

incorporate our best shot at a correct value structure, such as decision theory? Decision theory can be interpreted as a theory of the structure of value, or 'desirability', which should surely be acceptable to Lewis. It can be extended by adding a deontic principle such as: what ought to be is the most valuable of the alternatives. (It is controversial precisely what is the right principle to add.) The result will be a deontic theory. It will have too much substance to count as a deontic logic, but then Lewis's own system already has more substance than a logic really should.

The Humean papers I have mentioned present aspects of Lewis's general stance on ethics. Most of the other papers in the volume deal with particular issues that have interested Lewis. They display the power of analysis brought to bear on individual problems connected with ethics and society, but do not particularly depend on Lewis's general stance, or contribute towards it. I suppose the two careful, moderate papers on religion could be said to follow Hume's lead in their anti-Christian tendency. Two other papers present an argument in favour of toleration as a sort of tacit treaty, which warring parties find mutually advantageous. There are two papers on the morality of deterrence. This is a subject where philosophy and game theory can come together to analyse a major practical moral problem. One would therefore expect Lewis's writing on this subject to be amongst the best, and indeed it is. The final paper on ethics asks why we should punish attempted crimes less severely than successful ones. The answer is that our practice amounts to a sort of penal lottery, but Lewis does not unreservedly insist that a penal lottery is just.

This is a valuable, varied collection, which illuminates ethics from a distinctive, tightly analytical perspective.

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Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium: Hume's Pathology of Philosophy, by Donald W. Livingston. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. Pp. xix + 433. P/b \$25.00.

When in 1984 *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life* was published it was immediately clear to all interested in Hume that its author, Don Livingston, was an exceptional presence in Hume studies. It was the first time that a study of such scope was attempted of Hume's philosophical, historical and critical output; and Livingston was equally powerful when dealing with Hume's most 'abstruse' metaphysics, with the most 'sentimental' of his historiography, and with the most 'conversable' of his essays. The book was an extraordinary feat for its depth of insight and erudition, for the combination it presented of philosophical commitment and historiographical sophistication, and for its riches

of striking detailed readings. Much of Livingston's interpretation of Hume was difficult and controversial; but it was also a masterful interpretation. (See for example David Fate Norton's review in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 25:2 (1987): 300–302.) Its guiding idea was the centrality of the notion of common life in Hume's redefinition of rationality, and the book was a detailed exploration of the historical and narrative structure of this reformed rationality. The Hume thus unveiled was not the third, and possibly the greatest of the British empiricists, but a Ciceronian humanist, light-years apart from Locke's natural-law Stoicism and Berkeley's Christian Platonism. Also, he was not a superficial and overambitious, if very clever thinker, but a dead-serious metaphysician and moral philosopher of the very greatest depth and coherence. He was not simply an important figure in Anglo-American philosophy, but an all-round canonical author of works open to a number of different interpretations, appropriated by different philosophical traditions, and cutting straight across the divide between analytic and continental philosophies. He was not a devious and inaccurate, if elegant philosophical writer, but a dialectical philosopher experimenting with philosophical genres. And he was a deeply conservative political and historical thinker. Fifteen years later, Livingston offers to the public his second appropriation of Hume and Humean philosophy, showing how Hume's work explores the dialectic between custom and reflection. Livingston's Hume writes a natural history of philosophical consciousness which is still of tremendous philosophical and practical importance to us. The book as a whole is, in fact, an impassioned advocacy of Humean (true) philosophy as a 'conversation of mankind'. It combines philosophy and history of philosophy more deliberately than *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life*, offering a set of 'Humean Reflections' followed by one of 'Humean Intimations'. The result is another extraordinary book.

In the early 1690s, when starting to make plans for the *Historical and Critical Dictionary*, the French exile Pierre Bayle, in Holland to escape religious persecution, first thought of putting together a dictionary of errors and false opinions. In this way he was proposing to make a particularly useful contribution to the Republic of Letters, since such a work would undoubtedly be a most efficient tool for the quicker abolition of the errors and false opinions listed in its pages (see A. Grafton, *The Footnote. A Curious History* London, 1997, pp. 192–5). Livingston now presents Hume as belonging to the very same tradition. For a start, his Hume is not an empiricist: like Bayle himself, Cicero, and Montaigne, he is a sceptic. His philosophy is a style of life, not just a mode of enquiry (for a splendid discussion of scepticism as a style of life see M. Burnyeat, 'The sceptic in his place and time', in R. H. Popkin and C. B. Schmitt (eds.), *Scepticism from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, Wiesbaden, 1987, pp. 13–43). The myth of an empiricist Hume is, according to Livingston, the result of modern philosophy's obsession with epistemology. In fact Hume's scepticism is the product of a pre-industrial-revolution culture, and is very much at odds with 'empiricism' in our sense, which is a late-nineteenth-cen-

ture epistemology corresponding to the ideology of progress and the economic reality of massive transformations brought about by the industrial revolution. Again like Bayle, Hume is interested in errors and false opinions. Indeed the crucial point of Book 1 of the *Treatise* is the distinction between the true and the false philosophies, and the mapping of the modes of false philosophy. This is according to Livingston the message of Part 4, 'Of scepticism and the other systems of philosophy', which, as its title suggests, aims at establishing the nature of scepticism, the true philosophy, and at highlighting its difference from the other philosophies, the false ones. It is the most important part of the *Treatise*, Book 1. In its sections Hume is at the same time carrying out first-order philosophical investigations—that is, investigations trying to find answers to such questions as 'how is it possible to perceive physical things?', or 'what constitutes our personal identity?'—and a second-order investigation, the quintessentially philosophical one trying to find an answer to the reflexive question: 'what is philosophy?' For example, in 'The scepticism with regard to the senses' Hume 'does not argue that vulgar realism is true, but only that it is believed and presupposed. Theories of perception are theories about the world, whereas Hume's insight is a thesis about self-knowledge' (p. 82). He is passing through total Pyrrhonian doubt, and—as is clear enough throughout Part 4, and unmistakable in its Conclusion—is learning how to live with the defeat of reason by surrendering all validating power which reason was trying to claim for itself to custom and the community to which he belongs. The introspective phenomenological studies carried out in Part 4 are the necessary prelude to 'mitigated scepticism', that is, to the recovery of the 'magnificent and radiant order of participation in custom' (p. 37) achieved by the true philosopher. So, to take again the example of 'The scepticism with regard to the senses', the acknowledgment at the end of the section that despite all our philosophical arguments we do keep believing in the existence of an internal and of an external world is, rather than an ontological theory, 'the recognition, through dialectical self-reflection, of a necessary mode of participation in common life' (p. 82).

So in Part 4 Hume is both philosophising and observing himself philosophise, in an attempt to assess what can count as good philosophy (that is, as a good style of life). We should read these sections as he wrote them—with bifocals, as Livingston puts it, that is, keeping an eye both on the philosophical text and on the metaphilosophical sub-text. The philosophical text presents 'a cavalcade of philosophical folly' (p. 15), in which we see reason subverting itself over and again; the metaphilosophical sub-text presents the stages through which the reconciled view of the true philosopher takes shape. Before and after the false philosophies and the true one there is 'the radiant world of unreflectively received common life' (p. 8). The truth of true philosophy lies in the deliberate, reflective, in short philosophical, recovery of that radiance, a fullness of intellectual being which is only possible to those who go through the radical doubts of Pyrrhonian scepticism, that is, in concrete terms, through

the hell of philosophical melancholy and delirium. His passion for philosophy did cost Hume a nervous breakdown before the achievement of the true philosopher's moderate scepticism. But at that point he was capable of acknowledging his tie to and rootedness in common life and custom—as he memorably put it, he was a philosopher who amidst all his philosophy still was a man, or, to use the words of his cousin Reverend John Home, the 'first of sages', 'To whom the gods their richest gifts impart,/ The soundest judgment and the soundest heart' (p. 155).

Philosophical melancholy and delirium are the result of what Livingston calls 'heroic' philosophising. Livingston characterizes philosophical heroism in detail on the basis of three principles constituting the philosopher's 'view from nowhere': philosophy is supposed to give us the ultimate answers about reality; it is supposed to be a self-justifying, entirely free and autonomous enterprise; and has a vocation to rule, since its truths are absolute. These are the principles of ultimacy, autonomy and dominion. The true philosopher will discover that they are incompatible with human nature itself: in particular, the Humean true philosopher must abandon the principle of autonomy of rationality in favour of the principle of autonomy of custom. On this basis Livingston proceeds to sketch the virtues of the Humean true philosopher. These include humility, piety, folly, eloquence, greatness of mind, and extensive benevolence (pp. 36 ff.). It goes without saying that this Hume is not entirely compatible with the usual Hume. Of course nobody could really quarrel with, say, either the eloquence or the extensive benevolence. Hume was, after all, both a theorist of sympathy and 'le bon David', a jolly and humane person; and he was an intellectual whose interest in and admiration for ancient eloquence is well known, and a writer whose persuasive abilities are still admired. Greatness of mind also seems suitable to the author of *My Own Life* and of the *History of England*. Folly is unexpected: putting the Humean philosopher in the tradition of Erasmus and Montaigne is an attractive idea, if not at all an obvious one (made even less obvious by the inclusion, in the same tradition, of St Paul's doctrine of the foolishness of Christianity and Tertullian's *credo quia absurdum*, p. 40). But it is easy to imagine at least some perplexity at the inclusion of humility and piety. And yet, Livingston's case for a pious, and indeed for a theistic Hume is tightly and extensively argued, with a lot of textual evidence and with a historiographical insightfulness which are more than enough to make one at least pause and think very hard.

Most of Livingston's book is devoted to the cavalcade, the 'bestiary' of false philosophies: the heroic philosopher, alienated from custom and thrown upon himself as his own guide, goes through the passions of disdain, resentment, and self-disgust and loneliness, corresponding to the ascetic (Diogenes), the revolutionary (Descartes, Marx), and the guilty (Rousseau) modes of philosophy. This false philosophical consciousness lives in a dialectically inverted world: 'Thales thought that all is really water; Hobbes, that benevolence is really self-love; Berkeley, that to be is to be perceived; Proudhon, that property

is theft; Rousseau, that man in civil society is born free but everywhere in chains; Marx, that all history is class struggle; Quine, that to be is to be the value of a bound variable' (p. 29). The whole history of philosophy is revisited in the Humean perspective, so that the dialectics between true and false philosophy 'is used to illuminate the tradition, and the tradition is shown to exemplify the dialectic' (p. 81). Classical philosophies are treated by Hume in the essays on the Epicurean, the Stoic, the Platonist and the Sceptic. They are philosophical archetypes of men reflecting about happiness: the Sceptic portrays the perspective of the true philosopher; while the Epicurean, the Stoic and the Platonist all uncover some truth, but by making it ultimate and autonomous and by claiming dominance for it they all end up incarnating forms of the false philosophy. This is the result of what Livingston calls 'the Midas touch', the ability of philosophy to transform the part into the whole, or of a 'philosophical alchemy' which transmutes a practice into its opposite. Similarly the Scholastic philosophers, in their 'moaping seclusion', followed the dictates of their 'appetite for absurdity' (p. 105); and so also modern philosophers—Descartes and Malebranche, Montesquieu, Cudworth and Clarke—pursued their moral rationalism. These are the sources of the egoism of Hobbes and Locke, of Rousseau's 'quackery' made so popular by his eloquence, and, after Hume, of Kant's and his more recent followers' moral rationalism, of the critiques of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, of the revolutionary philosophy of Marx.

After the French Revolution, there is no country which is not 'all scribbled over by philosophy', Livingston says using the words of De Maistre (p. 385): it is the first philosophical age, in which we still live. But it is an age of false philosophies. Today the heroic act of philosophical reflection gives rise to 'the alienated solipsism of Sartrean nausea; the grim self-determining will to power of Nietzsche; the *angst* of Heidegger and the project of waiting for a god to save us; the cynical self-display of Foucault; the alienated ferocity of Marx' (p. 41). Theorists of the end of history such as Francis Fukuyama make one realize that even liberalism has its fundamentalists, while in a Humean perspective the practice of liberty is no more than one of the modes of existence of a very inventive species. Others among our contemporaries belonging to 'Hume's bestiary' include Nietzsche, Derrida and Deleuze, the linguistically oriented reincarnations of (false) Pyrrhonism who rightly deconstruct language but wrongly turn to deconstruct both philosophy and common life itself (p. 399). The ironic mode of life celebrated as the post-modern condition is, in fact, a self-imposed inability to speak of reality (p. 401). Even art show the signs of the pervasiveness of false philosophy in our age: no longer a craft in a tradition and no longer connected with taste, it is in fact a form of heroic philosophical action. In this sense performative artists such as the French feminist Orlan can be seen as reenacting, though for different purposes, the shocking displays of the Cynics (p. 400). The question is, how are we to preserve humanity in the 'tragic condition' of this age of false philosophy? However Hegelian he may

sound, Livingston's Hume does not believe that true philosophy is at the top of a hierarchy of experience, for it cannot be deemed superior to the pre-reflective order of common life. Livingston's final admonition in his Humean natural history of philosophical consciousness is that we leave the figures of the philosophical bestiary to their struggle and proceed to enter the 'calm though obscure regions of true philosophy. The theoretical limits of this life are marked out by "The Sceptic", but its soul is animated by practical engagements of "The Stoic"' (p. 407).

It is difficult to combine philosophy and history of ideas—'But in the end, both things must be done', Livingston announces at the outset. And in the book he does proceed to do so with impressive authority. He is helped by being congenially minded with Hume; in any case, he is as confident and uncompromising as a classic philosopher. The modes and purpose of his appropriation may or may not be shared by his readers: some may find it alienating or politically objectionable; some will find his deliberately non-analytic, highly metaphorical style eccentric; and, among the scholars, some will doubtless notice that on several occasions it would be good to know the actual target of Hume's polemic before proceeding to later instances of the types of false philosopher to whom Hume objects. Be this as it may, Livingston's Hume makes very good historical sense; and on the whole this is a strange and, in its kind, an imposing work.

By the time he was thirty, Livingston's Hume had already had his conclusive *Aufhebung*; and Livingston's reading of Hume is, in a sense, optimistic, in that it states loudly and clearly that philosophy, a Humean true philosophy, can still make a difference to our life and to our civilisation. Nevertheless, there is a black streak of pessimism in all this. Humean philosophy contains the suggestion that nature will always triumph over false philosophy: 'common life is still primordial', as Livingston puts it (p. 405). But Dürer's beautiful obscure allegory of *Melancholia*, on the cover, sets the tone of the whole reading experience. By the end of the book it would be hard not to think of Dürer's other most famous allegory, *The Four Knights of the Apocalypse*: for Livingston's descriptions of the horrors of the false philosophies and of their practical impact around us are as frightening as they are memorable. It made me think of *It's a Wonderful Life*: in the end all is well, Jimmy Stewart is restored to existence and to the affection of his family and neighbourhood. In the last scene everybody is singing in front of the Christmas tree, and from the ring of a silver bell we are also informed that Clarence, the wingless guardian angel, did get his wings, as he should since he deserved them so well. But the memory lingers of another world, the one which the sentimental and ultra-optimistic director Frank Capra presented to us as a rapid cavalcade of poignant film-noir vignettes, the world devoid of Jimmy Stewart—that American provincial town filled with screaming police sirens, drunken prostitutes and neon-lit strip clubs.

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Place and Experience: a Philosophical Topography, by Jeff E. Malpas.
 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. Pp. vii + 218. H/b £35.00,
 \$54.95.

The central thesis of this book is that ‘subjectivity is necessarily embedded in place’, (p. 176) that is, that existence as any kind of self-conscious subject at all is only possible at or in a place (pp. 14–17). ‘Place’ is no mere spatiotemporal region occupied by various spatiotemporally distributed entities; it is ‘an open and yet bounded realm within which the things of the world can appear and within which events can “take place”’ (p. 33; see also p. 18 and p. 170). At least very often, this seems to mean that ‘place’ is a spatiotemporal region which is ‘open’ (in that it has both flexible boundaries and possibilities of containment) yet ‘bounded by’ (in the sense that it is individuated in terms of) certain concrete, spatiotemporally organised and interconnected ‘forms of life’ which ‘take place’ within it. Place in the rich sense is thus at least very often the site of, and spatial background to, some social activity or practice in which subjects interact with objects and other subjects spatiotemporally distributed around them (see p. 185). (Admittedly, this reading would exclude landscapes pure and simple, which Malpas regards as ‘places’ — see, for example, p. 7.)

Three very strong claims stand out as together tying the possibility of self, thought and experience to ‘place’ in some rich sense. Chapters three, four and five ultimately conclude (1) that to be a self-conscious subject is to be a *locus of agency*, hence to exist as acting intentionally upon entities in a common continuum whose topological properties must be more or less like those of the space we actually live in. Chapter six then goes on to argue (2) that to be a self-conscious subject one must stand in interaction not just with spatiotemporal objects *simpliciter*, but also more specifically with those spatiotemporal objects which are other (like-minded and like-bodied) subjects given to one in experience. For an object existing in objective space is essentially something intersubjectively available. So actual experience of, and interaction with, other subjects is required in order for one to grasp what it is to be an object existing in objective space. It thus itself a pre-condition of that embodied, spatialised agency which previous chapters have ostensibly demonstrated to be a pre-condition of all thought and experience.

Chapter seven exploits Georges Poulet’s interpretation of Proust’s *Remembrance of Things Past* in order to show that this work is driven by an insight which Malpas calls ‘Proust’s Principle’ (p. 14, p. 176 and elsewhere). This is the