

Wittgenstein and Analytic Philosophy: Essays for P. M. S. Hacker. Edited by Hans-Johann Glock and John Hyman (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009), xxii + 315 pp. £40.00 cloth.

The editors of this collection, both former students of Peter Hacker's, are quite right to begin their Preface by pointing out that he is 'the pre-eminent interpreter of Wittgenstein's philosophy' (p.vii). Their volume includes thirteen essays and a bibliography of Hacker's writings to date. It is very much a *Festschrift*, rather than *Hacker and his Critics*, for although some of the essays take issues with points Hacker has made, all of them are by people who have substantial sympathy with his kind of philosophizing. Eight contributors (Severin Schroeder, Bede Rundle, Stephen Mulhall, John Cottingham, John Dupré, Anthony Kenny, David Wiggins and Jonathan Dancy) are from UK universities, two (Wolfgang Kühne and Joachim Schulte) from continental European universities, two (Hans Oberdiek and John Canfield) from universities in North America, and one (Avishai Margalit) from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I shall comment here, not on all the essays, but only on those which particularly excited my interest.

One of the most fascinating (and the longest in the volume) is Wolfgang Kühne's 'Wittgenstein and Frege's *Logical Investigations*', which begins by detailing the occasions on which these two thinkers met or corresponded. Kühne moves on to consider the philosophical content of their correspondence, including Frege's objection to the *Tractatus* that if things are constituents of facts, some facts will have among their constituents material objects and their parts. Having brushed off this objection at the time, Wittgenstein later came to accept it. He explicitly criticised the first essay in Frege's *Logical Investigations*, '*Der Gedanke*', and Kühne shows that

the third essay therein, '*Gedankengefüge*' ('Compounds of Thoughts'), engages with questions that probably came up in their discussions, and which reappear in the *Tractatus*.

Künne's general line is that the points Wittgenstein made against Frege are unsuccessful, and that his readings of Frege's philosophy of logic are unsympathetic, involving misrepresentations of it. He defends, for example, Frege's claim that pains are 'individual accidents of those who suffer them' (pp.38-9) against Wittgenstein's (and Hacker's) view that our language individuates them only in terms of their qualitative features. The commentary on Frege's *Logical Investigations* that Künne is now writing is much to be anticipated.

Hans Oberdiek's essay 'Wittgenstein's Ethics: Boundaries and Boundary Crossings' is one of the best things on this subject I have encountered. It concerns Wittgenstein's personal ethics, as well as his pronouncements on the subject of ethics in general. Oberdiek brings out the important features of the conception of ethics present in the *Tractatus* and the 'Lecture on Ethics', while also bringing out the mysterious and unsatisfactory quality of that conception. His essay concludes with a consideration of how the insights of the *Philosophical Investigations* and *On Certainty* might have been followed up in moral philosophy, and how they were followed up, in part at least, by Georg Henrik von Wright.

John Cottingham's essay 'The Lessons of Life: Wittgenstein, Religion, and Analytic Philosophy' is very successful in showing the wrongness of superficial relativist and non-cognitivist readings of Wittgenstein's remarks on religion. Cottingham argues that when read carefully, Wittgenstein's remarks contain important insights about the nature of religious allegiance, insights helpful not only in understanding such allegiance, but also in mounting a defence of it. Cottingham is

impressed by Wittgenstein's insistence on the *autonomy* of religious discourse, and by the importance he allots to *practice* in understanding such discourse. Wittgenstein's comment that 'a religious belief could only be (something like) passionately committing oneself to a system of reference' is analysed, and Cottingham argues that what appears to many to be Wittgenstein's commitment to a non-cognitivist view of religion is really more like an insistence on 'the importance of trust and openness in spiritual life' (p.215).

Following Hacker's rather neglected work on Thomas Nagel's famous paper 'What is it Like to be a Bat?', Dupré dismantles the so-called 'hard problem' of consciousness, together with the ideas of 'qualia' and 'zombies'. His essay ends with some important remarks about the non-existence of a sharp distinction between science and philosophy. Dupré remarks at one point that the subject of *attention* 'has received negligible recent philosophical discussion' (p.242). Perhaps Alan R. White's book Attention, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964) isn't recent enough to qualify, but it is nevertheless an important contribution to the study of attention-concepts.

The next essay, by Anthony Kenny, focuses on the first fruits of Hacker's recent collaboration with the neuroscientist Max Bennett, their book *Philosophical Foundations of Neuroscience*, which Kenny rightly deems 'the most significant contribution to philosophy of mind in recent years' (p.253). Kenny contrasts the implicitly neo-Cartesian conceptions of mind and consciousness prevalent within contemporary 'cognitive science' with a more promising one deriving from Aristotle and Wittgenstein. But he concludes by entering some important *caveats* about Wittgenstein's dramatic rejection of parallelisms between the mental and physical.

This is an excellent volume, which should be of interest to all Wittgenstein scholars, as well as to those concerned about the present and future states of analytic

philosophy. It is an appropriate tribute not only to the pre-eminent interpreter of Wittgenstein's philosophy, but also to one of the most important figures in contemporary analytic philosophy.

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