

the interpretations likely to open new metaphysical frontiers for political theory (172). This book is steeped in the Anglo-American debates about Hegel, and its strengths are there. But other thinkers and traditions, no less invested in the dialectic, assume an altogether different attitude toward the system and its author. For instance, Goodfield says nothing with respect to a tradition of radical political thought that finds footing in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. I wondered how a metaphysical reading of Hegel's political philosophy relates to the split between Right and Left Hegelians—or if we are led to rethink this distinction altogether. Goodfield does turn briefly in conclusion to how his approach allows us to transcend the Anglo-American and Continental divide in contemporary philosophy, though it's also true that everything about the preceding pages seems to reinforce it.

Hegel and the Metaphysical Frontiers of Political Theory is part of a growing body of Hegel scholarship that speaks for the metaphysics of the system. Political theorists will especially appreciate Goodfield's focus on political concepts and questions, where a speculative procedure comes back down to Earth. This reader was especially grateful for the occasion to rethink Hegel *contra* political science.

Social Inquiry after Wittgenstein and Kuhn. Leaving Everything as It Is. By John G. Gunnell. New York: Columbia

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— Aletta Norval, *University of Essex*

Social Inquiry after Wittgenstein and Kuhn seeks to elucidate the conception of “philosophy as a form of social inquiry” that marks Thomas Kuhn's approach to the philosophy of science, as well as the writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein after 1930. In so doing, the aim is to throw light on social inquiry as an interpretive endeavour that is characterised by a distinctive practical and cognitive relationship to its subject matter. Gunnell argues that “Wittgensteinian philosophy constitutes the basis of a theory and method of social inquiry and that Kuhn's account of transformations in natural science is an example of the kind of investigation that Wittgenstein's philosophy entailed and anticipated” (p. 2). The main body of the text traces out these key thematics in Wittgenstein's work, focusing both on the shadow he casts on social theory, noting in particular the relevance of his arguments against mentalism and naturalism. Gunnell's reading, written against the background of the spectre of relativism and the ways in which contemporary social theory in its return to naturalism (particularly as manifested in cognitive neuroscience and socio-biology today) seeks to overcome it, problematizes philosophy's anxiety about its capacity to address matters of truth, justice and so on in a way that ‘transcends the criteria indigenous to the practices that constitute its object of inquiry.’ (pp. 3–4).

For Gunnell, mentalism, which is rejected by both Kuhn and Wittgenstein, is understood as the doctrine that holds that meaning resides in the world of the mind (p. 7) and that language and concepts “mediate” between thought and the world in the writings of contemporary thinkers such as Taylor, Grice, Chomsky, Pinker, Searle and Skinner, amongst others. From this perspective, the task of textual interpretation is “a matter of recovering the mental state of an author, whether this is to be accomplished by deciphering the meaning behind the words of a text or by closing the context in which the text was produced” (p. 67). In contrast to mentalist conceptions, Gunnell draws out Wittgenstein's rejection of the bifurcation of thought and language; for Wittgenstein, meaning no more comes from the mind than from a correlation with objects (p. 105). The fact that world and language are internally related means that it is impossible to separate linguistic meanings from the activities in which they are manifest (p. 97). This is also what lies at the core of Wittgenstein's insistence on the vision of social science as an interpretive endeavour, where the focus is not on facts of nature, but on conventions and their interpretation (p. 150).

Here we come to the core of Gunnell's reading, namely the focus on “how the language of the interpreter can provide an account of the conventions that are being interpreted” (p. 152). Overcoming the “craving for generality” is at the heart of this approach; against emulating the natural sciences and its “disdain for the particular,” Gunnell articulates Wittgenstein's approach as one that reconciles “the dual demands of particularity and generality,” resisting the tendency to reify the means of representation and what is being represented (p. 153). Gunnell here emphasizes that the world and objects of social inquiry are conceptually autonomous. In a manner similar to Kuhn, the focus is on understanding and interpreting (social) phenomena. The task of philosophy is not to represent the world (based upon a correspondence theory of truth), but to clarify and represent the grammar in which the world is manifest (p. 36). This mapping assumes the autonomy of what is mapped (p. 37) and seeks to achieve clarity. Similarly on this account, social inquiry assumes the autonomy of the conventions that are constitutive of social objects, and seeks to interpret them against an inherited background in such a manner that justice is done to “the indigenous meanings of social practices” (p. 230).

Gunnell focuses explicitly and rightly on the question “is this all there is?” In what sense does a Wittgensteinian approach “leave everything as it is?” Questioning the authoritative role of the philosopher, as well as the social scientist, to make judgements based on principles that surpass all contexts—some transcendental basis for judgment—does not, for Wittgenstein and for Kuhn, imply that “one view of the world is as valid as another” (p. 51).

Wittgenstein clearly did not wish to leave philosophy as it was (p. 57), and the same holds, Gunnell argues, for social inquiry. While Wittgenstein's work has implications for dealing with a variety of substantive issues, Gunnell argues that he was ambivalent about whether or not his work could or should have a practical effect (p. 210). Gunnell does argue throughout the text that Wittgenstein's work puts into question "philosophical absolutism" insofar as it involves finding reasons that "stand outside of any particular situation or conception of the world" (p. 227). For the same reasons, a Wittgensteinian approach would be critical of what Gunnell calls "a democratic metaphysics" as evident in democratic theory of the kind espoused by Habermas, who holds onto the idea that the social theorist "stands above or apart from the democratic conversation and provides the terms in which it should be conducted" (p. 227).

To further deepen these crucial insights, Gunnell would have done well to draw on the writings of other Wittgenstein-inspired political theorists such as Michael Freedman, James Tully and indeed, Quentin Skinner, who do "retrench" this idea of the social theorist and public intellectual as "standing outside of the democratic conversation." Together with other political theorists such as Glynos and Howarth, who have sought in recent years to explore in more detail the forms that social inquiry after Wittgenstein and Kuhn may take, each of these writers provides us with critical tools with which to conduct social inquiry. Freedman's morphological account of political ideologies, Skinner's genealogical accounts of liberty before liberalism together with his methodological writings (which are not mentalist in character), Tully's public philosophy in a new key, and Glynos and Howarth's social logics approach are all exemplars of what social inquiry after Wittgenstein and Kuhn looks like. Attention to these writings would have considerably enriched Gunnell's account of the possibilities opened up by a Wittgensteinian approach for each of these theorists seek to enact the approaches they outline, providing contemporary social and political exemplars of the work that Kuhn does for Gunnell in this text.

Thomas Paine and the Idea of Human Rights. By Robert Lamb. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 217p. \$99.
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— Thomas W. Merrill, *American University*

This book makes the case for Thomas Paine's importance not just as a political pamphleteer, but as a thinker with a distinctive and coherent political philosophy. It also makes a methodological case (in Chapter 1) against the contextualism of Quentin Skinner, and for studying the texts of political theory as "works of political philosophy speaking across time to perennial problems." The

latter—the more important thesis for the self-understanding of political theory as a subfield—is a welcome contribution to a conversation that often seems stuck in skirmishes of many decades past. Robert Lamb suggests, reasonably enough, that contextualists tend to conclude from the (true) statement that we human beings do not have metaphysical insight into "eternal problems" that all human actions and beliefs are irretrievably entangled in historical particularity. But this is a false inference, Lamb says: There may be, and in fact are, problems that continually recur in human experience across historical epochs. We do not know that these problems are eternal; all we know is that we have not yet been able to avoid them. And if some earlier thinker has something to say to teach us or at least us make us think more clearly about those problems, then obviously we would do well to listen. Lamb's point is a sensible one that political theorists would do well to heed. It says all that needs to be said in order to justify the continuing relevance of the history of political thought.

Lamb takes Paine to be primarily a moral theorist—someone who starts from normative foundations from which he or she proceeds to deduce practical consequences. Thus Lamb's substantive thesis is that Paine is a liberal theorist who takes human equality and natural rights as axiomatic truths. Lamb claims that Paine's liberalism is distinguishable from the liberalism of more frequently read natural rights or contractarian theorists such as Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. Indeed, Paine, rather than any of those theorists, deserves the honor of being called "the progenitor of our modern understanding of natural rights." In the ensuing chapters Lamb certainly shows that Paine's positions are closer to contemporary liberals like Rawls than are the other three. Lamb argues that Paine has a strong commitment to inalienable moral rights based on a fundamental human equality (Chapter 2); that that commitment leads to a strong preference for representative democracy (Chapter 3); that Paine does not simply hold a Lockean or libertarian commitment to the protection of private property, but is also committed to economic or welfare rights, and so to some version of distributive justice in the contemporary sense (Chapter 4); that Paine is a committed cosmopolitan in the sense that natural rights offer a universal standard for political judgment, although this does not necessarily translate into a duty or even a right of intervention on the part of liberal states in the affairs of non-liberal states (Chapter 5); and finally, that Paine's moral and political egalitarianism is supported by his natural theology (Chapter 6). Lamb's case for the unity and coherence of Paine's thought is largely successful, as is his portrayal of Paine's similarity to today's liberalism.

Yet Lamb's choice to read Paine as a moral theorist is not without its drawbacks, such that a partisan of context and circumstance might have reasonable objections. For one thing, Lamb's approach tends to take much of the drama out of Paine's thought—drama necessarily