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Inheritance and Originality: Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Kierkegaard, by Stephen Mulhall. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001. Pp. xi + 448. H/b £40.00.

Stephen Mulhall's *Inheritance and Originality: Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Kierkegaard* operates at a number of levels. It considers the imperatives of modernist philosophy, how these imperatives are manifested in particular works by Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Kierkegaard, and, ultimately, how they can be traced back to theological concerns. By Mulhall's own lights, however, this macro-level characterization is, while not inaccurate, misleading. This is because a modernist approach to philosophy is nothing if not self-reflective. By perpetually calling into question the background conditions that inform the writing and reading of a philosophical work, as well as the internal dynamics of its construction, the modernist conception of philosophy also perpetually calls into question the philosophical work's very meaning, which is produced by the ceaseless interplay of destruction and reconstruction. The modernist conception of philosophy, in sum, cannot abide hard and fast characterizations of a text as a whole. And this is especially so for Mulhall, who sees this book, as well as the works of Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Kierkegaard that it considers, as essentially therapeutic in nature. Accordingly, if, as Mulhall declares, it is necessary to go beyond the 'misunderstanding' that there is some privileged approach to a book, for 'that places us entirely outside the text, and makes the text entirely opaque to us' (p. 24), it is also necessary to follow discreetly the movement of the particulars that constitute the text to appreciate its conclusions fully.

Inasmuch as the nature of beginnings is an explicit theme in the modernist conception of philosophy, Mulhall's introduction, 'Modernist Origins: Reading Stanley Cavell's *The Claim of Reason*', is critical. Straightaway, it plumbs the beginning of Cavell's ground-breaking work to discern how modernist works, which are expressly designed to effect ruptures with philosophical conventions, can communicate with a reader who is steeped in those conventions. The dilemma is that there is not even a given set of philosophical problems through which a disoriented reader might reorient himself, for what constitutes a philosophical problem is itself a problem (p. 8). Thus, Mulhall contends, the writer bears the responsibility of giving the reader enough at the outset to continue profitably, at which point 'a text can teach its readers how to read it because the mutual implication and relative autonomy of parts and wholes creates a play of meaning that invites initial interpretation and can

reward progressively deeper readings' (p. 24). It is with an emphasis upon beginnings, therefore, that he approaches the works of Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Kierkegaard that form the parts of the whole that is his own book.

This emphasis on beginnings is especially striking in Mulhall's analyses of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Because they properly conceive of philosophy as 'essentially responsive and dialogical' (p. 29), he contends, Wittgenstein and Heidegger begin their works with quotations, albeit unlikely ones. Bypassing Frege and Russell, Wittgenstein starts with remarks by Augustine concerning his initiation into language, while Heidegger, bypassing his predecessors from Hegel through Husserl, opens with comments from Plato's *Sophist*. Of course, their motivations differ, since Wittgenstein is pointing to an early misconception of the relationship between language and the world that held sway even in the *Tractatus* (p. 36), namely, the picture theory of meaning, while Heidegger seeks to recover what he takes to be a genuine conception of philosophy that has been buried beneath the metaphysical tradition. Still, implicitly for Mulhall, by strategically bypassing the development of philosophy in their immediate predecessors, Wittgenstein and Heidegger can both more effectively offer 'a paradigm to end all theoretical paradigms' (p. 43; see also pp. 191–6), and more clearly unveil philosophy's theological debts. But as to the first point—I shall return to the second later—this compromises, at least in Heidegger's case, Mulhall's contention that philosophy is 'essentially responsive and dialogical'. One must work through the problems as they are inherited from one's predecessors, especially if, as Mulhall will argue, these problems themselves must be understood as reflecting a particular form of life.

The question of beginnings aside, it is in Mulhall's textual analyses of these works that his book especially shines. His readings are exceedingly close and sensitive, and more than repay the not insubstantial demands that they place upon the reader. From the outset, one gets the sense from Mulhall that there are still new and important insights to be reaped by freshly reconsidering works that have already received a huge amount of attention, and throughout the book he delivers on this promise. This makes it a real pleasure to read.

Mulhall's own distinctive treatment of Wittgenstein resides in his thoroughgoing emphasis upon the irreducibly socio-historical nature of all proper understandings of language: 'language is essentially historical ... to see language aright is to see that it must be viewed synchronically and diachronically at one and the same time' (p. 70). And this contention, he tacitly asserts, puts to rest the logical positivists' distinction between sense and nonsense: 'nonsensicality occurs not because we violate established criteria for the use of words, but because we have not yet established criteria for their use in the relevant context' (p. 68). This would seem to open the door to the speculative moment that logical positivism sought to shut in its outright rejection of Hegel (a door that Mulhall himself will happily step through with his theological commit-

ments). Moreover, Mulhall relies on this interpretation of Wittgenstein's *Investigations* to resolve contentious issues in the secondary literature. Thus, in response to Bede Rundle's claim that concepts cannot univocally apply to items with no common features, and thus cannot be squared with the notion of a 'family resemblance', Mulhall, stressing the need to 'see the diachronic in the synchronic', states that it is 'difficult to think of a more appropriate figure than that of a family to capture Wittgenstein's sense of the embeddedness of language in time and worldly circumstance, its rootedness in the complex interplay between nature and culture, its dependence upon the bedrock of natural history' (pp. 85–6). So too, in examining Baker and Hacker's dispute with Malcolm over rule-following—namely, the question of the relationship between a rule and its extension, and, concomitantly, the question of whether it is possible to have an isolated rule-follower—Mulhall contends that both sides miss the point because they fail to recognize that the notion of following a rule and the particulars of a rich form of life with rules are not two different things. More precisely, he claims, the clash between Baker and Hacker's intuitionism and Malcolm's decisionism as to rule extension reflects a false dispute, for both sides, relying upon addition as an exemplar of rule extension, 'wrongly see no essential difference between non-mathematical and mathematical cases' (p. 129). And moreover, Mulhall asserts, for Wittgenstein mathematics is itself an illicit subliming of the ordinary that does not take into consideration the fact that 'even mathematical series have to be produced, exist only in their specific embeddedness in human culture, and are grounded upon shared natural reactions' (p. 149). Thus, as to the isolated rule-follower, there is no basis for saying whether she is or is not following a rule, since there is no basis for saying what role her behaviours play in her form of life.

In contrast to his consideration of Wittgenstein, Mulhall's emphasis in his consideration of Heidegger is made far more explicit: his claim is that, contrary to the emphasis of his own earlier work, Heidegger's primary concern was to address satisfactorily 'the challenge of scepticism' (p. 194). At first blush, this is an unremarkable, albeit exaggerated, claim. It is unremarkable in so far as the problem of scepticism, at least in its modern formulation, ostensibly arises from the dualisms inherent within the Cartesian worldview, which Heidegger took to be predominant and in need of supplanting; yet it is exaggerated in so far as he seems to have bigger fish to fry, and scepticism, based upon a putatively misguided correspondence theory of truth, is merely attendant to these larger concerns. Mulhall acknowledges this point when he contends that the connection between Heidegger's concepts of worldliness (that is, the socially constituted horizon within which entities must first appear before they can be taken as objects for examination) and discourse 'can seem enough taken on its own to determine Heidegger's concluding response to scepticism', namely, that it is not even 'coherently storable' (pp. 237–8). Still, Mulhall suggests, what he previously missed were the existential concerns that motivated Heidegger's analysis of the Cartesian worldview, which reflects a 'sceptical anx-

xiety' that is itself only a manifestation of a more thoroughgoing existential anxiety resulting from the sceptic's 'lostness to herself' (p. 242). Accordingly, the 'inauthenticity' of the epistemic estrangement characteristic of sceptical anxiety would seem to be at odds with Heidegger's depiction of anxiety, more generally, which he privileges as the mood that opens up the possibility of a more 'authentic' comportment toward Being. Yet crucially, Mulhall argues, sceptical anxiety is the very stuff from which a more 'authentically sceptical phenomenology' arises. To overcome the 'average everydayness' of the inauthentic 'they-self' requires not that scepticism be abandoned outright, but that it overcome itself immanently: it must 'be sceptical about its own scepticism' (p. 265). Mulhall's analysis here is of a very high order. And, more broadly, beyond his admirable explication of many of the other basic ideas in *Being and Time*, he offers a number of other meticulous and highly illuminating analyses. Mulhall's discussion of what he calls Heidegger's 'deconstruction' of Kant's last ditch effort to retain the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity, which he sees as reflecting a conflation of the ontic and ontological, is especially noteworthy in this regard (see pp. 252–5).

The devil is not in this book's details but in its one overarching substantive theme, namely, the ultimate indebtedness of these philosophers' concerns, if not the concerns of philosophy itself, to theological concerns. At its best (which is most of the time), the book, with Mulhall's gentle hand, avoids didacticism, which is in keeping with his modernist aspirations. But this larger theological theme, and the attempt to link Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Kierkegaard in its thrall, is contrived. One acutely feels this in the closing passages of parts one and two, which are specially dedicated to this task. More specifically, although one can grant that Wittgenstein's desire to clarify our relationship to language is therapeutic in nature, thereby suggesting that we are in some sense linguistically 'fallen', Mulhall's inference that this account is structurally analogous to Christian notions of sin and redemption is a stretch. Mulhall is in a better position to give this argument a run for its money with Heidegger, who invites the analogy by revamping such biblical notions as 'fall-eness', 'conscience', and 'guilt', and he works hard to do so. Contrary to the preponderance of the secondary literature, he argues, Heidegger does not deny 'the body' (read: 'the sinful temptations of human animality'), but sees it as something to be both incorporated and transcended (pp. 419–28). But even here the analogy breaks down if pushed too hard. As Mulhall himself implicitly acknowledges, although Heidegger's idea that human existence is a being-towards-death can be squared with the Christian problematic of sin and redemption, in denying that another 'can die in our place, can atone for us' (p. 432), he is wholly at odds with it.

Furthermore, although he seeks to explicate faithfully Kierkegaard's (Lutheran-inspired) theological commitments, I believe that Mulhall ultimately tends to interpret Kierkegaard along the lines of his own (Catholic-inspired) theological commitments. Kierkegaard himself surely opens the door

to this possibility by writing under a pseudonym to undermine his own authority, and thus let the reader come to the religious of her own accord. Still, some of Mulhall's interpretations are beyond the pale of what can properly be attributed to Kierkegaard. For instance, Kierkegaard is well known for focusing his own investigation on the vertical relation to God, thus prompting Louis Mackey to refer to 'the loss of the world' in Kierkegaard's ethics. And, in his discussion of a 'teleological suspension of the ethical' (the story of Abraham) in *Fear and Trembling*, Kierkegaard emphasizes that the religious and the ethical, with its grounding in the profane Hegelian world, ultimately part company. But this parting runs afoul of Mulhall's philosophical and theological commitments. In discussing Wittgenstein, Mulhall, with clear admiration, frequently points out that what is decisive in Wittgenstein is his rotation of the 'axis of investigation' from the vertical to the horizontal (see, for example, pp. 92, 101, 104, 106, 120–1, and 138). And, correlatively, his own theological commitments are grounded in the obligation to empathize with our neighbour's victimization (p. 436). This leads Mulhall, in my opinion, to attribute arguments to Kierkegaard that, although inspired, are not Kierkegaard's. By rejecting the possibility of a conflict between religious and ethical imperatives (pp. 381–7), he tames Kierkegaard, and inadvertently moves him toward certain humanistic interpretations of Hegel.

And indeed, in the final analysis, this reflects the other concern that I have with this book. Although Kierkegaard was in no small part motivated by an anti-Hegelian animus and Heidegger's hermeneutics owe much to Hegel's thought, Hegel receives very little attention. Indeed, even in Mulhall's consideration of Wittgenstein—specifically, Wittgenstein's claim that indexicals such as 'this' and 'that' are anything but the most 'genuine names' (p. 93)—the discussion cries out for a reference to the first 'form of consciousness' in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 'sense-certainty', in which Hegel not only makes the very same point, but goes on to rebut anticipatorily the views that Wittgenstein's teacher, Russell, will proffer more than a century later. It seems that even for those analytically trained philosophers who are open to the continental tradition, Hegel (notwithstanding Heidegger's ties to Nazism and equally obscure writing style) remains a blind spot. In any case, by taming Kierkegaard, Mulhall arguably makes his thought amenable to Hegel's last movement in the *Phenomenology*, in which philosophy sublates religion. Or, put differently, Kierkegaard's Christian moment is pantheistically revived in the ethical community (see p. 436). But for Kierkegaard, who sought to make good the 'otherness' of God and His imperatives, this was Hegel's chief affront.

All things considered, however, there is much to consider in this book. It is rigorously argued, and opens up Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Kierkegaard in new and interesting ways.

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Reference and Reflexivity, by John Perry. Stanford: CSLI Publications, 2001. Pp xiii + 208. H/b \$55.00, P/b \$19.50.

Indexical expressions, that is, personal pronouns ('my', 'you', 'she', 'his', 'we', ...), demonstrative pronouns ('this', 'that'), compound demonstratives ('this table', 'that woman near the window', ...), adverbs ('today', 'yesterday', 'now', 'here', ...), adjectives ('actual' and 'present'), possessive adjectives ('my pen', 'their house', ...) have been at the centre of some recent studies in philosophy of language. Indexicals also captured the interest of those working within the boundaries of cognitive science, for they play a crucial role when dealing with such puzzling notions as the nature of the self, the nature of perception, the nature of time, cognitive dynamics, and so on. The notion of indexicality is also at the core of Perry's new book. No doubt anyone interested in singular reference and related topics, from the philosopher to the linguist and the cognitive scientist will benefit from reading this book. Perry's contribution cannot be ignored and will set the agenda for some time to come.

In this book, Perry brings together and develops some of the ideas he has unveiled and published in the last few years. He thus explains and expands on the *reflexive–referential* account of singular reference. Among Perry's main contribution in this book we find a careful and well-argued distinction between indexicality and reflexivity; that is, Perry distinguishes between what is said using an utterance with an indexical and the identifying conditions at work when reference gets fixed. The identifying conditions are what a competent speaker grasps and masters when s/he uses/hears a referential expression. To be the referent of an indexical expression and thus the object of discourse a given object/individual must satisfy the identifying conditions associated with the utterance of the indexical. When, for instance, one hears someone saying, 'I am a philosopher' without knowing who actually spoke, one comes to understand that the speaker of the utterance is a philosopher. The referent must be the speaker; this is the condition the referent must satisfy. If the utterance is produced by John, then John says that he is a philosopher and expresses a proposition having himself as a constituent. John does not say that the speaker of the utterance is a philosopher. If, addressing John, one says, 'You are a philosopher', one expresses the very same proposition: that John is a philosopher. The condition John must satisfy to be the referent of 'you' is that he is the addressee. This identifying condition differs from the one John satisfies when he says 'I'.

Proper names are not indexicals. Nevertheless, the same distinction holds. Utterances of proper names rest on the reflexive–referential distinction as well. When one uses a proper name, such as 'John Perry', one exploits a given convention; that is, one exploits the fact that there is a conventional link between