

Book Reviews/ Comptes rendus

Knowledge and Civilization

BARRY ALLEN

Boulder: Westview Press (Perseus Books Group), 2004; 324 pages.

"Philosophy begins in the shadow of the artisan." With this terse and somewhat enigmatic statement Barry Allen begins the Introduction to this fascinating book. Its meaning becomes clear as the several main themes of the book come into view. The penchant of early Greek philosophers for abstraction and rational theorizing led to the disparagement in philosophical circles of the inherited wisdom and practical talents of the day, and the new theories of knowledge and reality which became the model for philosophizing in the West did not rate highly the knowledge found in centuries of intelligent tool making, art, manufacture, and social construction. One of Allen's central theses is that any adequate philosophy of knowledge must accommodate the superlative artifactual performances of humanity evident throughout the history of *Homo sapiens*. Western philosophy with its sophisticated analyses of methods of inquiry and argumentative discourse has been, of course, genuinely enlightening and progressive, but at the same time it has been too narrowly focused to see the merits of nonlinguistic forms of cultivated capacities for making and creating. Allen sees his project as "the rehabilitation of philosophy from the rationalist bias of its origin, ... a new direction in the theory of knowledge, away from textbook problems of epistemology, towards an ecological philosophy of technology and civilization" (3).

The second bold thrust of this book is to argue that conceiving of knowledge in the broader way suggested above is made urgent by new understandings of human evolution and the development of mind. Allen makes use of the growing literature in this area which manifests two prominent tendencies: the first, to understand knowledge as a determined, adaptive accommodation among human beings; and the second, to perceive knowledge as a consequence of evolution, certainly, but as emerging from an area of contingency, aesthetic preference, and choice on the part of human beings. He allies himself with the latter group, having in mind the gap of some fifty thousand years between the evolution of an organism capable of the kind of cognition that human beings have and the actual cultivation and use of these possibilities in human culture and (eventually) civilization.

The focus on the broad sweep of evolution is also the context of Allen's third main preoccupation—namely, the mutual dependence and synergistic interaction between knowledge production and civilization. He claims that though human knowledge developed, perhaps discontinuously, over a stretch of thousands of years, it passed through an "architectural threshold" late in this span owing to the emergence of cities and the qualitatively new density of artifactual mediation that cities brought into being. Not only did cities provide safety and generate tolerance, but further, "[t]he mutualism of civilities and personal conduct, sentiment and taste, and civilized practices of law, morality, and art, make cities at once architectural and ethical accomplishments" (218). Allen contends that in the twenty-first century the forms of knowledge that sustain humanity are mutually dependent on the flourishing of cities (and their urban reach) which are "the abiding matrix of civilized practice, and consequently of civilization"

(218). The mutual dependence of urban centers and knowledge, he suggests, is so necessary, and at the same time so fragile, that the fate of humanity now depends on the assiduous cultivation of those forms of knowledge that will enable human beings to flourish in the global urban network.

Two thirds of Allen's book is devoted to the presentation of his radical redescription of knowledge. A systematic exposition is given in Part One, which includes a clear portrait of what epistemology has been in the Western tradition together with a concise and lucid sketch of his own theory that knowledge is better thought of as the capacity for superlative artifactual performances. In Part Two, this new conception of knowledge is situated within postmodern literature, with whole chapters devoted to Nietzsche, Foucault, and Rorty, though along the way substantial reference is made also to Dewey, Heidegger, Quine, and many, many others. Rorty makes a special point, in his Preface to the book, of remarking on the richness of the author's frame of reference in defending his radical departures.

Part Three, the last third of the book, is devoted to spelling out how the search for knowledge should be understood as a contingent choice in the context of human evolution, and to the further task of explaining the close interconnection between the ways in which knowledge has been pursued and the thriving or otherwise of civilizations. Allen concludes with some urgent and somber thoughts (informed by an almost Heideggerian pathos) on the human predicament at this time, e.g., with regard to the undesirable consequences of technologically transformed agriculture, and the failure, in Allen's view, of most efforts of city planning. These and other particular concerns of the author, briefly touched upon, are huge global problems which do indeed illustrate his point about the sometimes shortsighted and counterproductive applications of scientific knowledge, but they are dealt with too cursorily to assure confident agreement of all readers.

The book is well structured, and the reader's progress is facilitated in a number of ways. Each chapter begins with a paragraph explaining its place in the whole and the focus and aim of that chapter. The argument throughout is punctuated by sketches of trends in philosophy and by summaries of parts of the author's position which are masterpieces of concision and clarity.

The novelty of Allen's critique of Western epistemology is found in his claim that most of his allies in this critique are implicated in the tradition they so vociferously criticize. This is so by reason of their almost exclusive preoccupation with language and discourse. He sees them as fixated on language and unable to get beyond it. To mention one instance, he shares Foucault's idea that knowledge and social power are "inextricable, continuous, facets of each other," but he notes that Foucault "does not distinguish ... between knowledge and sanctioned, accepted, prestigious statements" (122). Foucault, he believes, is stuck in the order of discourse, which is very limiting because "[t]here is more to *Homo sapiens* than *logos*, more to knowledge than words, more to its value than the truth of an irrefutable discourse.... Two million years of technical culture have so interbred humans and artifacts that our organism is now untenable without their shelter" (145).

Allen recommends a shift of emphasis from language (and "the relentless linguistifying" of philosophy in the recent past) to artifactual performance as central to the grasp of knowledge. Knowledge has no essence. It must be understood in terms of its good which is found in successful actions, useful manufacture or, to use a summary term, artifactual performances—not mundane, habitual performances but creative, superlative performances, a notion that links knowledge to art. "Art and knowledge alike are rooted in *aesthesis*: prelogical preferences, prelinguistic sensitivity to felt differences; an aesthetic comprehension of performative possibilities conditioned by the ontogenetic interaction of neurology and artifactual ecology" (69). He suggests that these performances are assessed with regard to such dimensions as appropriateness to use, quality of design, fecundity, and symbiosis (72–3).

By way of illustrating his radical departure from traditional epistemology, he reminds us that "the Inuit of Baffin Island do not 'believe that snow is white,' they know it—not as an impeccably justified belief, not as an 'attitude' to a 'proposition,' but as kinesthetic, adaptive, performative, ecological knowledge, expressed in artifacts, practices, language, and myth" (18). The importance of linguistic expressions of knowledge and the significance of truth are not being denied here, of course (how could they, when Allen's book is a linguistic artifact, indeed, a superlative artifactual performance replete with truth claims which have to stand up to critical examination). However, the author consciously decenters language and truth to make room for a broader characterization of knowledge: "Knowledge is deeper than language, different from belief, more valuable than truth. It is exemplified in exemplary performances with artifacts of all kinds. It is itself an artifact of artifacts interacting in an artifactual ecology" (59). Allen's artifactual constructivism, if I may put it that way, goes all the way down, and while he complains about some philosophers being stuck in the order of discourse (he exempts Dewey, Heidegger, and perhaps Nietzsche), he seems quite comfortable himself in the more ample but still circumscribed order of artifacts. For there are no known nonartifacts, according to Allen, nor do we have any reason to postulate their existence. "Reality, in the only sense that matters, is completely artifactual" (62). Or again, "reality" means the environment of whatever life poses the question of its meaning" (85). Thus he eliminates the dichotomy between artifacts and the natural order and challenges a response from those whose intuitive predilections on these matters are of a realist sort.

Allen's philosophy of knowledge is iconoclastic, but it is intelligible with reference to lines of argument commonly pursued in the profession. His philosophy of civilization, however, presents a different kind of problem since there is much less of a common frame of reference within which to work. In 1932, Albert Schweitzer lamented the lack of interest in philosophy of civilization and he published a three-volume work on the subject. In the years that followed, a few excursions were made in that direction such as R. G. Collingwood's *The New Leviathan* (1942) which was inspired by the rise of fascism and Nazism, but no subdiscipline developed to make progress with these issues. The term "civilization" is used variously, and often without a very determinate meaning, but in the context of particular conversations it is clear enough, and few think it is useful to theorize about the concept. Some uses of the word are compromised by ideological self-

interest, which makes the topic unattractive if not incendiary. But at the same time, there are many more or less isolated works on civilization written by archaeologists, historians, sociologists, and political scientists who are also strategic analysts. They tend to be individual, even idiosyncratic, efforts, but some attract a very broad general readership because they are perceived to be about profound and universal human problems. Such works are commonly disparaged or damned with faint praise by experts in relevant fields because of errors of commission or omission or because the theorizing is thought to go beyond the limits of reasonable testing and confirmation. When Braudel published *A History of Civilizations* in 1987 it was rejected as a proposed history text for use in schools because it dealt with matters thought to be too remote from the usual concerns of historians. Times change, however. Felipe Fernández-Armesto remarks, in his book *Civilizations* (2000), that after the end of the Cold War the topic of civilization is back on the academic agenda. But he still calls his book (because of the immensity of its subject matter) an "essay" (despite its 636 pages), and a "tentative" and "experimental" work. Allen also refers to his thoughts on civilization as experimental, though they are not at all short on specificity and coherence. His treatment of the subject is appropriately experimental both because he takes an unabashedly interdisciplinary approach and because he advances a novel theory in an area where there is little scholarly consensus.

Allen eschews the common practice of thinking of civilization and culture as identical, differing only in scale. He builds on a perceived strong connection between cities and civilization. "The shelter of culture" (tools, language, ritual) goes back two million years to the beginning of the genus *Homo*, whereas cities only emerge around 5800 BP. Civilization, for Allen, is not a single thing, but rather "the synergy of two intertwining processes, practices, and preferences: urbanization, or the economy of cities, and urbanity, or the ethos, the ethical culture, of enduring cities worldwide" (221). The preferences and choices of numerous people over long periods of time have consequences, including some that may limit future choices, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century the relentless spread of cities draws most of humanity into a somewhat chaotic and vulnerable urban net generating knowledge at an unprecedented rate. He thinks that this process of globalization is perhaps irreversible and that the job for philosophy is to comprehend the complex interdependence of knowledge and civilization as part of the interdisciplinary dialogue that will be necessary to attain the understanding and accommodations required to sustain human flourishing.

Allen does distinguish his study of civilization from others, past and present, and there are brief critical references to other contributors in the field. On two or three pages alone he touches on the thought of Comte, Norbert Elias, Foucault, J. S. Mill, Freud, Rousseau, Schiller, Hegel, and Samuel Huntington. But he is bent upon breaking new ground. He does not view civilization as the acme of universal history (as do Kant, Comte, and Spencer), nor does he privilege one civilization over another. He does not advance a teleological view of the development of civilization. He does not perceive civilization to be simply culture on a large scale. Civilization is conceived by Allen to be half urban architecture and half what that architecture intimates and shelters (218). There is a wealth of detail in his

treatment of topics such as the civilizing process, human violence, the alleged clash of civilizations, changes in cities over time, and the urbanization of knowledge. Suffice it to say that Allen has created an impressive armature (in the sculptural sense) for a concept of civilization which the author and his readers can add to and fill out and thus make progress toward a philosophy of knowledge and civilization, and at the same time a substantive philosophy of history, adequate to the pressing needs of our time.

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An Ethics of Dissensus: Postmodernity, Feminism, and the Politics of Radical Democracy

EWA PŁONOWSKA ZIAREK

Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001; 288 pages.

An Ethics of Dissensus is written in response to an impasse frustrating contemporary feminism and postmodern political theory: the conceptual dissociation between ethics and politics. Ziarek attempts to fuse ethics and politics in a way that moves beyond the failures of the two prevailing trends in recent theory: on the one hand, a politics of difference that avoids confrontation with the ethical structures of difference and, on the other, theories of normative obligation that fail to address the political contexts that create the need for ethics in the first place. Ziarek's procedure for synthesizing ethics and politics is to recontextualize both at the level of embodied practice. Considered at this level, ethical-political practice is clearly marked by sexual and racial differences that make problematic any attempt to separate ethical and political elements. Understanding that racial and sexual difference is constructed through political antagonism helps us recognize the value of an ethical investiture in politics. In Ziarek's view, the political sites where embodied differences gain their significance will be the field for an ethics that finally addresses embodiment without essentializing it. The advantage of this view for contemporary feminism is clear: traditional political models that neutralize and disembodify citizens can be opposed without lapsing into essentialist demands for the "recognition" of difference.

One signal strength of Ziarek's book is her ability to develop a conversation with a multiplicity of voices. The book proceeds through critical expositions of Foucault, Levinas, Lyotard, Mouffe, Laclau, Kristeva, Irigaray, and others. Her skillful engagement with such a diverse range is grounded in a familiarity with the broad spectrum of Continental philosophy. The index attests to the fact that no major Continental thinker goes unconsidered. Such breadth is also apparent in Ziarek's first and only other offering, *The Rhetoric of Failure: Deconstruction of Skepticism, Reinvention of Modernism* (1996), where the fusion includes Derrida, Benjamin, Cavell, and Kafka. Ziarek engages with the work of Foucault and Levinas to situate ethical practice between an "ethos of becoming" and an "ethos of alterity." She states the value of Foucault's work in terms of his conceptualization of an agency that both resists the disciplinary mechanics pervading modernity

and creates itself through an aesthetics of existence. She employs Levinas to articulate an ethical responsibility that commands the self prior to its willful and rational presence. Ziarek holds together these seemingly opposed views in order to conceive an ethics that resides in the interstices of this unlikely combination. Articulating freedom and responsibility as embodied practices, she argues that these two ethical paradigms are not opposed, but are in fact contexts for one another. Responsibility is not passive obedience to command, but is the free creation of embodied subjects. In turn, this freedom is never absolutely individual, but is always created with others.

Some may wonder why the third main trajectory in postmodern ethics—discourse ethics—is not blended with these other two. Ziarek's attempt to situate politically the ethics of dissensus clarifies this lacuna. By employing Lyotard's concept of the differend, Ziarek acknowledges the political importance of nonsignifiable wrongs—the possibility of which is theoretically denied in most versions of discourse ethics. Ziarek uses Lyotard to develop the notion of an "indeterminate ethical judgment that proceeds without a concept" (86). In this view, normative judgments are not a structural possibility inherent in either communication or political antagonism; rather, normative judgments are an artifact of actual political antagonism. In directing her attention in this way, Ziarek is able to address the very embodied subjects who formulate normative judgments. Thus we can recognize that the moment at which embodied differences become political is also the moment of normative judgment. Politics and ethics, in other words, are indistinguishable wherever practice is marked by embodied differences.

To describe the effects that follow from recognizing the embodied conditions of ethical-political practice, Ziarek enters into dialogue with Kristeva, Irigaray, and bell hooks. Readers will especially appreciate the fresh approach of Ziarek's discussion of hooks. She moves beyond the familiar nods to hooks's criticisms of the racial and sexual essentialisms still lingering in postmodernism to take up hooks's own *positive* contributions to postmodern ethical and political theory. Through hooks she explicates the political timeliness of "an unapologetic commitment to ethical vision" (184). Such a commitment enables us to theorize politics without familiar liberal paradigms (such as consensus) that predictably subtract ethical considerations from the domain of the political. Instead, Ziarek argues, we can invoke a more inclusive ethical paradigm that manifests a combined commitment to experimental freedom and responsibility to others.

Although Ziarek claims that feminist theory is the central context for the book, its relevance clearly extends to postmodern political theory in general. One example of this is Ziarek's repeated criticisms of the traditional liberal call to dissociate ethics from politics. Some may find these criticisms misdirected insofar as Ziarek's tendency is to describe liberalism as relying on and extending an individualist social ontology. The problems with contemporary liberalism can hardly be addressed by looking back to the individualism of its early formulations. Most contemporary liberals (e.g., Rawls, Rorty, and Hayek) acknowledge the ontological priority of the social over the individual. Dropping the assumption that liberalism relies on an outdated individualism would enable Ziarek to convey more effectively her crucial insight that democratic politics needs the ethical investiture she calls for. In this spirit, I would suggest that liberalism be regarded as a complex

network of institutions for social government. This would be consistent with Ziarek's attention to Foucault's genealogy of discipline. Seeing liberalism in this way clarifies how antiessentialists like Rorty can defend versions of liberal theory that explicitly dissociate ethical practice from political governance: contemporary liberals are comfortable privatizing ethics because they bet that liberal social institutions can reliably pick up the slack. This, I take it, is the bluff that Ziarek wishes to call. By addressing antiessentialist forms of liberalism, Ziarek could further underscore the value of negotiating ethics and politics in terms that acknowledge their constitutive embodiment. It would also help clarify the way in which Ziarek's democratic political vision is (as the book's subtitle indicates) *radical*. Merely abandoning an individualist social ontology is, at this point in time, more *predictable* than radical.

COLIN KOOPMAN, *McMaster University*

The Philosophy of Gadamer

JEAN GRONDIN

Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003; 180 pages.

Gadamer's *Truth and Method* is an intensely profound read, but one that is often made especially difficult by his frequent reference to figures and traditions that remain unfamiliar to most North American-trained students. Knowledge of these figures and traditions—for example, Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Droysen, German romanticism, and humanism—is clearly integral to understanding not only the particular ideas that Gadamer conveys or critiques at any given point in his study, but also for understanding the history of the hermeneutical tradition as a whole. There are also numerous key themes interwoven throughout *Truth and Method* that can be easily overlooked or misunderstood, and Grondin consistently takes on the task of calling to our attention and explaining these themes. With the publication of Grondin's *The Philosophy of Gadamer*, the student now has a guidebook that not only provides a good deal of the historical information but also untangles Gadamer's intricate themes through careful explication and analysis. The book's table of contents is set up to correspond to the respective sections of *Truth and Method*, which makes it easy for readers to refer to specific sections for closer analysis. With Grondin's book, the student can devote less time to searching and more time to the study of *Truth and Method*.

The pervading idea informing Grondin's approach throughout *The Philosophy of Gadamer* is "that *Truth and Method* represents a privileged access to Gadamer's thought" (15). What Grondin proposes to accomplish with the text is a critical and detailed reading that takes into account the entirety of Gadamer's completed work. Grondin is well suited to this task, for not only was he personally well acquainted with Gadamer but he has also published numerous books and papers on his thought, including a recent, monumental, biography (*Hans-Georg Gadamer: A Biography* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003]). Grondin also includes in the Introduction to this book a brief biography of Gadamer, and gives a helpful

overview of the historical context both for *Truth and Method* and for Gadamer's other works.

The Philosophy of Gadamer is broken down into five chapters that map onto the three main sections of *Truth and Method*: 1) The Problem of Method and the Project of a Hermeneutics of the Human Sciences; 2) Truth After Art; 3) The Destruction of Prejudices in Nineteenth-Century Aesthetics and Epistemology; 4) Vigilance and Horizon in Hermeneutics; and 5) The Dialogue That We Are. Grondin's book maps onto Gadamer's exceptionally well, and does this in only 180 pages. The majority of Grondin's book is devoted to elucidating the central themes and ideas of Gadamer, providing historical background and the ideas of central figures in the hermeneutical, humanist, and natural science traditions, and clarifying parts of the text that can easily be misunderstood. Grondin also points out some of Gadamer's shortcomings and conceptual errors, sometimes quoting from an elder Gadamer himself (this critical addition to Grondin's study is especially helpful in approaching a balanced reading of *Truth and Method*). Grondin explains, for example, regarding Gadamer's notion of the experience of truth in art, that "[p]erhaps this aspect of Gadamer's hermeneutics is the most important, and also the most misunderstood. If it is misunderstood, it is because Gadamer in *Truth and Method* sometimes has a tendency, as he later recognized, to take an epistemological approach to the problem in talking of 'knowledge.'... He was the victim of too epistemological a connection with the problem of understanding that he wanted to unsettle" (19–20).

Grondin's book has many merits aside from these technical aspects. His writing style is relatively casual; the book reads like he is talking about an old friend—as, in fact, he is. The book also gets straight to the point, without ever losing its academic rigor. Grondin does an excellent job of illustrating the relevant figures and historical contexts that inhabit and surround Gadamer's magnum opus. He unfailingly provides his reader with the right amount of background information to understand Gadamer's main point, and also provides enough insight to be able to stand back and critically evaluate Gadamer's analyses and critiques. Grondin's book is, in short, an ideal companion to *Truth and Method*. *The Philosophy of Gadamer* is superb in its exposition of Gadamer's difficult and often complex ideas, as well as in detailing how Gadamer has advanced the modern study of hermeneutics, the philosophical problem of method, and the further development of Heidegger's ideas on language and thought. Grondin's book is essential reading for anyone who wishes to appreciate more fully both the bold general undertaking and the more subtle dialectical inroads of *Truth and Method*.

KIMBERLY BALTZER, *Wilfrid Laurier University*

Deconstruction and Critical Theory

PETER V. ZIMA

London: Continuum, 2002; 231 pages.

Deconstruction and Critical Theory announces itself as an important piece

of writing for graduate students interested in the various branches of deconstruction that stem from Derrida's writings. Excellent as a graduate text, Zima's book is too basic for anything beyond graduate school, with the possible exception of his final chapter, in which he spends considerable time outlining the various critiques of deconstruction. On the whole, this book serves as a useful tool with which deconstruction might be examined by graduate students. The structural organization of this book is superb. Each of the seven chapters is fairly self-sufficient and informative in its own right. As the title suggests, Zima explores deconstruction's relation to critical theory, however this exploration occurs more as a matter of fact and less as a thematic point of focus. Of the seven chapters, four are devoted exclusively to writings of Paul de Man, J. Hillis Miller, Geoffrey Hartman, and Harold Bloom. The first two chapters explain Derrida's deconstruction and attempt to show its historical roots in Heidegger, Nietzsche, and the romantics. The final chapter provides an outline of the various critiques of deconstruction.

The main thrust of *Deconstruction and Critical Theory* consists in displaying the historical roots of deconstruction in general as well as the similarities and differences between particular strains of deconstructive thought as they appear in the writings of de Man, Miller, Hartman, and Bloom. While there are several noticeable differences between Derrida and American writers on deconstruction, one thing stands in common: the enormous influence that Nietzsche and the German romantics have had on deconstruction. This influence, described as a "precursor of deconstruction," opens the door to the critique of logocentric thought, and is exemplified in Friedrich Schlegel's question, "is incomprehensibility really something so reprehensible and bad?" (10). No one would question Zima's elementary point that Schlegel's romanticism anticipates the key ideas of deconstruction. Nor would we question the immense importance that Derrida's readings of Nietzsche have had on his writing style and content. Zima's first two chapters, wherein he spends most of his time stating and restating the various ways in which deconstruction has been influenced by Schlegel and Nietzsche, provide nothing new for the scholar. However, these chapters contain everything that a graduate student might need to become familiar with the project of deconstruction and its place within the history of philosophy.

While the first two chapters read more like a history lesson, the section on de Man is the first chapter where we find Zima's own position and interpretation of deconstruction. It is in this chapter that Zima begins to critique deconstruction by challenging ideas presented by de Man. Zima asks, for example, "How can one assert that a particular way of reading—deconstructive or otherwise—is the correct one, and that the contradictions revealed by de Man or another deconstructionist are 'contained' in the object?" (85). With this in mind, Zima concludes that "de Man seems to commit the very Hegelian error he criticizes when he declares that 'a deconstruction always has for its target to reveal the existence of hidden articulations and fragmentations within assumed monadic totalities'" (85). Zima takes issue with de Man's highly speculative and particularized interpretations of poetic fragments. He expresses frustration with de Man's repeated attempts to turn his subjective fantasies into interpretations, and describes de Man's interpretations of poetic fragments as "Nietzschean

exaggerations" (88).

The chapters discussing de Man, Miller, Hartman, and Bloom lead into Zima's final chapter where his own critical voice becomes most apparent. In this final chapter, Zima lumps together all writers of deconstruction and aims his axe in their general direction. Not only do we hear Zima's own critique of deconstruction, we are also made aware of the many critical voices that have been launched against it. Many of these attacks are well founded and to be expected. From this banquet of assaults we find the following samples: (1) the many paradoxes and logical contradictions of deconstruction; (2) the problematic distinction between the non-theoretical/non-methodological "non-essence" of deconstruction versus the theoretical and methodological essence of particularized interpretations (e.g., de Man, Miller, Hartman, and Bloom); (3) deconstruction's inability to speak of a history without interpreting this history as rhetorical; (4) deconstruction's limited applicability to social problems and inability to offer pragmatic interpretations of legal texts; (5) deconstruction's glossing over of political issues, its ambivalence toward cultural values, and its rejection of the social sciences; (6) deconstruction's undermining of traditional literary criticism; (7) deconstruction's unfortunate consequences of creating a paralysis of action, a denial of lucidity, an inability to reflect on itself as a theory having social, political, and historical ties, and a presentation of itself as an ideological monologue of indifference; and finally (8) deconstruction's negation of the agency of the individual subject, the disavowal of historical action, and the complete disintegration of political action or agency.

While, on their own, none of these attacks is new, what *is* unique about Zima's book is the concise, lengthy, and formidable presentation of these various attacks as a unified front leveled against Derrida and his American followers. Zima offers little consolation to the deconstructionists and does not entertain the possibility that deconstruction will be able to sustain itself against its numerous critics. Instead, he offers a rather terse and uncritical suggestion that anyone wishing to move deconstruction into the "future" must confront the fact that deconstruction is incapable of accounting for a non-rhetorical "history." At this point, we could imagine how proponents of deconstruction might happily embrace a nonutopian utopia where subjective agency, political agency, and social decisions are never desired, but instead give way to the free play of *aporia* and interpretive indifference. At any rate, Zima does make one critical and powerful point to frighten away many readers from deconstruction—namely, Lehman's fantastic suggestion that deconstruction could plausibly interpret Hitler's *Mein Kampf* as follows: "Hitler rejects religious anti-Semitism ... its author secretly implies the opposite of what he declares 'openly.' ... Hitler as a democrat ... or as a friend of the Jews ... represses his sympathies" (175). Zima's point here haunts his reader and lingers as a kind of threat or dare for writers of deconstruction—a dare to see how far they are willing to go to defend their happy acceptance of a rhetorical history, and a threat to test how steep their conviction might be when they claim that all interpretations (Lehman's included) are interesting and clever readings encouraged by the text *itself*.

TANYA DITOMMASO, *University of Ottawa*

The Book of Love and Pain: Thinking at the Limit with Freud and Lacan

JUAN-DAVID NASIO

Albany: SUNY Press, 2004; 143 pages.

The Book of Love and Pain is David Pettigrew and François Raffoul's translation of *Le Livre de La Douleur et de L'Amour* (Editions Payot et Rivages, 1996), a remarkably brief (too brief) psychoanalytic treatment of two sizeable themes which, according to Nasio, are inadequately treated by both Freud and Lacan as well as in the larger literatures of psychoanalysis and philosophical psychology. The book endeavors to offer both "the first exclusive treatment of psychic pain in Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic literature" (back cover) as well as a broadly Freudian-Lacanian analysis of love. In spite of the book's very catchy title, it is pain, not love, that is its principal theme. Indeed, Nasio's treatment of love itself is decidedly secondary and is approached in the main from the perspective of pain (a term he prefers to the broader and, for Nasio, ambiguous "suffering").

After a short Translators' Introduction, the book comprises six chapters (intriguingly titled "Clémence, or the Experience of Pain," "Threshold," "Psychical Pain, Pain of Love," "Archipelago of Pain," "Corporeal Pain: A Psychoanalytic Conception," and "Lessons on Pain"), and concludes with some very short excerpts from Freud and Lacan on psychical and corporeal pain. Among the principal contentions in the book is that "love is an expectation, and pain the sudden and unforeseen rupture of this expectation" (9), and that the pain of loss represents the sudden collapse of the ego—"a mixture of the ego being emptied out and contracted in a memorial image" (10)—and an encounter with the limits of meaning. Pain is an affect of the extreme; it is even "the ultimate affect" in that it is "the expression of a struggle for life" and "the last line of defense against madness" (10). The task of psychoanalysis, Nasio tells us, is the essentially hermeneutic one of transforming the brute fact of pain—"in itself ... [of] no value and no signification, ... [but] simply there, made of flesh or of stone"—through interpretation; "to ease it, we must understand it as an expression of something else, detaching it from the real by transforming it into a symbol" (13).

The coupling in the book's title of love and pain is not accidental since, in the account Nasio offers, psychical pain can be understood only against a background of love and loss. Psychical pain is in the first instance the experience of separation from an object, be this a person, value, material object, or a loss affecting the integrity of the body, and includes the pain of abandonment, humiliation, and mutilation no less than the loss of the beloved: "All these kinds of pain are, to different degrees, pains of brutal amputation from a love-object, one to which we were so intensely and permanently bonded that it regulated the harmony of the psyche" (14). Yet, for Nasio, the fundamental cause of pain is less the loss of the object itself than the internal turmoil which the loss occasions and our perception of that turmoil. Further, Nasio advances the view that in the experience of pain, the imaginative representation of the loved object invariably involves a certain idealization and overinvestment, an idealization that is brought about by the loss itself: "When we lose an arm, for example, or a loved one, the psychical image (or representation) of that lost object we

compensate for it through overinvestment" (24). The process, or "work," of mourning involves the gradual disinvestment and reinvestment of psychical energy from the lost object, or the representation of it, onto another.

Love itself, in Nasio's words, "is the fantasized presence of the loved one in my unconscious," while the beloved "is a complex being composed both of the living and actual person who is in front of me and its double within me" (28). Indeed, it is the imaginative representation of the other within the unconscious that emerges in Nasio's account as the primary object of love rather than the other—the flesh and blood person—him- or herself. This is undoubtedly among the more contestable positions Nasio puts forward. Another is that the beloved centers and regulates our desire while leaving us invariably dissatisfied (or "insatisfied"), and that accordingly "my partner has [a] castrating function of limiting my satisfaction." While "normally we attribute to our partner the power of satisfying our desires or providing our pleasure, ... his or her function in our unconscious is quite different: it assures psychic stability for us through the insatisfaction that it produces and not the satisfaction it provides. Our partner, the person we love, does not satisfy us because, while exciting our desire, he or she cannot—if he or she is even capable of it—and does not want to satisfy us fully. Being human, he or she cannot, and being neurotic, he or she does not want to" (27). The fantasized representation of the other centers and stabilizes our desire precisely by rendering it unsatisfied, yet within tolerable limits. "The person that we love the most," he writes, "remains inevitably the person who leaves us the least satisfied" (29). For Nasio, then, the true cause of pain lies invariably within the unconscious, while pain itself is the confrontation with our own "unhinged" and "panic-stricken desire" (37).

A difficulty with this book is that while Nasio puts forward numerous hypotheses, many of them highly intriguing, many call for far more support than they receive, or, at the very least, elaboration. While this is perhaps not unusual in the literature of psychoanalysis, it is especially problematic for Nasio given the brevity of this book. Some of Nasio's phenomenological descriptions ring true—others may not—yet to be convincing Nasio owes his readers more than he has given us.

Finally, a word about the structure and style of the book. While the book is written in accessible style, Nasio opts for short—often very short—sections which give the book an excessively fragmentary, even incomplete, appearance. There is frequent jumping from topic to topic and even more frequent repetition—not what one would expect in a book of 143 pages. Equally surprising is how poorly edited much of the book is (with sentences beginning with such constructions as "You will agree then that ...," "You see ...," "Do you remember our earlier discussion ...," and so on). The book shifts in the final chapter, "Lessons on Pain," to a seemingly unrevised transcription of an oral seminar, and while the content is well integrated with prior chapters, the stylistic shift is abrupt and jarring. The final impression one is left with is of a book that is of some importance in the literature of psychoanalysis and philosophical psychology, but that is nonetheless a draft or two away from completion.

PAUL FAIRFIELD, *Queen's University*

Husserl and Stein

RICHARD FEIST and WILLIAM SWEET, Editors

Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2003; 202 pages.

With the popularity of Edith Stein growing so rapidly today, new collections of critical essays such as this are in urgent demand. Feist and Sweet's collection is especially welcome, for in locating Stein in the context of the early days of phenomenology, and in addressing explicitly the relation of her thought to Husserl's it fills an important niche for the newcomer to Stein studies. Sweet and Feist introduce the ten essays here collected with a twenty-page discussion of "Husserl, Stein, and Phenomenology," in which they offer brief biographies and general historical observations that will prove especially helpful to the student who comes to this subject with little or no knowledge of phenomenology. But this student is also to be cautioned, for the editors occasionally repeat misleading caricatures and common misconceptions. We find an example of the latter when they write: "Husserl is reputed to have said that Stein was the best doctoral student he ever had—which is remarkable given that Heidegger was also a student of Husserl's—and in 1916 he chose Stein to be his assistant..." (10). In point of fact, Heidegger never studied under Husserl; he served as his assistant (following Stein), but he never took any courses or received any formal supervision from Husserl. (This criticism might seem trivial, but little points like this often prove extremely important. If we continue to misinform our students in this regard, for example, how are they ever going to understand how it is that we find Husserl, in his notorious letter to Pfänder of January 6, 1931, bemoaning the fact that Heidegger has never understood phenomenology?) Such minor shortcomings aside, Sweet and Feist do provide the student with the bare basics required for accessing the material, and the essays that follow continue to flesh out the general historical context while at the same time illuminating important particular features of the respective phenomenologies of Husserl and Stein. Only four of the ten short papers here collected focus on Stein; four discuss quite particular aspects of Husserlian phenomenology, and two present different portions of the historical context of early phenomenology. The collection opens with the historical pieces, then moves on to the studies of Husserl, closing with the four essays on Stein.

In "Brentano and Intentionality," Rolf George points out how Brentano's development of the notion of intentionality was initially inspired and remained informed by critical reflection on Aristotelian psychology. Along the way, George takes his reader on a learned historical romp through some neglected territory of early modern philosophy, pausing to make certain that we appreciate Brentano's indebtedness not only to the tradition of Aristotle, but also to the pre-Kantian tradition to which Leibniz belonged. Anoop Gupta turns our attention to a different historical context in "Altered State: American Empiricism, Austrian Rationalism, and Universal Intuition." As he remarks, "James was read by Husserl, and in turn [Husserl] was studied by Gödel after 1959, in order to clarify his notion of intuition" (38). Gupta argues that this notion never did get clarified, and that it is only within the framework provided by naturalized epistemology that we can properly appreciate the cognitive value of intuition.

Richard Holmes tackles the notorious central question of "The Sixth Meditation"—namely, "how a phenomenologist can explicate a subjectivity

that both belongs in the world and yet constitutes objectivity and its world" (49). Building on his analysis of an analogy drawn from quantum physics, Holmes argues that we must rethink the nature both of the Ego and of its constitutive activity. He concludes: "The solution to the problem of how to explicate the subject as both constituting the world and itself as in the world while being independently and apart from the world appears in seeing that the subject and object are present only as I constitute them and not before. The photon was not somewhere before it is detected nor is the egg or I" (55). René Jagnow's impressively argued "Carnap, Husserl, Euclid, and the Idea of a Material Geometry" has as its goal the formulation of "a coherent notion of such a geometry" (58), and each of its three parts is devoted to one step in this formulation. In the first part, Jagnow critically assesses the account of a material geometry that Carnap offered in his doctoral dissertation (*Der Raum*, 1922), demonstrating that it fails due to two problems: "intuition is restricted to a limited region of space and material geometry is constructed as an axiomatic system in the contemporary sense" (58). In the second part he argues that Husserl's account of spatial intuition enables us to avoid the first problem, and in the third part of his paper he suggests "a non-standard interpretation of Euclid's method in the *Elements* that circumvents Carnap's second problem" (58). Feist's "Reductions and Relativity" deals with a related issue. After outlining Herman Minkowski's geometrical articulation of special relativity, central to which is the conception of "space-time," Feist suggests that it was quite natural for Hermann Weyl subsequently to explicate Minkowski's interpretation in the philosophical language of Husserl's phenomenology. Feist does a good job of explaining how Weyl saw himself able to proclaim that "the real world, and every one of its constituents with their accompanying characteristics, are, and can only be given as, intentional objects of acts of consciousness" (Weyl, *Space-Time-Matter*, trans. H. L. Brose [New York: Dover, 1952], 4). David L. Thompson states the somewhat bold main point of "Are There Really Appearances? Dennett and Husserl on Seemings and Presence" as follows: "Husserl's description of phenomena as present to subjectivity and Dennett's rejection of real seemings share a common understanding of mental reality and of the nature of consciousness" (111). Thompson does, however, tone this point down a bit in his concluding paragraph, in which he points to what he takes to be the fundamental difference between the tasks of the two thinkers: "I wish to emphasize once again, in conclusion, the radical disparity between Husserl's project and Dennett's project. Husserl sets out to find a solid foundation for science in the investigation of consciousness. Dennett wants to explain consciousness on the basis of science. What they have in common is their conception of the nature of consciousness, or at the very least, their agreement about what consciousness is not" (117).

The four papers on Stein are probably the most valuable in this collection. In "Other Bodies and Other Minds in Edith Stein: Or, How to Talk about Empathy," Judy Miles argues against "certain feminist critics who have claimed that it is incorrect to describe empathy as 'projection'" (119). Miles presents the feminist criticism quite concisely: "We have seen that the Oxford English Dictionary defines empathy as 'the power of projecting one's personality into the object of contemplation' and this certainly seems to capture Edith Stein's understanding of the notion. The four authors of

Women's Ways of Knowing, however, complain that the OED's definition of empathy as 'projection' favors the masculine point of view. They write, 'this phallic imagery may capture the masculine experience of empathy, but it strikes many women—Nel Noddings, for example—as a peculiar description of 'feeling with'" (121; Miles cites: Mary Field Belenky, Blythe McVicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, and Jill Mattuck Tarule, *Women's Ways of Knowing* [New York: Basic Books, 1986], 122; she also notes Nel Noddings, *Caring* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984], 30). Miles rightly wonders what exactly it is that is phallic about projection, and she also takes Noddings to task: "While [Noddings's] idea of 'receiving the other into myself' might seem a kinder, gentler image than that of 'projection' I think that Noddings's description is actually the wrong way to talk about empathy and not Stein's or the OED's" (122). This is a well-argued, no-nonsense little piece, and it will make the reader wish that Miles had been able to pursue a subsequent, positive task of articulating Stein's view of empathy at far greater length. As it happens, however, Ernest J. McCullough continues this very task in "Edith Stein and Intersubjectivity." McCullough's concise treatment of Stein's conception of the person as a "psycho-physical being" is of particular value, for it points to the Aristotelian foundation not only of Stein's thought, but also of the work of many of Husserl's students who were at the same time his first and most powerful critics. Marianne Sawicki has written extensively on Stein, and her expertise in the area of early phenomenology becomes apparent already in the opening sentences of her short but insightful contribution, "The Humane Community: Husserl versus Stein." This brief contribution targets the area of social/political theory, which—as she admirably documents—remained largely neglected by Husserl. As she correctly points out, Husserl's few comments in this regard appear to have been inspired by Stein's research. Given the necessary brevity of the paper, Sawicki does a remarkably good job of pointing to the relevance of the powerful, emerging mentality of National Socialism in the early days of the phenomenological movement. Chantal Beauvais contributes the closing selection of the book, "Edith Stein and Modern Philosophy." Attempting to situate "Stein's work in relation to contemporary debates" (158), Beauvais adopts Ricoeur's distinction between "strong modernity" and "weak modernity" (which he introduces in *Oneself as Another*) and argues that Stein integrates the central concerns of each of these "modernities" in her notion of "transcendental truth." Toward the conclusion of her argument, Beauvais points out the fundamental relevance of Stein's conception of empathy, thereby pulling together all four of the papers on Stein included in Feist and Sweet's collection.

The major drawback of this collection perhaps serves a positive function. The papers are so short that none of them is really capable of doing justice to the subject matter. The reader is constantly left with the feeling that far more could, and should, be said about these things. This is especially the case with the papers on Stein. Perhaps this collection will help to foster general interest in the work of this profound thinker, who has been marginalized for far too long, and thereby further the task of honest, rigorous phenomenology.

JEFF MITSCHERLING, *University of Guelph*

Frail Happiness: An Essay on Rousseau

TZVETAN TODOROV. Trans. John Scott and Robert Zaretsky
University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001; 120 pages.

Many liberal commentators portray Jean-Jacques Rousseau's political writings as the eighteenth-century utopian anti-individualistic antechamber of the tragically real totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century. Todorov's essay challenges this widespread critical stance and argues for a thoroughly humanist reading of Rousseau's political thought. Certainly, as Todorov asserts, Rousseau was aware of the pressing need for order and equality within the "general association" of the polis. However, he was not blind to the equally pressing need for individual self-realization either. In order to substantiate this interpretation, Todorov engages in a careful and meticulous exercise of textual analysis, which draws from the whole corpus of Rousseau's writings. By doing this, Todorov can chart the thought of Rousseau as a comprehensive, sophisticated, and largely consistent philosophical system, thus implicitly dismissing another widespread critical interpretation of Rousseau's philosophy as chaotic, fragmentary, and inconsistent.

Todorov does recognize the ambiguities and the inner tension characterizing much of Rousseau's extensive philosophical production. Also, he does not deny the persistence of "a certain philosophical extremism" (3), which, however, should not be taken as the distinctive trait of Rousseau's work. Todorov claims that Rousseau's extremism is due to "sheer intensity of thought" (3), rather than to political fanaticism. The virulent tone of certain works of Rousseau's derives, for Todorov, from Rousseau's desire to show most vividly and sharply the consequences that certain sets of premises imply. Unfortunately, this virulent tone is taken to be proof of Rousseau's own commitment to that particular view. Rousseau's *Social Contract* is certainly the most representative text in this sense. Still, to a deeper and broader scrutiny, Rousseau's vehemence appears to be part of a more complex and genuinely humanist enterprise. Specifically, Todorov speaks of a generally unrecognized "third way" (18) proper to Rousseau's philosophy. With it, Rousseau would attempt to combine together the goals of collective welfare and individual self-realization.

According to Todorov's account, Rousseau's system hinges on the "opposition between the 'state of nature' and the 'state of society'" (5). The state of nature is a forever-lost, animal-like condition of blissful ignorance. In it, neither language nor self-consciousness existed. As a consequence, there existed no notion of, and no opposition between, "goodness" and "evil," "happiness" and "unhappiness," "justice" and "injustice." After the creation of language, which requires "sociability," i.e., mutual recognition and self-recognition for the sake of successful communication, human beings started breaking up the original harmony of the whole into a dissonance of particular elements. The conditions for disagreement, conflict, and vice were thereby generated. Despite this grim historical account, Rousseau does not demonize sociability and society in toto. On the contrary, he regards them as something momentous, identifiable with the birth of the human being qua human. Contrary to the popular myths surrounding Rousseau's "bon sauvage," he does not preach a return to the "state of nature" of our happily idiotic ancestors. As Todorov explains,

"there is no turning back" (10). Rather, Rousseau invites us to go forward, looking for ways in which the lost harmony of the "state of nature" can be reproduced analogously (i.e., not identically). Todorov states that Rousseau envisaged three main ways in which this harmony can be approached, of which only two are generally recognized by scholars: the way of "man" and the way of the "citizen" (12).

The latter way, the way of the "citizen," is probably the more famous. It is the one around which most of the critical views of Rousseau's political philosophy orbit. By reflecting on this option, Rousseau powerfully describes the institutions of that polis in which citizens want to establish total harmony by annihilating individuality. Todorov regards Rousseau's intellectual attempt as an extraordinary example of "if ... then' analysis" (25), a hypothetical study rather than a political manifesto. He claims that Rousseau did not and could not think of the way of the "citizen" as the ideal solution, for it involved the disintegration of two fundamental virtues, which Rousseau himself believed to be generally needed in order for the human being to be happy—namely, "individual freedom" and "equality." Most tellingly, Rousseau recommended the way of the "citizen" to only two actual communities of his day: Poland and Corsica. Rousseau believed that in these two nations no widespread culture of individualism had yet developed. A Sparta-like social reality could therefore be reasonably realized there, without having to immolate individual freedom on the altar of collective harmony.

The former way, the way of "man," is the one cultivated and practiced by Rousseau himself in the later years of his life. It is the way of solitary, quasi-ascetic isolation from society. Harmony is to be regained within oneself by a peculiarly Rousseauian fourfold medicine, which Todorov terms "limited communication" (35). First, one should express oneself primarily in the private form of writing rather than in the public form of speaking. Second, one should turn one's private imagination into the new universe in which one may spend most of one's time. Third, one should rediscover the prehuman wilderness of nature in remote places, far from humankind and from any concern related to human affairs. Finally, one should treat other people as sheer extensions of one's own being, as the few persons one needs to deal with can be regarded no more as actual individuals, but merely as instruments for one's own goals, similar to "pets and domestic animals" (41). Although personally experienced and implemented, Todorov believes this fourfold medicine not to be Rousseau's ideal way to harmony. On the contrary, in the very same autobiographical works where the "way of the solitary individual" (53) is described, Rousseau repeatedly observes the painful shortcomings of this ascetic lifestyle and its inherent contradiction with the human "constitutive characteristic—sociality" (47).

Neither the way of the "citizen" nor the way of "man" appears to be satisfactory. Fortunately, according to Todorov, Rousseau presents a generally unrecognized "third way," which can be discerned particularly in his *Emile*. The protagonist of this "third way" is the "moral individual." Its distinguishing feature is the capacity for the "reconciliation of these two opposite terms": "citizen" and "man" (56). Appropriately, the pedagogy of *Emile* comprises "two phases of education" (62): "negative education," which is aimed at fostering the individual's unique traits of soul and body, and "social education," which is aimed at helping the individual to relate amiably, but not subserviently, to other members of the community.

Rousseau's educational project would appear to be aimed at training the individual in "a healthy form of sociability," which Todorov regards as a special form of "wisdom" (65). As a practical skill, this "wisdom" does not assure the successful balance between individualistic and collectivistic forces a priori, but only a posteriori, i.e., only as the result of the individual's life-long application of its abilities for mediation. Rousseau's "third way" is risky and unstable, and the happiness that it can generate is a "frail happiness" (66).

No less frail, however, is Todorov's overall defence of Rousseau's philosophical achievements as a largely consistent system of humanist thought. His novel interpretation may sound convincing at first, thanks to the many relevant passages that he cites. Still, this extensive drawing from Rousseau's entire corpus also undermines some of Todorov's aims. The myriad of contrasting suggestions, remarks, observations, and hypotheses that can be found in Rousseau's immense intellectual production can also suggest a view of his legacy that is less that of a consistent humanist system of thought, and more that of a fluid and often incongruous wandering of the mind among diverse scenarios and convictions. To resolve all internal contradictions and ambiguities by speaking of "sheer intensity of thought" is not sufficient. In fact, by reshuffling the quotations from Rousseau that Todorov collects, one could write a counter-essay. Perhaps, it would be better to say that the comprehensive, humanist "third way" belongs less to Rousseau himself than to a new postmodern entity whom we could baptize "Rousseau-Todorov." It is as such that the "wisdom" of the *Emile* can be rediscovered and used to re-read Rousseau's philosophical corpus. It is as such that the "third way" can be said to underlie the entire body of Rousseau's work. It is as such that a thoroughly humanist view of Rousseau can become plausible and valuable, though not capable of erasing once and for all the plausibility of alternative interpretations. After all, the greatness of Rousseau lies in the diversity of insights that he has been able to generate with his rich and polymorphous intellectual production. One or two scholarly labels, however positive they may sound, are not enough to contain him and his work.

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Articulated Experiences: Towards a Radical Phenomenology of Contemporary Social Movements

PEYMAN VAHABZADEH

Albany: SUNY Press, 2003; 223 pages.

Employing all the familiar postmodern terminology, Vahabzadeh's *Articulated Experiences* is a fast-paced exploration of contemporary social theory aimed at establishing an antifoundationalist theory to accommodate "new [social] movements ... [which] generally involve nontotalizing antifoundationalist praxis" (1). Using this theory, Vahabzadeh then seeks to answer the question: "Are we post-modern yet?" (3). The book draws heavily upon Laclau and Mouffe's highly acclaimed *Hegemony and Socialist Strategies* (1985) and Gramsci's *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (1971).

Methodologically, Vahabzadeh is indebted to Heideggerian elements in the work of Reiner Schürmann, whose method of radical phenomenology informs this study.

Vahabzadeh begins by explaining that "[t]he term new social movements emerged to designate a wide range of contemporary movements: ecological and environmentalist movements, feminist and women's movements, AIDS, peace, gay and lesbian, indigenous or aboriginal rights movements..." (9). What is common to these movements is that they are cultural or social rather than political in their focus. Accordingly, the actions they take are set within a social, as opposed to a political, arena and seek societal rather than political/institutional change. Further, and most importantly for Vahabzadeh, "[c]laims to group or individual identity as a particularity in contrast to other groups or the state in fact becomes the pivot around which the new movements are arranged" (10). For this reason Vahabzadeh claims that a theory of new social movements "should understand *identity as a particularity* that does not make claims about some ontological or essential universality of the identity to which all other particularities must conform" (11). Both Touraine and Melucci, according to Vahabzadeh, seek to explain "new social movements in this way. Touraine believes that such identity claims are the byproduct of a shift from an industrial to a postindustrial society. Similarly, Melucci says these identity claims occur as a result of changes in historical circumstance. Eder, on the other hand, explains such identity claims as being a matter of "middle class radicalism." All three approaches Vahabzadeh rejects since, among other reasons, they all imply some sort of "ultimate referentiality" and therefore fail to meet the requirements that he has set out for a properly post-modern, antifoundationalist theory. Vahabzadeh then turns to Laclau and Mouffe's notion of "hegemony." For Laclau and Mouffe "every identity ... is the effect of a 'constitutive outside,' that is an external threat that consolidates the elements within a structure" (43). In other words, identity claims are informed by the predominant ideology and ethos of a given context that constitutes its "constitutive outside," or its "hegemony." To this Vahabzadeh adds a careful analysis of Gramsci's original formulation of the notion of "hegemony" in order to accentuate the role that experience plays in the creation and overturning of hegemonies.

Having laid out this critical groundwork, Vahabzadeh next proceeds with the constructive portion of his task. He argues that identity claims are made (or, rather, acts of identification consist) in the articulation of experiences of possibility. Such possibility is made available by the underdefined aspects of the governing hegemony. That is, no hegemony is such that it contains or otherwise defines all possible sources of meaning within the context it governs. The agent or collective recognizing this, what Vahabzadeh refers to as the "unfixity" of the hegemony, is free to act in a manner that is directed toward the acquisition of meaning and identity out of such possibilities. In this sense it articulates the experiences of these possibilities. It is only after arriving at this formulation that Vahabzadeh is in position to express what is probably the most philosophically significant statement of the book: that "*Acting and being become one*" (94). Vahabzadeh adds to this only one proviso, and in so doing he reveals a thoroughly Heideggerian, and Gadamerian, allegiance. He maintains that "[e]xperience ... takes place within the limits and the possibilities of language" (81). Central to Vahab-

zadeh's argument is the view that language is the most fundamental mediating factor in both articulation and acts of identification.

After he has carried out the theory-construction portion of his work, Vahabzadeh returns to the question: "Are we post-modern yet?" (3). His conclusion is that the regime, or logic, put in place by the governing hegemony does not permit a proper answer to the question, but that through our own critical articulation of possibilities, an era liberated from essential universality, in other words a truly postmodern era, reveals itself to be imminent. Vahabzadeh concludes his book with the prescription that sociology must embrace the method of radical phenomenology that he has put forth as a means of reinventing the discipline as a "sociology of possibilities." This approach, according to Vahabzadeh, will lead the discipline to abandon its pretension to being the "science of modern society" and will open it up to becoming "an instrument for human emancipation" (183). Vahabzadeh's prescription requires a drastically different conceptualization of sociology that, in my opinion, might more accurately be characterized as a philosophy of social history, or even a philosophy of societal future, and not "sociology" at all.

DARRYL J. MURPHY, *University of Guelph*

Moral Textures: Feminist Narratives in the Public Sphere

MARIA PIA LARA

Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999; 280 pages.

Maria Pia Lara presents in this book a broad and original interpretation of the success of the feminist movement. Her analysis of the history of the women's movement emphasizes its origins in aesthetic expression, using a variety of sources from aesthetic, social, and narrative theory to weave together a picture of how the private world and language of women evolved into, and in turn caused the evolution of, the public language of politics and social institutions. Lara places her analysis within the empirical framework of feminist history while also making imaginative use of critical theory. While her analysis is, in the end, somewhat preliminary, her argument provides a useful template for further examinations of feminism as well as of other, more nascent, social movements.

Lara's emphasis on the role of the aesthetic in effecting political and social change results in a focus on novelty in her understanding of how change comes about. This underlies her argument that "new ways of conceiving political forms have to be imagined before they can be achieved" (77), and prompts her to focus on the creative dimension of social change. Drawing on Hannah Arendt's conception of the performative nature of narrative in the public sphere (to do this, Lara connects Arendt's conception of storytelling as the foundation of public memory to her analysis of the role of speech in the formation of identity in the *polis*), Lara combines this creative and ultimately unpredictable element of self-disclosure with the pragmatics of Habermas to produce a new way of conceiving illocutionary force. Drawing as well upon the Hegelian conception of recognition, Lara suggests that communication affects both parties involved in the exchange,

whether it be between two individuals or between a marginalized group and the larger culture. Her focus on novelty brings to the fore that marginalization itself originates as a discovery, as a novel perception of one's culture. To make the connection between this theme and the aesthetic, Lara appeals to Albrecht Wellmer's interpretation of Adorno, tying self-formation to utopianism, and suggesting that the power of art lies in its ability to change our perception of the world. Narrative is the initial means of communicating this new perception in the social sphere. It is the form optimally capable of changing the meaning of language and the terms of communication.

Lara's conception of illocutionary force is a communicative act's ability to change the public language—the language, in the end, of law and institutions. Lara takes her reader through this process by drawing on a variety of empirical examples taken from the history of women's writing and storytelling. Autobiographies and some fiction provide illustrations of the beginnings of women's conceptualization of themselves as moral subjects, and the introduction to the public imagination of this possibility. Lara also incorporates the writing of the women of European salons at the turn of the last century, using both the history of the salons and the writings themselves to develop her view of how the change in private imagination translated into a change in public language. Finally, she uses the narrative of feminist theorists to complete her analysis, reinterpreting their writing in light of recent criticism and the altered language of academic study, demonstrating the changes that have taken place even at the level of interpreting the changes that have taken place. Thus, Lara includes her own work as an object of its study, demonstrating the continuing effect narrative has on cultural change.

Lara incorporates reader, writer, character, and the world into the web of narrative's effects, much in the way she combines the moral and the aesthetic, the good life and justice, the private and public spheres, and the particular and the universal. Each of these opposite values effects the other dialectically in the process of communication. By changing the public language, narrative changes the boundaries of the public sphere, so that what was formerly private becomes part of public discourse. The degree to which a narrative accomplishes this is the measure of its illocutionary force. Her interpretation takes Habermas further by incorporating the agonistic element of communication—at the social level, the struggle for recognition—drawn from her study of Arendt into her theory, thus making it an indispensable part of the process of communication.

Lara attempts a tremendous amount of integration in this work. In addition to the philosophers already mentioned, she appeals to the work of several other thinkers throughout the book; Seyla Benhabib, Paul Ricoeur, Charles Taylor, Alex Honneth, and Nancy Fraser are a few examples. While her conception of "culture" remains vague, her appropriation of the written work of other feminists makes her analysis relatively specific. She uses a variety of narrative forms to support her case, making her arguments at multiple levels. She does not, however, follow a single narrative through the various levels, to show how exactly this occurs. This is a criticism only in light of her own conviction that her argument's greatest strength lies in the fact that it is falsifiable. A further criticism arises from her use of "culture" as a frame of reference: by expanding the factors involved in determining

and understanding illocutionary force from two individuals to an entire "culture," Lara makes it difficult to see by what standard communication should be judged. She appeals to emancipation as the factor that determines a narrative's ability to communicate and to effect change, but does not produce a convincing account of how emancipatory content itself should be judged.

The variety of sources, the degree of integration, and the detail with which Lara constructs her argument at times make it difficult to perceive its overall structure, although the Introduction, which includes a description of each chapter, is helpful. The potential in Lara's ideas and her creative use of the insights provided by recent feminist philosophy and narrative theory make the book an enjoyable read for anyone interested in developing those insights into a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenology of political and social change. While there remains much within her work to be developed, the questions raised by Lara's book do not disappoint. *Moral Textures* takes philosophy in an exciting and important direction, and is well worth reading.

SAMANTHA COPELAND, *Queen's University*

Spinoza's Heresy: Immortality and the Jewish Mind

STEVEN NADLER

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001; 225 pages.

Spinoza has not always been popular. It is a commonplace among scholars of early modern philosophy that in the century following his death, to say of an argument that it was "Spinozistic" was considered a sufficient refutation. Bayle, in his dictionary, devotes more space to Spinoza than to any other figure, but the entry is laced with invective. Voltaire dismissed Spinoza as "un petit juif, au long nez, au teint blême." By contrast, our own century begins with a flurry of interest in this difficult figure. Hackett's release in 2002 of Samuel Shirley's translation of the *Complete Works* puts all of Spinoza's writings, including his letters, along with a spare but thoughtful index, into one useful volume. Heidi Ravven and Lenn Goodman's collection, *Jewish Themes in Spinoza's Philosophy* (SUNY Press, 2002) and Antonio Damasio's *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain* (Harcourt, 2003) offer diverse viewpoints on Spinoza from, respectively, the disciplines of theology and, perhaps more surprisingly, affective neuroscience. None of these, however, goes as far toward forcing a revaluation of Spinoza as Steven Nadler's *Spinoza's Heresy: Immortality and the Jewish Mind*.

A sequel to Nadler's *Spinoza: A Life* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), *Spinoza's Heresy* examines the *cherem*, or expulsion, of Spinoza from the Portuguese Jewish congregation in Amsterdam in 1656. Nadler argues that it was Spinoza's rejection of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and ultimately his rejection of church and rabbinical authority in favor of a secular morality, that led to his formal ostracization by the ecumenical community of which he had been a member.

In seven brief chapters, Nadler deftly weaves explication of Spinoza's philosophical position with biographical detail and historical evidence concerning the Jewish and Christian contexts in which Spinoza was situated. Perhaps most interesting and useful to philosophers is Nadler's engagement with medieval and modern Jewish philosophers, scholars and clergy whose views on theodicy and the immortality of the soul may have influenced both Spinoza and his accusers. In one particularly rich chapter, Nadler pays special attention to Maimonides and Gersonides. In many respects, this chapter could stand alone as an introduction to medieval Jewish philosophy.

Despite his somewhat narrow concern with Spinoza's views on immortality, Nadler's account is painted with a broad brush. Doing justice to the views of three major philosophers and a number of lesser figures, while painting a rich portrait of seventeenth-century Jewish Amsterdam, is no small feat for a book of 225 pages. Nadler himself warns at the outset that he is "concentrating on the forest rather than on the trees (and the branches and twigs)" (xi). True to his word, Nadler offers not a single reconstruction of Spinoza's arguments, nor does he engage in any of the hairsplitting that often emerges in debates among historians of early modern philosophy. As a consequence, this slender volume is eminently readable, for Spinozists and non-Spinozists alike.

Perhaps also as a consequence of this broader view, Nadler is able to make a great deal of sense of passages from Part Five of the *Ethics* ("Of the Power of the Intellect, or of Human Freedom") which have eluded even such eminent Spinozists as Jonathan Bennett, who terms them "rubbish" (105), and Edwin Curley, who claims that neither he nor anyone else understands them (105). On Nadler's account, Spinoza's rejection in Part Five of the immortality of the soul in favor of the eternity of the mind is "central to [his] entire philosophical project: not just the metaphysics and moral philosophy of the *Ethics*, but also the agenda for political and religious reform in the 'scandalous' *Theological-Political Treatise*" (154). Opposed to the vulgar mentality of bribes and threats concerning the afterlife which subverted individuals to religious authority, Spinoza naturalized God and collapsed substance dualism precisely in order to demonstrate "that the true value of virtue is in this life" (153). For Spinoza, "[b]lessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself" (153).

For Nadler, the *Ethics* is not, as is sometimes alleged, a book about metaphysics that happens to be called the *Ethics*. Rather, it is first and foremost a book about ethics in which metaphysical ideas are crucially brought into the service of moral ideas. It is the very part of this work (Part Five) that is most often passed over as incoherent that Nadler uses as a lens through which to view the entire book. As such, Nadler's project is not only to evince Spinoza's views on immortality, but (much more ambitiously) to demonstrate the systematicity and coherence of Spinoza's thought.

Of course, it does not hurt that this important recasting of Spinoza's thought occurs in the context of an intriguing and well-paced story. However, if this book has a weakness, it is precisely in its historical aspect. In light of the seemingly more radical heresies of such figures as Uriel da Costa and Juan de Prado, Nadler never succeeds in making clear what it is about Spinoza's particular heresy that was sufficiently remarkable to warrant "the harshest writ of *cherem*, or expulsion, ever pronounced upon a member of the Portuguese Jewish community of Amsterdam" (2). One is

left entirely convinced of Nadler's interpretation of *Ethics V*, but not at all convinced of his interpretation of the *cherem*.

Moreover, there is reason to be somewhat anxious about Nadler's use of historical sources. Nadler repeatedly cites the account of early Spinoza biographer Jean Maximilian Lucas without any mention of the factual errors in the Lucas text that have been identified by (Spinoza scholar) Richard Popkin, and which demand some degree of skepticism vis-à-vis Lucas. Conversely, Johan Colerus's early biography of Spinoza, which considers the details of the *cherem*, rates only one mention and, although extant, is not listed in Nadler's bibliography.

Details like these, however, are mere trees within the forest of Nadler's book. While Nadler's historical reach may slightly exceed his grasp, his excellent grasp of Spinoza is sufficient to recommend this book. In addition to being a genuine pleasure to read, *Spinoza's Heresy* offers an insightful reading of Spinoza's ethics and metaphysics which should help shape future interpretations of this important figure.

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On Stories

RICHARD KEARNEY

New York: Routledge, 2002; 193 pages.

The role of narrative, not long ago considered a tangential element to philosophy and theology, has seen a marked resurgence in recent decades. Perhaps it is the "obituarists of storytelling" that have been the most important catalysts for this revival of narrative thinking. Though positivists and later poststructuralists have loudly dismissed narrative and imagination as fantasy and whim, particularly in the light of blossoming technology, Richard Kearney joins a significant movement against this trend. The marginalization of the story is, for Kearney, the marginalization of humanity. From the outset Kearney claims that stories are "what make our lives worth living.... They are what make our condition human" (3). Kearney's project, while similar to other champions of narrative in many fashions, relies primarily on hermeneutics rather than ontological or epistemological theory. He leans not on Wittgenstein, Frey, Lindbeck, or MacIntyre, all of whom have made significant contributions to the revival of narrative. Rather, Kearney's approach appears to be fueled less by narrative "theory" than by the raw phenomenon of narrative living. The drive and need for "stories" appears to be an unquenchable necessity for human beings, without which "life is not worth living" (14).

It is stories that transform our lives from a chaotic flux of events into social identity, both individual and communal. To some, the advent of postmodernism means that stories have receded into a language that "speaks only to itself" (5). But Kearney argues that the opposite is true, that postmodernism has opened up new ways of viewing the power and possibilities of storytelling. The movement from event to communication requires the interpretive and linguistic process of narration, and this ability to make stories of our lives is precisely what makes us human. Throughout

this volume one senses a persistent sense of urgency, brought about by the postmodern threat to disregard stories. But unlike alarmists who worry that technology and postmodernity will mark the disappearance of the story Kearney sees instead the opportunity for a blossoming of narrative. Postmodernity provokes, if anything, an even more desperate cry for stories that address the "gaping hole within us" (6). Clear throughout is that a price is to be paid for ignoring this gaping hole and for embracing national or personal narratives uncritically—or for pretending that narratives are unimportant in postmodernity. Technology has not and cannot rob humanity of its need for a good story, a story that enchants, awakens the imagination, heals the soul, brings morality to life, and creates personal and communal identity. Implicitly and explicitly, Kearney makes the hermeneutical choice to place *story* at the center of what it means to be human.

Not far beneath the surface of Kearney's illustrative book lies a practical application of his hermeneutical method. Hermeneutics, for Kearney, is an attempt to navigate between the extremes of otherness and sameness, of positivism and relativism, immediacy and remoteness. Nothing navigates the tension between these poles more successfully than the elegant simplicity of a story. In fact, for Kearney, it is only through stories that these dangerous poles can be held at bay. But it is not enough simply to tell stories and allow their implications to define society, past, present, and future. Kearney argues refreshingly for positioning narrative at the center of human life, and for imaginative storytelling as the source of creative and cathartic movements in the future. But he is keenly aware that storytelling is equally implicated in the persistence of racism, nationalism, sinister ideologies, and abusive totalizations. It is through the powerful and divisive tool of the story that nations give themselves meaning, almost always writing the alien "others" as the antagonists in their stories. "Stories are never neutral" (155), he argues, and we ought not be oblivious to the intrinsic biases and motives behind every story told. The solution, for Kearney, is neither to embrace narrative uncritically nor to dismiss narrative for being antiquated or inaccurate. Rather, we must employ a "hermeneutics of critical discernment" (10), a way of discerning and deconstructing our stories that they might be re-narrated to function anew as vehicles for love and inclusion.

Kearney divides this readable volume into four parts, introducing his thesis in Part One and then moving in Part Two through three case studies for his hypothesis. First, Kearney examines James Joyce's fictional character Stephen Daedalus, then Sigmund Freud's famous and controversial patient Ida Bauer (Dora), and finally Oscar Schindler, whose Holocaust heroics have moved from legendary to epic through the landmark film by Steven Spielberg. Each study oscillates with honesty between the extremes of relativism and positivism. Does Joyce's fiction cheapen or enhance the realities of life? Is any *real* history recoverable through memory and psychoanalysis? Kearney joins the heart-wrenching debate over what of the Holocaust should be said, and whether fiction (like *Schindler's List* and the more fictional *A Beautiful Life*) provides catharsis for the Holocaust or tramples on the memory of the suffering. In each case Kearney shows characteristic flare for navigating with a healthy realism between extreme positions. The Holocaust, notes Kearney, "has suffered from both *under-remembrance* and *over-remembrance*" (49). To honor the victims, and

protect humanity from such atrocities in the future, we must learn to remember ethically, to tell such stories with both caution and conviction.

In Part Three Kearney explores the vital role that narratives play in the formation of national identities. He provides another trio of test cases, pointing to the consequences of the national narratives of Rome, Britain, and America. The emphasis in the discussion of Rome concerns the fundamental role that narrative plays in the human search for belonging and meaning, which leads to the creation of a national *mythos*, providing a unifying and affirming national identity. But here it is clear that narrative is neutral, as prone to perversion (bigotry, racism, fascism) as it is to liberation. In the case of British national identities it becomes clear that founding narratives are often created by imposing boundaries of Us and Them. British national identity has depended upon the alienation of Ireland, often galvanizing the British people by pitting them against common aliens, external enemies. In America, as settled by Saints (Puritans escaping Europe for religious reasons) and Strangers (troublemakers, nonreligious adventurers), a profound lack of national identity makes the use of Us/Them boundaries the original source for unified identity. In the shameful alienation of Native Americans and African slaves, the American Saint and Stranger discovered that they were not as different from one another as they were from the alienated others. Too often American national identity has been defined by maintaining a no man's land between America and its alienated "other." Kearney argues that the difficulty of maintaining this form of self-identification has led to the proliferation of extraterrestrial theories in politics and in the media.

Kearney reaches Part Four having established that narratives play an indispensable, but ambiguous, role in human society. Prudent and moral storytelling are the imperatives; we must tell stories that entertain "their own disruption" (65) and acknowledge their bias and fallibility. But by what method are these decisions made? How may we engage stories in a fashion that is neither oblivious nor over-critical? Kearney uses the Aristotelian model of narrative to summarize and show how his balanced hermeneutic allows for the role of story to thrive in our contemporary context. He concludes with the ethical, the "moral of the story," which seems to be the most important criterion for prudent storytelling. Stories are able, and must be encouraged, to provoke "ethically responsible action" (153).

Kearney makes use of a large range of material for his examples, inviting the reader into his complex world of literature, history, philosophy, and mythology without assumptions or patronization. What becomes increasingly clear in the sequel volumes to this book, *The God Who May Be* (Indiana University Press, 2001) and *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters* (Routledge, 2003), is that Kearney is honing a careful hermeneutical method. It is fitting that this three-part series begins with *On Stories*, for the most fundamental tool in his hermeneutics is ethical storytelling. Social relationship originates in the translation of event to story, and so every relationship is ethical according to its manner of storytelling. The stakes for Kearney are clearly much higher than protecting good stories from the encroachment of scholarship and technology. For Kearney, storytelling makes us human in the best and worst senses. Stories can be the curse of ongoing intolerance and bigotry or they can be our salvation by deconstructing our biases. Stories, new and old, are capable of creating

new opportunities for forgiveness and cathartic remembrance. Ethical stories are the promise of the future, for when our stories are examined hermeneutically they allow us to navigate between the uniqueness of every event and its communicability, between the singular and the universal. The kind of hermeneutics advocated by Kearney never allows the other (of history, story, or today) to become too familiar or too remote. The good story will suspend the other beyond the grasp of the same, but never so far away that the other loses relevance. Stories draw us into life's boundaries, into the borderlands where our stories are called into question and new stories are born. Such a land is challenging and difficult, but it is the place where "once upon a time" is the language of ethics and forgiveness.

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Le conservatisme paradoxal de Spinoza, enfance et royauté

FRANÇOIS ZOURABICHVILI

Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002; 271 pages.

Que peut un corps? est bien la question qui résonne à travers toute pensée de Spinoza et à partir de laquelle peut se fonder tout discours spinoziste, tout propos sur Spinoza. Cette formule repose sur une puissance, la puissance d'être affecté. C'est dans cette puissance d'affectation, dans la limite qu'elle peut se donner, que se détermine le corps, là où il se joue aussi (Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, Paris: PUF, 1968, 198). Si le corps est puissance d'affectation, il s'ensuit nécessairement que cette puissance peut se développer non seulement biologique-ment, mais encore éthiquement et juridiquement. Ce que peut un corps dans cette puissance d'affectation est un rapport à autrui, construit sur un degré d'affectation pouvant se traduire, dans le domaine de l'éthique et du juridique, comme *droit naturel* (Deleuze, *op. cit.*, 236).

Si le corps est cette puissance d'affectation, il lui est impossible de rester le même. L'affectation est ce qui modifie le corps, le *transforme*. L'affectation est indissociable de la transformation. Le corps, sous l'effet du réel, ne cesse de se transformer, se transmuter. C'est là, peut-être sa plus grande puissance. Le concept de transformation spinoziste est au cœur de l'ouvrage de François Zourabichvili. La transformation du corps se donne sur deux plans, la métaphysique et la politique. L'affectation reste la condition de toute pensée, et la pensée détient ces deux dimensions, métaphysique et politique.

Mais s'il n'y a, sans doute, qu'une seule pensée, le corps qui la pense et la pensée elle-même engendrent deux pouvoirs distincts, celle de Dieu et celle des Rois. Métaphysique et politique. Visiblement, le siècle de Spinoza se déroula sur la confusion de ces deux formes de puissance, et à Louis XIV de l'incarner même si en d'autres temps il peut être puissance de transformation. Effectivement, Dieu a une puissance d'affecter et d'être affecté infinie, quand l'homme ne peut exister que dans la limite de sa puissance, et de son pouvoir aussi ; et deux êtres, même semblables, ne peuvent être affectés de la même manière

(Deleuze, *op. cit.*, 197–8). La confusion de ces puissances octroie à Dieu et un corps et une volonté, même si la monarchie exige du Roi des qualités divines. Dieu est rendu humain quand, par la même confusion, le Roi se voit doté d'un pouvoir divin, donc infini. Pourtant, toute puissance dépend du corps que l'on reçoit, si corps peut-il y avoir. Dieu n'a pas de corps ce qui lui autorise une puissance infinie.

Le Roi, comme l'enfant, sont des personnages (conceptuels) détenant un corps, donc une puissance, une puissance de transformation également. Hobbes exposait l'État comme un gigantesque corps, un *Léviathan*, où chaque membre de ce corps correspondrait à une partie étatique. Par Spinoza, c'est le corps du Roi qui remplit le rôle de l'État. Il en est l'esprit— « L'esprit est l'idée d'un corps » (236)—mais aussi le corps politique tout entier tant il doit être supporté par son peuple. Comme tout corps, il est soumis, malgré lui parfois, à des variations, des *transformations*. Mais comment alors ce qui est censé être divin, ou d'essence divine (monarchie absolue), pourrait souffrir de la condition des choses finies (le peuple peut saigner, mais le Roi ne saigne pas) ? Par cela, la monarchie absolue repose, selon Spinoza, sur cinq chimères détaillées par François Zourabichvili.

Mais à un autre niveau de la réalité, doublant le collectif que représente le pouvoir, existe dans l'œuvre de Spinoza la figure singulière de l'enfant. C'est un peu comme deux niveaux de transformation, se jouant parallèlement tout en se rencontrant, de temps à autre, par les modalités que ces deux figures peuvent parfois développer. L'enfance n'est pas malheureuse, comme l'ont souvent compris les commentateurs de Spinoza. L'enfant n'est jamais impuissance, il est bien plutôt puissance en devenir. Dès lors, il est une puissance de transformation, où la mémoire, mémoire de l'enfant en tant que tel, est l'élément par lequel cette transformation peut s'opérer. Ainsi, corps et esprit ont la puissance d'un déploiement que détient l'enfant. Nous sommes, par Spinoza, loin de la vision scolastique de l'enfant qui, marqué d'une impuissance parfois humiliatrice, ne peut s'en sortir que par une double transformation : celle de l'esprit (devenir raisonnable), celle du corps (devenir grand). L'enfance n'est alors dans ce cas qu'une objection, une imperfection entravant ces transformations.

Mais si la transformation est en acte dans la philosophie de Spinoza, on est en droit de se demander vers quel point, ou monde, elle plonge ce qu'elle transforme. Déjà, toute transformation n'a pas nécessairement un but. Le *Panta Rhei* héraclitéen est un mouvement immanent—ou immanence du mouvement—ne recherchant aucun but ultime sinon l'effectuation de la vie même. Chez Spinoza, la transformation est passage, médiation. Contrairement à ce que pourraient penser certains lecteurs de Spinoza, cette transformation ne vise pas une condition du sensible. La transformation ne vise pas particulièrement une émancipation sociétaire de soi, comme un acte de révolte, un esprit révolutionnaire. Au contraire, la transformation spinozienne se conçoit pour un conservatisme de notre nature. On évitera de penser à une conservation sensible de soi dans les normes sociétaires qui nous sont imposées, comme la servitude clôturée par la mort. Le conservatisme de Spinoza se pense plutôt par la conservation de notre vraie nature, celles de nos essences, de ce qui nous est commun. Cette lecture de Spinoza

repose particulièrement sur le fameux cinquième livre de l'*Éthique*, articulé sur la *béatitude*. La transformation spinozienne a bien ce but : la préservation de notre nature pour sa révélation à soi. Car il s'agit bien de cela : notre vraie nature nous reste inconnue, et la révéler fait acte de création. La transformation met en jeu trois concepts pour la réalisation de soi : conservation, révélation et béatitude. Se conserver pour mieux s'apparaître, condition d'une déaliénation de soi pour un accès à la béatitude.

L'ouvrage de François Zourabichvili se divise en trois parties. La première est consacrée à la condition de l'être dans sa relation à la nature, où le concept de *transition* dans l'œuvre Spinoza annonce celui de transformation. La seconde est consacrée à l'enfance dans les modalités que lui confère le dix-septième siècle. S'en révèle une condition picturale, médicale ou juridique de l'enfance, mais aussi comment on put penser l'enfance en dehors d'elle-même, comme pour l'*Infans adultus*. La troisième partie est consacrée à la notion de pouvoir et à sa transformation potentielle par une analyse fort bien détaillée de la politique hollandaise contemporaine à Spinoza et l'influence qu'elle a pu avoir sur son œuvre.

Voici donc un beau livre sur Spinoza autorisant une lecture nouvelle de l'auteur de l'*Éthique*. Cet ouvrage s'accompagne d'un second volume se présentant comme sa complémentarité, ou son pendant, *Spinoza, une physique de la pensée*, aux Presses Universitaires de France, paru également en 2002.

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L'île déserte et autres textes: Textes et entretiens 1953–1974

GILLES DELEUZE, Édition préparée par David Lapoujade

Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2002; 416 pages.

et

Deux régimes de fous: Textes et entretiens 1975–1995

GILLES DELEUZE, Édition préparée par David Lapoujade

Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2003; 383 pages.

Ces deux ouvrages rassemblent une centaine de textes et entretiens réalisés par Deleuze de 1953 à sa mort en 1995. La plupart de ces «dits et écrits» ont été publiés dans des journaux ou périodiques français. Mais l'un des nombreux intérêts des deux recueils réside dans le fait qu'ils présentent aussi un bon nombre de textes et entretiens inédits en français qui ont été traduits et publiés en langues étrangères (anglais, italien, japonais, arabe). C'est le cas de nombreuses préfaces aux traductions américaines ou italiennes des œuvres de Deleuze (dix au total), lettres («Lettre ouverte aux juges de Negri», «Lettre à Uno sur le langage», «Lettre à Uno: comment nous avons travaillé à deux»), courts textes («Cinq propositions sur la psychanalyse», «*Manfred*», un extraordinaire renouvellement), «Les pierres», «Réponse à une question sur le sujet») ou entretiens («Capitalisme et schizophrénie», «Foucault et les prisons»). Au total donc, une vingtaine de textes et entretiens qui demeureraient jusqu'à maintenant

inaccessibles en français. Notons que ces deux recueils préparés par David Lapoujade ne reprennent pas les textes et entretiens qui ont été inclus dans les appendices à *Logique du sens* (Minuit, 1969) et dans *Pourparlers* (Minuit, 1990). *L'île déserte* et *Deux régimes de fous* excluent également les textes antérieurs à 1953, les notes de cours, les comptes rendus non significatifs, les échanges épistolaires (hormis quelques lettres à Uno et à Mascolo), de même que les textes collectifs (comprenant, entre autres, les pétitions).

Ces deux volumes constituent un outil de travail inestimable pour les études deleuziennes, et ce, pour au moins trois raisons. La première est d'ordre purement pratique. *L'île déserte* et *Deux régimes de fous* épargnent aux lecteurs de Deleuze la tâche souvent ardue et même pénible par moment qui consiste à retrouver certains textes. La seconde raison est d'ordre théorique et comporte deux dimensions. La première dimension théorique qui explique la grande valeur de ces deux recueils est liée au fait que plusieurs des textes et entretiens offrent à Deleuze l'occasion de jeter un regard rétrospectif et souvent éclairant sur ses œuvres déjà publiées. C'est le cas, en premier lieu, des préfaces rédigées pour les traductions aux éditions américaines et italiennes qui permettent à Deleuze de revenir avec quelques années de recul, parfois même des décennies entières, sur ses ouvrages antérieurs. Dans la «Note pour l'édition italienne de *Logique du sens*», Deleuze pose un regard critique sur son travail (fait rarissime à l'intérieur du corpus deleuzien). Il associe *Différence et répétition* (PUF, 1968) à une quête de «hauteur classique» et de «profondeur archaïque» (*Deux régimes de fous*, 59) contre laquelle *Logique du sens* (Minuit, 1969) prend position en réorientant les notions développées dans *Différence et répétition* vers une théorie des surfaces. Dans la «Préface pour l'édition américaine de *Dialogues*», Deleuze récapitule admirablement son chemin de pensée, de son empirisme à la théorie de la multiplicité en passant par sa critique de la psychanalyse. Le second point d'intérêt théorique de ces ouvrages réside dans le fait qu'on y trouve des affirmations absentes des livres de Deleuze qui fournissent certaines «clés d'interprétation» à l'ensemble de l'œuvre. Ainsi en va-t-il d'un texte peu cité originellement paru en 1967 et intitulé «La méthode de dramatisation». Deleuze propose de définir le logos par un aspect dramatique de manière à dissoudre les catégories du tragique et du comique. Il nous semble que l'entreprise de description du fonctionnement des synthèses disjonctives, caractéristique du «second Deleuze», implique une telle sortie hors des tonalités comique et tragique avec lesquelles la tradition philosophique demeure plus naturellement familière. Le conflit ou la lutte qui rend la synthèse conjonctive impossible pour Deleuze n'est ni tragique («évitons les passions tristes»), ni comique («montrons-nous dignes de ce qui nous arrive»). Le drame deleuzien, qui en fait aussi son stoïcisme, correspond à une Joie nécessaire face à laquelle la volonté personnelle demeure impuissante. Un autre exemple d'innovation théorique est donné dans le texte de 1956 intitulé «Bergson, 1859–1941». Dans ce texte, Deleuze se propose de «rejoindre la vraie raison de la chose en train de se faire» (*L'île déserte*, 42). La découverte d'une philosophie rationnelle de la différence constitue non seulement l'essentiel de la machination par laquelle Deleuze s'approprie la pensée bergsonienne (ou découvre en elle de nouvelles virtualités), mais la nature de la connexion avec «la vraie raison de la chose en train de se

faire» contient aussi toute l'originalité de la pensée deleuzienne qui lui permet de se démarquer des grands courants philosophiques du XX^e siècle (l'irrationalisme typiquement phénoménologique et l'utopie rationaliste de la théorie critique). En effet, l'abolition de la métaphore et la défense d'un conceptualisme singulier où le langage anexact et le dire adéquat cessent de s'opposer sont les effets du type de rationalité revendiquée en 1956 et fonctionnant déjà implicitement *sub specie disjonctivis*. Le troisième motif qui nous amène à considérer *L'île déserte* et *Deux régimes de fous* comme des ouvrages essentiels est d'ordre théorico-pratique. Il peut être tentant de lire Deleuze comme s'il s'agissait d'un penseur intégralement libre face à sa tradition et, pire encore, à sa propre actualité. Mais Deleuze lui-même exhortait les philosophes à partir d'une situation concrète («Lettre-préface à Jean-Clet Martin»). Les textes et entretiens contenus dans *L'île déserte* et *Deux régimes de fous* nous rappellent que les propos de Deleuze ne sont peut-être pas aussi intempestifs qu'on le croit parfois, et qu'ils répondent d'abord à un contexte socio-politique précis défini par l'après Mai 68 («Mai 68 n'a pas eu lieu»), l'hégémonisation américaine («La guerre immonde»), le conflit israélo-palestinien («Les gènes», «Les Indiens de Palestine», «Grandeur de Yasser Arafat»), la constitution de l'Europe comme grand ensemble sécurisé et contrôlé («Le pire moyen de faire l'Europe»), etc. Les livres de Deleuze ne font pas explicitement référence à ce contexte. Pas plus qu'ils ne tissent de liens (ou très peu) avec l'actualité intellectuelle. *L'île déserte* et *Deux régimes de fous* offrent également une reconstitution des relations de Deleuze avec ses contemporains, relations souvent amicales («Hélène Cixous ou l'écriture stroboscopique», Kostas Axelos dans «Faille et feux locaux», Maurice de Gandillac dans «Les plages d'immanence», François Châtelet dans «Il était une étoile de groupe», Toni Negri dans «Lettre ouverte aux juges de Negri» et «Préface à *L'anomalie sauvage*», «Correspondance avec Dionys Mascolo», Michel Foucault dans plusieurs textes dont «Qu'est-ce qu'un dispositif?» et «Désir et plaisir», et bien sûr Félix Guattari dans «Pour Félix»), relations quelques fois ambivalentes (Sartre dans «Il a été mon maître»), et relations parfois marquées par une fin de non-recevoir («Les nouveaux philosophes et d'un problème plus général»).

La nature des textes et entretiens réunis dans les deux recueils témoigne bien du fait que Deleuze aimait peu voyager, participer aux colloques ou donner des conférences publiques. Aucune «Conférence de Tokyo» ni «Débat de Los Angeles». Hormis de rares exceptions («La méthode de dramatisation», «Conclusions sur la volonté de puissance et l'éternel retour», «Table ronde sur Proust», «Rendre audibles des forces non-audibles par elles-mêmes», «Qu'est-ce qu'un acte de création?»), Deleuze n'a jamais cru que la pensée puisse véritablement s'expérimenter à travers les débats organisés à l'extérieur de sa salle de cours. *L'île déserte* et *Deux régimes de fous* répondent, d'une certaine manière, à cet impératif de l'expérimentation non ordonnée. Ils permettent aux lecteurs de voyager sur place à travers la métaphysique, l'esthétique, l'éthique et la politique deleuziennes constamment mises en contact avec le Dehors de la philosophie (le roman policier dans «Philosophie de la Série Noire», la sexualité dans «Préface à *L'après-midi des faunes*», la drogue dans «Deux questions sur la drogue», etc.). L'absence de goût pour les rencontres pré-organisées et cette réticence à prendre la parole sur la place publique ont

certainement nuit à la diffusion de l'œuvre deleuzienne. Nous disions regretter la tendance à sa décontextualisation. Mais plus regrettable encore serait la stricte récupération de la pensée deleuzienne par l'histoire de la philosophie. Lui-même grand historien de la philosophie, il enseignait que l'histoire était constamment à réinventer. Qu'il faut aussi se méfier des figures philosophiques qui ne subissent aucune éclipse au cours de l'histoire.

L'œuvre deleuzienne captive un public sans cesse croissant. Ce dont témoignent, entre autres, la réédition récente de plusieurs de ses livres chez Seuil et Minuit (*Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation*, Seuil, 2002; *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique et Pourparlers*, Minuit, 2003), la création du Fonds documentaire Gilles Deleuze (2002), la fin de la traduction anglaise des principales œuvres (avec *Francis Bacon: Logic of Sensation*, University of Minnesota Press, 2004), de même que la parution des documents audios *Spinoza: immortalité et éternité* (2001) et *Leibniz: âme et damnation* (2004) dans la collection «A haute voix» chez Gallimard. En attendant la publication, souhaitons-le, prochaine, des cours de Deleuze à l'Université de Paris VIII (1969–1987), *L'île déserte* et *Deux régimes de fous* sauront satisfaire les connaisseurs tout en constituant aussi une excellente introduction au système deleuzien.

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Setting the Moral Compass: Essays by Women Philosophers

CHESHIRE CALHOUN, Editor.

New York: Oxford University Press, 2004; 384 pages.

The conviction that "gender makes a difference" holds together this collection of essays by nineteen eminent moral philosophers. The volume has two main aims, which seem to be in tension. On the one hand, it politicizes the category of "woman philosopher," raising the question of why women are frequently included in mainstream collections as representatives of the feminist point of view, or of woman's voice, when such multiplicity exists under this head. On the other hand, Cheshire Calhoun draws out the unity, or common character, of women's work in moral philosophy, which she describes as sharing the approach of "inventive realism"—realist, because women tend to focus on what moral experience is actually like, rather than forcing our ordinary practices to fit the traditional models. In setting the moral compass, this volume points toward a new north, "when it is no longer necessary to insist that the difference women make to moral philosophy is something to be prized" (vi).

Following an Editor's Introduction, the collection is divided into six sections, each addressing new directions that moral philosophy has taken in the past two decades, largely due to the work of the women philosophers listed below. The first section, "An Ethics for Ordinary Life and Vulnerable Persons," contains contributions from Marcia Homiak, Elizabeth Spelman, Virginia Held, and Martha Nussbaum. The second, entitled "What Ought We to Do for Each Other?" includes papers by Barbara Herman, Susan Wolf, and Cheshire Calhoun. The third part is devoted to "The Normative

Importance of a Shared Social World," with essays from Margaret Walker, Claudia Card, and Annette Baier. The fourth section, "Achieving Adequate Moral Understandings," brings together papers by Robin Dillon, Marilyn Friedman, Alison Jagger, and Michele Moody-Adams. The fifth, "The Dramatic and Narrative Form of Deliberation and Agency," contains essays by Amelie Oksenberg Rorty and Diana Tietjens Meyers, while the final section, "Emotions, Reason, and Unreason," includes papers by Christine Korsgaard, Karen Jones, and Marcia Baron. I shall discuss a few of the highlights below.

Noteworthy for its originality is Robin Dillon's essay, "Kant on Arrogance and Self-Respect." Self-respect is crucial to our ability to set priorities and goals for ourselves. At issue for feminists in particular is the question of how self-respect can be engendered in victims of oppression. If arrogance is the opposite of servility, it might be thought that victims of oppression should cultivate a heightened sense of self-importance. Yet Dillon argues against this view, drawing upon Kantian moral philosophy to support her claim that arrogance is a failure of what she calls "interpersonal recognition respect." The failure to recognize others as equals is also, importantly, a failure to recognize the proper domain of one's own self-worth. This is because the arrogant person uses the supposed weakness of others to heighten his self-esteem, taking their deference to him as a sign of his greater, and their lesser, worth. Thus, "[t]he kind of self-worth the arrogant person cares about is essentially comparative and competitive," unlike the dignity that we all already have by virtue of our autonomy as rational agents (195). Dillon's essay is illustrative of the inventive side of "inventive realism," as she draws on examples from a wide variety of sources, from personal testament to a newspaper story about Alfred Stieglitz's relationship with Georgia O'Keefe, to Harry Potter.

The question with which Dillon frames her essay is of interest to feminists, however her paper is one of several in the volume that is not explicitly feminist in scope. Marcia Homiak's essay, "Virtue and the Skills of Ordinary Life," is another piece that blurs the lines between feminist and mainstream philosophy. Homiak challenges the common view in Aristotelian scholarship that virtue can only be understood from within the virtuous perspective, which restricts the *Nicomachean Ethics* to an exercise in self-understanding for those who have already achieved a virtuous character. Homiak provides an alternative reading that explains the attractions of a life of unimpeded activity in a way that could appeal to a self-interested character, like Thrasymachus. To this end, she argues for the possibility of achieving unimpeded activity in daily life. To illustrate her thesis, Homiak uses an example from Michael Baxandall's *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, which describes how Florentine art patrons used the mathematical skills developed in their business practices to a new purpose in appreciating art. Homiak contends that the art patrons's activity approximates the continuous, unimpeded, and self-realizing praxis that Aristotle describes. If Homiak is right, then Aristotle's life of unimpeded activity is not restricted to those with an interest in virtue; although, as she argues, participation in unimpeded activity would encourage the cultivation of the virtues. Homiak's paper lends credence to Calhoun's claim that women approach philosophy in the spirit of realism. Rather than marking

off virtue as something special and separate, Homiak finds it to be quite naturally interwoven into our quotidian affairs.

Calhoun justifiably claims that the essays in this volume are similar in spirit, if nothing else. The tension between diversity and unity is never resolved, yet it is a tension that contributes to the book's success. The question of how the category "woman philosopher" operates within the discipline is brought to the fore, and remains very much an open question.

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Unforeseeable Americas: Questioning Cultural Hybridity in the Americas

RITA DE GRANDIS and ZILÁ BERND, Editors
Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2000; 339 pages.

The notion of a "pure identity" has dominated cultural and political thought for much of human history. Although we tend to think of it as an ideal, pure identity has two major faults: it often serves as an ideological support for "ethnic cleansing" or some other politics of exclusion, and it assumes as possible what never was, is, or can be: a univocal identity. One's identity is hybrid: other identities simultaneously transcend and are immanent aspects of it; we intersect each other and yet remain distinct. Bakhtin provides one version of this thesis. He accepts that subjects are not separate from what he calls "social languages" or "voices," and then shows that each social language always "intersects" or "cites" other such languages: "[A]t any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles, and so forth, all given a bodily form. These 'languages' of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying 'languages.'"¹ Because of this linguistic heteroglossia, subjects, like society itself, are hybrids, that is, an interplay of voices including the one that usually serves, or is taken as, the subject's "true" identity.

Most of the authors in *Unforeseeable Americas* refer to Bakhtin and his notion of hybridization. But they also draw from a tradition of thinking about hybridity that precedes Bakhtin and has developed largely independently of him. Since the conquest, Latin American thinkers have always seen "mestizaje," that is, their mixed Amerindian, African, and European legacy, as characteristic of the countries south of the U.S. border and as that which, in a positive manner, distinguishes them from Europe and the imperialistic power to the north. Indeed, Mexico's Minister of Education from 1921 to 1924, José Vasconcelos, wrote a famous book, *La raza cósmica* (*The Cosmic Race*), in which he valorized the integration of races in Mexico and Latin America. Through individual miscegenation a fifth cosmic race would replace the four existing ones.² Most Latin American thinkers have taken this biological hybridization as only a symbol for what they consider a more important cultural and linguistic hybridization.³

Besides Vasconcelos, some of the most cited Latin American writers on hybridity are the Cuban poet José Martí,⁴ the Peruvian novelist José María Arguedas,⁵ the Peruvian scholars Angel Rama⁶ and Antonio Polar Cornejo,⁷ the Cuban anthropologist and public intellectual Fernando Ortiz,⁸ and the Mexican intellectual Néstor García Canclini.⁹ All these figures are discussed in *Unforeseeable Americas*, some, like Martí, extensively,¹⁰ and Polar is even one of its contributors. This discussion includes the major notions that these writers introduced or are developing, such as "transculturation," "mestizaje," "migrancy," and other versions of what we can refer to collectively as "hybridity" or "hybridization." The editors of *Unforeseeable America* note that the "new" idea of hybridity has already reached its "boiling point" and is now revealing some of its limitations (x). They have therefore collected papers that address these limitations, especially as they have evolved in the past decade of "literary and cultural hybridity in Latin American literary and cultural criticism" (x). Their discussion of these limitations is enriched by frequent reference to and use of such postmodern thinkers as Barthes, Bhabha, Bourdieu, Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida, Geertz, Said, and Taussig.

Although the papers focus on "the multitemporal heterogeneity that characterizes [the] modernity [of Latin America]," two deal with the "unforeseeable Americas" of Japanese Canadians and Oriental Québécois (xii). Moreover, a number of the papers illustrate or support claims concerning hybridity through extensive analyses of works of art, literature, film, and various examples of popular culture and religion. Most of the fifteen papers published in the volume are authored by scholars who have lived and taught in both South and North America.¹¹ Moreover, each of the authors has an interdisciplinary background encompassing such fields as history, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and literature—a grab bag necessary for dealing with a topic like hybridity. The volume seems aimed at scholars already involved in the field. Although the history and variety of the different versions of hybridity in Latin American thought are discussed, it is not done in an introductory manner. Nonetheless, the intellectual richness of the papers makes them interesting to initiates and veterans in the field alike.

I shall concentrate on the theoretical positions taken up in the articles and restrict myself to those articles that I find the most useful in illustrating these positions. More specifically, the author of the first article in the volume, Sabine Mabardi, sets out the two "trends" manifested in the work of the thinkers she reviews in her paper and in other papers of the volume: "one celebrating the hybridity of culture and, the other, skeptical of it" (16). In the opening paragraph of this review, I have already indicated reasons for celebrating the notion of hybridity. These are reiterated frequently and added to in the papers that comprise *Unforeseeable Americas*.¹² I will therefore concentrate on the suspicions raised in the volume over the role of "hybridity" in contemporary thought. I will then suggest some ways in which one might reply to them.

Mabardi introduces one of the graver of these suspicions right after her comment on the two trends concerning hybridity. She begins by reminding us that "the declaration of liberation from the subject, the death of the subject/author" came about "just when feminist groups were joining the debate." In other words, just when women needed to appeal to a collective

subject or feminine identity as both oppressed and now ready to defend itself, these notions are cast aside in postmodernism's eschewal of individual and collective subjects. Mabardi then shows how other authors have pointed out that hybridity seems to serve the interests of "Euro-American hegemony" just when subaltern voices are increasing their audibility around the world. For example, the mega-exhibition *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries* celebrates hybridity and rejects returning to an "essentialized past" at a time when indigenous people "feel they must go back to their lost origin for reasons of survival" (12).

In concert with the skepticism highlighted by Mabardi, Jerry Zaslove, in his "Memory's Children and Redressing History: Critical Reflections on *Obasan* by Joy Kogawa—The Case of a Northern 'Hybrid' Novel," sharply criticizes "hybridism" for muting voices of resistance. For example, he declares that black-white hybridism in the Americas "is a reactive formation to the traumatic domination of white over black" (161). More generally, he argues that the aesthetics of hybridization is ineffectual in relation to the cultural hegemony of the dominant classes: "The Canadian multicultural policy is the public sphere institution that effectively transforms ethnic identity into an ideological pattern where the creative character of social life ... is sacrificed to legal and technical applications of identity. Put differently, hybridization became a structural feature of the bourgeoisie's success in institutionalizing and managing the polyphonic discourses that were released with the spread of peoples and, at the same time, with the need to assimilate peoples through reading, literacy, numeracy, universal education and marketplace values" (180). Zaslove argues that Joy Kogawa's novelistic account of the internment of the Canadian Japanese during World War II preserves a sense of the historical time that undermines the postmodern promotion of multiple heterogeneous times and the myth of a harmonious multicultural society. In her article, "Pursuing Hybridity: From the Linguistic to the Symbolic," Rita De Grandis adds support to Zaslove's objection to (and contra Canclini's affirmation of) hybridity by referring to Robert Young's work and affirming his fear that the celebration of cultural hybridity risks elevating a non-racist ideology to the level of myth, thereby ignoring actual ethnic, racial, and class conflicts.¹³

A second suspicion that revolves around the popularity of hybridity and its ties to multiculturalism concerns the status of the notion of the subject or self. According to Zaslove, the notion of hybridity and the "new [Canado-Americo-Northern] market world order" create "a world of multiple identities without integral 'selves'" (191). He valorizes, and feels the novel *Obasan* illustrates, "the historical person whose hybrid self is not simply made of the pastiche of fragments tattooed on the self" (192). The type of hybridity that Zaslove fears is dramatically "fantasized" in Vicente Sánchez-Biosca's article, "Metamorphosis as Fantasy of the Hybrid: Postmodern Horror and the Destiny of the Human Body in *The Fly*" (David Cronenberg, 1986). When a fly enters the scientist-protagonist's human-transporter machine, the result is an "impossible narcissism" in which the scientist, also in the machine, is converted not into a fly but into something "that never existed" and a "degradation of the flesh" (297), or, as De Grandis and Bernd put it in their introductory essay to the volume, a "dissolved identity" (xxviii). This tale of an uncanny metamorphosis and dissolved self appears to capture the worst fears that we have about the postmodern idea of the self or

about a possible effect of postmodernity itself. In her essay, Mabardi points out that Canclini also notes the prevalence of this type of fear. He suggests, she says, "that subjects themselves create rituals because there is a limit to the amount of hybridization that they can bear" (15).¹⁴

Despite the suspicions of hybridity articulated in many of the articles in *Unforeseeable Americas*, most of the authors represented in the volume are favorably inclined toward the notions of hybridity and postmodernism. Their intent, for the most part, is to encourage us to find means of overcoming these limitations. None would appear to want to return to modernist totalizing doctrines, univocal identities, autonomous subjects, or other views contrary to the seminal idea of hybridity provided by the Latin American social reality and its intellectual tradition. In order to contribute to the construction of a more viable notion of hybridity, I would like to propose that we consider two aspects of hybridity that may be helpful in this regard.

The first of these concerns the notion of the subject and its identities—its hybrid identity. First, this identity is not a synthesis: the strands or other voices that make up our own are still very much alive; we are an "agon," a contestation of many identities or voices. Who has, for example, not been surprised to hear a father's or mother's voice, or that of some other authority or rebel figure, resounding in their own? Which text or doctrine is not at war with itself, even when one discourse dominates within it? Which institution or economy does not find contrary tendencies emerging from inside? On the other hand, the identity of the self is, except under special conditions, neither "the pastiche of fragments tattooed on the self" of which Zaslove complains nor the "dissolved identity" fantasized in *The Fly*. Subjects do not create rituals in order to withstand their heterogeneity, as Mabardi says Canclini suggests. Rather, subjects are more fully one of their voices than the rest—the one that is most audible among the clamor of the others. But this dominant voice is established in part through its commonalities with and differences from the rest. The subject remains a hybrid of mutually transcendent and mutually immanent voices, but partially stabilized through the voice that developmentally takes the lead in response to the social realities surrounding it. Stabilized or not, the interplay of these voices produces new voices and a permanent sort of metamorphosis of both the individual and the social body.

This view is fairly close to the one that Antonio Cornejo Polar puts forward in his contribution to the volume, "A Non-Dialectic Heterogeneity: The Subject and Discourse of Urban Migration in Modern Peru." He discusses the adolescent migrant hero of José Arguedas's *Deep Rivers*—his Quechua and Spanish speaking worlds—and concludes that this subject "manages a plurality of codes which although they join in a single discursive direction are not only not confused but also preserve a good part of their own autonomy" (119). This dynamic hybridity is true of us all, but stands out more clearly in the case of migrants and others who must conspicuously flip back and forth between disparate living situations.

As for the suspicion that "hybridism" silences minority voices, this is true when multiculturalism is made into a doctrine, what I would call an "oracle," rather than consisting of the interplay or creative tension of the voices that make up the social body—voices that approach equal audibility under the best of circumstances. In other words, the anxiety of being overwhelmed by the many "social languages" that make up a society and an individual

can be exacerbated in times of war, natural disaster, or other conditions that threaten survival. This can lead to raising one of the voices to the level of an oracle, idealizing and promulgating a strict identity (racism, ethnic cleansing, patriarchy, capitalism), and thereby diminishing the interplay of voices that would otherwise characterize society and the subject. The limitation is not with hybridization, then, but with the social and cultural forces that oppose it and our lack of resolve to counter them. Overall, *Unforeseeable Americas* restores this resolve to us and also provides the reader with a rich set of papers on the topic of hybridity and the forms it takes in Latin America.¹⁵

Notes

1. Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel" in *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 259–422, 291; see also 365. The description I have just given extends Bakhtin's specific claims somewhat. For justification of this, see the section on Bakhtin in my *Psychology and Nihilism: A Genealogical Critique of the Computational Model of Mind* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993) and some more recent publications listed in note #15.

2. José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race*, trans. Didier T. Jaén (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997). See Sabine Mabardi, "Encounters of a Heterogeneous Kind," *Unforeseeable Americas*, 13.

3. Vasconcelos also saw his "cosmic race" as the basis for a more open and heterogeneous culture.

4. See especially the essay "Nuestra America" (Our America), where he coins the phrase "our mestizo America," in his *Antología mínima*, Vol. 1 (Habana: Instituto cubano del libro, 1972).

5. See his *Formación de una cultura nacional indoamericana*.

6. See for example *La Transculturación Narrativa en América Latina* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1982).

7. See for example *Escribir en el aire: Ensayos sobre la heterogeneidad socio-cultural en las literaturas andinas* (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 1994).

8. See his seminal 1940 work, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

9. See for example *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*, trans. Christopher L. Chiappari and Silvia L. Lopez (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

10. Amaryll Chanady, "National Reconciliation and Colonial Resistance: The Notion of Hybridity in José Martí."

11. The editors list five of the authors as Canadian, five as American, one as Mexican, one Spanish, two Brazilian, one Peruvian.

12. For example, Amaryll Chanady, "National Reconciliation and Colonial Resistance: The Notion of Hybridity in José Martí," speaks affirmatively of Martí's idea of *mestizo* America as a "heterogeneous and harmonious unity" (32). Sabine Mabardi, "Encounters of a Heterogeneous Kind," points out that Chanady elsewhere sees this as "an alternative to a nationalist strategy which defines a collective identity in opposition to a 'foreign' Other" (11). This reason for affirming hybridity is close to one of the justifications given above; it is a counter to the use of "pure identity" by the advocates of ethnic cleansing. The other point in favor of hybridity that was mentioned in the introductory paragraph—pure identities are impossible—is affirmed in Christopher Chiappari's article, "Hybrid Religions in Highland Guatemala: Modernity, Tradition, and Culture." In relation to Catholicism, Protestantism, and Maya religions, he points out that although globalization has led to integration of bits from each to each, "processes [of hybridization] have always occurred," that is, every tradition is hybrid to one degree or another from the beginning (236). Catherine Poupeney-Hart, in her "*Mestizaje*: 'I Understand the reality, I just do not like the word': Perspectives on an Option," points out that writers from the Francophone areas of the Caribbean, such as Édouard Glissant, think it is absurd to claim a single origin for any human group.

13. See Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Verso, 1995).

14. The reference is to page 80 in Néstor García Canclini, "Memory and Innovation in the Theory of Art," *South Atlantic Quarterly* vol. 92, no. 3, 1993.

15. I have elaborated these claims in favor of hybridity in several recent publications. See for example "Genealogy and the Problem of Affirmation in Nietzsche, Foucault, and Bakhtin," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* Vol. 27, no. 3, 2001; and "Voices of Chiapas: The Zapatistas, Bakhtin, and Human Rights," *Philosophy Today* vol. 42, 2000.

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