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Simon L. Altmann

*Is Nature Supernatural? A Philosophical
Exploration of Science and Nature.*

New York: Prometheus Books 2002.

Pp. 627. US\$39.00. ISBN 1-57392-916-6.

Whether you agree with much of what it says or not, this is a must-read book. For it covers a huge range of topics, from quantum theory to philosophy of mind, in a delightfully challenging way that forces you to think through your own views on those topics. Equally importantly, you will be led to formulate your views more carefully to avoid being swept away by some of Altmann's claims. (Whether those claims are ultimately successful is for the reader to determine.) Altmann's ontological commitments are essentially Kantian: Nature₁ corresponds to Kant's *Ding-an-sich*; nature₂ is a nature resulting from our cognitive interactions (the structure for which, for Altmann, is determined by evolutionary means) with the world; and nature₃ consists of *our most successful model* of nature₂, the scientific model. Thus, the knowledge that we gain from the sciences is knowledge of nature₂ and we must remain forever silent about nature₁.

Altmann's leading question for the book is that of his title: Is nature supernatural? It is, however, a question that, strictly speaking, he leaves unanswered, even in his final chapter of the same title. In that last chapter, however, he does make remarks that *suggest* that he thinks that nature is not supernatural, for he spends much of that chapter criticizing Aristotelian teleology and variants of it and criticizing philosophical views that would appear to countenance the view that nature *is* supernatural.

The book consists of twenty chapters, most of nearly equal length. The first four beyond the Introduction have to do with making clear what Altmann will mean by such notions as *metaphysical* and *meta-physical*, the *analytic/synthetic* distinction, a *law of nature*, the *deductive/inductive* distinction, and so forth. His view on such matters is broadly latter-Wittgensteinian with some of his own idiosyncratic views thrown in (see his Glossary entries for examples, including 'Intension' and 'Normative principle'). His take on these notions is crucial for much of the remainder of the book, and so the reader must keep them clear as the remainder of the book unfolds.

The next several chapters (6-14) are devoted to defending the view that only the physical deserves to be called real. In addition to the Wittgensteinian views already alluded to, Altmann adopts the Wittgensteinian view that the meaning of a term is its use; he does so in order to assault the view that mathematical entities belong to a 'Platonic' realm rather than an empirical one, thereby to buttress his claim that some version of materialism is the correct one. (Altmann suggests that the alternative is to adopt some 'philosophical' view that meaning corresponds to a notion of 'Truth' — his spelling

— that only philosophers are interested in. He does not, apparently, think that philosophers might be just concerned with ‘truth’ and how it is possible that some of our thoughts can be true. Nor does he argue seriously for his view, apparently thinking the notion of meaning as use to be nearly obviously correct.) He argues that mathematics was arrived at as humans developed evolutionarily and that it is evolutionary processes that gave mathematics any meaning: that is, that it was empirical problems and solutions that mathematics developed upon (making them empirically meaningful), and only later in the development of human thought did mathematics come to be viewed as the study of ‘Platonic’ things and hence non-empirical.

In this section of chapters, then, Altmann attempts to do away with a number of views that might incline us away from materialism/physicalism. He attempts to do away with the notion of meaning adumbrated by J.L. Austin, or of Geach and/or Kripke (though the last two are not mentioned by name) which might require commitment to propositions construed as non-material. He attempts to undercut or eliminate the notion of mathematical truth as truth about a ‘Platonic’ realm of non-empirical entities. He attempts to ground our development of mathematics in evolutionary processes, taking for granted (and, of course, he might be justified in doing so) that evolutionary processes are purely material and that what comes out of those processes must also be purely material. In short, he thinks that commitment to such entities involves ontological befuddlement. Anyone who does *not* think so, therefore, is obligated to meet his objections.

Finally, Altmann focuses on his main target, quantum mechanics. In this focus, he adopts a fundamentally realist position, understood as an ontological commitment to nature₂. It is not, he urges, that getting our knowledge of quantum stuff imposes epistemological constraints on quanta. It is rather that nature₂ is a world determined by the interaction of our cognitive structure with whatever is ‘out there’ and so nature₂’s structure is therefore something objectively real. Our cognitive structure, in other words, helps determine nature₂ but that does not in way make nature₂ unreal or ‘relative’. And nature₂ is a world in which there is no sharp distinction in fact between the macroworld and the microworld. The ever-so-often-alluded-to quantum indeterminacies and probabilities occur in nature writ small *or* large; they are merely cancelled out in the macroworld by the huge volume of interactions among quantum-level phenomena underlying them. Altmann therefore thinks that nature₂ is unified and that it is a *quantum* world.

In the closing chapter, Altmann reveals inadvertently that he is weakest in his understanding of philosophy of mind, accusing John Searle of being a dualist (because he subscribes to *emergentism* of mental properties). He also criticizes Nagel, Block, and Fodor on the grounds that they give the *privacy of the mental* overmuch importance; he suggests that one can ask Nagel’s question ‘What is it like to be a bat?’ *mutatis mutandis* of a stone and will get the same answer — ‘We can’t know’. But his views are not to be dismissed lightly, for they are trenchant.

Overall, Altmann's book is highly commended for a read. You may not agree with everything he says, but thinking through his arguments can serve only to help you make your own stronger.

L.W. Colter

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Alain Badiou

Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil.

Trans. Peter Hallward.

London: Verso 2001. Pp. viii + 166.

US\$37.00. ISBN 1-85984-297-6.

Alain Badiou contends that the predominant trend in politics and political theory today is a preoccupation with 'ethics', understood in terms of human rights and respect for differences; he startles the reader by arguing not only that our 'ethics' is inconsistent in its conceptual foundations, but also that it is tantamount to nihilism. But *Ethics* is not a merely destructive critique of the 'politics of ethics' and its (mis)understanding of evil: the greater part of the book provides a 'preliminary sketch' of Badiou's own 'ethic of truths', based on a radically different understanding of good and evil.

Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil might be interpreted as a Nietzschean genealogy of morals, for Badiou debunks the ethics of universal human rights and 'respect for differences' as an ideology that promotes the interests of a particular identity, viz. 'the identity of a wealthy — albeit visibly declining — West' (24). Badiou's critique proceeds by exposing the internal inconsistencies of the ethics of human rights, and the 'ethics of otherness'. Badiou first examines the ethics of human rights, which posits a universal subject and universal human rights to protection from Evil, recognized through a consensus on the self-evidence of 'what is harmful to Man' (58). Badiou argues that the doctrine of human rights is inconsistent because it insists on the universal dignity of humanity, yet defines the human being as a potential victim. In addition, this definition of man implies that the universal subject is not self-identical, for humanity is divided between the suffering victims, and the 'armed benefactors' who intervene.

Badiou next examines the ethics of alterity and respect for differences. He identifies the 'ethics of otherness' with the ethics of Levinas, who proposes 'a radical, primary opening to the Other' (19) because the self first comes to be in an 'I-Thou' relation with the other. Badiou objects that the relation with the other qua other *may* be ontologically prior to the constituted self-identity,

but it is not necessarily so 'simply because the finitude of the other's appearing certainly *can* be conceived as resemblance or as imitation ...' (22). Ironically, the ineliminable risk of such narcissism in the self-other relation is exemplified by the inconsistent practice of the ethics of respect for differences. Badiou argues that the proponents of respect for differences are 'clearly *horrified by any vigorously maintained difference*,' and that the inherent inconsistency of this ethics is that 'there can be no respect for those whose difference consists precisely in not respecting the said differences' (24). Badiou shows that the ethics of human rights and the ethics of respect for differences are mirror-opposites: both are attempts to give an account of universal ethical recognition — human rights privileges abstract universality and the moment of identification, whereas the ethics of respect for differences privileges particularity and the moment of differentiation. Therefore, in their tension with one another, they represent an internal opposition within the conception of ethical universality.

In the third chapter, 'Ethics as a Figure of Nihilism', Badiou advances his provocative thesis that contemporary ethics represents a genuine nihilism because it makes evil primary and defines the good negatively as the absence of evil: '... ethics designates above all the incapacity, so typical of the contemporary world, to name and strive for a Good' (30). He has shown that in practice, 'ethics' promotes the interests of the Western political regime, which attempts to maximize the freedom of the individual to pursue private (economic) interests. Therefore, he argues, ethics is hostile to *any* collective politics organized around a positive conception of the Good, and 'represents a threatening denial of thought *as such*' (italics added, 3). Badiou invokes Nietzsche's claim that 'man would rather will nothingness, than not will at all,' and argues that ethics represents 'a purely negative, if not destructive will' (30) to root out *any* effective political thought based on a positive conception of the humanity, which it judges 'a priori' as totalitarian evil.

However, Badiou does not end with the wholly negative conclusion that contemporary ethics is a nihilistic outlook, but rather develops his own account of an 'ethic of truths'. He holds that the abstract universality of 'ethics' prevents us from 'thinking the singularity of situations as such' (14), and suggests that ethical universality really exists only by the advent of a singular truth that is 'universally addressed' (73) to all individuals within the situation. Badiou rejects the conception of man as victim and identifies human dignity in the capacity for truth 'that is to be postulated for one and all' (27). He argues that the 'human animal' may become a subject under the circumstances of a truth, which begins with an 'event' that cannot be accounted for within the situation. Badiou's examples of events include the French Revolution of 1792, Galileo's creation of physics, Haydn's invention of the classical musical style, and a personal amorous passion (41). The process of truth stems from the 'fidelity' of the subject: the decision to think and act in the situation, thereafter, from the perspective of the truth disclosed by the event. On Badiou's view, the subject who 'bears' the event is also

'absolutely non-existent in the situation before the event, for the truth-process is what *induces* a subject' (43).

Badiou suggests that the opposition of universality and particularity cannot be overcome at an abstract level so that his 'ethic of truths' elaborates a logic of singularity. However, there is a logical conundrum in an ethic of truths that is supposed to characterize *singular* truth-processes in *general*. Badiou heightens the paradox by proposing a 'formal definition of the ethic of a truth' (44). It may be that a truth process can be formally defined in universal terms, but that the bare form cannot provide genuine understanding unless someone can fill it with the substance of a particular truth process. Badiou's 'phenomenology of the ethic of truths' in 'the experience of ethical consistency' (48) is a description of the ethic of truths in formal flexible terms, which could contain significance for any genuine experience of subjectivation in a truth process.

From his 'ethic of truths' Badiou derives an understanding of good and evil that is fundamentally different from that of contemporary ethics. He denies the existence of radical evil, understood as evil pure and simple, for it not only makes evil unintelligible and thereby prevents an understanding of the difference between good and evil in moral agency, but, in addition, the idea of the 'unmeasurable measure' is incoherent: 'The measure itself must be unmeasurable, yet it must constantly be measured' (63). Badiou rejects the 'religious absolutization of Evil' (64) in the concept of radical evil. On the contrary, he argues that good and evil are only at issue in 'the rare existence of truth-processes' (60), with the implication that most of the bloody conflicts among human beings are *in themselves* morally indifferent. Badiou argues that human beings are generally '*beneath* good and evil' (59) since the simple pursuit of self-interest belongs to 'the cruel innocence of life' (60). It might be objected that in the pure competition of self-interest, human beings sometimes manifest a desire to commit evil actions simply for the sake of what is evil in them, i.e., the degradation of a human being by treating him as a mere thing to be subjected to one's arbitrary will. But in any case, Badiou does not advocate that those in a position to protect others from harm should do nothing, for he affirms the dignity of humanity in its capacity for truth. He supports intervention that is sensitive to the particularities of a situation, and allows the possibility of genuine (self-)liberation 'peopled by its own authentic actors' (13).

In contrast to ethics that defines the good negatively as the absence of evil, Badiou asserts that 'if Evil exists, we must conceive it from the starting point of the Good' (60). Based on his own ethic of truths, he argues that evil 'as the (*possible*) effect of the Good itself' should be understood as 'a possible dimension of a truth-process' (61). The book concludes with an 'Outline of a theory of Evil' in which he identifies three forms of evil: simulacrum (of the event), betrayal (of the fidelity), and absolutization (of the power of truth) (87), which are to be warded off respectively, by the virtues of discernment, courage, and moderation (91).

In a genuine truth process, an event convokes a radical break in the situation by naming the central void on which it depends: 'To take a well-

known example: Marx is an event for political thought because he designates, under the name “proletariat”, the central void of early bourgeois societies. For the proletariat — being entirely dispossessed, and absent from the political stage — is that around which is organized the complacent plenitude established by the rule of those who possess capital’ (69). Badiou gives an ontological criterion for distinguishing simulacrum from a genuine event: ‘Fidelity to a simulacrum, unlike fidelity to an event, regulates its break with the situation not by the universality of the void, but by the closed particularity of an abstract set ... ’ (74). Nevertheless, he states that ‘all the formal traits of a truth are at work in the simulacrum’ (74) so that there is no epistemological criterion to distinguish a genuine event from simulacrum with certainty. Thus, Badiou suggests that the question of whether a radical break in a situation convokes the void of a situation or its plenitude is ultimately a matter of judgment in the interpretation of events, which cannot take guidance from existing knowledge as it is precisely the legitimacy of that knowledge that a truth process calls into question. Even if the singularity of a situation is the starting point of ethical thinking, nothing dispenses with the need for subjective decision, which forms an orientation, and cannot be objectively verified by any procedure of ethical deliberation.

Sheela Kumar

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James Robert Brown

Who Rules in Science?: An Opinionated Guide to the Wars.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University

Press 2001. Pp. xi + 236.

US\$26.00. ISBN 0-674-00652-6.

It is not surprising that many people are confused about the science wars. The debates involve scholars from a number of different disciplines: sociologists, historians, philosophers, even scientists and scholars working in cultural studies. Due to the diversity of backgrounds of those involved in the study of science, misunderstandings are to be expected. Indeed, the misunderstandings that have resulted are responsible for much of the animosity between the parties involved.

James Brown’s *Who Rules in Science?: An Opinionated Guide to the Wars* provides a much needed explanation of what the science wars are all about. Specifically, Brown’s aim is to provide the educated public with a sense of

what the science wars are, and why they really matter. As with his other books, this new book is very clearly written. Brown expresses complex and technical matters in an accessible way that does justice to the subject matter. And, as Brown makes clear in the sub-title, his guide to the science wars is opinionated. He has strong views about many of the normative issues that divide those involved.

Chapter One is an engaging discussion of the Sokal affair. Alan Sokal, a respected physicist, published an intentionally gibberish-laden article in *Social Text*, a once highly regarded cultural studies journal. It was a mock 'postmodern' analysis of science. This article was followed by a second, published in *Lingua Franca*, in which he unmasked himself and his intentions. Though the science wars were well under way before this event, Sokal's experiment further polarized the debate. His intention was to show that the field of cultural studies is full of scholars who do not understand science, and thus lack the authority to criticize it. But the Sokal affair took on a life of its own, raising questions about the reliability of refereeing procedures, the ethics of pulling such a prank, and many others. Brown details the complex and varied exchanges that followed.

The next four chapters cover broad terrain, touching on such topics as scientific experience, the philosophy of science, 'nihilist' or postmodern critiques of science, and realism, objectivity and values. These chapters are meant to provide the reader with a vocabulary necessary to understand what is at stake in the debates, and how we ended up in this situation.

Chapters 6 to 9 and the Afterword is the core of the book. In these chapters Brown discusses the Strong Programme's critique of scientific knowledge, the role of reason in science, the democratization of science, and the social agenda of science. It is here where Brown develops and presents his own view. And, it is here where he gets into the details of why the science wars really do matter.

The key debates in the science wars are over (i) the role of science in society and (ii) the value of science to society. As Brown notes, these are old and recurring questions. C.P. Snow discussed these issues in the 1950s in his *Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*. Indeed, much earlier, Francis Bacon and other early moderns worked hard to convince people that science could be a valuable resource for improving the quality of our lives. Science, they argued, can be instrumental in bringing about social progress. It was these early modern propagandists who are responsible for ensuring that governments realized the potential power of science.

Not everyone, though, is so enchanted by or optimistic about the power of science. Some claim that our culture is too scientific, wrongly celebrating science, and thus failing to see both the limits of science, and the value or importance of other non-scientific aspects of our culture. Such critics regard science as hegemonic, and want the public to know that scientists deserve neither exclusive epistemic authority nor exclusive political authority. The privilege and power scientists seek is ungrounded and detrimental. The public, some critics suggest, need to be saved from science, and the false hopes that scientists give people.

One of the key points of Brown's book is that the debates in the science wars are incorrectly framed, cast as a war between the leftist critics of science and right-wing scientists and friends of science. Brown, though, argues that not everyone on the right is a friend of science, nor are all those on the left critical of science. Indeed, Brown believes that the most important neglected voice in the debates is the left pro-science voice, *his* voice. Rather than needing to be freed from science, the pro-science left claim that people's only real hope is to accept and rely on science. Science is a means to material flourishing and a necessary tool for combating ignorance.

On the whole, *Who Rules in Science?* fulfils its mandate. It is a comprehensive accessible introduction to the Science Wars. But the book is a little uneven in quality. In the early stage setting chapters Brown attempts to do too much, with the result that the reader is sometimes left wondering where the discussion is going next. For example, in Chapter 3, where Brown presents 'a short course in the philosophy of science', he discusses Thomas Kuhn's influential account of scientific change. Rather than providing a synthesis of Kuhn's view, Brown lists nine key terms in Kuhn's philosophy of science and briefly discusses the meaning and significance of each. Though Brown's explication is accessible and free of jargon, this style of presentation is not conducive to presenting a clear narrative. Further, the reader is not apt to get the sense that Kuhn had a comprehensive account of scientific change.

There is one typographical error in Chapter Seven that is worth noting. While discussing Kuhn's views on page 144, at the beginning of the second paragraph, Brown claims that some of Kuhn's passages 'strike most readers as saying it is not reason and evidence, but *rational* factors that determine scientific decision-making' (emphasis added). The word 'rational' should read either 'irrational' or 'non-rational.'

Despite these concerns, *Who Rules in Science?* is a model of what is needed in these turbulent times. Brown provides readers with a good clear, but opinionated, guide to the wars.

K. Brad Wray

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Beverley Clack

Sex and Death: A Reappraisal of Human Mortality.

Cambridge, MA: Polity 2002. Pp. 159.

US\$59.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-7456-2278-X);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7456-2279-8).

In an age of materialism and consumerism, in which scepticism about ultimate values is combined with a fascination for the paranormal and the mystical, it is important for people to discover a sound basis for the meaningfulness of their lives. This book promises guidance in this quest by suggesting that we, as human beings, should be able to find spiritual meaning in our lives through fully acknowledging ourselves as sexual and mortal beings.

Two key terms that Clack uses are 'transcendence' and 'immanence', and the thinkers she chooses to discuss take varying positions on whether they see the meaningfulness of life as arising from the transcendent aspects of human existence — our rationality and powers of reflection and contemplation — or the immanent aspects — our bodily being, sexuality, and mortality. Her argument is that we should place the stress on the latter aspects of our existence rather than the former. So she criticises Plato and Augustine for directing our attention towards the transcendent realm of Forms or of God respectively and for promising us an afterlife. She suggests that both Sartre and de Beauvoir, despite their atheism and worldly focus, continue the Cartesian focus on the separateness of our reflective powers of autonomy in order to define our existence as transcendent to the world. She invokes Freud as a thinker who stresses the immanent aspects of human existence and helps us see ourselves as akin to animals. But, asks Clack in her next chapter, if the transcendent realities and values beloved of our tradition are to be rejected how can we avoid the horrors of sexual depravity and violence that de Sade has portrayed in his writings? Clack then appeals to the Stoic philosopher Seneca in order to present a non-dualistic account of human existence in which the necessities and vicissitudes of life can be accepted without rejecting the immanent features of human existence in which they are grounded. Clack's final chapter promises a sketch of how life might be lived in a meaningful way without appeal to purely transcendent realities. Sexuality highlights the relational aspects of our existence, while mortality gives value to the time that we have.

A book of this kind succeeds to the extent that it leads readers to engage philosophically with arguments that have the potential to change their fundamental attitudes. However, in her discussion of Augustine, Clack accounts for his negative views on sexuality and his faith in God by citing his unhappy experiences in love rather than by fully explaining his arguments. Sartre's credibility is impugned because of his insensitive journalistic discussion of a rape case. In this and in other cases she makes use of recent feminist scholarship to challenge the authenticity of her chosen authors as well as the

cogency of their ideas. And yet Clack devotes a whole chapter to de Sade. Why should a reader seeking to ground the meaningfulness of human life in immanent human values be tempted to take his writings seriously? Why does Clack suppose that such writings pose a challenge that needs to be met? Does she seriously believe that anyone with an ounce of normal human decency would think that a rejection of purely transcendent values would lead inevitably to such depravity? Are these pathological texts the only substantial connection between sex and death that she can muster? It is Nietzsche whose challenge she and her readers need to meet. (Another notable omission is Heidegger on *being-towards-death*.) Clack fails to notice that the problem of a secular spirituality is an ethical as much as a metaphysical one.

This failure is also illustrated by her limited conception of what a tragic view of life can be. She equates this simply with the ability to bear loss, and she appeals to Seneca to teach us how to develop this ability. But a genuinely tragic view of life is deeper than this. It is the acceptance of loss without justice. It is the ability to bear a loss or a hardship without having an answer to the question, 'Why?' or 'Why me?' Clack misses the essential meaning of the Platonic tradition as it flows through Augustine and religious thinking more generally: namely, that the cosmos is just or that God is providence. In this conception our hardships are accepted in faith as being justified in the order of things. In contrast, the tragic sense of life is one that acknowledges that there is no justice in the cosmos. 'Shit happens' and that is all there is to it. Clack can accept Seneca's view because he still believes in cosmic justice in the form of the rationality of nature. A truly ethical view of life is one that accepts responsibility for creating justice rather than having faith in its transcendent reality. Clack has not seen the full implications of Nietzsche's resounding dictum that God is dead. We are on our own and we make the meaningfulness of our lives to the extent that we make our goodness.

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Katherine Covell and R. Brian Howe
The Challenge of Children's Rights in Canada.
Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University
Press 2001. Pp. 244.
Cdn\$24.95. ISBN 0-88920-380-6.

Mill argued that women were not 'children or animals' since the latter 'cannot judge or act for themselves.' Covell and Howe's *The Challenge of Children's Rights in Canada* aims to reconcile the perception of children's incapacities for judgment and agency with a commitment to children's rights by analyzing the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ways in which Canada has failed to fully implement it.

First considered is 'The Challenge of Children's Rights' (Chapter 1) and 'The Promise of Children's Rights' (Chapter 2). A more detailed examination of three broad categories of rights as outlined in the Convention follows: 'The Rights of Provision' (Chapter 3), 'The Rights of Protection' (Chapter 4) and 'The Rights of Participation' (Chapter 5). The terms to which Canada signed on in 1990 and ratified in 1991 are compared in detail with government action to date. In the final chapter of the book, the authors make several policy recommendations. The entire text of the Convention is included in an Appendix.

In the opening chapter, the authors, echoing Dworkin, state that 'we need to take children's rights seriously' (13). While they admit much has been accomplished to reduce the impact of 'physical toxins' (2) on children's health and safety, they argue not enough has been done to reduce the impact of 'social toxins' (2) on children's psychological and social development. It is commitment to children's emergence as autonomous persons and citizens that the authors find lacking in existing policy, despite this commitment's prominence in the Convention text. And on the basis of this omission, the authors argue that Canada has not fulfilled its obligations under the Convention.

The 'challenge' of children's rights is therefore represented by the difficulty of generating the political and social will to embrace a more state-oriented approach to child rearing. Assuming the difficulty is empirical, the authors claim, based on new research tools, that the effects of authoritarian rather than authoritative methods of child rearing on heretofore less tangible and so politically risky aspects of children's development, for example, 'can [now] be predicted' (2).

While primarily a work of social science, this is also a work of practical ethics. Covell and Howe argue that the separation of state and family, of federal and provincial powers over welfare and education and the value placed on multiculturalism must each be reevaluated in light of their tendency to impede the implementation of children's rights as outlined in the Convention. We must, they say, 'change our belief about children from parental property to social responsibility' (161). We must see that federalism, while disadvantageous in some respects, 'does allow for policy innovation in

one jurisdiction and the spread to others' (159) and recognize that since 'virtually all countries of the world have ratified the Convention' (159), ethnically rooted barriers to implementation are not insuperable. And not to be ignored are fiscal obstacles. On this last point, they are optimistic because 'recent surpluses of the federal government have given it much greater capability of initiating or expanding its own programs and of entering into cost-sharing programs with the provinces' (160).

Covell and Howe address the issue of corporal punishment specifically and the allowance for it in Canadian criminal law. They conclude that it is high time for the government to comply with the Convention and repeal Section 43. (As the authors note, the question of Section 43's constitutionality will be addressed by the Supreme Court of Canada in the coming year.) Of considerable philosophical interest is their discussion of rights of participation. Tolerance for children's rights becomes strained when participation rights come up. It is widely believed, as Mill claimed, that children '*cannot* judge or act for themselves.' As a statement of fact, however, Mill's rhetoric cannot be supported. Some children, say under the age of twelve, do not *yet* know enough about the world to be generally *relied* upon to make choices in their own best interest. Nothing in this more precise rendering of Mill's point precludes participation rights for children, but few people take the time to seriously consider this.

Adults are granted limited individual rights and freedoms given certain capacities for decision-making and self-control that we assume most have *developed*. Covell and Howe argue, in effect, that it is precisely the assumption that such capacities will be adequately developed that supports rights of participation for children. Opponents of children's participation rights correctly attack the liberationist's 'emergent self-disciplining child' but fail to acknowledge it is not what proponents have in mind. As Covell and Howe explain, tailoring children's participation in decisions that affect their interests to their stage of development and with future development in mind has been shown to enhance children's capacity for self-control or compliance, among other factors directly related to their emergent autonomy and sense of citizenship.

It is on the basis of this point the authors argue against what they call 'authoritarian' parenting, schooling and rendering of legal decisions and in favor of 'authoritative' approaches. The authoritarian approach discounts the child's suggestions and preferences merely because they are those of a child. The authoritative approach may result in going against the desires of a child but on other grounds — ones arguably acceptable to the child, at least in principle, and ones justifiably advanced in social and political decision-making contexts.

As a work of social science, the book is thorough and sobering. In the shadow of Kyoto, it is disheartening to think that ratifying a global agreement can have so little impact on government policy. But eliminating 'social toxins' implies much greater government involvement in the daily care of children and as such, in the 'private' lives of adult citizens. We seem sadly

ready to tolerate being spied upon willy nilly in the interest of national security, but proprietary passion for children still runs very high. Also, fiscal fortunes may indeed have been on the upswing when the book was written, but the cost of national security today (and it will likely be something else tomorrow) has snapped the purse shut. The authors are, therefore, more sanguine about the prospects for change than seems warranted by the evidence.

Finally, the 'lack of will' criticism of government policy on children's issues as well as on many other social matters has, I think, run dry. Complaining about a lack of will on the part of right wingers to convert an individualistic society to a welfarist one is a bit like criticizing Milton Friedman for lack of will when he fails to promote socialism. Like so many arguments of this sort, the changes to policies on children's issues Covell and Howe recommend are not simply add-ons. They imply a seismic philosophical shift in the way we regard our social and economic responsibilities to others, as parents and citizens. The authors say we need to stop thinking of our children as private property. Easier said than done.

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Robert Denoon Cumming

Phenomenology and Deconstruction.

Vol. III: Breakdown in Communication.

Vol. IV: Solitude.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2001.

[Vol. III] Pp. ix + 316.

US\$50.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-12370-7);

US\$27.00 (paper: ISBN 0-226-12371-5).

[Vol. IV] Pp. vii + 222.

US\$50.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-12372-3);

US\$22.00 (paper: ISBN 0-226-12373-1).

In tracking the transition from phenomenology to deconstruction, Cumming began this multi-volume collection with an analysis of Sartre's 'conversion to phenomenology', and in Volume II he tackled Sartre's complicated relation of indebtedness to and differences from Husserl. Volume III begins with the complexities of Heidegger's early relations to Husserl as the predominance of phenomenology is both reached and overturned with Heidegger's 'breakdown in communication' with Husserl.

The method of Cumming's analysis is one that he acknowledges neither Heidegger nor Husserl would endorse, since he continually links biographical data, including letters and marginalia from personal books, with philosophical differences in perspective, analysis and methodologies. Thus he tracks Heidegger's overt and explicit references to Husserl's ideas in *Being and Time* and his more oblique allusions which include particular examples, starting points, directions of analysis and a detailed examination of the nature of signs which parallels the same issue in Husserl's *Logical Investigations*. In focusing primarily on *Being and Time* and the *Prolegomena*, Cumming restricts his analysis to the time and place where Husserl and Heidegger were still linked both personally and philosophically and the debts of Heidegger to Husserl were often explicit and acknowledged. In addition, Cumming analyses in depth their differential assumptions of the 'same' terms and their resultant divergence in methodology. An example of this is the very term 'difficulty'. For Husserl, ambiguities surface as difficulties (to be overcome with univocity and clarity of expression) whereas for Heidegger they become part of his very path of retrieval of the tradition. Scientific clarity for philosophy was a well-known goal and standard for Husserl's phenomenology whereas Heidegger repeatedly turns away from any conception of language that would involve or presuppose such transparency.

Cumming's focus here is clearly on the contrasts between Heidegger and Husserl despite their proximity. He includes the portrayal of each by the other at times when historical documents permit and shows the irony of their 'breakdown in communication' as not really communicating at all insofar as they are referring to different objects of analysis, different directions in their search and different methodological assumptions that guide their works.

In Volume IV, Cumming proceeds to analyze the links between the later Heidegger, beginning with the *Letter on Humanism*, and Jaspers initially, and then turns to Heidegger and Sartre's brief interchanges and break. Here Cumming is more biographical in his analysis although he does not defend the linkage between philosophical differences and biographical/psychological ones including personality and character. He juxtaposes as connected the notion of solitude in Heidegger's philosophy with his own penchant for solitude and isolation as a man. In this regard, Cumming focuses on Heidegger's Nazi period as it related to Husserl, Jaspers and ultimately Sartre as well. The convoluted statements of allegiance, ambiguity and finally rejection of the Nazi program are revealed in connection with the personal betrayals of both Jaspers and Husserl during the 1930s and '40s. He documents Jaspers' personal appeals to reconnect with Heidegger and the latter's rejection of Jaspers both as a thinker and as a man, even as he at times would send perfunctory communications of birthday greetings and such. Along this line Cumming cites instances of Heidegger's less than honorable behavior as a man towards the works of other philosophers who overtly felt themselves indebted to him. His disregarding of Sartre and Jaspers philosophically paralleled his disregarding them as colleagues and companions.

The philosophical differences are dramatic as is well known, and Cumming cites Heidegger's condemnations of others as arrogance — misunderstanding his project, and reducing the ontological dimensions to merely psychological or subjectivist as well as disregarding the limits of communications regarding the public sphere and hence the limits of dialogue. These condemnations are played out and documented by Cumming as rebuffs to the others who sought communications and mutual understanding with Heidegger. This mixing of the biographical and psychological with the philosophical itself requires some justification but it is adopted whole cloth by Cumming and used through this volume. He disregards the fact that Heidegger denied any relevance of the biographical and even more so the psychological to the philosophical dimensions of thought. Instead, we see Cumming make much of this denial as itself indicative of a deeper connection rather than an abyss or *aporia*. Hence, the focus on the Nazi era where Heidegger's own statements seemed to link philosophy to the public sphere, the *Volk* and thus actuality itself (it was not long before he takes these back as is well known).

Cumming criticizes Heidegger's lumping of all philosophers together in one grand tradition, and for not regarding highly enough the real differences among them. This is true, Cumming argues, even for the Greeks — Plato and Aristotle in particular, when the specificities of the dialogues or the totality of the virtues are not embraced for what they are but as embodying an essence of the tradition beyond themselves. For this flaw, Cumming also indicts Derrida, who is known to follow Heidegger in many of these sweeping categorizations. A key issue one might raise with Cumming, however, is his own assumption about the necessary linkage between the philosophy and the philosopher, and the window into one that the other seems to allow. If this is to be the case consistently for Cumming, then it is surprising that we see none of his own biographical data which clearly, from his point of view, impel his own project itself; one is left to read between the lines for this.

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Jacques Derrida

Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971-2001.

Edited, Translated, and with an Introduction by Elizabeth Rottenberg.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2002.

Pp. 424.

US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-3831-2);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-3892-0).

As the subtitle suggests, *Negotiations* is a collection of some of Jacques Derrida's most important interviews and interventions from 1971-2001. Edited and translated by Elizabeth Rottenberg, this collection is particularly valuable in two respects: first, nearly all of the interviews and essays included in this collection have never been published in English, and they offer an insight into Derrida's work that those of us whose French is mediocre have not had the chance to appreciate; second, and perhaps more importantly, there is also an interesting conceptual integrity to this book that revolves around the problem of negotiation as it comes to bear on both ethics and politics (and on the process of writing itself).

First, it is worth considering some of the more singular insights that these new essays afford the reader. For the first time, there is not just a reference to, but an entire essay on, Sartre, which was written to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of *Les Temps Modernes*. 'Dead Man Running: Salut Salut' reveals a previously unseen generosity towards one of Derrida's main predecessors on the French scene. Of course, he is never wholly uncritical, but his emphasis upon the aporetic in Sartre, or the Sartre who contradicts himself, is very evocative and, as is the case with much of Derrida's work, also blurs the boundaries between the biographical and the theoretical.

Significantly, this volume includes several essays derived from conference presentations by Derrida, in which he tried out material before it was published. In this book, we see an essay on the relationship between time and money (*argent*) that develops and transforms the ideas raised in *Given Time: Counterfeit Money*. Similarly, in 'Declarations of Independence' there is an alternative take on the problem of the signature — that first became famous in 'Signature, Event, Context' — in relation to the framing of the US Constitution. For anyone familiar with Derrida's work, this book hence offers a fascinating insight into the whole process that precedes and motivates his published work, as well as Derrida's responses to the criticisms his work has received over the years — notably, the early lack of ethico-political engagement, and more recently (and strangely) accusations of decisionism.

In an interview with Michael Sprinker, Derrida explains his apparent ethico-political reticence when he was first appointed to the Ecole Normale. To outwardly reject his Marxist/Althusserian counterparts would have risked his position being co-opted by a conservative politics that he has always disavowed. In this long interview conducted in the '80s, we also hear

of Derrida's wish to write a book on Marx, which some time later we know eventuated in *Spectres of Marx*.

However, what might be surprising to some readers is that it is the political import of this collection that gives the volume its structural integrity. It is not a collection of random interviews, an accusation that might be levelled at Peggy Kamuf's collection of interviews with Derrida, *Points*. Rather, oriented around the theme of negotiation, Derrida argues that what is required in all responsible decision-making is to 'negotiate the nonnegotiable'. Moreover, in the interview titled 'Ethics and Politics Today', Derrida represents ethics as the nonnegotiable, and politics as the art of negotiation. He suggests that what is required in many of the issues confronting us today (including terrorism), is a means of negotiating the nonnegotiable and, by implication, a breaching of any arbitrary divide between politics and ethics. There is a difference between them, but one can never, for Derrida, be exclusively ethical or political. Rather, each is implied in and necessary for the other. One can only wonder what kind of response Derrida might have made to Simon Critchley's *The Ethics of Deconstruction*, which argued, to put it crudely, that deconstruction had an ethical component but could not adequately thematise the political.

Of course, even before Critchley's book, deconstruction was accused of lacking this political commitment. In this respect, it is interesting that the idea for *Negotiations* actually came out of a colloquium in the '80s that was pondering such an issue. That it took fifteen years to become a book — albeit a long one at well over 400 pages — is not a reflection of the importance of the task itself, which remains just as necessary today as it was then. For those among us who are still sceptical, this book includes essays by Derrida on the human genome, the French government's treatment of the *sans papiers* (immigrants without passport papers), globalisation, justice, the death penalty in the US, and colonialist reparations for Algeria (where Derrida was born). There is also quite a lot of material on freedom of speech, owing largely to Derrida's association with international political groups like the Collège International de Philosophie, GREPH, the International Parliament of Writers, and PEN. In this regard, an open letter to Bill and Hillary Clinton begging for a retrial for Mumia Abu-Jamal is particularly evocative. This book also contains many discussions about the role of institutions, the role of the law, and how deconstruction can play a role in institutions, at least provided that deconstruction doesn't itself become the institution.

Finally, and related to this insistence upon the political, the theme of the decision recurs throughout this book. Derrida's recent work has been increasingly concerned with the decision, which he argues needs to come from a moment, paradoxically, of undecidability. That is to say that in order for a decision to genuinely be decision, it must move beyond calculative reasoning and beyond any prior preparations for that decision. In this book, Derrida confronts the issue of the decision through the theme of amnesty and reconciliation: the decision to genuinely forgive another person, or nation, must remain heterogeneous to moral calculations, however necessary they

may be. Derrida contends that this 'impossible' aspect of the decision is too often ignored in current international discussions pertaining to colonial reparations. This may not seem to prescribe an easy answer, but what becomes clear from *Negotiations* is that Derrida's ethico-political injunction might be to avoid simplification at all costs.

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William Desmond

Ethics and the Between.

Albany: State University of New York Press
2001. Pp. xiii + 530.

US\$86.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-4847-9);

US\$30.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-4848-7).

In *Ethics and the Between*, William Desmond presents an interesting and phenomenologically rich account of the human ethos. The book stands as the second volume in a trilogy which explores the 'between'-ness of existence. (*Being and the Between* was also published by SUNY Press [1995], and *God and the Between* is forthcoming.) Desmond explains, 'By such a between, I intend an ontological milieu that is overdeterminate: both indeterminate and determinate, taking form in a plurivocal interplay between otherness and sameness, openness and definition, and yet excessive to final fixation' (1). This is an open-ended dialectic, but one whose structure can nevertheless be intricately mapped. For Desmond, the ethical self is situated between autonomy and dependence, between the immediacy of sensation and the mediation of law, between the singularity of the individual and the plurality of the community. To reduce ethical inquiry to a set of fixed rules or possible solutions to specific problems would be to lose sight of the ontological richness of the ethos in which we dwell as selves responding to others.

Desmond writes: 'To be human is to be metaxological: to be in the between, a between we do not first create, within which we become ourselves, though we never become complete masters of ourselves or the between. To be ethical is to be in the milieu of the good, between the conditioned goods we find and create in the web of relativities, and the unconditioned good that is shown or intimates itself in the happening' (6). The texture of this 'between' is conveyed through an exploration of what Desmond calls the different 'potencies' of ethical life. These range from the indeterminate potencies of the idiotic and the aesthetic (sensation, embodiment) through the more determinate poten-

cies of the dianoetic (laws, regularity) and the eudaimonic (happiness with others), and finally to the overdetermined potency of transcending towards God and transcendence as such. The dialectical tension between determinacy and indeterminacy is constitutive of the human ethos; and so the character of this tension forms a central concern of the book. As Desmond claims, 'we are determinate and more than determinate, and much of what we are, as determinate, is itself the crystallization of an indeterminate power of self-surpassing' (12).

Throughout *Ethics and the Between*, Desmond develops the layers of significance held in these potencies by offering interpretations of such ethical *topoi* as freedom, suffering, temptation, sovereignty, will friendship, and community life. But the originality of the book lies less in its structure than in its concrete elaboration of particular ethical phenomena such as bewitchment, generosity, blushing, and so forth. For example: 'A blush is the immediate incarnation of exposure; it is a kind of silent, yet loudly eloquent expression of answerability in the flesh itself' (246). Here, and in many other passages, we get a strong sense that the ethical 'between' is not only a logical structure of different potencies, but a structure that is lived in the body, in a world, and with others.

Ethics and the Between owes a clear debt to both Hegel and Heidegger; in some sense, it situates itself 'between' a Hegelian sense of dialectical tension and a Heideggerian critique of modernity. In so doing, however, the book charts its own course, offering an original account of what it means to exist as a self among others. Desmond demonstrates a deep familiarity with the Western philosophical tradition from Plato and Aristotle to Descartes, Kant and Nietzsche. But throughout *Ethics and the Between*, Desmond self-consciously distances himself from both Anglo-American philosophy and what he calls 'postmodern chatter' (20). As a result, the book sits somewhat uneasily on the shelf; and I suspect that this is part of the point. Desmond shows little interest in situating his inquiry in one or the other stream of contemporary philosophical discourse. This contributes to the charm of the book, its commitment to *thinking* about the various forms of ethical life rather than merely sorting or cataloguing the work of others. But it also contributes to a certain sense of disappointment, as if it were dislocated from a community of contemporaries. At times, precise and original phenomenological insight gives way to what, in the wake of much twentieth-century reflection, has almost become a philosophical commonplace. Haven't we heard these thoughts somewhere before? For example: 'To strip naked before the gaze of another is always to risk being objectified, to risk being an objectifier' (391); 'The basic usurpation is the urge to be God' (297); 'I will to possess, but I end up possessed by what I possess' (210).

The ambitiousness of this book — its interest in addressing the rich plurality of ethical life as such, without responding directly to contemporary scholarship — lays this book open to the risk of vague generality and repetition. As readers, we are told time and again that we are in the realm of the 'between', that ours is a 'metaxological' inquiry. But the contours of

this 'between' are sometimes too familiar, and even traditional. Desmond's account of the family in particular betrays a certain dated conservatism (see, for example, the section entitled, 'Boys will be Boys'). Desmond's chosen terminology leads to such unfortunate phrases as this: 'Women are often closer to the idiotic and the aesthetic, while men are more distanced from sources and origins, from life as a gestation and birth' (405). Given the context, it is clear that Desmond offers this as a sort of compliment to women; but it is less clear that a sentence like this could ever be received in the spirit with which it is offered. Again, the strength of the book lies in its attention to the particulars of ethical life, and falters when the broader structure of 'potencies' imposes its weight.

The clear, accessible prose style of this book makes it a good choice for both the intelligent general reader and the ethical philosopher. In sketching the ontological dimensions of ethics, it makes an important — if also mixed — contribution to current and classical ethical theory.

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Hent de Vries

Religion and Violence: Philosophical Perspectives from Kant to Derrida.

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press
2002. Pp. xxiii + 443.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8018-6767-3);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8018-6768-1).

Hent de Vries' *Religion and Violence: Philosophical Perspectives from Kant to Derrida* builds on his previous work on the role of religion in philosophical thought. The first three chapters of the book contain deconstructive and scholarly readings of, among others, Immanuel Kant (especially *The Conflict of the Faculties* and *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*), Søren Kierkegaard, and Walter Benjamin, in the light of Jacques Derrida's writings on these authors. The fourth and final chapter of the book is a commentary on Derrida's writings on hospitality, friendship, justice and democracy.

The book is inspired by a (re)turn to religion in contemporary philosophy, for instance, in Jean-Luc Nancy, Derrida, and Emmanuel Levinas. De Vries asks how this turn to religious figures is related to contemporary social changes such as multiculturalism and immigration. In regard to religion and violence, de Vries asks: 'why, in questions of ethics and politics, the religious, its intellectual systematization, and its practical instantiation, *must matter*

at all, and second, why in this “permanence of the theologico-political” (to use an expression by Claude Lefort) the question of violence is inescapable and, as it were, omnipresent’ (xvii). Thus, de Vries does not engage with the religious from a theological point of view, but rather from the point of view of practical philosophy in general and, more specifically, from the point of view of the relation between, on the one hand, reason and philosophy and, on the other hand, religion. By ‘religion’ de Vries understands a (formalized) relation to the Other, that is, to that which is beyond conceptualization and knowledge. Violence, too, is understood by de Vries in a generalized manner as the violence towards the Other: Any engagement with the Other and any attempt to include or to do justice to the Other necessarily violate her otherness because this engagement and inclusion is only possible insofar as the Other does not remain absolute Other. For instance, I can only show hospitality towards the Other if I am already sovereign within my own home. In other words, hospitality towards the Other presupposes demarcations of imaginary or physical territories as well as a distancing from the Other.

The generalized notion of religion partakes in what de Vries, following Derrida, refers to as ‘nonsynonymous substitutions’: concepts such as ‘religion’, hospitality, friendship, justice, and democracy-to-come are all attempts to capture that part of the social relation that cannot be captured: Otherness. This is an Otherness that escapes any dialecticization or conceptualization (whether juridical, communicative, and so on). Therefore we are left with the task of substituting different names for it. However, these names are nonsynonymous, that is, never quite the same. There is thus a relation of simultaneous iteration and alteration at work here (what Derrida refers to as iterability). This means that although for instance justice and hospitality are ‘transcendental’ structures, they are always articulated through ultimately contingent institutions or nonsynonymous substitutions. There is always a gap between the transcendental and its concrete institution, but at the same time you cannot have the former without its articulation by the latter. This is why concepts like ‘religion’ and hospitality are marked by iterability: any attempt at capturing the relation to the Other is a little different from other attempts at doing the same, and this difference is irreducible to any conceptual scheme or to mere accident. As a consequence of this iterability, justice, democracy, or hospitality can never be realized unconditionally. Hence there will be recurrent re-articulations of social institutions, and this is a situation to be celebrated rather than disparaged, according to de Vries. Religion, then, becomes one possible site for mediating the transcendental and the empirical, reason and power, and so on, and for rethinking the ways in which community allow for both consensus and dissent. In other words, religion (in the generalized sense of the term) is a way to institutionalize iterability.

Religion and Violence is a rich text with many insightful readings, which it is impossible to do justice to in a review like this. Especially the reading of Kant is insightful and sheds light on the role of religion in Kant’s thought. The commentary on Derrida is illuminating and draws together the different

threads in Derrida's latest writings, although it hardly adds anything to Derrida's own conclusions. Although different parts of the book are valuable contributions to philosophical debates, when the book is viewed as a whole, it is less successful, however.

First, de Vries repeats his points over and over. The only good thing to say about this is that it does to some extent make up for his convoluted style of writing.

Second, it is not clear how the different parts and arguments of the book are related to one another. It is not clear how, for instance, the theme of religion and violence is related to that of religion, philosophy and the university. Likewise, it is not clear how de Vries' commentary on Derrida's notions of hospitality and friendship are related to the other themes. Furthermore, the theme of religion *and* violence — that is, the relationship between religion and violence — is not developed in much depth. As a matter of fact, the book's subtitle — *Philosophical Perspectives from Kant to Derrida* — is a more precise (!) description of the content of the book than *Religion and Violence*.

Third, the reading of Kant is both suggestive and convincing in regard to the theme of religion and philosophy. De Vries shows how Kant's notions of reason, philosophy and the university rely on religious figures. However, de Vries' broader claim that modernity, reason and philosophy should be understood in light of religious and theological figures remains just that: an unsupported claim. This is especially so with regard to the role of religion and religious figures in contemporary philosophy and society.

In conclusion, I have no doubt that Hent de Vries is an excellent philosopher and scholar, but, despite its insights, *Religion and Violence* as a whole is less than successful.

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Rule-Following and Realism.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University
Press 1997. Pp. xvi + 368.

US\$49.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-674-78031-0);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-674-00555-4).

Rule-Following and Realism is an extended discussion of some prominent themes in contemporary philosophy of language, epistemology, and metaphysics; those mentioned in the book's title are merely two among many that Gary Ebbs treats at length. Ebbs' main target is the notion of an *external perspective*, a conception of reality as obtaining independently of the conceptual resources we mobilize in thinking about it. As famous sceptical arguments from Kripke and Quine appear to show, psycho-linguistic meaning seems to find no place in reality so conceived. For Ebbs this an artefact of applying hidden realist standards to meaning's metaphysical standing. A stable countervailing view must take a *participant perspective* as methodologically fundamental. This means attributing conceptual priority to the situated judgements of the participants in a practice, and specifically the practice of language use.

The book is divided into three main sections: 'Rule-Following'; 'The Analytic-Synthetic Distinction'; and 'Anti-Individualism'. In the first part of the book, Ebbs reviews Kripke's and Quine's distinct brands of meaning scepticism, and diagnoses them both as arising from some combination of metaphysical realism and scientific naturalism. The elucidation of Quine in particular is excellent: focussed and insightful, it does not simply retrace familiar ground in Quine-exposition. According to Ebbs, what Kripke and Quine share in spite of their differences is a conviction that the satisfaction-conditions for meaningful assertion are to be evaluated from a perspective external to that of the participants in the linguistic practice. The participants' sense of the well-foundedness of the practice is discounted, and this, Ebbs argues, is what must be called into question. But, he observes, it is unconvincing simply to insist that such an external perspective is flawed. One must actively explore the alternative participant perspective, revealing how the relevant questions about meaning and reference are actually answered from within it.

Much of Part Two is devoted to arguing that Quine's critique of Carnap hinges upon a misunderstanding of Carnap's methodology, which in Ebbs' view amounts to a proto-version of the participant perspective. The conventionalist overtone of Carnap's treatment of logic and mathematics is properly understood as a pragmatic conviction that these practices are only intelligible from within a metalanguage shared by the practitioners. This is very interesting material that reflects some deep thinking about Quine and Carnap, and vindicates the latter quite convincingly. When the discussion turns to Putnam in Chapter Six, the participant perspective is more explicitly utilized. Ebbs is sympathetic to Putnam's tendency to take linguistic practice,

actual and counterfactual, as fundamental. A review of Putnam's discussion of the A-S distinction, seen through the lens of the participant perspective, serves to introduce the further Putnamian theme of anti-individualism, or semantic externalism. Part Three, substantially the longest, takes up the views defended by Putnam and Tyler Burge on this issue. The discussion aims to separate those elements that privilege the participant perspective from the metaphysically realist elements to which they have often been wedded — especially through the influence of Kripke on the topic.

In sum, the goal appears to be a strongly pragmatist version of the use theory of meaning, invoked to defuse scepticism about self-knowledge, linguistic and otherwise. The success of the project is hard to assess, though, simply because no overall thesis is very clearly identified. Ebbs advises at the outset: 'Some may wish I had skipped these [reconstructive] details and stated my own position directly. But the reconstructions are integral to my method of working through alternative points of view. My position is inextricably tied to my method' (4). Asking Ebbs to skip the reconstructions of his interlocutors' views would be silly and unfair, but this has nothing to do with asking for his own position to be stated directly, or sketched in the form of an argument. There is a related lack of detailed definitions for the main stalking horses. Metaphysical realism goes undefined in any detail, in the discussion of Kripke, and the fine discussion of Quine also becomes slippery when we get to Ebbs' introduction of the participant perspective and its relation to scientific naturalism. In neither case does the sceptical argument receive a direct reply. We are left uncertain about exactly what the problem is, on pain of which we must adopt the participant perspective.

The choices of literature for discussion are sometimes quite idiosyncratic. For example, Ebbs' point about the need for a positive alternative to the external perspective could surely have been argued directly. In fact, he extracts it in Chapter Three from an extended critique, of John McDowell's critique, of Crispin Wright and Kripke, on Wittgenstein, on rule-following. This rather uncontextualized detour through the middle of an abstruse debate does not advance the overall project of the book. Some important literature is also notable by its absence: there is neither discussion nor mention of the vigorous recent literature on the relation between externalism and self-knowledge, following on from Michael McKinsey's 'Anti-Individualism and Privileged Access' (*Analysis* 1991).

A more aggressive editing might have been in order throughout. Ebbs is attached to the use of scare quotes to indicate his distrust of a word or phrase's typical philosophical use. Aesthetic considerations aside, this can be deeply confusing: the scare quotes are often interspersed among both genuine phrasal quotations alluding to some author's actual words, and Ebbs' frequent use of quotation marks and indented text to indicate things that an interlocutor *might* say. This lessens the clarity of Ebbs' thought, and for no apparent positive trade-off. Once a caution about an expression is explicitly declared, is there really a need to say that 'Kripke's skeptical reasoning fosters the feeling that we have "discovered" metaphysical requirements for

the “objectivity” of meaning and assertion”? Whether Quine is concerned about an arbitrary choice between translations, or an arbitrary ‘“choice”’ between translations, is a distinction of uncertain utility but palpable awkwardness.

The lack of overall argumentative structure, the uneven relevance, and the occasionally difficult style combine to make *Rule-Following and Realism* unsuitable for any course save perhaps a graduate reading seminar. That is a shame, because Ebbs really does have scholarly and philosophical contributions on display throughout the book. The idea of the participant perspective, in particular, rewards a charitable reading and is worth further critical discussion. Certainly Ebbs displays a breadth of interest and a depth of thought that promise a unified and clearly argued account of the participant perspective. *Rule-Following and Realism*, however, occasionally resembles only notes for such a book.

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Anna Elisabetta Galeotti

Toleration as Recognition.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2002.

Pp. viii + 242.

US\$60.00. ISBN 0-521-80676-3.

As recent discussion in political philosophy has shown, the liberal theory of toleration can be unpacked in many ways. By no means could one say that there is a consensus on how a liberal theory of toleration should be constructed.

Anna Elisabetta Galeotti is professor of political philosophy at Università del Piemonte Orientale at Vercelli, Italy. She has published many significant articles and books in political theory during the last decade. The complexity of the philosophical landscape of liberalism and toleration is critically examined in her recent book, and she offers an interesting theoretical contribution of her own. Meanwhile, illustrating the consequences of her theory, she also addresses some hotly debated practical problems in contemporary politics.

The book falls into two parts. The first deals with the liberal theory of toleration, how it has been developed and what the basic problems of the various positions are. Galeotti provides a valuable overview of the recent discussions, mapping out two types of contested liberal theories, neutralism and perfectionism. Neutralism is the view that toleration, basically, is ‘the

principle by means of which liberal institutions are legitimated' (28). On this view, liberalism is procedural, based on state neutrality and toleration. As such, it has been argued, the procedural neutrality is presupposed if social fairness is to be achieved in a socially diversified society. By contrast, perfectionism regards liberalism as a moral good, a political value that can be theoretically and practically contested. On this view, liberalism 'necessarily presupposes a conception of the human good, which is not simply procedural, but also ethically substantive' (37). Therefore, its conception of toleration can only accommodate social differences insofar they are compatible with the basic ethical conception.

Thus perfectionism endorses an exclusive liberalism. Galeotti argues that this conception of liberalism makes 'toleration too restricted in scope to have any social relevance' (51), and consequently she opts for neutralism while recognizing its shortcomings if it is taken in a purist way, that is to say, if it is based on an abstract conception of individualism. Above all, Galeotti argues, purist neutralism, as perfectionism, fails to accommodate the problem of symbolic discrimination against social groups in public space (for example, the Islamic veil, seen as symbol) and official practice (for example, public holidays, which support the religion of the majority). This problem, as Galeotti presents it, consists in the fact that certain social groups that are deviant from the perspective of the political mainstream are excluded from social recognition. These groups, on the traditional view, should be tolerated by the liberal mainstream, but the differences between their views and the dominant view 'are understood only as disadvantages to be compensated' (61). As already indicated, a significant part of this problem, Galeotti argues, is that neutralist as well as perfectionist liberalism is based on individualism rather than on social identity. Hence, there will be a symbolic discrimination against certain groups — groups that endorse views incompatible with individualism, given the mainstream conception of it. Such groups are not socially recognized, and individuals in these groups are thus excluded from full citizenship.

Galeotti seeks to address this problem, while also taking seriously the philosophical challenges of communitarians and multiculturalists; she therefore tries to expand the liberal neutralist conception of toleration in terms of symbolic recognition. This should not be understood as if the minority views, which are regarded as deviant views by the majority, are recognized for their intrinsic value, since that would be incompatible with neutralism. It should rather be interpreted instrumentally, as recognition of the value the views have for the individuals holding them, this enabling an active symbolic recognition of different views (as long as no third party is harmed). Galeotti argues that this option avoids the problem of traditional neutralism, which is incapable of distributing symbolic recognition of the views of minorities.

The second part of the book contains of three exemplary cases, where Galeotti applies the main conclusions of her theory: Islamic veiling, racism, and same-sex marriages. This part of the volume speaks strongly to the

theoretical value of her approach, demonstrating as it does the applicability of the theory to contested political issues.

To sum up, Galeotti's book on liberal toleration is lucid, balanced and very well argued, and thus it is a significant contribution to an urgent and ongoing debate. It gives also an informative overview of that debate. Strongly recommended.

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William Galston

Liberal Pluralism: The Implications of Value Pluralism for Political Theory and Practice.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2002.

Pp. ix + 137.

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US\$19.00 (paper: ISBN 0-521-01249-X).

Many liberals argue that autonomy is liberalism's basic value, but Galston argues that this monist view too readily sweeps other valuable goods under the rug. The significance of this book is Galston's attempt to steer contemporary liberalism from its imperialistic tendencies to impose autonomy on all citizens. He wants liberalism to become more pluralistic, while still having the state encourage a minimal set of values and virtues. This is an important task, which Galston fills with elegance and clarity. Galston's goals are sometimes at odds with another, which is not a fatal problem, since political life is often filled with conflicting goals, as a pluralist like Galston would note. Yet Galston could have better noted some of the tensions inherent in his argument.

Galston's pluralism is directly inspired by Isaiah Berlin. Galston, like Berlin, argues that there are many goods in the world; one cannot say that one good is better than another. Who can say that listening to Mozart is better than reading Rousseau? They are incommensurable goods. Galston insists that our most difficult choices are not between good and evil but between good and good in both our personal and political lives. But sometimes Galston overdraws the contrast between monist and pluralists. Autonomy-based liberalism — the monism that Galston mostly argues against here — does not pretend to choose between Mozart and Rousseau for citizens, but would happily agree that this is a personal choice. These liberals would then argue that individuals in the liberal state should be properly equipped to make this

choice, which means educating them to be autonomous. It may be that the argument between autonomy-based liberalism and Galston's liberalism is not so much between monism and pluralism, but between those who want to encourage individual diversity, regardless of its effects on group differences, and liberals who want citizens to be allowed to opt out of the reigning autonomous ideal. It is not that one must wholly choose between individual diversity and group difference, but it does seem likely that emphasizing one will put some limits on the other.

Galston does not believe that political pluralism means allowing parents and groups to raise their children as they wish. He maintains that while pluralists look at the world in terms of incommensurable goods, this does not mean all values should be treasured. Galston insists that we must preserve a minimum area of personal freedom. The state may allow different kinds of lives in its midst, but it also must insist that every community allow its members to exit if they wish. This means that communities lack the coercive power to prohibit exit, and that all children need to be educated so they can understand and evaluate the world outside their community. Yet Galston is careful not to overemphasize civic education and he insists that the special relationship between parents and children be given considerable leeway.

Galston also argues that a state must embrace certain minimal values to sustain order, but beyond these values the state should allow people to live as they choose. But order is not the same as citizenship, and Galston usually wants the values of order to be defined minimally, including clear and stable property relations, the rule of law, public authority able to enforce the laws, an economic order that does not allow cavernous gap between rich and poor, and a widely though not necessarily universally shared sense of membership. While Galston rightly insists upon the distinction between liberalism and civic republican in this book, the last two conditions of public order smack more of the civic republicanism than of liberalism, and are certainly more controversial than Galston admits.

Galston also adds on another condition: that core public purposes should be honored by the state. He argues that it is right to deny tax-exempt status to Bob Jones University since it bans interracial dating. Yet on the next page Galston defends the right of a fundamentalist school to fire a pregnant teacher, since the school believes that mothers of young children should be at home. Susan Okin is surely right to ask why it is legitimate to burden racial discrimination by private institutions, but not gender discrimination. The core public purpose argument is tricky for Galston, since core public purposes can certainly be defined expansively.

Yet these tensions within Galston's argument highlight one of the crucial points he makes: that the modern state is large and ubiquitous in our lives. Given this, liberals need to be careful about granting the state endless authority for interference in people's lives. This hardly means that the state's role in guiding public life is illegitimate, but it does mean that when possible and consistent with public order we should try to define the state's role as minimally as possible. The tensions within Galston's argument hardly de-

tracts from this pressing reminder in this important statement of contemporary liberalism.

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Stephen Gaukroger

Descartes' System of Natural Philosophy.
New York: Cambridge University Press 2002.
Pp. viii + 258.
US\$60.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-80897-9);
US\$22.00 (paper: ISBN 0-521-00525-6).

In 1642 Descartes informed Mersenne that he wanted to publish his thoughts on natural philosophy under the title *Summa Philosophiae*, a title designed to help the book 'gain a better reception among the Schoolmen, who are now persecuting it and trying to smother it at birth.' The title ultimately adopted by Descartes was *Principia Philosophiae*, published in Latin in 1644 and in French in 1647. The book contains the entirety of Descartes' system of natural philosophy, something he had worked on steadily throughout his early career but whose details were already fully in place by 1633. Why then this relatively late presentation of the natural philosophy? As Gilson (and others) have famously noted, Descartes wanted the *Principles* to replace the textbooks of Scholastic-Aristotelian philosophy, and thus to undermine Aristotle from within the French educational system. To this end he may even have been willing to falsify some of his metaphysical views — those on free will, for example — in order to bring them into accord with those of the Sorbonne Jesuits. And Descartes' aims were ambitious: he wanted to write definitively about everything from the rainbow to the passions of the soul, from the development of stars to that of the embryo.

The *Principles* was, however, never completed. Although we have a full account of the non-human material world, the last two sections — one on 'Living Things', the other on 'Man' — remain unfinished. Perhaps in part as a result of this, the *Principles* has received far less scholarly attention over the years than has the *Meditations*, a fact which makes Stephen Gaukroger's latest book a most welcome addition to the critical literature on Descartes. There is perhaps no commentator still alive who commands both as synoptic a view of Descartes' philosophy in general and as precise an understanding of Cartesian natural science in particular as does Gaukroger. His task is

straightforward: he wants to reconstruct in full the text of the *Principles*. Most of the details that would have been contained in the last two sections are imported from, respectively, *The Treatise on Man* and *The Passions of the Soul*.

After placing the *Principles* in the fuller context of Descartes' corpus, Gaukroger begins his book by very usefully locating Descartes' textbook within the Scholastic textbook tradition. There are some illuminating historical insights here. For example, Gaukroger argues that the late Scholastic tradition — beginning around the time of the fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517) — is presented with a tension between natural philosophy and theology. Metaphysics is no longer thought to be a viable bridge between theology and natural philosophy. The wedge between the two is provided by the revival of the Averroist doctrine of 'double truth' — the idea that the two branches of inquiry might generate independently legitimate but mutually incommensurable truths. The response to this crisis on the part of the Jesuit textbook authors is twofold: 'to show how the truths of a Christianised Aristotelianism could be derived from first principles, and to show how this was a single, coherent, comprehensive system' (49). Descartes' project in the *Principles* is of a piece with this general aim. But although he continues the Jesuitical project of reconciliation — by, for instance, couching the legitimatory metaphysics of the early sections of the book in the Aristotelian vocabulary of substances and modes — Descartes manages in the process to transform utterly the contents of natural philosophy.

In Part I of the *Principles*, Descartes lays out the principles of human knowledge. There is little here that goes beyond the detailed account of this subject provided in the *Meditations*, but Gaukroger makes some helpful interpretive suggestions where the two texts do seem to diverge. For instance, in discussing our knowledge of the existence of the self, Gaukroger claims that for the Descartes of the *Principles* such knowledge is inferential. We begin from a clear and distinct apprehension of essentially mental properties and move inferentially to the existence of something capable of bearing just such properties. It might be tempting to read this presentation of the problem back into the *Meditations*, with disastrous interpretive results. The *cogito* cannot be an inference for the simple reason that inference as such is suspect in Meditation Two, with the evil genius afoot. Gaukroger however does not make this mistake, reminding us that deduction is not for Descartes a logic of metaphysical *discovery*, and that the *Principles*, at least in this branch of philosophy, is not about the discovery of first principles.

Gaukroger is less careful however in his discussion of the relation between a non-deceiving God and our clear and distinct ideas. He argues that after the *Regulae* — that is, after the 1620s — Descartes for the first time begins to think of clarity and distinctness as requiring a divine guarantee to support it. This strategy, Gaukroger claims, is found paradigmatically in the *cogito*, which is legitimated not by 'some procedure which is simple and generates real results (as was the case in the *Regulae*), but [by] a divine guarantee whose workings are, and will remain, a complete mystery to us' (83). This

cannot be right. If it were, Descartes would, as Arnauld suspected was the case, be trapped in a viciously circular argument in Meditation Three — the divine guarantee would be required to buttress truths whose purpose is to establish the existence of a truth-buttressing God. Descartes moreover knew about this problem, and denied explicitly that God is required in such a role: He at most guarantees the truth of *remembered* clearly and distinctly grasped truths.

Gaukroger is, as ever, on much firmer ground when discussing the science. His account of Descartes' cosmology is a case in point. The going view among commentators — including Gaukroger himself, earlier — is that Descartes neglects to write about the most contentious implication of his Copernican cosmology — that the Earth moves — because he feared the Roman Inquisition. But, according to Gaukroger, the doctrine of the *Principles* is simply not ambiguous on the question of heliocentrism. Not only does Descartes not suggest that the whole cosmos rotates around the Earth, but he ventures the truly radical hypothesis that there are multiple, locally heliocentric systems. This claim, Gaukroger notes, harbours 'far more radical consequences for established natural philosophy and theology than [bare] heliocentrism' (144). Moreover, the Cartesian universe is one in which whole solar systems collapse as a result of the formation of spots on stars — hardly the theory of someone trying to 'placate the Roman Inquisition' (154).

There is an equally fascinating analysis of the vortex theory. We post-Newtonians are perhaps inclined simply to disdain the idea, but this attitude fails to appreciate the historical importance of Cartesian vortices. The theory of vortices dominated cosmology before the publication of Newton's *Principia* precisely because with it Descartes had provided the first comprehensive mechanist cosmology. Indeed, Newton's system had one huge disadvantage over its competitor: it postulated the existence of what Cartesians considered an 'occult force', gravitation, something seemingly requiring action at a distance. Moreover, the vortex theory remained prominent on the Continent well after Newton. Variations of it were significant features of the explanations of magnetism put forward by prize winning scientists like Euler and Daniel and Jean Bernoulli. If fecundity is a measure of a good scientific theory, then there is a good deal more 'truth' to vortices than we might have expected.

Gaukroger ends his book with an intriguing suggestion. The importance of Descartes as a natural philosopher is not so much a product of the theories he propounded. Rather, it is in defining for modernity the project of *scientia*. Even more precisely, it lies in giving us a picture of the natural philosopher as an ideal type. Descartes was as much interested in reforming philosophers as philosophy. Who is the natural philosopher? Someone with a distinctive cognitive capacity, but one that is also moral: the ability to stand back from thoughts, feelings, and prejudices, in order to test all truth-candidates against the criterion of clarity and distinctness, guided by the knowledge that God guarantees a fit between such ideas and the world. To this extent, the *Principles* fulfills the reconciling task Gaukroger assigns to it, and Gaukroger

himself, aside from a few slips, provides as reliable a guide to its complex structure as is currently available to us.

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**Eric Katz, Andrew Light and
David Rothenberg, eds.**

*Beneath the Surface: Critical Essays in the
Philosophy of Deep Ecology.*

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2000.

Pp. xxiv + 328.

US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-262-11252-3);

US\$27.00 (paper: ISBN 0-262-61149-X).

This book is a rich treasure-trove of speculation, scholarship, close critical reasoning, and philosophical poetics inspired by the influential but complicated-to-define movement within environmental thought called 'deep ecology'. Lest there be any confusion, deep ecology is not a branch of the science of ecology, but a partially theoretical, partially activist philosophical movement founded by Arne Naess, the influential Norwegian thinker. Naess sought to distinguish his movement terminologically from what he called 'shallow ecology', environmental thought and action based on the implicit or explicit assumption that action to save and protect the Earth is merely or primarily for the benefit of humans. Naess and other 'deeps' argue that we need to do nothing less than rethink and restructure our whole relationship to the other life with which we share this small planet, in such a way as to see human existence as merely an interdependent part of a much larger skein of life. Our whole ethical orientation, say the deeps, should be *biocentric*, and not merely anthropocentric — not merely because this would conduce to our longer-term survival on this planet, but because that is in the very nature of ethical and philosophical maturation.

The editors take pains to explain that this book is not meant to be a comprehensive review of all aspects of deep ecology; in particular, they skirt many politically charged questions such as population control, wilderness preservation, and 'the economic imperialism of international environmental programs' (xxii). The views of some deeps on these questions have been scathingly criticized by authors such as Ynestra King and Ramachandra Guha, who charge that deep ecology is anti-human, or little more than colonialism under a different name. Katz et al hardly mean to deny the cogency and importance of these debates, but they claim — and with much

justice — that the core theoretical ideas of deep ecology are philosophically rich enough in their own right to deserve a book of analysis and criticism.

The book is divided into two parts, and contains fourteen papers in all. Part I, *Deep Ecology and Its Critics*, consists of papers by John Clark, Eric Katz, William Grey, Val Plumwood, Mathew Humphrey, Ariel Salleh, and Andrew Light; Part II, *New Horizons for Deep Ecology*, has papers by David Rothenberg, Michael E. Zimmerman, Arran Gare, Jonathan Maskit, Knut A. Jacobsen, Deane Curtin, and Bron Taylor.

Clark provides a useful literature review, and argues that Naess' version of deep ecology is inclusive enough to obviate the nasty bickering that has gone on between some competing ecophilosophers. Katz offers a challenging argument that deep ecology, ironically perhaps, remains beset by anthropocentrism despite its best intentions to transcend that presumed vice. Grey offers a friendly but incisive critique of the late Richard Sylvan's Deep Green theory, which Sylvan offered as an alternative to deep ecology. Plumwood's paper is explicitly political; she warns that certain aspects of deep ecology could be co-opted in defence of the commodification of nature. Humphrey criticizes the deep ecological suggestion that the morally right actions will follow merely from expanding the Self; he insists that there is an irreducible need for concrete principles of morality. Salleh serves up a wide-ranging ecofeminist critique of what she calls idealist tendencies in deep ecology, which ignore the fact that philosophical theorizing is impossible without the material production often carried out by exploited persons. Light explores the tension between J. Baird Callicott's moral monism and Naess' pluralism in environmental ethics, and comes down in favour of the latter from a pragmatist viewpoint.

David Rothenberg opens Part II with an exploration of Naess' poetic metaphysics; Naess' ecophilosophy, says Rothenberg, 'is an environmental ontology, not an environmental ethic' (157) — or, at the very least, an environmental ethic grounded in an ontology. (This is one of the most interesting papers in the book, showing the connections between Naess' environmental thought and classical epistemological and metaphysical problems in philosophy.) Zimmerman's rich paper is difficult to summarize: he reviews his own troubled dalliance with Heidegger, and concludes that Ken Wilber offers a better view of a religiosity that sees divinity as both transcendent to and immanent in nature. Gare explores parallels between deep ecology and anti- and post-modernism. Maskit takes us from ontology and religion to a more down-to-earth discussion of material consumption; in contrast to Rothenberg, Maskit claims that Naess' metaphysics of the Self is 'mythological' (227) and that 'deep ecology is fundamentally a political and economic theory which necessitates an ethics' (223). Jacobsen presents a fascinating and detailed analysis of the extent to which deep ecology can be understood as a realization of the philosophy of the *Bhagavadgita*. But Naess' thought has roots in both Hinduism and Buddhism, and Curtin explores the latter with sensitivity and insight. And finally Bron Taylor distinguishes highly theorized deep ecology from what he calls 'deep ecology on the ground'

(270), and argues that the latter is often guilty of over-simplification of very complex issues.

This book contains much that will be of the greatest interest to those philosophers and students of ecophilosophy who have been following the intense debates between varying brands of deep ecology and similar ecophilosophies in the past two or three decades. But, as the rainforests burn, environmental activists are likely to become impatient with what they may well see as pointless scholastic disputations between ecotheorists. Their understandable impatience should serve as a spur to the philosophically inclined to keep their feet on the ground. Ecological theory has to cash out in practice; one of Naess' foundational principles was that ecophilosophers have to work both sides of the theoretical/practical street. But at the same time Naess was surely right to insist that ecoactivism, like all human action, cannot avoid the need for philosophical grounding.

In fact, all of the authors in this collection are trying hard (and in most cases trying successfully) to rise beyond academic quibbling and construct conceptual tools that can take into account the incredible complexity of the environmental problem. I heartily recommend this book to anyone interested in ecological philosophy.

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Peter Kosso

Knowing The Past: Philosophical Issues of History and Archaeology.

New York: Humanity Books 2001. Pp. 200.
US\$45.00. ISBN 1-57392-907-7.

Recent years have seen a steady increase in the attention paid by philosophers of science to fields outside of physics and biology, the two sciences that have dominated discussion in past. Peter Kosso's *Knowing the Past* is a part of this trend, attempting to bring archaeology and history into the fold. This is an admirable project: theory, observation, confirmation and the like are important parts of any field of research, and the philosophy of science can only benefit from expanding its horizons in this way. Unfortunately, Kosso's book is only partially successful in breaking new ground.

Central to the discussion of archaeology and history is what Kosso calls the 'essential tension' of the theory-ladenness of observation: how we understand our present observations (of archaeological remains or historical accounts) depends partly on our theories of the events of the past, and partly

on our theories of how those events determine what we presently observe. This need to 'impose information in order to discover information' (25), raises the concern that our theories of the past may reflect our current values and beliefs more than those of the past. This is a familiar predicament in the sciences: our observations are often said to be 'laden' with our theories of how our instruments (including our own sensory and cognitive apparatus) work. Kosso's main aim is to show that though this tension complicates the task of justifying claims about the past, it does not make justification unattainable.

The book is essentially divided into two parts (there is a third part containing only a concluding chapter). The first part focuses on conceptual issues in epistemology, with Kosso arguing for a 'middle way' approach between the extremes of foundationalism and coherence. Epistemic foundationalists argue that there are incontrovertible 'foundational' facts forming the basis of all justified claims, while coherentists argue that internal coherence is sufficient to justify a set of claims. Kosso argues for a 'weighted coherence' model intended to take the best of both views: foundationalism is rejected since all claims require external justification, and yet simple coherence is rejected in that some claims are more 'weighty' than others, and thus sets of explanations preserving more weighty claims are to be preferred over those rejecting them.

Kosso's most interesting conceptual arguments concern the interplay *between* history and archaeology (Chapter Four). Historians and archaeologists, says Kosso, often cite the agreement between their two fields as evidence of the truth of claims about the past. Since the two disciplines approach their subjects through apparently independent means, their agreement would seem to argue strongly for the truth of those claims. Kosso spends considerable effort examining the nature of this independence, arguing that the necessary form of epistemic independence needed for mutual corroboration does not necessarily accompany historical and archaeological claims simply in virtue of their being claims made by different disciplines. Pairs of claims must be examined to ensure that one is not tacitly part of the justification of the other.

The second half of the book develops the conceptual framework in three chapters describing case studies in archaeology and history. The first (Chapter Six) examines the interplay between historical and archaeological evidence for an Athenian cleruchy (a type of colonial settlement) on the Mediterranean island of Euboea. The evidence for such a settlement consists of several historical references to cleruchies being established on the islands of Andros, Naxos, and Euboea, but there is no record of precisely where the settlements were located. Archaeological evidence, such as the common patterns of inscription found on the remains of clay pots, suggests an interaction between specific communities on these three islands. The hypothesis is that a particular site on the southern tip of Euboea was the location of an Athenian cleruchy. The philosophical interest lies in showing that though archaeological evidence is used to interpret historical remarks

and vice versa, the two lines of inquiry can lend each other mutual support without circularity.

The second case study looks at the archaeological record of the development of settlements on the island of Crete. The question for archaeologists is whether a number of similarly sized states developed on the island in unison, only later to be dominated by the city of Knossos, or whether Knossos was always the dominant political centre of the island. The philosophical interest is in the use of 'central place theory' to model the political influence of settlements based on their size and distribution, and subsequently to argue for a particular theory of the development of states on Crete. Kosso argues that though central place theory itself is not incontrovertible, it can still be used as part of the justification for another set of claims, provided that together they form the best explanation of the archaeological record.

Kosso's third case study examines the veracity of Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian war in the fifth century BCE. Since Thucydides' is the only available account of the war and since there is little archaeological evidence to confirm or disprove his claims, the veracity of his account must be assessed on purely 'internal' features of the text. Kosso considers a variety of such features, though in the end the only strong conclusion he draws is that logical inconsistencies in the text are indicative of falsehoods.

The book suffers somewhat from its layout: the early 'conceptual' chapters take up the majority of space, and yet offer little that is new to philosophers already familiar with contemporary epistemology or philosophy of science. Readers already familiar with the Quinean 'web of belief' may want to begin in the middle and use the book's glossary for terminological reference. The more appealing 'empirical' chapters of the second half provide interesting case studies of evidence and justification in history and archaeology, though there is unfortunately little discussion of any features *peculiar* to archaeology or history rather than more general problems of epistemology. This book may be more effective as an introduction to philosophy for archaeologists and historians, rather than an examination of archaeology and history for philosophers. However, those looking for a supplement to introductory readings in the philosophy of science may find this an appealing choice.

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Elmar J. Kremer and Michael J. Latzer, eds.
The Problem of Evil in Early Modern Philosophy.
Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001.
Pp. vi + 179.
Cdn\$/US\$60.00. ISBN 0-8020-3552-3.

This book grew out of a conference on the problem of evil in early modern philosophy held at the University of Toronto. The book will be of interest both to scholars of the period, and to readers with a more general interest in the perennially fascinating problem of how to reconcile God's traditional characteristics — benevolence and omnipotence — with the undoubted fact of evil in the world. The period is well-represented; the book incorporates papers on the philosophers whom everyone at once associates with the period, like Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, and also on less widely-taught, though certainly no less interesting, figures like Suarez and Bayle.

Frequently the problem of evil is addressed by attempting to explain why a good and all-powerful God has permitted evil in the world, that is, to give a rational justification of God's ways. But another way to answer the problem of evil is to refrain from answering, or to deny the possibility of a rational justification — in other words, to fall back on a mystical response.

Leibniz, certainly, wants to offer a rational justification. Robert C. Sleigh Jr.'s contribution analyses Leibniz's several approaches to evil; Sleigh argues that God's physical concurrence in evil is the most difficult problem for Leibniz to solve. God's concurrence in evil is a wide-ranging theme: if God is to be the first cause of everything, then there must be some way of explaining how God's causal role evades moral responsibility for sin.

Alfred J. Freddoso gives an account of Suarez' ingenious manner of reconciling these. God's concurrence is required for every act of any agent; but this concurrence is different for free and for non-free agents. God offers concurrence to non-free agents only in cases where the effect in fact occurs. However, Suarez' robust notion of freedom means that God's concurrence must be offered to do an act A, not to do A, or to do some other act in place of A; and these must be real options. Thus Suarez can claim that God is the cause of the act in its being, but not in its sinfulness.

We see the mystical response to the problem of evil in Descartes and in Bayle. Michael J. Latzer presents Descartes as someone who has been pushed, as it were, into an appeal to mystery as a solution to the problem of evil. But even allowing an appeal to mystery, Latzer argues, Descartes' insistence on God's absolute power — the doctrine that God could make a mountain without a valley or a circle in which the radii are not equal — means that the necessity of error cannot save Descartes' view. God could easily have made a world which was perfect, and contained no evil at all. The fact that God did not makes us question God's morals.

D. Anthony Lariviere and Thomas Lennon's account of Bayle's response to the problem of evil, as shown by his treatment of various heresies, shows that he also rejects the possibility of a rational solution of the problem of evil.

Bayle's perspective on the Manichean and Socinian heresies is that both are rational responses to the problem of evil. However, the fact that these rational responses end in heresy shows that reason is not the appropriate tool to use in coming to terms with evil. Faith in a good God to whom one might bear a moral relation, combined with a commitment to toleration and conscience, is the 'solution' to the problem of evil.

A neo-Stoic thread runs through this period, and is addressed in Donald Rutherford's paper, which argues that the differences between Leibniz and the ancient Stoics are fewer than may appear. Of course, Leibniz, unlike the Stoics, held that the immortality of the soul provides us with a second chance, so to speak, at virtue rewarded. But both Leibniz and the Stoics thought that apparent evils and imbalances are all part of the perfection of the whole; and also that we can strive to contribute to what we understand of that order. True happiness results from an active participation in God's plan, in the knowledge that whatever happens happens by God's will. Rutherford questions whether it is ultimately possible to reconcile Leibniz's view with his Christianity.

Orthodoxy is, of course, a general issue for this period. Elmar Kremer argues that Leibniz's concern with orthodoxy did not extend to sending unbaptized babies to hell — in effect, Leibniz made original sin more a disposition to sin than actual sin.

Spinoza would seem to be uninterested in orthodoxy, but Steven Nadler sees Spinoza as taking a certain trend in medieval Jewish thought to its ultimate conclusion. Nadler argues that Spinoza denies personal immortality of the soul, but personal immortality is not required for virtue to be rewarded. Virtue is its own reward in this sense: by increasing our participation in eternal knowledge we decrease our disturbance by vicissitudes of chance.

Graeme Hunter, on the other hand, argues that Spinoza is a radical Protestant, whose aim is to reform or to rectify an old religion not to found a new one. Hunter argues that Spinoza need not be seen as a fatalist; he might consistently have thought that a loving providence rules our lives.

Denis Moreau emphasizes Malebranche's differences from other early modern theodicies. Malebranche was determined to affirm the positivity or reality of evil. Malebranche's God is in a dilemma: on the one hand, God would prefer that there be no particular evil; but on the other hand, God's wisdom dictates that God's ways be as simple as possible. The simplicity of the ways sometimes requires that there be meaningless evils. Moreau sees Malebranche's approach as a courageous innovation that paves the way for later thinkers like Voltaire, as well as for Simone Weil and Hans Jonas.

Kremer and Latzer also provide a useful introduction that picks out these threads and others, including predestination, the nature of free will, and the new science of the period.

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Thomas Kuhn

The Road Since Structure: Philosophical Essays, 1970-1993, With an Autobiographical Interview.

James Conant and John Haugeland, eds.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2000.

Pp. vii + 335.

US\$25.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-45798-2);

US\$18.00 (paper: ISBN 0-226-45799-0).

Thomas Kuhn's 1962 *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is surely one of the most influential books of the last few decades. Written with the aim of pursuing history for philosophical ends, in *Structure* Kuhn explored a number of major transformations in the history of science and from these drew various conclusions about the nature of scientific change. Science, Kuhn argued, was not gradual and cumulative in ways it was generally agreed to be in the early 1960s. Rather, the chief turning points in the history of science should be understood in terms of paradigm shifts. In making this case, Kuhn did however not believe he had undermined or diminished the authority of science or questioned the value of the customary scientific procedures of rational debate and validation. For Kuhn, science was a social undertaking, but his historical actors investigated a real world.

Given that *Structure* was published over thirty years before Kuhn's death in 1996, and that much of Kuhn's post-1962 work was concerned with elaborations on and responses to criticisms of ideas expounded in that volume, it is surprising that Kuhn never published a monograph pulling together the various strands of his changing thoughts. In fact the only monograph he published post-*Structure*, *Black-Body Theory and the Quantum Discontinuity 1894-1912*, was centered on a narrow aspect of turn-of-the-century physics. This was a work very much of the history of science, but one that puzzled many readers. Where were the attempts to draw broad philosophical points from the examination of this historical episode? Where were the accounts of paradigms and paradigm shifts, incommensurability, and scientific revolutions? It was as if the author of *Black Body Theory* had never heard of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, let alone written it.

Kuhn was indeed working towards a follow-up to *Structure*, but this was not completed in his lifetime, as the editors of *The Road Since Structure*, James Conant and John Haugeland, note. Conant and Haugeland will also edit what were in effect early drafts of this planned book and publish it separately. *The Road Since Structure* is instead conceived of as a sequel to, and as modeled upon, Kuhn's earlier collection, *The Essential Tension. Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change* published in 1977. Whereas *The Essential Tension* was largely historical, *The Road Since Structure* is composed mostly of lengthy philosophical essays written in the years after 1970.

The Road Since Structure is divided into three parts. 'Reconceiving Scientific Revolutions', 'Comments and Replies' and an edited version of a lengthy discussion/interview with Kuhn from 1995. The book ends with a list of Kuhn's publications. A few of the chapters in *The Road Since Structure* have already attracted a wide audience. They include, for example, 'Reflections on My Critics', first published in 1970 in the well-known Lakatos and Musgrave edited *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge: Proceedings of the International Colloquium in the Philosophy of Science* (Cambridge University Press 1965). Other chapters are perhaps less well known. Among these, for instance, is 'The Trouble with the Historical Philosophy of Science', a robust assault on the so-called strong program in the sociology of scientific knowledge. First published in booklet form by the Department of History of Science at Harvard in 1992, this paper will now reach a broader readership.

The two sections of the book that reprint Kuhn's writings centre on four chief topics, all of them linked more or less closely with central themes from *Structure* but which Kuhn later developed further: 1) the defense of the view 'that science is a cognitive empirical investigation of nature that exhibits a unique sort of progress ...'. (2); 2) 'science is fundamentally a social undertaking' (3); 3) the exploration of the idea that there is an analogy 'between scientific progress and evolutionary biological development,' (3), and 4) and most importantly in the opinion of the editors, 'the elaboration of the idea of incommensurability, in particular, its linguistic reformulation.'

The Road Since Structure ends with a lengthy 1995 discussion/interview between Kuhn and three philosopher colleagues. This discussion ranges across his whole life and provides an interesting context for many of the ideas and issues raised elsewhere in the volume, as well as providing a sense of the intellectual trajectory that led to *Structure*, as well as his responses to various criticisms of that work.

One of the striking aspects of the interview is the way Kuhn insists that he should be seen a philosopher rather than a historian. After several years at Harvard where he completed a Ph.D. in physics and then taught the history of science, Kuhn joined the Philosophy Department at Berkeley. As he put it, the philosophers 'wanted to hire a historian of science,' but at the last minute he also joined the History Department. At Berkeley each year he taught two courses in history and two in philosophy, a requirement that he recalls was important in raising problems for him of how to organize the development of science. But the Berkeley Philosophy Department turned him down for tenure, and the deep hurt this inflicted is obvious from the interview. Yet in his later career at Princeton and then at MIT, Kuhn never had a philosophy graduate student who completed, and he remembers he was surprised to find much of the response to *Structure* coming from social scientists. *Structure*, as he conceived it, was 'directed to philosophers' but 'it was no particular force for some time in philosophy, although the philosophers surely knew it' (307). Perhaps Kuhn's career can be seen in one respect to be a lengthy effort to get philosophers first, to take his ideas

seriously, and, second, to convince them of their correctness. To judge from the interview, Kuhn sensed he had only limited success in the latter.

Structure, which was published by the University of Chicago Press, did not contain an index. Readers of *The Road Since Structure* will be dismayed to find that the Press had been derelict in this respect again. This is, nevertheless, a substantial volume that helps chart as well as elucidate the shifting ideas of one of the major figures in the intellectual life of the late twentieth century.

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Laurence Lampert

Nietzsche's Task: An Interpretation of Beyond Good and Evil.

New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2001.

Pp. xi + 320.

US\$40.00, ISBN 0-300-08873-6.

As its title states, this book considers 'Nietzsche's task' through 'an interpretation of *Beyond Good and Evil*'. This task is the task of philosophy itself, construed as 'both ontological and axiological' (2). Ontologically, philosophy is the attempt to gain 'insight into the way of all beings' (263) in the form of 'a comprehensive perspective on the world and on the human disposition to the world, a perspective that could claim to be true' (1). The axiological task is to provide a 'humanly devised good and bad' aligned with the ontological perspective and serving as an evaluative measure in life (79, 2). Nietzsche's basic ontological claim is that 'the world ... is "will to power" and nothing else' (*BGE*, §36), from which he adduces the basic axiological demand for the willing of eternal return as 'the highest ideal of a world-affirming human being' (118).

But Nietzsche's task has also a 'political' dimension in that a place must be made 'in the lived world of human culture' for the ontological thesis he espouses and for the fulfilment of the axiological demand that this thesis occasions (1). Yet, given the sway of irrationality, 'strategic finesse' is required to persuade humanity that the interests of philosophy are indeed its own highest interests. Hitherto such persuasion has required the noble lie; but this apparently is no longer so. With the overcoming of Platonism, the 'only virtue left to free minds' aspiring to be future philosophers is probity

(*Redlichkeit*) or 'candour in speech' (*Rede*) — or at least it is the only virtue left 'that can be publicly claimed' (221). Probity seems to require, however, that 'the art of *silence* is in the foreground' (*EH*, III, 7).

The plausibility of Nietzsche's ontological thesis turns on the rational demonstration of its comprehensiveness. For philosophical wisdom demands not merely a workable or poetically appealing interpretation of things, but an interpretation of the whole of things that can lay claim to being 'the most comprehensive perspective' (13). Yet as inevitably *perspectival*, interpretation can only ever claim a putative comprehensiveness. Perspectives are, for example, high or low, healthy or sick, broad or narrow — precisely not from 'everywhere and nowhere' (cf. 12). Yet even a putative comprehensiveness must be self-inclusive. For this reason, the conflict of interpretations calls for a return to a 'psychology' that provides 'an understanding of the human soul' as the 'source of interpretations' (58; cf. *BGE* §23). It also calls for a 'critique of modernity' as a critique of what is 'nearest' to us, that is, of the prevailing interpretation of things as a whole that defines, ontologically and axiologically, who we presently *are* and where we presently stand.

The axiological thesis follows from the ontological perspective by 'erotic necessity' (119). Eternal return as 'highest formula of affirmation' (*EH*, III, 6) is the fullest expression of will to power in and for life that one could conceivably desire. Although not placed in quotation marks, the phrase 'erotic necessity' recalls the *erotikais anagkais* invoked by Glaucon in Plato's *Republic* (458d). In its highest Platonic form, this necessity impels the best souls to wisdom, their purity of mind being realised through conformity with the good in itself. But if the 'error' of the Platonic 'invention' of pure mind and the good in itself is overcome, the philosophical import of erotic necessity will likewise radically change. For if the good and bad are 'humanly devised,' then erotic necessity must itself will the erotic end that incites it. But such willing is no longer a 'necessity' in any usual sense of the term.

On Lampert's reading, the 'central matter' of *BGE* is the question of how, against Platonism, the 'love of truth' can be 'trained ... into love of the world' (303). Platonism had 'set truth on its head' in a way that 'denied perspective, the fundamental condition of life' (*BGE*, pref.). For the sake of life, this 'error' must be righted in such a way that 'the True can win independence from the Good; and the Good learn dependence on the True?' (303; 79). This possibility turns on the creation of 'free minds' who, in place of the Platonic 'error,' would herald a new teaching on the relation of mind and nature and a new form of the love of truth. Accordingly, Lampert regards Nietzsche's chapter on 'The Free Mind' as 'the most important chapter in the book' (61).

It is not possible in a short space to present an adequate account of even the main themes of Lampert's interpretation, let alone to enter into the dialogue over fundamental issues that it invites. Suffice it instead to comment briefly on one obvious strength and one possible weakness.

It is perhaps ironic — although in the blush of postmodern enthusiasm, understandable — that nowadays even readers well-disposed to Nietzsche have something of the 'plundering' attitude that Nietzsche himself ascribed

to 'the worst readers' (*HH*, II, §137). By contrast, Lampert takes seriously Nietzsche's own claim that *BGE* is informed by a 'long logic of a determinate philosophical sensibility' (1-2; cf. *KGB*, 8, 320-1). Thus, he carefully reads the book section by section, devoting a chapter to each of the main parts, including the celebrated Preface and the much-ignored After-song, framing his discussion with an introduction on Nietzsche's task and a conclusion on Nietzsche's future. Given the current ubiquity of textual strategies that would deliberately subvert coherent, 'logical' readings of texts, in honouring 'the whole' of the text by attending to its 'logic,' Lampert's interpretation is a welcome alternative indeed.

Yet this interpretation does not altogether assuage doubts about the 'varied paradoxes and heterodoxies' that even Nietzsche's 'most favourable readers' saw in the text (*KGB*, 8, 230-1). Many are likely still to have pressing questions about how Nietzsche's seemingly contradictory appeals (e.g., to perspective *and* *Ur-faktum*, to probity *and* masks, to truth *and* error, to interpretation *and* *Grundtext*, to meta-narrative *and* one's own judgement, to truth *and* life, etc.) do all fit together coherently. But, perhaps, leaving the reader with such questions is the very point.

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Sabina Lovibond

Ethical Formation.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

2002. Pp. xiii + 203.

US\$39.95. ISBN 0-674-00650-X.

The debate between those defending a virtue-centered Aristotelianism (much influenced by Wittgenstein), and those elaborating and defending a more Hume-inspired antirealism (also much influenced by Wittgenstein) is at the center of recent metaethics. This book defends the former and substitutes for the latter a different opponent. Lovibond acknowledges that her 'most important philosophical debt' is to John McDowell and identifies the virtue-centered approach as a variant of the 'practical reason' approach to ethics. In this approach the practically wise person represents a character-ideal. A crucial element of what makes for the ideal is 'sensitivity to the claims exerted by different sorts of value' (13). The debt to Aristotle is that this is a conception of ethical judgment, motivation, and excellence that is largely a contemporary rendering of the way in which the *phronimos* sees things and

responds to them. The debt to McDowell is in regard to his approach and idiom in working out a conception of objectivity that does not involve a 'sideways on' encounter between mind and world. This is then, a non-pejorative quietism, i.e., 'a (correct) policy of accepting that the investigation of such practices [different linguistic practices] must be carried out from a position of immanence within them; a policy of giving up that fantasized external standpoint from which we could conceivably pass judgement on whether this or that entire region of discourse succeeds in making contact with the "real world" ' (22).

The book has three main parts of about equal length. The first focuses on making the case for there being such a thing as practical wisdom. This is a cognitivist rendering of the notion of virtue. Virtue is a kind of conceptual fluency that can be transmitted through habituation — given a Wittgensteinian treatment. It is acquired through learning 'patterns of social or linguistic usage' (x). For Aristotle, habituation is (when done well) a process through which an agent's dispositions and attention are ordered to their proper objects, even if the agent does not fully understand why those are the proper objects. Indeed, sound character formation is what will enable the agent later on to understand what makes them proper objects. In Lovibond's version the Aristotelian *telos* of human nature does not figure. We needn't assume or argue that human beings have intrinsic or proper ends in any metaphysical sense. Rather, we can explicate virtue-centered cognitivism in terms of a 'social teleology in which one generation sets itself the goal of initiating the next into a common repository of wisdom about "what is a reason for what"' (63). A well-formed second nature is not explicated as the proper operation of the capacities of primary human nature, such that through their exercise the kind-specific intrinsic end is actualized. Still, the acquisition of a second nature is a way of a character realizing a form, 'by the internalization of shared standards of conduct, and beyond that, by a more diffuse feeling for ethical significance or saliency' (62).

The middle portion of the book is mainly a consideration of what it is to 'seriously mean' what one learns to say, and to have genuine authorship of it. This is indicative of the shift of focus from the metaphysical notion of *telos* to a more socialized conception of (uncodifiable) rule-following and mastery of language. In seriously meaning what one says, one can be relied upon, is accountable for what one says — is recognized as the author of what one says. This is perhaps a language-oriented rendering of Aristotle's claim that one's action expresses virtue only if the agent knows what he is doing, chooses the action for its own sake, and acts from a fixed character. Again, this is how the notion of second nature is given a Wittgensteinian, language-based but still cognitivist, treatment. The notion of human form is replaced by the notion of a form of life — a way of seeing things and a way of negotiating one's way in the 'space of ethical reasons'. In both cases, the importance of the person's psyche acquiring a certain form is central. This enables the possessor to make sound judgments, though not in a way that can be captured and expressed by a fundamental rule or criterion of right action.

The final third of the book is called 'Counter-Teleology', and is an examination of whether the view developed in the first two parts can withstand 'the postmodern critique of reason, whose unifying theme, insofar as it has one, seems to be a questioning of the ideology of *universalism*' (xii). The worry is not Hume, projectivism, or noncognitivism, but the more politically oriented Continental philosophy of Foucault, Derrida, and Deleuze, for example. The first two thirds of the book explain how bringing one into a form of life as a participant is crucial to their developing 'receptivity to the demands of reason' (139). What if we look at the matter from the standpoint of *recalcitrance*? What if there are serious doubts about the authorship needed for 'seriously meaning' what one says, about the universality of reasons, and about whether there is such a thing as an ideal of rationality 'for finding one's way around within a "space of reasons" '? (187) A 'determinate critique' is 'internal to the search for a satisfying articulation of the rationalist character ideal ... or equivalently for a specification of the "good life"' (140). There is a more radical, counter-teleological critique that valorizes difference and recalcitrance, just those things that ethical formation informs and orders. Counter-teleology critiques the claims of reason and shows us the limits of reason. It does this in part by focusing our attention on the 'incomplete decidability' of the distinction between '*mere* recalcitrance ("bad") and the recalcitrance that is potentially, even if not yet actually, articulate dissent ("good" — or, anyway, a possible candidate for "goodness")' (189). It does not however, catastrophically undermine the claims of practical reason.

Those already interested in key points of contact between Continental and Anglo-American philosophy will find that Lovibond's book explores a centrally important avenue in a generally clear but somewhat sweeping manner. Those more interested in the elaboration and defense of virtue-centered realism will appreciate the treatment of it, but will wish that a focus on its metaethical and moral psychology had been sustained throughout.

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William L. McBride

From Yugoslav Praxis to Global Pathos:

Anti-Hegemonic Post-Post-Marxist Essays.

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
Inc. 2001. Pp. 272.

US\$70.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7425-1224-X);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7425-1225-8).

As a reader interested in the praxis ('practical') philosophy of Yugoslavia, but one not as celebratory about Marxist critiques in general, I was (unexpectedly) engaged by (and therefore, thankful to) McBride's masterful, coherent and insightful collection. Captivatingly, this procession of essays follow the complex negotiation in McBride's career between his personal celebration of progressive, 'relevant' leftist ideologies on the one hand, and the progressively more capitalist nature of the university academy/Western democracy as a whole. Not surprisingly, McBride speaks with an anxious tone that signals his passionate commitment to the mores inscribed within his text, and it is this passion that lights the way for even the most cynical reader. Positively, this dialectic is illuminated via the usual suspects — Sartre, Rawls, Habermas and McIntyre — who our essayist uses as a series of jump off points for underlining his own mission: to awaken an apathetic academe from their collective sleep by regendering the anger of their consciences.

McBride refreshingly dispels this cynicism by virtue of presenting sound arguments worthy of serious reflection rather than metaphysical notions about fairness, or a priori salutations about justice. Rather, his first chapter outlines the real ethical and political outcomes that have resulted from post-Marxism and although references to Antonio Gramsci (might be) less than one expected, his analysis is sound and thorough. Indeed, he saves Marx by treating him as a hermeneutical tool, insisting Marx' 'chief value consists in his ability as a critic of existing states of affairs' (9). Perhaps, more importantly, McBride shows us the limits of Marx' thought as much as its strengths, leaving us with a roadmap, if you will, to the errors of Western twentieth-century post-Marxist theology.

At the same time, McBride's work is also important from a historical point of view. His documentation of particular ideas as they circumvented around the Americas and Europe during the sixties, seventies and eighties is both entertaining as well as informative. He reminds his reader that certain ideas held great hope once — and might yet still. His illumination of the work of Leszek Kolakowski through Mihailo Markovic, for example, displays how disparate elements of both analytic, as well as phenomenological philosophy have found ethical vindication and ideological quarter within the expansive elements of Marxism. And this generous albeit penetrating style is what McBride exercises while ruminating upon questions about the world today. McBride states that hegemonic elements such as the Cold War and Vietnam come and go but the fundamental economic disparities that initially gave Marxism its extraordinary explanatory powers continue to 'haunt' us, as

Derrida suggests. The New World order is predicated for McBride, in short, 'on a vision of transnational capitalist hegemony that threatens to stabilize global injustices for the foreseeable future, while eliminating not only alternative systems but even discourses about alternative systems' (66). And of course, both Derrida and McBride are right.

Consequently, it is not surprising to discover that McBride is interested in Community, but he is quick to point out that his idea of community is not based on the same ideological premises as Habermas and others inscribed in the work of Critical Theory. Weary of the formal (read Enlightenment) rationalistic presuppositions of communicative action, McBride implores us to follow a program of 'co-operation with respect for differences,' without becoming mired in stances of 'self-abasement' or 'cultural chauvinism' (101). McBride spends some time talking about how unilateralist the thinking of Rawls is, precisely for this reason. For McBride, *A Theory of Justice* is 'conceptualized strictly within the boundaries of a single imaginary nation-state' and, written 'to be employed as an ideological instrument to protect the dominance of certain countries, for example, the United States' (109). Rawls' work so radically denotes the cultural geography of its inception, in other words, that it is virtually useless for understanding practical transnational affairs. And since in this age of globalization none of us can afford to live in an isolationist mode, the issue of rights, specifically civil, national and human rights (logically) take on a bigger and bigger portion of McBride's final essays.

McBride chooses to bring philosophy to life in various essays, especially when he is accenting the silencing of various political voices (such as in the Serbian Republic). And he is quick to turn us to Hegel and the young Marx, to the importance of making clear distinctions regarding the complex relationship between civil society and the state, before thrusting us into the heart of his argument. McBride clearly identifies transnational control of democracy with outright governmental manipulation of political will, and quite clearly despises it. Consider the following for example. 'But despite all the hopeful talk about freedom and rights and democracy, there is every reason to fear the vast powers of the almost limitlessly wealthy transnational corporations, capable as they are of buying the favours of political leaders in even the largest countries, much less the smaller ones, and of coopting entire nations as instruments in their pursuit of profits' (158). Indeed, his penetrating and insightful analysis of what thinking must be performed in order for us to live in an inhabitable (if not civil) world is accompanied by theoretical proposals that reach their heuristic climax in his discussion of our common values and goals. Western society's greatest challenge concerns realizing that, economic goals cannot be the chief signifier for the greatness of present civilizations (160).

McBride's suggestion (following Wittgenstein) that philosophy can act as a type of therapy is an important one in many respects. Thinkers such as Žižek, Chomsky, Derrida, Baudrillard and Butler, amongst others, have also attempted to use this metaphor as a way of acknowledging the (potential role

of) Western arrogance in the events of the infamous 9/ 11. Although this collection was published antecedent to that epochal event it hauntingly articulates in a profoundly disturbing manner the inevitability of the Anti-USA sentiment that so clearly now populates the world. McBride's inclusion of a decimating statement by Nobel winning author A. Solzhenitsyn about the hegemonic control of the West brings an alarming concreteness to his arguments about Coca-Cola and hegemonic control of foreign national cultures. As does McBride's actual praxis of true equality, whose telos is the pursuit of 'global wisdom' and is, the instantiation of 'true cosmopolitanism, as distinguished from the neo-Enlightenment mentality that envisages the achievement of consensus through persuading others that one's own conception of rationality is the only acceptable one' (233). One need not be a Marxist to understand the reason in McBride's position, only a pragmatist, and perhaps that is why his collection finally persuades one to the praxis of his method.

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Stephen Mulhall

On Film.

New York: Routledge 2002. Pp. 142.

US\$50.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-415-24795-0);

US\$12.95 (paper: ISBN 0-415-24796-9).

Stephen Mulhall's *On Film* appears in Routledge's new series 'Thinking in Action' which aims (according to the blurb) to take philosophy to its public by 'punchy, short and stimulating' books dealing with different current issues. Mulhall tackles his subject in a rather surprising manner by dealing basically only with the four films of the 'Alien' series (admittedly relating them to other films by the four directors). Mulhall is no doubt aware that a reader coming to a book called *On Film* might be expecting something more general, but his main reason for choosing such an approach is precisely his disappointment with the generalizing pretensions of film theory. Indeed, he thinks that 'theorists exhibit a strong tendency to treat the films they discuss as objects to which specific theoretical edifices ... could be applied' (6). Instead, by a close reading (or viewing) of particular scenes in these films, Mulhall wants to convince his readers of his main claim: that these films are not to be seen as *illustrations* of philosophy or theory, but that they instead are 'philosophy in action' — films *as* philosophy. Indeed, he thinks that these

movies can be thought of as at once 'film as philosophizing, as philosophy of film, and film in the condition of philosophy' (6). This might seem a bold and pretentious claim, and Mulhall is aware that his approach makes him susceptible to charges of either banality (pointing out things that are obvious, e.g., that these films deal with anxieties related to human sexuality and mortality) or over-interpretation (reading sophisticated philosophical insights into products of mass culture that cannot sustain such an interpretation). This is a risk that Mulhall admirably steers clear of by taking great care to show how the philosophical issues he discusses can be discerned in the particular movies (the one exception to this being a discussion of the replicants in *Blade Runner* with reference to Heidegger's notion of 'Being-towards-death', where the inclusion of some rather insipid movie dialogue does nothing to dispel a lurking suspicion of over-interpretation).

Mostly, then, Mulhall succeeds in showing that these films deal with a number of perennial philosophical issues related especially to human identity and embodiment; questions of acknowledging or denying the body, sexuality, and reproduction. These themes crop up in different forms in all four movies, especially through Lieutenant Ripley's relation to the different aliens she confronts. All this is discussed in great depth by Mulhall, who shows how the films' treatment of these themes can be connected to the work of philosophers like Nietzsche, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and Cavell. Mulhall thinks that the 'Alien' films in particular merit this kind of attention since the 'cosmic backdrop' of the films 'makes it all but impossible to avoid grasping the narrative and thematic universe in metaphysical or existential terms' and to be concerned with 'the human condition as such'. Mulhall does not, however, want to limit his discussion to the way such issues are dealt with in these particular films. Indeed, his further claim — implicit in the title of the book — is that these movies also deal explicitly with 'the conditions for the possibility of film' (3). According to Mulhall the 'Alien' series is an exemplary instance of cinematic modernism, in the sense that it reflects upon 'the conditions of its own possibility' (6). Discussing these conditions Mulhall takes up issues like sequeldom and movie stardom, but surely this question would demand closer attention to the specifically cinematic features of the films, as well as their conditions of production. Mulhall does not completely ignore these aspects, but his understanding of 'the conditions of cinema' is unduly narrowed by his emphasis on issues concerning the human body and embodiment. In keeping with this distinct emphasis Mulhall indeed claims that these films deal with the conditions of their own possibility precisely *in virtue of* these reflections upon human embodiment and identity. This is because movies (in general) are dependent upon 'projection of moving images of embodied human individuals presented to a camera' (3). Such an understanding does, of course, justify both his choice of films and his particular emphasis on the body, but surely there is more to say about the conditions of film as a medium.

Indeed, if one would like to criticize Mulhall's book this is precisely its problem: Mulhall can defend his interpretations by a close reading of par-

ticular scenes, but it is not always clear what makes the 'Alien' movies interesting as *film* as well as philosophy — i.e., Mulhall does not really thematize how they exploit the capacities and limitations of film as an artistic medium. Another, related problem is Mulhall's *auteur*-centred approach to the films under discussion. He devotes the four films a chapter each (beginning with Ridley Scott's classic *Alien*, going through James Cameron's much more traditional, action-packed *Aliens* and David Fincher's nihilistic *Alien³*, ending with Jean-Pierre Jeunet's parodic and often disregarded *Alien's Resurrection*) and treats the individual movies as products of particularly gifted directors involved in developing themes that can be described in other parts of their *oeuvre* and in commenting upon their predecessor's work. He does touch upon the issue of general conditions of movie making in Hollywood (the negative constraints of which are most clearly visible in Cameron's *Aliens*) but these are perhaps not given enough consideration, especially since Mulhall also thinks that these limitations upon the director's freedom need not only be negative but can 'engender aesthetic achievements' (138) — a claim that certainly would merit more discussion.

However, these misgivings are mainly prompted by expectations raised by the book's title; as a study showing how this particular film quartet thematizes deep metaphysical and existential issues the book succeeds in an admirable manner, and makes for a thought-provoking read. It is clear, accessible and engaging, and thus certainly fulfils the aims of the series it appears in. Ideally, the book should come bundled with the 'Alien' films (as well as *Blade Runner*) on DVD, for two reasons: firstly, Mulhall relies on the reader's detailed familiarity with the films he discusses, and someone who has not seen them will lose many of his points. Secondly, he describes scenes from the films with such enthusiasm and brio that even a reader who has them in fresh memory will want to see them again.

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Jean-Luc Nancy

Hegel: The Restlessness of the Negative.

Trans. Jason Smith and Steven Miller.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

2002. Pp. xxix + 124.

US\$49.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8166-3220-0);

US\$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8166-3221-9).

Over the past fifteen years, Jean-Luc Nancy has been one of the most important, prolific and interesting philosophers writing in French; most recently his writing has been constant and frantic, authoring and co-authoring no less than eleven texts since 2000. Unfortunately, he is only beginning to be discovered in the English-speaking world (for example, there is as yet only one text devoted entirely to an evaluation of his work: *On Jean-Luc Nancy: the Sense of Philosophy*, edited by D. Sheppard, S. Sparks and C. Thomas [Routledge 1997]). This is hardly surprising since the status of some of his intellectual precursors is still in the balance (e.g., Derrida and Foucault — are they important or just silly fads?) while others are only now being considered seriously (e.g., Blanchot and Levinas). It is in light of this undecidedness that the most recent translation of a Nancy text (*Hegel: the Restlessness of the Negative*, originally published in 1997) finds itself. It is quite likely that this text will occupy an important place in the story of Nancy appreciation in the English-speaking academic world. While some of his other works in translation (e.g., *Being Singular Plural*, *the Birth to Presence*, and *the Inoperative Community*) seek to make and defend original claims with all the opaqueness required of a good post-Heideggerian text, *Hegel's* historical orientation renders it more accessible. What's more, with its title it has a better chance of finding its way into the hands of some unsuspecting historian of philosophy or Hegel scholar than his previous publications might, and so actually runs the risk of being read by someone not necessarily predisposed to read the work of a contemporary French post-structural theorist. *Hegel* will help decide where Nancy is situated among contemporary philosophers.

While *Hegel* is historical in its re-treatment of Hegelian philosophy, or rather of Hegel 'as he has already been played out in thought' (7), we shouldn't make the mistake of thinking that this text is no more than a secondary source for keen undergraduates. Nancy uses Hegel and the appropriation of Hegel as a means by which to develop and defend his own account of the 'we' and of the being of human beings as simultaneously singular and plural, a kind of radically communitarian communitarianism. Nancy's Hegel is neither Kierkegaard's nor Levinas' Hegel; he is neither the great systematizer whose hyper-rational system entirely obliterates the particularity and subjectivity of the subject, nor the oppressive totalizer who effectively reduces the otherness of other subjects (the Other) to the sameness of the self-conscious subject. Instead, Nancy, without any regret, begins with Hegel as the 'inaugural thinker of the contemporary world' (3).

According to Nancy, it is with his treatment of negation that Hegel's place as a contemporary figure is secured. In the *Science of Logic* Hegel famously shifts the focus of the principle of identity from identity to negation. Identity is the negation of negation: A is not not-A; A is only A in so far as it is differentiated from not-A. While not-A seems on the surface to be a negation of A, Hegel suggests that logically not-A comes first, that the identification of a thing is only possible following from the opposedness of the world where that thing *is not* something else, something other. Contrary to Levinas' Hegel, Nancy's Hegel (correctly!) recognizes the status of otherness and its priority. The other comes before the thing identified (whether a thing or a subject), which is only identified through the negation of the other. Such negation, however, is neither an annihilation nor a sublimation. The other must be preserved *as other* in order for identification to succeed. A is not not-A only so long as not-A is (not A).

Nonetheless, while Nancy rejects the view that Hegel is a totalitarian thinker, he insists that Hegel is a systematic thinker who stresses totality. This does not, for Nancy, mean an obliteration of difference, but that difference is the condition of our being in the world and the condition of truth. In fact, for Hegel, 'the truth is total or it is nothing ... totality is not a global form, assignable as such and liable to be foisted upon being as well as sense, but the infinite self-relation of what is' (9). The self-relation of what is is not the relating of a self-same self, but the relating of a self with the other, in the other and from the other. Furthermore, truth is total but not unitary, it is not oppressive as a totalitarian truth which either eliminates the self (contra Kierkegaard) or the Other (contra Levinas). This totality forms a unity of spirit as an infinite movement of self and other through identity and difference: 'it is the unity of the one that never goes without the other and, further, the unity of the one that goes to the other, of the one that *is only this going to the other*' (20). The being of the one is its relation to/with the other. Hegel, thus, is the inaugural thinker of the contemporary world because he thinks *our* world (before our world). Ours is not a world where the self should be lost or where the other should be expendable; it is a world where the preservation of self and other are at stake. Ours is a world where this movement from one to the other has become our political and ethical project.

Whether Nancy gets Hegel right or not I leave to the Hegel scholar to decide. Whether Nancy gets our world right we must leave to our posterity. Nonetheless, however we decide either of these issues, we must certainly grant that Nancy's re-thinking of Hegel is both intriguing and plausible, and most importantly, a profoundly insightful penetration of our world, both in order to understand and describe, but most importantly to critique and improve. It is here that Nancy makes his most important contribution.

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Jean-Luc Nancy

The Speculative Remark

(*one of Hegel's bons mots*).

Trans. Celine Surprenant.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2001.

Pp. 196.

US\$49.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-3713-4);

US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-3714-2).

First published in 1973 and carefully translated by Celine Surprenant as part of the series entitled *Cultural Memory in the present*, Nancy's work is part of a text-orientated postmodernism that owes much to Derrida and that revels in the intricacies and undecidabilities of philosophical works. This current of philosophical thought often produces works that do not fit easily into the standard secondary readings and Nancy is no exception. On the one hand, Nancy's text is about Hegel's dialectic, in particular the concept of the *aufheben* (sublation), and yet on the other hand it appears to be utterly outside the secondary literature on Hegel, leaving us in the curious position of reading a book that appears to be a piece of secondary literature yet operates, like much deconstructive work, as though it were primary. Even as a primary text, however, there are difficulties. For example, it is difficult to summarise the argument of Nancy's text. At best one might summarise its concern as follows: the Hegelian *aufheben* relies intimately upon the material nature of the language in which it is articulated and simultaneously must go beyond the nature of our language. While Hegel may be said to focus on this 'going beyond', Nancy wants to draw our attention back to the very text itself. It is for this reason that Nancy's work is worth study, since it is an intimate meditation on the undecidable nature of the language of the *aufheben*.

Nancy speaks of the *unruhe* (restlessness) (148) at the heart of the dialectic, located in the *aufheben*, the subject of his work (9); but also asks, beginning in Chapter 1, about the reading of Hegel (10). The necessity, posed by Hegel himself, is to read 'otherwise', to engage in a *fassen* (grasping) that is 'otherwise' (12). This is necessitated because the *aufheben* is contained in the *darstellung* (presentation) that is 'at the level of the text itself (*à même le texte*)' (14). There is not an expression or manifestation or even epiphany since both the form and the content of the speculative proposition, if taken in the Hegelian way, involves the activity of *aufheben*. To engage in such an *aufheben* is, precisely, to grasp the text philosophically (16). This problematic is laid out in Nancy's Preamble, Chapter 1 of the text, as a problematic of reading and of the hermeneutic circle (15 — fn. 14, 161).

An example of Nancy's approach can be found in Chapter 2 when he presents a brief reconstruction of the movement of Hegel's text (43-4). It is clear that he identifies four moves, which set up the problematic of the *aufheben*. He is addressing the text of *The Science of Logic* and the first focus is on the Remark to the first chapter of the first book of this *Logic*. The first move is to simply use the word within the first chapter, without comment.

The second step is to note its use through the Remark. The third step is the initial content of the Remark, to convert the use of *aufheben* from a negative meaning of suppression to a doubled meaning that includes preservation. Finally, the fourth move, and the one critical to Nancy, is the implication of the Remark: the already used word has to be re-read both in the preceding pages of the first chapter of the *Logic* and in the rest of Hegel's text. This is a form of posterior anteriority, prompting the reading that will otherwise be, for Hegel, a philosophical grasping.

In Chapter 3, Nancy pushes this structure of doubled reading within Hegel and reveals what he sees as an intimate relation with language at the heart of the dialectic. The speculative word is, for Nancy, neither conventional nor natural and he argues that 'with respect to the two poles of philosophical semiology, *aufheben* adopts, if you like, the tactic of "neither ... nor"' (60). Chapter 4 further pursues this problematic of the word and language. Nancy claims that 'the concept must let itself be conceived in (and perhaps *as*) a certain form of writing' (77). He then draws us towards the speculative proposition, famously outlined by Hegel in the Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, where the speculative proposition, the mechanics within which the speculative word works, is compared to the tension in musical rhythm between meter and accent (100). The difficulty of finding the voice of the Hegelian text thus arises because it appears that the *aufheben* relies upon a very delicate tone or accent. There is, through this, a thought of simultaneous excess and absence within the *aufheben* that is Nancy's central positive 'argument' and that I associate with the image of the live performance and the aesthetic difficulties that would be presented in attempting to either record or remember this performance.

Chapters 5 and 6 continue to pursue this thought of the excessive/absent nature of the *aufheben*, in particular bringing in the role of the joke or pun, the *Witz* (128-9), another bon mot but this time one that destroys the higher aims of the *aufheben*. At this point, right towards the end of Nancy's text, the danger inherent in exploring the 'play' of meanings is brought fully to the fore — the danger of frivolity (130). It is undoubtedly amusing to find, in a text that is so clearly embedded within the deconstructive discourse of playfulness, this awareness of the frivolous, but it is also a little like a self-knowing irony, an in-joke. In the end, the charge often levelled against deconstructive texts of 'not being serious philosophy' depends entirely on our understanding of 'serious philosophy'. If it involves detailed and delicate reading of small sections of philosophical texts, then Nancy's difficult work is a fine example of such a practice and one worth returning to whenever the Hegelian *aufheben* is the focus of study.

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Brian Orend

Human Rights: Concept and Context.

Peterborough, ON and Lewiston, NY:

Broadview Press 2002. Pp. 265.

Cdn\$/US\$29.95. ISBN 1-55111-436-4.

This book adds to the burgeoning collection of textbooks on the subject of human rights. In contrast to other contributions that focus upon a specific academic discipline's approach to the study of human rights, Orend aims to provide the interested reader with a comprehensive survey of the historical development, theoretical bases, and practical application of the moral and legal doctrine of human rights. The book consists of two parts and includes two appendices. The first part presents a comprehensive survey of the conceptual basis of human rights, while the second part provides a whistle-stop tour of the principal historical landmarks in the development of human rights, from Classical Greece and Rome to the present day. Finally, the appendices provide a highly useful research tool in the form of a catalogue of the principal national and international human rights documents covering the broad range of fundamental human rights.

The principal stated aim of Orend's book is to school the reader in the 'lingua franca' of human rights. Human rights, he argues, is a distinct discourse with its own terminology and turns of phrase. Orend insists that in order to gain a satisfactory and sufficiently comprehensive understanding of human rights one must first 'learn the language'. The study of human rights, however, consists of an amalgam of numerous and distinct academic disciplines, each of which has its own, separate discursive and terminological conventions. Thus, learning the multidisciplinary language of human rights is perhaps less akin to learning the tongue of a traditional language, as Orend suggests, and more like learning that 'artificial' language which had similar aspirations towards the establishment of a single, common basis for establishing harmony between peoples and nations: Esperanto. To his credit, Orend may be commended for providing a thoroughly accessible and yet intellectually sophisticated educational resource for the present-day inheritors of the political spirit of those seeking to speak the language of a common humanity.

Orend presents us with more than a mere introductory text-book, however. While he generally succeeds in succinctly analyzing many of the central theoretical and practical aspects of the doctrine of human rights, he goes much further in presenting his own defence of the basis and scope of the doctrine. He is not, of course, the first to attempt to do so. Previous attempts cover those who seek in human rights the basis for establishing a new Jerusalem. For these defenders of the faith, human rights possess the means for instituting a cosmopolitan and global political system that is truly just. On this view, human rights represents an expression of the true potential of humanity. At the other end of the human rights spectrum, however, are those whose appraisal and expectations of the doctrine is far more circumspect. For

many of these human rights advocates the doctrine provides a means for identifying and establishing certain minimal expectations of decent treatment only. Fundamental human rights thus aim to curb the excesses of national and international power-holders through the identification of certain minimal standards, possessed equally by all human beings everywhere. Orend may be best located towards this end of the spectrum. The purpose of human rights, he argues, is not to make everyone maximally happy or to provide answers to metaphysical questions concerning the meaning of life. Rather, human rights aim to ensure 'that minimal level of decent and respectful treatment which we believe is owed to a human being' (29).

Orend aims to defend the philosophical basis of human rights against those who reject any and all universal moral doctrines as philosophically unsustainable. He argues that one may justify human rights without becoming embroiled in the interminable epistemological disputes that characterize so much of contemporary moral philosophy. Philosophical controversy may be best avoided, he contends, precisely by limiting the aspirations of human rights to a set of claims that all may reasonably accept. He argues that human rights provide an essential means for protecting and promoting human beings' vital interests. His is an instrumentalist justification of human rights. He refers to these vital interests as 'the foundational five' (101). These consist of personal security, material subsistence, elemental equality, personal freedom, and recognition as a member of the human community. Akin to Rawls' concept of 'primary goods', Orend defends the foundational five as essential prerequisites for leading a minimally decent life. In addition to these core rights, he identifies a second level of human rights, the content of which is determined as the means for ensuring each human beings' enjoyment of the foundational five. The implication is clear. Not all human rights are of fundamental and equal importance. Orend insists that an adequate justification of the basis of human rights positively requires distinguishing between rights of primary and secondary importance. He even goes so far as to argue that Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which posits a fundamental right to paid holidays, should not be included since it is not a necessary means for securing anyone's enjoyment of the foundational five and thereby invites unnecessary controversy. The cause of human rights, he asserts, is not best served by inflationary trends which seek to espouse human rights claims to an ever increasing range of goods and services. For Orend, justifying the basis of human rights requires restricting the scope and limits of human rights to the protection of those interests consonant with leading a minimally decent life and nothing more.

The perceived value of human rights is not best served by individuals' resorting to the language of human rights to justify every complaint pursued through the courts. It is ironic, perhaps, that the very visibility and popularity of human rights may have potentially adverse effects upon attempts to justify the doctrine. To this extent, Orend's relatively cautious and minimalist approach to the defence of human rights has much to commend it. His book succeeds in both introducing more people to the language of human

rights, whilst simultaneously cautioning against a potentially damaging over-dependence upon human rights terminology and conventions. As a language of common humanity, human rights is assured a better fate than that which befell Esperanto and Orend's book should continue to provide an excellent introduction to successive generations of human rights students.

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John Perry

Reference and Reflexivity.

Stanford: CSLI Publications 2001.

Pp. xiii + 208.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 1-57586-309-X);

US\$19.50 (paper: ISBN 1-57586-310-3).

This short book pulls together a number of themes from previous essays (see especially *The Essential Indexical: Expanded Edition*, 2000). My strategy will be to present it without the detours, qualifications and reservations that make this such a rich, complex and rewarding book. In previous writings, Perry has both applied Kaplan's character-and-content theory to cognitive issues involving indexicals-demonstratives, and investigated the role of situations in meaning relations. In the present book, he says, 'I move the utterance to the center of things' (xi). Chapter 1 introduces the problems of content, context and cognitive significance for indexicals-demonstratives and proper names, Chapter 2 offers a general conception and taxonomy of propositions and content, Chapters 3-5 apply this conception to indexicals-demonstratives, Chapters 6-7 apply this conception to proper names, and Chapter 9 pulls the two strands together, and compares the result with (early) Frege and Kaplan.

Perry promotes and defends a position he alternatively labels 'critical referentialism', the 'reflexive referential' theory and the 'reflective referential' theory. The basic idea is that both the Russellian (referential) and Fregean (descriptive) traditions have something to offer, and their insights should be incorporated into a final theory. Unlike the traditions, Perry is careful to distinguish issues of meaning, which pertain to linguistic types in virtue of rules and conventions of language, from issues of content, which pertain to utterances (production or use of tokens) in contexts — which can

function presemantically to, e.g., disambiguate, semantically to fix reference or postsemantically to provide 'unarticulated constituents'. The Russellian tradition contributes an analysis of 'official content' in terms of the referential contribution to what is said, as supported by well-known intuitions-arguments surrounding counterfactual truth conditions and samesaying. The Fregean tradition contributes the notion of an 'identifying condition' on reference, 'a unary condition that only one thing satisfies', as supported by well-known intuitions-arguments surrounding co-reference and no-reference. The major project of the book is to explore the integration of these traditions by supplementing the referential tradition (and so get counterfactual truth-conditions and what is said right) with other types of content in order to solve the co-reference and no-reference objections to referentialism. Perry acknowledges that, in the end, his view could also be viewed as a descriptive theory supplemented by aspects of the referential tradition.

According to Perry's terminology, indexicals-demonstratives refer (contribute the object they designate to the proposition expressed), because they denote (the conventions of the language associate an identifying condition with them), whereas proper names, though they refer, do not denote, they name (the conventions of the language associate an object with them). Descriptions describe by denoting. Moreover, each of these devices is associated with a different kind of content: indexical ('reflexive') content, referential ('official') content, designational content and extension. To display the variety of contents, when associated with utterances of various devices (on occasions), Perry eschews Kaplan's device of angled brackets, and opts instead for conventions of boldface and italics 'the boldface tells us which things we're thinking of as the subject matter. The italics tell us that [it] is the identifying conditions ... that are the subject matter, and not the objects they designate' (26). For descriptions, which can be taken 'referentially' (boldface) or 'attributively' (italics), the convention is useful, but it is not clear what boldfacing a proper name adds, given the above conception of them as naming and referring. An example from Perry will flesh this out:

- (1) I am a computer scientist (said by David Israel)
- (2) David Israel is a computer scientist (said by someone referring to David Israel)

Although (1) and (2) have the same official content, viz the singular proposition:

(P) <David Israel, x is a computer scientist>

they have different 'reflexive contents', and this difference can play a role in explaining why (1) vs (2) was uttered, and how (1) vs (2) is understood.

Indexicals. The reference of 'I' depends on narrow context (agent, time, position) and is automatic (no further intention is required) vs e.g. 'that' which depends on wide context and is intentional. The reflexive content of an utterance of (1) is the proposition:

(Px1) that the speaker of (1) is a computer scientist (there is an x such that x is a speaker of (1) and x is a computer scientist)

Reflexive contents allow Perry to solve problems of cognitive significance for indexicals. According to Perry, there is a spectrum of 'incremental' contents (or even truth conditions) of which (P) and (Px1) are only two, depending on which facts about the utterance and context are fixed: language, words, meaning, context. Official content, (P), is maximally fixed incremental content, in this case, fixing David Israel as the speaker of (1).

Proper Names. The reflexive content of the particular utterance of (2) is the proposition:

(Px2) that the person named 'David Israel' to whom the use of it in (2) refers, is a computer scientist

What links name to individual, analogous to 'being the speaker of (1)' for indexicals? 'When a person or thing is assigned a name, a permissive convention is established: that name may be used to designate that person' (103). Perry doesn't develop this idea very far, other than to note that some notion of 'exploiting' such conventions is needed to deal with 'nambiguity'. So (Px2) becomes:

(Px2') that the person the convention exploited by (2) permits one to designate with 'David Israel' is a computer scientist.

Here 'the role of context is pre-semantic, to help figure out which convention is being exploited ... — to grasp the relevant convention — is just to grasp who is designated' (109). Permissive conventions seem to be individuated by name and bearer, but we still do not know what one looks like, nor how exactly they are exploited.

Reflexive contents for names allow Perry to solve co-reference (and 'Padrewski') problems for names, but not no-reference problems, since there is nothing for naming conventions to attach to. For this Perry digs deeper into the cognitive support for such conventions: 'A convention that governs the use of a name is a permissive convention that is supported by a notion-network; it permits one to use a name to refer to the origin of the notion-network. Where there is a block in the network, a name may be supported by a network with no origin, and so will be an empty name, when use exploiting the convention' (148-9). Notions (mental representations of particulars) and ideas (mental representations of properties and relations) reside in notion-networks, and provide a new increment of 'intentional content'. Perry offers (Chapter 7) an intriguing preview (more will come) of his mental management scheme involving the flow of information from and to perceptions, buffers, files, origins and utterances. The upshot is that utterances involving vacuous names, such as:

(3) Jacob Horn does not exist

have the reflexive content:

(Px3) that the network that supports the use of the name 'Jacob Horn' in (3) has no origin

Fixing the reference of the description to the notion associated with 'Jacob Horn' (NJH) yields the network content:

(P3) that NJH has no origin

Network content, as Perry urges, also has interesting applications to fiction.

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Philip Rose

On Whitehead.

Belmont, CA: Wadsworth 2002. Pp. vi + 94.

US\$15.95. ISBN 0-534-58377-6.

Philip Rose offers the latest contribution in the procession of companions, keys, and introductions to Alfred North Whitehead's later philosophical work. Rose focuses not only on *Process and Reality*, but on Whitehead's speculative cosmological scheme as a whole, drawing clarifications and explanations from Whitehead's numerous books and essays. By using some everyday vocabulary of his own devising, Rose offers a short, concise interpretation of some of Whitehead's central ideas with a view to 'make his philosophy more accessible and less "strange" than it sometimes appears' (vi). In this endeavor, Rose omits 'some of the specialized language and terms that Whitehead himself commonly employs (in order to) present Whitehead's philosophy in a manner accessible to the more skeptical reader' (vi). For the most part, Whitehead's philosophical notions have not been welcome in the Analytic sphere. Rose explains that in addition to Whitehead's logical analysis, his speculative cosmological scheme is largely 'synthetic', relying on 'self-evidence' and on various appeals to experience in its challenging of Cartesian substance ontology, Humean scepticism, and the materialistic and mechanistic worldview of Newtonian physics. Specifically, according to Rose, Whitehead's scheme and the account of reality within that scheme is primarily *aesthetic*. Whitehead's speculative method is said to involve the open-ended and 'imaginative construction of extensive generalities' (8), as well as incorporating understanding that necessarily 'applies beyond logic' (86) within itself. His scheme ventures 'beyond the normal confines of language and thought and into spheres of consideration that challenge the limits of conventional discourse' (8), while at the same time comprising a valuable metaphysical alternative to poststructuralist thought (19). Whitehead's cosmological vision is further said to depict 'the aesthetic experience of *value* [in which] while all "things" are constituted by their relations, all relations are

further defined as *value*-relations, that is, relations of some positive or negative character' (2). Thus, in Rose's reading, Whitehead's cosmology reveals that experience in general is aesthetic. Moreover, he offers the perspective that for Whitehead, conscious experience implies aesthetic judgment.

Because Rose uses some of his own vocabulary for the sake of clarification and omits some of Whitehead's specialized vocabulary, there are two areas of possible concern for the reader. First, Rose evidently omits much of the Whiteheadian language of the theory of prehensions. In fact, while quoting passages that beg for a detailed explanation of the notion of a 'prehension', Rose seems to designate the term uniformly as 'inherit(ance) from the past' (44, 55, 87, 88, 89). Furthermore, Rose mainly covers Whitehead's genetic analysis by way of some of the vocabulary of coordinate analysis, namely, with notions such as 'division', 'decision', and 'objectification'. It might be suggested that this manner of interpretation will be helpful for some readers, since, for Whitehead, the two modes of analysis are not to be radically distinguished. Nevertheless, Rose's presentation might be strengthened if he were to more directly take into account the genetic analysis independently from the coordinate analysis, including Whitehead's outline of the process of 'conrescence' or the 'growing together' of actual occasions. Rose's references to the theory of prehensions appear to be cloaked in his other discussions. For example, it appears in the elaboration of his notion of *value* (1-15), in the section, 'Life: A Bid for Freedom' (59-67), and under the general heading of 'Microscopic Analysis' (38-48) to which Whitehead himself refers. Second, as noted in a disclaimer in the preface, Rose throughout employs the terms 'construction' and 'self-construction', which were used by Kant to designate a 'synthetic, self-organizing activity' (vi), as what Whitehead is getting at by way of his notions of 'creativity', 'appropriation', and 'self-realization'. Since Whitehead repudiates the notion of 'the Kantian doctrine of the objective world as a theoretical construct from purely subjective experience (*PR*, xiii)', readers of Rose need to be careful to avoid the connotation that for Whitehead the world is arbitrarily built by consciousness. Rather, Rose intends to mean 'construction' in its *social* sense, metaphysically construed, as 'a constitutive feature of the world we experience (how the world *orders itself*)' (vi), and as the process of genesis of the internal constitution of an actual entity.

Rose draws attention to the fact that Whitehead's scheme lends itself well to the field of environmental ethics. He writes, 'Whitehead's critique of traditional metaphysics combined with his vision of an "ecological" metaphysics of interdependent relations may allow for the construction of more environmentally and worldly sensitive aesthetic, moral, and alethic ideals' (92). Particularly, Whiteheadian cosmology is holistic, for all organisms within nature are said to be functionally interrelated. In fact, near the end of *Science and the Modern World* (1925), Whitehead wrote of the organic interdependency of the diverse species, trees, elements, and weather patterns found in the Brazilian rainforest. As Rose clarifies, in Whitehead's view, 'the "things" that populate this relational world are constituted by their

various relations — all beings are relational beings' (2). For Whitehead, what happens to one organism or what it contributes to the environment directly affects the life of the many and vice-versa. In this light, Rose makes reference to Whitehead's phrase that an organism 'which by its influence deteriorates its environment, commits suicide' (59). In any case, Rose believes that 'much work still needs to be done before Whitehead's ecologically minded metaphysics can begin to take hold as a familiar alternative to more traditional points of view' (v).

On the whole, Rose's book is an effective, explanatory primer that makes some basic ideas of Whiteheadian cosmology accessible to the reader in a few short sittings. While it sometimes amalgamates the discussion of various themes, it does give an adequate and accurate sense of the direction of Whitehead's thought. Rather than attempting to advance a systematic summary of Whiteheadian philosophy, Rose's book accepts its limitations as a 'perspectival' introduction to one of the most complex speculative thinkers of the twentieth century.

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Theodore Schatzki

The Site of the Social:

*a philosophical account of the constitution
of social life and change.*

University Park: Pennsylvania State

University Press 2002. Pp. xxii + 295.

US\$45.00. ISBN 0-271-02144-6.

This book presents a claim about the nature of social existence and change. The claim is driven by the wish to find an ever more general context for human life and co-existence. Human activity can be analyzed individually, but individual human lives inter-relate to constitute a mesh of human practices and orders. That is to say, society consists of intelligible human activities and an arrangement of such activities into an order of specific relations and meanings. However there can be many such social orders. So the concept of 'the site of the social' is that of the context where these differing social orders occur.

The idea of the site of the social is thus one of a non-individualist ontology of the social. Individualistic ontologies do not recognize that the constitution of individuals as individuals is intrinsically tied to the actions and intentions of other people. However Schatzki's approach is not a traditional holistic

approach either. The latter approaches analyze social facts as distinct from facts about individuals. Schatzki wants to avoid the reductionism of individualism while not having to appeal to any social facts which aren't constituted by individuals. He appeals to Heidegger's notion of a 'clearing' as the inspiration for a site ontology, although he insists his idea is of a context rather than a clearing. What this amounts to, it seems, is that unlike traditional holism the overall context for human society is not governed by any set of principles. It is simply a 'space' where differing and multiple social orderings can occur. However it is not an empty space since it is constituted by what makes up human coexistence. So the overall context of social existence consists of all the unlimited possibilities of human social ordering, all the ways in which the constituents of human co-existence can be arranged. These constituents include people, artifacts, non-human organisms, and things.

One of the most interesting aspects of this book is that society is not conceived in opposition to nature. Instead nature, i.e., those entities generally unaffected by human activity (including the human body), enters into the constitution of the social as one of the elements that make up how humans co-exist and as a causal factor in social change. Humans create artifacts out of nature and out of other artifacts. We alter our practices in response to, or in anticipation of, natural events, while natural processes both of the human body and of the wider natural sphere bring about changes in practices. So the history of the social site is a story of how human agency, the human body, human-made artifacts, and the natural world have evolved and interacted in relationship to each other.

Schatzki's argument proceeds in two ways. There are detailed critiques of many contemporary social theorists, and a high level of acquaintance with the literature is assumed. In that respect this is a book for advanced researchers. There are also two extended case studies, of very differing types, taken from Shaker life in the mid-nineteenth century and contemporary day trading, intended to vindicate his approach and show its applicability to a wide range of social lives. The simplicity of one way of life contrasts with the apparent relativity complexity, or at least technological sophistication, of the other. Perhaps, though, the vindication Schatzki wants could have been still more convincingly demonstrated by examples from a more diverse geographical, cultural and chronological range. As it is, the examples seem over-done, containing more detail than is necessary to sustain the necessarily very general and abstract theses in the main argument.

What does the claim about the site of the social amount to? The focus on practices and orders and how these are constituted in interaction with the natural is illuminating, and builds on Schatzki's earlier work. The examples used do demonstrate what an account of social life based upon practices and orders looks like. In saying that human society can take many forms, that these forms are not governed by any overarching sets of principles, and that both human and natural entities go into the practices and orders that make up social life, an account of the social is given. The idea of the 'site' of the

social captures both the unlimited multiplicity of human social orders and that what makes up society is not just human intentionality and agency. On the other hand the idea of a 'site' seems to imply a definite realm which has its own structure and laws, and that is just what is not wanted. Schatzki argues that there is no single ordering which contains all specific social orderings at a lower level, yet the idea of a 'site' may be taken to suggest just that. There is nothing to this site above and beyond the multiplicity of social arrangements, constellations of orders and practices, and this makes the term 'site' perhaps an unhappy choice. On the other hand the idea of a 'site' does perhaps capture the idea that human action takes place in a context which is made up of both human and natural elements and out of which specific social orders and individual lives are constituted. The overall approach, in any case, seems to have a lot to recommend it. This book will be required reading for all those working in the field of social theory.

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Alexander Nikolaevich Shytov

*Conscience and Love in Making
Judicial Decisions.*

Law and Philosophy Library Volume 54.

Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers 2001.

Pp. xvi + 242.

US\$84.00. ISBN 1-4020-0168-1.

This book argues in favour of judicial conscience informed by Christian love. Shytov's primary sources are Leon Petrazycki, a Russian legal theorist of the '50s and Thomas Aquinas. Shytov takes the view that an examination of the legal philosophies of Petrazycki and Aquinas will yield a comprehensive theory of what he calls 'agapic casuistry' — a form of deliberation (especially in relation to hard cases) enlivened by the demands of Christian love understood in terms of the commandment to love thy neighbour as thy self.

Shytov argues that Aquinas' theory of the role of love in judicial decision making; though it occupies a disproportionately large place in Aquinas' thinking, remains underdeveloped. This is a result of Aquinas' misguided attempt to do the impossible: to marry Aristotle and the gospel (48-9). Thus, Shytov departs from John Finnis' discussion of Aquinas in *Natural Law and Natural Rights* which focuses on Aquinas' Aristotelian roots (86). Shytov offers instead an interpretation of Aquinas which stresses his evangelical aspirations. Likewise, Shytov sees Petrazycki's work on love and judicial con-

science as coming up short because, though Petrazycki sees the promotion of love as the 'primary goal of law' (7), he does not have a means of giving that love any objective content. Petrazycki's conception of the role of love is too subjective — too idiosyncratically individualist — to provide the kind of methodical guide that Shytov is seeking. Shytov, therefore, places his work between Petrazycki and Aquinas as a bridge between the two, embracing the shared aspirations of both while curing the flaws of each. Essentially what love and conscience contribute to judicial decision-making is care; they keep uppermost in the judicial mind the need to approach all parties before the court as beings who are significant, precious and worthy of respect.

The theory rests on a conflation of the commandment to love thy neighbour and the golden rule: do unto others as you would have others do unto you. It is also grounded in a conception of judicial virtue which Shytov draws from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Shytov's list of judicial virtues is as follows: humility, compassion, gentleness, striving for justice, mercy, purity of intentions, striving for peace, readiness to suffer for justice and non-conformism (91-3).

Shytov's discussion of the little known Petrazycki is clear and interesting and his discussion of Aquinas is also helpful and scholarly. In the elaboration of his theory he also draws interestingly and competently on Neil MacCormick, Ronald Dworkin, Richard Posner, and Lon Fuller. However, the most salient aspect of the book is its pervasive and explicit Christianity: its insistence on the need for Jesus as the exemplar of the kind of love that assists in judicial deliberation.

Yet Shytov aspires to more than simply articulating a method of deliberation for Christian judges. He wants to articulate a theory of Christian love as essential to all good judging. In this he takes a sort of quasi-pluralist stance. He does not claim that non-Christian judges (say Jews or Buddhists) can provide a distinctively Jewish or Buddhist version of care that will happily take the place of Christian love in their deliberation, but rather that Jewish and Buddhist judges are capable of practising Christian love. Shytov writes: 'One may ask whether a non-Christian judge is able to exercise Christian love or not? The answer is yes. For history knows examples where non-Christians sacrificed themselves for the sake of others. The commandment "love your neighbour as yourself" binds everyone' (93). The Christian centrism of this view is likely to alienate some non-Christian readers.

The core contribution of this book is in Shytov's attempt to reconcile judicial impartiality and judicial sympathy. Shytov takes seriously the tremendous difficulties in giving play to the emotions of sympathy and compassion within impartial judicial decision-making. Like many feminist theorists who have grappled with the role of compassion in adjudication, Shytov attempts to forge a notion of judicial sympathy which is somewhere between simple cognitive understanding of the party's circumstances and compassionate concern for the litigants. For Shytov, judicial sympathy essentially involves conscientious and attentive awareness of the lived reality of each and all of the parties before the court. Drawing on Lynn Henderson's

discussion of the role of compassion in the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, Shytov works to extend Henderson's insights into other less obvious contexts. Interestingly, Shytov uses a case about whether the English court was able to give judgment in a foreign currency to flesh out his theory of judicial sympathy. Although Shytov refers to some feminist thinkers such as Martha Minow in talking about the role of compassion in judging, his work on sympathy and impartiality would benefit from a discussion of the work of others, such as Jennifer Nedelsky, whose aspirations to articulate a sophisticated theory the role of empathy and experience in impartial decision making are very similar to his own.

The final third of the book is devoted to elaborating the theory by analysing four different examples. The book is well written and will be of interest to students of analytical jurisprudence and Christian ethics.

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Kaja Silverman

World Spectators.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2000.

Pp. i + 177.

US\$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-3831-9);

US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-3832-7).

Silverman's latest work extends her proposal, initiated in earlier works, that the visual image has priority over other forms of representation. It is an important work in the theory of representation because of its solid grounding in Lacan at the same time as its divergence from Lacan, especially on the issue of the Oedipal drama.

Silverman claims that appearance is not primarily a linguistic disclosure, but 'insistently visual' (3). Yet, she believes that vision is denigrated in the Socratic tradition. Silverman begins to articulate a non-Socratic perspective by turning to Lacan, who argues that the source of production for forms is a mysterious nonentity, *das Ding*, the 'impossible nonobject of desire' (15). This is itself a departure from Freud: we are not oriented then toward an original love object; rather, the object 'becomes an object only in its absence' through 'retroactive symbolization' (16). However, the activity of symbolization needs to be informed by Heidegger. To care and release a creature into its Being we need to make sense of it in its perspectival diversity. Heidegger's problem,

though, is that he articulates Being in non-psychic terms. While Lacan emphasizes the psyche, the problem is that his emphasis on a psychic void overlooks the movement toward the world through care.

Silverman claims that disclosure of objects requires two losses. The first is an original lack, and the second involves kinship structure and the incest taboo. Both give rise to a desire to symbolize what we have lost. Lacan's perspective is that the lost object is a non-object, *das Ding*. This means that the orientation is to the loss of Being, not to the loss of the original love object. For Silverman, this emphasis on loss has an important consequence: '[it] opens the way toward something many of us have long dreamed of: an a-Oedipal or even anti-Oedipal psychoanalysis' (40). Yet, according to Silverman, Lacan is not interested in going that direction; for him, the loss of Being must be repeated through castration in the Oedipus complex. Silverman agrees that the experience of loss must be repeated, because the non-object cannot connect us to the world. This connection is performed by the representatives of the non-object which we love when we lose Being. We lose then love, not love then lose. If the latter prevailed, then the only path to desire would be to recoup our first loves. However, even for the Freud of 'Mourning and Melancholia' the love-object is a 'radically heterogeneous collocation of memories' (41). Thus, desire can move in unpredictable directions. It is therefore not bound to a repetition of first love objects nor to Oedipus.

Silverman's argument concerning the centrality of the visual image begins by showing how Lacan transforms the sign from Saussurian heritage. For Lacan, perceptual signifiers precede verbal, looking precedes speaking, and the image precedes the word. Moreover, it is only in perceptual signifiers that things become affectively present. This occurs in the transference which begins linguistically — we address our words to the other and they return to us as signifiers. Yet, according to Silverman, the transference is a general social event, a theatrical event. Those who hear actor's speech are not listeners, but spectators. Through speech they see something. And thus saying becomes showing, a visual affirmation.

Silverman grounds the argument for the libidinal production of images in Freud. For her, it is in the displacement of kinship that libidinal speech becomes possible. This is not an abstract process. We speak libidinally by producing images, not abstract notations. Silverman claims that '[t]he basic drive in the human subject is the urge to see more than what has been seen before' (78). The psyche is therefore established as an optical device with the analogy drawn between psyche and camera. This analogy goes back to Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. For Freud, perceptual stimulus only becomes conscious when it coalesces with a memory from the unconscious. These memories have a force of attraction in their struggle to achieve perceptual form.

This perspective of Freud in his early work leads to a unique understanding of the pleasure principle, different from the one usually attributed to Freud. The pleasure principle is not oriented toward reducing excitation, but increasing it. There are two sources of stimulation, one, from the external

world, and the other from unconscious memory. As they coalesce, there is not a discharge of excitation, but a displacement from memory to external perception. In fact, there is a pleasure in not being satisfied, in giving oneself over to displacement. The pleasure principle is thus 'the enabling force behind a particular kind of looking' (92). According to Silverman, Freud's position points to numerous scopical possibilities, which are, in effect, possibilities of showing. Here, there is pleasure in reviving an earlier memory by linking it to a new external perception in the present.

This pleasure is grounded in the thing-presentation and not the word-presentation. In Silverman's re-working of Freud, the linguistic signifier, or word-presentation, is understood to be closed to affective transfers. On the other hand, the perceptual signifier, or thing-presentation, is viewed as open to affective transfers. The word-presentation linked to the preconscious-conscious system. The preconscious binds the unconscious memory by linking it to a linguistic signifier. This inhibits the transfer of affective energy and curtails the pathways that energy might go. The thing-presentation is open to libidinal transfer. According to Silverman, the unconscious forms around an ideational representation that is primarily repressed. The force of the drive then occurs with the force of this primary repression. The primarily repressed term then places a second term in its place. And the second prevents the first from entering the preconscious. For Silverman, the primarily repressed thing-presentation realizes itself by allowing another thing-presentation to take its place. This generates a constant displacement that keeps desire moving. It also involves an anti-cathexis. The preconscious anti-cathexis attempts to reduce excitation by connecting thing-presentation to word-presentation. On the other hand, the unconscious anti-cathexis creates excitation by facilitating the transfer of energy to from original to secondary thing-presentation.

Silverman sums up her position on the central importance of vision by pointing out how her perspective differs from that of her good friend Leo Bersani. For Bersani, in order for the communication of forms to occur, the psyche must be bypassed because the psyche is bent on identity and control, leading to a murderous incorporation of the other. Communication occurs through direct transfer of sexual energy. Silverman is not as suspicious of the psyche because of the link, not to conscious mastery, but to unconscious revelation. With emphasis on the link to the unconscious, we do not witness murderous incorporation, but 'the transfigurative act of vision' (143).

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John R. Wallach

The Platonic Political Art:

A Study of Critical Reason and Democracy.

University Park: Penn State University Press

2001. Pp. xi + 468.

US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-02075-X);

US\$25.00 (paper: ISBN 0-271-02076-8).

This wide-ranging and thoughtful book (*PPA*) makes two principal claims: (1) that Plato's political thought can best be understood as the attempt to establish 'critical' standards for relating ethics to power; and (2) that this 'critical' approach to ethics and politics can be useful to contemporary democrats ('critical reason' being defined on p. 11, no. 16, as 'the expression of self-conscious efforts to call into question the authority of extant discourses and practices'). I discuss each claim in turn.

The arguments and textual analysis under the umbrella of (1) make *PPA* perhaps the best general companion available for anyone seeking an architectonic and thematic framework for interpreting Plato's political thinking (as opposed to a single dogma of his 'thought'). The life and death of Socrates, for Wallach (drawing on previously published articles), posed a problem for Plato which exacerbated the general difficulties posed by the political defeat, social conflicts and intellectual specialization which followed the end of the Peloponnesian War: what Wallach calls 'Plato's Socratic Problem' was 'the conflict between the critical discourse (*logos*) of Socratic virtue and the actual conduct or practice (*ergon*) of the political art [in Athens]' (7). Plato's solution to both this specific problem and the more general tensions between *logos* and *ergon* in politics was the idea of the *politikē technē* or political art which could productively relate them in a virtuous and rational way. It follows from Wallach's persuasive exposition of this ideal that Arendtian valorizations of praxis over *technē* (and the consequent prizing of Aristotle over Plato) involve a misunderstanding of the reliable possibilities of virtuous and rational political practice to which Plato aspired. (When one tries to get clearer about just what a Platonic political art would look like, however, Wallach's attempt to break down the practical/theoretical distinction can become less satisfying: it is right, but also vague, to define that art as 'the capacity to shape well the practice of power in a collectivity' by 'assuring the transformation of words of counsel into deeds of justice' (1), and just what that capacity consists in remains unspecified.)

This framework is then deployed in illuminating readings of varying lengths of the *Laches*, *Charmides*, *Euthyphro*, *Meno*, *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, *Republic*, *Statesman*, and *Laws* dialogues listed above. Wallach proceeds through each dialogue summarizing and paraphrasing the arguments and action with an eye to his overall argument; this gives the reader the comforting feeling that his comments are not arbitrary, although inevitably some individual remarks will strike one as misleading or underdeveloped. The *leitmotif* of each discussion is the thought that Plato's aims were essentially

'critical' of all existing structures and justifications of power, all of which he felt failed to link power productively to virtue and reason in the way that a true political art would do. What then links (1) to (2) is the further suggestion that Plato was not only essentially critical of all such extant systems of power, but that he was no more critical of democratic ones than of others (and perhaps less so). Plato's attack on key beliefs and practices of democratic Athens should for Wallach be read as a generic attack on the power structure of his day rather than a specific attack on democracy per se. Because the power structures of our own time are not adequately democratic in the Athenian sense, but are 'postliberal democracies' (410), we can today become 'democratic Platonists' who criticize nominally democratic existing regimes in the name of a political art which would make them more rational and just and indeed more genuinely democratic.

Wallach is right to insist that the generalized critique of regimes as such provides the context for the critique of democracy and not vice versa. Paradoxically, however, despite the overt thesis of (2), Wallach still accepts Plato's criticism of Athenian democracy too easily, holding with the author he studies that dominant Athenian discourses did in fact simply justify power as domination. But the orators as well as the idealized Funeral Oration in Thucydides proclaim the ethical values inherent in democracy (*isonomia* and *eleutheria* for starters), and if those values were traduced in democratic practice, that would justify a charge of hypocrisy rather than a charge of absence of ethics altogether. Similarly, S. Sara Monoson has recently shown (in a book which is richer in suggestive detail than Wallach's, but less ambitious in its theoretical aims and claims: *Plato's Democratic Entanglements: Athenian politics and the practice of philosophy*, [Princeton University Press 2000]) that the Athenians valued an imaginary sense of themselves as united and harmonious in agreement: this would mean that Plato's valorization of harmony in his various sketches of ideal cities was not a denial of democratic ideals in this respect but rather precisely an attempt to fulfill their ethical aim. By immediately conceding that Plato was undemocratic but insisting that modern-day Platonists should be democratic, and by insisting that ancient Athenians severed power from ethics whereas Plato would uniquely connect them, Wallach sometimes deploys schematic polarities where a more nuanced shading would better serve his overall case. (He occasionally errs in the opposite direction as well, seeking a friendliness to democracy in passages which do not support it, for example: 'Although the relation of the weaver to wool [in the *Statesman's* use of weaving as a model of the political art] is surely hierarchical, it need not imply domination' [352].)

The concluding chapter is similarly schematic in its attempt simultaneously and over-ambitiously to indict a range of existing contemporary political theories as inadequately attentive to the relation between ethics and power; sketch the contours of modern politics; and explore what a 'democratic Platonist' should do about the current predicaments of American education. But the weakness of this final chapter can ironically be taken to confirm one of PPA's key overall insights: that what Plato's political thought has to offer

is a way of structuring the relating the realms of value, power, and rationality, rather than specific or universally stable prescriptions for action. As an account of this dynamic, productive, and encompassing nature of Plato's political thinking, treating various dialogues as dimensions of this thinking rather than as compendia of theories, Wallach's book has a great deal to teach and should be consulted by anyone interested in the subject.

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Bruce Wilshire

Fashionable Nihilism:

A Critique of Analytic Philosophy.

Albany: State University of New York Press

2002. Pp. xv + 156.

US\$57.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-5429-0);

US\$18.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-5430-4).

Fashionable Nihilism is not a wholly coherent work — it is, indeed, not a monograph but a collection of essays roughly grouped together by a common theme: Wilshire's opposition to what he terms 'analytic' philosophy. This theme occasionally fades into the background, however, as other topics come to the fore. The difficulties involved in understanding the awful phenomenon of genocide, for example, occupy one chapter of the book (Chapter 6). Henry Bugbee and William James are each discussed (Chapters 7 and 8), though their relevance to Wilshire's critique of analytic philosophy is largely restricted to the fact that Wilshire thinks these figures (along with other practitioners of 'the existential and phenomenological thought indigenous to our own Euro-American thinkers' [xiv]) have been unfairly neglected by analytic philosophers. For sure, if Wilshire is right, then he is making a point of some interest. The phenomenological line that Wilshire finds in the pragmatists leads directly back to Hegel and, as such, has the same source as the line that extends from Hegel to Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and beyond. If analytic philosophers have indeed chosen to ignore this aspect of their inheritance, then they have chosen to ignore an important aspect of their kinship with those in the continental tradition who have made phenomenology the cornerstone of their philosophies.

Wilshire devotes the fourth essay in the collection, 'Phenomenology in the United States', to an exploration of this connection between pragmatism and continental phenomenology and the neglect of phenomenology that he per-

ceives on the part of analytic philosophers. The discussion divides into two distinct parts: first, Wilshire gives an accessible, if brief, account of the development of phenomenology in the hands of Hegel and Husserl and their correspondences and differences with Peirce and James. The second part of the discussion then turns to more recent phenomenologists in America (those whom Wilshire deems unfairly overlooked by their contemporaries): James Edie, John Wild, Aron Gurwitsch, William Barrett, and Calvin Schrag. This discussion is notably short on philosophy, however, as Wilshire is more concerned to voice his disapproval of the politics of academic philosophy that he holds responsible for marginalizing contemporary American phenomenology. What philosophy is to be found therein is hard to follow, largely as a result of Wilshire's desire to blend it with strands of his own interest in indigenous American culture and curious remarks on supposed connections with modern physics. This attempt to somehow holistically unite ancient and modern modes of thought by appeal to phenomenology is seldom explained in more than outline form and, consequently, is far from convincing, despite Wilshire's obvious enthusiasm for the project: 'If we only look, the bridges ramify: radical empiricism, phenomenology, linguistics, current physics, indigenous American traditions of thought, belief, and action!' (79) Rather than showing us how such ramifications might be understood (or even perceived), however, Wilshire contents himself with warning us, in quasi-mystical fashion, of the dangers of failing to do so: 'The fracture of European mentality from indigenous traditions ... is gravely hurtful to both. When shamanic healing works, it must be that the very reality of paradigmatically regenerative creatures — snakes and bears for example — irradiates and suffuses the bodies of patients' (79). Wilshire's contention that the 'reality' of shamanic healing is supported by modern physics is equally sketchy, and unlikely to impress a theoretical physicist: 'I think again of physicist John Wheeler's remark, "There is no *out there* out there." I think he means that reality is a sea of energy nodes within the sea, and what we call mind is but one aspect of the exchange, another aspect of which we call matter' (78). Wilshire is fiercely critical of 'scientism', which he thinks is little more than an appeal to authority designed to disguise conceptual confusions in analytic philosophy. Certainly he is right to warn us of the dangers of scientism; but vague appeals to theoretical physics devoid of any sensitivity to the highly technical mathematical apparatus underlying that discipline are no less dangerous and misleading, particularly when they are irresponsibly invoked to give the illusion of connections that cannot be otherwise substantiated.

The first four chapters of the book do coalesce in a more unitary way. In these chapters Wilshire comes closest to providing the critique of analytic philosophy that the title of the book promises. Chapter One, in particular, is concerned with outlining Wilshire's characterization of analytic philosophy as nihilistic. In essence, Wilshire's thought here is that philosophy, in its analytic form, has lost sight of its origins; it is no longer in touch with what is truly important and has thereby lost its depth: '[Nihilism] means to lose full contact with our willing-feeling-valuing life-projects: to have a shallow

sense of what is valuable in human life. It means to be arch, smug, dried out — to be a talking head among other such heads. Speak and reason as we will, we are no longer moved in our depths' (6). However, it is never quite clear who Wilshire has in mind when speaking of 'analytic' philosophers, nor is there a workable definition to be found in the book of 'analytic philosophy'. The most prominent figures in the analytic tradition are noticeably absent from the discussion: Frege, Russell, Moore, Wittgenstein, Carnap, and Quine get hardly a handful of mentions between them in the book. Quine does receive slightly more attention than the other figures I have mentioned but the context in which he is considered illustrates well the real motivations behind Wilshire's distaste for analytic philosophy. Aside from a cursory glance over Quine's 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' (24-5), Wilshire's main interest in Quine revolves around the latter's role in the American Philosophical Association. It is this organization toward which Wilshire directs his assault and whose members and governing body he has in mind when speaking of analytic philosophers. Whether one sides with him or not in his dislike of the APA will, I suspect, determine how one will respond to this book. Those who share Wilshire's political concerns about academic philosophy in America may find something of interest in his polemic. Those who come to this book in search of a serious discussion of analytic philosophy, however, will be disappointed.

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J. Richard Wingerter

Beyond Metaphysics Revisited:

Krishnamurti and Western Philosophy.

Lanham, MD: University Press of America

2002. Pp. 391.

US\$71.00. ISBN 0-7618-2192-9.

J. Krishnamurti is a classic figure in twentieth-century spirituality. His teachings, however, have not joined the academic canon. This is partly because Krishnamurti eschewed institutionalization, preferring instead to talk with people about thinking for themselves through the problems of living and about actualizing a 'meditative mind' by which to see the real. In *Beyond Metaphysics Revisited*, Wingerter intends to rehabilitate the academic perception of Krishnamurti by seeing the whole history of metaphysics for what

it is, and by comparing this to Krishnamurti's mode of mind: observerless observation.

Wingerter depends primarily on Lev Shestov's *Athens and Jerusalem* for his analysis of metaphysics. He brings Shestov and a parade of other metaphysicians (including Berdyaev, Marcel, Levinas, Foucault and others) into dialogues with Krishnamurti that could not have otherwise taken place. Every section of the book follows a three part structure: quotations from a metaphysician (more than half of these from Shestov's main work), comments by Wingerter, and relevant quotations from Krishnamurti's *Commentaries on Living*. No single, numbered section runs more than two pages. Shestov's thesis is that Greek philosophy falls into two modalities, philosophy as reason and philosophy as will (with its subsidiary, concrete existence). Reason is the dominant mode; will is the secondary mode. Shestov's fideism itself falls under the secondary. Wingerter accepts the distinction, but lays a doom on reason and will: neither of them is adequate for experience of the eternal or real. That neither is adequate is evident in the back-and-forth criticism that each, in various guises, offers of the other. This split and conflict between reason and will structured the character of philosophy down to the present day, in the contemporary analytic-continental divide.

For Krishnamurti, 'functional mind' necessarily divides human life, and this is at the heart of all human suffering. In order to get beyond the dualistic level of existence (oppositions, dialectics, subject-object distinctions, etc.) one must assume the possibility of a non-dual mind: 'quiet' or 'meditative mind'. Wingerter explains this most thoroughly in the introduction and conclusion of the last chapter where he details the epistemology of meditative mind and how it differs from the epistemology of functioning mind. The definitive difference is freedom from opposition, the subject-object distinction, and dualism in general (310, 355-60). Wingerter concludes that, if philosophers wish to transcend metaphysics, it will not help to counter one function of thought with a new function. Instead one must 'go beyond [metaphysics] ... by going beyond the level of the mind out of which metaphysics ... is created' (22). One goes beyond when one 'see[s] choicelessly, and without observer observing, what each of these [metaphysical] traditions is' (74). This takes place in Krishnamurti's kind of meditation, a still mind. There is something to be gained from such post-metaphysical work: truth. As Krishnamurti says, 'the approach to truth must be negative, for positive action is based on the known, and what is known is not the real' (147). None in the western traditions have transcended metaphysics. Though they desired to transcend (Aristotle beyond Plato, Hegel beyond Kant, existentialists beyond rationalists), they remained always within one of the two approaches.

Even if Krishnamurti offers an escape from metaphysics, however, it is not clear why his is the only possible example of such thinking, as Wingerter implies. Or why certain prominent figures are not among the metaphysicians. The glaring omission here is phenomenology. One cannot deal with either metaphysical thought or with observerless observation without dealing with the tradition that understands itself as going 'back to the things

themselves'. After all, phenomenology confronted subject-object dualism head on. At the very least, Wingerter should have considered phenomenology's place within the history of philosophy. Additionally, Wingerter might have brought Heidegger into dialogue with Krishnamurti on the relation between observation of the real and fundamental ontology.

There are two additional problems with the book. The language is frequently awkward; and when Wingerter treats twentieth-century post-metaphysical thinkers, he does so through secondary sources or through introductions to the authors' works. This shortcut seems to be an evasion. If one cannot take up the originals, one ought not take them up at all.

Still, the book is worth reading. First it provides an unusual introduction to metaphysical thought and effectively categorizes such thought. Second, for the popular philosopher or the comparative philosopher who wants a door to Krishnamurti, this serves as an engaging topical introduction to his teachings. It presents Krishnamurti in relation to many philosophers and issues, and one can follow up these issues in Krishnamurti's talks through Wingerter's citations. Finally, the reader will benefit from thinking with Wingerter and the interlocutors about the problem of knowledge and reality or being. If there is any question that still exercises philosophers, it is this one. To establish the proper ground of knowledge is to clarify the ground of our being, since knowing is so large a part of that. Wingerter constructs valuable conversations concerning this problem.

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John Zammito

Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2002.

Pp. 576.

US\$29.00. ISBN 0-226-97859-1.

The aims of *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* are somewhat diffuse. The book centers around an examination of the lives and writings of Kant and Herder during a ten year period beginning in approximately 1762. Zammito's sympathies are clearly with Herder in this examination, but Kant receives the majority of the attention. Anthropology is obviously a central theme within the overall discussion of Kant and Herder. However, given the very broad range of material falling under a 'science of man', the intellectual history is extremely wide-ranging.

The book is wonderful for giving a sense of the sheer complexity of the cultural milieu within which Kant was steeped during this period. Whether one agrees with Zammito's analyses or not, his approach does convey how Kant stood not always on the shoulders of giants, but also on those of a vast cast of more ordinary mortals. Likewise, Zammito evokes images of poisoning lusts, coating and suppressing phlegma, sordid coquettes and hypocritical gallants — all leading to what the author terms the 'philosophical machine' of the critical Kant. Although I was often un-convinced by Zammito's spin on these stories, they nonetheless fascinate, all the while opening one's mind to a view onto a vast plain of possible Kants.

It was unclear how discussion of Herder was meant to tie into the biographical material on Kant, except insofar as the author was clearly *applying* Herder's theories about the historical-groundedness of philosophy to his approach to Kant. Beyond this, the connections drawn between Kant and Herder are largely at the theoretical level: we learn how Kant's lectures and writings of this period influenced Herder. We also get an intriguing summary of Herder's thinking, although not one that aims at either completeness or philosophical encapsulation.

The timing of the work is perhaps somewhat unfortunate, as it must compete with Kuehn's recent biography of Kant without being able to rely upon this work. On a quite separate front, one senses that reference to Hanna's equally recent *Kant and the Foundations of Analytic Philosophy* would have been useful, had this been possible. For Zammito makes some swipes at Kantian thought in the name of post-positivistic analytic philosophy that do not seem particularly credible in light of this work.

But such are the pitfalls of a still mercifully disconnected world. It is of course only in other areas that one can really take Zammito to task. First of all, despite the power of Zammito's treatment of Kant's life, there is, as I implied, much about it that is un-convincing. Kant is assigned, for example, a 'soured' attitude toward women as a result of his awareness of his strong sexual attraction to them. In a similar vein, Zammito wonders if Kant's negative comments on women are the result of some (potential?) romances gone bad. Moreover, these 'wonderings' are offered repeatedly, and conjoined with suggestions of Kant's immense and embittering pain in suppressing un-wanted sensuous neediness. I got the odd feeling from all of this that Kant had been placed in a kind of therapy group for philosophers, where he was to be spectrally forced into a programmed wearing away of his dignity.

There is absolutely zero consideration of Kant's sexuality relative to a specifically Christian eighteenth-century Prussian culture — one tied, no less, to the ostensibly celibate Teutonic Knights and other Christian upholders of celibate life. This averting of eyes from religion is most unfortunate. For who knows how such medieval forces might have haunted the mind of eighteenth-century Prussian philosophers. And what of other spiritual and chthonic forces? One might focus upon, for example, the fact that these eighteenth-century philosophers were heir to an Orphean-Platonic tradition

that contrasts spiritual re-birth with sexual reproduction. Continuing in this vein: what of the homoerotic in Kant's life?

Neither is there any in-depth consideration of health issues, such as possible impotence, or clinical depression. Zammito does briefly mention that Kant at times felt generally un-well and out of sorts in the decade under consideration. But there is no attempt to put on display the vast array of possible spiritual and bodily forces that may have pushed Kant to his Stoical conquest of the sensuous at the age of 40. Zammito writes little to nothing concerning religion, same-sex attraction, specifically Germanic Pauline traditions — to say nothing of their interaction. Rather, we find only the suggestion that it was a woman who is to thank and blame for Kant's 'transformation'; or that it was possibly several.

To my mind, Zammito tries a little too hard to make Kant look pitiful. This is particularly true given that Zammito claims a wider goal in his work. This is namely the goal of furthering a transition in Kant studies that he sketches out the end of the book, involving a move toward seeing the anthropological as central to Kant's thought. For at the same time that Zammito outlines his disciplinary goals, he offers an un-charitable, reductionist approach to Kant's intellectual biography; and offers it together with a negative view of Kant's emphasis on securing purely a priori foundations for theoretical, moral, and aesthetic judgment. This is problematic, because of the nature of Zammito's target audience here: those working on bringing out the anthropological side of Kant's thought, along with those emphasizing other themes that Zammito values, such as 'unity, system, purpose, aesthetics, the primacy of practical reason,' etc.

First, most philosophers tend to be allergic to anything that even smacks of an attempt to refute theoretical positions — however culturally-grounded — through ad hominem critiques. And this is especially true of those sympathetic to Kant's position on the un-knowability of inner motives (i.e., most philosophers who specialize in Kant). Second, it seems to me that most Kantian philosophers favorably disposed to a third *Critique* and *Anthropology* orientation think it useful to work *within* the boundaries of Kant's commitment to a priori bases. There is no desire to burst these boundaries for the sake of some other, un-specified 'integrity', as in the approach mentioned by Zammito.

So while I applaud Zammito's highlighting of themes I too take to be the proper direction of Kant studies, I think this effort is undercut by his lack of appreciation for the positive aspects of Kantian purity. In the end, the more difficult and more valuable project of Kant studies lies in imagining how Kantian purity and impurity can be placed in community. Simply appropriating the impure is a lesser activity, whatever degree of conscientiousness one has in recognizing that Kant would not approve.

In the end, however, the more theoretical faults of the book are more than outweighed by its manic devotion to displaying the documented web of intellectual and social influences the author reveals. If an over-confidence in the biographical value of eighteenth-century documents about Kant has its

positivistic influences: well, these are displaced by the thoughts of other, dreamier lives that Zammito cannot find on paper; but whose existence he manages to suggest through the thick and branching story that he tells.

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