find in this volume a series of encounters with a philosopher who has that all too rare ability to make both original and profound philosophy both accessible and enjoyable. They will emerge from these encounters with a sense of the general importance of philosophical reflection on the aesthetic and a very particular sense of what a philosopher, of any persuasion, is, or ought to be.

It is a principal conclusion of the opening chapter, which gives the collection its title, that a distinctive mark of aesthetic pleasure is the fact we take pleasure, not just in the object itself, but also in our admiration for the object. Just such a pleasure will be occasioned by this admirable volume. Marvelous indeed.

**Ian Ground**

*Truth, etc.*
By Jonathan Barnes
Clarendon Press, 2007
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'The pages of this book make no contribution to logic or to philosophy.' Thus writes the author of *Truth, etc*. An immediate resultant thought, for dedicated logicians and philosophers, may be that reading the pages – pages in excess of five hundred in number – would, at best, pass the time. That response is open, of course, to Samuel Beckett's quip, 'Time would have passed anyway.'

*Truth, etc*. readily affords a means for passing the time; but also for much, much more. In particular, the 'much more' includes encountering ancient reflections on whether the truth of truths should often be timed, the truths passing the time with changing truth values. In general, the 'much more' includes delighting in Barnes' marvelous medley and erudite eclecticism concerning philosophical logic, as approached by logicians and philosophers running from the fourth century BC, on and off, to the sixth century AD. The logic and philosophy is lightened, and enlightened, with the author's splendid lightness of touch, of word and of style, which takes us through quips, tales and insights.

We have grown to expect entertaining enlightenment from Barnes ever since his brilliant *The Presocratic Philosophers*, nearly thirty... – oops, let's say merely some years ago. Unlike that earlier work, *Truth, etc*. lacks the immediate appeal, the sex appeal, of a tortoise pulling a 'slow one' on Achilles, of an enigmatic Heraclitus finding it impossible to step into the same river twice (or even once?), and of an Empedocles spinning a whirligig of time. Instead, we have

the logical masters of antiquity anguishing over. . . – well, they anguish over truth of course, but also over predication, sentential connectives, forms of arguments, and the nature of logic. The cast naturally includes Aristotle, 'master of those who know', but also Theophrastus of Eresus, Chrysippus of Soli, Cicero, Galen, Apollonius Dyscolus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and many more. Walk-on parts are allocated to the likes of Chaeremon, Cominianus, and many others, including Marius Victorinus who, after converting to Christianity, 'became the bore of the century.'

At heart, *Truth, etc*. is a guided tour through significant controversies that kept the hearts beating of antiquity's logicians: Chrysippus, for example, is in conflict with Epicurus over a principle of bivalence and the law of excluded middle; Aristotelians and Stoics disagree over the syllogism; and many enter the fray about the definition and significance of connectors. Must connectors connect only sentences or also other expressions? Are prepositions also connectors?

The reviewer is no classical scholar and many of the characters, with whom Barnes seems almost to be on (so to speak) first-name terms, possess not merely lives and doctrines unknown to the reviewer, but also names not readily popped into conversation, be it at high or low table. The writings of these characters rarely sparkle, but the Barnesian presentation and enthusiasms do. Indeed, this book is likely to engage many readers – readers intrigued by the author's hunt for quite what was meant and whether it was well meant and meant well. Readers are likely to delight in the scholarship and learning on display. Of course, remembering the drawing that appears as rabbit, yet also as duck, some other readers – even the same – may sometimes collapse in despair under so much learning and detail. The answer, if impending collapse requires avoidance, is, of course, to dip, pour the claret, take a sip, reflect and then return to the reasoning of the Barnesian detective at work.

Although the book is an erudite work displaying plenty of quotations in the original Greek and a few in Latin, these classical sentences are always translated, the originals being consigned to footnotes. Further, in the main there is a deliberate absence of symbolism and jargon. Mind you, the symbolism gets replaced by a fair amount of 'so-and-so'-ing, which can distract; and Barnes, despite his informal style – or maybe because of it – cannot resist his own jargonic pleasures with, for example, 'argumodes' and 'expletive connectors'.

The book reads as if Barnes is present and chatting, taking us through the matters and evidence at hand – as, in fact, he was, the book building on his six John Locke Lectures, given at Oxford in 2004. Of course, the topics are not remotely the casual chitter and

chatter of these sad media sound-bite days; but Barnes' approach, with its absence of detailed cross-references to current authors and thought, makes the book an enjoyable read. It should even be possible, though Barnes himself doubts it, to read and enjoy 'in a hammock on a spring afternoon.' True, such a literary swaying may at times generate exhaustion, even dizziness, the detail being a little too much and the investigative route a little too winding. After all, Barnes acknowledges that at times he dawdles and indulges in perfectly unnecessary circumvagations. But, of course, that can also aid gentle hammock life on a spring afternoon, by way of inducing the occasional siesta, appropriate for troubled logicians' souls.

Barnes tells us that we are better at logic than Galen, Chrysippus and even Aristotle – though, arguably, at least with the last one, not as creative. We can spot their mistakes. That is true – well, true for likely readers – yet modesty, it appears, forbids Barnes from adding that some of the mistake-spotting needs his welcome and guiding directions. In fact the enjoyment and value for this reader is not so much the historical details of who said what and when about whom, though the bits of gossip are fun, but more the way in which Barnes brings alive the disputes, alluding in some cases to their continuance today, be they involving deflationary truth (an approach, he notes, in Plato's *Cratylus*), the need for truth makers, or the Fregean rejection of subjects and predicates in favour of arguments and functions. Barnes acknowledges, though, that generosity and cleverness (as well as the opposites of course) may well create distortions of these thinkers of the past. But accepting the risk, even the actuality of distortion, is well worth it, when the goods on offer are Barnes' revised renderings of texts and subtle speculations – providing us with nuanced news from the past.

Here are a couple of examples of what readers will meet.

'Chrysippus strains every sinew in order to persuade us that every assertible is either true or false,' we are told, courtesy of Cicero. Chrysippus, in defending something like a principle of bivalence, is opposing Epicurus who, with the likes of future sea-battles in mind, would insist that many assertibles are neither true nor false – for example, that a sea-battle will occur. If the assertible, 'Jonathan Barnes will be visiting Venice in 2012,' is true now – or false now – then, Epicurus presupposes, there would have to be something about the causal world now which ensures that the Venetian visit occurs – or not. This is not, Barnes argues, to posit standard causal chains with links which are both effects of their predecessors and causes of their successors. Whatever the causal details, regarding the possible visit, we seem to have a fatalism of sorts on our hands.



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Epicurean hands let the fatalism drop, holding instead some causeless future swervings of atoms, maintaining the future as open. However, Chrysippean hands are happy to embrace the fatalism.

Chrysippean fatalism, Barnes argues, is not intended to underwrite the rationality of predictions, but simply to underwrite truths about the future. Just as there must be present forerunners of the future to make present truths concerning the future true, so there must be present traces of the past to make truths, concerning the past, true here and now. (The concern is with the 'now', though perhaps we should also wonder about what needs to be 'here'.) This may remind us of a Leibnizian monadic world: the world, in the present, is burdened with all things past and pregnant with all things future. Of course, we may wonder why Chrysippus should need to turn to physics or metaphysics to explain how a present truth about the future may indeed be a truth. After all, what makes it true that Barnes will visit Venice in 2012 is simply his visiting Venice in 2012. Barnes, though, offers a 'mumbled' defence of Chrysippus: the Barnesian visit will occur, is occurring, has occurred. There could be three such truths, each asserted at a different time; and, to secure their distinctness, we need more than just the visit in 2012 to make them true. The mumble is indeed mumbled in word; maybe the diction would have been clearer, had more been said about the understanding of, and relation between, past, present and future.

Here is another example of Barnes at work. A proof requires its premisses to be prior to the conclusion in various ways, in particular it should be possible for us to know the premisses without already knowing the conclusion. Suppose, then, that we have a simple argument with a negated conjunction as premiss. 'Locke wasn't both a philosopher and an historian; Locke was a philosopher: therefore, Locke wasn't an historian.' This is without doubt a valid argument; but can it ever be a proof? In order to come to know the negated conjunction of the first premiss, must we not already have established the conclusion? I leave readers with the question. Barnes offers a teasing discussion and perspicuous answer on pages 525–6.

There is much in this book from which to learn and much that stimulates reflection. No doubt the original lectures, together with this learned and delightful work, would trouble many of our current political leaders who are ever eager to search out the use of things, seeking especially for positive answers in monetary terms. Indeed, Barnes discusses an ancient utilitarian view of logic, as a servant of science, and the consequences for logic that flow – for example, the consequences concerning the place, or lack of place,

for modal syllogistic. Well, no one is going to get monetarily rich through reading this book – nor, I assume, by writing this book, nor, for that matter, by writing this review – but, none the less, readers will be enriched. They will be enriched, and not just because reading *Truth, etc*. passes the time – even passes some considerable time, once reflection is engaged on what the author so splendidly is saying.

**Peter Cave**



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