

## Book Reviews

Gerald Vision, *Veritas: The Correspondence Theory and Its Critics*,  
Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press 2004, xvi + 298 pp.,  
ISBN 0262220709.

In *Veritas*, Gerald Vision argues compellingly that we ought to pay more attention to our intuitions about the nature of truth, especially those intuitions which favor substantive theories over deflationary accounts, and those which distinguish correspondence from its substantive rivals: various coherentist and pragmatic theories. And, if he is right, then these are the only deep intuitions about truth we have. The book divides into three main sections. Chapters 1-4 outline and articulate a strategy for defending correspondence as a general approach. Here we discover that correspondence is the only viable substantive theory. Only deflationism is a real competitor. Chapters 5-7 present Vision's critique of various deflationary approaches. Finally, Vision articulates a specific, broadly Austinian, correspondence theory of truth in chapters 8-9.

Chapter 1 opens with Vision's "quasi-official" statement of the correspondence theory: "the truth of a proposition is constituted by a state of the world such that, were the proposition stated, it would state the world to be that way" (p. 1). However, Vision's correspondence theory is not strictly committed to all truth makers being completely mind-independent. For some truths are constituted in part by the world and in part by how cognizers structure the world into different circumstances. The remainder of Chapter 1 presents a clear and informative broad stroke account of correspondence theories and their competitors. Beginning with Chapter 2, the general defense of the correspondence approach starts with the familiar survey of historical authorities ranging from Plato and Aristotle to Tarski, but quickly shifts focus to what Vision calls his two "non-negotiable intuitions." The first, *Variability* (or V), is that "the truth value of a proposition would be altered were the world to change in certain ways, or, if the truth value must remain the same, it is because the world cannot change in relevant ways" (p. 33). The second, *Cognition-Independence* (or CI), maintains that

“nothing in the account of truth itself indicates that truth is, ever will be, or can be entertained by minds of roughly our capacity” (p. 38). The first intuition expresses the view that the world determines what is true. The second intuition rules out accounts of truth that depend upon our actual or possible knowing, believing, or being willing to assert putative truths. Vision holds that these intuitions reflect the core of our ordinary conception of truth.

These intuitive commitments remind one of the three constraints on theories of truth invoked by Russell (in *Problems of Philosophy*) in his familiar presentation of correspondence truth. However, the particular way in which Vision articulates these intuitions, especially CI, rule out Russell’s choice of individual beliefs as truth-bearers. This is no accident, for CI is also used to help rule out both coherence-based and pragmatic theories where a proposition’s claim to be true turns on some feature of our belief set or on whether we find the proposition useful. So-called pluralist theories, theories that maintain there are different accounts of truth proper to distinct realms, are indicted for sometimes satisfying the intuitions and sometimes not, and convicted for rejecting the further commonsensical intuition that the nature of truth is univocal. Nihilist (or primitivist) theories, which hold that truth is in some sense inexplicable and *sui generis*, can embrace CI and V only by admitting that they have said more than nothing about truth (thus rejecting Nihilism). The identity theorist, who holds that truths are identical with their truth makers, can accept CI and V, but does not have the same intuitive appeal as correspondence. However, the main rivals to correspondence, deflationist and minimalist theories which hold that the nature of truth is exhausted by equivalence schemas and other logical roles and that deny that truth, if it is a property at all, has any deep nature, can satisfy CI. How to understand what V requires of a theory of truth is presented as the main point of divergence between correspondence theories and deflationary theories.

Vision understands the debate between correspondence theories and deflationary theories in global terms. Traditional and deflationist attacks on correspondence are often directed at the correspondence approach, rather than at specific versions of the approach. So, the *prima facie* defense of the correspondence approach is presented at the same level of generality. Thus, Chapter 3 is a critical survey of different forms which a correspondence type theory might take and Chapter 4 defends the plausibility of a brief slogan such as a proposition is true if it corresponds with the facts’, being a genuine theory of truth and not a mere platitude. Against the platitude interpretation, Chapter 4 also includes an extended critical discussion of the correspondence platitude embracing minimalism found in C. Wright (1999).

The critique of deflationist views developed in chapters 5-6 focuses upon the issues which divide correspondence theories which accept equivalence schemata from deflationary theories that hold such equivalences to exhaust the nature of truth. Two such equivalences are singled out for examination.

(R)  $\langle p \rangle$  is true iff  $p$

(D) “S” is true (in language L) iff  $p$

Vision understands deflationist theories (in general) as jointly committed to three key theses:

- (1) *Logical Thesis*: The left-hand side of each biconditionals (i.e. “ $\langle p \rangle$  is true,” “S’ is true”) are logically equivalent to the right hand side (i.e. “ $p$ ”).
- (2) *Semantic Thesis*: The left-hand side and right-hand side of each biconditionals means the same thing (viz., have the same cognitive content).
- (3) *Metaphysical Thesis*: ‘Is true’ does not express a property, or truth has no (substantial) nature, or ‘is true’ is not a predicate, or (R) or (D)—plus whatever can be culled from the indirect cases—express all there is to [the concept] TRUTH (p. 131).

Vision’s target here is (3), for in light of V, the conditions under which we should apply the truth predicate are at issue. Vision distinguishes between no-property deflationists (disquotationalists and redundancy theorists) and thin (non-substantial) property deflationists, whom he calls *minimalists*. Vision’s worry is that the former class of theories treats truth as a concept without a property, while the minimalists admit that truth is a property, but denies that the property has a nature. In the first case Vision objects that if truth has no nature, then it lacks conditions for application or non-application. Thus, either nothing falls under the concept or everything does. In the case of the minimalists, Vision objects that if the property has no distinct nature, then, again, the property lacks any means to clearly distinguish between propositions with the property and those without it. The conclusion to draw here is that deflationists of all sorts must at some level deny V, and so, at best, are describing a different concept of truth altogether.

Chapter 6 develops a number of further, more pointed, objections to deflationist theories. And Chapter 7 seeks to undermine the broader appeal of deflationist views by undercutting its connection to historical authorities. Ramsey, e.g., remains a deflationist, but Vision argues that Quine is a correspondence theorist and Wittgenstein ends up a nihilist.

Chapters 8-9 finally lay out Vision’s own Austin-inspired correspondence theory (cf. Austin, 1950). The inspiration in question urges us to see language-world relations as conventional (and usually unanalyzable). Thus if one treats statements, or sentences expressing statements,

as basic units of semantic evaluation, where part of the conventional role of the statement *S* is to define the *type* of state of affairs (SOA) that would satisfy *S*, then the recognition that a relevant SOA obtains will be sufficient to constitute the truth of *S* (the truth of logically complex statements will be determined in the familiar truth functional way). This is correspondence conceived as a conventional congruity between statements and SOA. There is no demand for isomorphism between names and predicates on the one hand and objects, properties, and relations on the other. Vision's insight here is that one mistake prior correspondence theories might have made was to provide more detail and specificity than respecting our intuitive commitment to truth as correspondence demands. No doubt, the first target of criticisms against Vision's view will be his refusal to offer a more specific account. Chapter 9 and a brief appendix are dedicated to the proper formulation and defense of an ontology committed to states of affairs against various criticisms.

*Veritas* is a rare sort of book that leaves one feeling as if they have spent a long afternoon or evening deep in conversation with a thoughtful colleague or friend. It is a fine, scholarly and thought-provoking book of tremendous value for those who are already party to debates over truth. Newcomers with little background will also find it accessible due to the excellent survey of major issues and positions in the first chapter and to its clear and readable prose. Whether one agrees with Vision or not, there is something refreshing about his attempt to stand back from narrower debates about truth and describe with new clarity the wider contours of these disputes.

### References

- Austin, J.L. (1950). Truth. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Suppl. 24*, 111–28.  
 Wright, C. (1999). *Truth and Objectivity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

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Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, *Moral Skepticisms*,  
 Oxford: Oxford University Press 2006, xiii + 286 pp.,  
 ISBN 0195187725.

This book is an attempt by the author to explore “what we can accomplish and what we cannot accomplish when we try to justify our moral beliefs” (p. 251). It is also an interesting contribution to the semantics and metaphysics of morality. The focus of the book is

the epistemology of morality. Sinnott-Armstrong argues that while no conclusion can be had concerning whether or not we have justified moral beliefs when we consider radical possibilities, e.g., error theories of the sort propounded by J.L. Mackie and others, we can have limited sorts of justification. The book is both a defense of a form of Pyrrhonian moral skepticism and an attempt to provide some justification of our everyday epistemic practices with regard to morality. The two are obviously tricky feats to pull off together, but the attempt is rewarding.

The book begins with a discussion of different ways the moral skeptic might seek to support her position with various moves that can be made in the semantics and metaphysics of morality. In particular, Sinnott-Armstrong considers expressivist denials of the truth-aptness of moral claims and the error theoretic claim that while moral beliefs are truth-aptness, they are all in fact false. Either position has an obvious appeal to a defender of moral skepticism.

As far as expressivism goes, Sinnott-Armstrong argues that in order to overcome the Frege-Geach problem, the expressivist must make use of a minimal truth predicate that will render expressivism so much like moral realism as to make it uninteresting to the moral skeptic. He is also skeptical that a minimal truth predicate will overcome the Frege-Geach problem in the first place. He finds error theories implausible, but—importantly—he thinks they are at the very least consistent. Furthermore, he claims there is some (inconclusive) reason for adopting such positions. The enemy of error theory, he says, has “the burden of going forward” (p. 59). Here he is surely correct. As he notes, some very smart people have found error theory plausible. The opponent of error theory owes us at least one counterargument, even if the error theorist cannot provide an extremely strong case for her position. Morality and moral belief need justification in the face of such opponents.

The heart of the book is his discussion of the epistemology of morality. His interest is whether there are grounds that provide adequate epistemic reason for moral belief rather than grounds that make it merely permissible to believe. His concern is with being “wholly justified” (p. 72f), that is, being justified both from the point of view that examines only the information the believer in question has and from the point of view of all the relevant information. He considers the position of the Academic moral skeptic, which claims that no person is ever justified in believing any moral claim whatsoever (p. 77). Sinnott-Armstrong briefly presents two arguments for Academic moral skepticism: The Regress Argument and the Skeptical Hypothesis Argument. Each is a standard argument for universal skepticism altered to fit moral beliefs.

The regress argument challenges the anti-skeptic to provide justification for some moral belief. If the justification makes use of moral premises, as it seems bound to do, then the skeptic can demand justification for that premise. If some way of ending the regress by appeal to either self-justifying moral claims, non-moral normative claims, or non-normative claims cannot be found, then there is an infinite regress of justificatory claims. The skeptic charges that none of the available strategies can succeed. Academic moral skepticism seems to follow.

The skeptical hypothesis argument imagines some alternative to the way things appear that can fully explain all the available data. The standard epistemology model is Descartes's demon. Just as the demon might have deceived Descartes into believing that he was awake when he was in fact dreaming, the demon might just as well make some moral claims seem obviously true even when in fact no moral claims are true. It is here that the coherence of an error theory has its importance. If error theory could be ruled out as incoherent, then the skeptic will have a much harder time running the skeptical hypothesis argument.

Rather than immediately critique or endorse these arguments, Sinnott-Armstrong instead provides an analysis of talk of justification of beliefs in general and moral beliefs in particular. He claims we should understand someone's claim that  $X$  is justified in believing  $p$  as asserting the conjunctive claim that  $X$  is justified relative to some contrast class  $C$  in believing  $p$  and that  $C$  is the relevant contrast class. Justification of a belief relative to a contrast class consists in being able to rule out all the members of that contrast class. A contrast class for a belief,  $p$ , is a set of propositions consisting in  $p$  and one or more contraries of  $p$ .

Sinnott-Armstrong's analysis and his discussion of which contrast class is the relevant one begins his case for his own brand of skepticism: Pyrrhonian moral skepticism. He also introduces the extreme and moderate contrast classes for moral beliefs. The extreme contrast class for  $p$  consists of  $p$  and all of its contraries. The moderate contrast class for  $p$  consists of  $p$  and the contraries of  $p$  that we require to be ruled out by our usual epistemic standards in order to have justification for believing  $p$ . The Pyrrhonian moral skeptic refuses to assert or deny that anyone is justified in believing any moral claim whatsoever by refusing to assert or deny that any contrast class—including the extreme and moderate contrast classes—is in fact the relevant contrast class. A very interesting discussion ensues of the various ways one might hope to fix the relevant contrast class, e.g., by claiming that the extreme contrast class is always the relevant class or by claiming that the relevant class is fixed by context. While remaining silent on the relevance of any actual

contrast class, Pyrrhonian skeptics about relevance can still assert that some claims are justified relative to various contrast classes.

Next, Sinnott-Armstrong uses the moderate and extreme contrast classes to assess various ways one might attempt to overcome the earlier skeptical arguments and provide justification for moral beliefs. The Naturalistic approach attempts to provide justification from premises that are all non-normative. The Normativist approach uses normative non-moral premises. The Intuitionist uses foundational moral premises, which are in no need of further justification. The Coherentist approach also uses moral premises and hopes to avoid a regress by justifying moral beliefs in virtue of their relations to each other. He concludes that each strategy fails to provide justification for moral beliefs relative to the extreme contrast class but that some varieties of these strategies can provide weaker forms of justification. It is important for his brand of skepticism that any attempt at justification fails relative to the extreme contrast class since justification relative to it implies justification relative to all contrast classes.

Let me turn now to the issue of how much of a defense of our everyday epistemic practices with respect to morality Sinnott-Armstrong can provide and the importance of that project. We can very often, Sinnott-Armstrong says, justify our moral beliefs relative to the moderate contrast class. The friend of morality might see this claim as a welcome one, but it is not clear that the claim can be much assistance to her. Recall that the moderate contrast class for  $p$  is the set consisting of  $p$  and the propositions contrary to  $p$  that need to be eliminated in order for us to be justified in believing  $p$  by our usual epistemic standards. All this initially sounds very reassuring: We may not be justified when we consider extreme possibilities, but we can be justified when we stick to the sorts of options that we normally feel need to be ruled out. Yet, consider that we can justify almost any moral belief relative to some contrast class or another. Hitler very well may have been justified in believing that it was good to commit some particularly foul act relative to the contrast class that also consists of the proposition that claims he should commit some even more dreadful deed and the proposition that claims he should take a vacation on Pluto. That hardly seems reassuring. Or reflect on the less alarmist example, which Sinnott-Armstrong considered: An ethics committee at a hospital may consider abortion to save a mother's life, an action that needs to be ruled out in order to justify some other contrary course of action. A different ethics committee at a hospital with a religious affiliation may simply consider abortion to be completely irrelevant. The latter committee's epistemic standards do not give the slightest credit to the belief that abortion is

the appropriate course of action, while the former's epistemic standards do.

It is hard to know exactly what this moderate contrast class consists in and, thus, if it really manages to exclude error theory. The moderate contrast class for  $p$  is the class consisting of  $p$  and the contraries of  $p$  that *our* usual epistemic standards hold need to be ruled out for the justification of the belief that  $p$ , but it is not clear whose epistemic standards are at issue. Do the standards of immoral people count? How about the standards of those with bizarrely low or misguided standards? Are the standards of the non-religious or the religious ethical committee the ones that count? What about the standards of politicians, dictators, and common criminals? Depending upon how the standards are specified (if they can be specified at all), error theory (and presumably Academic skepticism) may be right back in the game. More questions can be raised concerning this contrast class: Is there anything special about the moderate contrast class? (Our usual epistemic standards have in the past occasionally been very bad epistemic standards.) And should we feel reassured knowing that we can justify some of our moral beliefs relative to it if it is just another contrast class?

These issues and the general issue of the justification of moral belief are not merely technical issues for philosophers and no one else. The shape of morality itself is in part determined by how much we can know about it. If it is not possible for someone to know that some act is wrong, then at the very least it is usually not right for us to punish or scold that person for performing that act. Perhaps we should tell the individual about the wrongness of the act or prevent the person from performing the act. If we are unable to determine whether anyone has any moral knowledge whatsoever, then our actual moral practices will likely need to reflect that fact. If we can only be sure that we are able to have limited forms of moral knowledge, then once we are clear on what those limits are our practices will likely need to reflect that fact as well. It could be very important that we know the exact limits of our ability to justify our moral beliefs. This book is a useful and engaging contribution to that endeavor.

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Stephen Darwall, *The Second-Person Standpoint: Morality, Respect and Accountability*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 2006, xii + 348 pp., ISBN 0674022742.

In *The Second-Person Standpoint: Morality, Respect and Accountability*, Stephen Darwall argues that morality is, and ought to be, cen-

tered around the demands people are entitled to make on one another's conduct and will, or what he calls "the second-person standpoint" (p. 3). The book is divided into four sections, and contains two central arguments.

The second-personal character of moral theories is a perspective that has gone unnoticed in the past. The goal of the first argument is to show that generally accepted concepts in moral theory have an irreducibly second-personal character and that it is impossible to fully understand many central moral ideas without it. Darwall elaborates on the interpersonal nature of moral obligation by evaluating a broad range of literature in moral theory and articulating the second-personal aspect of each. The detailed discussion presents some well-known moral theories. While Darwall emphasizes deontological moral theory, he highlights the second-personal character of all moral theories.

Darwall acknowledges that the first argument cannot vindicate the ideas it analyzes. Thus, his second argument is dedicated to a reverse-strategy: instead of arguing for the existence of a second-person foundation in moral theory, Darwall sets out to show that the presuppositions of the second-person standpoint include the moral law. Darwall explains that the second-personal standing can only be justified within a circle of four interrelated ideas: claim, accountability, second-personal reason, and second-personal authority. These interrelated ideas necessarily exclude instances of coercion.

In my view, the second argument is a weakness of the book. Darwall overextends the argument's reach by saying that it "vindicates moral obligation and the dignity of persons on the assumption that second-personal reasons exist at all" (p. 147). This weakness is only a temporary drawback since Darwall dedicates the last few chapters to motivating the normative aspect of his theory. Darwall covers a vast amount of terrain, so I choose to focus only on the most prominent, and perhaps most noteworthy, lines of support for the two central arguments.

Darwall evaluates three generally accepted concepts in moral theory—moral accountability, moral obligation, and the moral idea of dignity of persons (along with its due respect)—and he exposes the second-personal aspects of each. Using arguments from Peter Strawson, Darwall supports the idea that attributions of moral accountability are mediated by "reactive attitudes," such as resentment, blame, guilt, indignation, and remorse (p. 70–4). These reactive attitudes presuppose the competence and authority of the individuals who are their targets, as well as about those who have them (since without such presuppositions they would be "unintelligible"). Blame, for example, implies that the blameworthy agent had reason enough not to do what we blame him for doing because if he had sufficient reason to do it, then it would

not make sense to blame him. Moreover, a reactive attitude of guilt implies that the agent believes the blame is warranted from the perspective of a member of a moral community. Darwall thus argues that moral accountability expressed through reactive attitudes is implicitly second-personal.

Next, Darwall provides support for the second-personal character of moral obligation. Darwall argues that the most natural way of interpreting Kant's Categorical Imperative or related injunctions like the Golden Rule is through the second-person standpoint, in terms of demands that one can sensibly make on all from a shared standpoint as a member of a moral community (p. 115–18).

Finally, Darwall evaluates the moral concept of dignity of persons and the respect that is its fitting response. This part of the book includes the most original and insightful discussion. Darwall argues against the prominent view that some basic value that persons have is what we respect when we respect each other. He says that when we think that even crooks are entitled to a respectful form of accountability, we are not granting that respect based on the assessment of their value as persons but rather on their authority to demand due respect. Darwall calls this form of respect "recognition respect," and he defines it as something that does not concern evaluation or appraisal but as something that concerns the manner in which our relations to someone are to be regulated or governed (p. 122–26). Thus, the dignity of persons includes an irreducibly second-personal authority to demand respect for this authority. Further, by respecting someone's dignity in this way, we recognize their standing not only to demand but also to resist, to blame, to excuse, to forgive, and so on.

Darwall strengthens this claim by arguing that unless we respect others' authority to demand something of us, we fail in an important sense to respect them. He says that we can accept first-personal norms of respecting persons and even accept such norms as mandatory, but unless we respect their authority to demand such compliance, we fail to give them due respect. Dignity of persons thus involves an authority that is second-personal in nature and no evaluative or normative proposition can imply this dignity unless it is fundamentally second-personal. He writes,

Dignity is not just a set of requirements with respect to persons; it is also the authority persons have to require compliance with these requirements by holding one another accountable for doing so (p. 14).

After revealing the second-personal aspect of the dignity and respect for persons, Darwall proceeds with his second argument. He tries to "vindicate the authority of moral obligation and these other ideas, again, from the second-person perspective" (p. x). As Darwall defines

it, the second-personal standing can only be justified within the circle of four interrelated ideas: claim, accountability, second-personal reasons, and second-personal authority (p. 13). This part of the book amounts to the following: (i) making a claim presupposes the authority to make it; (ii) the claim creates a reason for compliance (a second-personal reason); (iii) if the reason for compliance is not fulfilled, the authority to demand compliance makes room for accountability. In other words, for the speaker to make a valid claim, the listener must accept the second-personal reason. If the speaker has the authority and if the listener fails to comply with the speaker's request, then there is reason for the speaker to hold the listener accountable for his failure to act. When these second-personal conditions are met, the speaker and listener share a common authority. Only if the speaker and listener share a common authority can the speaker be justified in directing the will of the listener.

Darwall uses arguments from Fichte and Pufendorf to distinguish between legitimate forms of address, as outlined in the previous paragraph, and instances of coercion. He also explains why a sergeant can claim justified authority when commanding a private, for example, but a slave owner often fails to do the same when addressing a slave (chap. 10). The discussion focuses on the moral obligations in justified second-personal interactions. Darwall assumes that both the speaker and listener have a "common normative standing simply by virtue of being (second-personally competent) rational persons" (p. 147) for a second-person reason to exist. I am not convinced that this argument "vindicates moral obligation and the dignity of persons on the assumption that second-personal reasons exist at all" (p. 147).

Darwall dedicates the last few chapters to an argument for the "validity" of second-personal reasons. He thus provides some motivation for why we "ought" to follow second-personal reasons, primarily because his second argument is still in need of a "substantive normative thesis" (p. 268).

Part of Darwall's strategy for reorienting morality around the second-person standpoint includes an argument against other types of reasoning. Darwall considers two different ways in which you might convince another person to move his foot from on top of yours to explain the contrast between second-personal reasons and other reasons for acting. One way of persuading another person to remove his foot from your own would be through an appeal to sympathy. You try to show the other person the pain this situation is causing you. The reason to move the foot would be to eliminate this bad state of the world, which Darwall calls an "agent-neutral" reason. An agent-neutral reason is "outcome-regarding" and is in principle available to anyone else in a position to alter this state (p. 247).

A second way of convincing the person to move his foot, would be to demand for him to move his foot. This reason is cogent only if we suppose that they have the authority to demand that some other individual move his foot, that there is a reason for him to do it, and that he is accountable for doing so (p. 248). The reason has nothing to do with improving the state of the world. It has everything to do with one's individual authority to demand something of another. This is a second-personal reason, and what Darwall calls an "agent-relative" one.

Darwall uses several strategies to argue against "agent-neutral" types of reasons. He sets out to prove that "any account of the distinctive normativity of moral obligation that fails to capture the second-personal element is deficient" (p. 27). Since he believes that Kant's moral theory ultimately fails because his theory depends on first-personal "supremely authoritative reasons" (p. 214), Darwall criticizes "outcome-based" reasons. His argument is that if an action has consequences and their valuable outcome as its substantive aim, then it is impossible to freely act against this aim (just as it is impossible to believe something in the face of what one regards to be conclusive evidence to the contrary) (p. 279–86). Darwall uses Moore's "open question" argument to emphasize the lack of connection between an action and the potential to realize the most valuable outcome, and the normative claim that an agent "should" therefore perform such an action (p. 280). While this discussion does not provide an argument for the normative authority of "agent-relative" reasons, Darwall argues that the second-personal standpoint at least gives us a perspective on our own agency, and it allows us to appreciate a fundamental difference between theoretical and practical reasons, thereby improving our own grasp of reasons for acting (p. 299). Finally, to remedy the shortcomings of "agent-neutral" accounts of morality, Darwall offers an alternative moral theory known as "contractualism." He argues that the second-personal standpoint developed in the book provides the most natural way of motivating and grounding such a theory (chap. 12).

Given the book's high level of abstraction as well as the dense, difficult prose, it might be best recommended for those with a special interest in metaethics, especially the role of justification in morality. Nevertheless, any dedicated reader will surely profit from this fascinating and intuitively appealing reorientation of moral theory.

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Adam Grobler, *Metodologia nauk (Methodology of Science)*, Kraków: Aureus, Znak 2006, 344 pp., ISBN 8324007458.

Adam Grobler's *Methodology of Science* (published in Polish) adopts the kind of attitude to philosophical questions concerning science that is familiar from the works of Marian Przełcki, Ryszard Wójcicki and Adam Nowaczyk. More generally, the book conforms to the legacy of the Vienna Circle (p. 144) incorporating topics discussed in recent philosophy of science. Also, *Methodology of Science* takes into account some of the fashionable issues raised in erotetic logic, epistemology (esp. Bayesianism and the theory of truth), and philosophy of mind.<sup>1</sup>

The book consists of four parts. Part I, "Induction and Explanation," (5 chapters) endorses a version of abductive reasoning to the best explanation as *the* theory of inductive reasoning in science which succeeds in overcoming the difficulties of its main contenders, i.e. inductionism and falsificationism. Grobler offers a contrastive conception of explanation which modifies the idea of explanation elaborated by T. Kuipers and A. Winiewski. Roughly, the main rationale for the explanatory power of scientific hypotheses is that they come up with answers to questions of the following form: "Why did in setting  $a$  event  $b$  (unexpectedly) occur rather than one of the (usual) events  $b_1, \dots, b_k$ ?" The process of generating the correct answer can then be described as a series of questions which aim at picking up the true hypothesis for a given set or—should that fail—an extensive revision of presuppositions of the contrastive question is considered. Next, two criteria for comparing alternative explanations are formulated: one of comparative explanatory power, the other—of progressive revision of the received scientific knowledge. Roughly, the set of questions answered by the less explanatory hypothesis is a proper subset of answers delivered by its alternative. And a revision is progressive if it covers all the explanations offered so far and solves at least one more scientific question. The criteria offered are compatible with I. Lakatos's principle of theoretical pluralism as they may well select several hypotheses having the same explanatory power.

Part II, "The Structure of Science," (12 chapters) covers topics such as: the notion of scientific theory, the problem of the reduction of theoretical terms and various types of definitions in science, the notion of scientific law, idealisation in science and the *ceteris paribus* condition, different types of models employed in science, the non-statement view

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<sup>1</sup> An extensive exposition of *methodology* of science is to be found in Stanisław Kamiński's *Science and Method* (in Polish), Lublin: TN KUL 1992 (4th edition), where a theory and different types of methods are comprehensively presented. In contrast to Grobler's book, Kamiński's monograph covers the history of science and the philosophy of science.

of theories, reduction and the unity of science. The author claims that contrastive explanation sets a framework which makes it possible to alleviate or even to resolve many of the traditional problems raised in philosophy of science. It is granted that scientific knowledge progresses as theories solve more varied kinds of problems. However, if a recurrent failure in resolving a theoretical question persists, a revision of some of the presuppositions underlying the question at hand is considered. And this may lead in turn to a radical reconstruction of the domain studied, as exemplified by the elimination of absolute space and time by four-dimensional space-time. Thus, the stepwise transition from the old domain to the new one can be traced back and explicitly described, which in turn undermines the claim of their radical discontinuity and absolute incommensurability.

In Part III, "Different Types of Sciences and Their Methodological Characteristics," (4 chapters) a number of standard distinctions of different types of scientific disciplines is critically examined. P. Kitcher's idea that mathematics is a science of mental representations of possible manipulations of objects by an ideal subject is generalised to cover also logic and to question the sharp divide between formal and empirical sciences. Next, it is suggested that the opposition between the naturalistic and interpretive approaches to the social sciences will become less stringent if both approaches are reconceptualised by means of K. Popper's idea of the third world. Nonetheless, the author acknowledges that there is a tension between the interpretive method conceived of by Popper and the exceptionless and naturalistic postulates entailed by his falsificationism. Finally, the distinction between nomotetic and idiographic sciences is criticised. Of course, there are examples where the distinction is not observed even in the supposedly paradigmatic idiographic sciences like history. But the principled reason for Grobler to reject the distinction is that it presupposes that the explanatory role is primarily attributed to scientific laws. The contrastive conception of explanation, however, takes laws and theoretical generalisations to be merely instrumental in achieving the main objective of science, namely explanation.

The central topic of Part IV, "The Cognitive Status of Science," (4 chapters) is the debate between scientific realism and anti-realism. Grobler defends the pluralism of truth within the internal realist standpoint. The progress of science in one domain affects related domains. It does not follow, however, that there is anything like the end-point of scientific research and the Ultimate Truth yet to be discovered. Rather, the author argues, the conceptual frameworks established with the advancement of science have merit relative to specific cognitive needs of human beings. Metaphorically speaking, the theoretical advancement

of science resembles working out the details of various interrelated kinds of maps of the same region, e.g. physical, political, or administrative. Each of these maps can be improved, even though there is no unique and ultimate ideal map.

*Methodology of Science* is the third volume published in the *Philosophical Companions* series. The readership is not explicitly identified by the author, but on the back flap of the dust cover the publisher announces that the companion as “an academic survey” is “written in accessible style with didactic elements.” In the Introduction the author acknowledges that the editors—seeking perhaps the completeness of the survey—endorsed some topics that go beyond the initial plan of the book. Indeed, in its final form the book covers a broad range of topics within philosophy and methodology of science, some of which, however, apparently do not essentially contribute to the author’s project. Moreover, in view of the coherence of the book the four appendices (written by J. Cachro) may well have been saved for a different occasion. The book does not include a table of contents or a summary in English, and the detailed table of contents is not divided into lines and has no page references. The publisher’s description of the book could give the false impression that its main purpose is an elementary exposition of philosophy of science in Poland and elsewhere, or that *Methodology of Science* presents definitions of the central notions, illustrates them with examples and helps to test a student’s comprehension. Grobler purportedly brings out only the standpoints and ideas relevant to his own approach to induction and explanation in science. Moreover, to appreciate the accessible style in some parts of the book the reader has to be an advanced—and perhaps also a dedicated—student of philosophy of science. *Methodology of Science* is an advanced textbook for graduate philosophy students and scholars. Familiarity with the 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy of science is a prerequisite for an informed reading of the book, and acquaintance with erotetic logic would certainly be an advantage.

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John McDowell, *Mind and World*,  
with a New Introduction by the Author,  
Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press 2003 (second edition),  
196 pp., ISBN 0674576101.

John McDowell’s *Mind and World* (originally published in 1994 as an outcome of his *John Locke Lectures* at Oxford University; revised and reissued by him in 2003) offers an extremely ambitious and challenging

project to reformulate the traditional philosophical frame of the issue of the relation between mind and world. In order to determine the proper relation between them, he focuses on the human experience of the external world. As he declares, his overall topic of interest in *Mind and World* concerns “the way concepts mediate the relation between minds and world” (p. 1). McDowell’s reformulation of the problem is motivated by the unsatisfactory state of the dominant positions that try to explain the relation between mind (thought) and world (experience). Namely, on the one side there is the position labelled by W. Sellars (1956/1997) as the “Myth of the Given” (that McDowell ascribes to G. Evans (1982), and presumably to Ch. Peacocke (1993)), and on the other the position of coherentism (that McDowell ascribes to D. Davidson (1984)).

According to the “Myth of the Given” (which represents some sort of foundationalism) there is a “given,” founding element in human experience of the external world, i.e. a kind of *non-conceptual* content of experience that plays the role of the ultimate foundation for the empirical or observational beliefs of the cognizer. Its rival, coherentism, in the version sustained by Davidson (1984; 1986), denies any such non-conceptual contents and describes the grounds of our beliefs just in terms of the other beliefs: experience does not justify beliefs, because “nothing can count as a reason for holding a belief except another belief” (Davidson 1986, p. 310). In other words, following the Davidsonian (1984, pp. 183–98) categories of “conceptual scheme” and empirical “content,” we can state these positions as follows. The foundationalist “Myth of the Given” emphasises the role of empirical, non-conceptual content in our experiencing the external world (trying to avoid a *regressus ad infinitum* in justifying our beliefs on the external world; non-conceptual content plays the role of an unsupported-supporter for these beliefs). Whereas coherentism determines this experiencing primarily to the conceptual scheme that is constituted by our beliefs, arguing that justification (as a proper relation for beliefs) needs constraint that is rational, not causal (in virtue of their intrinsically rational character) (Davidson, 1984, p. 189).

In effect, according to McDowell we are faced with the unresolvable dilemma of either admitting that there is some “mythical” (not recognizable as non-epistemic), founding non-conceptual element in our experience or lapsing into coherentism that closes us in our set of beliefs and is vulnerable to the threat of idealism (by emphasising just the mental side of our cognition and cutting connections with objective, non-mental reality).

McDowell tries to avoid the “oscillation” between these two approaches and offers a reformulation of the problem in a different framework.

Namely, McDowell appeals to Kantian categories such as: (i) concepts and intuitions, (ii) spontaneity and receptivity, and (iii) understanding and sensibility. These opposing categories, respective to the domains of mind (thought) and world (experience) they belong to, must be integrated in every human cognitive act (pp. 2–3). In other words, all experience must be conceptualized. To express this claim, McDowell evokes the Kantian words: “Intuitions without concepts are blind; thoughts without content are empty” (pp. 1–2). Human’s conceptual capacities (spontaneity) are involved in every experience of the external world (receptivity).

The notion of conceptualized experience, McDowell argues, helps him to keep the advantages of the “Myth of the Given” and as well as coherentism, and at the same time to escape the unsatisfying consequences of both of them. In other words, by reformulating the problem itself, he tries to avoid the unresolvable dilemma to which they give rise.

However, the conception of conceptualized experience (as a proper explication of the relation between the mind and the world) directs us to the charge of idealism. Because idealism is usually characterized as the view that mind is the most basic reality and the physical world exists only as an appearance to or expression of mind, or as somehow mental in its inner essence, McDowell’s position, assuming the entire conceptual character of our experience of the external world, is vulnerable to the threat of idealism.

McDowell is aware of the possible charge of idealism. Substantiating his thesis on the conceptualized character of experience (in Lecture II) by arguing that the realm of the conceptual (“space of reasons”) is “unbounded,” he offers some kind defence against this accusation.

We can reconstruct the following three arguments of McDowell in order to defend his position against the charge of idealism:

- (1) McDowell makes the distinction between “thought” as the act of thinking and “thought” as the *content* of thinking, describing the *content as thinkable*. The key point here is that “the constraint comes from outside thinking [as an act—P. Sz.], but not from outside what is *thinkable*” (p. 28).
- (2) McDowell (pp. 29–34) also argues that the integration of concepts and empirical content (intuitions) in experiencing the external world (in virtue of the cooperation of *spontaneity and receptivity*) assumes the “openness to the world,” i.e. requires the assumption that they are a part of a broader picture of the world that extends beyond our actual or even possible experiences.

- (3) Finally, McDowell tries to protect himself against the threat of extreme “anthropocentrism,” i.e. “confidence that the world is completely within the reach of our powers of thinking” (pp. 39–40), that leads to idealism. He argues that there is a “perpetual” obligation for subjects to reflect and revise the accepted set of concepts and beliefs in the face of new evidence of experience. “Ensuring that our empirical concepts and conceptions pass muster is ongoing and arduous work for the understanding” (p. 40). The crucial point of his argument rests on the conviction that

there is no guarantee that the world is completely within the reach of a system of concepts or conceptions as it stands at some particular moment in its historical development (p. 40).

Then, it is possible even that there may be some aspects of the world that escape our conceptual capacities or grasping, if we stop to scrutinize our beliefs about the external world (p. 40).

There is some tension between the first argument (on the essential mind-involvedness of the world) and the third one (on the possible aspects of the world that are beyond the scope of our conceptual capacities). The former regards the *potential* capacities of mind-involvement within any possible cognition of the world, whereas the latter concerns *actual* cognitive access to the world. It is also possible to understand the second argument in this way. In other words, the tension would be avoided by assuming that the world is intrinsically mind-structured, and in our cognition we just actualize the *possible or virtual access to the world*. However, this still seems to lead us to the threat of the idealism, because *possible cognitive access* to the world rests on the claim that the world is essentially organized in terms of the human mind. We cannot grasp anything what is beyond our minds, so world as (potentially) graspable is still (in some sense) mind-dependent.

In other words, there is no assumption that the external world depends on *actual* human cognitive access to all its elements, but rather that nothing is *virtually* (or *potentially*) beyond the scope of human cognitive grasp. That this is the case with McDowell’s proposal seems to be supported by his arguments (pp. 46–65, 162–74, see also 1990; 1998) against the non-conceptualists positions of G. Evans (1983) and Ch. Peacocke (1992). They sustained that at least some elements of our experience are not conceptualized. In other words, we do not have cognitive access to them, even *virtually*, because intrinsically they are not mind-involved. In general, to accept that there is non-conceptual content of experience is to commit oneself to some form of the Myth of the Given: accepting an unconceptualized “given” element that in some mysterious way is then conceptualized by the mind. According

to McDowell, the only possible explanation of the coherent (rational) relation between the experiential input of the external world and the mind's output in the form of beliefs (or judgements that express the beliefs) rests on the assumption that "spontaneity is already implicated in receptivity." That is, experience is wholly conceptualized.

To conclude, McDowell's defence against the charge of idealism seems too ambiguous to be claimed successful. In the face of the above evidence, it is very hard to say that his sustaining the independence of the external world from mind is defensible. Moreover, from a historical perspective, it seems to be somewhat analogous to the classical idealism of Kant and Berkeley. The analogy to Kant is obvious. McDowell is engaged in his terminological framework that intrinsically suggests the strict correlation between mind and world, in favour of the former. The way we perceive the world is determined by the empirical input—*phenomena*, and the conceptual scheme—the transcendental categories of mind. They jointly guarantee the cooperation between *spontaneity* and *receptivity*. However, in fact, the human cognizer is closed in her conceptual framework, because things in themselves—*noumena* (represented by *phenomena*) are unknown (as incomprehensible in principle). The external world is, then, only a picture dictated by human capabilities to conceive (in mind ordered way) its appearances.

Even if we accept McDowell's claim (pp. 41–44) that his proposal is free of this "dark," "transcendental story" of the Kantian position and it offers only an empirical explanation, it is still extremely close to the charge of idealism. This is for two reasons. First, it means that we would accept the appearances in the Kantian sense as the real side of the world. Therefore, it still leaves the status of these as ambiguous at best. Or even more, they would seem to be just "shadows of our mental capabilities." Secondly, if we emphasise, following McDowell, the empirical side of his position (in order to avoid the transcendental implication of the Kantian framework), we can paradoxically relapse into Berkeley's empirical idealism. In the epistemological sense, our picture of the world is strictly determined by our way of experiencing this world. In consequence, ontologically, we are justified only to claim that there exists nothing more than *what* is experienced and *how* it is experienced. In short, *esse est percipi*.

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Jan Woleński, *Epistemologia—poznanie, prawda, wiedza, realizm (Epistemology. Cognition. Truth. Knowledge. Realism)*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN 2005, 560 pp., ISBN 8301144653.

*Epistemology*, as intended by Woleński, is “something between a monography and a coursebook.” Merging the merits of a coursebook and a monograph is a fortunate decision of the author. Taking into consideration the didactic functions protects *Epistemology* from having a hermetic character, a fault of many monographs. Being placed in “between” secures the work from the pathology of coursebooks which provide students with “summaries of summarized summaries” and which “teach logical reasoning’ in a reduced scale of summaries” (Florian Znaniński).

*Epistemology*, by developing the theory of truth and the defence of realism, follows the tradition of the Lvov-Warsaw School, whose output is examined and promoted by Woleński (author of a major monography concerning the topic—Woleński, 1989). The founder of this Polish analytic formation, Kazimierz Twardowski, indicated the need for writing Polish university coursebooks on philosophical disciplines which would report the real condition of the debate in international literature and which would not lose sight of Polish achievements. *Epistemology* fulfills this postulate of Twardowski. In a consistent manner, Woleński emphasizes: (i) Polish achievements in epistemologic analyses (e.g. not much known works of Maria Kokoszyńska), and (ii) the merits of the style in which philosophy is practised in the Lvov-Warsaw School and the merits of application of analytic methods based on the use of logic.

Looking closely into the works of Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz (a representative of the Lvov-Warsaw School) it is recalled that he “joked that he did not do anything else apart from writing a coursebook on elementary logic” (Klemens Szaniawski). This characteristic

corresponds to the rich in publications epistolary output of Woleński. It can be said that Woleński “is still writing a coursebook” which makes basic, but complex, epistemological analyses easier to comprehend. In *Epistemology*, Woleński sums up and amends the results of many years of studies, which develop: the semantic theory of cognition (inspired by the ideas of Ajdukiewicz and Roman Suszko), the effects of Alfred Tarski’s inquiry into the semantic definition of truth, the findings of theory-cognitive analyses and discussions (concerning knowledge, rationalism, empiricism, realism, memory, perception, etc.), in which he uses the tools of contemporary logic and historical-philosophical research into the Lvov-Warsaw School.

Referring to historical analogies, it can be noted that *Epistemology*, owing to its arrangement of issues, may fulfill the functions attributed to a different well-known work (intended to be a coursebook) of the Lvov-Warsaw School: Tadeusz Kotarbiński’s *Elements of the Theory of Cognition, Formal Logic and the Methodology of Sciences* (1929). Those who study *Elements* under the author’s supervision use the term “the school of *Elements*,” and think it is “a school of strong intellectual excitement. Neither supporters nor opponents are indifferent to it. It provokes thinking and [...] scientific discussion” (Jerzy Pelc). It seems useful to create “a school of *Epistemology*,” which would develop the legacy of the Lvov-Warsaw School. Due to the solutions included in *Epistemology*, equally profound debate can be expected as the one which occurred—and is still taking place—in the case of *Elements*.

The didactic intentions of *Epistemology* are based on the assumption that

the semantic definition of truth formed by Alfred Tarski is such an important idea that it should be known to each philosopher, especially in Poland, where the concept came into being. (p. 9)

The basis is constituted by a particular valuation of methods and philosophical findings—Tarski’s results are of special importance not only in logic, but also in epistemology. It is the philosophy student’s duty to acquire the knowledge of the semantic definition of truth, since understanding this definition (together with its context and the method of its creation) should shape the skills required in practising philosophy and should improve the quality of independent inquiry.

The structure of *Epistemology*. Discussion concerning the terminology of the theory of cognition and the major problems in the history of epistemology (until the 19<sup>th</sup> century) is brought about by a “General historical introduction” (chap. I). Key issues and concepts of the theory of cognition are explained in chapter II. In chapters III-V the history of the concept of truth and the development of the theory of truth (in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century) are introduced. In chapter VI the tasks of the theory

of truth and its questions are discussed. Voluminous chapters VII-IX focus on the semantic definition of truth, highlighting its philosophical reception and evaluation. This part of *Epistemology* (pp. 181–354) deserves special attention. In X an analysis of knowledge is carried out and the issues of perception and memory are spotlighted in XI. In XII attention is paid to empirism and rationalism, the issues treated as most essential in many lectures of the theory of cognition. Currently discussed problems of realism and anti-realism (semantic anti-realism) are presented in chapter XIII.

In the “Supplement” scepticism and Nelson’s argument against epistemology are considered in a synthetic way. The bibliography (pp. 497–537) constitutes an important part of the book. The book is supplemented by useful indices: of people and properly selected concepts.

In *Epistemology* meta-philosophical reflection is regularly undertaken, among other reasons, in order to exhibit the autonomy (understood in a special way) of philosophy in relation to science (“I do not treat philosophy as science,” p. 61). Making the evaluation of philosophical achievements dependent on a particular meta-philosophical paradigm is assumed as well. Woleński claims that there is no philosophy “beyond meta-philosophical points of view” and teaches the analytical point of view. This is associated with particular evaluations and choices of issues and with abandoning those topics which, from a different meta-philosophical point of view, cannot be deleted from a lecture on epistemology.

Various difficulties of philosophy are indicated. For instance: while describing formal languages, after drawing attention to the coherence criteria of colloquial utterances which “sometimes refer [...] to a web of difficult to explicate categorial relations,” Woleński states that: “This concerns philosophy even to a wider extent and is a nightmare of ontology and metaphysics” (p. 194). The peculiarities of philosophical discourse are emphasized as well (p. 434).

Woleński highlights the meta-theoretical character of epistemology from its very beginning:

Epistemology could originate when philosophers not only undertook speculation about the world, but also raised the question how this should be done. (p. 17)

It seems useful to view the elements of ancient theory of cognition selected by Woleński because they, as the first, reveal his research preferences, which indicate the course of analyses in the whole of *Epistemology*. The author: (i) marks the development of views on the valuation of cognition sources, the origin of the deductive method, the opposition of *episteme* and *doxa* (“The introduction of those two notions [...] [is] one of the most important events in the whole history of the theory of

cognition,” p. 18), Democritus’s initiation of interests in the subjective aspect of cognition (which anticipated critical realism); (ii) indicates the sophists as the first who focused on the issues of epistemology; (iii) emphasizes Plato’s concept of *episteme*, which influence of the whole philosophy, (e.g. the division into *noesis* and *dianoia*), the contribution of Aristotle to epistemology (e.g. genetic and methodological empiricism, differentiating the forms of cognition, “creating logical tools for science in the form of the first systematic formal-logical theory and the science of defining,” outlining the influential concept of truth) and the ideas of scepticism, which create one of “the major philosophical challenges from Pirron of Elida till our times” (p. 21); (iv) draws attention to the issue of faith and mind in the Christian synthesis of theology and philosophy.

Woleński develops—and solves in his own way—the ancient dispute about *episteme* (“knowledge is a justified and well-aimed conviction of the *doxa* type,” p. 373) and the relations epistemology-ontology (p.157), being aware that he will not be generally accepted. Postulating the programme of moderate naturalism in epistemology (treated as a set of problems), the author argues about its tasks:

I consider the claims of epistemology to decide about the importance of science as a sin of the traditional theory of cognition (p. 61).

While pondering limiting enunciations, Woleński expresses a “philosophically basic” for *Epistemology* conclusion that “semantics is in general richer than syntax” (p. 255), which is of crucial significance for realism (p. 487).

The axiology of anti-irrationalism is merely signaled in *Epistemology*, although it is omnipresent in the background of its reasoning. It is the axiology appropriate for the Lvov-Warsaw School and reservations in accepting cognitive results are one of its main requirements.

Due attention should be paid to the paragraph “Anti-irrationalism and irrationalism” (chap. XII). In spite of its brevity, the subject matter is worth developing. While describing the anti-irrationalism-empiricism relation, the dispute about *episteme* was raised again and the model of game theory (inconsistent with the classical concept of *episteme*) was presented. The key questions for the whole a *Epistemology* are collected here:

Is there only one criterion of being rational, or are there more? Is being rational in the humanities comparable to rationalism in the sciences? Is rationalism a value? (p. 463)

However, *Epistemology* lacks analyses focusing directly on these questions (though Woleński discusses them in his other works).

For Woleński, the historical context is crucially significant in philosophical analyses, as the problems of philosophy emerge through their history and should be explained owing to the analysis. “In philosophical issues it is important who, when, and what someone wrote” (p. 10). Using source materials deserves special appreciation, especially referring to the “epistolary dialogue” of philosophers (several references in key moments of the argumentation to the correspondence in which a particular point of view is widely and thoroughly discussed).

The personal preferences of the author, as a philosopher of law, are also expressed in *Epistemology*: “Investigating the influence of legal notions on philosophy is an interesting research undertaking” (eg. Kant’s understanding of deduction) (p. 30). Thus, it seems useful that Woleński undertakes writing a study of the history and role of legal concepts in philosophy.

Attention is drawn to the presence of logic in *Epistemology*. Woleński expresses the conviction about the superior significance of logic for philosophy and about the need for a proper viewing of logic and its application in philosophy (he highlights the method of paraphrase, which, owing to logic, provides philosophy with intersubjective form). Logic, as a tool for analyses, aims to control intellectual work. Its constructive role is much more important than its destructive role. Philosophers ought to acknowledge the primacy of logicians’ investigations, which inspire philosophical interpretations. Logical methods, which are to be effectively used in analyses of philosophical problems, should be used with certain philosophical aims in mind. These meta-theoretical convictions determine the way in which logic is applied in *Epistemology* (they are also presented in Woleński, 1999).

Logic is also present in *Epistemology* as the subject of analyses as, for instance, “the issue of logic is of major significance for the defense of empiricism in epistemology” (p. 457).

Does *Epistemology* use “too much” logic? Should formal records not be given a more elaborate commentary? These questions are raised by the parts of the book that lack a description (which directly accompanies the formalisms) in natural language.

The question whether owing to logical analysis “‘important’ intentions are seized of those who put the issue forward, though they were not able to give it a proper logical design” was discussed by Tarski (III Polish Philosophical Convention, 1936). According to him, logical analysis has the advantage that “it makes the opponents state precisely ‘the nature’ of issues” following logical regime and “it deprives future discussion of the character of an uninterrupted chain of never-ending misunderstandings.” The meta-philosophical ideas of Woleński are expressed here: (i) the crucial significance of precisely stating a problem

and the role of disputes, in which questioned issues are clarified with the help of logical tools; (ii) reservations in declaring the finality of solutions.

*Epistemology* highlights the fact that “the formalization of language always occurs within the framework of a more or less informal meta-language” (p. 194). The limitations of formalization do not imply that non-formalized description should become inaccurate or contradictory utterance.

The role of discussion and disputes in philosophy is also presented in *Epistemology*. Woleński is convinced that “there are no undisputable things in philosophy” (p. 490) and regrets that “there was not enough place for undertaking many disputes” (p. 10) worth consideration. Drawing attention to the role of disputes in philosophy and quoting and developing arguments from different disputes are merits of *Epistemology*. The discussions of Kokoszyńska and Tarski are an example of past disputes; among the present ones, the arguments of Woleński and A. Grobler become most eminent. Following them, the stimulating “nerve” of issues can be recognized, although it often disappears in the academically ordered text. Reading *Epistemology* allows for participation in disputes and for spotting this “nerve,” which is most transparent in the arguments the author is engaged in.

In *Epistemology*, Woleński follows the regime of the analyses imposed in the Lvov-Warsaw School, especially the rigour of Tarski (the intellectual hero and the founder of the main ideas of this book). The author explains the undertaken subjects in formal, intuitive and historical aspects. Firstly, the postulate of clarity and differentiation between language and meta-language is fulfilled. Secondly, the author avoids contradictions, as accepting them leads to the acknowledgement of false statements and the aim of science is collecting true ones. Thirdly, he exhibits historical awareness in the field of the issues under analysis.

As regards the accessibility of *Epistemology*, some objective obstacles arise as a result of the undertaken subject matter complex and controversial problem issues. In philosophy, the charge that certain issues should be elaborated and others abandoned can be directed to each author, especially when the opinion is expressed on the basis of a different meta-philosophy and a different evaluation system of problems. This point will always be arguable. By declaring what and from which point of view is interesting for him, Woleński gives the key to the extraction of the issues which are basic for him. He takes care to make clear the distinction between what he says (often emphatically) and what refers to other authors' ideas. Presenting the arguments for and against a particular point of view, Woleński does not refrain from expressing his own opinions.

Independently of accepting Woleński's theses and verdicts, the reader of *Epistemology* is impressed by the erudition and logical culture of the author, his orientation in the abundance of views and arguments, and his skill of synthetically framing thoroughly performed analyses.

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Urszula Żegleń, *Filozofia umysłu. Dyskusja z naturalistycznymi teoriami umysłu. (Philosophy of Mind. The Debate with the Naturalistic Conceptions of Mind)*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek 2003, 349 pp., ISBN 8373221573.

Urszula Żegleń's book offers a comprehensive and competent attempt to confront analytic philosophy of mind with the results of empirical research conducted within the frame of cognitive science. Apart from presenting her own position—a moderate variety of anti-naturalism, the Author, adopting a clear methodological approach, discusses most of the contemporary conceptions of mind and frequently explores areas extending beyond philosophy. Żegleń addresses the fundamental ontological question of the nature of mind and its mode of existence as well as the relations of mind to the brain, the body and the environment. She also considers methodological problems regarding interdisciplinary cognitive science and the role philosophy of mind plays in empirical research. Although the solutions offered by Żegleń remain preliminary theoretical proposals, the analysis of their strengths and weaknesses may contribute to the construction of a future ontology of mind that will be (a) analytically sophisticated, (b) consistent with the scientific knowledge of mind and (c) phenomenologically adequate.

1. *The book, its structure and content.*

*Philosophy of Mind* consists of two parts divided into 5 chapters. The first part is an introduction to philosophy of mind and the methodology of studies of the mind. Chapter 1 offers a concise analysis of the sources

of issues of the mind in the history of philosophy, psychology, the theory of artificial intelligence, cognitive linguistics and neuroscience. The Author introduces the basic notions crucial for her analysis, such as mind, information, representation, intentionality, and consciousness. The chapter presents a clear critical discussion of neutral monism, methodological and semantic behaviorism, the identity theory of central states, computational functionalism, anomalous monism, biological naturalism, functionalistic naturalism, and connectionism.

In Chapter 2, Żegleń outlines her own methodological-ontological position and performs a preliminary analysis of her category of inquiry, namely the mind. In this context she analyses the nature of the cognitive science paradigm. Besides interdisciplinarity, another important feature of the cognitive approach is its tendency towards unification. The category enabling unification is information—cognitive processes are explained in a uniform way as processes based on information-processing. The issue of unification is also connected with the fact that two different approaches to the architecture of the mind coexist within the frame of cognitive science. They are represented by the standard theory of artificial intelligence, and connectionism, closely connected with neuroscience. After explaining differences between them, the Author defends the position than advocates the possibility of converging the two approaches. The chapter concludes with a handful of remarks regarding the book's key problem of explanation and reductionism in cognitive science and philosophy of mind.

In the second part, Żegleń systematically reflects on selected issues of philosophy of mind and particularly focuses on (a) the relations between intentionality, mental representation and causality, (b) propositional attitudes, and (c) consciousness. In Chapter 3, the Author juxtaposes the standard Brentanian approach to intentionality with its naturalistic counterpart. The characteristic feature of the naturalistic approach rests in that it attempts to re-define the traditional concept of intentionality in order to transform it into a physical, biological or semantic category. Further on in this chapter, the notion of mental content is analysed (in the context of the debate between representationalism and non-representationalism) as well as the notion of mental causation.

Chapter 4 analyses the cognitive propositional attitudes of the following types: (a) "to know," (b) "to believe," and (c) "to suppose." Following J. Fodor's conception, Żegleń proposes her own multidimensional approach to propositional attitudes. As regards every cognitive propositional attitude, one should distinguish two mutually non-reducible levels of analysis: epistemic-psychological and semantic-logical. In the last chapter of the book, selected problems of consciousness are under analysis: (a) the consciousness-intentionality relation (the

connection principle), (b) qualia, and (c) the issue of compatibility of descriptions at various levels of organization. Towards the end of the chapter, realism and antireductionism about phenomenal consciousness are defended. In the Author's opinion, descriptions of phenomenal properties of conscious experience are partly compatible (in a weak sense) with their descriptions in the language of neuroscience.

2. *Moderate anti-naturalism, property dualism and emergentism.*

The book's objective, according to its subtitle, is a critical debate with the naturalistic conceptions of mind to provide an answer to the following question: Can naturalistic conceptions produce a philosophically satisfying theory of mind? The Author's answer is negative. Philosophy of mind should not follow the unifying and reducing approach of cognitive science—moreover, the attempt to replace it with neurophilosophy should be deemed utopian. Philosophy of mind should postulate the non-reducible and multidimensional character of the mental domain and preserve philosophy-specific research methods (analytical and phenomenological). On the other hand, interesting philosophy of mind must not be an a priori demonstration of anti-naturalism. It must be developed in the extensive research context that has recently been dominated mostly by naturalistic approaches.

The Author is convinced that the substantial (Cartesian) interpretation of the mind is not to be accepted, nor is the approach eliminating or replacing the category of mind with the category of software or brain. The substantial interpretation fails when confronted with the results of scientific research, whereas identifying mind with the brain is a category mistake. The term "mind" designates no biological organ. The fact that specialized brain areas are responsible for particular mental functions lends no ground for the mind-brain identity thesis. According to the Author, such identification ignores the basic distinction between a neuronal realizer of mental state and a mental state itself. The brain is a necessary but insufficient condition for generating the mind—it is a biological substrate that produces mental states. Still, generating the mind from the brain is impossible in the case of a hypothetical isolated brain. It is only an embodied brain interacting with the environment and other minds through the medium of the body that is able to generate mental states and processes.

The main thesis recurring throughout the whole book is that mental states cannot be fully explained nor reduced to physical states. Thus, it is a strong thesis of ontological and explanatory antireductionism. Despite those declarations, the Author postulates causal reductionism, according to which mental states are generated from neuronal processes. In the terms of ontology of mind, one can say Żegleń supports

an emergentist version of property dualism. Regretfully, she avoids the contemporary debate over emergence.

The Author seeks inspiration for her version of emergentism in the works of the philosopher J. Searle, the neurobiologists S. Greenfield, G. Edelman, F. Crick, and the physicists in the field of non-linear thermodynamics. She does not, however, ascertain whether the aforementioned authors actually make use of a notion of emergence that she would accept as the ontological basis for her analyses. As is known, the theories they propose do not postulate a new non-physical level of reality that would go beyond the competence of scientific methods. It is their conviction that mental processes are an integral part of the physical world. The mind can only exist at a specified level of the natural hierarchy, and it is the task of the sciences to explain its natural genesis.

The fact that the Author accepts both causal reductionism (which is the main assumption of contemporary naturalism!) and property dualism (which is the ontological basis for the anti-naturalism defended in her book) can be interpreted as an indicator of inconsistency flawing her position. If the human mind is a natural product of the human brain and its environment (as well as evolutionary processes, to put it in a wider context), it seems obvious to assume that the progress of scientific knowledge will eventually result in explaining the mechanisms of its genesis. In other words, one can defend emergentism and abandon property dualism. Dualism introduces a simplified dichotomy between physical properties and mental properties, which are non-physical by definition. On the other hand, emergentism assumes the existence of many-levelled organization in Nature and various kinds of properties, processes and regularities manifesting themselves on different levels of the natural hierarchy. Psychophysical emergence is a particular instance of the more fundamental tendency in Nature, which is the capability of self-organization in higher-order structures. Its highest achievement is the human mind. Understanding the relationship between mind and brain—between consciousness and its neural correlates—requires understanding the multi-level structure of the natural world.

### 3. *Mental causation. The place of mind in Nature.*

Żegleń's analyses of mental causation are based on the so-called conditional definition of "a cause," which states that a cause  $c$  invariably results in an effect  $e$  in time  $t$  under a set of specific conditions  $W$ . The Author presumes the existence of three types of determination: (a) causal determination, (b) causal determination extended with non-causal determination, and (c) non-causal determination.

In philosophy of mind determinations (b) and (c) are especially important. Type (b) determination assumes the simultaneous occurrence

of physical and non-physical factors. The Author explains non-physical determination factors and their role using the example of a transition from one doxastic state to another. She points out that a necessary condition for holding beliefs is the knowledge that the subject has and his inferential ability. Furthermore, one should distinguish the physical realization of the belief revision process from the logical rules that constitute a non-physical determination factor. A description of belief revision exclusively at the level of physical determination cannot be complete if it excludes the role of mental content and logical rules. An adequate description of doxastic states must be multi-dimensional, including not only neuronal mechanics, but also their logical-semantic aspect. Żegleń's position in her own words is "weak determinism"—the mind in the physical world is bound by causal determination, but it is not the only kind of determination at play.

Notably, it is assumed that non-physical determination factors influence physical processes. In other words, were it not for non-physical factors, some physical processes would not take place. Consequently, the principle of the causal closure of the physical domain should be rejected, for there are physical effects (changes) that result from non-physical causes (determination factors). This is what one straightforwardly infers from the Author's assumptions; it is not, however, expressed explicitly. The matter is further complicated as the criterion of the division into physical and non-physical properties, which Żegleń applies, is poorly defined. She claims mental properties are physically realized and simultaneously assumes that they are non-physical. How can something be physically realized and remain a non-physical property? Since no analysis of the concept of physical realization is provided, the Author's position again generates charges of inconsistency.

An alternative solution could be offered on the condition that property dualism were rejected and an assumption were accepted that mental contents and logical principles of inference are physical in the broad sense, i.e., that they constitute a certain aspect of the information structures (and/or processes) realized in our brains. Nevertheless, such an interpretation would require extending the category of *the physical* and rejecting post-Cartesian dichotomies. The concept of mind we are dealing with at present and the concept of physical world implicated by the contemporary scientific knowledge are not mutually exclusive. Only using post-Cartesian definitions of the *mental* and *the physical* can one maintain that mental processes are not physical processes (and vice-versa).

Still, the most controversial type determination the Author proposes is type (c). In this case, the cognitive system is not realized physically at all and, consequently, it is not subject to causal deter-

mination. Searching for an example for such a system, Żegleń proposes (1) Husserl's transcendental conception of pure consciousness, (2) computer simulations of cognitive systems, and (3) possible states of a divine mind. Since a reference to a divine mind goes beyond the competence of science and philosophy I will only comment on examples (1) and (2). The first one is controversial for it remains uncertain whether the Author accepts Husserl's transcendental idealism together with its pure consciousness understood metaphysically. If she does, one should objectively demonstrate that states of pure consciousness (a) are not physically realized, and (b) can change without physical changes. Such a solution, however, would in effect reject the principle of psychophysical supervenience, which Żegleń seems to accept. And even worse, speaking of consciousness with no reference to physical structures realizing it remains groundless in the light of scientific knowledge. On the other hand, if the Author rejects transcendental idealism together with its metaphysical conception of pure consciousness, the example should be disqualified as fictitious.

Furthermore, mentioning the possibility of a computer simulation of cognitive processes as an example of non-physical determination is simply erroneous. The Author admits it herself claiming that every computer simulation must be physically realized. Thus, no type (c) determination takes place here. It is worth noting though that the aforementioned problem has deeper implications. The existence of systems that are able to simulate processes realized in other systems is actually dependent on physical laws realized in our Universe. Without them, no cognitive systems could exist—neither natural nor artificial. The existence of minds is conditioned not only by the local structure of our brains and their closest environment, but also by the global structure of the Universe where brains and their minds have been able to develop.

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