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Ruth Abbey

Charles Taylor

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

2000. Pp. vi + 250.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-05713-3);

US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-05714-1).

This is a useful, if somewhat unexciting book. Charles Taylor is one of the 'big names' of contemporary philosophy but his ideas are not as widely known as they might be because the corpus of his works is very extensive and scattered in a great many places. (The bibliography of his writings in the back of this volume runs to 11 pages.) Abbey has done those unfamiliar with Taylor's philosophy the service of reading virtually everything he has written and summarizing it in a clear and helpful way. She organizes material that can be somewhat diffuse around four main themes — explaining morality, interpreting selfhood, theorizing politics and understanding knowledge — and devotes a chapter to each. In my view, these four themes do indeed capture and reflect Taylor's principal concerns over thirty-five years as Canada's most distinguished philosopher. The way Abbey treats them both brings out what might be called the grandeur of Taylor's thought, and reveals the interconnectedness of topics that might otherwise seem diverse. In this respect she secures for his work a unity that (for example) the collection edited by James Tully published by Cambridge in 1994 failed to do.

This connectedness lies essentially in a picture of what it is to be a human being, a picture that animates nearly everything Taylor has written since his first major publication — *The Explanation of Behaviour* — in 1964. People are first and foremost language users, but their use of language goes beyond the instrumental to include the expressive. This is what will forever mark them out from machines and other animals. It is what makes them capable of rising above felt desire and engaging in 'strong evaluation', a level of evaluation that generates personhood and with it underscores the vital connection between individuality and political or communal engagement. This is the picture that Abbey usefully fills out at considerable length, and she has performed a valuable task for those who want to know about Taylor in less time than reading the originals would take.

Nevertheless, it is not a specially good read. To begin with, it is exceptionally uncritical. This, it is true, is by express intention (5), but pure exposition inevitably loses a lot of the excitement of intellectual engagement. There is not much sense here of why one would or should engage with Taylor's thought. At times, indeed, the lack of criticism verges on discipleship, when she defends Taylor's views against unsympathetic criticism. (The sole exception is where she chides him for overlooking feminist criticisms of Marx.)

Second, and this is a related point, Abbey is quite happy to treat assertion as argument. Time and again she speaks as though what we were being presented with was a closely argued position, whereas, in fact, as it seems to me, a marked characteristic of Taylor's philosophical style is that it trades

heavily in gesture and allusion. Some of these gestures and allusions will strike most people as genuine insights, and so indeed they may be. But generally they need to be expanded and worked upon if their full weight and significance is to be uncovered and assessed. I find Taylor a highly suggestive thinker, but in philosophy suggestiveness is not enough. Consequently, he is not a thinker well suited to straightforward exposition, and the importance of what he has to say can only come out through imaginative and critical engagement with the ideas themselves. Taylor, I am inclined to say, needs to be contended with.

The final chapter is a case in point. It is a merit of the book that it picks up, as a coda to Taylor's work so to speak, the newly emerging theme with which he has recently been concerned in a number of places — the significance of the decline of religion, or as he puts it, what it means to live in a secular world. This theme was touched on in *Sources of the Self*, and figured prominently in his (as yet unpublished) 1999 Gifford Lectures and again in his most recent book (published after Abbey's) *Varieties of Religion Today*. In this area I find Taylor at his most suggestive, and interesting. But I fear that Abbey has not altogether done him justice. I am not sure that those who read this coda would get any sense of the significance — and contentiousness — of what he has to say in this context, something which is conveyed powerfully in his exchange with Quentin Skinner in the Tully volume. Skinner is a fierce and deeply unsympathetic critic of Taylor on religion in *Sources of the Self*. Yet the importance of Taylor's theme comes across much more clearly in Skinner's attack than in Abbey's exposition. In this case, I am inclined to think, the sympathetic is the ally of the anodyne, and for a thinker of Taylor's stature this is unfortunate.

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Charles Blattberg

*From Pluralist to Patriotic Politics:
Putting Practice First.*

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford

University Press 2000. Pp. xiii + 294.

Cdn\$79.95: US\$85.00. ISBN 0-19-829688-6.

Charles Blattberg's book is structured around a three-way contest between theoretical approaches that Blattberg designates as 'neutralist', 'pluralist', and 'patriotic'. Most forms of contemporary liberal theory fall either in the neutralist or pluralist category, and therefore Blattberg's preferred theoretical option, 'patriotic politics', presents itself as, to this extent, a critique of liberalism, or a critique of the mainstream versions of liberal political philosophy: one might say that he aims at a modestly post-liberal politics — a kind of politics that preserves some of the moral impetus behind civic-republican versions of politics, but in a highly liberalized version. This three-way typology is a rather stylized presentation of the current political philosophy scene; but let's face it — more or less *all* political philosophy involves stylized typologies that organize or focus our sense of the theoretical alternatives.

A good deal of contemporary political philosophy gets shoveled into Blattberg's first category, neutralism: utilitarianism; Kantian liberalism, whether Rawlsian or Habermasian; right-wing or libertarian liberalism; and finally, certain forms of analytical Marxism. The main target is Rawls, and we are meant to assume that the kind of critique applied to the Rawlsian project could be re-worked to criticize these other theories. Targeting neutralist liberalism is fairly familiar in contemporary debates, but Blattberg's way of targeting it is less familiar. He sets up a parallel between Rawls's (and by extension, other political philosophers') quest for a neutral set of rules to guide political life and the stance of 'disengaged objectivity' (24) to be found in certain philosophies of science. Therefore, an argument about rival philosophies of science (connected to an argument about expressivist vs. representational philosophies of language) is presented by Blattberg as serving to debunk the efforts of most political philosophers within the mainstream Anglo-American tradition (again, whether Rawlsian, Habermasian, utilitarian, or whatever). The neutralist project is 'to construct systematic rulebooks for morals or politics' (27). Blattberg wants to support more 'embodied', context-sensitive, judgment-oriented conceptions of scientific rationality, and if he's right about the underlying connection between the ideal of disengaged reason in science and the ideal of disengaged reason in a theorist like Rawls, then we can expect that an understanding of the limits of the former will also help us understand the limits of the latter. 'The neutralist aims for the formulation of a thin, neutral, and precise theory of right that is then neutrally applied to practice' (27). There are echoes here of Walzer's critique of the abstraction of Rawls and Habermas, and even more of Taylor's multifaceted theoretical concerns. Yet Blattberg's attempt to build his cri-

tique of Rawls and the others on an argument concerning the philosophy of science doesn't strike me as very persuasive, nor am I convinced that embracing the kind of philosophy of science that Blattberg favors will suffice for such an ambitious challenge to almost the whole enterprise of contemporary political philosophy. Blattberg never really explains why rejection of the legitimacy of reflecting on politics at the level of abstract principles isn't disabling for *any* political philosophy, not just neutralist versions; nor does he clarify why his way of doing political philosophy is more embodied, context-sensitive, and judgment-oriented than those he rejects. The fact is, political philosophy is a pretty abstract intellectual discipline, whether it's Kantian or Aristotelian, Rawlsian or Gadamerian.

One can be skeptical about whether Blattberg's detour into the philosophy of science has succeeded in debunking the Rawlsian quest for a neutral doctrine of right, but at least the target here is pretty clear. Blattberg's second target, 'pluralism', is somewhat more elusive, since he groups quite different theorists, with significantly different concerns, under this rubric. Those he categorizes as 'pluralists' include Michael Walzer, Joseph Raz, Robert Dahl, John Gray, Stuart Hampshire, and Isaiah Berlin, which suggests to me that he runs together pluralism as a *moral* doctrine about the plurality of legitimate ends of life, and pluralism as a *political* doctrine about the proper political role of groups within contemporary society. So the target here is not always as clear as it might be. But I think his contrast between 'patriotic' and 'pluralist' politics is primarily intended as a theoretical dialogue between his teacher (and my teacher), Charles Taylor, and his teacher's teacher, Isaiah Berlin. A pluralist like Berlin sees moral and political reality as defined by a crucial set of intractable either-or choices that will not yield to any kind of rationalist solution, and that lends an air of tragic incommensurability to the moral and political universe. Even if one embraces a mode of pluralism that departs from Berlin's vision of an ultimate tragic conflict of moralities, the best that the pluralist can hope for is negotiation or accommodation between those committed to radically conflicting visions of political life. Blattberg, as he says, wants to 'aim higher': for a vision of a common good that positively 'reconciles' or 'integrates' conflicting pluralities of political belief or commitment. Politics, he says, must 'mend' the fragments of the contemporary political world (208; he invokes here the Jewish idea of *tikkun*, highlighted by philosophers like Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem). Mere 'negotiation' of difference doesn't suffice. Like Taylor, what this passage suggests is a set of moral-political aspirations that are not only ambitiously teleological, but also quasi-theological.

At this point, it is easy to imagine the objections of contemporary liberals, whether neutralist or pluralist. Indeed, they would say, conjuring up ambitious notions of moral integration and a shared vision of the good belongs more to theology than to politics. Accepting that individuals and groups in modern society see the world in very different ways, and are not likely to reach consensus on fundamental philosophical premises in any finite series of lifetimes that we can envisage, is the crowning moral insight of modern

liberalism. We must design political institutions that accommodate, because they resign themselves to the untranscendability of, fundamental moral conflicts. Liberalism represents a higher stage of moral-political insight precisely because it *doesn't* aim so high, morally or philosophically. Returning to notions of moral integration or an ambitious politically-shared telos represents a reversion to pre-modern horizons, and is therefore a kind of moral regression rather than an improvement on liberal humility about morals and politics.

At this level of abstraction, it is hard to judge whether Blattberg's post-liberal politics represents a realistic cure for liberalism's deficiencies, or — in light of the sociological realities of the modern world — a naive and rather Romantic turning-away from liberal insights into the limitations of morality and politics. To his credit, Blattberg does attempt to apply his political theory in more concrete settings, which offers a welcome opportunity to test how Blattberg's principles 'cash out' in terms of actual social practices and institutions; describing governance, welfare, and recognition as the three major modes of justification in politics today, he explores patriotic theory's implications for each. To simplify the discussion, I'll focus on Chapter 6, where he tries to suggest how patriotic theory should inform our thinking about welfare, and specifically about the contemporary world of work and ownership.

Chapter 6, entitled 'Welfare', offers two ways of resisting a *laissez-faire* approach to the world of the modern corporation, according to which corporations carry *no* social responsibilities other than the responsibility to maximize its own profit. Following the categories used in the rest of the book, Blattberg refers to these two anti-libertarian accounts as 'the pluralist corporation' and 'the patriotic corporation'. The pluralist view is that profit is only one value among other important values, that the corporation is answerable to a diversity of interested stakeholders, and that the art of management consists in skillful 'interest-balancing' among the various stakeholders pulling in different directions. The civic-minded pluralist manager views the corporation not just from the perspective of an owner of personal property, but as a *trustee* concerned with wider social responsibilities (see quotation, 174). Why is this account insufficient? As elsewhere in the book, Blattberg argues that the pluralist view wrongly compartmentalizes social goods (in this case, profit or money), rather than seeing them as tied into a larger interdependent social whole. Blattberg presents the 'patriotic corporation' as a conversational community, not just balancing or negotiating among different interests, but drawing all stakeholders into a community of *shared* interests. This sounds good, but again, Blattberg doesn't do enough to explain why 'pluralism' is the culprit, and he relies too much on abstract theoretical contrasts: compromise vs. reconciliation; negotiation vs. conversation, and so on. Moreover, the terms Blattberg uses to characterize this non-pluralistic alternative don't come close to yielding a determinate picture of what economic institutions would look like under his patriotic regime.

There is a further problem here. At the very end of Chapter 6, Blattberg concedes that, given the realities of modern economic life, the 'patriotic corporation' is something of a utopia. Ultimately, we can't count on it to transcend mere pluralistic bargaining and the separateness of group interests; we must turn to the regulatory powers of the state to ensure that the interests of non-shareholding stakeholders (labor unions, consumers, environmental groups) are respected (184). This suggests that Blattberg's patriotic ideal can be more reliably located at the level of the political community as a whole than in the institutions of economic life. But can it? Doesn't Blattberg's conception of politics as dialogue and reconciliation run counter to everything we know about the character of the modern state? Don't we have the same problem here of unredeemed competition between individuals and groups, or at best pluralistic negotiation between them, rather than a genuine community of conversation about shared ends? If the theoretical standard of judgment being applied is that competing interests should be knitted together into a consciousness of what is shared, and division shall give way to ambitious reconciliation, isn't the patriotic polity just as utopian as the patriotic corporation?

Blattberg has written an intelligent and wide-ranging book, and he's impressively widely-read in political theory and much else. There's no question that he has a vision of politics that has much to recommend it. But I think the term 'pluralism' is being used in too many disparate senses in this book; I think he needs to nail down more clearly than he does what pluralism is and why it's not a good guide to morality and politics. And second, despite his emphasis on contextualism and on dialogue between thickly-described social goods, I think Blattberg needs to be more specific about the content of his political vision, and to spell out in more detail how adoption of his patriotic ideal would yield a better understanding of social practices and political institutions.

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Richard Bodéüs

*Aristotle and the Theology of the
Living Immortals.*

Albany: State University of New York Press

2000. Pp. xi + 375.

US\$59.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-4727-8);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-4728-6).

The topic of the divine in Aristotle has been of interest to philosophers and theologians throughout the ages. While the standard picture of Aristotle is that of a philosopher critical of the religious myths passed down from the earlier Greek tradition and intent on developing a metaphysics of a transcendent deity, the portrayal of Aristotle by Bodéüs shows a Greek who endorses the stories of religious tradition as a model for a comprehensive understanding of the world. The presentation made in this translation of his 1992 French work is certainly a challenging and innovative one and sets Bodéüs apart from most writers on Aristotle, although at points his position reminds the reader of some things Brentano had to say about the role of the gods in the Aristotelian corpus.

The book is divided into five main chapters. In the first chapter Bodéüs rejects the standard interpretations of Aristotle's position on 'theological issues'. He argues that the focus on the Unmoved Mover in *Metaphysics* Lambda as the culmination of a purely philosophical investigation into the ultimately divine aspect of the universe has misled many into thinking that belief in the traditional gods was impossible or useless for Aristotle. Since the gods of tradition seem to have a concern for man while Aristotle's Thought thinking Itself seems unaware of man, the conflict between providence and transcendence seemed avoidable only by the rejection of the popular belief. Bodéüs sees the Stoics as prominent in furthering an allegorizing approach to traditional beliefs which then allowed later thinkers to mistakenly view Aristotle as promoting a natural theology as an independent speculative inquiry. *Metaphysics* is not a theological science but rather a science of causes: if *Physics* can study divine visible beings (i.e., the planets) then *Metaphysics* can study their separate causes. Since these are eternal and the gods of tradition are known to be eternal (by definition they are immortal as opposed to humans), the traditional deities can serve as a model for the former, which, nonetheless, are of a very different sort. One could then see theology as a knowledge the gods have of these separate substances — something which Aristotle in fact seems to do.

In the second chapter which deals with the 'celestial gods', Bodéüs goes on to examine the 'theology' of the *De Caelo*. Here Bodéüs argues that Aristotle accommodates the belief in the traditional gods and uses them as supportive of his cosmic theory. In parallel to Plato's division of the divine into the Demiurge, the visible celestial gods (i.e., planets), and the Olympian gods, Aristotle presents a threefold division of the invisible celestial spheres, the visible celestial beings, and the sometimes visible deities. However,

Aristotle will neither consider the planets to be deities (they are merely somehow divine) nor is there a celestial soul that causes motion for the whole system. Aristotle is prompted by the observation of the unchanging heavens, general beliefs in the immortal deities, and even by the use of language — all of which can be taken as *phainomena* — to develop a picture of the universe wherein an ethereal substance helps explain the eternality of the universe. For Aristotle, Bodéüs argues, science is confirmed by the popular belief — not in the sense that it receives from it ‘academic’ verification, but rather in the sense that its own conclusions can be seen as consonant with some of the deeper sentiments at work in popular belief.

In the third chapter which deals with mythological accounts of the gods, Bodéüs argues that the term ‘theology’, as employed by Aristotle, does not refer to a science but rather to the works of the poets who presented the stories often meant to be explanatory of the origin of the universe and its constitution. Such poets mistakenly transformed the elements into persons and at the same time anthropomorphized these beings. Aristotle’s attitude to myths is mainly negative. He does not see myth as allegory, as containing deep truths, even though the occasional historical, zoological, or political fact might emerge from these otherwise false tales, tales that are really targeted at the passions rather than at the mind. However, myth can be utilized to motivate people to respect human civic institutions — Plato seems to have taken this route (as did Critias) and Aristotle seems willing to see truth in this approach. While not accepting the tales to be speaking truly of the identity and activities of Greek gods, Aristotle nonetheless would have admitted the existence of some beings like them.

Given that Aristotle accepts the existence of deities indicated by the tradition, Bodéüs proceeds in chapter four to deal with how Aristotle reacted to this tradition. Plato had defined a god as ‘a being whose mind is responsible for all its movements’. This definition would cover both the celestial gods as well as the Olympian gods. Bodéüs goes on to argue that Aristotle was concerned about the methodological aspects of claims about the gods and ultimately describes the gods as ‘living immortals that are essentially eternal’. Given this account, Aristotle is still able to grant that the gods possess a body and will therefore be able to allow for the existence of the Olympians. While not adopting the chariot image proposed for them by Plato in the *Phaedrus*, Aristotle nonetheless follows Plato in granting to the gods a bodily type of existence and makes it of the fifth element which is eternal. Bodéüs then draws on a number of passages, even from the *Topics* and *Rhetoric*, to give some indication of a providential character which the gods might possess but he leaves open, for the moment, the question whether Aristotle actually endorsed such a widespread view. The God who is the focus of attention in Book Lambda of the *Metaphysics* is one both separate from matter (not embodied as one of Plato’s gods) and yet not totally separate from the sensible world which is aware of it — much as in a human there is a relation of the bodily to his own theoretical intellect. In a certain way God becomes, then, a paradigm of the macrocosm. Moreover, the separability of his intellectual

activity is mirrored in those infrequent moments in which man realizes his contemplative capacity.

This vision has impact on the social picture also, as Bodéüs points out in his last chapter. Aristotle will argue that a sense of religion is linked to a sense of deference. While he does not endorse the worship of any particular deities of the Greek tradition, he does see religion as falling under justice as an appropriate exchange between the gods and men; its exercise is necessary both on the individual and the civic level. One owes the gods gratitude — gratitude for existence, sustenance, and education. Although Aristotle is hardly maintaining that there are not secondary causes (primarily parents!) who are responsible for these, he is nonetheless aware that chance plays a large role in these matters and the gods are able to influence the concrete outcomes which lead to a happy life. There is, however, more than just duty that characterizes this relationship; one can speak of a friendship, albeit a friendship of unequal parties. The gods love us not due to our merit yet they may withdraw their favor if we do not render them the piety deserved. They find that person most pleasing (*theophilestatos*) who develops his own mental faculty. Aristotle sees the gods as functioning both as efficient causes (they are benefactors) and as final causes (they are the object of our imitation). However, Bodéüs provides a very interesting discussion of purposiveness in nature and in the end shows how the efficient divine causation seems to merge with the final. If contemplative activity has this predominant importance, the political domain will be responsible for fostering it — ‘the lawgiver must comply so as to render the city “blessed” in the image of the gods.’ Thus, Bodéüs sees the standard for determining action which is articulated in the *Eudemian Ethics*, *ten theorian tou theou*, as best translated to mean ‘whatever promotes the spectacle of the god’, i.e., whatever promotes the liturgy and public cult of the god. In short, Aristotle has developed a theological picture for a man who neither believes in particular popular myths nor for a man devoid of religious belief but rather for one who cultivates a power within himself that makes him resemble the gods. The belief in the gods becomes, then, a protreptic argument for moral behaviour and the science of first principles is designated ‘theological’ only by reference to its role vis-à-vis the popular mythology of the poets.

In his final summation Bodéüs notes that a certain demythologization had occurred in the Greek tradition long before the Pre-Socratics: the poets had prepared the way for a type of atheism that, in the eyes of such writers as Plato, undermined the moral basis of society. Aristotle holds to the importance of a theological underpinning to his ethics but the theological backdrop does not arise from the *Metaphysics* but rather from popular belief refined and sifted. Aristotle adopts the notion of a god not as something separate from the world but rather as something that combines aspects of both physicality and immaterial activity. Aristotle purifies the mythical tradition to employ truths that motivated its understanding of the cosmos: a god, then, functions as a hermeneutical model of the world which, to be a complete system, must include both the material and the intellectual.

Bodéüs has left us with a remarkable work. His book uses Aristotle as a lens to view earlier theological ideas in Greek poets, Pre-Socratics, and Plato. The theses he presents are bold and innovative ones but they also seem to demand more amplification and justification. They also raise more questions: what is the relationship of the gods to the planets? How do the gods relate to the so-called Intelligences of the later tradition? Is one not to think of the Unmoved Mover as a substance? Bodéüs seems, at times, either by omission or inclusion, to read more or less into a text than is actually present in it. For instance, while arguing that a lawgiver is to render a city blessed 'in the image of the gods' as noted above, he leaves the impression that the final phrase is included in the text of the *Politics* at 1331b25 — however, it is not. On the other hand, a quote about the role of fortune at 1332a29 is incomplete and leaves a different impression than Aristotle may have intended. Such objections notwithstanding, this is a work that must be reckoned with. It has all the marks of serious scholarship: 57 pages of notes, 40 pages of bibliography, lengthy indices of ancient and modern authors, as well as a subject index. It belongs on the shelf of every scholar in the area and will continue to make an impact in the English-speaking world as it has done in the French.

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Eugen Fischer

Linguistic Creativity:

Exercises in 'Philosophical Therapy'.

Philosophical Studies Series.

Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers 2000.

Pp. xiv + 193.

US\$90.00 ISBN 0-7923-6124-5.

Frege called our attention to the astonishing power of language: 'With a few syllables it can express an incalculable number of thoughts, so that even if a thought has been grasped by an inhabitant of the Earth for the very first time, a form of words can be found in which it will be understood by someone else to whom it is entirely new' (Gottlob Frege, 'Compound Thoughts', in Brian McGuinness, ed., *Gottlob Frege: Collected Papers on Mathematics, Logic, and Philosophy* [Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1984], 390). What seems remarkable is not so much that there is such a system capable of expressing an indefinite number of novel thoughts, but rather that we, apparently finite beings, could be masters of it. Reflection on this problem — called the *problem of linguistic creativity* — may induce a sense of wonder, the peculiar feeling

that is said to mark the beginning of philosophy. Once felt, wonder poses grave dangers: a mind normally engaged in respectable practical and theoretical pursuits may find itself entangled in paradoxes. Those wishing to inure themselves to such dangers may seek the aid of a Wittgensteinian philosophical therapist; Eugen Fischer is an excellent practitioner of this art of anti-philosophical philosophizing.

The question that gives rise to perplexity is how a *finite being* (i.e., one that possesses a finite and definite stock of semantic knowledge) that is *epistemically conservative* (i.e., one who knows all along only the meanings of expressions already encountered) can come to know the meaning of any of indefinitely many sentences. The orthodox answer to this question is twofold. First, understanding a potentially infinite array of sentences is *possible* because language is compositional — the meanings of sentences are determined by the meanings of their constituents and the way those constituents are combined — and because these determinants are within the ken of a finite being. Second, understanding a potentially infinite array of sentences is *actual*, because our language comprehension system is a computational implementation of a compositional semantic theory, that is, because the causal processes underlying interpretation somehow mirror canonical derivations within such a theory. Knowledge of the lexicon together with knowledge of syntax is sufficient for us — or more precisely for a certain module of our brains — to *work out* the meaning of complex expressions upon hearing them. The only thing to marvel about is the ease and efficiency of processing.

Fischer's disagreement is not so much with empirical research along the orthodox lines. He claims that the eventual success of an orthodox computational explanation of our linguistic competence is "merely" very unlikely' (140). What is not just unlikely, but outright impossible is that such explanations would provide an answer to the question we are really interested in. And this is so, Fischer claims, because a finite and epistemically conservative being *could not* understand an indefinite number of sentences. In particular, there is no good reason to assume that *we* are finite or epistemically conservative.

The bulk of the book is spent giving an argument for this claim whose main thread runs as follows. Talk about knowledge of meaning is *indeterminate*; it is unclear exactly what such knowledge amounts to, and we cannot expect future science to decide among the non-equivalent proposals. To make our investigation precise, we should cast appropriate constraints in terms of the schema: 'an agent knows what an expression E (of class C) means iff that agent is competent to play role R of game G with it' (54). Fischer considers a variety of proposals about how to flesh out the relevant roles and concludes that, at least for an extremely simple language, knowledge of the meaning of sentences is *constituted* by knowledge of the meanings of the syntactic constituents and their mode of combination. This means that knowledge of the meaning of sentences does not qualify as *new* relative to knowledge of the meanings of their constituents, competence with the latter simply 'adds up' (71) to competence with the former. For more complicated languages the

result needs qualification: knowledge of the meaning of sentences containing complex predicates requires in addition knowledge of the *order* in which combination rules must be applied (126-8). Nonetheless, the basic conclusion stands: given sensible specifications of what knowledge of the meaning of linguistic expressions amount to, ordinary speakers are neither finite nor epistemically conservative.

So much for what Fischer calls the 'philosophical dissolution' of the problem of linguistic creativity. What remains is the therapy: an attempt to identify why this result strikes us as either superficial or puzzling. Fischer traces this to the bad habit of viewing linguistic abilities through the lens of a false analogy between semantic and arithmetical knowledge (102). To know what $2356+5693$ is, it is not enough to understand decimal notation and know how to add; one has to actually *carry through* the calculation. In the grip of the analogy, we might think that we come to know what a new sentence means by *deploying* our knowledge of the meanings of its parts and of its structure. Fischer claims that the similarity is misleading: when we add two numbers we learn what their sum is, when we understand a sentence we acquire no new knowledge of meaning.

The book is, for the most part, meticulously argued and quite engaging, at least for those willing to tolerate its sometimes heavy use of jargon. I am sympathetic with the main conclusion, though I retain misgivings about the particular line of argument Fischer offers. The crucial claim that knowledge of meaning is nothing but possession of certain practical abilities is introduced rather casually at the beginning of Chapter 3. The identification occurs in two questionable steps: that knowledge of meaning is a species of knowledge how, and that knowledge how is merely a practical ability. As Fischer is well aware, we would be quite unwilling to accept simplistic claims, such as that knowledge of the meaning of a predicate consists of a practical ability to point out the objects in the vicinity that satisfy it (55). He is open to the suggestion that there are other practical abilities that are involved in our knowledge of the meaning of a predicate, and even to the suggestion that this one is not. But the openness is superficial. It masks the fact that he is *not* open to the idea that all the relevant practical abilities are *mere symptoms* of a mental state, and that *being* in that mental state is not a matter of having this or that practical ability.

My final comment concerns the tone in which the results of this investigation are announced. Philosophers of language are by now quite used to the harsh words of Wittgensteinians, who accuse us of asking 'unintelligible questions' and providing answers to them that turn out, under proper scrutiny, to be 'nonsensical'. We are also used to not quite knowing what all these harsh words are supposed to mean — other than that they are obviously not words of praise. Fischer is quite exceptional in actually spelling out what *he* means in saying that the question 'How can a finite and epistemically conservative being get to know the meaning of any of indefinitely many sentences it has never encountered before?' is unintelligible. He compares it to a question that exercised ancient geometers, namely, 'How can one trisect

an angle with compass and ruler?" Since we now know that this problem is unsolvable, we realize that 'the ancient geometer's question asks how to do the impossible, and is "unintelligible" in the sense we explained' (181). So, it looks like a question is unintelligible if it asks how something can be done when it actually *cannot* be done. The question Fischer criticizes counts as unintelligible because a finite and epistemically conservative being *cannot* get to know the meaning of indefinitely many sentences. What a relief! I had always feared that when Wittgensteinians accused me of unintelligibility, I was supposed to be doing something far more objectionable than asking perfectly clear and important questions to which we can find illuminating, although surprising, answers. If this is nonsense, long may it live!

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Lenn E. Goodman

In Defense of Truth.

New York: Humanity Books 2001. Pp. 431.

US\$55.00. ISBN 1-57392-908-5.

The heart of the book is Goodman's defense of the idea of objective truth against skepticism, phenomenalism, and relativism. Skepticism is approached through the first-century Skeptic Agrippa's tropes for disarming claims to philosophical understanding: 1) the conflict of opinions; 2) the infinite regress argument; 3) the relativity of perception; 4) the undemonstratedness of premises; 5) the circularity of reasoning.

Goodman reconstructs the Skeptical argument which uses the traditional Pyrrhonian method of playing off the 'dogmatists' against one another, in this case Stoic propositional logic and the Aristotelian quantificational syllogism. His resolution of the standoff recognizes, as he writes, 'the incompatibility of the two rival approaches, the adequacy of each to its own concerns, and the inappropriateness of subjecting either to the conventions of the other' (17). The upshot is 'pluralism about our logical toolbox,' but this is sharply distinguished from relativism: 'We are not confronting multiple realities but one world amenable to various instrumentalities and techniques' (17).

The discussion of phenomenalism aims to defend realism, 'a reality out there beyond the mind,' conceding that phenomenologists can always translate objective knowledge claims into subjective terms, but holding that they 'remain semantically and syntactically dependent on the vocabulary of such a world' (18).

His case against relativism features a vigorous critique of six dogmas: 1) Observations or perceptions are dependent upon theories. So all attempts to found claims of fact on observation turn circular and are mere symptoms of our predisposing notions. 2) The dependence of thought upon paradigms renders impossible any external or critical judgment of the issues prejudged in those paradigms. 3) Rival paradigms are inherently incommensurable. So theories and other constructs in their terms cannot be critically compared. 4) Paradigms are not made but born. They are innate, or acquired with mother's milk. For they are embedded in natural languages and the processes of language acquisition — thus too arbitrary and existential for rational appraisal. 5) Paradigms are ultimately matters of intension, and no behavioral evidence or overt sign can convey to an outsider the categorical intensions of a language user. These are inevitably opaque to all who do not share them. They are miraculously transparent (thus invisible) to those who exercise them. 6) To be is to be the value of a bound variable (93-5).

Goodman sketches David Weissman's diagnosis of Quine's ontological relativity, according to which Quine, along with Hilary Putnam and Paul Horwich, 'followed Tarski into an interpretation that regards *S*, in the right limb of the biconditional [*Sentence "S" has the property T, for truth, if and only if S*], as simply another sentence, a sentence in the object language, but a sentence all the same' (119). Quine tries to defend a 'delicate nexus between phenomena and realities' by appeal to the pragmatic thought that 'a sturdy physicalism is the most likely (because the most salubrious) account of our subjective experience,' and although he knows that an astrologer or faith healer might mount a similar defense, pragmatism 'will allow questions about what there is to be settled judiciously among scientists, without undue fanfare or interferences from the laity ... To be will be whatever a logical system says it is. But we'll be jolly sure that accredited systems of logic and language say only what we, the scientists, think they ought to say. Thus Quine's relativism feeds his physicalism' (119-20).

Like Searle, Goodman is flabbergasted by what he takes to be his opponents' crucial inference: 'Remarkably, philosophers move from the truism that we can speak of things only in such terms as we use to speak of them to the astounding inference that there is no world beyond our representations, or that there are many disparate worlds — those intended in our characterizations — but none at all remaining, no world of things as they are, apart from any views or attitudes or sentences about them' (135).

Goodman writes with an urbane touch. The reader is regularly treated to sentences like this: 'A critic's limitations in decoding great art *salva profunditate* do not show that the meanings to which such art may give body are trapped within its symbols or that the symbols are opaque to interpretation' (134). He wears his erudition, if not lightly, then without stumbling under its weight: 'I don't think that rejection of the kind of philistine materialism that has laid hold of the name and person of realism with all the tact and finesse that Pluto used in courting Persephone commits one to the kind of

relativistic nominalism or ontic pluralism that has been urged as its saving alternative' (135).

There is quite a lot going on in this book, fully justifying its 431 pages. There are chapters on context, induction, creativity, truth in art, myth, and religion. This is not cutting-edge work on truth, but it's a collection of occasional essays on diverse topics, reflections on the philosophical tradition from Agrippa to Quine, by an author with a deep philosophical voice. The book's well worth opening up.

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**Claire Ortiz Hill and
Guillermo E. Rosado Haddock**

Husserl or Frege?

Meaning, Objectivity, and Mathematics.

La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing 2000.

Pp. xiv + 315.

US\$39.95. ISBN 0-8126-9417-1.

According to popular myth, Husserl's relevance to analytic philosophy is minimal. His *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, published in 1891, not only included misguided criticisms of Frege's 1884 *Grundlagen*, the modern day bible of analytic philosophy, but also expounded an extreme version of psychologism that was, in 1894, conclusively refuted in Frege's damning review of Husserl's work. Following Frege's criticisms, the first volume of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* of 1900/1901 improved somewhat on his earlier naivete through its rejection of psychologism and acceptance of Fregean notions such as the distinction between sense and reference. However, by the second volume of the *Investigations*, Husserl had begun to forget the valuable lessons he had learned from Frege, falling back into the dangers of psychologism, never to return to the respectable realms of analytic philosophy.

In *Husserl or Frege*, Claire Ortiz Hill and Guillermo E. Rosado Haddock have brought together a collection of their articles in order, first, to show this assessment of Husserl's career to be mistaken, and, second, to display the relevance of Husserl's work to debates in modern day analytical philosophy. In relation to their first aim, the rejection of the above assessment of Husserl's relationship with Frege (which they attribute to Dagfinn Føllesdal), Ortiz Hill and Rosado Haddock make a compelling case for an alternative story. In particular, in his 'Remarks on Sense and Reference in Frege

and Husserl', Rosado Haddock shows that, although it did not appear in his *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, Husserl made the distinction between sense and reference of expressions around 1890, independently of Frege (indeed, this is acknowledged by Frege in a letter to Husserl of May 24, 1891). Furthermore, Husserl's rejection of psychologism was influenced by his reading of Bolzano, Lotze, and Hume in 1890-91, and is present in manuscripts of Husserl's written before Frege's 1894 review.

Having put the record straight on this point, Ortiz Hill and Rosado Haddock suggest that this misreading of the relationship between Husserl and Frege has contributed to a feeling amongst analytic philosophers that Husserl's writings can be safely ignored. Once one adds to this difficulties with English translations of Husserl's work, due in part to the reluctance among phenomenologists to tackle Husserl's early pre-phenomenological ideas regarding mathematics and logic, it is perhaps not surprising that Husserl's views have not been incorporated into mainstream, mostly Anglo-American, analytic philosophy. Indeed, as Ortiz Hill points out in her Introduction, those analytic philosophers who do try to study Husserl's ideas 'still mainly find a mass of writings on precisely the kind of views they oppose, expressed in language that they could only find repulsive' (xii). Why, then, should philosophers in the analytic tradition make the effort to understanding Husserl's views on mathematics and logic?

Ortiz Hill and Rosado Haddock have several answers to this question. First, from a historical perspective, Ortiz Hill points out that it was Husserl, and not Frege, who was in close contact with Weierstrass, Cantor and Hilbert, so 'more than Frege, Russell, or Wittgenstein, Husserl was actually present and witnessed the very earliest stages of twentieth-century Anglo-American philosophy, and the *Philosophy of Arithmetic* was written under the influence of the same mathematicians and philosophers that ultimately played such a key role in determining the course of philosophy in English-speaking countries' (4). Furthermore, a closer look at Husserl's mathematical and logical writings shows little-considered alternatives to the Fregean views that have dominated analytic philosophy. For example, in a trio of articles on sense and reference, Rosado Haddock points out that Husserl's distinction between sense and reference is somewhat different from Frege's, in that, for Husserl, the reference of a sentence is not its truth value but rather a state of affairs. Rosado Haddock goes on to argue that Husserl's further notion of a 'situation of affairs' can be used to solve some otherwise worrying problems about the differences in conceptual content displayed by various identity statements.

Similarly, in showing Husserl's importance to contemporary philosophy of mathematics, Rosado Haddock rejects several influential arguments in the philosophy of mathematics on the grounds that they fail to take seriously the possibility of an adequate epistemology of abstract objects, and turns to Husserl's epistemology, as developed in the Sixth Investigation, to present an account of mathematical knowledge as achieved through categorial perception (or intuition) and categorial abstraction. Since Rosado Haddock

argues that neither categorial intuition nor categorial abstraction has the mysterious character often attributed to the Platonist's vague notion of 'seeing with the mind's eye', there is a prospect for an epistemology of abstract objects.

However, *Husserl or Frege?* is not an unmitigated success in presenting Husserl as an analytic philosopher to be studied alongside Frege. Some of the discussions of Husserl's criticisms of Frege, for example, actually speak in favour of the view that Husserl simply failed to understand Frege's work. Thus, in Ortiz Hill's discussion of identity statements, Husserl is presented as criticizing Frege's rewriting of the sentence 'the segments are equal in length' as 'the length of the segments are equal or the same' as erasing the difference between *equality* (in some respect) and *identity* in such a way that Frege 'in fact is arguing that being the same in any one way is equivalent to being the same in all ways' (6-7). Ortiz Hill accuses Frege of a blatant fallacy here, ignoring Frege's move from talking about line segments to talking about their lengths (which might itself be reasonably criticized). Frege is not saying that two line segments can be said to be identical if they are of equal length, but only that their *lengths* may be said to be identical. Similar misreadings of Frege's views on identity and equality cause problems for Ortiz Hill's discussion of logical abstraction.

Further difficulties come from the format of the book — a collection of previously published articles by the two authors. Since each article is self-contained, when collected together some repetition is inevitable, and the degree of repetition between some of the articles can be frustrating. The collection lacks the variety of perspectives present in a good anthology, as well as the organization and argumentative continuity of a purpose-written book. Nevertheless, despite these reservations, *Husserl or Frege* does provide a good one-stop source to be dipped in to for those interested in learning more about Husserl's mathematical and logical views.

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**Nancy J. Holland and
Patricia Huntington, eds.**

Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger.
University Park: Penn State University Press
2001. Pp. xvi + 399.

US\$75.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-02154-3);

US\$28.50 (paper: ISBN 0-271-02155-1).

Like the many other fine editions in the Penn State University Press series 'Re-Reading the Canon', *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger* reminds us of how complex, rich, and fruitful combining feminist scholarship with the tradition can be. This volume proves to be an invaluable resource for feminists seeking to revisit Heidegger in their own research or to teach Heidegger in the classroom.

One of the most striking features of this collection is the expansive introduction provided by each editor. Patricia Huntington provides an overview of feminist thought's complicated engagement with Heidegger, whose beginning she marks with Sandra Bartky's landmark essay 'Originative Thinking in the Later Philosophy of Heidegger', appearing in 1970. This engagement begins with Bartky soundly dismissing the liberatory potential in Heidegger's work. But, of course, the story does not end there. Huntington reviews the varied ways that aspects of Heidegger's thought have been revived with respect to feminist analyses of language, authentic identity, and the environment. She also provides readers with 'A Guide to Heidegger's Thought', which should be useful to students and others unfamiliar with Heidegger's work. Though in this introduction, Huntington refers to Dasein as unproblematically human being (23), a concept that is continually questioned throughout many of the essays in the volume. This general introduction is followed by Nancy J. Holland's specific introduction to this volume, in which she explains the organization of the book and provides brief summaries of the selections to follow. As Holland claims about the contributors, '[e]ven those most critical of his ideas admit their relevance to the feminist philosophical enterprise, and many go further to show how his thought may be productive in the work we do' (49).

As an anthology, this work seeks to combine landmark works from established thinkers on Heidegger and feminism, like Jacques Derrida, Luce Irigaray, and Iris Marion Young, as well as new essays from scholars working in diverse areas, such as poetics, ethics, and ecofeminism. The first grouping of essays is entitled 'The Gender of Dasein', and includes the first of Derrida's essays on Heidegger's concept of Geschlecht 'Geschlecht: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference', Tina Chanter's 'The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology', Dorothy Leland's 'Conflictual Culture and Authenticity: Deepening Heidegger's Account of the Social', and Nancy J. Holland's '"The Universe is Made of Stories, Not of Atoms": Heidegger and the Feminine They-Self'. These authors question Heidegger's notion of Dasein and its accompanying fundamental ontology. Is Dasein really gender

neutral as Heidegger claims? Is sexual difference as foundational as ontological difference, or is it simply an anthropological feature of the ontic realm? Does Heidegger really portray Dasein as a social being, or is it another instantiation of Western individualism? Tina Chanter discusses the normative assumptions in Heidegger's early works through the themes of bodies, others, temporality and history. Her essay in particular could serve as an excellent introduction to Heidegger's thought for students, as well as a clear and comprehensive critique of Dasein as neutral and universal, and the implications of this stance for feminist thought.

Further mining Heidegger's work for what is unthought regarding women and the feminine, Part II 'Poetics and the Body' addresses Heidegger's later works on poetics. The three essays all point out what is present and notably absent in Heidegger's examinations of Augustine, the Greeks, and language. In 'The Absence of Monica: Heidegger, Derrida, and Augustine's *Confessions*', John D. Caputo contrasts the conspicuous absence of Augustine's mother in Heidegger's reading of the *Confessions* and her presence in Derrida's reading in *Circumfession*. Carol Bigwood's 'Sappho: The She-Greek Heidegger Forgot' and Jennifer Anna Gosetti's 'Feminine Figures in Heidegger's Theory of Poetic Language' recover the forgotten or distorted feminine figures in Heidegger's writings, most notably, Sappho, Aphrodite, and Antigone.

'Ethics, Home, and Play', Part III of the volume, includes Trish Glazebrook's 'Heidegger and Ecofeminism', Iris Marion Young's 'House and Home: Feminist Variations on a Theme', and Mechthild Nagel's 'Thowness, Playing-in-the-World, and the Question of Authenticity'. Alongside Young's well known retrieval of home as a site of feminist praxis, and Nagel's construction of a feminist play discourse informed by Gadamer and a critique of Heidegger, Glazebrook's essay stands out as particularly useful for novices. She provides a concise overview of ecofeminism and its conflict with deep ecology. She makes the case that ecofeminists do not have to prioritize feminist concerns over ecological concerns, but can think through both simultaneously.

The last group of essays in this volume addresses spirituality and the political potential of Heidegger's work. 'Thinking, Spirit, and Moving Forward' includes Luce Irigaray's 'From *The Forgetting of Air* to *To Be Two*' (the introduction to the Italian edition of *L'Oubli de l'air* translated by Heidi Bostic and Stephen Pluháček), Ellen T. Armour's '"Through Flame or Ashes": Traces of Difference in *Geist's* Return', Gail Stenstad's 'Revolutionary Thinking', and Patricia Huntington's 'Stealing the Fire of Creativity: Heidegger's Challenge to Intellectuals'. Irigaray's and Armour's pieces situate Heidegger as a pivotal figure in continental philosophy. Stenstad and Huntington examine the political import of Heidegger's work. Stenstad thinks seriously of another beginning arising out of a critique of tradition that fuels personal and political transformation. Huntington asserts that Heidegger clears a space for intellectuals to reflect on their own thinking. She writes, '... Heidegger's thought endures because it turns us toward the possibility

availed to us now to take a leap and, through coming to an understanding what compels us to think, become free as thinkers' (353).

Overall, this volume presents a clear picture of Heidegger's potential for feminist theory, his liberatory moments and his limitations. Many intersections of Heidegger's thought with other areas, phenomenological psychology and Asian thought, for example, could be explored further in relation to feminism in future volumes. Perhaps this series is ready to initiate second volumes of feminist interpretations of important thinkers such as Plato, Kant, and Heidegger — 'Re-Reading the Canon, Again'?

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Wolfgang Iser

The Range of Interpretation.

New York: Columbia University Press 2000.

Pp. xv + 206.

US\$27.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-231-11902-X);

US\$18.50 (paper: ISBN 0-231-11903-8).

Though one of the preeminent living literary theorists, Wolfgang Iser has always occupied a rather strange place in his discipline. He managed to develop a genuine school (the so-called 'anthropological approach' to literature) without jumping on the bandwagon of poststructuralism — no easy feat for a literary theorist who wrote his most important books in the 1970s and 80s. Against the anti-humanism of most current literary theory, Iser's work has always given primary importance to the question of why literature plays such a unique role in our lives, why we humans make and consume fictions; and in developing this 'humanistic' approach Iser has given us some of the most fascinating positions in recent literary theory. *The Range of Interpretation* (originally presented as the 1994 Wellek Library Lecture in Critical Theory at the University of California, Irvine), continues in this vein. Here we find Iser at his best, offering a study of interpretation that is an invaluable tool for philosophers and literary theorists alike.

Iser's book is not so much an attempt to develop a theory of interpretation as it is an attempt to trace the geography of the concept, to explore how it changes form in different areas of human activity. Though Iser identifies something common to interpretation in all of its manifestations — interpretation is an act of translation — his book is first and foremost a standing rebuke to the tendency, widespread in both philosophy and literary theory,

to treat interpretation as a sort of unified activity which calls for a theory. After an introductory chapter on popular theories of interpretation (feliciously called *The Market Place of Interpretation*), the book divides into 5 chapters (plus two appendixes), each of which examines a specific region of interpretation. The range of examples is astonishing, covering the Talmud to Shakespeare's dramas (and just about everything else imaginable); and the theoretical observation Iser culls from his readings of literary and cultural texts are uniformly insightful. Central is Iser's claim that interpretation, far from being mere *description-in-other-words*, turns out to be a genuine action, 'not so much an explication but a performance: it makes something happen' (xiv). Interpretation generates what Iser describes as 'emergent' realities (154), for an interpretation always introduces something novel into our various vocabularies, our understanding of our world. Indeed, this 'emergence' is the hallmark of interpretation, and it helps explain our general cultural interest in interpretations (literary or otherwise), for in the activity of interpreting our world we are at once creating it, bringing new phenomena, new regions of experience, into existence.

Iser's book is what might best be described as the first sustained study of the *genres* of interpretation, and this alone will likely ensure a wide audience for the book. It would be a shame if this audience turns out to be made up exclusively of literary theorists, for the book offers much to philosophers working on topics as diverse as the problem of rule-following or the theory of translation. Even if one does not find anything particularly useful in the various picture(s) of interpretation Iser promotes, the simple existence of a book that weaves together theoretical discussions of interpretation with masterful readings of specific texts will offer philosophers something undeniably valuable: an account of the actual practice of interpretation. It leaves the reader with a greatly expanded understanding of the nature of interpretation, of the various roles it assumes in our culture, and it is difficult to imagine a scholar who would not profit from such a book.

John Gibson

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Melissa Lane

*Plato's Progeny. How Plato and Socrates
Still Captivate the Modern Mind.*

London: Duckworth 2001. Pp. x + 165.

US\$17.95. ISBN 0-7156-2892-5.

In 1993 both sides in a Colorado court case contesting the exclusion of homosexuals from anti-discrimination laws sought validation from Plato, who like the Bible has been mined for support of diverse and sometimes opposing principles. In three essays Melissa Lane puts Plato's conflicting appeal into a broad historical context as an attempt to explain what motivates his continuing hold on modern and postmodern thought. She concentrates on the reception of Plato since the Enlightenment, the period which marks the beginning of ideological battles over democracy and the political role of the masses.

Lane directs a chapter to Socrates and the 'civic question'. Did Athens justifiably execute Socrates and did Socrates rightly accept punishment? Lane points out that Socrates's civic and political role interested ancient commentators only until the end of Athenian democracy some seventy years after he died. After that, Socrates was treated as an ethical or religious figure until the eighteenth century returned the political Socrates to the forefront. Thinkers inspired by the Enlightenment faulted Athens. Voltaire regarded Socrates as the model philosopher, free-thinking and rational, victimized by countrymen overcome with religious prejudice. Hegel in turn argued that Athens and Socrates were both right and that their conflict was tragic, though acknowledging that Socrates's rationality marked a significant advance in historical awareness. Grote in the nineteenth century and Richard Crossman in the twentieth also championed Socrates as a model Enlightenment thinker. In the late twentieth century, Arendt, Rawls, Vlastos and others, affected by the protest movements over civil rights and the Vietnam war, re-examined Socratic opposition to Athens and questioned whether Socrates was an adequate model of civil disobedience. The space which Lane allows herself to cover this material (or which the publisher allowed in a series aimed at non-specialists) causes numerous names to be crowded in, sometimes rather breathlessly. In addition to those mentioned, Hamann, Herder, Nietzsche, Mill, Kierkegaard, Foucault, and Patçoka are called upon for witness. Inevitably this results in occasionally cursory treatment. Lane's survey would be richer if it had been accompanied by more sustained analysis.

Lane follows her updated version of the venerable question 'Who was Socrates?' with two essays directly on Plato. The first considers the Forms and the issue of metaphysical foundationalism. The influential Neoplatonic interpretation of Plato embodied both transcendence and foundationalism, and induced Kant to identify Plato as a metaphysical dogmatist. Kant's successors thought his 'Ding-an-sich' constituted an advanced form of Platonism, and Neokantians like Natorp interpreted Plato with a view to resolving

inadequacies in Kant's own philosophy. To Nietzsche, Plato's argument for a transcendent reality was the first of two egregious and far-reaching errors, the second being the demand that morality had to be based on this transcendence. To Nietzsche 'Plato' meant moral foundationalism which Christianity then transformed into a despised program of spiritual consolation for the masses. An important point to keep in mind here is the need to differentiate between Plato and Platonism. There is legitimate doubt that Plato would admit to being a Platonist. Despite loose scholarly talk, Plato nowhere articulates a formal theory of Forms, and Lane reminds us that everything we get on the topic from Plato comes 'through allusion and analogy'. Nietzsche's target is best seen as Platonism rather than Plato.

Nietzsche read Plato as a metaphysical dualist. At the same time, Lane notes, Idealists were interpreting the forms as immanent, not transcendent. The Form Beauty is especially well suited to the immanentist interpretation. Diotima explains in the *Symposium* that it is the beauty inherent in all objects of desire which attracts the one ascending the ladder of love. This reading underwrites what Lane calls an aspirational view of foundationalism and ethics. This is particularly relevant to art, love, and imagination where the quest for foundations is replaced by a striving to 'shape and discipline' one's life and to bring to fruition Beauty's generative power. Plato himself is the source of imprecision over the nature of Forms. In places Plato says they act as *paradeigmata* (Forms as standards or paradigms), while in others he treats them in different fashion. Just as there are different accounts of the Forms so too there are different Plato's. The complexity and ambivalence within the Platonic corpus and individual texts is what Platonism overrides.

The second chapter on Plato surveys his political program. An interrogative chapter heading asking whether he is 'the first totalitarian, the first communist, the first idealist?' is validated by Lane's observation that 'socialists and fascists alike have invoked Plato to legitimate their programmes.' Romantic anti-modernists such as the American southerner Richard Weaver or the German émigré Leo Strauss found a Plato who favored moral hierarchy and condemned bourgeois materialism. Nineteenth-century France witnessed battles over whether the *Republic* offered a prescription for a communist utopia. Twentieth-century readers of the *Republic* most commonly read Plato as a political reactionary. Richard Crossman said in 1937 that the Great War had put paid to any idealist reading of Plato's politics, and argued in *Plato Today* that Platonism offered only a 'rational apologia for reaction'. Karl Popper's widely-read *The Open Society and its Enemies* placed the mantle of totalitarianism squarely on Plato's shoulders, though admittedly the book evoked vigorous defenses of Plato by John Wild and Ronald Levinson.

Lane admits that her book 'does not set out to engage Plato's texts in ... direct critical scrutiny.' Consequently *Plato's Progeny* seems closer to intellectual history than what passes today for history of philosophy. When readers analyze Plato they find the need to keep arguing, since philosophical closure is repeatedly blocked off. The dialogue form makes resistance and

opposition integral to the deliberation. Lane's book is a salubrious warning that when we pull our philosophical arguments up short we are left with a Plato resembling a Rorschach test: what you see is what you get.

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Helen E. Longino

The Fate of Knowledge.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
2002. Pp. x + 233.

US\$49.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-08875-6);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-08876-4).

Longino's *The Fate of Knowledge* aims to provide insight into the science wars, the debate between philosophers of science, on the one hand, and sociologists and historians of science, on the other, over who is the legitimate authority about science. In the 1960s, philosophers of science generally worked independently of sociologists and historians of science. Back then, most sociologists were Mertonians, and their projects seemed to have little bearing on the concerns and questions that occupied philosophers. Philosophers showed some interest in the history of science, but the history of science was generally regarded as a source of data that could be used to confirm or refute philosophical claims about science. In the 1970s, as philosophers came to terms with the implications of Kuhn's *Structure*, and as the Strong Programmers, the new generation of sociologists of science, began to theorize about issues that were within the traditional domain of philosophers, tension began to build. By the 1990s, the tension had mounted to such an extent that the state of the field was widely described as a state of war. Many philosophers felt that recent sociological and historical studies of science threatened to undermine (i) the legitimate authority of science, and (ii) the authority of philosophers of science.

Longino has been deeply influenced by developments in the history and sociology of science. But, she is also concerned with many of the issues that have traditionally occupied philosophers of science. Consequently, she sees her job to be one of reconciliation. Her principal aim in *The Fate* is to provide a diagnosis of the problem that led to the rift between philosophers of science and historians and sociologists of science.

Longino argues that the main source of the tension is an assumption that both sides take for granted. Both sides assume that the social and the rational are opposed. Consequently, when sociologists argue that social factors influence science and scientific practice, both take this to entail that science is non-rational, or, worse, irrational. This conclusion, though, is contrary to the assumptions that both philosophers and scientists generally make about the nature of science. As a result, philosophers have generally taken their job to be one of showing faults with sociological and historical analyses, thus showing that science really is rational after all.

Building on the view she developed in *Science as Social Knowledge*, Longino argues that science and scientific inquiry are social in many respects. But what she denies is that this entails anything about the rationality of science. Longino argues that the rational/social dichotomy is actually a false dichotomy. Hence, she urges sociologists, historians and philosophers to see that something can be both social and rational. This is the core of Longino's new book, developed in the first four chapters. We can only hope that both sides in the debate take notice.

In the remainder of the book Longino develops her own view, showing how science is both social and rational. Those familiar with her earlier work will be familiar with many of the views discussed in the latter part of this book. The place where she develops her view most extensively is in her discussion of pluralism and local epistemologies. In this chapter, she provides an analysis of a variety of debates in the biological sciences that demonstrate the plurality of standards and cognitive aims operative in science. Longino argues that philosophers must recognize that in science epistemologies are local. Different research communities have different aims and standards, and make different substantive and methodological assumptions. As a consequence, she suggests that if we are going to understand the way science works, our inquiries will have to be of a local nature, sensitive to the fact that different scientific research communities realize their goals in different ways. This is what contemporary sociological and historical studies of science help us see.

I strongly agree with her assessment of the science wars, and appreciate her recognition of the value of recent sociological and historical studies of science. In these respects, *The Fate* is an excellent book. Perhaps the only disappointing part of the book is Chapter 6, where she tries to fit her own view of knowledge into the model of traditional analyses of knowledge, stipulating necessary and sufficient conditions. I found it puzzling that she set herself such a task, given that contemporary epistemologists and philosophers of science work independently and are only minimally influenced by each others' work, as she recognizes. On the whole, though, *Fate* is an interesting and important book by one of the most important philosophers engaged in the debates about the rational and the social in science.

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Kathleen Dow Magnus

Hegel and the Symbolic Mediation of Spirit.

Albany: State University of New York Press

2001. Pp. xviii + 291.

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US\$20.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-5046-5).

Magnus offers a Hegelian counter to Derrida's charge that the sign dominates Western metaphysics (including Hegel's) and that metaphysics has failed to recognize its effacement of metaphor in its privileging of the sign. She counters that the symbol's lack of complete transparency is a necessary part of Hegel's idea of Spirit. 'By interpreting Hegel's philosophy from the point of view of his theory of the symbol and his understanding of the symbolic, we can come to see how the contradictoriness, negativity, and "otherness" inherent to spirit is less an impediment to spirit's self-realization than *the condition for it ... serv[ing] the purpose of completing spirit*' (31-2). She claims that 'spirit is not just the act of transparent self-knowledge, but also the intuitive, representing, artistic and religious acts of expression, acts which contain significant *symbolic* components ... Spirit cannot be or become *whole* without both elements [the sign and the symbol]' (34-5). She offers a good metaphysical argument but her claim that this is Hegel's view is not completely convincing.

Chapter One is an overview of the symbol and the sign in Hegel's philosophy. Her command of secondary literature elsewhere in the book is exceptional so her superficial comparison here of Hegel's view of the sign with various twentieth-century definitions of the term (Freud, de Saussure, Lacan, Kristeva, Gadamer) is unfortunate. Chapter Two concerns Hegel's *Philosophy of Spirit* lectures, tracing 'spirit's process of moving toward self-identification through his experiences of intuition, representation, imagination and memory' (242). She concludes that 'not only do these symbolic identifications serve as the basis from which the sign-making imagination must abstract, but they also serve as the positive means by which the intelligence becomes capable of conceiving such an identity in the first place' (242); furthermore, loss through otherness (a characteristic of the symbolic) is essential to the transition from mechanical memory to thought. In Chapter Three she concludes that the forms of art that Hegel explicitly refers to as symbolic 'prove necessary to the development' of spirit (243) and that Hegel's general idea of art is 'shown to be thoroughly symbolic' (243). Chapter Four shows that religion is in itself symbolical mediation of absolute spirit. Chapter Five likewise attempts to show that philosophy, as the highest form of spirit's activity, is dependent on symbolic mediation.

This excellent book remains unconvincing. The problem lies in the main argument. The argument is that spirit needs the symbol as much as the sign because while the sign gives clarity and comprehension to spirit so that spirit can know its objects absolutely, spirit requires the ambiguities of the symbol in order to negate itself and experience itself as other. In this way it does not remain abstract but takes shape and progresses. Progress is essential, she

claims, since '[g]enuine self-determination requires that one was *not* "always already" self-determining. For Hegel, there is no such thing as simply *being* self-determining. Spirit must *become* self-determining' (235). Self-difference is essential to that progress, so symbolic mediation is necessary. What she fails to see is that the idea that spirit can find its way out of ambiguities in order to reach absolute spirit *presupposes* that the real was *always already* rational and that spirit just had to mature into that realization. Derrida's critique that Hegelian negation comes full circle in identity at the expense of true ambiguity has itself not been touched. (This problem is particularly evident in her account of the necessity of loss in the move from mechanical memory to thought in Chapter Two.) This is a problem not just for spirit's historical progress but for its ultimate, continuing self-genesis ('"Through philosophy spirit recognizes that it is *both* the process *and* the result of its own development"' [238]); once absolute spirit *knows* itself to encompass all ambiguities in its totality there can be no real loss or alienation.

Her story would work if one thinks only in terms of the consciousness making its way through the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. There alienation and ambiguity exist in the distinction between absolute knowing and the natural consciousness making its way toward it. But it is that distinction which is overcome by the end of the book in order that consciousness now be able to do speculative science. Symbolic representation is the problematic of that work, not of the *Science of Logic*. Magnus's claims are like claiming that Hegel never gets out of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* into the light of speculative science. I sympathize with her conclusion in terms of the truth of our condition, but I don't think it is what Hegel argues. Hegel wants us to move beyond the *Phenomenology of Spirit* to speculative science, to thoroughly think through the ambiguities and contradictions and consequent alienations which arise out of the inadequate (symbolic) forms of self-reflection in order to gain the speculative comprehension of the forms of experience. With all forms in hand at the end of the *Phenomenology*, the process becomes one of the Word, the sign knowing itself in and through any phenomenon. The sign has the upper hand, not the symbol. We rise above the symbol even if the symbol is what we need to interpret.

For Derrida the sign is still a symbol; there is no decidable absolute return to spirit; no perfect self-reflection. Magnus, by keeping a distinction between sign and symbol and arguing for the necessity of the symbol, does not address the key problem Derrida poses. This does not mean that Derrida is right. But her book needed to address that problem to successfully use Derrida as the foil.

Magnus's goal of summarizing Hegel and proving that spirit cannot be thought separately from symbolic mediation is accomplished at the expense of textual commentary. Problems discussed tend to concern only consistency across Hegel's texts. Important philosophical problems arising from these texts remain undiscussed. It would have been impossible for her to provide commentary in every instance. But through the chapters on art and religion some textual commentary would have curbed the tide of summary.

Despite these points of contention, this book is a *tour de force* and a must for Hegel scholars as well as the interested general reader. It is well-written and scholarly (with excellent endnotes and bibliography), and it is reader-friendly. Her tendency to repeat key points and to summarize is occasionally annoying but overall helpful. The six page conclusion offers an excellent summary of the entire book.

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Martin Beck Matustík

Jürgen Habermas.

A Philosophical-Political Profile.

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2001.

Pp. ix + 339.

US\$85.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7425-0796-3);

US\$29.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7425-0797-1).

The Habermas effect, Martin Beck Matustík's intellectual biography tells us, is felt in every major discipline of the human and social sciences. Habermas towers over the contemporary fields of communication, ethics, hermeneutics, law, linguistics, philosophy, political theory, sociology, and critical social theory. Matustík sets out to take a fresh look at Habermas, claiming that received conventions of Habermas scholarship may have prevented discovery of his rich existential and political dimensions. Rejecting what he sees as the prevailing story of a respected liberal theorist, sober analytical philosopher, and safe democratic reformist, he sets out to provide a corrective reading that 'not only aims to win the minds and hearts of various readers ... for another Habermas; it also wishes to introduce the next generation of thinkers and activists into their fresh beginnings in critical social theory' (280).

'Beginnings' is a word that is repeated frequently throughout the book, testifying to Matustík's concern to develop an existential variant of critical social theory that would be truly subversive (see, for example, Matustík, *Postnational Identity* [New York: Guilford 1993]). His aim is to bring the reader to her own new beginnings as a critical theorist and activist through participating in a journey through Habermas's intellectual and political trajectory. To this end he situates Habermas in relation to his own beginnings, marking May 8th 1945 as his 'existentially motivated political birthday' (8). Thus, Matustík focuses on what he calls 'authoring' as opposed to authorship; rather than discussing the content of his published writings, he sees himself as offering a reading of Habermas's fundamental life-project, conceived as a 'singular integrative series of actions' (277).

Pursuing a non-linear strategy Matustík interweaves three sets of questions across nine chapters. These concern: i) the formative situations shaping Habermas's philosophical-political profile; ii) his interventions in philosophical and political problems of his era; iii) the resources his theory and praxis offers for the emancipatory transformation of our societies. Due to the wealth of detail, the reader's journey is often strenuous, requiring perseverance and concentration. Progress is not facilitated by a sometimes impenetrable prose style — Habermas's own writing, not always regarded as a model of clarity, seems limpid in comparison. However, Matustík evidently has an expert knowledge of Habermas's considerable *œuvre* and an easy familiarity with the political and cultural climate of post-War Germany. His attention to formative intellectual influences such as Heidegger, Horkheimer and Adorno is useful and his reconstruction of the German 1968 student protests particularly impressive. Less convincing, perhaps, is the existential angle. Habermas is introduced as a member of a 'skeptical generation' — contrasting with the previous 'securing generation' — which 'lives out its trauma with a pervasive ambivalence toward all acts that require new commitments and carry new risks' (8). For Matustík, this ambivalence gives rise to a disastrous lack of revolutionary zeal, leading, for example to half-hearted support for the student activists of 1968. Habermas's detachment here is contrasted unfavourably with Marcuse's lifelong readiness to criticise imperialism and to engage in revolutionary praxis (94), and also with the activism of prominent student leaders such as Krahls and Dutschke (the latter, indeed, are held up as examples of self-standing and original social theorists). The same existentially conditioned ambivalence supposedly accounts for Habermas's reactions to the Persian Gulf War, where he endorses the UN position despite acknowledging the gap between its cosmopolitan ideals and its institutional reality, and for his 'historical blindness' (192) in supporting the NATO bombing of Serbia in the Kosovo/a conflict. More generally, it is made responsible for his 'Janus-faced' conceptions of socialism, of nationalism, and even of truth (235, note 3).

Matustík hits hard at Habermas's lack of revolutionary aspirations. Describing him in derisory tone as a left-liberal, he criticises him for shrinking away from the revolutionary — and violent — dimensions of new social movements and claims that he has bequeathed no radically transformative ideals of liberation to subsequent generations. One problem here, however, is that it is never made clear why exactly Habermas's ambivalent stance toward violence and revolution is reprehensible (or why, on a more abstract, conceptual level, he is wrong to advocate a 'Janus-faced' perspective); although Matustík's attempt to establish a connection between ambivalent attitude and existential situation may be illuminating, it leaves open the question of whether or not this attitude is justified. A second problem is Matustík's own ambivalence. On the one hand, he starts by diagnosing a problem of reception: allegedly, the conventional reading of Habermas's work does not further the aims of a genuinely liberating critical social theory. His reading, by contrast, seeks to uncover its radically transformative potentials. Thus, throughout the book the reader is reminded that Habermas's life-pro-

ject has liberating potentials. Matustík's discussion of his role as witness to the Holocaust — of his endeavours to restore the solidarity shattered by Auschwitz by way of acts of 'dangerous remembering' — is clearly in this vein: not only is it one of the most interesting parts of the book, it also unequivocally endorses his aim. On the other hand, Matustík attacks Habermas's lack of commitment to revolution, criticises his inadequate attention to economic democracy, declares the bankruptcy of his universalist approach and cosmopolitan ideals, and accuses him of failing to inspire future generations to transformative action. In the end, it remains unclear whether or not Matustík sees Habermas as the last representative of a terminally ill tradition and, if he does, why he hopes that his reading will attract the attention of 'those who are ready to jump the ship of Critical Theory for other seas' (278).

This is the most serious shortcoming of Matustík's book. For all its impassioned defence of the 1968 student protesters and appeals to the power of new social movements, it does not tell us *why* we should prefer Marcuse's activism to Habermas's scepticism, *why* we should regard Krahel and Dutschke as important social theorists or *why* critical social theory, today, should look to postcolonial theory and praxis. Nor does it tell us what economic democracy would look like or what kinds of thinking and praxis should replace Habermas's universalist and cosmopolitan orientation. In the end, the reader is not quite sure where her journey has brought her. Has the ship of critical social theory been sinking steadily as she travelled or was it being rebuilt plank by plank by Habermas (and depleted crew)? If the former, is there a lifeboat aboard to transport her to more sustainable vessels and more congenial waters — and why should she regard them as such?

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Todd May

Our Practices, Our Selves.

Or, What it Means to be Human.

University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press 2001. Pp. x + 206.

US\$35.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-02085-7);

US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-271-02086-5).

In recent years philosophers have increasingly attended to practices as both a central phenomenon of human life and a key topic in philosophy. Under the impress of such thinkers as Ludwig Wittgenstein and Martin Heidegger, the significance of practices for such stalwart philosophical topics as knowledge,

morality, subjectivity, mind, rationality, action, and meaning, and for such ascendant theoretical concerns as the characters of science, language, power, and social life, has been the subject of expanding disquisition. The texts involved have been written primarily for fellow philosophers. As a result, they have been technical and specialized in character. Missing have been attempts to make the practice approach available to beginning or non-philosophers and to summarize it for philosophers. Todd May's *Our Practices, Our Selves* has now admirably filled this gap. The book is an insightful, clearly written, and provocative introduction to the practice approach to human life, one that is recommended to anyone curious or interested in the innovations that this approach brings to traditional philosophical topics. This includes professional philosophers interested in an overview of these innovations.

The book addresses three principal topics: the question of who one is, the nature of knowledge, and morality and politics as matters of practice. Chapter One introduces the overall issue of who one is. It also gives a good analysis of practices as 'regularities of behavior, usually goal-directed, that [are] socially normatively governed' (8) and begins to explain how who one is is a matter of, and largely derivative from, the practices in which one participates. May shows how the uniqueness that each of us attributes to his or her own self lies in the how of participation: one's personal style, one's particular combination of roles, the particular ways practices are combined in one's life. He also rebuts two prominent objections that readers might press against a practice account of the self: that each of us has a secret self independent of and determinative of our participation in practices, and that something that transcends the world grounds who we are from the outside. I stress that one advantageous feature of May's book is the forthrightness with which he addresses objections that are likely to occur to his readers, both neophytes and the more sophisticated. This adds tremendously to the persuasiveness and pedagogical value of the book.

Chapter Two argues that knowledge is largely inseparable from human practices. Appropriating the distinction between knowing-that and knowing-how, May argues that knowing-that is underpinned by knowing-how and that knowing-how is both acquired and rooted in practices. He nicely explains how the practice approach to knowledge bids farewell to the foundationalism characteristic of modern (Cartesian) epistemology. Organizing his discussion around the traditional analysis of knowledge as justified true belief, May also, among other things, shows that justification is a form of practice-based inference, discusses contemporary 'deflationary' accounts of truth, defends the existence of moral knowledge, and argues that embedding knowledge in practices does not relativize knowledge to practices.

Chapter Three analyses morality and politics as practice phenomena. Distinguishing unreflective moral judgment from moral reflection-theory, May argues that moral reflection-theory is central to life as the practice (1) through which humans cope with moral conflict and (2) that secures the universal scope inherently claimed by moral values. Turning to politics,

which he avers is essentially concerned with power, May calls on Foucault's history of sexuality to fittingly illustrate how approaching human life through practices expands the range of concerns and issues for politics and political thought. The book concludes by juxtaposing the practice approach with the familiar idea that 'technological capitalism' is the dominant determinant of contemporary phenomena, including who we are.

All in all, the book is an excellent presentation of a practice approach to philosophical issues. Clearly written, both the neophyte and the professional will be able to identify easily the ideas with which he or she disagrees. This makes the book especially useful for teaching purposes, as does May's aforementioned talent for anticipating likely objections. What also makes the book effective pedagogically is the fact that it addresses a wide range of issues taken up in philosophy courses, including identity, the self, knowledge, justification, relativism, truth, morality, moral relativism, moral theory, character and action, multiculturalism, politics, and power. Pairing the book with texts that take more traditional approaches to these themes, one has the makings of an excellent course.

As noted, May's lucid style makes it easy for any professional philosopher reading the book to find points of disagreement. I suspect that philosophers will especially take issue with May's discussion of morality. His arguments for moral knowledge, against the coherence of moral relativism, for counting philosophers as moral experts, and for considering moral theories in philosophy apiece with everyday moral reflection are guaranteed to generate dissension. As for epistemology, some will wonder, *inter alia*, whether May should go beyond the idea that practices embrace webs of inferential relations and analyze inference as a kind of action with its own know-how. The book's deft provocations, however, are a strong reason to read it. One final note: the book does not address a perennial topic for which a practice approach has significant implications, viz, the nature of mind/action. May writes that intellect and emotion, and not just action, are molded in practice (152). More needs to be said about mind/action to substantiate this claim. Added substance here would fill out his discussion of character in chapter Three, as well as deepen his account of who one is qua denizen of practice. Maybe May can be persuaded to add a chapter on this topic in a second edition.

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Janet McCracken

Taste and the Household.

Albany: State University of New York Press

2001. Pp. xiv + 341.

US\$78.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-5105-4);

US\$26.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-5106-2).

Given that we all make domestic choices, Janet McCracken's *Taste and the Household* has broad appeal and will reward the general reader, especially anyone interested in contemplating a substantial critique of our consumerist culture. McCracken's analysis of the moral dimension of domestic decision-making also provides readers more conversant with postmodernism, labor theory, ethics and value theory plenty of philosophical depth with which to engage. And though she does not explicitly draw the connection, McCracken's approach toward what she calls 'the domestic aesthetic' parallels much in classical and current American pragmatism. Beginning with the everyday, McCracken weaves a far-reaching tapestry of philosophical insight into the importance of our daily aesthetic engagement with the world.

Our daily decision about what to eat and what to wear are not, according to Janet McCracken, trivial activities but instead constitute a *domestic aesthetic skill*. In fact, moral reasoning 'depends on domestic aesthetic skill' (14). Domestic labor, like labor in general, is not mere drudgery but an opportunity to refine our notion of goodness. Work is exploitative or rewarding not in relation to whether we work for ourselves or others, argues McCracken, but in relation to 'a spectrum of qualitative distinctions judged reflectively in comparison to the agent's notion of goodness ...' (17-18). McCracken uses the term 'phenomenological intimacy' to connote success at comparing objects to a conception of goodness; it is 'a sharp, clear field of vision between concepts of the good and objects of experience' (19). We also learn that the 'facility' of phenomenological intimacy allows for moral learning, since a clear understanding of the concept and the object are required for good judgment. Presumably, though McCracken does not make this point, phenomenological intimacy and moral learning are reciprocal processes informed and refined by ongoing experience.

McCracken uses the Aristotelian notion that concepts of goodness are interdependent with one's physical conditions; that the analogies Aristotle makes between learning to be virtuous and learning a craft ought to be taken literally. One cannot excel at a craft using inferior materials or with inferior knowledge of what accomplished craftsmanship looks like. Domestic aesthetic skill is similar, says McCracken. Should instant rice boiled in plastic packets be one's only experience (and thus standard) of making and eating rice, one cannot be expected to know how to cook good rice or how good rice tastes. Limited practice and experience limits one's understanding. What McCracken wants us to see is that the practice and experience we have in domestic life contributes fundamentally to our knowledge, experience, and understanding of all decision-making, especially moral reasoning.

A troubling confusion in McCracken's theory involves her lack of discussion of the role of relationships and other people in the skill of making domestic aesthetic choices. She defines the domestic aesthetic as 'the skillful making and judging of food, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities' (22). She argues (30) that 'the physical space and the physical objects in and around her household, including the bodies of other household members, together occasion more reflection more commonly for a particular consciousness than does anything else. It is through reflection on household objects that one develops one's phenomenological intimacy. It is with these objects that one first and foremost practices judgment.' Here and elsewhere it is suggested that the decision-making process and moral learning that McCracken wants to cover with her 'domestic aesthetic' include choices regarding relationships and human interaction. Yet McCracken fails to discuss this inclusion explicitly, nor does she address directly how reflection on household objects is fundamentally similar to interacting and communicating with other human beings. We might wonder how far we wish to take the idea that other people are objects, as she suggests above, or how reflection on household objects is developmentally prior to learning how to interact with people and thus the fundamental way in which we practice judgment. Since moral reasoning often involves consideration of others, McCracken's lack of explicit connection between the aesthetic judgment of objects and interaction with human beings weakens her claim that moral reasoning depends on a domestic aesthetic skill. That being said, it is important to recognize that McCracken is drawing deserved and overdue attention to an area of life that has long been neglected in philosophical thought.

McCracken is perhaps at her best in demonstrating why contemporary advertising and consumerism are so dangerous. After establishing 'the domestic aesthetic foundation of moral reasoning,' she looks at postmodernism, ethics and labor theory of value, and language and oppression in Part II, using and critiquing the likes of Mill, Locke, Smith, Marx, Baudrillard, Barthes, Bourdieu, Peirce and Wittgenstein. In Part III we get her contemporary analysis, where she looks at 'techniques of vagueness' and the disturbing 'fashion tactics' used primarily in marketing and the media. It is hard not to sympathize with McCracken's passion against the production of clever and enticing messages that take our culture away from communication of the good and towards that which is vague. She calls (177) the production of images that project the 'vague inklings of the self-concept of an ordinary consumer or promoter' onto commodities a 'bulldozer' that 'flattens and makes obsolete' any 'natural signification of the good.' Modern consumer life is filled with 'poorly designed, useless domestic aesthetic objects' that are 'divorced from the human practices and traditions that compose them, and so they are divorced from the use value that clarifies their existence' (178).

Fashion tactics are now so developed that they build on and refer to each other; they correspond to no reality save themselves. The media-drenched market is one big construct of vague signification that obfuscates the real and tangible nature of the choices we must make in our everyday lives. A

typical and arrogant offender is Ralph Lauren. McCracken's critique clarifies why his advertisements and product lines are so disturbing: he creates replicas of eras and places (e.g., his Bermuda and Old West lines) that are 'vague symbols' that 'gesture' at what we think these periods and places looked like, our knowledge gleaned primarily from Hollywood movies. The authenticity that Ralph Lauren so carefully attempts to create is nothing but a disingenuous lie that, like much production and marketing today, veers us away from being able to make good judgments about basic necessities. McCracken's demonstration that we are quickly losing an important skill has far-reaching implications; her work in this book will be of interest to anyone interested in how America's massive consumerism has deteriorated our collective understanding and experience of what makes for a good and meaningful life.

Paola Kindred

Elijah Millgram, ed.

Varieties of Practical Reasoning.

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2001.

Pp. xi + 487.

US\$55.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-262-13388-1);

US\$35.00 (paper: ISBN 0-262-63220-9).

Millgram's useful anthology contains twenty articles (most previously published) by nineteen authors (most well known). The unifying topic is 'reasoning directed towards action: figuring out what to do, as contrasted with figuring out how the facts stand' (1). The articles provide varieties in sorts of practical reasoning discussed, in theoretical approaches advocated, and in methodologies employed. The first article, by Millgram, surveys these varieties.

Millgram offers his anthology as a successor to Joseph Raz, ed., *Practical Reasoning* (Oxford 1978). The approaches of the two editors contrast instructively. Raz cautioned that 'the conception of practical reasoning as a unified field of philosophical inquiry is not yet firmly established and the contours of its problems are far from being generally agreed upon' (1). Millgram, though, seems confident of the unity of the field of inquiry and of consensus about the contours of its problems, for he says that 'the current debate in practical reasoning focuses on the question of what inference patterns are legitimate methods of arriving at decisions or intentions to act, or other characteristically practical predecessors of actions such as evaluations,

plans, policies, and judgments about what one ought to do' (2). Millgram's confidence may initially seem odd, for he himself acknowledges that his 'way of organizing the material leaves to one side' issues that others think are central to the field (2), and that some theories that he says are focused on the question of inference patterns are not believed by others to be focused on that question (11). It seems best to suppose that where Raz described, Millgram prescribes. Millgram's perception of the current state of play regiments the field and imposes as much as discovers unity, contours, and focus there.

Is the regimentation coherent, though? If we focus on the question of inference patterns, mustn't we 'conceive of practical reasoning as some sort of logical inference or form of argument'? (Douglas Walton, *Practical Reasoning* [1990], 46.) If so, mustn't we conceive of legitimate patterns of practical inference as sorts of valid 'inference schemata' (Walton, 46), as 'ordered sets of statements the last of which is a practical conclusion adequately supported by the others' (Raz, 5)? How can such formal inference schemata be specified prior to specific answers to other questions that Millgram explicitly and repeatedly defers, including 'questions about the mental states involved in practical inference, and about the logical status of those states'? (Millgram, *Practical Induction* [1997], 8.) It is striking that, though Millgram puts the focus on patterns of inference, his anthology contains relatively little discussion of anything like formal practical inference schemata. It seems best to suppose that Millgram deliberately employs a very loose notion of 'inference pattern' to ask and emphasize a phenomenological question: What general but informally characterizable sorts of trains of thought do we tend to accept as being able to explain the justifiedness of their terminuses, when those terminuses are 'decisions or intentions to act, or other characteristically practical predecessors of actions such as evaluations, plans, policies, and judgments about what one ought to do'? If we ask and emphasize this question, then we may well (as Millgram does) require that any legitimate formal conception of practical inference fall out of a well supported theory of practical inference in the looser sense. Moreover, we may well (as Millgram does) reject instrumentalism (the theory that 'all practical reasoning is means-end reasoning' [4]) as being too unfaithful to the phenomena, since specification of ends, induction from experience, coherence-driven reasoning, and redescription of situation may seem also to be among the many sorts of trains of thought that qualify as patterns of practical inference in the loose sense.

All things considered, it seems best to view Millgram's anthology as a deliberate, positive, and strong contribution to the articulation and defence of a particular theory of practical reasoning, the Elijah Millgram/Paul Thagard theory. Previous contributions to the development of the Millgram/Thagard theory include individually authored books (Millgram, *Practical Induction*, 1997; Thagard, *Coherence in Thought and Action*, 2000) and jointly authored articles (for example, 'Deliberative Coherence', *Synthese*, 1996). In terms of taxonomic distinctions made here by Millgram in his survey article, that theory is nonnihilist, noninstrumentalist (specifically,

inductivist and coherentist), and externalist (specifically, empiricist). In other articles in the anthology, Millgram argues that 'pleasure is practical reasoning's analog of experiential rock-bottom conviction' (336), which 'makes possible a practical analog of induction to be used in deliberation of ends' (346), and Thagard argues that '[practical] inference is an unconscious mental process in which many factors are balanced against each other until a judgment is reached that accepts some beliefs and rejects others in a way that approximately maximizes coherence' (368). The anthology as a whole in effect places the Millgram/Thagard theory side-by-side with competitor theories in a way that seems calculated to show that the former, more than any of the latter, coheres with our experience of practical reasoning.

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Kai Nielsen

Naturalism and Religion.

Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books 2001. Pp. 506.

US\$40.00. ISBN 1-57392-853-4.

Although it never describes itself as a collection and gives the initial misimpression of being a monograph, this book is a compilation of eleven of Nielsen's articles defending naturalism and critiquing religion, sandwiched between a brief introduction and a long postscript. The jacket blurb promises 'a new approach to naturalism ... at the very cutting edge of recent developments in philosophy,' but it is unclear that 'new' and 'cutting edge' describe a collection consisting almost entirely of previously published articles dating to at least 1964 (I say 'at least' because the bibliographical information for some articles omits the date of original publication). As one might expect from a collection of separately published pieces, the book contains needless repetition, and it seems that no editing took place to correct this flaw.

In his critique of religion, Nielsen makes some apt claims. He rightly draws a gloomy moral from the fact that most theists report never once having questioned God's existence (14). Following Anthony Flew, he notes that the uneven temporal and geographic distribution of theistic belief undermines Reformed epistemology's claim that belief in God is innate in all human beings (34, 312). Unfortunately, however, and despite the book's considerable length, too many of Nielsen's claims are merely asserted rather than carefully defended. His sentences abound with references to opponents, but his tendency to dismiss them with a phrase ('*pace* Plantinga,' '*pace* Quine') only shows us his erudition; he is aware of the opponents he dismisses this way, but he does not say how he would answer them.

Nielsen's favorite epithet by far is 'incoherent', a label he uses dozens of times, especially in describing non-anthropomorphic theism. Given the central role that the charge of incoherence plays in Nielsen's critiques, one would expect to see it spelled out carefully. Yet in calling a concept or a position 'incoherent', he seldom indicates what fails to cohere with what. One exception is his discussion of the theistic concept of God as an *infinite individual*, a concept he finds incoherent for this reason: 'Something could not be an *individual* unless she or it were differentiated from other individuals or things. But something that is infinite cannot (logically cannot) be so differentiated. She or it cannot, being infinite, be an individual distinct from other individuals, for something which is infinite is not bounded, is not, and cannot be, differentiated from other things in the way an individual can be' (473). Although it is unclear how Nielsen construes 'infinite' in this argument, he seems to give it a *spatial* sense: a spatially infinite being would have no spatial boundaries. But sophisticated theists would never apply that sense of 'infinite' to God, who is supposed to be infinite in power, knowledge, and goodness rather than in size. It is, moreover, false that 'something which is infinite' in *some* respect, such as the set of real numbers, cannot be differentiated from other things, such as Kai Nielsen. In short, this particular argument for incoherence — one of the few such arguments we get — looks irrelevant to theism and unsound.

Nielsen has long said, and in the book often says, that he accepts atheism not because non-anthropomorphic theism is false but because it is *meaningless*, a position he bases on an avowedly verificationist theory of meaning. But the book's postscript essentially retracts this long-held view: '... verificationist arguments do not play the central role in the critique of religion that I ... took them to play. ... I tried to milk more out of verificationism than could be milked' (486). Such a candid retraction makes sense at the end of a retrospective collection of old articles, but in a supposedly 'new' and 'cutting edge' book it is exasperating to see the last chapter retract earlier chapters.

Nielsen is proudly contemptuous of natural theology, which he writes off as 'an old game that has come a cropper again and again. ... New developments in physical cosmology and biology are not going to help one whit' (21). He doesn't say how he knows that physical cosmology will never support the fine-tuning argument, for instance, or that molecular biology will never support the intelligent design hypothesis. Those two research programs may end up failing, but why should we suppose they must? Importantly, he takes up Jean Hampton's demand for an informative definition of 'naturalism', but in the end it is unclear that we get anything more than an unhelpful negative definition of naturalism as the denial of supernaturalism (227).

The book's results are the more disappointing given the clumsy prose one has to wade through to reach them. Nearly every page contains sentences as bad as these: 'His very explanation (as all natural explanations) is incompatible, where accepted, with the person who accepts it, continuing to be a religious believer, if he would be at all consistent' (48); 'This social naturalism, which is nonscientistic and nonutterly biological, is not only social but,

as well, a contextual-historicist naturalism' (60); '... belief in an afterlife ... is so problematic that it should not be something to be believed' (78); 'It is this conceptualization that we are maintaining that is incoherent' (82); 'It is over such matters that her arguments and perspicuous articulations obtain' (201). Often Nielsen himself loses track of his meaning: he writes, 'I am, hardly unsurprisingly, largely sympathetic with Flew here' (299-300), when he means 'hardly surprisingly'; he doubts 'that the term "God" answers to something' (311), when surely he means it the other way around.

Along with the questionable writing comes careless editing. Nielsen claims (15) that blacks constitute twenty-five percent of the U.S. population — double the correct figure, something easily checked; he repeatedly calls Plantinga a 'Reform' philosopher, as if Plantinga's tradition were Jewish rather than Calvinist; and he frequently misspells the names of people he's discussing or citing, including his own name at least twice (130).

Nielsen rightly worries that most religious believers never question their faith or take seriously the claims of atheistic critics, yet he believes that books such as his can have value outside academic circles. For on those occasions when believers do entertain doubts seriously enough to read critiques of religion, 'it is important that there be secular humanists who write in ways that speak to where they are' (16). Regrettably, this book is unlikely to serve that purpose.

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Martha C. Nussbaum
*Women and Human Development:
The Capabilities Approach.*
New York: Cambridge University Press 2000.
Pp. xxi + 312.
US\$28.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-66086-6);
US\$20.00 (paper: ISBN 0-521-00385-7).

The most prominent methods of evaluation of quality of life are utilitarian approaches and especially the GNP (Gross National Product) approach. One problem with the GNP approach is that it provides only an aggregate figure about a country's wealth and income and does not indicate how each individual is doing. Also, wealth and income are not necessarily the best measures of quality of life. Other goods are important indicators of people's well-being. The capabilities approach is an alternative method of evaluation of quality of life that considers how each person within a given country can develop capabilities essential to a flourishing life. Instead of focusing on how much people earn, this approach examines what people can do and can be.

In *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, Martha Nussbaum offers a feminist philosophical version of the capabilities approach. Given the primacy of utilitarian approaches to quality of life today, Nussbaum argues that philosophy is needed to show the inadequacy of these approaches and elaborating better ones. Nussbaum also holds that philosophy can be a guide to practice only when informed by experience. Because the quality of life of women has long been neglected, particularly in developing countries, Nussbaum uses the experience of women in India as a framework to elaborate and test her capabilities approach. Women in India, and elsewhere in the world, desire to develop a manifold of capabilities once they perceive these capabilities as within their power. Nussbaum takes these desires into account in her approach. She recommends, moreover, that all governments do the same and guarantee women's acquisition of a higher level of capability.

In Chapters One and Two, Nussbaum presents her capabilities approach in three ways: first, by exploring various problems with utilitarian approaches to quality of life; second, by distinguishing her approach from other capabilities approaches; and finally, by comparing and contrasting her approach with Rawls's theory of justice. Like Rawls, Nussbaum believes there are universal values (or goods) despite the diversity of human cultures and traditions. Nussbaum's list of capabilities represents such goods. Unlike Rawls, however, Nussbaum offers a definite and extensive conception of the good. She identifies ten central human capabilities: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination, and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species; play; and control over one's environment. All these capabilities have a distinct value and importance. The privation of one capability cannot be compensated by the greater development of another. Yet practical reason and affiliation 'stand out as of special importance, since they both organize and suffuse all the others, making their pursuit truly human' (82). Practical reason is the capability to form one's own conception of the good and plan of life. Affiliation is the capability to treat others as an end and care for others. Nussbaum's conception of the good is not metaphysical or teleological; intuition or judgment is all one needs to perceive the universal value of these capabilities. The list of capabilities, furthermore, 'remains open-ended and humble; it can always be contested and remade' (77).

The government's role is to guarantee the '*social basis of these capabilities*.' Although all capabilities are important, governments cannot force people to develop them or to develop them in a certain way, for this infringes on people's capability for practical reason. All citizens must determine themselves whether they want to develop these capabilities and how. Hence the government's role is to ensure that the development of all capabilities is *possible* — if one desires it. Of course, capabilities can be developed to various degrees. So what is the government's exact responsibility? Nussbaum thinks some 'threshold level of capability' should be secured for all citizens. This threshold should be established through interpretation, deliberation, and consensus within each nation and, ideally, across all nations.

Justice, however, demands more than this threshold level of capability. Nussbaum intends to complete her theory of justice later, but she already specifies in Chapter Three and Four what this theory calls for. Through the analysis of the legal and political status of religion and the family, she shows the importance of equality in relation to the threshold level of capability. Let us take the family, for example. For Nussbaum, the family is an affiliation in which each person is treated with respect and where love and care are mutual. Many families do not satisfy these conditions. Women are often considered by men merely as a means to men's well-being and women are prevented from developing their capabilities. Should the state, then, intervene? And if so, will not the state infringe on people's freedom to develop their capability to love and care as they choose? Nussbaum claims that the family is not prepolitical, but constituted by law and institutions. So when the state refuses to interfere with the family, it is not being neutral; through its inactivity it contributes to a certain constitution of the family and the public sphere. The state 'should treat rape as rape, battery as battery, coercion as coercion, wherever they occur' (277). More generally, the state should intervene whenever capabilities are jeopardized, for the state's role is to protect the central capabilities of individuals.

Nussbaum introduces the reader in *Women and Human Development* not only to her capabilities approach, but also to general issues of poverty and development in India. She refers throughout her analysis to the lives of two Indian women, Vasanti and Jayamma, as well as to various women's collectives in India. Nussbaum does this to illustrate what women in India are actually capable of doing and being and thus to show the need for a higher level of capability for women. But Nussbaum also refers to these two women and the women's collectives to exemplify what the capabilities approach can do for women, for these women's collectives actually adopt this approach and increase women's capabilities.

In *Women and Human Development*, Nussbaum emphasizes the importance of the concept of autonomy yet neglects to demonstrate how women's acquisition of self-sufficiency will not merely lead to a greater individualism and indifference to others in society. If men treat women as a simple means to their well-being, is it because of tradition or because they judge the good, and plan their life, *on their own*? Self-sufficiency actually contributes to the problem of inequality and therefore deserves a closer examination. Still, Nussbaum's book has a particular strength. It shows how a philosophical theory can both be informed by experience and aim at transforming experience. Through this book, one appreciates the importance of philosophy in global ethics.

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Zdravko Planinc, ed.

Politics, Philosophy, Writing:

Plato's Art of Caring for Souls.

Columbia: University of Missouri Press 2001.

Pp. 261.

US\$19.95. ISBN 0-8262-1343-X.

This collection of essays on Plato centers around the theme of the Platonic conception of philosophy as the 'practice of death' and 'erotics'. The book contains an introduction written by the editor, and seven essays on seven different Platonic works. There is a comprehensive index that contains modern and ancient names, references to ancient texts, and topics.

The essays are, by and large, interesting and well worth the read. Horst Hutter's 'Soulcare and Soulcraft in the *Charmides*' is a meaty look at the differences between the philosophic and sophistic conceptions of human nature. The first half of Oona Eisenstadt's essay 'Shame in the *Apology*' connects the causes of the trial with anger, immodesty, insolence and thinking one knows when one doesn't. As such it draws upon and develops some of the themes found in Hutter's essay. Leon Craig's article, 'The Strange Misperception of Plato's *Meno*', argues that the *Meno* is 'one of the most important texts of Platonic political philosophy' (60). The article is original and insightful, and contains an interesting discussion of philosophy as activity and its relation to politics (67-8). "A Lump Bred Up in Darknesse": Two Tellurian Themes of the *Republic*', by Barry Cooper, and 'Homeric Imagery in Plato's *Phaedrus*' by the editor Zdravko Planinc, while both a bit lengthy, are interesting studies of shamanic allusions in the *Republic*, and Plato's allusion to Homer's *Odyssey* in the *Phaedrus*, respectively. These two essays stand slightly apart from the other essays, being different in method, and not as closely connected to the themes of the volume. Kenneth Dorter's essay on the *Timaeus* focuses on what is missing in the threefold classifications in the text when one would expect a fourfold classification. Philosophy as a kind of activity, and the importance of perplexity (*aporia*) are emphasized. The last article in the collection, James Rhodes's 'Mystic Philosophy in Plato's *Seventh Letter*' discusses the connections between politics and philosophy in the context of trying to effect political change.

According to the introduction, this anthology arose out of a shared belief, held by the contributors, that there is still much to be learned about Plato's writings, and a shared desire to read and understand Plato properly (Planinc, 3). Planinc laments the fact that most people treat the Platonic dialogues as artifacts, and do not read them 'as texts representing a horizon of understanding that can question our own' (2). There are few serious readers of Plato who endeavour to 'get Plato right' (2). The contributors, however, are not guilty of such sins, and what emerges from their essays is 'an understanding of the unity and integrity of Plato's work as a whole' (3).

There are many things that are right and good about the approach taken by this book. Trying to enter into what the editor calls the 'horizon of

understanding' is essential to reaching an understanding of Plato (or any other ancient author) that goes beyond scholarly squabbling and gets at what is best and most profound in Plato's thought. But how the editor introduces this approach and the attitude he has toward the book itself is curious, given the themes of the book. For example, while undoubtedly many scholars of Plato exist who treat the dialogues as 'curious historical, cultural, and philological artifacts' (2), surely these 'sinful' scholars are trying to get it right. Perhaps Planinc means that these scholars are not trying to understand it the way he does. And, this may be true. But who is right, who wrong, who is trying and who isn't, is irrelevant to what I see as the problem here: the arrogance in this rant is at odds with the themes of the book.

As is suggested by the title of the book, the essays focus on politics, philosophy, and writing. In his introduction, Planinc links together politics and philosophy through a discussion of the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo* and *Symposium*. The true political art is concerned with the care of the soul; it 'encourages the development of virtues ... and provides restorative therapy, when necessary, to counteract the psychic equivalents of illness and suffering' (5). This is not the political art as practiced in public office, but as practiced by living the philosophical life as exemplified in the life of Socrates. Philosophy is not just refutative rhetoric (*elenchus*) and a reflective awareness of ignorance (5). Instead philosophy is the art of dying and the art of erotics ('when the soul puts something beneath itself, it also moves, with longing, toward something higher or greater than itself' [5]). Both arts purify the soul, and the same activity can purify the souls of others. Indeed, Socrates's 'eulogy' (6) of love in the *Symposium* is, Planinc writes, an exemplar of how to practice the art of politics and purification. But only Alcibiades, who, according to Planinc, loves Socrates, can see the beauty of Socrates's soul and understand what Socrates is doing.

Linking politics and philosophy through purification is an interesting and fruitful suggestion, but I am not convinced that Planinc clearly sees the significance of calling them purifications. For example, Planinc contrasts his understanding of politics and philosophy as purification with *elenchus* and Socratic ignorance. Yet in the *Apology*, *Phaedo*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, and elsewhere, Plato writes that it is *elenchus* that can purify the soul, and that Socratic ignorance is an example of a purified soul. What is it that must be purged from the soul so that it be purified? As is suggested by the inclusion of Eisenstadt's essay on the *Apology*, Planinc seems to think that it is a kind of shamelessness (8). As he writes in his discussion of the dangers of writing, a soul can be corrupted by carelessness and a false sense of its own wisdom. In a word, it is arrogance that must be purged from the soul. And yet Planinc begins the book with the arrogant claim that it is he and his contributors who are the ones who are trying to get Plato right, and that through their work one can understand the unity and integrity of Plato's works.

Despite the arrogance of the introduction, and the fact that some of the themes are not pushed far enough (other examples: Why was Socrates

unwilling to write? Can the philosopher enter politics without becoming corrupted? etc.), this book contains much that is interesting and valuable.

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Gerald J. Postema, ed.

Philosophy and the Law of Torts.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2001.

Pp. ix + 336.

US\$60.00. ISBN 0-521-62282-4.

On the flyleaf of *Philosophy and the Law of Torts*, Gerald Postema makes a claim of novelty: 'When accidents occur and people suffer injuries, who ought to bear the loss? Tort law offers a complex set of rules to answer this question, but *until now philosophers have offered little by way of analysis of these rules* [emphasis supplied].' Odd: The corpus of works that look at wrongful infliction of injury in philosophical perspective starts before Aristotle and fills many thousands of pages. Holmes sounded like a philosopher of torts in *The Common Law* and *The Path of the Law*, but Postema dismisses him as an antagonist to philosophy, too quick to rationalize an implicit 'quasi-utilitarian framework', and a writer who cut off discussion (5). Even if we limit our reading to contemporary Anglo-American accident scholarship and insist that analysts be committed to philosophy in their methods, we find a trove. David Owen's *Philosophical Foundations of Tort Law* (Oxford 1995), for instance, contains twenty-one essays by legal scholars, some of them Ph.D. philosophers, who invoke philosophy to shed light on tort law, and also includes the celebrated 'What Has Philosophy to Learn From Tort Law?' by philosopher (and nonlawyer) Bernard Williams.

Perhaps Postema uses his claim of novelty in order to express doubts about the depth, rather than the quantity, of philosophy-of-torts writing that preceded his book. This interpretation gains support from his remark that torts is well behind criminal law and other fields in its 'philosophical reflection' — indeed it is 'in its infancy' (21). Offering a force for maturation, Postema presents eight commissioned chapters by nine torts professors (seven who work in the U.S. and two in Toronto), all of whom hold doctorates in philosophy. They enjoy well-earned renown. It is impossible for a torts specialist to think of corrective justice without recalling Jules Coleman and Stephen Perry, or of what economics and philosophy hold in common without reading Mark Geistfeld, or about Rawls and the social contract without help

from Gregory Keating. In addition to stellar authors' credentials, *Philosophy and the Law of Torts* contains stellar scholarship.

The collection falls short, however, in the project that Postema has announced: to 'help readers better grasp the shape of key conceptual and normative issues' in tort law and 'to identify and avoid some theoretical dead ends' (20-1). One key concept remains notably unshaped: What do Postema and his contributors mean by 'torts'? Early on, Postema uses 'unintentional torts' as an apparent synonym for all of torts (1-2). Keating's title is 'A Social Contract Conception of the *Tort Law of Accidents*' (22) [emphasis supplied]. Thus far the authors have included negligence and strict liability, positing out intentional torts. Next comes Perry, who announces a concern only with 'negligence' (72): *tant pis* for strict liability! Coleman, Geistfeld, and Martin Stone find their particulars in accident cases but do not exclude intentional torts; Bruce Chapman takes on 'Pluralism in Tort and Accident Law'; in an exceptionally stimulating paper, Arthur Ripstein and Benjamin Zipursky focus on two American judicial decisions, theorizing within mass-tort products liability. In short, *Philosophy and the Law of Torts* lacks a single conception of 'torts' that would have united the disparate chapters. Other under-adumbrated concepts in the book include 'functionalism' (introduced, with imprecision, by Stone; invoked with somewhat more care by Coleman; repeated by Postema) as a Bad Thing, and Postema's sorting of each chapter into a 'monist' or 'pluralist' category — a dichotomy from which he quickly retreats (17).

Often in *Philosophy and the Law of Torts* the bugbear 'functionalism' stands in for law and economics. Most of the contributors, excepting Chapman and Geistfeld, site economic analysis of tort law on a continuum of distaste: 'the theory to meet and beat,' according to Postema (5); 'a classic just-so story,' says Coleman (191); useful enough when constrained, but an inadequate grounding for tort law (e.g., Perry 113). With respect to this aversion, the authors might profitably have reflected on why they care so little about intentional torts and torts derived from Trespass, involving unmediated contact between wrongdoer and victim. An extensive literature, ignored in the book, explains the domination of accidents over intentional harms in modern torts scholarship with reference to incentives: distant deep pockets (insurers, employers, manufacturers) are routinely compelled to pay for unintended harms and consequences remote from wrongful conduct, only rarely for intentional or immediate harms. And so tort theory, trailing behind tort litigation, has gone where the money is. Given their commitments, economic analysts can be forgiven for accepting this state of affairs without question; philosophers cannot.

Other omissions appear purposeful, reflecting tradeoffs. In designing the book, Postema favored strong track records over newness, choosing to publish theses he knew well before the papers came in. Most of the authors mined their old lodes. You'll find crisper Keating in the *Stanford Law Review* and elsewhere (this Keating fan would like to take away his copy of *Siegler v. Kuhlman* [1972] and make him find a fresher illustration of reciprocal risks),

fuller Coleman in *Risks and Wrongs* (a book reviewed in detail by Postema back in 1993), and more detailed Chapman in a paper coauthored with Michael Trebilcock. Stephen Perry calls a 1996 article by Heidi Hurd 'recent' (75); by 2001 it was nearly time to say 'classic'.

The other salient exclusion, related to the staleness problem, concerns writers and topics. A big title can mislead readers with an implicit promise of breadth. *Caveat lector*: More goes on today in philosophy and the law of torts than is dreamt of in *Philosophy and the Law of Torts*. Numerous torts teachers who write scholarship informed by their study of philosophy at the doctoral level (e.g., Heidi Li Feldman, Steven Hetcher, Ken Kress, Anthony Sebok) are not heard from here: extend 'philosophy' to embrace nonprofessional philosophers, and even more new philosophy-and-torts can emerge. Fresh perspectives would serve the admirable Postema aim of escaping 'theoretical dead ends'.

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Gerhard Preyer and Frank Siebelt, eds.

Reality and Humean Supervenience:

Essays on the Philosophy of David Lewis.

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

Publishers, Inc. 2001. Pp. xiii + 243.

US\$68.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7425-1200-2);

US\$27.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7425-1201-0).

Philosophy has recently lost one of its most ambitious, clever and original metaphysicians. Princeton philosopher David Lewis died at sixty and will be sorely missed. His work in logic, metaphysics, philosophy of mind and science has been extremely influential. He is best known for his infamous realism regarding possible worlds, his theory of counterfactuals and his counterfactual theory of causality. This recent volume of papers on Lewis's work is thus timely and important as it brings together a number of excellent papers by prominent philosophers, the majority of whom have been long-time critics or defenders of Lewis's views.

The text is divided into three sections. Part one focuses on Lewis's modal realism. Articles in this section come from Phillip Bricker writing on island universes, John Bigelow on time travel, Peter Forrest on ontological commitment, Paul Teller on identity over time, and Harold Noonan, also on identity and change. Part two focuses on physicalism, causation and conditionals with papers by Daniel Bonevac writing on naturalism, David Armstrong on

causation, and Jonathan Bennett on Lewis's theory of conditionals. Part three picks up on Lewis's theory of mind with discussions from Terrence Horgan on reductionism and Michael Tye writing on qualia. The collection is introduced by Gerhard Preyer and Frank Siebelt who focus their discussion on Lewis's commitment to physicalism and Humean Supervenience. Each paper in this collection deserves attention, but here I shall make just a few, somewhat miscellaneous comments.

Preyer and Siebelt's introduction is welcome for, apart from giving a fine overview of Lewis's views, they usefully show the logical independence of a number of theses Lewis adheres to. Physicalism and Humean supervenience are easily conflated, but should be kept separate. Lewis believed that all the truths of this world are truths dependent upon the arrangement of localized intrinsic physical properties and external space-time relations between these properties. Put this way, however, we blur the distinction between physicalism and Humean supervenience. Physicalism asserts that all fundamental properties will be found in physics, while Humean supervenience is conceived to require that all facts depend on localized properties. We could, therefore, hold to a physicalism that denies that the fundamental physical properties are local. Preyer and Siebelt suggest that a world in which we cannot decompose entangled quantum superpositions into local parts is a world in which Humean supervenience fails. But Humean supervenience could obtain even if the fundamental properties of the world are not physical properties, although they are suitably local. Thus a world with vital or conscious nonphysical properties may still be a world in which everything else supervenes upon these properties. To deny both physicalism and supervenience we need to show that the actual world contains non-local and non-physical properties. Keeping these two theses separate isn't easy and Preyer and Siebelt, having carefully distinguished them, later appear to mix them up. In their discussion of Lewis's causal role theory of the mental they write: 'Lewis thinks his causal role analyses could give us an understanding of the mental even if Humean superveniences [sic] fails for our world. For example we could think of our world as including entities solely characterizable by means of non-physical properties, where those properties have to be regarded as fundamental. Even in such a situation it might still be true that our mental states can be defined by their causal roles ...' (11).

Here Preyer and Siebelt are considering the causal role theory of the mental for worlds in which physicalism fails, but not necessarily for worlds in which supervenience fails. But apart from this apparent slip, their introduction provides an excellent overview of the issues. One problem that is not greatly attended to, however, is the definition of physicalism. Lewis, like physicalists generally, has to explain what his theory amounts to, for saying that the world's facts supervene on the physical doesn't tell me much regarding what makes something physical. The physical cannot be identified with that which current physics postulates, for we know that our current theories are incomplete. Appeal to the posits of future physics is, arguably, an appeal to we know not what.

In general this is an excellent collection of papers on Lewis's work by some of his most prominent critics, (although John Bigelow's paper on time travel appears to discuss Lewis's views only as an after-thought — this is an exception). I did not always agree with the characterization of certain theses however. Harold Noonan comments on four dimensionalism or the temporal parts theory of identity through change as entailing '... there exists a spatiotemporally discontinuous object of which George Washington is the first spatiotemporal part and the Post Office Tower the second' (124), remarking that such pluralism makes four dimensionalism difficult for many to believe. Now those who have defended perdurance are often attracted to such unrestricted principles of composition, but I don't think it is entailed by the four-dimensionalist view. We may think that change in an object is explained by that object having temporal parts, differing in their intrinsic properties, but deny that just any two temporal parts make an object. We might require, what we lack in the case of Washington and the Post Office, a robust causal relation between the temporal parts, some notion of contact, or something else again. Nevertheless Noonan's discussion and critique of Lewis's argument from temporary intrinsics is excellent.

Much more could be said about each of the articles in this collection. It is essential reading for those interested in metaphysics, philosophy of mind and the philosophy of science. It is very sad that we could not have a collection that includes Lewis's latest replies to his critics.

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William R. Reddy

The Navigation of Emotion.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2001.

Pp. xiv + 380.

US\$69.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-80303-9);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-00472-1).

This book is a strange, but interesting, hybrid. On the one hand it is a theoretical excursus into the nature of emotion while, on the other, it examines a specific period in the history of the emotions. The second project is meant to be an application of the theoretical insights gained from the first.

Reddy begins by exposing what he takes to be the shortcomings of a number of different approaches to the question 'what are emotions?' The answers offered to this question on behalf of cognitive psychology, cultural anthropology, and poststructuralism are deemed not so much false, as simply incomplete. According to Reddy, what we need is a theory of emotions that

gives us a robust account of both agency and historical change. Further, we need to be able to describe 'emotional regimes' — the concrete sociocultural life forms that prescribe specific sorts of emotional expressions while proscribing others — as either good or bad for people. In other words, there is no room in Reddy's thinking for relativistic analyses of emotional regimes. More specifically, he aims to provide an account of emotions that allows us to criticize certain emotional regimes in defense of human liberty. Indeed, Reddy thinks that his analysis of the emotions will provide us with '... a universal conception of the person ... one with political relevance'.

This is a hefty task, and it is not at all obvious that Reddy has managed to pull it off successfully. Consider, to begin, his very convoluted definition of emotion: an emotion is a '... range of loosely connected thought material, formulated in varying codes, that has goal-relevant valence and intensity ... that may constitute a "schema".' The 'thought material' in question, moreover, '... tends to be activated together but, when activated, exceeds attention's capacity to translate it into action or into talk in a short time horizon' (94). The core conception of 'thought material' remains elusive, however. It seems to refer to just about everything going on inside conscious beings — from sensory inputs to goals and purposes, memory traces, behavioral tendencies, and so on. This is the stuff that is translated by an ill-defined homunculus known as 'attention'. But what *is* the emotion? The translator, the translated, or the translation? Or perhaps all three? Since Reddy is overwhelmingly concerned with how we describe our emotional states to ourselves and others — by employing what he calls 'emotives' — the answer would seem to be that the emotion is the translation. But that hardly seems correct since many such translations of our 'thought material' — verbal descriptions of the visual field, for example — do not appear to have anything to do with emotion. One gets the impression that the phenomenon has been lost in all the baroque architecture.

Reddy is on slightly more solid ground in discussing directly the concept of emotional liberty. He defines emotional liberty thus: 'the freedom to change goals in response to bewildering, ambivalent thought activations that exceed the capacity of attention and challenge the reign of high-level goals currently guiding emotional management' (129). There is then a useful distinction between types of political regimes based on the amount of emotional liberty they allow their subjects. 'Strict regimes' prescribe strongly reinforced normative codes of emotional expression and thus restrict individual emotional management, while 'loose regimes' do the opposite. So, strict regimes tend to induce relatively profound emotional suffering — defined by Reddy as a form of acute 'goal conflict'. They are therefore, in principle, less desirable kinds of regimes.

This is a useful schema but it is not clear that it gives us very much ammunition for criticizing real political regimes, except perhaps those whose inducement of emotional suffering is severe (Reddy names political torture as the most salient form of emotional suffering). However, since some level of enforcement of normative codes is inevitable, some degree of emotional

suffering is required for any society to remain cohesive. Just when do restrictions on individual emotional management become ethically burdensome? What Reddy owes us is some attempt to answer the age-old question of the limits of individual liberty, especially as he is so concerned to avoid the specter of relativism.

By far the most interesting part of the book is Reddy's examination of the period 1700-1850 in France. He does a genuinely good job of exposing the manner in which the French Revolution in particular depended on a particular cultural view of the power of emotives. First, there is the flowering of sentimentalism between 1700 and 1789. This was a period of relative emotional liberty. For, even though Versailles etiquette was tightly constricted, there was an upsurge of 'emotional refuges' — organizations of relationships that provide a safe haven from existing emotional norms — in French society. Reddy has in mind literary salons and Masonic lodges, both of which acted as zones of emotional relaxation. More importantly, however, such organizations became important for the Revolution itself because they were fashioned in the belief that radical egalitarianism was rooted in the 'moral sense' shared by all of us. The disaster, however, came with the attempt to translate this naïve — and very Rousseauian — belief in basic human goodness into politics. The Revolution went astray, according to Reddy, because of the harsh emotional suffering it imposed on people. Everyone was supposed to have access to true natural feelings of pity and generosity, to a deep concern for fellow humans. Why then the Terror? Because the notion of a natural wellspring of altruistic feelings is a chimera, and everyone knew it; though nobody could admit it. Everyone therefore became engaged in terrible internal battles of self-management, of induced emotional suffering, as they tried to dig down to their 'true' feelings. Just insofar as such management was necessary, however, everyone became suspect — for why should you need to engage in such management if you were truly virtuous? So everyone becomes a traitor: a fine, if partial, explanation of the paranoia that marked the Terror.

This latter part of the book is a delight to read, but it does not owe most of its substance to the first part of the book. Would that Reddy had kept the two parts distinct.

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Nicholas Rescher

*Philosophical Reasoning: A study
in the methodology of philosophizing.*
Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers 2001.
Pp. xi + 282.
US\$69.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-631-23017-3);
US\$34.95 (paper: ISBN 0-631-23018-1).

Philosophy is supposed to be the discipline that makes no assumptions, the subject that questions everything, the branch of rational enquiry that problematizes rational enquiry itself. Given this pride philosophers have in leaving no intellectual stone unturned, it is surprising how marginal metaphilosophy is in academic philosophy today. The vast majority of academic research is concentrated in the nooks and crannies of an ever-mushrooming field of specializations. Few are the philosophers who lift their heads up and examine the wider nature of philosophy itself. The philosophical division of labour seems to have left the care and scrutiny of philosophical method itself under-staffed.

Nicholas Rescher's *Philosophical Reasoning* is a reminder not only of how important metaphilosophy is to philosophy but how fascinating it is too. It is hard to imagine how anyone interested in philosophy could fail to be captivated by Rescher's meticulous yet pacey study of philosophical method. Rescher follows his own dictum that, when writing philosophy, authors should avoid death by a thousand qualifications and follow the '*via positiva*' and set out, plainly and explicitly, what they are prepared to assert' (55). The result is an unapologetic exegesis of one philosopher's view of how his subject should be pursued rather than a dry survey of the contemporary consensus and controversies.

Rescher's analysis of philosophy pivots around three key concepts: aporetic, coherence and systematicity. These three concepts provide the unifying threads that pull the eighteen chapters together. Their frequent appearance throughout the text often leads to repetition, but like a jazz player, each time the theme reappears, Rescher provides a slightly different emphasis or angle, so that the reiteration adds something new to our understanding.

The aporetic nature of philosophy is perhaps the key to understanding Rescher's view of the subject. An apory is 'a group of contentions that are individually plausible but collectively inconsistent' (93). On Rescher's view, philosophy arises because its data constantly produce apories. These data are not particular to philosophy and include the findings of natural science and everyday experience as well as the findings of previous philosophers. A classic example of an apory is the cluster of contentions that include the existence of human free will and the causal closure of the physical world. Faced with such an apory, we either throw our hands up and say we can't resolve the contradiction or we get to work and try and sort it out. When we do this, we do philosophy, and how we do this comprises much of what Rescher has to say about how we do philosophy.

If we accept that aporetics is at the heart of philosophy, then we can see how Rescher's two other key concepts — coherence and systematization — come into play. In short, Rescher contends that the very project of eliminating apories requires a commitment to coherence and systematization. The short reason for this is that an apory is a problem in need of a solution precisely because it fails to cohere with a wider system of belief. If we accept that apories are a problem, we are already at least halfway to accepting that philosophy is coherentist and systematic in nature.

One interesting upshot of this is that it implies a return to a more synoptic view of philosophy. Apories do not just occur locally in the many sub-species of philosophy: they can arise across the whole subject. For instance, versions of the human free will apory arise because of conflicts between the findings of metaphysics and ethics. Claims about the nature of causation have implications beyond the narrow 'philosophy of causation'. As a profession, we have tended to forget this and as a result are inclined to believe we can work in our small corners of philosophy more or less in isolation. If Rescher is right, this needs to change and the average philosopher needs to become much more of a generalist.

This synoptic view of philosophy, where all its problems and questions are somehow interrelated, is what drives the need for systematization. We cannot eschew system because, like it or not, philosophy forms an interrelated system. However, the systems of today arise through a collaboration of a 'dissagregated and unorganised sort' (273) rather than through the individual work of a Hegel or a Kant.

More controversially, Rescher argues that this system is coherentist rather than foundationalist in nature. The system hangs together like a web — it is not built up from below like a wall. True perhaps to the spirit of coherence theory, Rescher never argues for its truth from first principles. Rather, he repeatedly shows how the coherentist view itself coheres with the picture of philosophy he is painting, at least better than the foundationalist one does.

In chapter six Rescher argues that there is always an uneasy balance in philosophy between rhetoric and argumentation, and his championing of coherentism is a case in point. There are limits as to how far one can argue for coherentism rather than simply try to persuade people as to its merits. Rescher is a good persuader, but one can accept the aporetic and systematic nature of philosophy whilst hanging on to foundationalism. The fact that one accepts that one's philosophical commitments must cohere is necessary but not sufficient for accepting coherentism, as Rescher is well aware.

There is much to argue with in *Philosophical Reasoning*, but much more to agree with. Rescher's account explains so much about what makes our subject so odd. It explains why it is rooted in unavoidable questions that trouble all reflective minds yet lead to discussions of obtuse technicality. It explains why philosophy is so rigorous in its methods yet without any certain foundation and without hope of any final answers. It explains why certain broad positions are perennial while the arguments for and against them move on.

What makes the book such a pleasure to read is that it combines the precision and thoroughness of a master philosopher with a writing style that makes for easy reading. Rescher's penchant for technical terms and foreign phrases is no obstacle, since everything is made clear in context. This is a book which both novices and experts should read to help both understand the nature of their enterprise better.

Julian Baggini

The Philosophers' Magazine
England

**Charles E. Scott, Susan M. Schoenbohm,
Daniela Vallega-Neu, and Alejandro
Vallega, eds.**

Companion to Heidegger's

Contributions to Philosophy.

Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2001.

Pp. 255.

US\$49.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-253-33946-4);

US\$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-253-21465-3).

Written between 1936 and 1938, Heidegger's *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* was published in 1989 as Volume 65 of the *Gesamtausgabe*. In 1999 the English translation, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, appeared, and in May of 2000, the book was the focus of the 34th Annual North American Heidegger Meeting. Though the conference and *Companion* are not coextensive, this is the context out of which *Companion* grew. A companion is certainly needed for this, arguably the most difficult, and certainly the most abstruse, of Heidegger's works, not in general known for their transparency. *Companion's* strength is also its weakness: despite somewhat irritatingly repetitive claims about how *Contributions* is intelligible to only an elite few, and why it is so difficult, *Companion* is an invaluable guide for gaining access to the pivotal thinking contained in *Contributions*. This thinking is pivotal because it encapsulates Heidegger's turn from transcendental-horizonal thinking to being-historical thinking. More importantly, *Contributions* enacts a turning in the question of being itself, a transition in the history of thinking from its 'first beginning' in Greek thought to an 'other beginning' that overcomes metaphysics not by transcending, but by thinking *through* that first beginning.

A central difficulty in making sense of *Contributions* is the problem of language. A new beginning requires a new language, and German remains

trapped in the metaphysics of the first beginning. Hence the *Beiträge* is even more replete with neologisms, hyphenations, and cryptic ambiguity than Heidegger's writing is usually; his translators stuck to his writing strategies in *Contributions*. The editors of *Companion* thus chose papers which offer alternative translations to *Contributions* with the intent of giving readers options. *Companion's* contributors are still, however, in a bind: if they stick closely to Heideggerian language, they reproduce the difficulties encountered in reading both the *Beiträge* and its translation; if they leave that language behind, they risk reducing the invitation for another beginning to the exhausted yet intelligible metaphysics of the first beginning. Despite the fact that the papers are somewhat uneven in their success at resolving this difficulty, *Companion* contains insightful, challenging and useful suggestions for how to interpret *Contributions*.

Companion consists in fourteen papers, collected into two sections. The first seven papers, among which I include Scott's introduction as it has more to say about *Contributions* than *Companion*, offer interpretive strategies for *Contributions* as a whole, while the remaining seven treat major sections and themes. Scott and Schoenbohm each articulate the strangeness of the thinking that is at play in *Contributions*, Scott by emphasizing 'the travail of a suicidal machinational world that sucks out the marvelous lives of beings' (10), Schoenbohm by orienting the reader to 'the other beginning' (27). Schmidt explains how there may be in *Contributions* 'a possible Heideggerian politics' (33). Vallega interprets on the basis of 'a thinking of passage' (48) in which the text enacts rather than simply describing such passage. Vallega-Neu explores possibilities for 'letting being eventuate' (66) in poietic saying over and against propositional language. Polt's rich analysis of *Ereignis* provides an insightful explication of truth toward understanding 'enowning' and 'en thinking'. Von Herrmann's essay situates *Contributions* against other Heideggerian texts, and is unique in his arguments that *Contributions* is not a renewed attempt to complete the project of *Being and Time*. His paper is particularly useful, given his recommendations as to which Heideggerian texts are prerequisite for reading the *Beiträge* in his 'Editor's Epilogue' to the German edition.

The second section opens with McNeill's thoughtful treatment of time through elucidation of the *Augenblick*. Maly treats 'turnings' to show how the 'ontological difference ... gives way to enowning' (154) in 'inceptual thinking [that] dares the leap' (161). Brogan also treats the leap, but in its implications to Da-sein's double character as non-subjective origin of being-in-the-world and attunement to the abandonment of be-ing. Sallis's beautifully crafted piece explores what is unthought in the first beginning in order to show how Dasein is the abysmal ground for the other beginning. Figal and Crownfield both discuss god(s), Figal to show how religious experience and philosophical thought belong together in the context of the flight of the gods, which he is interestingly able to do without reducing Heidegger's thinking to theology, and Crownfield to demonstrate the role of the question of the last god in the development of Heidegger's thinking. Emad's concluding paper treats the

section 'Be-ing' which Heidegger originally included as Part II, but moved to the end of the book in 1939. Emad addresses the sense in which this section belongs in the book by showing how it once again enacts the movement of thinking at work in *Contributions* to provide actual entry into be-ing.

Taken separately, each paper is useful in its own way, but the real value of *Companion* is in reading the papers together. Taken as a whole, they make sense of the fugue-like structure of *Contributions* in which each section is a re-enactment in a different way of the experience of thinking being, situate it against Heidegger's other writings to expose its singularity and its role in the development of his thinking, offer alternative translations of difficult Heideggerian words and concepts, provide options for interpreting this deep yet awkward text, and uncover a variety of ways to think about such difficult themes as enowning, truth, sheltering, the abandonment of being, overcoming metaphysics, ground, leap, and the other beginning. They also say much to clarify the relation and difference between being (*Sein*) and be-ing (*Seyn*), but one should be careful with these arguments as von Herrmann has noted that there are places where Heidegger apparently did not consistently maintain the different spelling while writing. Nonetheless, since *Contributions* has been celebrated as Heidegger's most important work since *Being and Time*, if not eclipsing even that text, and since it is extremely difficult to read because of both its innovative structure and its content, *Companion* will be indispensable to scholars and graduate students who wish to travel the path of Heidegger's thinking enacted in *Contributions*.

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John R. Searle

Rationality in Action.

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 2001.

Pp. xvi + 303.

US\$35.00. ISBN 0-262-19463-5.

Rationality in Action is an intriguing book, often dense in its arguments, the product of the 2000 Jean Nicod Lectures and winner of two international prizes. It engages some fundamental issues for philosophy of mind and has implications for other areas including ethical theory. This highly original work addresses a key philosophical concept — rationality and its relation to our 'rational actions'. The book will likely be most accessible to professional philosophers, graduate students and the like. While based on a lecture series, the book is a thorough re-working of both the content and form of the lectures. Indeed, Searle admits to having had the manuscript accepted for publication

and then choosing to re-write the whole work again prior to publication. The nine chapters in the final product outline Searle's questions about rationality and how it relates to action. Written in a readable style, the book incorporates relevant examples to illuminate the points being made. While philosophically thorough, it is also not littered with numerous references, rather references are evident only where required.

The groundwork for the book is provided in the first two chapters. Following an outline and critique of the 'classical' model of rationality (Chapter 1), Searle moves (Chapter 2) to provide a context for and summary of his overall ideas on rationality. Engagement with a range of issues such as free will, theories of mind and the mind-body problem (Chapter 3) lays the argument that there is a gap between the reason for an action and the action itself. The reason can be held without necessarily engaging in the action. Likewise it can be possible for an action to take place without there needing to be a reason in the strict sense of the term. This leads Searle to examine Hume's account of the self and to develop an alternative argument for the existence of an irreducible, non-Humean, self.

What is the reason for an action? Is there a logical structure of such reasons? Chapter 4 argues that reasons must be more than linguistic entities, they must connect with the world. The question is how do they connect and what does this connection consist of? '... how can anything be a reason for anything and what is the reason for anything, anyhow?' (98). For Searle, 'The notion of a reason is embedded in at least three other notions, and the four can only be understood together as a family. The other notions are "why," "because," and "explanation"' (100). Once we address the demand for rational explanations, there typically comes a demand for justification. 'All good reasons explain, and all explaining is the giving of reasons. But this point has to be understood precisely. One may have justifying reasons for believing something or for having done something even though the statement of the justification does not give the reason why one believes in or why one did it. *The reasons that justify my action, and thus explain why it was the right action to perform, may not be the same as the reasons that explain why I in fact did it*' (110).

Reason can be construed as an activity rather than an abstract process based on logical properties (Chapter 5). 'In theoretical reason the end product is a belief or acceptance of a proposition; in practical reason it is a prior intention or intention-in-action' (135). Searle's view is that '... theoretical reason is a special case of practical reason: deciding what beliefs to accept and reject is a special case of deciding what to do' (136). However, there are rational constraints on both practical and theoretical reasons. In the end he views rationality not as a '... separate faculty or module, but rather a feature internal to other cognitive and volitional capacities ...' (143).

There are also other features of rationality which need to be considered (Chapter 6) including altruism or desire-independent reasons, where there is awareness of and willingness to act on things beyond one's own immediate self-interest. Motivation and different levels or kinds of desire also need to

be taken into consideration. While reasons for action require special philosophical consideration, there is also a more general account of action which, according to Searle, must address at least five features: freedom, temporality, the self and first person point of view, language and other institutional characteristics, and rationality. A basic philosophical mistake is '... to misconstrue the relationships between the antecedents of an action and the performance of an action' (226), suggests Searle (Chapter 7). Even if all conditions of reason are met, it remains possible that the rational action may not be taken due to a 'weakness of will'. Judgments and decisions can get in the way of reasoned action.

Is it possible to develop a logic for practical reasoning? Chapter 8 explores the issue. 'Practical reason ... is reason about what to do, and theoretical reason is reasoning about what to believe. But if this is so, it ought to seem puzzling to us that we do not have a generally accepted account of the deductive logical structure of practical reason ... After all, the processes by which we figure out how to best achieve our goals seem to be just as rational as the processes by which we figure out the implications of our beliefs, so why do we seem to have such a powerful logic for one and not for the other?' (239). One issue in developing a logic for practical reasoning is the question of entailment relationships — logical reasons do not entail the psychological action, i.e., it is by no means necessary that a person who holds the premises is committed to the conclusion (action). Other factors such as desire, preferences, intention, and Kant's doctrine of 'will' contribute to the case against the possibility of a deductive logic of practical reason.

The final chapter examines the application of Searle's ideas into consciousness, free action or free will and the brain. He examines the relationship between consciousness and brain processes. Out of this discussion he develops two hypotheses which assist in stating the problem and pointing towards possible solutions. By the end of the book we have been offered a new way of examining the problem of rationality, a fresh way of stating it and some indications of likely solutions. Searle has not sought to offer novel solutions, merely to state the problem in a new way.

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Ninian Smart

World Philosophies.

New York: Routledge 2000. Pp. vii + 454.

Cdn\$56.00: US\$45.95

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-18466-5);

Cdn\$31.95: US\$21.95

(paper: ISBN 0-415-22852-2).

Philosophers tend not to use 'philosophy' as a count noun. For most of us, philosophy is the stuff that gets published in the professional journals we consult, or taught in university departments we inhabit or discussed in college common rooms we frequent. The late Ninian Smart — one of the world's most published scholars in the philosophy of and comparative religion — takes a different view. There are many philosophies, he argues, and learning how to understand, distinguish, compare and contrast them, can help free us from the philosophical tribalism so easily adopted in the West particularly.

But what is to count as 'a philosophy'? Fundamentally, Smart contends, it is the articulation, criticism and/or amendment of a 'worldview'; a notion which is taken to need no exacting specification. Smart argues cogently for including a number of religions as 'philosophies', or nests for philosophies. And he calls to mind a number of character types taken to illustrate a variety of philosophical approaches: the 'sage' of eastern traditions, the dialectician of classical Greece, the 'spiritual analyst' who elaborates a religious position in the style typified by Shankara and St Thomas Aquinas, the 'super-scientist' who attempts to provide over-arching theories of reality, the metaphysician, spinning out a picture of the realities hidden under the appearances attended to by the natural and social sciences, the skeptic, who challenges not only conventional truths but the methods taken to arrive at them, the professional philosopher in the Anglo-American context — technically adept, empiricist and influenced by linguistic analysis. (One feels the dig in one's ribs when Smart comments on this breed: 'The image of suit and briefcase flit through the mind, and hours completed at the knowledge-plant from nine till five [5].') There is also the mathematical logician of modern times, and the figure of sage/adviser, typified by Confucius. Among them, these philosophical characters illustrate the three main themes of (1) metaphysical, political or ethical wisdom; (2) articulated world-view; and (3) critique.

This somewhat impressionistic explication of 'a philosophy' allows Smart to range over something like fourteen families of philosophies, specified initially by their place of origin (e.g., 'South Asian', 'Chinese', 'European', 'Greece', 'Modern South and South-East Asia' and so on). Until the final chapter, he does not attempt to cover developments more recent than the 1960s. The recent emergence of native American and Australian aboriginal philosophy is mentioned but not enlarged upon. (Is there really nothing of much significance before the '60s?) The lengthy chapter on philosophies arising in Europe, from Descartes through the existentialists to Hegel, the

two Wittgensteins and many more, is a chastening reminder by itself of the plurality of outlooks it is possible to ignore by being buried in one of them. Latin American philosophies receive interesting treatment, drawing out both strands inherited from Inca and Aztec roots and those produced by emergence from colonial thrall. African thought is handled in its own nuanced and provocative way, raising along the way an interesting question about the cultural loading of academic anthropology. In a short concluding chapter, Smart comments on happenings since the '60s, and speculates on future developments. He is hopeful about the flourishing of nascent and minority philosophies, and at the same time apprehensive about a kind of philosophical globalization, where Anglo-American philosophy homogenizes the globe.

Smart typically sees philosophical families as evolving, highly ramified, messily intermarried and resistant to tidy labelling. One result is that a given philosophy is likely to surface at more than one place in the book. E.g., there is a chapter devoted to 'Jewish philosophies' as they emerge in the setting of Christian and Islamic cultures up to about the eighteenth century, but they have popped up earlier in connection with Zoroastrianism and later re-emerge as part of Smart's discussion of North American philosophies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This treatment turns what could be something like a collection of lengthy and independent encyclopaedia entries into a dynamic and connected account, with themes that wax, wane, echo and re-echo in many places. E.g., resonances are found between certain themes in ancient Chinese philosophies on the one hand and utilitarianism and J.L. Austin's 'performative utterances' on the other.

Smart's outlines are generally sympathetic, but he does not hesitate to draw attention to apparent tensions in a number of views, or problems that have been raised with respect to them. As usual, Smart writes clearly, simply and with an evident relish for his subject. An excellent, 65-page bibliography is included.

The book is in some ways a remarkable *tour de force*. But the sheer breadth of the subject, and the comparative brevity of the monograph, between them bring significant limitations. It is quite possible to get lost in the multitude of trails traced out in the highly compressed treatment required by the scope of Smart's subject. And though the treatment is nuanced throughout, there is an inevitable impression of superficiality generated by the impossibility of developing any thought at length. By and large, terms are explained briefly as they are introduced, but the proliferation of terminology — unavoidable as well in a book of this kind — sometimes leads to confusion as well. The approach to philosophies arising and arriving in China, for instance, employs traditional western terms ('Taoism', 'Confucianism', 'Buddhism') as well as transliterated Chinese terms ('Daojiao', 'Jujiao', 'Foijiao') to refer to three central schools of thought. A graphical route map, and/or a glossary, would have been a useful aid in keeping track of the various currents as they develop and interact.

One cannot avoid the question of whom this book is written for. 'The general reader' who might wish an acquaintance with the philosophies of the

world, mentioned in the book's Preface, will, I think, find this book too concentrated a dose by itself. I gather that courses in 'The History of the World' are coming to be standard fare in many universities, and surveys of world philosophies cannot be far behind. Is this a potential textbook for such offerings? Not an ideal one in my estimation. The degree of compression entailed in summarizing this vast subject in 372 pages of text, plus the lack of such aids as timelines, relationship charts and a glossary, make it more useful as an added reference resource; though one can imagine that in a course where a number of the movements included in this book are given detailed discussion in the classroom, this might serve well as a smaller-scale overview, giving added context to and links within the classroom content.

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William Sweet, ed.

The Bases of Ethics.

Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press.

Pp. 250.

US\$25.00. ISBN 0-87462-622-6.

For those whose dealings in moral and political philosophy revolve around the work of Rawls, Nagel, Bernard Williams, Mackie and their ilk, it is salutary to be reminded that in the English-speaking world there are philosophers for whom these authors are marginal at best, and for whom their place is taken by Aquinas, Wojtyla (alias Pope John Paul II), Ladrière, and assorted others. Salutary but depressing, at least on the evidence of this collected volume, since these other dialogues yield little clarity or insight. One might be the more disheartened because an unusually large proportion of the authors are professors *emeriti*, presumably no longer goaded to publish or perish but able to offer us their wisdom straight. And ethics is an area where it is plausible to think that one's views will change and deepen with the passing years. But what do we find in these eleven essays plus an introduction?

Roger Sullivan offers peaceful coexistence to the four classical moral traditions he reviews: Biblical, Greek, Kantian, and Utilitarian. We are to see them as providing answers, not to our moral problems *en masse* but within circumscribed areas of concern: for the private sphere, Biblical when you want to save your soul, Greek when concerned for your moral character;

for the public, Kant when you are thinking of banning things, Utilitarianism when focussed on contributing positively (33). Lawrence Dewan provides a lengthy (40-page) 'presentation of the mind' of Thomas Aquinas. One hesitates to ask for more, but his concluding lines claim that 'ethics is of secondary importance ... [w]e must assert the primacy of contemplation' (63); if this could be supported without the antiquated teleology and other bizarre notions Dewan has mustered earlier it would be of some interest.

Leslie Armour offers a historically informed discussion of Descartes and the ethics of generosity. Timothy Sprigge provides a clear commentary on objections to Schopenhauer's view that compassion is the sole source of moral value, focussing on Nietzsche's trenchant denunciations. Sprigge opposes the more unconventional views of his protagonists mostly with appeals to common sense, but one feels that he has not properly connected with them. Nor does his claim that suffering is obviously a prescriptive fact about the universe, and thus a refutation of any error theory of morality, seem more than sheer assertion, untempered by the philosophical motivations leading to such theories.

Kenneth Schmitz compares Maritain and Wojtyla on 'modernity'. Hugo Meynell gives us quick reassurance that doubts about the foundations of ethics are the result of erroneous philosophy, though he also admits that there are some irresolvable dilemmas of a kind one does not expect to persist in science. Thomas de Koninck, with copious quotations from Whitehead and others, preaches on the theme of education and 'our present crisis', deploring our fragmented reductivism. Despite the pedagogical piety, I endorse his wish for ordinary schooling to bring our scientific perplexities to the fore, and to confront young minds with the greatest achievements of our various cultures. But even then education *on its own* will not much improve the lot of the disadvantaged.

Elizabeth Trott diagnoses another modern ill: the lack of a 'public identity'. This loss is related to the abandonment of a 'part-whole metaphysic'. Thankfully she does not offer any ways of re-enchanting the world. Considering what is needed to 'pass through' patriarchy, Monique Dumais engages in etymologising, as if this could support the far-fetched recommendations of Mary Daly to move 'in planetary communion with the farthest stars' (190). She also offers more sensible ideas from Braidotti and Legge that reveal different aspects of the critique of patriarchy that is to be undertaken. Indeed Legge seems to endorse solidarity with the oppressed and a rejection of the dualistic hang-ups typical of most religious and philosophical systems, views that are not specifically feminist.

Louis Perron aims to present the mind of Jean Ladrière on the matter of foundations. He seems to want to unite a recognition of the historicity or variability of actual ethical thought and practice with 'the radicality of the ethical call'. He tries to do this by invoking an analogy with Christian eschatology: A Kantian kingdom of ends somehow beckons, 'at once visible in so far as it is an inspiring force of effective initiatives, and enigmatic in so far as it declares itself always only in a directive appeal and never with a

predetermined content' (a quotation from the master himself, 215). Mackie and Hare once debated whether anyone actually believes in objectively prescriptive values: in so far as I can understand Perron at all, he does. William Sweet rounds off the book with a refreshingly clear discussion of MacIntyre and the importance of moral practices. He offers a kind of coherentist approach, not uncongenial to those who would like to fit morality into a straightforwardly natural world.

The book *qua* physical object did not stand up well to the tropical sun on the dashboard of my car, no more than it does, on the whole, *qua* philosophy.

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Charles Taylor

Varieties of Religion Today:

William James Revisited.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

2002. Pp. vii + 127.

US\$19.95. ISBN 0-674-00760-3.

This brief book of four chapters by Charles Taylor takes its source in his 1999 Gifford lectures delivered in Edinburgh. Taylor says that his purpose in these lectures was to address the questions 'What does it mean to call our age secular?' and 'What is the place of religion in our secular age?' The account that Taylor offers in this text masterfully blends Western historical overview, principles of social scientific reasoning, and philosophy of religion.

Historically, Taylor traces the transitions from 'church' to 'sects' to 'denominations' in Europe in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, and their relation to the rise of nation-states. Taylor's interests are also sociological, as he inquires into the human impact of various views about the relationship between church and state. These he describes in terms suggested to him by the work of Emil Durkheim: 'Paleo-, neo-, post-Durkheimian describe ideal types. My claim is not that any of these provides the total description, but that our history has moved through these dispensations, and that the latter has come more and more to color our age' (97).

Philosophically, Taylor uses William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* as an essential source for his own thinking on these subjects, believing that James prefigured 'a rather new phase of religious life associated with a post-Durkheimian dispensation.' The latter is characterized in part by wide-

spread expressive individualism in the ethical and spiritual domains, and an understanding of spirituality that 'has pluralism built into it.' But as they move through Taylor's text, readers will find that James's thought holds a secondary place to the development of Taylor's own answers to his central questions. For Taylor wants to expose both the advantages and disadvantages to this new phase of religious life, and while acknowledging the influence of James on his own thinking, ends his book with a critique of the 'blind spots' to be found in James's thought.

In 'Durkheimian' societies extending back into the Middle Ages, the church claims to gather within itself all members of society, for there is a strong link between adhering to God and belonging to the state. The 'paleo-Durkheimian phase' characterizes the Baroque age and the Catholic counter-reformation; it 'corresponds to a situation in which a sense of the ontic dependence of the state on God and higher times is still alive, even though it may be weakened by disenchantment and an instrumental spirit.' In 'neo-Durkheimian' societies, by contrast, 'God is present because it is his design around which society is organized' (76). The Anglican Church with its 'established synthesis', and to a lesser extent early and also some contemporary Protestant Americans believing in the providential mission of the United States, are best described as neo-Durkheimian.

Neo-Durkheimian society also contrasts with still more 'recent forms in which the spiritual dimension of existence is quite unhooked from the political.' Primary here is the 'post-Durkheimian' outlook, in which there is no necessary embedding of our link to the sacred in any particular broader framework, whether church or state (95). Its origins are caught up with the agnostic thought of the Enlightenment, and with 'the Lockean ethic of freedom and mutual benefit.' But in its full sense it also reflects an expressive individualism, exhibited first in the Romantic era and more recently in post-war ethics of authenticity and 1960s pop-culture. What Taylor describes as 'the new post-Durkheimian dispensation of expressive individualism,' drastically changes the dynamic of belief and unbelief. In our post-Durkheimian society a wider range of Westerners have come to express religious beliefs that move outside Christian orthodoxy, including 'the growth of non-Christian religions ... and the proliferation of New Age modes of practice, of views that bridge the humanist/spiritual boundary, of practices that link spirituality and therapy' (107).

Taylor finds wisdom in this 'new dispensation' in its commitments to pluralism and inner freedom, but the consequences of expressivist culture, he believes, have created their own predicament for modern man, in that they have 'destabilized and undermined' the other dispensations and constantly threaten to devolve individualized experience of the spiritual into 'the feel-good and the superficial.' Here James, whose expressivist philosophy Taylor has held strongly prefigures this post-Durkheimian world, comes in for extended criticism. His outlook reflects the biases of his own time and Protestant culture, and was therefore bound to overlook certain factors. Among those that Taylor focuses upon is the continuing importance of

neo-Durkheimian identities. Also, James's emphasis on personal experience as the primary source of religious sentiment led him to devalue the collective religious life, with its ritual/sacramental expressions and connections.

There are, of course, exceptions to the transition to post-Durkheimian society, and Taylor warns that we should not be too sanguine 'that the change is irreversible even in the core of North Atlantic societies' (97). More broadly, his insights into forces resisting global moral consensus and advocating a retreat to forms of religious nationalism seem particularly interesting in light of the events of September 11, 2001. All collectivities, Taylor asserts, need a sense of 'political identity', and some will call for a return to religious nationalism and to a paleo or even neo-Durkheimian state of affairs, despite the apparent loss of pluralism and toleration that ensues. 'This phenomenon remains important in the modern world, although from a faith perspective one might be ambivalent about it, because there is a gamut of cases, from deeply felt religious allegiance all the way to situations in which the religious marker is cynically manipulated in order to mobilize people. Think of Milosevic and of India's BJP' [Or again, think of the instigators of militant Islam before and after 9/11.] I can only agree with Taylor when he writes that 'whatever one's ethical judgments, this is a powerful reality in today's world, and one that is not about to disappear' (115).

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Liezl Van Zyl

Death and Compassion:

A Virtue-Based Approach to Euthanasia.

Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd. 2000.

Pp. xi + 230.

US\$69.95. ISBN 0-7546-1231-7.

Van Zyl's purpose in this well-written volume is 'to provide a critique of principle-based ethical systems within the context of modern medicine, focusing specifically on end-of-life decisions' (ix). In order to do so, van Zyl employs an Aristotelian teleological account of the virtues — three of them in particular: compassion, benevolence, and respectfulness. He believes that the whole issue of euthanasia needs to be re-articulated in terms of virtue ethics. Thus, compassion is offered as a 'response to suffering as solitude' (ix); 'responsible benevolence' is offered to suggest that the prolongation of life is not always beneficial; and respectfulness is offered as a way of suggesting

that euthanasia can sometimes be viewed as a way of allowing a person to 'die with dignity'.

Van Zyl begins by examining three historical shifts which he sees as interdependent: 'the transformation of medicine from an art into a natural science, the replacement of a virtue-based ethical system by a principle-based system, and the more recent rejection of medical paternalism in favor of the view of the patient as an autonomous and rational agent' (6). He views current efforts to legalize euthanasia 'as an acknowledgement of the failure of medicine to realize the Enlightenment ideal of completely eliminating pain and suffering through scientific methods' (40). Analogously, the rise of modern medicine as a supposedly objective science was accompanied by a view of any sort of context-dependent ethics as subjective, and was opposed by a demand for universal criteria in morals. Van Zyl rejects this subjective/objective binary as an artificial one (68), but he also points out that, while it is allowed to stay in place, it 'neglects the patient's emotional psychological or existential suffering' (9). And again, in the process of modernization 'the tendency of scientific medicine [is] to focus on the elimination of disease, psychical pain and disability while denying or disregarding patients emotional and existential suffering' (37). Reliance upon principle-based ethics also allows the physician to function *not* as an individual but rather as a member of a profession (38). Compassion has for the most part lost its relevance in the modern arena of science and ethics (68), being viewed merely as an irrational feeling. Going further, it has, unfortunately, been associated with total selflessness and with forgiveness in the Christian tradition (96, 102). When so viewed, it is subject to the critique of Nietzsche and others as being, in reality, only a form of pity. In opposition, van Zyl uses works like Tolstoy's *Death of Ivan Ilyich* and Sophocles' *Philoctetes* to argue that compassion involves imaginative interpretation of the significance of the other's pain — an interpretation that might be mistaken (102). Thus, compassion is more than a mere emotion — although it does contain an emotional dimension.

Second, Van Zyl argues for the virtue of benevolence over beneficence. Benevolence is defined as 'the desire to alleviate another's suffering or to benefit him or her' (103); or as 'an active disposition moving us to bring about the welfare and reduce the suffering of others' (105). It is a matter of intention (106), but it must also be 'responsible' (135). It is a type of *phronesis*, i.e., of thought *and* action (134), which must take into account more than only medical values as those relevant in deciding any course of treatment (143). It is much richer than the corresponding virtue of beneficence, to which the principle-based ethics of both Kant and Mill are more wedded.

Third, van Zyl argues for the importance of respect over autonomy, because the latter ignores the fact that the 'moral agency of many patients is impeded' (175). 'The informed-consent model has simply reversed the structure of the contractual relationship, so that the physician becomes a technician who obeys the orders of a patient as moral agent' (175). This approach concentrates far too much on distinguishing between 'competent' and 'incom-

petent' patients, as opposed to focusing on communication and dialogue, which can be adapted to the individual patient's level of comprehension.

A final chapter outlines the beginnings of a public policy position on euthanasia, using the virtues of compassion, benevolence and respect as 'a response to the various features of suffering: loneliness, helplessness and loss of self-respect' (210). Van Zyl believes that 'physicians are in the best position to practice euthanasia or assisted suicide as an act of *responsible* benevolence, since they are able more accurately to assess the patient's condition' (211-12). Even so, there are no universal rules available, or, for that matter, even desirable. While it remains a last resort, in the end one must acknowledge that 'euthanasia and compassionate care are not mutually exclusive' (212).

In short, this is a well-argued and nicely written little volume. It does a very good job of showing the reader the importance of 'context' over 'foundation' in one specific area of medical ethics. Going further, it does so in the only way possible for a true 'context' advocate, i.e., by making very good use of specific examples from several different cultures. While difficulties remain, e.g., what happens when dialogue does *not* lead to consensus, or, speaking more generally, when one is presented with 'competing role models' in a virtue-based ethics, nonetheless the present volume takes a significant step forward in offering a creative and concrete solution to a very complex issue.

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Dana Villa

Socratic Citizenship.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

2001. Pp. xvi + 370.

US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-08692-3);

US\$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-08693-1).

The addition of a chapter on citizenship in the most recent edition of Kymlicka's popular introduction to political philosophy signals the fact that citizenship is now firmly on the agenda of contemporary political theorists. Despite the ubiquity of the term it is as yet unclear what work the concept can be made to do in modern liberal democracies. Villa sets out to explore the possibility of elaborating a model of citizenship which amounts to more than a simple communitarian reaction to the atomism and materialism of modern society. The reaffirmation of the values of self-sacrifice, service, and solidarity risks rendering citizenship little more than a conservative ruse to quell

dissent and threaten individuality. If we are to revitalise public life in modern societies we need a more nuanced account of citizenship, a 'conscientious, moderately alienated citizenship' which Villa names 'Socratic citizenship'.

Socratic, or 'philosophical', citizenship has two main elements: personal integrity and civic involvement and the book is organised around the tension between these two: the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*, progressing by means of a series of readings of Plato, Mill, Nietzsche, Weber and, finally, Arendt and Strauss. Villa's distinctive contribution to the analysis of this tension is his differentiation between the moral and intellectual aspects of personal integrity, the latter constituting the peculiarly Socratic spin on integrity which serves to complicate the standoff between individual and community.

Villa's Socrates is not Plato's stooge, but the gadfly — the gadfly who does not simply stand up for morality against common sense and who engages in a consistently *negative* dialectic which aims less at discovering truths than at 'slowing people down' by unsettling beliefs and convictions. This '*via negativa*' is not a model for public deliberation, however, for as Villa shrewdly points out, the hurly-burly of democratic politics is no place for the subtleties of dialectic. Neither is it simply private though, for while its practice requires a certain withdrawal from the public space, its aim is political insofar as it is designed to make citizens more reflective in their political involvements. In proposing this model, Villa sets his face against the parochial 'I cannot think otherwise' stance of partisans of the 'encumbered self' on the one hand, and the struggle for struggle's sake excesses of proponents of agonism, on the other.

Villa then sets out to examine the way these elements of a conscientious citizenship have been juggled by the authors under consideration. The closest to the Socratic ideal and the author who has tried hardest to work out how it might be institutionalised in modern democracies is clearly Mill, although he is ultimately faulted for failing to strike the right balance between philosophical openness and civic solidarity. Nietzsche is not an obvious candidate for inclusion in work on citizenship, Villa admits, but is included on account of his 'oedipal' relationship to Socrates, which makes him the 'touchstone' for any modern account of the examined life. Unfortunately, his commitment to intellectual honesty renders him hopelessly apolitical. Besides the odd suggestion that Nietzsche is a sort of proto-liberal who seeks to protect culture from politics, the other thing Villa finds valuable here is Nietzsche's perspectivism, which represents an attempt to avoid the totalitarian implications of Platonism. This crops up repeatedly in the book, but doesn't receive a thorough examination, leaving us with an unconvincing attempt to discover it in Mill's *On Liberty*, and a suggestive reading of it in relation to Arendt which makes the mistake of lapsing into the relativism of supposing that there are 'truths' specific to individuals.

Weber gives due weight to both political and intellectual elements, but errs in arguing that these be kept apart. His contribution to our understanding of modern citizenship lies in his account of integrity as a form of

'calling', the political version of which centres on the integrity of leaders who must accept responsibility for the hard decisions which the role of statesman requires of them. It would have been interesting to see this discussion extended to Schumpeter, who rejected participatory politics on account of the irresponsibility of the average citizen when making decisions which affect distant others. Villa concludes with a review of Arendt and Strauss's respective commitments to politics and to philosophy, to the exclusion of each other.

These studies are lucidly written, although they are perhaps overlong and unnecessarily circuitous and occasionally suffer from indecision as to the intended audience (who needs to be told that Kant's metaphysics 'come in for sustained abuse by Nietzsche?'). The choice of authors is also puzzling in one key respect: why conclude by raking over the coals of Strauss's tedious and irrelevant elitism, when the challenge, as Villa himself suggests, is to take up where Mill left off in the attempt to work out a conception of citizenship appropriate to large, pluralist, liberal, democracies? Villa makes the intriguing suggestion that a reading of Berlin, Constant and Rawls would serve to reveal the extent to which Socratic citizenship departs from liberal ideas. It is a great shame that he did not pursue this line of thought for it would have put much-needed flesh on the bones of his ideal.

As it is, the detour through readings of classic authors prevents Villa from advancing a clear case for the possibility of combining moral individualism and civic commitment and we are left with little more than hints as to Villa's own views and the nagging suspicion that no such reconciliation can be achieved. This fear is encouraged by Villa's quasi-existentialist belief that communities are inevitably a source of injustice. If so, we seem not to have advanced beyond a restatement of the opposition between individual conscience and civic duty.

That said, Villa has put his finger on a tension to which liberals and deliberative democrats will have to devote ever more attention, and he has written an informative and stimulating book. Whether anything like a theory of Socratic citizenship can be successfully worked out remains to be seen, but Villa is surely right to think that it is worth trying.

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B.P. Vysheslavitsev

The Eternal in Russian Philosophy.

Trans. Penelope V. Burt.

Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans

Publishing Company 2002.

US\$26.00. ISBN 0-8028-4952-0.

Penelope Burt's translation of Vysheslavitsev's *The Eternal in Russian Philosophy* should be seen as a timely addition to the literatures of comparative philosophy, philosophical anthropology, and religious philosophy. The strength of this work may lie in its comparisons of Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, materialist, and idealist approaches to the concept of a human being. As such, it shows the influences of Plato, St. Paul, Kant, and Scheler on the development of Russian religious philosophy. On the other hand, Vysheslavitsev too easily dismisses the arguments of Marxists, Freudians, and materialists in general as 'immoral', 'repulsive', and 'third-rate'. His use of question-begging epithets and *ad hominem* arguments in relation to these philosophies may be the only disappointment encountered by the reader.

The major theses of the book (those concerning freedom, creativity, and selfhood) can be found in Chapters Three, Four, Nine, Ten and Eleven. Chapter Three concerns itself with the antinomy of freedom and necessity where Vysheslavitsev argues that just as freedom (creative purposiveness) presupposes causality, the 'spirit' of human beings presupposes its own embodiment. It is this spirit which freely engages in the creative endeavours, i.e., moral and aesthetic action, characteristic of human life. In Chapter Four he argues for creativity as sublimation, here understood, not as a Freudian displacement, but as an elevation, an uplifting of human nature. Much of this echoes both the arguments of Max Scheler's *Man's Place in Nature* and those of Pauline anthropology.

That Paul's particular views of human nature are influential in the development of Vysheslavitsev's philosophy can be seen in Chapters Ten and Eleven, especially in the references to the 'heart'. 'Man is made up of three hierarchically ascending levels: the body, the soul, and the spirit' (147). Further, 'reason and consciousness are not man's highest level: irrational and supraconscious selfhood is the highest' (149) with selfhood defined as 'the hidden man of the heart' (149). The heart is both the source of freedom in the human being and its point of contact with the Absolute, with God. Man is like God, and this likeness draws him through the act of sublimation to the Absolute. The goal of selfhood is not detached, impersonal immortality, but the resurrected body, the spiritual body proclaimed in Pauline anthropology.

Throughout the book, Vysheslavitsev reiterates the Hegelian dictum that 'the object of philosophy is the same as the object of religion' (xv, 83, 197). Religion, we are told, is recognition of both the divinity of God and the divinity of man; it is 'finding God in oneself and oneself in God' (134). According to Vysheslavitsev, this is where atheism fails as a philosophy of man, for atheism

fails to recognize the heart. Personhood, genuine selfhood, cannot be achieved without the free, creative (though emotive) energies of the heart. He argues further that not only do the materialists fail to achieve an adequate philosophy of man in this regard, so do the dualists. Chapters Twelve and Thirteen attempt to show how Pascal's intuitionism succeeds where Descartes's fails in its recognition of the self. While praising the straightforwardness of Descartes's method, Vysheslavitsev faults Descartes for reducing the 'cogito' to the status of an object or substance. On the other hand, he praises Pascal for his 'logic of the heart'. It is in this logic we see the completeness of the self that can be found only in the opposition of the rational and the irrational. What Descartes fails to affirm is the dialectic, the opposition which remains embedded in human experience. For Vysheslavitsev, intuition and dialectic are necessary if human beings are to transcend to genuine selfhood.

Perhaps some of the more interesting components of Vysheslavitsev's examination of selfhood are his comparisons of selfhood (understood in terms Christian anthropology) to the concept of 'Atman' in Hindu thought. Hinduism, while recognizing the existence of the Absolute, fails in its 'indifference' to the oppositions that are found in the world. For Vysheslavitsev, the recognition of these oppositions lead the Christian (and consequently the self) away from resignation and pessimism into 'tragic optimism'. Contradictions cannot, he claims, be merely dissolved into identity; they must be transcended through a yoga of sublimation (95-120). Vysheslavitsev continually reminds us that the central question for any philosophy or psychology is 'the God-man problem'. The question is resolved, he would seem to claim, in the discovery that the 'human being and God form a unity of opposites, but not an identity' (130). When Atman identifies with Brahman, it fails to preserve both the contradictions of human experience and the love which enables the transcendence of those contradictions, or so it is seemingly argued by Vysheslavitsev.

The book is not an easy read for those not familiar with Russian religious idealism and Christian anthropology, but, through its references to western idealism and eastern religions, it does provide a useful starting point for entry into the Russian philosophical mind.

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Donn Welton

The Other Husserl:

The Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology.

Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana

University Press 2000. Pp. xvi + 496.

US\$49.95. ISBN 0-253-33795-X.

This book is a significant contribution to the literature on Edmund Husserl. It offers, first of all, a penetrating interpretation of unpublished as well as published materials, including the recently published correspondence. It is also rich in that Welton treats his extensive material both historically and systematically. For him transcendental phenomenology is not a merely historical school of philosophy, but a method of doing philosophy that has plausibility and promise even today. The title is intended to tell us that he finds himself in fundamental disagreement with the way Husserl has been presented till now by commentators, e.g., by Derrida and Dreyfus.

The work is accordingly divided into three parts: (1) 'Contours: The Emergence of Husserl's Systematic Phenomenology' (13-256); (2) 'Critique: The Limits of Husserl's Phenomenological Method' (259-327); and (3) 'Constructions: Toward a Phenomenological Theory of Contexts' (331-92). The historical Husserl, Welton contends, has been too much interpreted in the light of early works such as the first volume of the *Ideas* (1913), and insufficient attention has been given to later work, particularly the works of the nineteen twenties and thirties, a substantial part of which is still unpublished.

What Welton is specially critical of in the traditional picture is the important role assigned to the influence of Descartes. He argues that Husserl is more of a transcendental philosopher than a Cartesian occupied with epistemological problems of skepticism, and that the mature Husserl is to be found in the *Crisis* or in such manuscripts as were published in 1966 under the title *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*, as yet not translated into English. He draws attention, for example, to the remarkable circumstance that Husserl could not bring himself to publish a German text of the *Cartesian Meditations*, even though it was translated into French and appeared in 1931. Eventually he abandoned work on that text and turned to the kind of work that eventually saw the light as *The Crisis of European Sciences*.

The first and historical part of Welton's book begins with the topic of taking the transcendental turn and ends with what he holds to be the high point of Husserl's development, namely genetic phenomenology. Since Husserl's own clarifications of the distinction between static and genetic phenomenology are few and unclear, Welton makes a considerable effort to add to what the master himself said about that distinction.

Within the transcendental tradition, Welton's Husserl is closer to Heidegger than to Kant. The doctrine of the so-called ontological difference between being and beings is clearly working behind the scenes in his interpretation of Husserl (e.g., 74). The conditions of possibility sought out by the latter's

transcendental phenomenology in its genetic phase are to be found in preobjective (prescientific, pretheoretical, nonepistemic) experience, which Welton does not want to be confused with an absolute consciousness to which everything else is relative (101-2). To be sure, Husserl in his Cartesian mood would have us understand the transcendental epochê as a turn to consciousness, but Welton's Husserl would rather take it as a turn from objective to preobjective experience. 'Philosophically approaching things as phenomena requires us to return to their presence, to the original way in which they are given, and to overturn those theoretical accounts that have come to confuse higher-order scientific or philosophical constructions and models with their primary being' (22). Another way of putting it, Husserl 'offers an account of how the world projected in the natural sciences *arises* from the world of ordinary experience. He does this by showing that the world under a scientific description is a *construction* that takes its starting point from, and arises through, methodologically guided transformations of the life-world' (334). One reads that the phenomenological reduction is a 'reduction of positivity' (338). ('Positivity' is an old-fashioned word coined, I think, by Hegel and used in the idealist tradition as roughly synonymous with 'objectivity'.) We are told that the scope of the legitimacy of objective experience must be understood by 'seeing how it arises from the life-world and how it can be connected to essential, human interests' (333). All this makes for a considerable change in the sense of the word 'transcendental'. It connotes a turn to subjectivity all right, but subjectivity consists in intersubjectivity and its being is a being-in-the-world. Husserl is not an idealist, we read, since 'the world is neither identified with nor reduced to subjectivity'; they are 'co-originary and irreducible' (93). World is the correlate of subjectivity all right, but not as an object might be said to be correlative to a subject. He does not understand the world as an object of any sort, for example, as the totality of what is, but as the horizon 'in which all appearing of phenomena takes place' (22). The world is therefore not a being but the being of beings.

As I noted, Welton's book is very rich. His discussion of essences and the method of eidetic variation (36-51), for example, is better than I have read anywhere else. And the same is true about what he has to say about genetic phenomenology (221-56) or about transcendental argumentation in the context of Husserl's phenomenological philosophy (288ff.). For just these reasons it is of course also extremely controversial. There are many things one can take issue with.

Take, for example, Welton's basic concept of transcendental philosophy. Husserl's phenomenology, according to Welton, reached the stage of being a philosophy, when it became transcendental. Well and good. And one could further comment and say that the transcendental turn is a philosopher's response to certain problems that are inherent in the so-called natural attitude but cannot be tackled from that standpoint. However, the question arises: what are these problems? In characteristically Husserlian terms, for what reasons do we, as philosophers, have to perform the transcendental-phenomenological reduction or epochê? Since Kant, at least part of the

answer was skepticism. Stated very simply, the transcendental philosopher secures our experience of objects against skepticism. That was also true for Husserl, at least in his Cartesian moods, but it does not seem to be so for Welton's Husserl. The principal movement of his philosophy seems to be from objective to what is in contrast called preobjective experience, from active to passive synthesis, but is it clear why that movement is mandatory for the philosopher? So the question one would like to address to Welton is this: what are the problems inherent in objective experience that require the search for the preobjective? What sense does he assign to the term 'transcendental' and its dialectical correlate 'objective'?

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Merold Westphal

*Overcoming Onto-theology: Toward a
Postmodern Christian Faith. Perspectives in
Continental Philosophy, No. 21.*

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US\$20.00 (paper: ISBN 0-8232-2131-8).

This volume is a collection of fourteen essays, all but one of which were published separately between 1993 and 2000. Although the volume does not present a single, sustained critique of onto-theology, or a systematic defense of the postmodern Christian faith alluded to in the title, each of the articles does contribute to Westphal's over-arching aim, which is to appropriate certain central themes of postmodern philosophy for the task of Christian thinking. The book is addressed both to Christian philosophers and theologians who regard postmodern philosophy as inherently nihilistic, and to secular postmodernists who take Christianity, and theism generally, to be committed to the 'metaphysics of presence' criticized by such thinkers as Heidegger and Derrida. Westphal maintains that the lines of thought he seeks to appropriate 'neither presuppose nor entail a godless world and that the links between those arguments and the secular project with which they are usually associated by friend and foe alike are merely biographical and not conceptual' (87).

English-speaking readers interested in continental philosophy but put off by the esoteric prose frequently employed by continental writers will find in Westphal a congenial expositor and astute bridge-builder. In 'Hermeneutics

as Epistemology' (Ch. 3), for example, Westphal disputes Rorty's assessment of hermeneutics as an *alternative* to epistemology (conceived as the attempt to develop a theory of knowledge), arguing instead that '*hermeneutics is epistemology*' (50) insofar as thinkers like Heidegger, Gadamer and Derrida make claims that 'plainly constitute a theory about the nature and limits of human knowledge' (62). Furthermore, these claims bear an affinity to those made by Anglo-American critics of epistemological foundationalism. Like Sellars's attack on 'the myth of the given' and Quine's argument for the contingency of necessity, Heidegger's analysis of pre-understanding and the hermeneutical circle serves to undermine the role accorded by modern epistemology to privileged representations intended to serve as the foundation of certain knowledge. 'The hermeneutical circle always means that one's foundations, which cannot eliminate tradition in favor of pure insight, are contingent and corrigible. The earth rests on the back of a turtle, and it's turtles all the way down' (70).

By exhibiting the historically mediated nature of all human knowledge, including ultimately the Hegelian attempt to dialectically incorporate the multiplicity of contingent perspectives within a larger unconditioned totality, the hermeneutical turn, in Westphal's view, 'makes finitude an epistemological category' (138). The result is an insurmountable 'perspectival finitism' or 'perspectival pluralism'. Rather than viewing this as an invitation to despair, however, Westphal is quick to note that the inability of human reason to obtain a God's-eye view of things does not by itself prove that no such view is possible — only that it is not available to us. Furthermore, he claims, there is nothing about this recognition that is incompatible with Christian faith. In fact, it ought to serve as a reminder to Christians not to confuse the absolute nature of the object of their faith with the provisional nature of all God-talk.

In such essays as 'Positive Postmodernism and Radical Hermeneutics' (Ch. 7) and 'Nietzsche as a Theological Resource' (Ch. 14), Westphal continues the project begun in his earlier book, *Faith and Suspicion: The Religious Uses of Modern Atheism*, of seeking to appropriate the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' developed by such thinkers as Marx, Freud and Nietzsche, whom Westphal reads as 'secular theologians of sin'. Unlike skepticism, which questions the validity of religious beliefs, suspicion questions people's unconscious motives for holding such beliefs. But Westphal prefers his suspicion in small doses, since otherwise 'the thrill of discovery quickly dissolves into the agony of despair' (141).

Heidegger's *Theologische Jugendschriften* (Ch. 2) is a review of Vol. 60 of Heidegger's collected works, which includes lectures on the philosophy of religion delivered in the early 1920s. As Westphal observes, in these lectures Heidegger clearly distinguishes the question of faith from the question of being, rejecting the notion that faith is an inferior type of knowledge. Rather, it is the mode of being in which revelation is received. For faith itself, the question of being is 'foolishness'. The task of theology is not to justify faith, but to develop an existential analysis of the act of faith, which is already there

as a phenomenological datum. This manner of conceiving the relationship between *Existenzphilosophie* and theology influenced Rudolf Bultmann. But there is also a thread of continuity connecting it to Heidegger's analysis of the 'onto-theological constitution of metaphysics' in such later works as *Identity and Difference*, which has exercised an important influence on Derrida.

Westphal emphasizes that Heidegger's critique of onto-theology is not a critique of theism per se, but only insofar as it has implicated itself in 'philosophy's project of rendering the whole of reality intelligible to human understanding' (4). The deity enters into metaphysical discourse under the name of the *causa sui* as a means for rendering the being of beings intelligible to reason. But this God of the philosophers is no longer religiously efficacious.

In a number of places Westphal observes that the critique of onto-theology does not concern *what* is said about God, but *how* it is said, which raises the question, How can one speak of God without subjecting the Wholly Other to the violence of metaphysics? What form ought theological discourse to take if onto-theology is to be overcome? Westphal comes closest to answering this question in 'Faith as the Overcoming of Ontological Xenophobia' (Ch. 12) and 'Divine Excess: The God Who Comes After' (Ch. 13). His answer, in short, is a kind of post-Derridean Augustinianism shaped by Levinas's phenomenological analysis of the face and Jean-Luc Marion's distinction between the idol and the icon. Westphal seeks to preserve the alterity of God against the autonomy of the modern rational subject, and he accomplishes this (with the aid of Johannes Climacus), by identifying sin as the source of this absolute difference. 'The faith that overcomes ontological xenophobia recognizes that no original bond of being is strong enough to keep sin from making human being radically other than divine being' (248-9).

In the end one is left to wonder what distinguishes this postmodern heteronomy, expressed in the voice of the divine Other, from the standard pre-modern variety that prompted Kant's insistence upon a moral principal capable of maintaining the dignity of persons against theocratic tyranny. Westphal's strategy is to appropriate the critique of onto-theology and the hermeneutics of suspicion by limiting their application to instances of conceptual idolatry that do not touch upon Christian faith properly understood. But if the object of genuine faith is 'not this and not that' — if it must defy comprehension in order to avoid being mastered and possessed (263) — then how shall we determine that it is not, after all, nothing? Westphal's arguments are illuminating and provocative, though some may still find reasons to remain skeptical, if not suspicious.

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Richard Wolin

*Heidegger's Children: Hannah Arendt,
Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas and Herbert Marcuse.*
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The Heidegger Myth, a monolith carefully sculpted by Heidegger and his devotees, continues to fracture. The Myth: Heidegger's Nazism was a brief, anomalous, flirtatious lapse with no intrinsic connection to his philosophy. Richard Wolin is a proven iconoclast, revealing how Heidegger's philosophy and his Nazism nurtured each other. *The Politics of Being* (1990) argued that Heidegger's Nazism was 'rooted in specifically German intellectual traditions to which Heidegger stood as a type of self-proclaimed heir.' *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader* (1993) complemented the earlier work, presenting in English many of Heidegger's political texts of the 1930s with insightful commentaries on his Nazi involvement.

This 'final installment' in Wolin's 'effort to come to grips with Heidegger's ambiguous and powerful intellectual legacy', examines four of Heidegger's students and the 'dilemmas of discipleship'. In the 1920s and early '30s many students were drawn to Freiburg and Marburg, but could not have anticipated Heidegger's eventual embrace of Nazism. Hannah Arendt later embroidered upon the Heidegger attraction, writing that a rumor traveled throughout Germany 'like the rumor of a secret king'. The rumor? 'Thinking has come alive again ... There is a teacher; one can perhaps learn thinking.' Within a German intellectual milieu redolent of nihilism, decline, moribund academic philosophy, and perceived crisis in modern life, Heidegger's repudiation of traditional categories of Western philosophy and his assumed role as *Zivilisationskritiker* evidently seemed prophetic and redemptive. Concrete 'existential' philosophy would surmount the arid *cul de sac* of German transcendental subjectivity.

Wolin contends the teacher's influence upon his students proved considerable but malignant. Although some went on to illustrious intellectual careers, Heidegger's anti-modernism and his Nazism constrained the intellectual orbits of this quartet of German-Jewish former protégés. For ten years Löwith studied with Heidegger, completing a *Habilitationsschrift* with him in 1928. He wrote incisive criticisms (1940, 1946, 1951) of the rootedness of Heidegger's Nazi politics in his philosophy, but finally embraced an ancient Stoic detachment as remedy for the decline and nihilism of the modern world. Despite critiques of Heidegger, Wolin asks whether the Stoic withdrawal from the world as a response to modern nihilism isn't a flawed remnant of his association with Heidegger. Jonas was Heidegger's student for four years in the 1920s, completing a dissertation on ancient Gnostic religion under him and theologian Rudolf Bultmann. His exposé of the congruence of Heidegger's Nazism with his 'fundamental ontology', the opening address at a 1964 Drew University conference on the relevance of Heidegger's thought to theology,

was an unsparing moral critique that clashed with the 'pro-Heidegger' design of the event. He published on environmental ethics, nature, the human body — topics that he deemed neglected by Heidegger and by modern science and technology. Troubled by a perceived nihilism in modernity and an environmental crisis wrought by contemporary capitalism, Jonas was attracted to (left) political authoritarianism as a countervailing force. But is this vestigial Heidegger influence?

The chapter on Arendt may illustrate Wolin's thesis of distorted discipleship. He links Arendt's idiosyncratic thought to her shifting personal and intellectual relationship with Heidegger. Arendt originally interpreted totalitarianism as 'radical evil' but later settled for criticizing Nazi 'banality' and 'thoughtlessness'. She once condemned Heidegger (to Jaspers) as a 'potential murderer' for his treatment of Husserl, but later dismissed Heidegger's Nazism as the naiveté of the philosopher who strays into politics. Her 'polis envy' and her positions on Judaism, Nazism, German *Kultur*, Heidegger, and philosophy itself may bear the stress marks of her faceted involvement with Heidegger. Arendt was not a consistent thinker, yet some readers may question whether this can be attributed to her complex relationship with Heidegger.

Marcuse exemplifies the thesis least, as Wolin repeatedly admits. Never a 'convinced Heideggerian' because of his 'commitment to Marxism', he judged his early attempts to combine Marxism and existentialism unsuccessful, finding in Marx himself the concreteness he once sought in *Being and Time*. Heidegger did not accept his submitted *Habilitationsschrift* on Hegel's Ontology and was surely aware Marcuse's 1928-32 publications exhibited commitment to the political and philosophical left. Marcuse's critique of Heidegger's Nazism may be the earliest (1934) of any, whereas his personal appeal to Heidegger (in 1947) to renounce his past embrace of Nazism linked failure to do so with betrayal of philosophy itself.

Chapter Seven (*Arbeit Macht Frei*) shows that Heidegger continued to integrate Nazi ideology with his philosophy after resigning as Rector of Freiburg University. There is no break in thinking between *Being and Time* (1927), his political speeches of 1933, and his lecture courses from 1934 on. Wolin reminds us Heidegger embraced the 'inner truth and greatness of National Socialism' as late as 1945 (indeed, 1953 and 1966). A final chapter, *Being and Time: A Failed Masterpiece?*, dispels the myth of the *ex nihilo* origins of his major work, a legend cultivated by Heidegger and furthered by refusal of the *Gesamtausgabe* editors to provide a critical apparatus. It is now clear how *Being and Time* germinated in the Freiburg lectures from 1919-23.

Wolin renders Heidegger's philosophy nearly jargon-free, tracing neologisms back to German colloquialisms. Humor explodes the pseudo-profundity of Heidegger's etymological tinkering — '“Thinking is thanking” (*Denken ist danken*) is an adage repeated ad nauseum' (93).

This book is better than its (more suggestive than persuasive) thesis and oblique title. Wolin's lucid exposition overshadows his interpretive theme. Excepting Arendt, it is unclear Heidegger's influence distorted philosophical

paths of these four. They responded (as did others) to problems associated with modernity — technology, science, human alienation, fascism and Nazism, nihilism, weaknesses and prospects of liberal democracy. They published criticisms of Heidegger's philosophy and his Nazism (Arendt's revisionism notwithstanding). All but Arendt (who was eighteen) were Heidegger's students in their late 20s or early 30s.

Teachers influence students. But this quartet epitomized the quotation from Nietzsche introducing the Löwith chapter — 'One repays a teacher badly if one remains a student.' Misgivings aside, Wolin's book contributes to understanding Heidegger's influence on his students but even more to our appreciation of the fissures in the Heidegger Myth.

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