

The evidence Regan introduces on behalf of these assertions is exiguous. In the welter of words the Bloomsberries wrote about themselves and their philosophies of life, Regan cannot seem to find a direct quote demonstrating that it was this argument that they found in Moore. Indeed, much of the evidence he cites has a contrary import: Virginia Woolf has read *Principia* ten times and complains she cannot understand it. Another of Regan's theses is that the Bloomsbury construal of Moore is the correct one. But a careful reading of Chapter 5 shows that Moore argues that the answer to the question, "What kinds of actions ought we to perform?" is that we ought *always* to follow the dictates of common morality. "In short," he writes on page 162 of *P.E.*, "though we may be sure that there are cases where the rule should be broken, we can never know which those cases are, and ought, therefore, never to break it."

There are other problems with the book. The subtitle states that Regan will describe the development of Moore's moral philosophy. But he does not; the focus is almost entirely on the *Principia*. Only a few paragraphs are devoted to Moore's *Ethics* (but not to its content); yet many philosophers regard it as Moore's greatest contribution to moral theory. Again, though not relevant to his theme, Regan discusses at length the relationship between Moore and Wittgenstein. He more or less accepts the conventional view that Wittgenstein did not think much of Moore as a philosopher and the Moore had virtually no influence on Wittgenstein. But in holding this opinion he overlooks, indeed never mentions, Wittgenstein's last work, *On Certainty*, which is a running commentary on four of Moore's greatest papers. The entries in *On Certainty* are dated sequentially, so that we can follow Wittgenstein's growing respect for Moore's defense of "The Common Sense View of the World." One of them (674), dated five days before Wittgenstein died, says: "There are, however, certain types of cases in which I rightly say I cannot be making a mistake, and Moore has given a few examples of such cases."

Yet, despite these flaws and others—such as its confusing, non-linear chronological structure—the book has important strengths. One of these is its depiction of Moore's intellectual development including, of course, his growth as a moral philosopher. The portrait of the *man* Moore that Regan gives us is not only unique in the growing body of Edwardian literature, but it is well done, indeed.

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Walter Watson. *The Architectonics of Meaning. Foundations of the New Pluralism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985. Pp. xiv + 205. Paper \$14.95.

Historians of philosophy believe that beyond its intrinsic interest, understanding past philosophers ("on their own terms") is an important part of any present philosophizing worthy of the name. Yet, pressed to justify these beliefs, it seems insufficient (though true, certainly) to argue that knowing history helps us avoid repeating past errors in the present; and, since the past philosophies we study may differ radically, our historical interests may seem to commit us to historicism or relativism. In any case, the notorious failure of philosophers to agree has been a scandal from the Hellenistic age

to the present. Thus Walter Watson's *The Architectonics of Meaning* is to be welcomed; for it presents an interpretive schema, called 'archic analysis', in which different and apparently conflicting philosophies can be univocally characterized such that apparent disagreements may be seen as consequences of, metaphorically, speaking different languages, rather than saying different things. It is thus, at once, an interpretation of and a contribution to the history of philosophy.

The book's premiss, which Watson describes as "the most significant philosophic discovery of the present century" is "the fact of pluralism, that the truth admits of more than one valid formulation" (ix). The doctrine or vision encountered in a philosophy, novel, poem, work of visual art, or religious text (for all are subject to archic analysis and included among the book's examples) are determined by five conceptual elements that vary in a limited range of ways. First, epochs in the history of thought differ in what they consider the 'primary (or universal) subject matter'; from "ontic" epochs in which being (or things) is the focus of attention, to "epistemic" epochs focussing not on things, but on the processes by which we know them, to "semantic" epochs which focus on "the expression of knowledge in what we do and say" (8). These orientations, like the other variables, are "reciprocally prior"—i.e., each includes and accounts for the others—so that none is true to the exclusion of the others; and the selection of one or another is simply an arbitrary or conventional element in philosophies that, once understood, need not be seen as an incompatibility between them. Ours is a semantic epoch; philosophy, like other arts and sciences, is a matter of texts, languages, and interpretations. Accordingly the four "archic variables" that constitute archic analysis are presented in relation to texts, although they could be presented as aspects of things (being) or thoughts (knowledge).

Perspectives (Chap. 2) are ways in which texts present their own authorship. The *Personal* perspective is looking at whatever one looks at from what is self-consciously one's *own* (individual, national, cultural) point of view. Alternatively, the perspective may be *Objective*, that is, as things are 'in themselves'; or *Diaphanic*, that is, from the point of view of a higher power, such as God; or *Disciplinary*, that is, from a multiplicity of independent and impersonal points of view ('disciplines').

Besides a perspective, every text also has its *Realities* (Chap. 3), the subject matter on which the text has whatever kind of perspective it has (what is being looked at from that point of view). A text's reality might be *Existential*, what exists or appears, phenomena; or *Substrative*, the material 'stuff' that underlies phenomena; or *Noumenal*, what transcends all appearances and existing things (Forms, Noumena, God); or else the subject matter is *Essential*, examining what each individual thing really is (its genus, kind, essence).

Then again, every text is itself ordered or structured and, in turn, orders the real, what it is talking about from its particular perspective, in a particular way. *Methods* (Chap. 3) order parts in wholes, and are *Agonistic* (pragmatic, operational, rhetorical), in which things and texts are ordered in 'whatever way works' (validity consists in success and is determined in conflict); or *Logistic* (compositive, combinatorial), in which the parts determine the whole and there are necessary relations among things or ideas or propositions; or *Dialectic*, in which the whole determines the parts in a self-

transcending way that finds the truth in the whole; or else *Problematic*, in which parts and wholes determine each other reciprocally and we proceed from problems to their solutions in inquiry.

Finally, every text has an aim (purpose, function) that it wants to achieve, which causes the text to function, just as principles cause things or thought to function. *Principles* (Chap. 4) may be *Creative* (arbitrary, actional), originating causes like free will or God; or *Elemental* (conservational, simple), causes that persist through change without themselves changing; or they may be *Comprehensive* principles determining the form or design of the whole, like Heraclitus' *Logos* or the Neoplatonic One; or, finally, principles may be *Reflexive*, causes of themselves, so that, unlike other kinds of principles, functionings are not seen as results of anything other than functioning itself.

Any philosophy may, then, be univocally characterized by its perspective, reality, method, and principle: its "archic profile." Hence, epochal differences apart—and why they do not figure in the archic profile is never explained—there are 256 possible profiles. Four "pure" or archetypal modes—Sophistic, Democritean, Platonic, and Aristotelian—are discussed in Chap. 5, *Archic Analysis*, along with certain metapluralistic questions such as why there is an archic matrix at all.

The Architectonics of Meaning may be found difficult to read because its sometimes Ciceronian prose, which makes its admirable precision possible, also makes unaccustomed intellectual demands on readers; and because of the enormous number and variety of philosophies, arts, sciences, and literatures used to illustrate the archic variables. It will be difficult to accept because, as Watson is well aware, its basic insight—that there is a multiplicity of valid formulations of the truth—runs counter to intuitions and commitments that remain deeply embedded in the spirit of individuals and cultures.

But even if one finds reason to disagree with the pluralist schema proposed here, the book deserves serious and widespread attention by historians of philosophy, who seek to understand the philosophies of the past, and by all philosophers and all practitioners of the liberal arts or human sciences, who, if they are performing their proper function, are trying to solve, in their own way and from their own disciplinary point of view, the problem of interpersonal, international, and cross-cultural understanding on which our continued existence has come to depend.

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