

# Canadian Philosophical Reviews

## Revue Canadienne de Comptes rendus en Philosophie

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**Robert Audi**

*Action, Intention, and Reason.*

Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Pp. xi + 362.

US \$39.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8014-2866-1);

US \$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8014-8105-8).

This is a collection of essays in traditional, analytic action theory. Most of them have been previously published; several first appeared in the early Seventies, the rest are of a more recent vintage. Each of the articles is a self-contained investigation; there is also a useful introduction that summarizes and unites the topics (the essays are carefully ordered as well) and presents Audi's general outlook on reason and action.

This is a very impressive compilation; a 'must-have' for anyone with a serious interest in action theory. Audi writes clearly, and his investigations are extremely careful, but rarely tedious. On the other hand, most of the steps are small and cautious, and there is little here that is revolutionary or surprising; most readers will find much to agree with in Audi's picture of rationality.

The essays are divided into four major topics: 1) the motivational grounds of action, where Audi analyzes and explicates wanting, intending and volition, 2) the explanation of action, where he develops a nomic, causal view of the connection between reasons and actions, 3) free will and determinism, where Audi defends, develops and applies compatibilism, and 4) rationality and the nature of action, where he defends an objectivist, internalist view of rationality. Self-deception, practical reasoning and weakness of the will are also addressed in the last two sections.

This volume is rich in themes; I will comment critically on three points that are admittedly of special interest to me. Others will no doubt find that their concerns with these essays lie in other matters.

Audi wishes to defend the view that intentional explanations and principles are nomic and causal and, thus, testable. At the same time he acknowledges, with those who claim that intentional principles are analytic, the fact that such principles seem to constitute part of the meaning of the intentional notions involved. In an attempt to satisfy both of these views, Audi advances the claim that intentional principles are *weakly analytic* (45). By this he means that such principles partly explicate the meaning of the concept(s) involved, but are testable, and potentially revisable (47-8). Audi offers several scientific examples to support this notion (45, 114-16). For instance, he claims that part of the meaning of 'magnetic' is 'exerts a force on iron'. This generalization is not definitionally true, but 'is testable when taken together with at least one other proposition that gives us a logically independent and reliable way of identifying an object as magnetic' (115).

While there is an interesting insight about natural kind concepts here, it is unclear that it requires a new notion of analyticity and, more importantly, it is not clear that it actually applies to intentional concepts.



In the case of magnetism, Audi's idea seems to be that we are testing to find exactly which set of propositions — i.e., which meaning — is appropriate towards explaining a property that is independently specified. But if this is indeed how it goes, then there is no need to invoke an alternative notion of analyticity; the process may be characterized as follows (adding some plausible views on concepts *à la* Putnam and Kuhn): the (approximate) reference of a given property is specified via a prototype or paradigmatic set of conditions, e.g., perceptual features. The task is then to determine which set of analytic principles best fills out the meaning of this concept in a way that preserves this reference, while satisfying the usual explanatory ideals, such as fit with evidence and other theories. One is not testing the truth of definitions so much as testing to see which definitions to adopt — they are all analytically true in the traditional sense.

Moreover, there is an important disanalogy between cases such as magnetism and notions such as belief. Common sense intentional notions are *not* specified by prototypes or paradigms. Rather, it seems that we learn (or innately know) what beliefs, desire, etc. are solely via their inter-relations and relations to actions. *That* is what makes us suspect that these notions are disanalogous to normal natural kind terms. Unless Audi can produce 'logically independent and reliable' specifications of belief, desire, etc. — apart from the principles in question — then it is not apparent that his analogy succeeds.

Audi's defense of compatibilism rests partly on an explication of compulsion (Chapter 7) — this is well-executed and sorely needed. However, he also attempts to argue that the acceptance of determinism leads some people to nihilistic views because of a confusion over the sort of necessity involved with determinism (Chapter 10). He suggests that while the laws of nature are necessary, individual events aren't, since prior contingent events together with necessary laws don't make subsequent events necessary — there are worlds in which different prior events occurred and thus different subsequent events. But that is no consolation when one is worried about the freedom of one's choices; and it is hard to believe that a confusion of this sort has played a part in the debate. Given any relevant causal factors that existed before I was born, and the laws of nature (they don't have to be necessary, just true), then here (and in any world with the same causal factors and laws) *all* of my actions including all of my future actions are (pre)determined by these factors that are obviously out of my control. Let us say that the state of the world prior to my existence plus the laws *necessitate* all of my actions. What happens in other possible worlds (e.g., those with different prior states of the world) seems irrelevant if I am concerned about the freedom of upcoming choices and actions in *this* world. My future actions are not necessary, but they are necessitated and thus not free.

A troubling aspect of Audi's investigations is his insistence on keeping empirical psychology at arm's length. For instance, he dismisses a homuncular (i.e., modular) explanation of self-deception on the grounds that it multiplies subsystems beyond necessity (212). But Audi's own explanation

of self-deception requires the postulation of substantial unconscious knowledge and unconscious desires. Current cognitive psychology provides scant support for such unconscious states; however, there is substantial independent support for a homuncular/modular architecture. Indeed, the only substantial account of unconscious knowledge is the Chomskian one that is rooted in a modular faculty psychology. Engagement with current theories of cognitive architecture is thus both helpful and perhaps required here.

A deeper problem of the same sort involves Audi's defense of an internalist view of rationality. There is a substantial body of evidence in cognitive science that challenges the idea that our reason-giving explanations cite the actual causes of behavior. While this view is highly controversial, it seems that Audi, and any internalist, must confront the evidence; there is no longer room for the comfortable isolation from scientific psychology that was practiced by traditional action theorists. Audi's failure to engage empirical psychology at crucial points thus makes this volume unsuitable to readers with a primary interest in cognitive science.

**Lawrence J. Kaye**

University of Massachusetts—Boston

**David Braine**

*The Human Person: Animal and Spirit.*

Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1992.

Pp. xxv + 555.

US \$32.95 (ISBN 0-268-01098-6).

David Braine has set out to accomplish two tasks: in Part One, to refute modern accounts of man that are either materialist or dualist; in Part Two, to advance an account of man which is non-dualist but yet allows for the immortality of the soul. Braine succeeds better in the first task than in the second.

Materialist and dualist accounts of human nature are really, Braine claims, but two different ways of falling into the same error: the error of supposing that there is some inner reality (such as a soul or a brain) that affects and is affected by some outer reality called the body. In effect, both positions are dualist in that they both suppose a split between inner, conscious life and outer, observable behaviour.

This error manifests itself in several positions on human nature which Braine refutes in Part One (Chapters Two to Nine). There is, first, the error



of supposing that perception is atomistic (Chapters Two and Three): that one can have a perception of the colour red without simultaneously perceiving a red object, that one can have a perception without being an agent in the world which one perceives, or that one kind of sense perception, such as vision, can be experienced in isolation from other kinds of sensation. In Chapter Four, Braine argues against the view that human actions are outer events and that emotions are inner events. Braine attacks (in Chapter Four) the allied errors of behaviourism, the view that human action can be explained without including an account of mental life, and of introspectionism, the view that the mental can be understood in isolation from behaviour. In Chapter Six, Braine argues that *agents*, substances that can act, are primarily causes, not events, as is often supposed. Finally, in Chapters Seven through Nine, Braine argues against reductionism or mechanism — the error that an animal can be understood as merely an assembly of physical or chemical constituents. Against such a view, Braine argues that animals must be understood *teleologically* (that animal parts must be explained in relation to the whole animal), that they are *holistic* (that no part of an animal is or operates apart from the whole, or that it is always the whole that primarily exists and operates), that animals are conscious entities with continuous histories, and that all statements about the animal qua animal are necessarily *hybrid* (that is, all such statements imply that the animal is a psycho-somatic whole).

In Part Two, Braine argues that it is language which distinguishes the human from other animal species. Language, however, is not merely a system of symbols. Following the practice of some linguists, Braine distinguishes between the *langue*-understanding of particular words and the *parole*-understanding of sentences and other forms of complex speech. '... [T]he kind of understanding which differentiates human beings from beast and angel alike is the kind of understanding exemplified every time a sentence in speech or writing is understood — every time the appreciation of the *langue* of words is exercised in an appreciation of their *parole* in speech' (355).

Braine is surely correct to hold that language is proper to man, but I would object that language is not as such the specific difference of the human species. Traditionally, the ability to reason has held this function, and Braine has not shown that language is a better replacement. In fact, as the above quotation indicates, it is really the *understanding* of language that differentiates man, but the understanding stems from the power of human reason. This power, furthermore, is manifest in all truly human activities: man can form governments, create artistic works, invent machines, and so forth. All such accomplishments, and language too, are the manifestation of the power of reason which pervades the whole human person. Braine has given a property, not the specific difference, to define man.

When Braine argues for the uniqueness of man, he also introduces the concept of soul, which he needs in order to account for human immortality. To introduce the concept, Braine explains the 'phenomenological conception of the soul'. We have an experience of our souls as the subjects of certain operations which are not, precisely in our experience, bodily operations.

Hence, we experience our souls as the subject of operations upon which 'the body does not obtrude'. The 'I' that thinks, wills, or imagines can be said to be the soul (488).

Braine then argues that the phenomenologically understood soul is non-dualistically united to the body and he even invokes the authority of Thomas Aquinas for such a phenomenological conception. To suppose, however, that the soul is the subject of human operations compromises Braine's anti-dualist project and misrepresents the position of Thomas Aquinas. Thomas will allow that only two human powers, intellect and will, are in the soul as in a subject, but it is truer to say that the whole man understands or wills than to say that the soul understands or wills. Thomas insists on this to avoid just the sort of dualism against which Braine has been arguing. If it is true, as Braine says, that the soul can be understood as a subject of operation, then the soul is a kind of self apart from the body: Braine becomes a dualist *malgré lui*.

Braine is forced to introduce the soul via the artifice of the phenomenological conception of the soul because he eschews the natural way of Thomas Aquinas, who would first insist (as Braine would not) that all natural things must be composed of substantial forms and prime matter. This composition is not the composition of two *things* or *substances* but the composition of two principles; hence it is non-dualistic. What must be shown is how the form of the living thing is different from the form of the non-living. This is accomplished by proving that it is the source of complex powers that transcend the activity of the merely physical. To express this transcendence, the form is called a soul, but the soul (even in the human case) never ceases to be a form. Hence, in the account of Thomas, the philosopher does not first recognize a phenomenologically separate soul and then try to unite it non-dualistically with the body; rather the intimate union of soul and body is a given from the necessary foundation of the philosophy of man in natural philosophy.

Braine succeeds in criticising contemporary materialist and dualist positions, but his own criticisms against dualism might be turned, in part, against himself.

**Steven Baldner**

St. Francis Xavier University



**William J. Danaher, ed.**

*Australian Lonergan Workshop.*

Lanham, MD: University Press of America 1993.

Pp. xi + 305.

US \$39.50 (ISBN 0-8191-9066-7).

Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) was a Canadian born Jesuit philosopher and theologian, whose best known writings, *Insight: A Study of Understanding* and *Method in Theology*, are but two of 21 volumes of collected works currently being republished by the University of Toronto Press. Considered one of the most original and insightful thinkers of this century, Lonergan has inspired a steadily expanding circle of scholars far beyond the borders of Canada. The present book attests to his growing international appeal. It contains 21 papers presented at the 1985, 1987 and 1989 Australian Lonergan Workshops, which continue to be held on alternate years to encourage the dissemination and critical study of Lonergan's philosophical ideas in the Southern hemisphere. The topics covered suggest something of Lonergan's wide-ranging interest in, and relevance to, diverse fields of human inquiry. Three papers deal with economics, five with natural science, two with moral philosophy, four with philosophy broadly construed, and seven with theology. Although it is nowadays fashionable to separate discussions of 'fact' and 'value', such a contrast is found neither in William Danaher's editorial arrangement of the Workshop papers, nor in Lonergan's own elaboration of a sort of critical realism, which emphasizes the methodological unity underlying the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities. To some extent, all the Workshop papers illustrate Lonergan's central thesis that 'objectivity (toward which the various disciplines are striving) is but the fruit of authentic subjectivity (grounded in the attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible activities of human knowers and doers)'.

What these activities of knowing are, and how we become aware of them, are topics discussed in Tom Daly's paper, 'Learning-Levels'. Daly provides a concise, easy-to-follow summary of Lonergan's cognitional theory for those unfamiliar with it. For Lonergan, concrete instances of knowing and learning involve a pattern of interrelated activities that can be grouped into three distinct levels (experiencing, understanding and judging). Lonergan's claim is that this structure is basic (it underlies all specialized methods in the various disciplines) and irreducible (it involves activities that are interrelated but distinct). Hence, it provides a common ground for discussions on method both within and across disciplines. Lonergan's own philosophy, then, suggests two categories into which the papers in the rest of the book might fall. One group of papers highlights features of specialized methods that correspond to the general structure of knowing as elaborated by Lonergan. Another group of papers illustrates how inadequate attention to aspects of this structure can give rise to problems and disputes in the various disciplines.

William Danaher, a chemist, takes up the first task in his three papers. He argues that Lonergan's cognitional theory can shed light on what scientists do when they make discoveries, formulate and verify theories. To cite but one example: if discovery is understood as an activity involving a creative insight into relations grasped concretely in sense data but later expressed in terms that do not refer to the particular aspects of this data then scientific understanding can at once be concrete and abstract, involve creative input but still concern intelligible relations. Lonergan's cognitional theory, then, can be a starting point for addressing the classic problem of induction, and mediating the dispute between hermeneutical and positivist schools in the philosophy of science.

The formulation of insights in abstract terms and intelligible relations gives rise, in Lonergan's cognitional theory, to models, and the heuristic and explanatory power of such models is amply illustrated by Peter Burley's three studies of Lonergan's own venture into the field of economics. Burley, a noted Australian economist, shows how Lonergan's model of the circulation of money goes some distance toward understanding the recurrent pattern of accelerated growth and decline in an economy undergoing waves of technological development. The aim of Lonergan's model was to '... integrate economic analysis into a general scheme of historical development which looks to the intellectual and moral progress of humankind' (10). For him, correct insight into the data of economics is a precondition for responsible decision making both by individuals and entire societies.

In a sense, Lonergan's cognitional theory is itself a 'model', and its fruitfulness is borne out in its ability to make sense of problems and disputes within the various disciplines. In philosophy, for example, Tom Daly's contribution, 'Rediscovering Philosophies Through Cognitional Models', illustrates how attention to six key cognitional activities provides a basis for contrasting Lonergan's philosophy with sixty-four other possible philosophies. Undertaking a less ambitious but no less difficult task, Mary Brennan's paper, 'The *A Priori* in Human Knowledge: A Critique of Kant from the Point of View of Lonergan's Insight', contends that there is implicit in Kant's philosophy an assumption that knowing is just 'looking' (although our gaze never penetrates beyond appearances) rather than a dynamic structure of three essentially different levels, each adding something distinct to our knowledge of reality. There is, then, in Lonergan's cognitional theory, no fundamental dichotomy between subject and object of the Kantian sort.

The implications of an account of knowing as a kind of 'looking', and its corollary (making the subject/object dichotomy methodologically fundamental), are considered in several papers from diverse fields. In biology, Lawrie Drake shows how these fundamental presuppositions underlie Jacques Monod's articulation of an 'objectivity principle' and his denial of purposefulness in living beings. In moral philosophy, Neil Ormerod attributes to John Finnis the view that one's knowledge of the good is arrived at intuitively (i.e., by a sort of intellectual 'looking'), and not (as Lonergan maintains) by a process culminating in concrete judgments of value. According to Ormerod,



the stark difference of opinion between Finnis and Lonergan on the role of feelings in moral knowing has its basis in this epistemological dispute. In theology, Peter Beer compares the understanding of 'transsignification' in the writings of two Catholic thinkers, Giovanni Sala and Edward Schillebeeckx, on the eucharist. Beer contends that Schillebeeckx's difficulty in integrating an ontological and intentional account of Christ's presence in the eucharist is grounded in his appeal to Kantian categories of 'appearance' and 'reality', and the unbridgeable chasm between the two.

To sum up, the *Australian Lonergan Workshop* is an impressive addition to a truly international effort to come to grips with the substance and implications of Lonergan's thought. Frederick Crowe, himself a student of Lonergan for more than 45 years, once likened Lonergan's thought to a mountain, and suggested that each student of Lonergan reaches a plateau but at different levels and on different sides of this mountain. It is not surprising, then, that this book provides various routes of access to Lonergan's thought. Students and newcomers will benefit from papers intended to teach them 'the ropes' of Lonergan's philosophy. Seasoned Lonergan scholars will appreciate the new heights and vistas achieved by various thinkers such as Peter Beer and Tom Daly. Specialists in areas such as natural science, economics and theology will be challenged by Lonergan's, or his students', contributions to these fields, particularly their insistence that even stances taken on empirical questions cannot avoid commitments on fundamental philosophical issues such as 'what am I doing when I am knowing?', and 'how is doing this valid knowing?'. The high calibre of all the contributions to this book bodes well for future proceedings of the Australian Lonergan Workshop. Organizers might wish, however, to consider arranging Workshops around some central theme, and editors of the proceedings may wish to include a more substantial foreword and an index.

**Bill Sullivan**

University of Toronto

**John Heng**

University of Toronto



**John Dupré**

*The Disorder of Things.*

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1993.

Pp. xii + 308.

US \$35.00 (ISBN 0-674-21260-6).

Science and order are usually thought to go together. For example, early modern philosophers and scientists expected that science would uncover a world of unity and order on the grounds that it was created by a single, rational Designer, whose mind our minds resemble. More recent philosophers and scientists who find no place for a creator nevertheless continue to expect science to uncover a world of order and unity.

John Dupré, in *The Disorder of Things* argues that an adequate understanding of science leads us to the view that the world is *not* all that ordered, and that we need a metaphysics of disorder to adequately underpin our understanding of the scientific project. This is not a view that derives from any disrespect about science, but is an attempt to take seriously the actual achievements of science, which, according to Dupré, has itself uncovered a world of diversity and relative disorder.

Dupré presents three theses. The first thesis is a pluralism about natural kinds. Dupré argues that the nature of actual biological science forces us to the view that there is no unique kind to which an individual belongs, but rather there are various legitimate ways to classify objects. In particular Dupré examines the notion of a species, and reviews the case for saying that there is no one right way to classify things, but various defensible ways to classify things into species — the morphological, biological, phylogenetic — depending on the goals in the context. It follows from this that essentialism, the doctrine that there are unique kinds determined by the essential properties of individuals, cannot be true. Dupré is a realist about natural kinds — but a *promiscuous realist*, holding that there are various objective ways to divide up the world. So what is it about the world that ties things into non-unique objective kinds? Dupré's answer appeals to purpose. There are various purposes we might have in classifying things, according to the context. (But if kinds are real doesn't that mean they exist independently of our subjective purposes?)

Dupré's second thesis is the disunity of science. The widespread failure of the reduction of the 'higher level' sciences to 'more basic' sciences is adduced as evidence that there are autonomous levels — the objects and events of each level are equally real, equally causally efficacious, and none is more fundamental than another. Cats and dogs exist in the same way that electrons and quarks exist, for no level has ontological priority. Different areas of discourse are causally autonomous.

The third thesis of the book concerns the causal structure of the world. Dupré denies that there is 'an omnipresent and wholly regular' causal structure to the actual world, preferring the view he calls 'probabilistic catastrophism'. Probabilistic catastrophism is an indeterminism where the

probabilities linking successive events do not necessarily converge as more features are taken into account. This does not go so far as complete randomness, where there is no connection between antecedent states and the probability of an event. How random the world actually is constitutes an empirical question which is answered just by the extent to which science uncovers order in the world.

Dupré's arguments for these three theses are not unconnected. The case for the first, pluralism about natural kinds, depends on the second, the denial of reductionism. For otherwise the failure of biology to adequately expose the unique natural kinds could just as well lead us to seek explanation at a deeper level. And the third, the denial of determinism, also depends on the denial of reductionism. As Dupré says, 'To provide an adequate grounding for a deterministic universe we need to be sure that *every* causal connection is underwritten by a completely sufficient condition. That this can be done in terms of the concepts at the structural level in question is incredible, so that the retreat to reductionist accounts of determinism is easy to understand. But reductionism is false. So, therefore, is determinism' (192). This dependence on the refutation of reductionism is all the more important because the independent reasoning against determinism, apart from loading the burden of proof too heavily on the opponent (it seems that all that could count as evidence for determinism would be a fully completed total science), rests on the non sequitur that determinism is false since there is no evidence for it. One area of science that may provide the sort of evidence he seeks, quantum mechanics, Dupré passes over as being beyond his area of competence.

So Dupré's argument against reductionism is crucial to his whole case. However, that argument is quite unlikely to convince a reductionist. For example, take Dupré's major case study: ecology. Consider a statistical fact such as the (dynamic) frequency of lynxes eating hares. For reductionism to work such facts must be derivable from facts about the individuals in the population; such as the (single case) propensity that a particular lynx will eat a hare. For this propensity to be 'exercised' in a given case conditions must be met: the lynx must be hungry, the hare close enough, and so on. Non-intrinsic facts will also be relevant, such as whether there is a handy hole nearby. But 'all this is quite irrelevant to the success of the macro model, which required only that the mean propensity of an arbitrary lynx to eat hares is reasonably determinate' (115).

Dupré's assumption seems to be that successful reductions of statistical facts about populations must yield a one-to-one mapping of the frequency value to the value of the single case propensity of the actual individual. I cannot see why this should be. Successful reductions could take any number of forms besides the one-to mapping of frequency to single case chance. For example, the probability that I (an Australian male worker) am aged 64, a useful fact in a simple actuarial model say, successfully reduces to particular facts: the ages of all the individuals in the population; but not to a single case propensity attaching to *me*.



*The Disorder of Things* is best read not as an argument, but as an outline for an interesting and important position in philosophy of science. As such it is a masterpiece, pulling together a range of contemporary themes into a highly readable account. As the style is accessible, and the arguments free from haggling with the detail of current literature, it may be profitably digested by any interested person.

**Phil Dowe**

University of New South Wales

**Jane Flax**

*Disputed Subjects: Essays in Psychoanalysis, Politics and Philosophy.*

New York: Routledge 1993.

US \$49.95:Cdn \$62.50

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-90789-6);

US \$15.95:Cdn \$19.95

(paper: ISBN 0-415-90790-X).

*Disputed Subjects* employs a method of intellectual inquiry in which Jane Flax acknowledges her intellectual antecedents and discusses the relation of theory to practice. This would suggest an endorsement of a view of philosophy which situates the inquirer in the context of those practices. Indeed one of the areas Flax's text investigates is the place of the theorizer in intellectual work. Flax inquires into some of the most important issues which have challenged contemporary intellectuals. Her style retains the professional tenor of much good traditional philosophical writing.

The subjects which people Jane Flax's *Disputed Subjects* will not be unfamiliar to readers of her previous work. As Flax notes in her preface, *Disputed Subjects* extends and deepens the discussions of topics found in *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Postmodernism in the Contemporary West* and other earlier essays. The new book goes further to address contemporary views of Postmodernism, especially critiques of enlightenment models of subjectivity, and their intersection with contemporary political theory, feminisms, and psychoanalytic theories. One of the most important contributions of this new book is her inclusion of the tough questions regarding the political implications of the more theoretical issues approached in the previous work.

In the essay 'Is Enlightenment Emancipatory?' Flax addresses what she considers to be a central problem of modern politics. This is the attempt to reconcile knowledge, power, and freedom. She makes the interesting claim



that many philosophers and political theorists attempt to solve this problem by maintaining the innocence of knowledge, power, and themselves. 'The position of the intellectual is part of what is at stake in arguments about the enlightenment'. In modernist discourse the legitimacy of knowledge claims should be decided without reference to the position of the knower. Flax uses Kant's essay 'What is Enlightenment' as an example of a pivotal text on this Modern subject. Women and uneducated men (by far the most numerous members of society) are, according to Kant, excluded from this authorization. In the essay Kant suggests that members of both of these categories are placed under the beneficent guardians who have 'so kindly assumed superintendence over them'. Their subject position and authority is discredited precisely by their condition. Contemporary responses to the question of the reconciliation of knowledge, power and freedom can be divided roughly between those who deny the universality and innocence of the modernist project and those who attempt to maintain its possibility. Kant is considered crucial because he so rigorously defends the latter position. A modern defender would be Habermas with Foucault representing the most notable of those opposing this aspect of modernist claims.

Another issue which has a modern inception and continues to be relevant in contemporary theoretical positions is the conflict between love and autonomy which Flax traces to the Kantian view but finds continued in the projects of Freud and Lacan. In these theories autonomy is continuously opposed to connection. This becomes associated with spheres of authority and has obvious implications for women and children who occupy a world of connection. This view is also opposed to premodern, for example Aristotelian and neo-Aristotelian notions of social connectedness and organic relations. The household in Kant and Freud represents unfreedom, in Aristotle it is the foundation of social and political life. Flax wants to be clear that her criticism of the Modern separation should not be interpreted as a nostalgia for the premodern view. She regards the premodern notion of an organic whole as fictive.

Flax has noted the feminist concern with the postmodern emphasis on the disintegration of the subject. Suspicions have been raised by feminists and other people concerned with contemporary social transformations that the questioning of authorial power coincides with the ascension of previously unheard voices to a subject position. Thus the voices of critique can more easily be discredited. In addition the questions of intellectuals elide those of cultural transformation looking to issues of language instead of social practice, for example. She addresses the concerns of feminists who consider the loss of the subject a weakening of the place from which one can access power and therefore act effectively. In chapter one 'Minerva's Owl' she confronts these debates quite explicitly. She argues successfully for a view of multiplicity in the subject which is the opposite of disempowering. In doing this she employs references to theorists and schools of thought which have found it necessary to complicate our old views of subjectivity and agency. Her references to the multiplicity of motivations which psychoanalysis uncovers can

be seen in chapter two 'Final Analysis' and chapter three 'Forgotten Forms of Close Combat: Mothers and Daughters Revisited', but also in 'Multiples: On the Contemporary Politics of Subjectivity' which then spins out some of the ramifications of this more complicated theory of subjectivity in political spheres.

Flax positions herself in her work by explaining the intellectual traditions to which she is indebted and also the present moments of engagement which guide her continued questioning. She credits her own intellectual development primarily to traditions within Critical Theory, Psychoanalysis and Feminism. She respects the attempts of critical theory to 'relocate epistemology within the terrain of social relations'. The practical engagements to which she refers are usually her psychotherapeutic practice or her scholarly and pedagogical employments. Seldom do we see an essay which fails to acknowledge her communities of praxis. In spite of what might be considered her appeals to experience, she is not naive about the relation of experience to her theoretical employments. She says 'I do not think that experience validates theory or determines choices among theories, or even that experience directly informs theory'. She is instead quite aware of the 'constructed nature of any narrative'. Her appeals to experience are done in such a professional and appropriate manner it is hard to conceive of criticism of this fairly radical style coming from even the most conservative of critics. This book extends her already important investigations into new ideas of subjectivity, justice and power.

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**Sebastian Gardner**

*Irrationality and the Philosophy  
of Psychoanalysis.*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993.

Pp. xiv + 303.

US \$54.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-41090-8).

There are two levels operating simultaneously in this book, rendering the work subject to at least two quite different readings. Considering the book at its narrow or specific level, it is an introduction to Freud and Klein on irrational phenomena and is too uncritical to be more than an introduction. At another level, the book attempts to consider irrationality in a broader philosophical context. Though many interesting philosophical points are raised here, Gardner's solutions are not altogether satisfactory. Both levels, however, are clear and precise.



At the specific level, Gardner begins with a definition of irrationality as a discrepancy between a subject's self-knowledge and his or her behaviour. He then takes us on a psychoanalytic journey to attempt to explain this discrepancy, starting from an account of Freud's Ratman. Since the Ratman's symptoms exemplify the kind of irrational phenomena that psychoanalytic theory considers, Gardner explains it using an orthodox interpretation of Freudian repression and wish-fulfilment and Kleinian phantasy.

Together with this specific analysis of irrational phenomena many other issues are raised at this level. For example, whether irrationality implies a partitioned or divided mind, whether psychoanalytic states are personal, and whether there is a possibility of unconscious phenomenology. However, I shall say no more about this level of Gardner's analysis and will focus on his more general analysis.

Gardner has two broader theses: 'that psychoanalytic theory provides the most penetrating and satisfying explanation of irrationality' (1) and that 'this amounts to an argument for the truth of psychoanalytic theory' (1). These two theses are far more interesting to those who are acquainted with the issues than the narrower discussion.

To show how psychoanalytic theory provides the best explanation, Gardner chooses Sartre as his foil, and specifically the metaphysical thesis that irrationality is an aspect of subjectivity as such, rather than a defect at the personal level. Throughout the book, Gardner returns to Sartre again and again to show how psychoanalytic theory can confront its 'most serious challenge' (2)! Gardner is also acquainted with other views that might challenge his position. He refers to Hegel, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Lacan and Nietzsche. However, he takes Sartre to be his most important adversary.

Unfortunately Gardner also takes Sartre as representative of all the philosophers just mentioned, which seems to me to be a terrible blunder. Sartre is certainly not representative of Nietzsche's views, nor Hegel's, nor Heidegger's, nor.... Moreover, a deeper understanding of, say, Nietzsche would have allowed Gardner to realize that his enemy is far more sophisticated than he thinks. Nietzsche, for example, certainly does not merely express a metaphysical view of irrationality.

To any psychoanalytic interpretation of irrationality that assumes irrationality to be a feature of subjectivity, the challenge comes not from the idea that irrationality is built into subjectivity as such, and is not just an error in its operation, but from those who doubt the very existence of subjectivity. The question is not where to locate irrationality, it is whether there is a subject for irrationality in the first place.

Foucault, for example, held that 'man is an invention of recent date' (*The Order of Things* [Vintage Books 1970]: 387), as recent as the beginning of the nineteenth century. The notion of a subject, of an 'I' who is both a subject and an object of knowledge, is a result of a rupture in thought brought about by the Kantian critique. Prior to that, there was no place in thought for the self-reflecting 'I'. Man considered himself immanent in a field of repre-



sentations that was guaranteed by God. Even with Descartes's formulation of the 'T, representations still had to be guaranteed by God.

A similar critique of subjectivity is to be found in the Nietzschean-Deleuzian philosophy. Here, 'subjectivity' is but a constellation of forces immanent in a field of forces that is in constant flux. Such a field of pure becoming, in which 'subjectivity' is immanent, is not so much irrational as non-rational and unconscious. (Here the unconscious is not a personal realm.) It is such views that present the greatest challenge to an orthodox psychoanalytic interpretation of irrationality, not Sartre's.

As to 'the truth of psychoanalytic theory', Gardner's argument rests not just on his belief that it provides the best explanation (as discussed above) but also on an appeal to ordinary psychology. Psychoanalytic theory, says Gardner, is an extension of ordinary psychology. Somehow this means that it 'requires neither the kind of scrutiny based in the philosophy of science which analytic philosophers have for the greater part accorded it; nor the kind of hermeneutic reconstruction undertaken in some Continental philosophy of psychoanalysis' (10). Indeed, for Gardner, it seems not only is ordinary psychology the measure of psychoanalytic claims, it is also a measure of what we might call the truth! Psychoanalytic theory is true because it is an extension of ordinary psychology which is itself true.

What is remarkable here is not the claim that psychoanalytic theory is an extension of ordinary psychology, which J.A. Brook has made ('Psychoanalysis and Commonsense Psychology', *The Annual of Psychoanalysis* [Analytic Press 1992]: 273-303), but the idea that this confers some kind of immunity to criticism upon it. And what is even more remarkable is that Gardner offers no argument for this view except for the implicit assumption that ordinary psychology is true.

If psychoanalytic theory is an extension of commonsense psychology, it goes much further than ordinary psychology, and in a number of important ways. Where do we find the Oedipus complex or part-object in commonsense psychology? This alone would suffice to open psychoanalytic theory to critical assessment even if ordinary psychology is immune to it. In any case, ordinary psychology is not immune to criticism!

Though this work does have some faults, it is nevertheless an admirable attempt at addressing some very puzzling questions. Gardner raises some crucially important issues at both levels of his analysis, issues that can not be neglected by anyone interested in the subject.

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**Philip J. Kain**

*Marx and Modern Political Theory: From  
Hobbes to Contemporary Feminism.*

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

Publishers 1993.

Pp. xvi + 427.

US \$62.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-8476-7865-2);

US \$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8476-7866-0).

One of the interesting things about Marxism is that its friends and its foes alike will agree most of the time that it is not a bad time for Marxism to be reassessed. This view, banal at some times, might have an especially strong claim on truth and importance right now, especially so far as Marxist political theory is concerned. Loyalties and animosities formerly held towards and against Communist parties and what used to be called 'actually existing socialism' no longer work as they used to — overlaying fields of attraction and repulsion onto other polarities and alliances. So Philip Kain's timing is good: at a time when reassessment of Marxism is not only virtuous but possible, he has taken a fresh look at what Marx appropriated and what he surpassed in the tradition of political philosophy in modern Europe; he also tries to see Marxism in perspectives oriented by two critical focal points that promise to determine the shape of political philosophy to come: feminism and the critique of Eurocentrism.

First Kain gives us a narrative history of European political philosophy from Hobbes through Marx. The narrative approach has its cost: in order to tell one story about six theories in the space of 235 pages, the author is compelled to treat each theory as a rather compressed episode within a larger plot. Although Kain does engage somewhat with debates in the literature, some readers will be disappointed that the balance of the book weighs towards narration, rather than debate with Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant or Hegel specialists. Post-modernists will say that any attempt at such narration is a waste of time. On the other hand, there are others among us who think that anyone who violates the Lyotardian no-fly zone around meta-narrative can't be all bad, and, as a matter of fact, the story Kain tells is far from uninteresting.

The story begins with a pair of questions: What kind of power can hold people together in a civil body? And how might such power be justified? Hobbes, seeing no social relations that provided for social cohesion, could see nothing but the coercive power of a sovereign as the source of social coordination, stability and security. Because Locke saw that the interaction of private interests could be a source of stability as well as conflict, he was in a position to argue for limited government and popular sovereignty. On the other hand, since social unity arises from property interests, and Locke's theory of property justifies extreme differences in wealth, popular sovereignty can be expected to give way, in any 'actually existing' Lockean world, to the sovereignty of wealth. The step to Rousseau is not hard to guess —



differences in wealth are inimical to popular sovereignty because they are destructive of the general will — yet Kain gives this an unexpected Rawlsian gloss: when the general will is at work, ‘Citizens ... reflect on their self-interest in the abstract case; they imagine how they might be harmed if they were victims of a particular law. This self-interest leads them to the common good ...’ (81). Yet this reflection will not take place so readily without reinforcement by customs, tradition and community. Meanwhile the Smithian notion that differences in interest, allowed to express themselves freely in a market, will result by the invisible hand in benefit to all, is amplified in Kantian philosophy of history, in the view that human tendencies towards conflict may tend, in the longer term, to promote peace. In the penultimate, Hegelian episode, property-based liberalising tendencies of civil society are harmonised with community and tradition, while property-based class tension needs to be addressed by a newly universalising political community.

What one expects, on reaching the final episode, is something like what Kain promises in the Introduction: ‘Marx’s project is very similar to the project of Hegel, but Marx wants to avoid Hegel’s rejection of concrete Rousseauian democracy ... abandonment of individual consciousness and his move to spirit. To accomplish this Marx tries to realize a communal individual and to dissolve sovereignty’ (5). The reader is therefore surprised to get so much more: Kain reads Marx’s 1844 discussion of ‘species-being’ as an attempt to replace the notion of general will with the notion of ‘working for the species’, arguing that, ‘To work for the benefit of the species ... is to act not merely *in accordance* with the categorical imperative but to act *for the sake of the categorical imperative*’ (161).

The seventh chapter argues that only a culturally pluralistic society would satisfy Marx’s stated desiderata for human development, and that his evidently (and, Kain adds, inexcusably) Eurocentric views on the ‘sweeping away’ of traditional non-European cultures and social structures by the rising tide of capitalism were not unmixed with genuine lament at the destruction, injury and suffering this caused to non-European peoples.

Among the many conclusions of the last chapter, ‘Marxism and Feminism’, are these: while women are oppressed by men, this oppression does not involve alienation (which happens only where there is commodity exchange) or exploitation (which happens only where surplus value is produced). Rather it arose through women’s confinement to the domestic sphere over the course of many centuries, during which time other spheres arose, grew, took up an ever greater share of social activity, and were dominated by men. For Kain, there are only three ways out of this situation: either (A) ‘women, along with men, could evacuate the family and enter civil society ... [and] we could, as Engels suggests, industrialize housework and childcare ... [but then] “the caring, nurturing, emotionally supportive, and communal dimension of the family” would also be lost’, or (B) ‘keep one adult in the family ... *either* the husband or the wife ... this person could keep alive the emotional, supportive, nurturing, caring, and communal realm of the family and counterbalance the negative elements of civil society brought home into the family at the end of



the day by the other person ... but the preserver would lose the development and scope of the larger world of civil society ... and would be oppressed', or (C) '... do away with *civil society*' (373). Needless to say, the last option is the one favoured by the author. It is unfortunate that this chapter and the book as a whole seem to culminate in this single terribly simple disjunctive syllogism — which might do more to reinforce than to dissipate the myth that Marxists are incapable of learning from feminism.

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**Stephen H. Kellert**

*In the Wake of Chaos: Unpredictable Order in Dynamical Systems.*

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1993.

Pp. xiv + 176.

US \$19.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-42974-1);

(paper: ISBN 0-226-42976-8).

This book is an attempt to give an explanation and justification of the fact that analytical mechanics, the crown of classical physics in the 19th century, has become again 'dreadfully fashionable', as the editor of the proceedings of a conference on the topic in 1985 put it (quoted on p. 158). To a large extent this is due to the development of chaos theory, a sub-specialty of analytical mechanics, which has excited enormous popular interest in an area of classical physics, comparable only to the fascination that quantum theory has had now for many decades. Kellert provides an informal introduction to the physics of chaotic systems (ch. 1), explicates philosophically and methodologically significant aspects of the theory (chs. 2-4), and offers an historical and sociological analysis of the rise of the study of chaotic behaviour (ch. 5).

The middle part is the book's *pièce de resistance* and distinguishes it from other, more breathless and less responsible presentations of the subject. Kellert defines chaotic behaviour, in a first approximation, as 'unstable aperiodic behaviour in deterministic nonlinear dynamical systems' (2). The notion is illustrated with many portraits of trajectories of such systems in phase space and connected with the more intuitive characterization of chaos as 'sensitive dependence of the systems' evolution on initial conditions'. One of the philosophically exciting consequences of this phenomenon is that it seems to force us to abandon the old and intuitive association of the predictability of a system's evolution with its deterministic character: Although governed by deterministic equations of motion, a chaotic system can display

unpredictable behaviour. Kellert discusses different senses of predictability and of determinism, from 'epistemic' (deterministic = predictable behaviour) to 'metaphysical' determinism which defines the evolution of a system as deterministic if it is unique: given a state of the system there is only one possible state for any future time, regardless of whether or not anybody can predict that evolution. Kellert plausibly points out that the metaphysical approach tends to 'empty [the notion of determinism] of much methodological import and motivational force' (66). He furthermore proposes an argument (69-75) to demonstrate that metaphysical determinism cannot possibly be instantiated in chaotic systems. The argument starts with the assumption that physical systems, on the most basic level of analysis, have to be described quantum mechanically, not in terms of classical physics. Quantum mechanics tells us that the state of a system cannot be characterized as a point in phase space (simultaneous sharp values for momentum and position) but rather must be represented by a finite area, measured by the uncertainty relations. This fact, together with the sensitive dependence of chaotic systems on initial conditions ('given a point in phase space [as initial condition] there is always another nearby point that will follow a widely divergent trajectory') seems to imply that 'two physically identical chaotic systems' that start out in the same (quantum) state at time  $t$  can end up in widely different states at  $t' > t$ . 'That is, determinism as uniqueness of evolution fails to hold' (71).

I don't think this quick argument decides the question against metaphysical determinism. To couple a quantum mechanical description of a system to a classical mechanical description of its evolution involves a host of foundational problems. Kellert wants to formulate his argument independently of the unresolved question of whether quantum systems exhibit anything like sensitive dependence on initial conditions (73). But even if he succeeded in this there remain serious doubts about the compatibility of quantum and in classical descriptions. The well-known fact that the expectation values of position and momentum operators,  $\langle x \rangle$  and  $\langle p \rangle$ , of a quantum system satisfy the classical equations of motion is in itself not helpful here because the higher moments of  $x$  and  $p$  do not obey those equations; one would, at least, need a proof that the chaotic system's classical evolution is *not* sensitive to those quantities.

Regardless of whether or not chaos theory contains deep metaphysical lessons to the effect that the macroscopic world is indeterministic, or that 'determinism is ... meaningless' (74), one can ask about the *methodological* changes that this theory has induced, or should induce, in our views about the aims of physical theories. Does chaos theory 'explain' phenomena in any of the traditional senses of the term? Kellert tries to argue that this branch of classical mechanics implies a new mode of explanation, different from, e.g., explanation as the display of a causal network underlying a phenomenon, or explanation as subsumption of a phenomenon under some general law. Chaos theory, according to Kellert, is not interested in identifying the concrete causes of a system's development, for instance, which behaviour of the parts



of a system causes the transition in the system's overall behaviour from regular to chaotic; the theory is rather concerned with the *geometric* features of systems in phase space, irrespective of what material parts constitute the system (105). The phase space portraits contain the relevant information, e.g., about the transition to chaos, in a *qualitative* way which cannot be reduced to quantitative general laws that would determine necessary and sufficient conditions for the development of the system (111). This new kind of understanding — understanding in terms of phase space geometry rather than causes, qualitative rather than quantitative — Kellert proposes to call 'dynamic understanding' (114). Whether it is in fact a novel feature of chaos theory, or whether it is also exemplified in some much older types of physical theory (phenomenological theories, for instance), is a question that deserves further attention.

These philosophically interesting features of the study of chaotic behaviour, however, don't seem sufficient to explain the growth and the extent of the current interest in chaos theory. Kellert tries, in ch. 5, to answer the complementary question of 'why it took so long for scientists to focus attention on these phenomena' (119). Using the work of recent historians and sociologists of science, in particular feminist scholars like C. Merchant and E.F. Keller, he argues that part of the answer has to be that scientists had to overcome the hegemony of the 'clockwork paradigm', the institutionalized emphasis on predictable and controllable phenomena as the only scientifically relevant aspects of nature, before they could become interested in the irregular behaviour of systems (154). Kellert seems to be suggesting here that in the 'dynamical understanding' that chaos theory provides we can discern something like an alternative scientific approach to nature, an approach that is no longer informed by the idea of dominating and manipulating nature. — One may safely doubt this without doing damage to any of the earlier discussions in the book.

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**Christopher Macann, ed.**

*Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments*  
(in four volumes).

New York: Routledge 1992.

The Routledge Critical Assessments of  
Leading Philosophers.

Volume II, The History of Philosophy.

Pp. x + 404.

US \$600.00:Cdn \$750.00 (for the set)

(ISBN 0-415-04982-2).

What is Heidegger's special claim to originality in the history of philosophy? A strong candidate would be his challenging of the whole western philosophical tradition — most notably the post-Cartesian — at its foundations, merging contrapuntal voices such as those of Pascal, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche into a powerful synthesis. As against the punctual, theoretical, cognizing subject, Heidegger produced the angst-ridden, historically situated, caring individual, whose truths are not to be subordinated to the timeless truths of science. He called upon Modernism to justify its own presuppositions in the light of the forgotten question of Being.

Heidegger's place in the history of philosophy can be much better judged in the light of these fifteen well-chosen essays. In many cases they perform the triple function of analysing Heidegger's studies of past philosophers, independently assessing those philosophers, and interpreting Heidegger's own views. The result is a many-sided portrayal of Heidegger, drawing on material from the full *Gesamtausgabe* (collected works). As the Editor suggests, Heidegger's reading of the history of philosophy helps to lay the ground for his philosophy, while his philosophy provides the 'necessary hermeneutical clue to a certain way of understanding the history of philosophy' (5). The essays bring to light important precursors of Heidegger's thinking, not all of which are widely known.

The names of contributors follow the order of the text, with the names of historical thinkers in brackets: Marlène Zarader (pre-Socratics, Plato), Kenneth Maly (Anaximander, Parmenides), Robert J. Dostal (Plato, neo-Kantians), Franco Volpi (Aristotle), John D. Caputo (Meister Eckhart), Jean-Luc Marion (Descartes), Pierre Aubenque (Cassirer), Christopher Macann (Kant), Denise Souches-Dagues (Hegel), David Farrell Krell (Nietzsche), Michel Haar (Nietzsche), Klaus Held (Husserl), Caputo (Husserl), Christina Schües (Merleau-Ponty) and István M. Fehér (Lask, Lukács).

Macann has made available some excellent texts through translations, five of them by himself. The studies by Souche-Dagues, Haar and Schües, as well as Macann's own essay and Introduction, are original to this collection.

There are interesting concurrences. Dostal, Macann, Souche-Dagues, Krell, and Haar note Heidegger's occasional propensity to interpret philosophers in an idiosyncratic or ungenerous way, treating them at times as foils or vehicles for his own views. Dostal wonders why Heidegger, who knew Plato

well, did not pay more attention to Platonic intuition, to the Good as 'beyond being' and to the human erotic attachment to the Good. From Macann's essay we get the impression of Heidegger torturing the text of Kant's transcendental phenomenology into Heideggerian ontology.

Macann faults Heidegger, not for the interpretation as such, but for presenting it as the right one. Perhaps, though, such a rhetorical stance is needed to give life to debate. One fruitful method of gaining insight from earlier philosophers is to make out the best philosophical position consistent with their texts. Following this principle of (intended!) charity, changes in interpretation can be expected as an interpreter's own philosophy develops (as Zarader's essay confirms).

Volpi argues that the early Heidegger was involved in a 'voracious assimilation of Aristotle's ontology and practical philosophy' (92) such as the notions of theoretical, practical and productive intellect from Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The early Heidegger, unlike Aristotle, placed the practical ahead of the theoretical. Later he emphasized the productive intellect, or poetic revealing. Volpi claims, in a thoroughly spirited and provocative essay, that Heidegger's philosophy in *Being and Time* involved to a great extent the ontologization of Aristotle's practical philosophy, *phronesis* becoming conscience (*Gewissen*) and *prohairesis* (with qualifications), resoluteness (*Entschlossenheit*).

Caputo makes an excellent case for Meister Eckhart being a 'decisive source' of Heidegger's thought (134), beginning with the latter's early observation that in the medieval mind the soul is 'stretching out into the transcendent' (132). There is a foreshadowing here of Dasein's relation to Being. For Eckhart, the soul must become detached from creatures so as not to impede the advent of God in the soul (144). Eckhart's word for detachment, significantly in the light of Heidegger's later use of the term, was *Gelassenheit*. In an unorthodox tradition which Eckhart unwittingly inspired but did not endorse, God and humans have need of each other. The later Heidegger recalls this tradition with his view of Dasein as the 'shepherd of Being'. Held's study of Heidegger and Husserl is worth comparing on this point (314-15), along with Maly's etymological treatment of Anaximander's τὸ χρεών, usually translated as 'necessity', but linked by Maly to reaching or handing over, and through Heidegger's translation as *der Brauch* with the idea of service, allowing things to emerge as they are (49-50).

Marion sees Heidegger as involved in a protracted debate with Descartes from 1921 to 1974. Though critical of the purely theoretical, non-situated *ego cogito* of Descartes, Heidegger could not dispense with it, as it had important things in common with the Dasein central to his own thought. For example, both are finite and indeterminate, and involve some idea of 'mineness'.

Aubenque's study of Heidegger's relation to Ernst Cassirer is interesting for its foreshadowing of the contemporary debate between rationality and postmodernism. Cassirer, like Heidegger, felt the need to re-examine the origins of thinking in the light of limitations to scientific thinking, but developed a rationalism extended over different symbolic forms. Heidegger



subordinated rationalism, with dubious ethical results noted by Cassirer. Here it is worth comparing remarks by Held (319-20) and Schües (358-9 — but contrast 365).

Souche-Dagues argues that Heidegger distorted Hegel's philosophy, finding in him the ultimate symbol of the absolutization of subjectivity (268). She notes as a possible explanation of Heidegger's ungenerous interpretation, the influence on him by Tübingen Catholic theologians who linked Hegel to the Enlightenment. Her distinction between objective and subjective genitive in the expressions 'phenomenology of spirit' and the formula 'Being of beings' is useful.

Krell and Haar argue that Heidegger's treatment of Nietzsche involved too strait-jacketed an approach to such notions as Will-to-Power and Overman, reducing the former to essence, and failing to keep track of Nietzsche's own criticisms of the traditional notions of essence, substance, identity and the like.

Held's and Caputo's comparisons between Heidegger and Husserl are most illuminating. Caputo traces the development of Heidegger's thought from its common starting point with Husserl in a world constituted by a being with a radically different mode of Being: in the one case transcendental subjectivity, in the other Dasein. Held takes as his theme the notion of wilfulness. In *Being and Time*, Dasein is portrayed, Held says, as giving vent to a militant will which, as its 'for-the-sake-of-which' gives the world in advance as the field of play for its freedom. 'Here Heidegger outbids even Husserl's immanent theory of world constitution' (313). These presentations make very intelligible the 'life-world' turn of the later Husserl and the movement toward *Gelassenheit*, as a kind of extreme epoché, in the later Heidegger (318). Heidegger, Caputo says, has always been moved by Husserl's call to the things themselves, and has adhered in his own way to the principle of direct seeing (342).

Fehér's study of Emil Lask's influence on both Heidegger and Lukács should spark some interest in the work of Lask. Lask maintained that 'nature' does not spring simply from the generalizing method of the natural sciences but from a certain way of consideration. Truths, for Lask, are independent of subjectivity, but they appear only in and by the subject's efforts to attain something independent of itself — and in this sense they are dependent on it (393).

There are typographical errors, but not an excessive number. In the context of Hegel, one is not immediately sure that the phrase 'in a weak sense of that world' really does contain a misprint for 'word' (253).

All-in-all, a fine collection which, taken as a whole, leaves open-ended for discussion many points of interpretation, not only of Heidegger but of the other philosophers mentioned. It should become an important reference point.

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**Christopher Macann, ed.**

*Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments*  
(in four volumes).

New York: Routledge 1992.

The Routledge Critical Assessments of  
Leading Philosophers.

Volume III: Language.

Pp. x + 374.

US \$600.00:Cdn \$750.00 (ISBN 0-415-04982-2).

Did Heidegger have a philosophy of language? Christopher Macann writes that his approach was highly idiosyncratic, and did not provide the basis for a distinctively philosophical conception of language. Yet the fact that Heidegger said so many philosophically interesting, and profoundly significant, things about language would seem to warrant an affirmative answer. What must be added is that his deep sensitivity to affinities between words and word-components, resonances, and the like, as well as his particular concern with ontology, take him beyond the conventional boundaries of that field. The present volume has the great merit of revealing the broad compass, as well as the richness, of Heidegger's thinking about language, and through language to poetic revelation.

The seventeen essays overlap somewhat, but they often complement each other well. Macann provides a thoughtful guide, beginning with a comparison between Oxford language analysis in vogue during the early 1960s and Derridean textual analysis in France. In both cases he found the focus on language excessive, ignoring traditional philosophical concerns. Heidegger clearly contrasts with this narrow approach.

Two concluding essays by Michael Murray and Karl-Otto Apel compare Heidegger's work with Anglo-American philosophy (Ryle, Wittgenstein and Peirce). The collection thus at both ends has linkages to central figures in the English-speaking philosophical world. Murray brings out Ryle's indebtedness to Heidegger on key philosophical points (e.g. anti-Cartesianism, meaning in context, knowing-how and knowing-that), from evidence partly contained in Ryle's 1929 review of *Being and Time*. Apel, whose essay appears here in translation for the first time, compares Heidegger's pre-structures for understanding, and meaning in context, with Wittgenstein's language games and life forms. Whereas Heidegger investigated the historical dependence of these pre-structures on the tradition of western philosophy, Wittgenstein preferred functional models and was, to this extent, 'throughout his life a trained aircraft engineer who does not have much feeling for the humanities' (347). Apel argues that the relativity of truth developed from hermeneutics contains a pragmatic contradiction. Relativity is proclaimed, but the thesis proclaiming it is held as absolute.

Only two essays are wholly original. One of them by John Macquarrie, co-translator of *Being and Time* is a short but most interesting account of the difficulties faced by a translator of Heidegger's German. There are advan-

tages and disadvantages with any proposed English equivalent for a key Heideggerian expression, he writes, and it can be a very tough job deciding which among different possibilities to use. Parvis Emad notes Heidegger's concern to maintain the relation to the 'root unfolding of the word and to the dignity of language' (58). For Heidegger, language does the speaking and the translator should try to get the right resonance by thinking not only interlingually but also innerlingually (translating thoughts from one set of words to another within the same language), reformulating a thought in a way which may involve changing the chosen words entirely, even choosing a more appropriate word-context (62). Tetsuaki Kotoh links Heidegger to Zen: Language in its ordinary self-evidence restricts our experience of the world; silence restores the true relation between self and language, so the collapse of everyday language is to be welcomed.

The other original essay, by Macann, tries to find a way of preserving ordinary truth even while following Heidegger ('stepping back') into a more primordial involvement. The reflective reappropriation of the original way of being human might be reconciled with rational progress through a developmental perspective. There is, he argues, a progressive and regressive theory of transcendence within Heidegger's thinking and the two should be complementary instead of purely regressive.

Ernst Tugendhat, in an excellent essay, translated here for the first time, provides a penetrating criticism of Heidegger's treatment of truth as disclosedness. There is an ambiguity in the word 'uncover' since even falsehood can also uncover something. There is a need to attend to the *way* of disclosure if truth is to be preserved. By treating disclosure in and of itself as truth, Heidegger protects himself from questions about truth concerning the historical horizons within which truths are disclosed. What's needed, Tugendhat argues, is careful attention to narrower and broader concepts of truth and maintenance of a critical foundation.

J.N. Mohanty writes that although truth in the sense of adequacy or correspondence has its locus in judgment, truth in the sense of disclosedness of being is prior to judgment, and so Heidegger founded, in a sense, the judgment of logic on the hermeneutic of Dasein (112). Interesting comparisons with Hans Lipps and others are drawn, and judgments are seen not as statements but as practical decidings of questions, as in a legal judgment. Mohanty thinks a lot of work needs to be done to show how the practical-hermeneutical meanings of things get 'transformed' into the theoretical-logical meanings of words and sentences (118).

Jan Aler explores in detail Heidegger's use of language and method of argumentation in *Being and Time*. He notes Heidegger's use of familiar words in unfamiliar ways, the use of hyphenations to bring out original connections between word and concept, the expansion of vocabulary with varied prefixes and suffixes, and his use of new linguistic forms. The aim is to make language more plastic and thereby more expressive.

Theodore Kisiel sounds the Heideggerian theme of the need for creative poets to bring us to the very source of language, to use words which somehow



intimate the ineffable, and to help us listen for the unsaid in what has already been said (159). Robert Bernasconi argues, taking account of Derrida, that we should not treat texts of Heidegger as standing unambiguously outside metaphysics but rather treat the later thought as supplementary to the earlier.

John Sallis recalls how for the early Heidegger a sign, as indicating, raises a whole meaning context, the referential totality, into our circumspection. The human being projects, in a certain mood, *upon* possibilities in a world disclosed by language. With the reversal (*Kehre*), the emphasis is on stepping back from the involved world in order to hear the unspoken in language. Hermeneutics sets meaning adrift in truth to redetermine it as the very drift of truth (217).

Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann's superbly translated essay helps us to see Hölderlin's influence. Hölderlin, in Heidegger's appreciation, experienced the essence of poetic language which is an 'awakening to the deepest view', a 'harbouring return of the word to its essential source', and 'the ability to listen to the essential source and origin of language' (287).

I found the translation of Annemarie Gethmann-Siebert's article difficult to follow (two particularly challenging sentences are on page 271). She makes an interesting link between Heidegger's misguided political actions and his failure to differentiate adequately the appropriate functions of art and poetry as distinct from political action. Poetic genius should inspire, but individuals must be left to decide what actions to pursue (262).

Walter Biemel brings into focus the theme of openness. Language is not just a matter of words but what is uncovered by those words. Not scientific and philosophical knowledge about language, but an experience with language, is needed for truth concerning our own Being. We are so familiar with language that we overlook language itself, and the poet can help show us the revealing power of the word.

Joseph Kockelmans argues that metaphor cannot have a meaningful place and function where world and things for the first time come-to-presence. The philosopher and the poet seeking to respond authentically to the original address of Being must allow words to *receive* meaning.

All in all, this volume does a creditable job of linking early and late Heideggerian views on language, of indicating ties with analytical philosophy, and of pointing to merits and fundamental difficulties in his approach. It is not comprehensive, though, and given the high proportion of reprinted material, and absence of an index, the overall cost-effectiveness of this volume might be questioned.

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**Christopher Macann, ed.**

*Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments*  
(in four volumes).

New York: Routledge 1992.

The Routledge Critical Assessments of  
Leading Philosophers.

Volume IV: Reverberations.

Pp. x + 427.

US \$600.00:Cdn \$750.00 (ISBN 0-415-04982-2).

This final volume, longest of the four, lacks a completely unifying theme, and is partly a catch-all for materials not fitting themes of earlier volumes. In some ways, though, it is the most interesting. The first half (roughly) is devoted to the hotly debated and still topical issue of Heidegger's political choices and the connection, or lack thereof, with his philosophy. Opinions of Heidegger's involvement vary greatly: on one view he is like Plato in Syracuse trying to become the 'Führer's Führer', so to speak. Others seem close to sharing the view of Gilbert Ryle, expressed around 1962 to Gerald Cohen, (now at All Souls College, Oxford), that after the Nazis came to power and Heidegger refused, as Rector in 1933, to allow his former (Jewish) teacher Husserl to lecture at the University of Freiburg, 'he showed that he was (pause, throat clearing) a shit from the heels up'.

Recent books, by Hugo Ott and Hans Sluga have showed how multi-dimensional was Heidegger's political involvement in the light of alignments both within and without official Nazi circles. Simple parallels with current academia may be very misleading. Nevertheless, if we substitute contemporary concerns for equality, affirmative action, less Euro-centred, male oriented curricula, and the like, for Heidegger's concern to have the academic world inspire a heritage-conscious holistic sense of German mission, then some parallels can be found. In both cases political pressures, including student activism, have been mobilized both within and without the academic community. Christopher Macann's decision to devote so much space to the Nazism question was a sound one. His Introduction, with its moralizing tone — 'what often seems to me an unprecedented decline in ethical standards within the university world' (2) — and a swipe at 'less qualified persons [who] were able to slip into the system in the halcyon days of the 1960s' (3), makes him appear to be on the political right in the left-right spectrum, and makes one wonder where he stands on the question of university autonomy. If Heidegger's lamentable involvement with Nazism is to be taken as a cautionary tale, the actual complexity allows it to caution against opposing positions, depending on which features one chooses to interpret and emphasize, and how one does the interpreting. He opposed biological racism, institutional confessional bias in the university (in the form of Catholic theology), specialized studies which lacked a holistic vision, and de-spiritualizing positivism. He showed himself on occasion to be a staunch defender of academic autonomy, but there were notable lapses in his protests.

Of the eighteen essays presented here, five are original and of these four deal directly with, or follow from, the Nazi question. Jean-Pierre Faye points out how Heidegger's terminology, shifting from treating metaphysics favourably in 1929 to unfavourably in 1935, is coloured by the attack from Ernst Krieck, Rector of the University of Frankfurt, on 'Metaphysical Nihilism ... as it used to be presented to us, mostly by Jewish literati' (19). Heidegger seems to have adapted his terminology, at least, to suit the political powers, and Faye counters Heidegger's claim that Western philosophy has led to a 'forgetfulness of Being' by referring to some of the Arabic, Hebraic, and Latin influences behind the awakening of that question. Faye is more concerned to warn against postmodern forgetfulness of Nazism.

Original contributions by Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis, editors of *The Heidegger Case*, keep up with developments since Victor Fariás's 1987 study launched what Rockmore calls the third phase of the French debate. In a thorough review of the three phases, Rockmore casts the debate in terms of those who hold to the necessitarian thesis — that the politics and philosopher are intertwined — and those who support the contingency thesis, that the two are quite separate. Rockmore seems to me to deal too dismissively with the line taken by Alphonse De Waelhens, that a political stance cannot be deduced from a philosophy (44). Relativism has led to fascism as well as liberalism, and natural rights philosophy can lead to radical, liberal, or conservative political action. Margolis affirms an ineluctable link between philosophy and politics, but goes on to note the limited capacity of human conceptual schemes to take account of all that is real, so that opportunism and personal power advantages may derail many well-laid political plans (100-1). Ineluctability becomes unhinged, it seems, when immersed in the real world.

Rockmore sees Heidegger's Nazism as deeply rooted in his philosophy (68). But different things can be meant by both 'Nazism' and by his philosophy. The existentialism of *Being and Time* is far removed from Nazi regimentation. In section 74, as Margolis points out, there is the appeal to the collective destiny of authentic historicity, and there is language that resonates with Heidegger's *Rektorsrede*; but without this hind-sighted interpretation we have a text that is quite compatible with non-Nazi communitarianism. Margolis interprets Heidegger to be presenting the passages upholding collectivism against individual Dasein as 'noumenally privileged' (87), in contradiction with Heidegger's thoughts earlier in *Being and Time* that there can be no viable intrusions of an ontological sort in one's 'ontic' or 'ontico-ontological' life. In moving from Dasein to concern with Being in his Nazi era philosophy, Heidegger removed the contradiction but entered upon obscure hocus-pocus. Margolis leaves the reader with the clear impression that perverting philosophy to serve political ends is at once bad philosophy and bad politics.

Dominique Janicaud's article has a polemical flavour, understandable when responding to a critic's claim, even when qualified ('stylistically and lexically'), that *Being and Time* is 'quite close' to *Mein Kampf*. Janicaud rightly calls attention to the negative phenomenology of being-with (112). Janicaud explains Heidegger's bad judgment regarding Nazism as tied to his extremely



negative attitude toward technology, which he saw as making totalitarianism inevitable. An interesting consideration in the context of today's threats of 'eco-fascism'.

Endre Kiss, like Janicaud, focuses on the Nietzsche lectures, noting how the early lectures dovetail with the views of another Nietzsche interpreter and friend, Alfred Bauemler, who was widely thought of as conferring a certain legitimacy upon the Third Reich. Bauemler supported, for example, those who would abolish the independence of the judiciary.

Eliane Escoubas explores texts written by Heidegger during the period of Nazi rule, with a view to revealing their import for the explanation he later gave of his relation to Nazism. There are obvious connections in the *Parmenides* between Roman imperial rule and Nazism, as well as differences.

István Fehér gives a valuable and detailed account of the Rectorate period. He is sympathetic to Heidegger, noting that a deep crisis had convulsed the country, with an increase in unemployment from two to six million from 1929 to 1932. Heidegger sought a spiritual rebirth and science for the people, though not a politicized science. He prohibited the hanging of an anti-Jewish poster in the university, and forbade a book-banning planned by Nazi students. But his support for the Nazis followed upon a purging of non-Aryan professors at Baden's universities, and other less savoury features of Heidegger's involvement are not given equal attention.

Douglas Kellner takes up the question whether Heidegger has an ethical doctrine in *Being and Time*. It is hard to get away from the evaluative connotations of key terms such as inauthenticity, alienation, averageness and levelling down, idle chatter, etc. Kellner thinks that the doctrine of authenticity contains both a descriptive and an evaluative dimension, putting into question any strict descriptive-evaluative distinction (201). He sees Heideggerian concepts as having the same *function* as traditional ethical language. But such ethics has 'unexpressed ontological presuppositions' which it cannot itself define (206) and there is the suggestion that ontology functions as a court of jurisdiction for validating or criticizing ethical theories (206).

Macann thinks something like an *implicit* ethics can be traced to *Being and Time* (215). One problem lies with identifying the 'who' of Dasein, giving the phenomenon of Falling. The language suggests the existence of a pure primal state from which Dasein has fallen, but Heidegger denies this possibility. Macann argues against regression to a primitive level, and favours instead a 'reflective detour' taking the human being even further away from its self and from others in order to come back to itself in a genuinely authentic way.

For lack of space, I can only briefly mention the remaining articles which deal with diverse topics. Kathleen Wright, on art and technology, links Heidegger with Walter Benjamin, noting that the ubiquity of the 'exhibition setting' of a work is seen by the former as a special case of a general scientific displacement where humanly charged place is ousted in favour of uniform, mathematical, unhighlighted, space. What happened to the work of art can thus itself be revealing of our condition. John Sallis finds in Heidegger's view of art a kind of *mimesis* which is a kind of doubling, but one that goes beyond



merely reproducing what has been transparently revealed. Charles Scott treats Heidegger in the context of the psychopathology of Ludwig Binswanger and Medard Boss. For Heidegger the right sort of individual attunement to the openness of being-in-the-world is the key to well-being, rather than analysis of inner subjectivity (295). Richard Kearney writes about 'the possible' and God. In line with Heidegger's prioritizing of the possible over the actual Kearney appears to approve the idea of a God of *posse* rather than *esse*, with the result that evil might be seen as human closure against possibilities made possible by divine love in dialogue with use. The German word *mögen* and cognates provide links between possibility and love, or liking, that do not exist in English so easily, though perhaps one might get at such a connection, in a partly punning way with 'liking' and 'likelihood'.

Theodore Kisiel notes that Heidegger's view of science as non-thinking was predicated on a conception of science shared by positivists themselves, and he notes how philosophy of science since the 1960s has changed the positivistic image. Kisiel thinks the Heideggerian model for historicity in terms of the intermittent rhythms of unconcealment and concealment, truth and error, is suggested by the history of science (333). Catherine Chevalley explores connections and affinities between Heidegger and Heisenberg, who appears to have altered profoundly Heidegger's view of the fundamental concepts of physics in 1935. She argues that Heidegger, having first treated the difference between early and modern physics as decisive, came to see similarities as more important than differences, in that both involved calculative thinking.

Akihiro Takeichi draws a comparison between Heidegger's treatment of nihilism and the Japanese notion of *go*—, a translation of Sanskrit *karma*. Takeichi views Karma and the essence of technology as fundamentally functions of the same thing, both involving ceaseless human action without beginning or end. Acceptance or rejection of nihilism both involve death, Takeichi says, but he sees hope in self-awareness of one's sinfulness (375). Graham Parkes gives details of Heidegger's personal encounters with Japanese philosophers and makes a good case for possible influences of the latter on his thinking. Finally, Otto Pöggeler deals with Heidegger's 'last paths', his interview with *Der Spiegel* in 1966, where he reflects on the failure, through unreflectiveness, of the Nazis to live up to his hopes for confronting technology, and concludes that 'only a god can save us'. The saving power can grow only when humanity as a whole assumes responsibility for an always precarious and always finite life on this concrete planet.

The four volumes, taken together, are a valuable contribution to Heidegger studies, though the high cost will probably make it prohibitive for most individuals; the absence of an index lessens its usefulness as a research tool. The essays are often difficult to follow, partly for stylistic reasons, but many of them open up new lines of inquiry. The collection should become a frequent reference point.

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**Cynthia Macdonald**

*Mind-Body Identity Theories.*

New York: Routledge 1992.

Pp. xiii + 255.

US \$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-415-07104-6).

Most contemporary discussions of the relation between mind and body centre on the thesis that the mind is identical with the body. This book explores a variety of such theses and defends a 'token event-identity thesis of the mental and physical' (192).

Macdonald addresses mind-body identity theories from the perspective of two major problems: first, there is the possibility that the same mental state may have variable physical realizations; and second, there is the possibility that some mental state may have no physical realization. An example of the former is pain. This type of mental state may be realized internally in different creatures by diverse physical types of state. An example of the latter is sensation. The subjective feel or quale of any given sensation may have no physical instantiation.

The book divides into two parts. In the first part, Macdonald surveys three types of positions held by recent theorists. The first of these is the traditional central state identity theory advanced by J.J.C. Smart and U.T. Place. The second type of position examined consists of causal-role identity theories such as are advanced by D.M. Armstrong and David Lewis. Finally, Macdonald surveys token-event theories such as are proposed by Donald Davidson and Jaegwon Kim. All three types of positions are examined in the light of the two problems described above and the first two types are found to be deficient in that light.

The second part of the book focuses on token-event theories. This discussion breaks into two major parts. First, Macdonald develops and argues for a property-exemplification theory of events. Then, second, Macdonald defends a token-event identity theory which employs this theory of events. The final two chapters are devoted to replying to objections to non-reductive monism of the sort developed in this account.

Macdonald's style of writing must permeate any critical reflection of this book. While on the one hand Macdonald is thorough and methodical, leaving no objection, no matter how small, unexamined, no effort is made to spare the reader. The book reads as though it were translated directly from logical notation with no final edit for style or ease of reading. The use of technical terminology and jargon is extensive and terms are frequently not defined for the reader. Logical concepts and theories, such as the Barcan formula, are tossed about with an easy familiarity which will stymie readers without sufficient background. This is not a book for readers uncomfortable with a dense analytical style.

Even for those readers working within an analytical tradition this book may pose difficulties. Macdonald is not good with lists; her itemization of the series of objections against a particular proposition frequently require a



careful parsing; such for example, is the case where she struggles through a list of five items over a page and a half without ever using a number greater than two (49-50). Analytical writing need not be opaque — Colin McGinn's fluid exposition comes to mind as an example — and so this book would require a thorough edit were it to be reissued.

But the narrowness of the topic may preclude any lasting import for this work. Macdonald's work is thoroughly rooted in one moment of the development of mind-body identity theory and not a recent moment at that. Moreover, the book is devoted entirely to the logical analysis of the theses in question, which is fine in itself, but one would expect at least a nod to psychology or computer science. We find scant reference to Fodor and Davidson and none at all to Chomsky, to Churchland, to Stich or to any writers of that ilk. Perhaps these enquiries may have been felt to be off the topic of the current work, but if so, then that speaks against the current work.

There are some good bits. For example, Macdonald raises an interesting critique of the use of causal properties for the purpose of individuation (113). And her development of Lombard's property-exemplification account of events is careful and concise; any writer considering a token-event theory of mind-body identity ought to read at least this section (123-31). Nonetheless, enjoyment of such pearls first requires the digestion of a lot of oyster.

This book is recommended only for graduate students and faculty with a deep interest in mind-body identity theories.

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**Andrei Marmor**  
*Interpretation and Legal Theory.*  
Oxford: Clarendon Press 1992.  
Pp. viii + 193.  
US \$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-19-825691-4).

The interpretive model of legal theorizing developed by Ronald Dworkin in *Law's Empire* constitutes the most comprehensive and systematic contemporary challenge to traditional philosophizing about the nature of law. It claims that theories such as positivism and realism mistake the nature of the theoretical enterprise by offering semantic theories of law, and consequently are unable to explain the character of substantial judicial disagreements about what is law. These turn on normative disagreements about how best to justify the law's exercise of state power to enforce its directives in

society. Law as interpretation proposes a new set of aims and criteria for legal theorizing, which assimilate it to adjudication and other participant-centred activities of making sense of a social practice.

In this book Andrei Marmor, who teaches jurisprudence at the University of Tel Aviv, examines the interpretive approach to legal theory and subjects it to critical examination. He argues that the main target of Dworkin's theory of interpretation is not in fact semantic theories but rather conventionalist conceptions of law proposed by positivists, and he aims to show that the essentials of positivism survive Dworkin's criticisms. Numerous aspects of Dworkin's famous theory are critically appraised — its central constructive model, its criteria of identity, fit and soundness, its associated coherence theory of justification — with this aim in view. An important theme that emerges as the book progresses is that in Marmor's view 'interpretation is an exception to the standard understanding of language and communication' because 'it pertains only to those aspects of understanding which are under-determined by rules and conventions' (12). Therefore it is not a pervasive and inescapable stance toward understanding either language or practices and their rules.

Should we accept Dworkin's theory of interpretation? Dworkin takes interpretation to be at heart constructive rather than conversational. That is, rather than seeking to understand an object in terms of the intentions that its author was trying to communicate, interpretation seeks to impose certain purposes on an object in order to find a reading of that thing that makes it the best it can. A striking feature of Dworkin's theory of interpretation is that it takes the participants' viewpoint as paradigmatic of what is involved in interpreting a normative practice. In Marmor's words, Dworkin is committed to the hermeneutic thesis — any attempt to explain a social practice must involve the same kind of reasoning as is required for participation in the practice. In the case of law, both philosophical theories and judicial interpretations are seen as trying to impose meaning or significance on the practice so as to exhibit its norms as justified. Both aim to display those rules or norms as constituting good or justified reasons for action.

Against this, Marmor argues that it is possible for a practice to be interpretive while its proper description is not, and the fact that the intelligibility of certain social practices may require a participant's understanding does not show that a theorist must adopt the same normative viewpoint as a participant. Raz's notion of 'detached legal statements' permits us to explain how a participant in a practice can make a claim about what the system requires without simultaneously exhibiting a committed point of view. Also, the conversational-constructive contrast does not exhaust possible forms of interpretation. Interpretations can have other objectives, and so are not obliged to seek out a normatively appealing 'best reading' of their object. An interpretation of Shylock as a Yuppie merchant banker might cast *The Merchant of Venice* in an interesting light, without aiming to make of the play the best it can. And while it is true that any



theoretical interpretation will rest on some evaluative judgments about what it is important to explain or achieve (accurate prediction, simplicity in basic principles, etc), it need not require some sort of moral evaluation. The hermeneutic thesis fails. Jurisprudence should include some theory of what is entailed in interpreting the law, but this need not itself be an interpretation of the law.

Interpretive theories of law pose the question whether what is law can sometimes be determined by appeal to non-conventional sources, such as moral reasoning and moral principles. Dworkin holds that it can: law is a coherent scheme of rules and principles consisting not only of source-based items but also of those norms which are consistent in principle with those items and which together with them best fit the legal history and provide the normatively most appealing account of a society's practices. The view implies that law may include norms that have not been previously contemplated or created. This position is opposed by Raz, whose accounts of authority and law's sources hold that law is always the product of an intentional act invoking some authorized procedure or position. Marmor tries to carve a path between these views by claiming that intentional acts are essential for the identification of something as law, though not for the determination of the content of the law once it has been identified. He recognizes that legal practice does not always square with the first of these claims, and that these discrepancies require some non-legal explanation, such as a political one.

In other chapters, Marmor defends positivism from related theoretical challenges or explores how it would conceive some issues in legal interpretation. For example, realist accounts of law often present themselves as superior to positivism. These claim that 'what is law' refers to some independent or natural objective reality, in contrast with positivism's claims that law is a matter of social conventions. Marmor explores several possible realist views (Michael Moore, Ernest Weinrib) which entertain the possibility that a whole community could misidentify what is law in their society, on analogy with the familiar idea that a community could make mistakes about what is morally right or wrong. He rejects these on the ground that the latter idea assumes an intelligible distinction between positive morality and critical morality, but a parallel distinction cannot be drawn within the domain of the legal. Law is 'a cultural product par excellence' (102).

Marmor also presents a defence of the positivist distinction between easy and hard cases, drawing on Wittgenstein's notion of rule-following to rebut objections from Moore (defeasibility) and Fuller (importance of rule's purpose) to Hart's account of rules in adjudication. Fuller's important worry is not very convincingly dispatched, in my view. The concluding section returns to the role of intentions in explaining law, and buttresses it by arguing that sometimes a law's being made with certain intentions can provide a judge with a reason for interpreting its content in a certain way. Marmor makes a good case for thinking that 'legislators' intent' is not

always misguided as a canon of judicial interpretation, though as Dworkin has powerfully argued (*Laws' Empire*, Chap. Nine), it often is.

Marmor's arguments are crisply and cleanly set out, and the quality of reasoning is good. Sometimes one wishes for a fuller explanation or an exploration of undiscussed subtleties. His discussion makes effective use of a good knowledge of philosophy of language as well as a thorough understanding of different theories of law. The book gives a balanced and clear-headed appraisal of some important limitations of Dworkin's theory of interpretation, and is of particular value in identifying critical points of contention between competing theories.

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**James Bernard Murphy**

*The Moral Economy of Labour: Aristotelian Themes in Economic Theory.*

New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1993.

Pp. ix + 244.

US \$25.00 (ISBN 0-300-05406-8).

This book raises the important issue of whether moral considerations can and should apply to productive activity as they do to other forms of human activity. Murphy claims that following Aristotle, classical political economy (Adam Smith), Marxism and neo-classical economic theory have excluded moral reason from the sphere of production and have assumed that the current division of labour, involving an allocation of the conception and execution of tasks to different individuals, is 'natural'. While it is clear that Aristotle also explicitly and emphatically separates production from the moral realm, Murphy tries to establish that the opposite view is implicit in Aristotle's conception of the determinants of action in *physis*, *ethos* and *logos*. Murphy then claims that the criterion of technical efficiency cannot be decisive in choosing techniques of production and that regard for the freedom and well-being of workers should lead us to reject current methods in favour of alternatives which give individuals responsibility for both the conception and execution of productive tasks.

Murphy also claims that the exclusive dichotomy drawn in social theory between 'nature' and 'convention' is a disaster and should be replaced with a non-exclusive trichotomy between 'nature', 'custom' and 'stipulation'. Clearly, the 'nature-convention' dichotomy glosses over important distinc-



tions within the realm of culture. In particular, it is crucial to recognize the distinction between accepted, ongoing practices, including 'custom', and the explicitly articulated normative principles and stipulations through which social control is exercised, although readers are unlikely to agree with Murphy's passing claim that with respect to social behaviour, 'whatever custom does not command, it forbids' (138).

While a considerable amount of Aristotelian scholarship is brought to bear, Murphy ultimately fails to show that the unity of the realms of production and morality can be found in Aristotle in any useful sense other than this being the outcome of a critique of the explicit, opposite claim in Aristotle. Nevertheless, it is true that when Aristotle's distinction between the realms of production and morality is abandoned, this leaves Aristotle's ethics largely untouched.

When he comes to criticise the areas of classical political economy, Marxism and contemporary neo-classical theory, Murphy falls into remarkable lapses of scholarship. This is especially so with Marx, who remarkably appears as asserting that capitalist mechanization is driven by purely 'technological' imperatives (168), that the technical division of labour does not have a social dimension (165), that a detailed division of labour is necessary (10) and that one must despair of humanizing work (25).

Murphy also suggests that Marx contradicts himself by claiming that labour will be abolished (172) while asserting that human beings realize their essential nature through 'labour'. A more generous interpretation is that 'labour' for Marx, at this point, connotes work under relations of domination or duress which, unlike free productive activity, defeats the realization of the 'human essence'. At a later stage in the *Grundrisse* text [K. Marx, *Grundrisse*, trans., M. Nicolaus, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books 1973], Marx states this quite clearly in contrasting Smith's view of labour as a burden with the possibility that labour might be the 'action' of real freedom, which will only be possible when production is 'posited' as social and is 'not merely human exertion as a specifically harnessed natural force, but exertion as a subject' (611-12). It is not that Murphy overlooks the *Grundrisse*. Indeed, he extracts from it the remarkable claim that Marx 'assumes that even in capitalism, advances in productivity will always be translated into reductions of the workweek' (172), a feat of misinterpretation equalled only by his supposing that in *Capital*, Vol. 1, Marx considers that Defoe's Robinson Crusoe is 'communism writ small' (222) and the very prototype of '*homo oeconomicus*' (224). Murphy's lapses hopefully do not indicate that positive inattention to the text increasingly will supplant the lack of attention now being given to Marxism after its loss of status as the creed of a great power.

The discussion Murphy has of ways in which work might be made more humanly meaningful, or 'unalienated' as Marx might put it, is pretty unexceptional. This involves rejecting any absolute distinction between 'production' and what Aristotle terms 'action', by recognizing that production not only is a means to an end outside it, but can also be engaged in

for its own sake, can be governed by moral as well as technical reason and develops the agent of production. However, Murphy replaces Aristotle's distinction by proposing that production should be taken as 'any purposive activity oriented toward economic exchange' (111), thereby ruling out what has hitherto been the greater part of human productive activity. Even in contemporary market economies, there are significant areas in which production is not for exchange, household production being the salient example.

Production can be contrasted with other forms of human activity if Aristotle's distinguishing features are taken only as being relatively salient rather than exclusive to production. Thus, there are two respects in which production may be singled out: firstly, the primary if not exclusive object of production is the transformation of natural resources into useful objects, whereas relations with other human beings are the object of what Aristotle calls 'action'; secondly, although we may produce for its own sake, we produce primarily for the sake of an external end, whereas we engage in 'action' primarily for its own sake, even if also for extraneous ends. That is, the problem lies not so much with distinctions such as those between 'immanent' and 'transitive' ends of action and between technical and moral reason, but with taking the differing salience of these in different forms of activity as absolute differences.

In summary, Murphy's book raises the issue of work and its relation to human self-realization in the context of Aristotelian ethics. Serious lapses of scholarship are its major shortcoming which, perhaps, Murphy falls into because he very much wants to distance his advocacy of a humanization of work from previous views of the place of work in life.

**I.E. Hunt**

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**Livio Rossetti, ed.**

*Understanding The Phaedrus.*

Proceedings of the II Symposium Platonicum.

International Plato Studies Vol. 1.

Academia Verlag 1992.

Pp. xx + 328.

Cloth 98,- DM.

**David A. White**

*Rhetoric and Reality in Plato's Phaedrus.*

SUNY 1993.

Pp. 318 with Bibliography and Index.

US \$54.50 (ISBN 0-7914-1233-4);

US \$17.95 (ISBN 0-7914-1234-2).

The *Phaedrus* has appeal these days, perhaps because its rich mixture of natural, political, erotic and textual concerns fit so well our own preoccupations. A fair sampling of the wide spectrum of current scholarly approach to this complex work is represented in two works published over the last couple of years.

Livio Rossetti's editing of many of the thirteen English language articles from the 1989 Symposium Platonicum is too loose. There is no index, and no bibliography worth the name. Finally, there is an unacceptable number of misspellings, and typographical errors too numerous to note here. I cannot report with confidence whether the same sloppy copy editing persists through the nine Italian, fifteen French or four German articles. (The volume opens, incidentally, with a helpful, if sometimes cryptic, digest in English of all articles.) Not all articles are equally plagued by these errors; and, for the most part, they are merely irritating, though occasionally they badly obscure the argument, as in the final paragraph of section IV, p. 55.

Typos and other serious shortcomings aside, the volume is a valuable and important resource. The first half, led by Tom Robinson, contains thirteen longer papers which cover dating, the nature of rhetoric, the possibility of written truth, politics and philosophy, and early interpretations of the dialogue. The second half provides twenty-eight brief (three or four page) articles, many of which are attempts to set a scholarly agenda by sketching themes for further exploration. Helpful reflections on the origin of the contemporary debate are made by Y. Lafrance, and others address that debate among Plato and his contemporaries. In the most exciting part of the collection, the one covering the relation of philosophy and dialectic, I detected a promising trend. The pieces by A.W. Price, and R. Bodeus portray Plato as more Aristotelian realist than conventional wisdom tends to allow. Similarly foreshadowing Aristotle, Scolnicov persuasively argues that among Plato's objectives for dialectic is '... euporia, i.e., at showing the possibility of the desired conclusion under certain assumptions'.

There is another seminal piece by Piccone who reminds us of the political dimension of Plato's concerns. The brief papers also address philosophical language, eros, prayer and the psychology of the dialogue.

These summary articles are, generally, much more than 'notes', and are very useful both for advertising argued positions succinctly, and for exploring a suitable agenda for scholarly debate: an exploration which this dialogue urgently needs, given the lack of consensus even as to what it is 'about'.

There are some surprises. For instance, memory and recollection seem to have been neglected in many discussions, even in Chris Gill's *Dogmatic Dialogue in Phaedrus* 276-7? which nonetheless raises some important questions about the psychodynamics of rhetoric and learning. (Piccone does address the importance of memory and is almost the only one to do so.) Charles Griswold's exploration of the 'politics of Self-Knowledge' provides a refreshingly open range of thinking about what may be going on in the dialogue, but he seems (at and around page 182) to find a 'self', an EGO, which may be more consistent with Descartes's than with Plato's dialectical self.

By and large the papers in *Understanding the Phaedrus* eschew any 'Indiana Jones' approach. Many lack the excitement of hoping there may yet be substantial unsuspected truths to be recovered from a fresh reading of the dialogue. There are exceptions of course, some of them noted above, and the spirit of adventure is clearly not dead everywhere. Taken as a whole the collection, for all its irritating cosmetic and mechanical faults, is one no serious scholar or scholarly library should be without.

Little overt post-modern colour seeps into the way the *Phaedrus* is read by contributors to the *Symposium Platonicum*. But David White's focused and comprehensive *Rhetoric and Reality in Plato's Phaedrus*, like his earlier Platonic study, *Myth and Metaphysics in Plato's Phaedo*, is influenced by the work he has done in figures like Heidegger, James Joyce and Wagner. This literary and musical experience increases White's authority for work in the *Phaedrus*.

The style is dense and, initially, confusing. His choice of expository approach (Is it commentary or critique or exposition or translation?) does not immediately seem to fit his stated (p. 2-3 see also p. 8) objective which 'a tentative first step' in helping us read the *Phaedrus*

... as an account of reality, and of how human nature must confront that reality in order to speak, and to live, as wisely and well as possible ... situating these issues within a more articulated metaphysical position... (since the) *Phaedrus* has yet to receive its due as a concentrated discourse on metaphysical considerations.

The writing is episodic and thematically abrupt. A subtext is hinted at, but not fully disclosed. It progresses as a series of expository lectures might, and with an intimacy that builds confidence and engages an attentive reader's suspense. It carries on the Cornford or Hackforth tradition, blending text with comment; but it also incorporates much of what would have been footnoted by them, and leaves notes for purely bibliographic and technical issues. The



'translation' is so interwoven as to be really an interpretive account of what was said, an interesting and novel rhetorical form that derives much from the *Phaedrus* itself. This blend of exposition, commentary and reflection usually manages to keep the flavours distinct, but there is no sharp visual discrimination between Plato's text and 'situating' comment. While irritating at first, as the work develops this post-modern melding of texts builds an exciting conversational medium, much like a director's script notes.

But, as with the *Symposium* volume, there are surprises here too. Despite White's expression of objective, Pythagoras is nowhere to be seen despite acknowledgement (p. 51) that Socrates's first speech is 'study in opposites'. Occasionally White's elliptical style misleads by poor choice of word (as, e.g., on p. 41 he uses 'sense' where 'procedure' might have been better). He is sometimes too unforgiving.

As to the central thesis, while White's use of 'metaphysics' and cognate terms is fraught with contemporary Heideggerian 'code', his claim that the *Phaedo* and the *Phaedrus* make life 'the fundamental metaphysical source ... through which all living things are what they are' does much (and rightly, in my view) to make Plato more of a biologist, closer to Aristotle's view of form as act than many have supposed.

Both books are 'musts' for any library collection. But Indiana Jones would have more fun with White's.

**John A. Scott**

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### **Karl Popper**

*In Search of a Better World: Lectures and Essays From Thirty Years.*

trans. Laura J. Bennett.

New York: Routledge 1992.

Pp. x + 245.

US \$25.00 (ISBN 0-415-08774-0).

The majority of these pieces were given as lectures in Germany or Austria, and together they expound non-technically on nearly all Popper's well-known themes. There are also several *sui generis* pieces, the most interesting of which speculates on when books first became a market commodity (according to Popper, the time was around 550 B.C., the place was Athens, the books were Homer's, and the ramifications for Western culture were enormous). Another such essay includes an attack on Habermas's bloated prose.

Popper often turns to the theme of hope in these essays, and decries the pessimism and anti-rationalism of other 20th century thinkers. Popper

maintains that contemporary Western society is overall the best there has been (216). He points to income safety nets, relatively civilized judicial systems, and increased accessibility to classical music (the most 'transcendent' of human powers) as accomplishments which should give us reason for optimism.

It would be easy to accuse Popper of naivety: Do not the events of this century alone outweigh the facts to which Popper draws attention? But Popper's hopefulness is not about weighing up the credits and debits of Western society. Rather, his attitude seems to lie in the following train of thought or feeling: the fundamental values of the West, at least when not distorted by bad intellectuals, are correct and carry the potential for much good. Given this, we have the right to be hopeful, especially since such an attitude may itself help us realize the West's potential. (This is not the only place where Popper, the rationalist, brings to mind William James's 'Will to Believe'.)

Rationalism is the Western value which most interests Popper, and many of these essays deal with Popper's interpretation of this tradition (the 'last laggard of the Enlightenment' Popper calls himself with unfortunate sanctimoniousness).

Popper's rationalist heroes are Socrates and Kant: Socrates because he recognized the wisdom of his own ignorance whilst continually striving after objective truth; Kant because he clarified the mind's free creativity in science and ethics, and because he illuminated the relationship between rationality and human dignity. These are lessons Popper carries into his own work.

As Popper sees it, his distinctive contribution to the rationalist tradition has been to demonstrate that criticism, as opposed to proof or justification, lies at the heart of rationality. Through self and mutual criticism, scientists approach closer to the truth through falsifying one theory after the other. The truth itself, however, is never reached; or at least we can never be certain we possess the truth, *or even that we probably possess it*. In this sense, no-one knows anything. Moreover, Popper maintains that with each problem that science solves, deeper problems reveal themselves. Our ignorance, then, is as infinite as it is permanent. Nevertheless, the impartial criticism implicit in scientific methodology gives us reliable criteria for moving ever closer to understanding reality. By identifying rationality with criticism, rather than with the false idols of proof and justification, Popper believes he has shown how faith in reason can be sustained even once these idols are dismantled.

Popper maintains that his form of rationalism generally, and contemporary science specifically, can contribute to the spirit of hope he wants to engender. Given this, Popper is particularly concerned to show that science does not undermine our sense of ourselves as free, creative, and of equal dignity.

Popper directs one set of arguments against the negative image he believes most people have of evolution. As Popper sees it, people wrongly think of evolution as occurring through a 'bloody struggle for existence' in which organisms passively undergo change as the result of hostile environ-

mental pressures (12-14). Popper's 'new optimistic interpretation' sees life as active and as triumphing in an essentially supportive environment.

Popper's optimism, however, is sometimes pollyannaish. He says, for example, that the original living cell, from which all life derives, has triumphed because it literally still exists as all living things. But surely if one wants to see evolution in this romanticized way, then one must further admit that the primordial cell has triumphed only through a vast amount of self-mutilation. Popper further argues that living things, through their own actions, create new environmental niches, and therefore should not be regarded as mere passive products of natural selection. But how active in the process of natural selection can we really say organisms are, given that the evolutionary changes caused by these new niches are generally not intentionally directed or even foreseeable by the organisms themselves?

Popper sees his own critical rationalism as suggesting resolutions to the 'religious and philosophical uneasiness of our time, which surely concerns us all, [and] is largely an uneasiness about the philosophy of human knowledge' (81). But it is doubtful that Popper's resolutions could ever soothe the unease of more than a small minority of people. Assuming that the philosophy of knowledge teaches us we know nothing, how many people could find epistemological solace in Socratic humility, Kantian autonomy, or the pleasure of seeing science as an ever-changing body of falsifiable theories? Unfortunately, very few.

Popper also holds that critical rationalism entails ethical principles for treating others with tolerance and as moral equals: 'the potential unity and equality of all men somehow constitute a prerequisite of our willingness to discuss matters rationally' (199). But it is doubtful that the critical rationalist *must be* either psychologically or logically disposed to egalitarianism. For even the most optimistic rationalist must recognize that there will always be people who are either incapable of or unwilling to engage in rational discussion. A person whose ethical principles were circumscribed by critical rationalism would be more likely to exclude such people from ethical regard than to embrace them as equals. Where egalitarianism is concerned, there is no replacement for a fellow-feeling which goes deeper than our common potential rationality, as indeed Popper seems to recognize at other points in the book.

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### A. John Simmons

*On the Edge of Anarchy: Locke, Consent,  
and the Limits of Society.*

Princeton: Princeton University Press 1993.

Pp. ix + 293.

US \$39.50 (ISBN 0-691-03303-X).

In this book, his second on Locke in as many years, Simmons examines Locke's conception of the political relationship — the moral relation between persons that defines their membership in political societies. Not content simply to interpret and criticize, Simmons attempts to refine and develop Locke's philosophy revealing what he sees as its strong anarchist implications. Presenting Locke as an anarchist is not easy and requires 'excising or dramatically revising elements commonly associated with the Lockean perspective' (7). Simmons admits the position he ultimately defends is not Locke's own, but rather one he claims is 'an improvement' that is 'truly Lockean in its basic commitments' (193). Unfortunately, Simmons does not make clear where Locke's position ends and the new and improved Lockean position begins. Further, even those willing to accept as Lockean an ahistorical and secular reconstruction of Locke's philosophy may question whether Simmons's 'philosophical anarchism' is either Lockean or entirely convincing.

In part one, Simmons discusses the states of nature and war, the nonconsensual social relationships which precede and may reemerge from political society. He properly emphasizes the relational and moral quality of both these states, but questions Locke's understanding of them. Simmons argues that 'the moral condition that the state of nature describes is simply the relationship of *noncitizens* — the condition of not being a member of the same legitimate civil society as another' (34). Locke, however, does not claim that one must be a member of a political society to be subject to its jurisdiction (*Second Treatise*, Paragraphs 119-22). He says simply that the condition of 'men living together according to reason, without a common superior on earth with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature' (II, 9, see also II, 90) and argues that anyone who 'enjoys any part of the land' of a commonwealth must submit to its government 'as far forth as any subject of that commonwealth' (II, 120). Simmons further rejects Locke's claim that living in a state of nature in respect to others can quickly and easily degenerate into a state of war and argues that Locke's definition of the state of war is 'flawed and wishful' (161). In the end, Simmons believes most people can and do live relatively securely in a state of nature with those around them, a position difficult to reconcile either with Locke's writings or most people's considered judgements.

In part two, Simmons discusses Locke's ideal of government by consent. He argues that consenting to join political society is an '*intentional*, deliberate act, which requires knowledge and awareness of circumstances' and that 'one's freedom cannot be undermined by allegedly consensual obligations (or

alienation of rights) that are accomplished unwittingly or under duress' (74). Locke, with the possible exception of his discussion of conquered peoples, understands binding consent less strictly. While Locke does not go as far as Hobbes, he clearly accepts consent given under duress or on account of physical necessity as potentially having the power to bind (II, 75, 77, 101, 123). He further assumes that the act of consenting is generally done in a way that leaves most people, perhaps even the consenters, 'thinking it not done at all' (II, 117, see also II, 110). While the view that consent is meaningful only when given explicitly and under ideal conditions may be attractive, it is one that Locke's doctrine of tacit consent indicates he consciously avoided taking.

Simmons is at his least convincing when he proposes, in part three, that Locke's texts do not reveal a commitment to a doctrine of inalienable rights. When Locke speaks of rights that people 'have not a power to part with' (II, 149), Simmons interprets him as referring only to rights people never had. Simmons bases his argument on Locke's claim that 'nobody has an absolute arbitrary power over himself' (II, 135). Simmons confuses not having absolute and arbitrary control over a right with not having the right at all; Locke does not. For example, Locke clearly believes people have a right to acquire at least enough of the food to preserve themselves (II, 25), and that any attempt to alienate this right would be illegitimate. In this case, it is people's obligation to preserve themselves that prohibits them from alienating this right, but saying people cannot alienate their right to gather food could not mean they have no such right. While Locke does say people can forfeit all their rights, a position which might prove difficult to reconcile with a commitment to the inalienability of some rights, it is nonetheless indisputable that Locke is committed to the idea that some rights are inalienable.

Also in part three, Simmons discusses dissolution and resistance. Here Simmons brackets his assumption that most people reside in the state of nature vis-à-vis their societies, and looks, with Locke, at the question of people's rights and duties in regard to governments that breach the trust granted them. Simmons discusses people's right to resist and explores the interesting question of what duty if any people have to resist unlawful governments. Though some would take issue with his attempt to separate the secular from the theological aspects of Locke's argument, his discussion of the right of resistance is clear and intelligent. He is particularly insightful when trying to make sense of Locke's muddled discussion of the dissolution of political society.

Finally, Simmons looks at various critiques of Locke's consent theory, paying particular attention to Hume's, and then discusses more general questions of consent, obligation and anarchy. Here Simmons reviews a lot of the same territory he explored in his first book, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations* (Princeton 1979). It is a commitment to political voluntarism, the belief that 'political relationships among persons are morally legitimate only when they are the product of voluntary, willing, morally significant acts by all parts' (36), which Simmons believes commits Locke (and us) to philo-

sophical anarchism. However, just as many of us assume that consent is the only legitimate basis for government, most of us living in western representative democracies also believe that we are members of the political societies in which we reside. Reconciling these two commitments is an unfinished task; Simmons's attempt simply to reject the latter, while tempting, is not ultimately convincing. Like Locke, who tried to calm those who feared the practical implications of his resistance theory, Simmons points out that philosophical anarchism 'is only philosophically, not practically anarchic' (268). Philosophical anarchists as Simmons describes them are bound by a rather extensive set of natural duties and obligations. These duties preclude the political excesses which many associate with anarchism. But the duties that make Locke's policies safe are duties owed to God; Simmons does not offer convincing secular grounds for these duties. Further, Simmons may underestimate the dangers inherent in his position. He sees philosophical anarchism as freeing people from their perceived obligation to obey unjust actions by their governments, but overlooks what could happen if governments could proclaim large numbers of people non-members of the societies in which they live.

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**Charles Taylor**

*The Ethics of Authenticity.*

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1992.

Pp. xi + 142.

US \$17.95 (ISBN 0-674-268636).

This book is an American edition of Taylor's Massey Lectures which were published in Canada under the title 'The Malaise of Modernity'. It explores in ten short chapters many of the same themes treated at greater length in *Sources of the Self*.

As Taylor sees it, the key characteristic of modernity is that we no longer share the vision of a purposive order by which to measure and inspire our lives. Given this, it can seem that all values are 'up for grabs' (5) and that the world external to ourselves is valuable only as means to our ends. Furthermore, capitalism and the pervasiveness of technology accentuate instrumental rationality; while the liberal state, with its procedural neutrality, makes it all the more difficult to articulate a shared moral order.



In light of this confluence of forces, Taylor understands why people are so prone to experience 'loss of resonance, depth, [and] richness' (6); or how a book like Allan Bloom's *Closing of the American Mind*, which sees our age as sunk in degenerate subjectivism, could become a bestseller. Leonard Cohen's recent powerful song 'The Future' expresses the despairing attitude toward modernity Taylor considers: 'Things are going to slide in all directions/Won't be nothing/Nothing you can measure anymore/The blizzard of the world/has crossed the threshold/and it has overturned/the order of the soul/When they said REPENT/I wonder what they meant'.

Though Taylor sympathizes with this pessimistic rejection of modernity, he nevertheless maintains that such a response is profoundly mistaken; there has been no final crossing of the threshold. Taylor's tempered hopefulness rests on his conviction that modernity has open to it deeply humane values unattainable in the pre-modern world.

Rigid status hierarchies, for example, were a concomitant of the pre-modern sense that reality has a purposive order. Modernity, on the other hand, opens the way to genuine egalitarianism; for it puts into question ancient hierarchies, and at the same time affirms the worth of ordinary work and of family-life. Central to these modern developments lies the value of authenticity — the attitude that it is a good thing for people to determine for themselves what to believe and how to live. This value is integral to seeing humans as possessing equal dignity, and is an ideal 'unrepudiable by moderns' (23).

Authenticity, however, easily assumes trivialized and degraded forms involving subjectivism, narcissism, and political apathy. The pessimists about modernity mistakenly identify these manifestations with authenticity itself, and thereby overlook the virtue's ennobling potential. We must recognize, according to Taylor, that modern democratic culture embodies a permanent 'constitutive tension' (71) between healthy and degraded forms of authenticity. The debate, then, should be over not whether authenticity (and so the spirit of modernity) ought to be abandoned, but rather over how to curtail authenticity's degenerate forms while nourishing its higher potential.

A first step is to recognize that subjectivism and narcissism undercut themselves. To feel our lives have meaning, we need to place ourselves in relation to causes which transcend our own interests; we need, in Taylor's phrase, 'horizons of significance' (35). Moreover, we can establish our identities only through dialogue with others, and this presupposes non-instrumental valuing of significant others and of social traditions. Given these facts, the pure subjectivist and narcissist must lead self-stultifying lives, since they deny the validity of self-transcending values and of integral relationships to others.

No-one but the insane could lead the life of the pure subjectivist or narcissist (and of course this is Taylor's point). At the same time, it must be admitted that most evil, superficial, and even self-centred people have their own horizons of significance and integral relations to others. It is just that their horizons and relationships differ from those who lead good or noble

lives. The key question then is *which* self-transcending values and relationships to nourish. Much of Taylor's discussion can be seen as suggesting answers to this question.

One important antidote to the impersonality of instrumental reason, according to Taylor, is 'democratic empowerment' which fosters collective goals (111). More than this, however, we need 'subtler languages' (81) which would allow us to 'enframe' (120) modernity in richer ways.

Taylor explores two possible sources of these subtler languages. One is modern art which, according to Taylor, can help us 'resonate' (87) to an objective order. This may be true. However, given the deep division in our culture between middle-brow and high art, it is questionable whether art's 'subtle language' could foster that shared, publicly accessible moral order which Taylor would like to see.

The second possible source lies in retrieving 'some of the richer moral background' (103) of pre-modernity. Presumably, Taylor sees a significant part of this richer background in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. But it is questionable how much of this background could be accommodated, at the most fundamental level, to modernity. For if modernity suggests anything, it is that reality itself is blankly indifferent to any kind of moral order, and especially that portrayed by theistic religions.

There is a tension which runs through Taylor's thought about modernity (indeed it is related to the same 'constitutive tension' Taylor sees in modernity itself). Taylor maintains that horizons of significance, if they are to counter the 'flattened and trivialized' (91) forms of authenticity, need the backing of an 'objective order of value' (90). This order would show us how things can have inherent value 'independent of us or our desires' (82). However, the whole thrust of Taylor's project seems directed, in the final analysis, toward human flourishing. After all, the point of trying to situate ourselves in relation to an objective moral order is to counter the 'loss of resonance, depth [and] richness' caused by modernity. Given this, it becomes problematic in what sense Taylor's 'objective order' could have inherent value 'independent of us'. In the end, therefore, Taylor's argument may not escape the anthropocentrism he so insightfully analyses.

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**Joan C. Tronto**

*Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care.*

New York: Routledge 1993.

Pp. xii + 226.

US \$49.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-415-90641-5);

US \$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-415-90642-3).

Ever since Carol Gilligan (*In A Different Voice*, 1982) and Nel Noddings (*Caring*, 1986) espoused a moral view which is drawn from women's experiences and which values contextuality, relatedness, particularity and moral attentiveness, a sharp debate has centred on the implications of such an ethic of care for social and political theory and especially feminist theory. Is there a role for a care perspective in the public sphere? Can (or ought) care to co-exist with a theory of justice? Is there really a distinctive 'women's morality' and, if so, is it determined by nature or socialization? Ought feminists to even dabble in questions of moral essentialism? And while these theoretical niceties are debated, the new right has turned the language of care to its own purposes — George Bush's 'kinder, gentler' America; Ralph Klein's 'he listens, he cares' campaign.

Joan Tronto attempts to answer all these questions, in part by recasting the moral and political context in which they occur, and in part by redefining the concept of care itself. She argues (6-11) that three 'moral boundaries' effectively exclude considerations of care (and more generally, the interests and needs of the powerless) from the political arena: the public/private boundary, which has traditionally shunted care to the private and domestic sphere; the political/moral boundary, which prevents us from recognizing the political contexts in which moral questions arise; and the boundary around the impartial, universalistic 'moral point of view', which excludes all particularistic moral views.

In the first half of the book, Tronto argues ably for detaching the care debate from questions about gender difference in moral reasoning and the public/private distinction. She argues that caring has not always been seen as a women's morality, and that there are strong parallels between an ethic of care and the moral philosophy of Hume, Hutcheson, and Smith, and shows how the confluence of expanding world trade, increasing cosmopolitanism, rationalism, and democratization in the eighteenth century swung the focus of moral theory from a parochial moral sentiment to an impartial, universalistic Kantianism. Meanwhile, moral sentiment was re-defined as the natural morality of women, thus excluding them from the public world of Kantian universalism (50ff). She then discusses the Kohlberg-Gilligan controversy, agreeing with much of Gilligan's critique of Kohlberg, but arguing that Gilligan's work is undermined by recent studies which find no gender differences in moral reasoning (82f), and by Gilligan's own failure to conceive of care in a way that would challenge the public/private boundary (96).



This done, Tronto (102ff) defines care as broadly as possible as both a theory and practice which comprises four phases: caring about (attentiveness, recognizing a need), taking care of (assuming responsibility), care-giving (meeting needs for care), and care receiving (responding to care). Tronto argues that 'care has mainly been the work of slaves, servants, and women' (113), and is thus devalued, while the privileged and powerful benefit from it. Nonetheless, Tronto thinks care can be used as a language to translate abstract political and moral questions into concrete and particular terms, and to thereby transform political thinking (124). While caring is not a sufficient condition for morality, it is a necessary one if we are to take serious account of the importance of caring, come to grips with otherness, and construct a non-oppressive democracy.

Certainly the greatest problem facing any political conception of care is parochialism; that caring people will place the interests of those with whom they share enduring, committed relationships over the interests of distant, unknown others. But effective political action requires both the application of just and universal principles *and* the maintenance of enduring supportive relationships, and when the two collide (as they sometimes do), the resulting dilemmas cannot be easily solved by adjuring us to stick with our principles (Kant) or to abandon them (Noddings). Tronto's frustratingly abbreviated response is 'to insist that care needs to be connected to a theory of a justice and to be relentlessly democratic in its disposition' (171). But this isn't the solution, it's simply the question. Just how is care to be reconciled with justice? And what would 'relentlessly democratic' care look like? Is it simply *agapé*? Care requires a degree of emotional displacement, attentiveness to particularity, and a concern with the concrete which (I think) can't be extended to all the members of the polis. Moreover, parochialism isn't merely a hypothetical concern. If care is, as Tronto says, 'a commitment to ideals of connection and mutual support' (117), then we need look no further than the old boys' clubs and the machinery of political patronage to see what a parochial, perverted and undemocratic version of political care looks like.

Tronto also thinks care can be used to analyze power structures. Roughly put, care travels uphill; the powerful demand it, and the weak provide it (174). Janitors, she claims, are devalued because of their 'caring' work, while doctors are valued as scientists, and in spite of their 'caring' work (113-15). Since care is devalued, people of colour are dismissed as 'natural servants' (174). It seems unlikely however that there is such a neat connection between power and care. After all, we do sometimes care for the weak and for our peers. And it seems more likely that racists dismiss people of colour (and especially Black men) as stupid, lazy, irresponsible, and violent — in short, as *uncaring*.

Tronto makes a strong case for care as a political virtue and practice, and without the impedimenta of caring's devalued history. As the fundament of a truly democratic society, care enables us to understand otherness and interdependence in a way that traditional political theories do not. As

a practice, care avoids the problem of moral motivation by assuming that people are related and motivated to care for each other. But work still remains to be done to elucidate how principles of justice and an ethic of care can co-exist in the public sphere.

**Guillermo Barron**

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## Editor's Note

The anglophone editor of

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*W.E. Cooper*