about the law is essential to law; NLT shows that not just any kind of reason for accepting the law is a good reason. But then each of the latter gives the lie to the other – NLT cannot admit the need for mutual adaptation, and conventionalism is compatible with any reason at



all behind the convention's arising. Postema adumbrates at the end the theory which solves the problem, a 'constructive conventionalism' which regards both a link to politico-moral concerns and mutual adaptation as essential to law. His reasons for advancing to 'constructive conventionalism' seem to me impeccable. I do not see, however, why he supposes that NLT must reject the need for mutual adaptation. Certainly, one could imagine a version of NLT without it (cf., e.g., Beyleveld and Brownsword's; see *C.P.R./R.C.C.P.* 8.4 124-6), and a version that would additionally explain such mutual adaptation as caused by some sort of natural reason, even a divinely-dispensed one. If Postema's point is that conventionalism is incompatible with NLT because it requires mutual adaptation by voluntarist choice, not by instilled reason, that seems to load conventionalism with inappropriate metaphysical baggage. I also do not see why Postema supposes that 'constructive conventionalism' is not itself a version of NLT. Macormick picks up the theme of detached and committed legal statements. He rightly says that the possibility of detached statements only arises for positive law, not for morality, because positive law is 'jurisdiction-relative' and morality is universal. But he assumes thereafter that the law per se is jurisdiction-relative, which seems to beg the question against anti-positivistic theories. He claims that to acknowledge a statement of law as correct is to make merely a cognitive commitment – which leaves me wondering how he proposes to satisfy Postema's proper constraint on a legal theory that it explain the normativity of law. MacCormick tries to preserve conventionalism from Postema's critique by distinguishing justifying from motivating reasons, saying that mutual adaptation has only to do with the latter, and that they indeed may be of any content. That seems no improvement over the 'thin' version of conventionalism Postema has already repudiated. Lyons also concentrates on detached and committed statements. In a quaint echo of Stevensonian emotivism, he uses a distinction between 'assertion' and 'expression.' Both kinds of statement make the same assertion about the law's requirements, but committed judgments express without asserting the conviction that the law provides reasons for action: expressions are not part of meaning. Well, the difference between sincere and cynical assertions might be put as that the former and not the latter additionally express the conviction that the utterance provides reasons for belief. Does that show that the difference between sincere and cynical assertions is irrelevant to the nature of discourse? Hardly. Nonetheless, for all my pot-shots, there is much new serious and important legal philosophy in this session.

Rolf Sartorius' paper 'Positivism and Legal Authority' is very orthodox, with two loosely-linked themes. The first is, What kind of mental state is acceptance of authority? Hart (*CL* 110-14) seemed to leave



no choice to legal theory between full endorsement by officials and mindless conformity by subjects. Sartorius argues for a middle ground in which the subjects are aware that there is something accepted by the officials, but they understand it only vaguely. The assertion that in some society this middle ground, and thus accepted law, obtains may be made wholly from the external point of view, and thus any legal theory embodying this middle ground as a criterion of law will still be wholly positivistic. Sartorius' second theme is, When may those who use coercive force against others in the name of authority be said to do so as a matter of moral right? Sartorius sketches an answer in terms of successful completion by such would-be authorities of some task necessary to human flourishing. John Finnis would rather Sartorius had discussed instead, What sort of good reasons are there for thinking that laws or other social norms can and sometimes do give good reasons for acting? While Finnis may be right that his is a more interesting topic, it begs the question against Sartorius' positivism to say that Finnis' question is a central question of legal philosophy, rather than of, say, political morality. Hanina Ben-Menachem succinctly shows how implausible is Sartorius' claim at one point that public observable conformity is not a necessary condition for acceptance of law.

Igor Primoratz in 'The Middle Way in the Philosophy of Punishment' reviews well the traditional opposition of utilitarian and retributivist accounts, with particular reference to Hart's discussion in *Punishment and Responsibility* (Oxford 1968). The paper would be valuable for pedagogical purposes, but the subject is little advanced. Thomas Morawetz traverses the same ground – same plaudits, same caveats. Yoram Shachar contributes some allusive and elusive remarks about Eichmann as a suitable case for punishment.

Michael Moore in 'intentions and *Mens Rea*' confronts the sceptic who argues that the metaphysical underpinnings of the law's distinctions in the realm of *mens rea* are non-existent, and that these distinctions reflect no more than politico-moral policies and choices. He finds in ideas of Quine, Frege, Geach, Kaplan, and Davidson possibilities for ontologically sound individuation of intention. However, his conclusion is that the law's treating of individuated intentions as the same for culpability is either morally bankrupt or the substitution of a standard of knowledge, recklessness and negligence rather than one of intention. That seems a capitulation to, not a confronting of, scepticism. David Heyd finds circularity in Moore's account, rather than self-stultification. Mordechai Kremnitzer urges more concentration on the development of proper moral theory about the mental element in crime, rather than on an intuitive taxonomy of intentions.

Reading the book is an enjoyable experience. The reader basks in the warmth and friendliness of a family occasion, in contrast to the cold glitter of analytic swordplay in Hart's official *estschrift* from his Oxford colleagues (P. Hacker and J. Raz, eds., *Law, Morality, and Society* [Oxford 1977]). The original conference must have been wonderful to attend. Moreover, there is undoubtedly much good work in the book. But its value to the individual scholar is limited by the availability elsewhere of canonical and by now assimilated versions of so much of the material in it. One would be tempted to say that the Postema/MacCormick/Lyons papers were alone worth the price of admission, were the price of admission not what it is. This is a book to consult in the library and take to the photocopier (one copy of certain parts for private research purposes, of course), rather than one to have ever at one's bedside.

**Roger A. Shiner**  
University of Alberta

**Katharine Rose Hanley**  
*A Study in the Theatre and  
Philosophy of Gabriel Marcel.*  
Lanham, MD: University Press of America  
1987.  
Pp. xxiv+227. US\$24.25.  
ISBN 0-8191-6533-6.

Dr. Hanley has written a very valuable study of the philosophy of Gabriel Marcel, animated by the conviction that his work as a philosopher, and as a playwright are complementary, and that themes continually adumbrated in his philosophical *œuvre* receive their most effective interpretation in his plays. 'It is in drama' Marcel wrote 'that metaphysics occurs *in concreto*.'

For Marcel it was indeed always the concrete that was of ultimate significance. His hostility to the abstract and universal showed itself in a rejection of Kant's conception of the primacy of practical reason. In characteristic style he defined his metaphysical task as establishing 'how a subject, in his actual capacity as subject, is related to a reality which cannot in the context be recognized as objective, yet which is persistently required and recognized as real.' If this was Marcel's concern as a metaphysician, engaged always with seeking to define the presence of the transcendent, it was in his plays that,



with a wealth of subtly wrought examples, he articulated the elusive, yet always inescapable, 'effectual signs' of that *praesentia realis*. But (and this is very important) the plays are not merely exemplary material, conveying some universal sense. Rather, they are closely woven concretions of that which can only be realized 'through a series of events or relationships that occur specifically within the order of personal being.'

After a hesitant, and indeed repetitious start, Dr. Hanley traces the ways in which the pivotal notion of creative fidelity receives its rich and complex sense from a number of plays, spanning many years of Marcel's output, and including work as various as *The Rebellious Heart* with its sombre ending, the tragi-comical farce of *The Double Expertise*, *The Sting* with its obvious relevance to the polemical essays in *Man against Mass Society*, and its indebtedness to Max Scheler's exploration of resentment, and finally *Rome is no longer in Rome*. It is in this last play, from 1951, that Dr. Hanley finds the climax in her subject's exploration of fidelity. *Rome is no longer in Rome* was written after Marcel had given his two series of Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen University. Its title was drawn from words set by Corneille on the lips of Sertorius and converted in their quotation by the central figure in Marcel's play, to devastatingly effective use. In this last play a French academic's fidelity to his invocation is presented as a response to God's faithfulness towards him, indeed as a response which, growing out of his previous intellectual and spiritual formation, is seen as a revelation of that divine faithfulness in which it is grounded. A whole number of Marcel's fundamental commitments in metaphysics, treated or mentioned in Dr. Hanley's pages, receive sharp, if characteristically transient, illustration in the climax of that play.

Professor Ricoeur contributes the Introduction to this work. Ricoeur, for many years a deeply respected interpreter of Gabriel Marcel, is fully justified in commending Dr. Hanley's work as an important contribution to the understanding of a thinker, whose truly seminal quality demands close attention to the two related media in which he presented his insights. Her book contains very valuable bibliographical material, and includes a copy of the piano composition Marcel improvised in attempting to bring J. Supervielle's poem (*In Praise of Life*) to full expression as song. Thus the reader is effectively reminded of Marcel's passion for music, which was greater, indeed, than his devotion to the more easily communicable medium of drama.

Dr. Hanley would perhaps have strengthened her exploration of Marcel's understanding of creativity by attention to his early work on Josiah Royce, which should not be forgotten. Royce's influence can be seen in a play Dr. Hanley does not discuss, and which I much admire – *Homme de Dieu*. It is perhaps churlish to regret absence of

treatment of this play, when the author has given so much; but an expressed wish to know her views of it is perhaps a final sincere tribute to her achievement.

**Donald M. MacKinnon**  
Old Aberdeen, Scotland

**Denis J. Hilton, ed.**  
*Contemporary Science and Natural Explanation: Commonsense Conceptions of Causality.*  
New York: Columbia University Press 1988.  
Pp. xii+244. US\$45.00.  
ISBN 0-8147-3443-X.

This anthology grew out of a symposium, *Knowledge-based strategies in causal attribution*, at Clare College, Cambridge, 1985. It would appear, however, that most of the ten papers finally published were written by invitation subsequent to that symposium. Perhaps because of these origins, unlike the Proceedings of many other symposia, there are here neither replies to, nor discussions of, any of the contributions.

There seems to have been little thought given to the question of the intended audience for this book. All but one of the contributors, Rom Harré, are psychologists, yet philosophers figure prominently, although certainly not predominantly, in every one of the bibliographies accompanying the papers. If the book is intended to be interdisciplinary, there is remarkably little attempt, either by the editor or by the contributors, to integrate, or to synthesize anything from, the diverse articles.

For a philosopher picking up this volume, the most informative and provocative part will, surprisingly, surely be Part I, the four papers devoted to empirical studies concerning how persons go about selecting what they take to be causes. Part II, which is by design 'more philosophical,' will, very likely, strike the professional philosopher as being, if not familiar in its entirety, at least familiar in many places. It can be read with some profit and interest, but will not prove nearly as revelatory as the first half.

The thrust of this book is significantly different from the usual philosophical fare about causality. Historically, in the philosophical literature, questions about causality have principally focused on the issue of the metaphysical nature of 'the' causal relation and on the issue of how it is possible to know causes (along with the associated



problem of projecting such knowledge to unexamined cases). These issues are scarcely touched upon in this book.

Among these writers, the problems to be tackled in examining causality include [my reconstruction]: 'What sorts of conditions are regarded as normal against whose background the explanandum is seen as anomalous?'; 'What sorts of linguistic or conversational cues prompt certain kinds of causal explanations and eliminate others?'; 'What sorts of causal paradigms do persons invoke and modify in their particulars to explain concrete events?'; 'To what extent can a regularly repeated causal factor "mask" the recognition of the contribution of another?'; and 'To what extent are causal attributions rule-governed or the result of associations?'

These sorts of questions, it should be obvious, are a far cry from the normative or ideal reconstructions offered by certain formalist philosophers of the 1940s and 50s. Indeed, among these present writers, the earlier theories of Hempel, Braithwaite, et al., are so thoroughly discounted as to merit only an occasional swipe. The philosophers who are cited approvingly, and whose writings remain fertile pastures, are the critics of the formalists, e.g. Dray, Scriven, and especially Hart and Honoré, whose *Causation in the Law* is cited by three of the four experimentalists whose papers comprise Part I.

In little more than one generation, the formalists' theory of explanation has – at least in the writings of these psychologists – been relegated to the scrap heap of intellectual history. In retrospect, this development may be seen to have been inevitable. For the trouble with the logical (normative) theory of explanation was that it provided no grounds for a research program. Having argued that explanation is a *logical* relationship between propositions, and having explicitly and caustically eschewed the relevance of any and all psychological factors, the formalists barred the areas of explanation and causality to empirical researchers. But when one today reads 'an explanation of something is given by someone to someone' (57), one immediately sees in it the complete repudiation of the normative model. Indeed virtually each and every aspect of the formalists' model – that explanation involves universal or statistical laws, that explanation and prediction are 'symmetric,' etc. – are explicitly or implicitly dismissed, in one paper or another in this book, as simply inconsistent with *empirical* data about how persons actually generate causal explanations.

Apart from giving the lie to the formalists' theory, what has empirical investigation revealed to date about how human beings make causal attributions? On the evidence of this book: not much. But really, one ought not to expect otherwise. Attribution theory is still in its nascency. Its subject matter is exceedingly complex, and powerful theories in the field would seem to be years away. Even so, future discussions of causality can never again proceed in the kind of high-

handed a priori fashion of the period 1739-1960. Like it or not, future discussions of causality will have to take more and more cognizance of the experimental research of psychology and psycho-linguistics.

Philosophers unused to reading the professional writings of psychologists may find some of the prose in this book offputting. There is, for example, an overabundance of acronyms. To be sure, much of the writing is workmanlike. But some of it is, no doubt unintentionally, hilarious: 'unusual events, such as sudden deaths, often violate a desired aspect of the status quo. They are in that sense goal failures' (180). And, regrettably, some of it is of the sort which has provoked (obviously ineffectual) perennial lampooning by persons who admire the English language: 'conditioning results from increments in the strength of the association between event representations resulting from contiguous pairings of the events with the level of the conditioning being related monotonically to associative length' (95). 'Event representations' is, unfortunately, just one of numerous instances of nouns being used as adjectives ('covariation information' [35], 'abnormal conditions focus model' [39], etc.). Indeed, there are even instances of the resurrecting of obsolete nouns just to be misused in compound grotesqueries: 'enablement conditions' (179). Farewell, gerunds!

Overall, the conclusions drawn in this book are too few, too controversial, and too underdetermined to provide any secure grounds on which to base plausible theories of causality. If anything, this particular collection of papers warrants the verdict that psychological theories of causality are currently in disarray. Nonetheless, even if you, quite reasonably, decline to purchase this book for your own use, you might well want to borrow a library copy to catch the flavor and direction of contemporary empirical research in this field.

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**Jeffrey C. Isaac**

*Power and Marxist Theory; A Realist View.*

Ithaca and London: Cornell University

Press 1987. Pp. x+238. US\$24.95.

ISBN 0-8014-1934-4.

Political theorist Jeffrey Isaac is a natural ally to those many philosophers who by now have rejected much of what was once mainstream logical empiricist philosophy of science. Isaac, you see, rejects



the political theories that were produced by the generation of mainstream political theorists who thought they were following logical empiricist prescriptions for good science.

Unlike many social scientists, Isaac actually seems to know what philosophical positivism was about. (Being falsely accused of positivism by social scientists ranks high on my top ten list of philosophically annoying encounters.) The aspect of positivism that Isaac finds most poisonous for social science is anti-realism concerning causes. Among political scientists who have not ignored power relations altogether, those who counted themselves as the vanguard of empiricism argued as follows: stripped of all metaphysics, power is a causal relation, and these are relations of constant conjunction linking what is done by some people to what had been done by others. So causal relations are in the final analysis merely relations between events – relations described by empirical covering laws. On this analysis, exercise of power is everything, possession is nothing.

Never mind that there were empiricists too who found the underlying analysis of causes wanting. Much of the political science establishment went for it. Even when they debated the nature of political power, as in the rather well-known 'three faces of power' controversies, the contending theories were all equally phenomenalistic (in the sense that they made no concessions to power apart from the observable exercise of power).

My bias on these issues is that the covering-law model is simply too thin semantically to be of much use heuristically to would-be explainers of social events. The covering-law model suggests we generalize about sets of events, each event being a function (i.e. a unique property or value) of an object at a time. What this represents is the structure of a theory that is both simple and abstract, such as Newtonian mechanics. But more concrete theories, applied to subjects more specific, need to be semantically richer. As a result further relations enter into the model. But these relations are glossed over by constant-conjunction or covering-law talk. Kepler's planetary theory says that planets follow elliptical orbits. What sort of constant conjunction might this be? Kepler's law supposes the elliptical orbit, but what 'covering law' states it? Relations like Kepler's ellipse are essential components of theoretical structure – the laws work within them, and they don't work without them. But they are put out of focus by covering-law and constant-conjunction analyses. So I am not surprised when social scientists find that these seem not to fit the theories they attempt to develop.

Isaac cleverly shows that when his adversaries stop talking about theorizing and begin doing it, even they can't restrict themselves to finding constant-conjunction regularities. Perhaps the strongest arguments against the power-phenomenalism he opposes are empirical.



For instance, if you thought there were nothing to power but its exercise, then phrases like 'balance of power' would be meaningless. Isaac's third chapter surveys the range of social and political phenomena which power-phenomenalists are hard-pressed to describe, much less explain.

Isaac goes on to argue that Marxists in particular should be power-realists, by which he means, in the first instance, accepting his definition of social power as 'those capacities to act possessed by social agents in virtue of enduring relations in which they participate.' Social powers, so defined, are not esoteric but ubiquitous. To use Isaac's example, it is because he is a teacher that he has the power to make students read Macchiavelli. Isaac does not conceive of social powers as primary explanatory devices, but the conceptual links between enduring, reproduced social relations, on one hand, and behaviour on the other.

In Marxist theories the social powers associated with social class figure most prominently. Isaac is careful to preserve the double-aspect conception of class: on one hand class relations are economic power relations (capitalists control the means of production, workers exchange their labour power for wages), on the other hand classes are self-conscious collective agents. Against E.P. Thompson, Isaac points out that the latter is not separable from the former, since economic power forms the poles around which struggle organizes people into contending groups which become conscious collective agents. Against unnamed 'determinists' he points out that this last-mentioned process of class formation (from economic role-group to conscious collective agent) is historically variable, and there is a great gap between the general economic interests that can be read out from the economic roles, and the specific perceived interests of collective agents. What connects the two in any particular case is a long series of historical contingencies, which vary from sector to sector, country to country, and time to time.

Isaac also wants Marxists to recognize that the social powers associated with social class are not the only ones at work in capitalist or socialist societies. Thus he counts himself an opponent of 'class reductionism.' In his last chapter he recommends expanding the big theoretical picture to include the rainbow trinity (class, race, gender) and more: one must also reckon with the social power attached to military establishments.

The directions he recommends for social and political theorists seem to be the right ones, and I believe his view has strong enough philosophical foundations, but these are not well worked-out by the philosophers upon whom Isaac relies. A power-realist, he holds, is a causal realist, and causal realists believe that objects and systems possess real causal powers in virtue of their natures or in virtue of



underlying mechanisms. But what is a mechanism? I wonder how many other philosophers have shared my experience of reading Madden and Harré (on whom Isaac relies heavily), waiting for a thorough analysis of 'mechanism,' in vain. A mechanism could only be a concrete instance of the kind of system that satisfies a theory. Scratch a mechanism, and you find laws; the underlying semantics (e.g., Kepler's ellipses) may be closer to the surface, so to speak, but otherwise the differences between causalism and empiricism begin to fade.

There are other, more interesting analyses of causation and causal necessity that lay beyond the scope of Isaac's book. Since most of these were conceived with physics in mind, it would have been interesting to see whether they have any application to the social sphere. Are all but some few regions of the social state-space closed off to the agents? If physically necessary phenomena those which could not be prevented by social agents? It would be interesting, too, for a Marxist to discuss probabilistic causation, in which, objects interact so as to raise the probability of the effect. But for this we shall evidently have to wait.

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**John Marenbom**

*Later Medieval Philosophy (1150-1350),  
An Introduction.*

New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall  
1987. Pp. xi+230. US\$19.95.  
ISBN 0-7100-9405-1.

In this volume John Marenbom continues the account which he began in his *Early Medieval Philosophy* (Boston 1983), but this new work differs from the earlier in not being intended as any sort of history of its subject. Rather, Marenbom tells us on p.1, his purpose was to produce an aid for someone beginning their own study of medieval philosophy in the two hundred years between 1150 and 1350.

Unlike the earlier volume, this one has been divided into two parts: the first gives a great deal of largely non-philosophical background information on the milieu and methods of medieval scholasticism; the second describes the doctrinal development during the period on one topic of major philosophic interest: intellectual cognition. How this division is supposed to fit the purpose of the book is evident

enough from this statement of aims: 'It aims to provide some of the important information without which medieval philosophical texts will tend to baffle or mislead, and to give some detailed examples of how later medieval thinkers argued.'

Part one is obviously dedicated to the first of these aims, and part two to the second. The book, then, puts together in a somewhat contrived way two quite disparate endeavors, but it is one of Marenbom's points that scholarship in this area requires the skills of both the historian and the philosopher.

What does this book offer the student it sets out to aid? There are useful descriptions of university organization in the 13th century and of the sort of education the would-be theologian of the time had to undergo. There is a more than ample explanation of the types of texts that were produced and of the development of the *quaestio* format and how it relates to the various oral disputations that were the staple of academic life. There is a chapter that sketches the rudiments of scholastic logic including 'supposition' theory, i.e. the theory of reference the medievals themselves invented in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. Marenbom, of course, tells how and when the various texts of Aristotle and his Greco-Arabian commentators became known in the West and gives some brief remarks on the ideas that were thus inherited. Finally, Marenbom has scattered remarks on just what medieval philosophy is and how it related to theology.

This last deserves more comment. Marenbom is concerned that the philosophical discussions of the period not be divorced from their theological context and that while noting the aspects of medieval thought that are relevant to present-day philosophy we also see that the concerns of the scholastic doctors were usually very different from those of our own secular age. The philosophical inquiries of Aquinas, Scotus and Ockham are characteristically motivated by theological problems like the Trinity and creation, which few take seriously today.

While not wanting to disagree with these points, I, nevertheless, found Marenbom's account one-sided. In his eagerness to warn against treating scholastic philosophy in isolation from theology he fails to make clear two important points. First, by the middle of the 13th century nearly all the major doctors accepted (1) that human reason, unaided by revelation, could arrive at a valid, albeit limited, understanding of the natural world, of man, and even to some small extent of God; (2) that the tradition of classical philosophy founded in Aristotle and augmented by Greek and Islamic commentators by and large constituted a body of scientific knowledge gained by these rational methods without reliance on revelation or any special divine illuminations; and (3) that this discipline had its own valid standards of rationality and was worth pursuing for its own sake independently of theological concerns. This is the rationalism of the period, hard



won in battles against church traditionalists during the preceding two centuries, and it is something any student should be made aware of from the start.

Second, philosophy, i.e. the discipline just mentioned, dominates theological work to an extent unknown before or since. Exegesis of the Bible and the church fathers plays a very minor role compared to philosophical argument in the theological writings of the doctors of this period; often, in fact, the theological question seems like just an excuse to engage in a purely philosophical debate. The way theologians had transferred their focus from the scriptures to Aristotle is one of the things a radical and reviled critic like Nicholas of Autrecourt railed against in the middle of the 14th century. He had cause for complaint.

The other main failing of the book as an aid to students is its very thin presentation of the wealth of philosophical ideas inherited by this period from the classical and Islamic tradition. What makes the texts from this period so difficult for students today is that they suppose their readers are familiar with a tradition of thought and a specialized vocabulary that few today have any understanding of. I would have preferred several whole chapters devoted to explaining the way in which this tradition dealt with physical, psychological, metaphysical and ethical inquiries, the issues on which the tradition was divided, and the terminology it developed; in Marenbom's book all this receives merely one chapter of 15 pages. My feeling is, in fact, that the book would have been a better one, given its avowed purpose, if the whole of part two had been replaced by a series of chapters of the sort just mentioned.

A lesser criticism is the neglect of thinkers other than Ockham in the first half of the 14th century. No less a figure than John Buridan receives only a mention; Nicholas of Autrecourt, not even that. Marenbom does not give his reader much indication of what an active period philosophically this was, probably the most active of the whole medieval era.

But enough of criticisms when there is so much to praise. Coupled with the earlier volume this book gives us the most up-to-date general work on medieval philosophy in the Latin West currently available; I have no doubt students will profit from it. It is clearly written and has a good bibliography of the easily accessible sources as well as of important secondary works. Its discussions of philosophical issues are both erudite and astute. The topic of part two, intellectual cognition, covers more philosophical ground than one might expect and is certainly central to the thought of the period. Since in this area the tradition was very divided, the scholastics were free to experiment with a wide variety of conflicting ideas, and the resulting controversies are among the most lively that have come down to us.

In sum, I plan to recommend this book to my students as the best introduction to the subject so far produced.

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**Michel Meyer**

*From Logic to Rhetoric.*

Philadelphia: John Benjamins 1986.

Pp. x+147.

US\$32.00 (cloth: ISBN: 90-272-2553-2).

Michel Meyer is perhaps best known in Europe for the doctrine of problematology, to which the present book provides a brief and accessible introduction (chapter 7). The book's larger plan is very large indeed. It is no less than 'to introduce the reader to the connections between logic and language' (1), and in turn between 'language and context' (2). In so doing, 'we restrict ourselves to elementary notions, always defined, so as not to presuppose any particular knowledge on the part of the reader' (1). The design of the book is uncongenial to its ambitions; only eighty-four pages are allotted to work of Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Quine and Hintikka. Each of these writers has produced a huge and technically daunting corpus and it is hardly surprising that at times Meyer is forced to abandon his good intentions with regard to elementary notions, always defined. Mind you, *nobody* gets these philosophers right, even in five times the eighty-four pages Meyer has reserved for himself, and he doesn't either.

The discussion of Frege (fourteen pages) is a blur of non-elementary notions hardly ever defined, and could not I should have thought work as a beginner's introduction. Russell is dealt with in seventeen pages, with regrettable emphasis on Russellian topics (e.g., propositional functions and incomplete symbols) of rather more historical than systematic interest. As a result the author gets bogged down (as did the co-author of *Principia Mathematica* himself) in the intractable obscurities of Russell's arcana. It is quite possible to give an account of the theory of descriptions, for example, without encumbering it with *any* talk of incomplete symbols, and in any event Meyer has not managed to get its technical objectives right. To be fair, neither did Russell in his more popular expositions of the theory.

Similar difficulties mar the twenty-eight pages given over to Wittgenstein. They are suffused with a technical vocabulary insufficiently



explained (how could it be, in so few pages?) and they contain an occasionally startling assertion such as, for example, that for a pair of elementary propositions there are sixteen different classical valuations (48).

I confess that the philosopher discussed at pages 64 to 70 under the name 'Quine' is not easily recognizable as the Quine of my stout affections. *This* Quine restricts himself to acknowledgement of entities that 'owe their existence to experience' (68) and characterizes the restriction as 'nominalism.' Classes are said to reduce 'to the individuals which constitute them' (68) and the assertion 'There are numbers' is held not to 'posit the... existence of an entity' (69).

Professor Meyer does not shrink from bold judgment, such is the book's charm. 'Hintikka can be considered one of the great contemporary thinkers. Quine is the opposite of Hintikka; his originality is exaggerated, and he is little more than a continuator (sic) of Russell...' (63). There follows a sympathetic but over-hasty tribute to Hintikka's work on propositional attitudes, quantification and question-games.

Rightly noticing that contemporary logic does little to reconstruct a full-bodied notion of argument, Meyer passes to a brief characterization of Pereleman's new rhetoric (92-4) and the 'new linguistics' of Anscombe and Ducrot (94-6). Chapter six deals with Socratic dialectic, and chapter seven is reserved for mention of Meyer's own systematic contributions. He takes it to be a 'law' that 'given that the fundamental unit of language is the question-answer pair, the use of language is always situated and defined as a function of this pair' (116). Among 'the consequences of this law' (116) we have it that '[a]ll use of language responds to a certain problem' and that '... the object of language is not to express problems, but to express solutions.' And so there is a 'fundamental duality of language [which is] the difference between question and answer, which I have elsewhere called the problematological difference (*la différence problématique*)' (118).

Language, says Meyer, responds to the human problem, and dialogical interaction is essential to this response. Meaning is 'the locus of dialectic' (129-30); argument is that which 'functions as the demand for a conclusion... with respect to the problem posed' (131), and figurative meaning is 'only a particular type of inference, to the extent that all of them solicit answering from the questioner – addressee' (135).

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**A.J.M. Milne**

*Human Rights and Human Diversity.*

Albany: State University of New York Press  
1986. Pp. viii+240.

US\$39.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-88706-366-7);

US\$12.95 (paper: ISBN 0-88706-367-5).

Milne's project is to make a case for a modest list of rationally defensible human rights. Although Milne is a strong advocate of the view that most rights are the product of social conventions, and therefore vary from one community to the next, he holds that there are some rights which transcend the 'particular moralities' peculiar to individual communities, rights to which all human beings are entitled simply in virtue of being human. These rights emerge from a set of principles which Milne takes to constitute the content of a 'common morality' shared by all communities (§3.4). This common morality constitutes a universal minimal moral standard which must be satisfied in order to sustain any form of social life.

Among others, the principles which comprise common morality include: beneficence (the obligation to choose good rather than evil, or the lesser evil); respect for human life (a prohibition against wanton killing); justice (assigning to each his due); fellowship (a concern that every member of the community should live as well as possible); and social responsibility (a commitment to give precedence to the community's interest over one's own). With the exceptions of beneficence and social responsibility, each of these principles endows community members with corresponding rights. Respect for human life, for example, entails a right to life. Justice generates a right to fair treatment, fellowship a right to aid in distress, and so on. Communities which fail to respect this set of rights are defective.

The distinction between particular and common morality is a useful tool for assessing the evidence for moral relativism, which Milne does at the end of Chapter 8. Since the rights which emerge from common morality are couched in very general language, they constitute only a minimal moral standard which every community is required to meet. More specifically, these rights are subject to some contextual interpretation in light of the particular morality of a given community. The right to life, for example, always prohibits wanton killing. This rules out killing for private gain or sadistic pleasure in all societies because these are violations of the humanity principle (see discussion below), but does not automatically rule out duelling, abortion, or euthanasia. Whether they count as wanton killing depends on the particular morality of the community in question (§8.1.3). Consequently, Milne advocates a limited version of moral relativism, one which allows for such variations in the interpreta-



tion of the principles of common morality, while still insisting that there is a non-relativistic minimum moral standard which should be respected in all communities.

Although Milne devotes the bulk of his attention to the task of proving that the principles of common morality are necessary for the maintenance of social life, that approach is inadequate for establishing his central thesis: that the set of rights which these principles entail are universal human rights. The connection between common morality and social life establishes merely that the rights characteristic of common morality must be honored among community members. But for these rights to qualify as human rights, they must also be respected when dealing with non-members: in international relations, and in relations with individuals who don't enjoy membership in any community.

Milne is aware of the limitations of the argument based on the maintenance of social life. Consequently, in Chapters 4, 5, and 8 he develops an independent argument for the claim that the rights enumerated above are human as well as social rights.

Two additional principles are offered as the rational basis for the universal applicability of the rights entailed by the principles of common morality. The first of these, the 'humanity principle' (§5.2), is equivalent to the 'end in itself' formulation of Kant's categorical imperative: 'Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means' (Ak. 429). Milne dismisses Kant's defense of this principle (its universalizability) as inadequate for the derivation of moral principles generally. He argues instead that the humanity principle is simply the recognition that human beings have intrinsic value – at least for themselves – since 'every human being who is not in a state of pathological depression has intrinsic value for himself' (83). Although Milne does not make the connection explicit, the theory of value which underwrites this argument is set forth in Chapter 4, where he endorses a view reminiscent of Jean-Paul Sartre's 'Existentialism as a Humanism' (not cited by Milne). Increasing skepticism about the idea of a supernatural order has encouraged the view that we ourselves endow our lives with their significance. Since value is not imposed by supernatural agency, we are the legitimate arbiters of value. Hence the validity of the thesis that every human being has intrinsic value: each of us is a legitimate judge of what may have value, including our own lives. ('Agnostic humanism' is Milne's name for this view.)

In order to extend the humanity principle beyond the confines of a single community (where it is already entailed by the fellowship principle) Milne then introduces the 'practical reason principle' (§§2.3.3, 5.2.2), an admonition to treat like cases alike. This princi-

ple implies that 'Foreigners too... have intrinsic value for themselves and possess the distinctively human characteristic of being able to formulate and pursue purposes of their own' (85). Since the practical reason principle is a principle governing rational action generally, and not just moral action (§5.1.2), Milne's claim that there is a rationally defensible core of genuine human rights now has some foundation.

Milne presents a provocative but fundamentally sensible point of view about the theoretical status of human rights, and for that reason his book is well worth the effort of reading. But it is an effort, for Milne tends to get bogged down in an unnecessarily detailed taxonomy of rights and obligations. This digression obscures the thread of his main arguments, and uses up a good deal of space which could have been devoted to elaboration of those arguments, which are sketched out very sparingly.

In particular, I found the discussion of the role of the humanity principle regrettably brief, especially since Milne subsequently introduces the notion of *unenlightened* contextual interpretations of human rights. A community may still satisfy Milne's minimal moral standard even though its interpretation of human rights departs significantly from the perspective of agnostic humanism. That might be the case, for example, in an orthodox Islamic society, despite the fact that its interpretation of the human right to freedom from arbitrary interference incorporates a prohibition against married women consorting with men in public (§§8.2.4, 8.4.4, 8.4.5). Since agnostic humanism seems to be the foundation for the humanity principle, which is in turn the foundation for the minimal moral standard Milne advocates, his moral tolerance for unenlightened variants of human rights seems *prima facie* incompatible with his core argument for the universal validity of the principles of common morality.

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**Richard D. Mohr**  
*The Platonic Cosmology.*  
Leiden: Brill 1986. Pp. xi+200. US\$36.00.  
ISBN 90-04-07232-2.

This book is an important contribution to Platonic studies. It is composed of a series of essays, most previously published (and thus familiar to any serious student of Plato's cosmology), but the first two,



longest ones, new, as is ch. 5, which buttresses the argument of chs. 3, 4 and 6. The whole sequence forms a stimulating study of the cosmological theories of the *Timaeus* and, to a more restricted extent, of the *Statesman*, *Phaedrus* and *Laws X*, from a distinctive point of view, that is to say, a literalist interpretation of the *Timaeus* myth. Since I do not agree with this interpretation, my respect for Mohr's acuity and powers of argumentation takes on a special quality. Again and again one must recognise that, if one accepts his premises, he is righter than anyone else about the implications of them.

The work is divided into three parts. The first and longest (9-81), comprising the two new essays, covers *Timaeus* 27D-47E, or rather two salient topics therein, the Unique World Argument at 30C-31B, and Time and Eternity (37C-38C). He does not deal, except incidentally, with the creation of the Soul at 35Aff, which leaves something of a gap in his theory (though he does discuss the World Soul in a later essay, ch.9). He is not really claiming to be comprehensive, however, but rather to throw light on a series of particularly difficult problems.

The second part (85-138), covering *Timaeus* 48A-69A, comprises four essays, all but one previously published, 'Image, Flux and Space in the *Timaeus*,' 'The Gold Analogy in the *Timaeus*,' 'Remarks on the Stereometric Nature and Status of the Primary Bodies in the *Timaeus*' (new), and 'The Mechanism of Flux in the *Timaeus*'; while Part Three is a collection of five previously published essays addressing cosmological problems in other dialogues as well as the *Timaeus*: 'Disorderly Motion in the *Statesman*,' 'The Sources of Evil Problem and the Principle of Motion Doctrine in the *Phaedrus* and *Laws X*,' 'The World Soul in the Platonic Cosmology (*Statesman*, *Philebus*, *Timaeus*),' 'The Relation of Reason to Soul in the Platonic Cosmology: *Sophist* 248E-249D,' and 'The Platonic Theodicy: *Laws X* 899-905.'

It is good to have these papers gathered together, as I say, but one cannot help thinking that Mohr could well have gone one step further and woven them together into a book. The equivalent of a book does in fact emerge, however, presenting perhaps the most acutely argued and intelligent treatment extant of the consequences of a literal view of the *Timaeus* – that is, a view which accepts the existence of the Demiurge, and the reality of a temporal creation of the world, with which his existence is bound up. As one who does not accept this view of the *Timaeus*, I find myself nevertheless able to applaud the acuity with which Mohr pursues its implications, frequently setting right in the process such giants of Platonic scholarship as Cornford, Cherniss, Vlastos and Owen, as well as other very competent authorities such as J.B. Skemp, T.M. Robinson (his own teacher), Hans Herter or Leonardo Tarán.



Let me first address myself to suggestions of Mohr's which are independent of his literalist position. First of all, in ch. 1, the concept of the World-Animal's uniqueness being due to its role as an immanent standard, even as the Forms in general are standards (like the Standard Meter Stick in Paris). I am not entirely happy with this idea, stimulating through it is. Forms are certainly standards in a sense, but not, I think, as perfect particulars (14). All horses or trees do not conform to the Ideal Horse or Tree in the same way that all meter lengths must conform to the Standard Meter. As for the World-Animal, I would persist in regarding its uniqueness as simply the consequence of its being totally comprehensive. Uniqueness is built into the concept of it, even as, in a different way, it is built into that of the Sun, or of the phoenix-bird. On the other hand, his analysis of the very troublesome passage about the traces of the Forms in the Receptacle (*Tim.* 49B-50B), in chs. 3 and 4, I found not only stimulating but persuasive, both on first reading it, and on re-reading it now. He is good also on the nature of the disorderly motion in the *Statesman* (ch. 7). I must say, though, that I agree with Cherniss that the disorderly motions are simply 'inadvertent but inevitable spin-off effects from the orderly actions of the World-Soul' (142). The whole process is surely just like a top winding down.

On issues that depend upon his literalist stance, he is equally penetrating: on the Demiurge's role as, not so much a source of order or beauty (though I don't see that one can really deny him that role *as well*), as an improver of the world's intelligibility (55-61); on Time in general (ch. 2), on the presence of traces of the primary particles in the pre-cosmic chaos (ch. 6), and on the overt inconsistency between the *Timaeus* on the one hand and the *Phaedrus* and *Laws X* on the other, on the doctrine of Soul being the sole originator of motion (ch. 8). All these problems which he raises, however, only serve to strengthen my conviction that the *Timaeus* myth, with Demiurge, pre-cosmic chaos, creation of the soul, and seminal activities of the Demiurge, cannot have been intended by Plato to be taken literally. It occurs to me that if we had in complete form the second half of Parmenides' Poem, the *Doxa*, we would have a far better idea of just what Plato means by an *eikôs mythos*, and how it is to be taken. Mohr does a great service, however, I feel, in exposing these difficulties with intelligence and clarity.

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**Keith Seddon**

*Time: A Philosophical Treatment.*

New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall  
(for Croom Helm) 1987. Pp. 166. US\$39.95.  
ISBN 0-7099-5424-7.

Most of Seddon's book is devoted to problems surrounding a single issue, namely, that of temporal becoming. It is however, arguably the most important issue in the philosophy of time, and according to some, like C.D. Broad, the most profound and intriguing problem of metaphysics. Yet Seddon confidently sets about to demonstrate once and for all, in three short pages 'that the idea of temporal movement is conceptually incoherent,' because 'the only way that the alleged movement of events from the future to the present to the past can be understood is by introducing a second-order time against which the flow can be measured' (18-19).

To this oft repeated objection, the defenders of the transient view, have given, and could give a great variety of answers. For example, they might ask us to picture an infinite number of possible worlds,  $W_1, W_2, W_3$ , arranged in a series, each becoming the actual world for an instance, after which actuality moves on to the next world. In  $W_1$ ,  $t_1$  is in the present. In  $W_2$ ,  $t_1$  is in the past and  $t_2$  in the present while  $t_3$  is still in the future. In  $W_3$ ,  $t_3$  is in the present, and so on. As actuality moves from  $W_1$  to  $W_2$ , to  $W_3$ , the actualization of the 'now' moves from  $t_1$  to  $t_2$  to  $t_3$ . According to this, one may say that during the interval  $t_j - t_i$ , actuality which moves along the series of worlds, covers the distance from world  $W_j$  to world  $W_i$ . To the question 'When is the actual "now" at  $t_1$ ?' which the defenders of the transient view are often thought to be forced to dismiss, at best, as pointless as asking 'In which city is one in Rome?', he may simply reply 'at the stage at which actuality reaches  $W_i$ .' This reply assumes no time system beyond or above the normal one, but only the time system prevailing within every possible world. Our talk about the motion of the present translates into our association of the actual 'now' with different positions in the series of worlds that are being successively actualized and deactualized.

Of course, Seddon would have not been forced to accept this argument, but his book would have been more balanced had he mentioned it, or some other attempt to lend prima facie sense to the transient view.

Subsequent to this there is an extended discussion on A-statements and B-statements. the author correctly states that 'A-statements are not freely repeatable' (54), that is, not that the sentence expressing it may convey different statements depending on the time of its utterance, but that the self-same statement may change its truth-value.



However, on p. 62 he claims that there exist also 'spatial A-series' implying that a statement like 'Tom is here' would instantiate a spatial A-statement, something no one holds and which is quite pointless to hold. Admittedly, one and the same *sentence-type* 'Tom is here' may be uttered (e.g. by Fred who is standing close to Tom) on one occasion and express a true statement, and on another (e.g. uttered by Herb separated by thousands of miles from Tom) a different, false statement that ascribes to Tom a different location from the first statement.

Later, Seddon strenuously objects to the idea that the fact that all of us are far less anxious about past troubles than about those yet to come implies that we are escaping the former and running toward the latter. Furthermore he claims that the simple reason for our differing attitudes to past and future experiences is that 'expectations and anticipations attract our thoughts because what we decide to do now... usually makes a difference to how future circumstances develop' (87). But Seddon's explanation seems rather unlikely. Past disasters, however dreadful, if they have no implications for the future, have relatively little significance for us. Suppose I am worried that I will experience excruciating pain during the whole next week. If someone were to promise me to prevent this, then I would be willing to pay him a large sum of money. On the other hand, were he to offer to do away with a similar pain I distinctly seem to remember to have had last month (e.g. by producing convincing evidence that it never actually happened), I would not be very anxious to obtain his services. My different ability, in general, to affect the future than the past does not seem to account or be of any relevance to my different attitudes in these two cases. Thus if there is any explanation at all why contemplating what is going to be, unlike contemplating what has ceased to be, can have a strong effect on our present mood, Seddon's account does not seem to have captured it.

The book ends with a defense of the view that we need not fear death, echoing Epicurus who said 'Death is nothing for us; for as long as we are, death is not here; and when death is here, we are no longer.' Of course, Dr. Seddon realizes that arguments have little impact on people's attitude to death. Still it is worth showing that contrary to what most feel there are no rational grounds for fearing death. In fact however, given his views on the non-transience of time he could have strengthened his position by pointing out that the hour of our death is no more approaching us than the hour of our birth, since no point in time is moving. And we are not given to bemoan our prenatal non-existence. Reason requires that we should be equally indifferent to our post-humous non-existence.

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**Jean Starobinski**

*Jean-Jacques Rousseau:*

*Transparency and Obstruction.*

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1988.

Pp. xxxviii+421.

US\$60.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-77126-1);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-226-77128-8).

Arthur Goldhammer's translation of Jean Starobinski's *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La transparence et l'obstacle* will be welcomed by all English-speaking scholars of Rousseau. This edition contains both the revision of the original book and the seven essays on Rousseau which were added to the second French edition. Their publication in English should lead to a new interest in Rousseau among students of both philosophy and literature.

The importance of Starobinski's book lies, above all, in the unrivalled comprehensiveness of his treatment of Rousseau's works. He makes important observations about frequently treated works such as the *Discourses*, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, the *Confessions*, and *Emile* and he shows the importance of less read works such as the *Dialogues* and *Pygmalion*. By examining the rich diversity of Rousseau's works Starobinski offers a solution to the long debated issue of the consistency of Rousseau's 'system.' While he sees a certain unity in Rousseau's works, Starobinski (unlike Ernst Cassirer, Roger Masters, and Rousseau himself who argue for Rousseau's consistency as a thinker) sees 'discontinuity' in Rousseau's philosophy (274). He finds the unity of Rousseau's work in its guiding intention rather than its conclusion (271). Accordingly he discusses the various works to elucidate 'the structure of Rousseau's world' (xi).

It would not be entirely misleading to link Starobinski's book with the many psychological studies of Rousseau. Nevertheless, Starobinski does take care to distinguish himself from those who have diagnosed Rousseau's mental and/or physical illness. He is interested in 'what the disease meant to Rousseau' rather than in its medical nature (371). To find what the illness and, indeed, his own life and human life in general meant to Rousseau, Starobinski looks at what Rousseau explicitly says about them. This approach leads to a certain ambiguity. Sometimes Starobinski discusses Rousseau as an important thinker. He does so occasionally even when he is focusing on 'Jean-Jacques,' the autobiographical character constructed by Rousseau to dramatize certain fundamental issues. More often, however, Starobinski wishes to understand what is beneath the surface of Rousseau's work that Rousseau himself did not understand, to expose the 'emotional need' that engendered such works as the *Second*



*Discourse* (146). Given this concern, it is impressive that Starobinski avoids a psychological reductionism as much as he does.

Those who are primarily interested in philosophy or political theory could ask why they should be interested in Rousseau's emotional needs. Starobinski answers persuasively that Rousseau is the discoverer and (through his status as an exemplary figure) the cause of crucial problems of modern consciousness. In short, Rousseau's emotional problems are our emotional problems.

In Starobinski's account Rousseau discovered the problem of sincerity (199) and invented a new language of protest against insincerity (322). The problem is neatly summed up in Starobinski's subtitle: transparency and obstruction. Being sincere, or being perfectly oneself requires perfect transparency in one's relations with the world and is thwarted by obstructions. Starobinski argues that the guiding intention behind Rousseau's work is this desire for transparency, i.e., perfect immediacy in relations between himself and the world, himself and other people, desire and satisfaction, feeling and expression and so on. This desire is constantly threatened by obstacles requiring the mediation of instruments or signs. Thus Rousseau protests against written language for destroying the immediacy of communication, against money for complicating the relation between desire and satisfaction, against social institutions for standing as barriers between people. In the end the combination of a desire for transparency and the necessarily mediated character of life lead to a vacillation between active revolt against any constraint upon personal freedom and passive withdrawal into oneself. Starobinski's Rousseau is the inaugurator of both revolutionary protest and the defects Hegel analyzed in the 'beautiful soul' (262-5). Rousseau's greatness, in this account, consists in his ability to feel and articulate this dilemma and thereby to infect others with it.

Because of his emphasis on Rousseau's emotional needs Starobinski presents his works as a restless progress leading to the *Dialogues* in which his 'key ideas achieve their final form' (205). He shows that in earlier works Rousseau was aware of the advantages of mediation and reflection, but argues that his emotional need drove him to become progressively more and more blind to these advantages. Here one can well raise a question about Starobinski's focus on feelings. In many contexts, including the *Dialogues*, Rousseau showed himself to be acutely aware of the complexities raised by Starobinski. Thus Starobinski succeeds in revealing some of the fundamental issues that concerned Rousseau, but he underestimates the extent to which Rousseau thought about these problems as much as he felt them.

In some of the essays at the end of the book Starobinski does give primacy to Rousseau, the thinker. Students of Rousseau's thought



will be particularly interested in 'The Discourse on Inequality' and 'Rousseau and the Origin of Language.' In these essays Starobinski demonstrates a rigorous attention to the complexity and depth of the arguments. He shows that his focus on Jean-Jacques's supposed emotional needs does not blind him to the depth of Rousseau's thought.

Arthur Goldhammer's translation is very readable and accurately reproduces the general outline of Starobinski's argument. Nevertheless, it is rather loose. For example, for Starobinski's '*l'intention expressive est en quête d'une énergie supplémentaire*,' Goldhammer gives us 'Language needs to draw on additional sources of energy' (320). This willingness to sacrifice precision for readability also appears in the translation of *obstacle* which is rendered as 'obstruction' in the subtitle and as 'obstacle' elsewhere. Some of Goldhammer's choices are explained in the introduction by Robert J. Morrissey which also provides a useful account of Starobinski's other work. To remedy some editorial carelessness the publisher should provide an errata sheet with numbers of the pages cited by Morrissey and a correction that informs readers that it is Starobinski, not Rousseau, who wrote *Montaigne in Motion* (xxviii). In spite of these flaws this is an important addition to Rousseau literature in English.

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**Anna Whiteside and  
Michael Issacharoff, eds.**

*On Referring in Literature.*

Bloomington: Indiana University Press  
1987. Pp. ix+213.

US\$27.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-253-34262-7);

US\$12.50 (paper: ISBN 0-253-20437-2).

The editors of this volume of 13 essays are concerned to characterize the nature of literary reference, and to show that reference is a feature of all interpretation. The essays fall roughly into three categories: those which delimit types of reference and their interrelationships, those precizing the nature of a particular type, and those which concern in a general way the role of reference in literary theory. The collection is intelligently conceived and all essays repay reading even when they are problematic in certain respects.

1) In the first essay, Linda Hutcheon delineates the four basic forms of textual reference: intratextual, extratextual, intertextual, and metatextual. She presents clearly the legitimate goal of metatextual (metafictional) writing, and argues cogently that such writing requires that we redefine the notion of the novel.

2) The first of Anna Whiteside's two essays explores the various forms of auto-reference by means of a well-prosecuted analysis of paradigmatic auto-referential poems. This yields a general account of auto-referentiality modelled on classical paradoxes. Her account is plausible but it depends on a notion in need of clarification (a notion that features in several of the essays here) – that of a 'pure' referent, that is, something which a poet manages to present divested of *all* of its fixed connotations.

3) Gerald Prince helps us to an understanding of literary reference by discussing how Robbe-Grillet systematically frustrates it. R-G. sets the reader up for comprehension in terms of inter- and extra-textual reference and then prevents that comprehension from happening. The result is a bizarre form of intra- and meta-textual reference. Prince's critique of 'pure writing' and 'pure fiction' here is tactfully oblique but well taken.

4) Jean Alter identifies the basic forms of theatrical referring, articulates the differences between textual signs and stage signs, and convincingly argues for the priority of textual analysis over performance.

5) Jean-Jacques Thomas outlines the nature of 'topological' poetry – poetry in which extra-textual reference is less significant than intra-textual reference. Thomas' intricate essay is a bit puzzling in that he seems to make use of two rather incompatible notions about the nature of topological poetry. On the one hand it is poetry in which words refer to other words rather than to reality (poetry in which language is 'pitted against itself' [61]). On the other hand it is poetry in which the ordinary referential import of words describing specific people, things and events (as in Eluard's 'La Victoire de Guernica') is outstripped by the universal significance (war, death, the human condition ... ) which the poem embodies.

6) Françoise Meltzer does several interesting things in her contribution. She, as well as several other authors here, integrates central features of Fregean and Saussurian linguistics in order to underpin a theory of the nature of literature. (This bringing together of the Fregean and Saussurean traditions is perhaps the chief virtue of this book.) Along the way, Meltzer gives us an account of the reader's imagination in the generation of Fregean icons, i.e., signs which putatively have sense but not reference, and an explanation of how Frege's sign system works in regard to textual meaning. The result is an ac-



count of the special sorts of naming, describing, and referring that take place in a fictional context.

7) Michael Issacharoff queries the claim that fictional discourse is parasitic on ordinary discourse. An examination of reference in the context of dramatic discourse discloses that some elements of fictional discourse satisfy both criteria (existence and identification) for definite reference. Other elements satisfy only one or the other, but this is true of the elements of ordinary discourse as well. Issacharoff explains how references to real people and places work in a dramatic context, how readers and viewers can refer to fictional characters, how author's intentions to refer are irrelevant to successful reference and how visual aids (costumes, etc.) effect reference. Finally, he addresses the issue of *who* does the referring in the dramatic context, and establishes the role of both hearer and context in establishing reference.

8) Ross Chambers agrees with Riffaterre that literature is best understood by focusing on the relation between text and reader, but disagrees with the claim that linguistic referentiality is simply a matter of mimesis. It is instead a matter of the illocutionary context ('all the relevant speaker-hearer understandings on which the communicational act depends' [95]). Chambers, concerned about the endemic relativity of interpretation that seems to follow from giving primacy to the text-reader relationship, asserts that the illocutionary context is itself encoded in the text and hence may be objectively discerned there. This assertion, which may well be correct, is not substantiated. One suspects that it is as little susceptible of proof as the old assertion that texts are inherently meaningful.

9) Bruce Morrisette proposes to complete Roland Barthes' analysis of the code by supplementing the notions of 'code' and 'precode' with that of the 'postcode.' This is how the postcode emerges in Robbe-Grillet, whose works provide the best examples of 'generated and generative chains of codes' (112): a) The goal of R-G's new code structure is to 'destroy,' 'downgrade,' 'contradict' meanings to the point where they cannot be understood. b) The art of R-G consists in knowing how to slightly frustrate that goal at the last minute by leaving just a soupçon of the original sense, thereby permitting the reader to enjoy its imminent-but-never-quite-happening total collapse. c) The germ of the postcode is this trace of meaning that survives R-G's destructive handling of received language and images. It is just barely discernible, but still determinate enough to permit the continuation of the chain of code forms.

10) Patrice Pavis is concerned to counter those semioticians of drama who presuppose that signs are self-contained entities and that a performance is reducible to them. He does this by considering the role of the receiver in determining the meaning of signs. He provides



a strong argument for the view that it is necessarily the case that a sign 'be interpreted as a unit forming part of a discursive and ideological whole' (124), and that the referent of a theatrical sign is therefore not something visible and isolated, but it too is a function of the discursive context. He develops here the foundation for a new theory of theatre having all of the virtues and none of the vices of the competing theories, i.e., formalism, structuralism, sociology of contents, and reception theory. The sketch is very incomplete, but sufficiently tantalizing to make us look forward to reading the sequel.

11) Wladimir Krysiniski brings together Aristotle's ideas on the nature of the referent in drama and Frege's sketch of the relation between signs, meanings, and referents in order to form an account of the role of reference in modern drama, or rather, of the way in which the role of reference is methodically thwarted in modern drama. Several plays are analyzed to show the ways in which the relationships between sign, sense, and referent can be aborted. Krysiniski clearly shows that the purpose of this semiotic manoeuvring, deliberately destructive of the text's intelligibility, is to safeguard its autonomy. Neither he nor anyone else in this collection worries about the utility of having unintelligible autonomous literature.

12) Thomas Lewis gives us a spirited and sweeping attack on just about everything literary – on the idea of a theory of literature, the idea of a specifically literary way of referring (auto-referentiality), the idea of a literary sign, text, etc. In short, he opposes himself to the very idea of the aesthetic. The first part of his article is devoted to disabusing literary theorists of their epistemological interests. The second part gives an account of the sort of referring in which a 'literary' referent is constituted, i.e., an account of the act of 'intertextual inscription.' This account takes the form of an Althusserian Marxist modification of Mukarovsky's idea of the referent. The conclusion: 'Analysis of referentiality has little to do with the epistemological attempt to discover an absolute ground of textual meaning. It has everything to do with the political struggle over the forms of use and effectivity that texts enjoy within the broader social process' (168).

13) In the final essay, by Anna Whiteside, many of the rather disparate positions in the text are cleverly made to subserve a comprehensive theory of the nature of literary reference. This is an ambitious construct, in which 'the specifics of literary referring: its pragmatic and socio-cultural dimension, its modes, contexts, codes, types, and above all, the ways in which it functions and how these affect interpretation' (176) are delineated. The frame of reference is speech-act theory: the mode in which the speech-act is performed and in which it is received determines the difference between ordinary and literary discourse. As Whiteside develops her position it becomes clear that this theory will not allow for objective grounds for any claims about



the nature of the referent. We are led from a consideration of the modes of literary projection and reception to the conclusion that the literary referent is a 'protean' (181) thing. Hence literary sense is protean as well. — And so of course is literary interpretation. Maybe there is inevitably a semiotic *glissando* from Searle to Barthes: a) referents are functions of contexts; b) referents 'become signs referring to and thus transforming other referents into more signs which in turn refer ... and so on *ad infinitum*' (187); c) 'the' literary referent in a specific reading is a product of the way we fill in the 'skeleton' the text provides, so in fact "form" is the only literary reality' (201); d) so in the final analysis it is the writer's performance of a speech act *cum* (probably) the infinite multiplicity of effects of its perlocutionary function that is the literary referent. This theory is not too helpful if the correct answer to an inquiry about the literary referent can in fact be almost any answer one proposes.

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**T.C. Williams**

*The Unity of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason.*  
Queenston, ON: Edwin Mellen Press 1987.  
Pp. xiv+177. Cdn\$39.95. ISBN 0-88946-301-8.

The unity of the first Critique for Williams is not simply a matter of the mutual consistency of its parts but the presence in all of them of one fundamental idea. The idea, not surprisingly, is the conceptual understanding of experience as a reciprocity of concept and intuition. But his way of introducing it may set off some unfamiliar and suggestive resonances. By noting some striking similarities between the first Critique and Herder's essay *On the Origin of Language* (1772), Williams lays the ground for an approach to Kant through an emphasis on questions of meaning. The historical underpinning for this move is the suggestion that Herder, through his studies with Kant, came to see the basic idea before Kant did and used it to project a new approach to language. Kant, in turn, finding it in Herder and spurred by it to drop the notion of supersensible knowledge, developed it much further than Herder could have.

An important consequence of the new view is that within it causal explanations become irrelevant to the nature of meaning. Herder's notion of inner language is seen not as a way of substituting

spiritual for material causality but as a move away from causal considerations altogether to what we might call (this is not Williams' language) a hermeneutic, phenomenological or interpretive stance. If all experience involves both concept and intuition as forming a whole of meaning it becomes problematic to think of meaning, language or conceptualization as effects of some prior experience or empirical intuition. On the contrary, the causal structure at work in language is to be explained within the structure of intelligibility provided by the concept-intuition duality rather than explaining it.

The major part of the book is thus a careful expository review of Kantian fundamentals in the light of the clue provided by two dualities taken from Herder: the dual analysis of experience as concept-intuition and the distinction between psychological and transcendental (i.e., causal and conceptual) explanations. Because, as Williams convincingly shows (18-23), the causal account that Herder includes strikingly resembles Kant's threefold synthesis, he is able, in Chapter 4, to use Herder on the second of these two dualities as a clue to the crucial and difficult question of the status of Kant's appeals to psychology. This in turn provides a basis for his account (largely against Weldon) of the status of inner sense as part of Kant's causal account (summarized at p. 72) as well as of the extended discussion of the noumenon in the light of Strawson's critique, in the last quarter of the book (Chs. 7-9). But the concept-intuition duality is fundamental and it naturally comes to the fore in Williams' reconstruction of the objective deduction, the schematism and the account of geometry.

Williams' determination to focus on the 'idea of the whole' that Kant said was at the basis of the Critique, showing how it determines the broad lines of the work, gives his book a force that makes it an appropriate accompaniment to the works he is defending Kant from, particularly Strawson. He supplies a bold, intelligible framework which, more efficiently than recent more voluminous studies, brings into high relief just those questions about Kantian philosophy to which any student of Kant most needs to have his attention directed and – by giving a clear account of why the problems are important – provides a useful advance headquarters for explorations into the wilderness of Kant scholarship. The brevity of the book and the sacrifice of detail are a condition of the clarity of outline that Williams explicitly (vii) aims for.

But it also sometimes obscures what he is saying on the central issues. Thus on the basis of the Kantian argument that the categories have meaning only within experience, Williams makes the important and, I would say, correct claim that Kant did not intend the noumenon as a non-natural causal agency. This leads him to emphasize the negative sense of noumenon as a limiting notion. What is



valuable here is the careful demonstration that a phenomenalist analysis is not incompatible with the use of language to express agnosticism about the non-phenomenal and about the question of the sources of experience; such agnosticism rather than any differences about the structure of experience is argued to be what distinguishes Kant from Berkeley. But since Kant does at least appear to treat the noumenon as a non-natural causal agency in his ethics we may still feel uneasily that Kant's full theory of meaning has not been captured. One may then notice that Williams essentially remains within the confines of a theory of *literal* meaning, though on two occasions he comes to the brink of stepping beyond it, once in suggesting that noumenal language is to be understood as metaphor – though he seems to see this in a broadly Strawsonian way as, at best, a crutch (167) – and again in the useful suggestion that Kant owed something to Swedenborg (129). Given Kant's frequent references to analogy, one cannot help thinking that an expansion of these ideas might have led to the recognition of a much richer theory of meaning. As it is we are left without just that sense of what we could be thinking of when we think the noumenon metaphorically, which further analysis of what Kant finds in Swedenborg might have helped to make clear. And without it we have to reserve judgement about the merely agnostic meaning for the noumenon on which Williams sets considerable store.

That doubt suggests another concerning the general status of psychological argument in Kant. That Williams places causal explanations within the context of the transcendental is clear and unexceptionable enough. But it remains cloudy whether and in what sense he thinks we may speak meaningfully about the empirical causes of thinking without falling into a vicious circle between causal and transcendental accounts of thought. What does Kant mean when he acknowledges an empirical as well as a transcendental deduction for a priori concepts? Williams' clarity about Kant's willingness to accept a Lockean account at some level makes me wish he had explored the complications further.

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**John F. Wippel, ed.**

*Studies in Medieval Philosophy.*

Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press 1987. Pp. viii+302.

US\$36.95. ISBN 0-8132-0640-5.

This volume combines twelve articles by medieval specialists. The articles originate from a 1984 lecture series held at the Catholic University of America. Rather than detail the argumentation in each article, let me highlight in more general terms their themes, problems, and appeal.

Three of the articles (Wieland, McEvoy, Normore) are thematic, dealing with an issue ranging over several thinkers. The rest are author-specific, dealing with an aspect of one thinker: Boethius (Stump), Alfarabi (Druart), Maimonides (Hyman), Aquinas (Wippel), Inagaki, Ross), Ockham (Adams, Brown), and John of Jandun (Mahoney).

Of the thematic articles, McEvoy's ('The Divine as the Measure of Being in Platonic and Scholastic Thought') explores the philosophical implications associated with the concept of measure, as it arose in presocratic and Platonic thought and as it came to be applied to God by the Latins so as to underline the order of creation and the difference between the material and spiritual. Wieland ('Plato or Aristotle – a Real Alternative in Medieval Philosophy?'), however, questions the conventional view that only the availability of Aristotle's texts explains his dominance in the thirteenth century. Instead, Wieland looks for an explanation internal to the development of Christian wisdom. For although Plato's views seem more congruous with Christianity than Aristotle's, the latter was more amenable to the development of theology towards a rigorous scientific discipline alongside other sciences in the thirteenth century. Likewise, Normore ('The Tradition of Medieval Nominalism') questions the established view that nominalism is predominantly associated with a position on the problem of universals. His survey of references to nominalists in the early twelfth century, however, shows that they – and later Ockham as well – were concerned with the semantical issue of how language relates to reality.

The themes touched on in the thought of Aquinas include participation, the scope of metaphysics, the formation of habits, annihilation, and the conservation of the created world. Thus by analyzing the various kinds of participation, Wippel ('Thomas Aquinas and Participation') addresses the problem of how Aquinas can maintain a radical ontological dependency of creatures on God yet avoid the charge of pantheism. As well, he enters the debate of earlier commentators on participation. Inagaki ('*Habitus* and *Natura* in Aquinas') is interest-



ed in the causal explanation of habits. Rather than the result of repeated acts, habits, according to Aquinas, are essentially related to human nature as their final cause. In this link, Inagaki sees in the thought of Aquinas a way of moving from experience to metaphysics and of relating human freedom to divine creativity. Ross ('Aquinas on Annihilation') compares the Thomistic denial of cosmic annihilation with the current view in physics that suggests the cosmos will naturally endure forever. On Aquinas' account, God could withdraw causal support but in fact would not. But Ross argues that annihilation – destruction in an instant by withdrawing support – is incoherent on Aquinas' own principles of created order. While annihilation may be metaphorically true, it is, Ross contends, scientifically false. Thus science converges with theology.

Ockham's presumed voluntarism is scrutinized by Adams and his approach to final causality, by Brown. Outlining Ockham's central teachings in metaphysics, epistemology, and morals, Adams ('William Ockham: Voluntarist or Naturalist?') contends that the will comes to the fore only in Ockham's moral theory, but even then the will does not denigrate nature. Thus Ockham is presented as more of an Aristotelian naturalist than is usually acknowledged. Final causality, on the other hand, raises questions about the status of the end and about the nature of its activity. Apparently inconsistent views attributed to Ockham have led some commentators to reject the authenticity of several works. Brown ('Ockham and Final Causality'), however, argues for their authenticity, dispels inconsistencies, and suggests that Ockham sought to harmonize the Avicennian and Averroistic doctrines of final causality.

Two essays take up the theme of emanationism, in the thought of Alfarabi and of Maimonides respectively. Classifying the Alfarabian *corpus* into three types, Druart ('Al-Farabi and Emanationism') shows that Alfarabi recognized a limitation in Aristotelian metaphysics in the Aristotelian texts, outlined a more extensive objective for metaphysics in the programmatic texts, and carried out this program in the emanationist texts. The latter, comprising Alfarabi's main political works, are explicit and technical in their use of emanation theory. Thus, Alfarabi does embrace this neoplatonic doctrine, contrary to recent scholarly opinion. Hyman ('Maimonides on Creation and Emanation') elucidates Maimonides' understanding of creation. Neither necessary causation – be it emanation theory or the Aristotelian theory of change – nor *undetermined* volition as proposed by the kalam theologians will suffice. Instead, it is both the will and the intellect, i.e., *determined* volition, that explains creation. However, in line with the Maimonidean theory of attributes, such notions describe features of the world, rather than the divine reality. Moreover, emanation theory does explain the efficient causality of immaterial

things, especially God's causal agency in the world once it has been created.

Finally, in the first essay, Stump ('Boethius's *In Ciceronis Topica* and Stoic Logic') examines Boethius' commentary on conditional argument forms which were held to be self-evidently valid by earlier logicians. But she suggests, as well, that Boethius, in this work, is a more philosophically sophisticated witness to Stoic logic and other issues than is usually acknowledged. And in the final essay Mahoney ('Themes and Problems in the Psychology of John of Jandun') revises the view of John of Jandun as a rigid Averroist, because of tensions and discrepancies in his expressed views on the cogitative sense, abstraction, and the intellect.

A brief but helpful Index of Authors and Index of Subjects complete the book. In most cases the footnotes give the original Latin text of quoted passages and are detailed in bibliographical information.

In being both current and thorough in its scholarship, this collection, volume 17 of *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, maintains the high standards of the series. The collection succeeds in refining, and often revising, our understanding of medieval philosophical thought.

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**Richard Wollheim**

*Painting as an Art.*

Princeton: Princeton University Press 1987.

Pp. 384. US\$45.00. ISBN 0-691-09964-2.

In *Painting as an Art*, Richard Wollheim has integrated the aesthetics of *Art and its Objects* with the Humean-Freudian psychology of *The Thread of Life*, therein developing and deepening each. The main theme is an analysis of painting as an intentional, meaning-creating activity, both bound up with the natural needs and desires that animate other activities and yet possessed of a distinctiveness in drawing on and furthering specific visual and motor capacities. The relevant intentional, meaning-creating activity develops from general communicative and expressive intentions, from deep psychological and even Oedipal intentions, and from intentions that are made possible only by 'the history and traditions of painting' (8). The painter



aims at disclosing these intentions to 'an adequately sensitive, adequately informed spectator' through the work (8). As a result, an adequate account of the experience of individual paintings must draw extensively both on art historical investigations into the expectations of audience and artist about representation and on psychoanalytic theory. Wollheim makes use of these resources to develop rich accounts of both the general *œuvres* and certain specific masterpieces within them of Friedrich, Manet, Hals, Poussin, Ingres, Picasso, Titian, Bellini, and De Kooning, treating various other painters more briefly along the way.

Wollheim's attention to painters' intentions and the activity of painting is designed to 'campaign for a more explanatory account of painting than is usually provided' (9). Yet the explanations of works that Wollheim develops have more to do with traditional connoisseurship than with fashionable recent trends within art history. Wollheim argues that art has no univocal and universal social function, so that the social history and sociology of art cannot provide a general account of its significance. Structuralist and post-structuralist art history are criticized for conflating pictorial with linguistic meaning, in seeing rules and codes everywhere, and for failing to attend to the significant particularities of individual works.

Wollheim's style of connoisseurship dispenses, however, with any reliance on a special faculty of taste. Instead, psychoanalytic and other more general causal analyses of the embodiment of pictorial meaning in a work are put forward in order to account for the significance of various paintings. Formalist theories of art are criticized for resting on the assumption that the artistic quality of a painting must be evident in pure, untutored perception, whereas in fact all perception is influenced by background knowledge.

Wollheim's positive causal account of pictorial meaning and the importance of painting begins from a sketch of what he calls *Ur-painting*, the activity of intentionally merely depositing marks on a surface, without any further aim. This activity is then changed and enriched through the successive *thematization* of the mark, the surface, the edge, the orientation, the motif, and the image. That is, thoughts of these features of marked surfaces come to guide the activity of making them; the markmaker comes to expect an orientation, a motif, and an image against a background to be recognized in the marked surface, and thus comes to be an intentional maker of pictorial meaning, a painter.

Every painter who is an artist will have an individual style, a set of 'banked thematizations' or guiding thoughts with both psychological reality and explanatory power. Whereas general style is an artifact of art history useful for periodization and school distinctions, individual style – an idiosyncratic way of being guided by certain



thoughts so as to give new meaning to the marked surfaces one makes – is the distinctive possession of the painter as an artist. Achievement in art hence is the achievement of style, of a new mode of thematization. In a way that is reminiscent of Collingwood on the role of the spectator in achieving individual expression, Wollheim says the artist as spectator of his own developing work is concerned 'to keep the picture on track: that is, to ensure that the experience [of pictorial meaning] that the picture is calculated to produce in others is attuned to the mental condition, or the intention, [itself receiving further articulation through the activity], out of which he is painting it' (45).

Wollheim's intentionalist-causal account of the activity of painting further yields a theory of pictorial representation. X pictorially represents Y when and only when Y is correctly seen in X, according to the artist's intentions. This intentionalist theory of representation is contrasted with illusion, resemblance, make-believe, information, and semiotic theories, each of which leaves out of account the fact that the visual experience produced by a painting is something intended by the painter to be received as a representation.

After two initial, more general and theoretical chapters, Wollheim then fills in his account of achievement in painting as an art by investigating individual style in the paintings of Friedrich, Manet, Hals, Poussin, Picasso, Ingres, Titian, Bellini, and De Kooning. Woven through the treatment of these painters is a survey of manifold concrete and specific ways of achieving new thematizations, including the borrowing of motifs, the development of correspondences to emotions, the use of an unrepresented internal spectator, the ascription of meaning to the act of painting, and so on. At times in these investigations, attention to specific paintings and to the art of painting seems to waver in the face of the obsessions of psychoanalysis. Thus De Kooning, it is said, 'crams his pictures with infantile experiences of sucking, touching, biting, excreting, retaining, smearing, sniffing, swallowing, gurgling, stroking, wetting' and treats the edge of the painting as an ego-like regulator of the insurgent id-like paint (348, 350). In passages such as this, one is led to wonder both whether the psychoanalytic critical gaze is constructing much of what it sees and what, even if what it sees is there, all this has to do with art.

In other passages, however, especially those more involved with influences and borrowings and more distant from psychoanalysis, Wollheim's readings are assured and compelling, so much so that the question of taste does almost seem to disappear in the face of the account of the achievement of pictorial meaning. Thus Wollheim finds *within* Poussin's illustrations of certain classical myths of reason and desire the governing thought that 'the victory of reason over concupiscence is achieved through reason borrowing the resources



of concupiscence. For him the defeat of desire by reason is experienced as the victory of one kind of desire over another' (197). Insofar as it generates and is sustained by accounts like this of specific pictures, Wollheim's account of the intentionally caused achievement in painting of new thematizations has real promise as an account of painting as an art.

Yet Wollheim's account may also stand philosophically in need of modification and elaboration. His arguments against anti-intentional analyses of representation and pictorial meaning are not sound, and his own account suffers from general problems of intentionalism in the philosophy of mind. Those who see representation and meaning as crucially dependent on rules or codes or making-believe do not dismiss intentions altogether. Rather, they are making the logical point that the relevant intentions to represent and to mean are formulable only against a background of generally shared strategies for achieving and appreciating representationality and significance. Against this, Wollheim can claim to have put forward a deeper causal story about how a system of such shared strategies might have developed out of Ur-painting and subsequently evolved. But this development may have been less smooth and gradually accumulative than Wollheim has imagined it to be. A kind of gap or rupture may have separated the intentional production of meaningful paintings from idle markmaking, with no clear first painting or first intention to paint significantly in the absence of the slow and initially unintended emergence of shared strategies. Secondly, it is not clear that intentions are always decisive for representationality or meaning. Suppose Amatura, intending to paint Salome, carefully renders a woman drawing a knife across the neck of a sleeping general. Here it seems that, owing (one might say) to the language of painting, Amatura will have painted Judith, not Salome, no matter what he intended.

Wollheim's account of formalism is a caricature, for both so-called formalist aestheticians, such as Hume and Kant in discussing the arts, and formalist critics such as Bell and Fry in their actual practice, require attention to the representational and thematic content of paintings in understanding, appreciating, and valuing them. That they are nonetheless concerned with a particular art-relevant pleasure, supervenient on the interrelation of form and content, suggests that there is either more to painting as an art, and to art in general, than Wollheim's account of pictorial meaning would allow or more involvement of distinctive emotions on the part of artist and audience in the achievement and experience of pictorial meaning than Wollheim brings out. But to say this is not to diminish the impor-

tance of Wollheim's account of the achievement of pictorial meaning; it is only to point toward an account of why that achievement so moves us that is concerned with its content in relation to something more.

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