

response

max deutscher

I was in Germany at the time; the fortune of war had called me there ... the onset of winter held me up in quarters in which I found no conversation to interest me ... I spent the whole day shut up alone in a stove-heated room, and was at full liberty to discourse with myself about my own thoughts.

—Descartes, *Discourse on Method*

The military career of Descartes seems to have been a failure. In any case it did not last long. He was not of the stuff that makes good soldiers ... A happy failure ... yet Descartes' father said that his youngest son was not good for anything but to be bound in buckskin.

—Koyré's introduction to the *Discourse on Method*.

I was 17, a second-year undergraduate in science. An announcement that I had to register for 'National Service' arrived in the mail. This was part of Menzies' idea—to conscript all Australia's male youth; the policy was part of his policy of involving Australia in the war against North Korea. We were to be trained for war but,

unlike the situation of conscripts for Vietnam a couple of decades later, it was an open question whether we would end up going to Korea. The purpose, it emerged, was to swell the ranks of trained reserves, ready for call-up if required. I couldn't come at it. I must have felt my objection immediately; I can recall no significant event between receiving that letter and registering to object. In part, I was reacting against taking orders from those of whose motives I knew nothing. To fall in with the order would have seemed like giving in to the pressures at school to join some gang. In attempts at recollection I can sense some background of thought and feeling about killing, however. Something made me able to articulate a response to being ordered to ready myself for war.

Just after the end of the Second World War, my father, who had lost his property during the 30s Depression, was left some money at the death of his father; he bought 5000 acres of partly cleared Mallee scrubland in South Australia. It would have been just before my eighth birthday that we had come from the city to this Mallee farm. As children did on a farm I had learned to drive the tractors and the Nash buckboard by the time I was nine and so I guess it was at about that age that I learned to use a rifle. As I went to skin the animal I was proud to have become accurate enough to hit I was brought face to face with shattered liver and intestines. Perhaps images of what a bullet does to a body made me more ready, three or four years later, to be affected (as I shall tell you) by my mother's unexpected realism about war.

In our isolated farm life I learned by doing the fortnightly assignments mailed by the 'Correspondence School'. When I was about twelve, looking for an escape from traumas that I shall not discuss here, I was caught by the images and language of advertising material from the Navy. (It must have arrived in the newspapers that we collected each week from a railway siding settlement.) The advertisements sold me on the idea of becoming a naval cadet. (You could join at thirteen, as I recall.) You were to be educated through to matriculation, perhaps. Or was the promise simply to be trained in one of the trades. I talked to my parents about making an application. I cannot recall my father's response. My mother sentenced it in eight words: 'You know you may have to kill people.' A mother's expression of fear for her child's safety would have made me proud to enlist. She—well she philosophises with Nietzsche's hammer. Just a tap shatters the *Book of the Navy's* romance.

It was scarcely five years after that, at university then, that I was ordered to register for conscription. I cannot recall how I knew that you could apply (or how you would apply) for exemption as objector. No one in any group I belonged to (church and school) had voiced such an idea. Perhaps the option was on the form in small print. At any rate, that is what I did. An objector had to appear at a magistrate's court—my memory is that it was a children's court, which would be the case since I was under 18 when I had to register. (I was a year younger than usual in starting university at 16.) At any rate, as the day of the hearing approached I began to write down (as notes I could use) an attempt at make a case—to discover my reasons. I only then began to speak of these ideas—with a friend, a medical student. I see myself now as beginning to learn the difference between thinking and writing. The first lesson—a complexity of which you had no idea emerges as you go to write down what is stark and simple in the mind. To write that essay, then, I borrowed religious language. Accidents of history lie behind that. My father, who, with my mother and us had been always on the move since he lost his share of the family farm in the depression of the 1930s, became a minister in the Methodist church quite late in his life—1949. So we returned from the isolated world of Mallee, sand and limestones to the civilisation of a small seaside town just north of Port Pirie, where I then went to high school.

That change intensified the religiously infused life of my parents that already lay behind it; it meant that I was brought up to read and hear the biblical stories more systematically, and to draw from them ideas about life and what it is right to do. Given that the law of exemption required my objection to be stated on religious grounds, it seemed natural, then, to cite various appropriate sayings by that 'Jesus' who spoke to turn people away from violence when faced with a problem.

I am there at 9.30 in the morning, somehow finding the right court room, then being shown into the witness box (I suppose)—a lectern-like corral in the room. The magistrate was Scales. The Crown prosecutor was Gunn, of course. Dare I add, then, that the lawyer who came forward to defend me *pro bono* in subsequent hearings was Bunney? It is as if what I write now obeys a literary logic that brings into order what I dreamed after reading Dickens. (A favourite author while we were in the bush.)

The procedures started abruptly. The magistrate barked at me for leaning on the witness box, told me to state my case for exemption and then forbade me, when I brought out my notes, to use them. I must have more or less kept my head; I

would have called upon such lines such ‘Love your enemy’, ‘blessed are the peacemakers’, forgiving ‘seventy times seven’. The Crown prosecutor joined the magistrate in cross-examination. He cited against me Paul, on respect for authority, of course. I said that it was Jesus, not Paul who was the figure of divine authority. The prosecutor objected that I was picking quotes to suit my purposes. I stuck to my guns on the point of their different status. (Theatre of the absurd!) The Justice went for the jugular. Would I not kill someone who was raping my mother? (I wish I’d had the wit and wisdom then to ask him whether that such peremptory killing was even lawful.) I was amazed at this turn in proceedings. I said that I didn’t know what I would do. I said that I imagined that I would take hold of the man and prevent him. In having to speak *ex tempore* I found that I had to use my wits more than the bible; the magistrate was not satisfied that I was the absolute religious pacifist that he took the law to require for ‘conscientious’ objection. There occurred, over weeks or months, a number of hearings of increasing legal complexity, mostly about the meaning of the ‘non-combatant’ duties that I was being urged to accept. In recollecting now the moments in the extended legal process when I had to speak, I seem to hear the religious reasons that I had thought apt, as coming to echo in my head as not *my* words. I suspect that I had already begun to move out of religion.

As I say, the case went through a number of hearings. It was given sensational (third page) headlines in the Murdoch press: ‘Boy would not kill to save his mother from rape!’ and so on. (The young Rupert already learning the tricks of easy money.) What I actually said, though, in my movements from private thought to writing and public speech, under a series of cross examinations in those three or four court hearings, would have shifted in content and style. Although I did not recall, then, my images of what bullets do to an animal body, under the pressure of his asking me yet again what made me think that I could not take part in war I did however recall, unexpectedly, a specific event. (It may seem an absurd trifle now in comparison with the prospective acts of war that concerned the court and me.) I was being pressured yet again to say why I refused to be conscripted—perhaps the question was how I had come to form my attitude. (From the time that Scales refused me use of my own notes, I had an inkling I articulated only much later, that he suspected I was following some line I had been given by a pacifist group, or some such.) At any rate, I had become uncomfortable—dissatisfied—with citing biblical text. I found myself telling Scales of an incident that had made me think that violence was not the way to deal with what was wrong—an event that had shocked me out of viewing a bad situation only in terms of my being the one who

suffered it.

Though I was strong and fit from farm work, when I began attending an ‘area’ school after years of learning at home I was bullied—because I liked learning it seemed to me. (Doing the fortnightly assignments had been good entertainment on our remote farm.) Worse, I didn’t know how to play football or cricket. Without stating or even recalling the context, I told Scales how one day I reacted and punched someone (one of my tormentors as I later remembered)—on the chin, I think. He, stunned, fell to the ground. I was stunned in a different way. In my distress I had lost imagination of what you might do to someone in defending yourself. (The boy was uninjured, of course.) I managed to avoid fights after that. I gained a different sort of status, perhaps, when a large strong boy joined my class. He was subject to epileptic seizures, and the teacher had me always sit beside him. I was cast, then, as the one to deal with him in his fits when they emerged, as those things do, out of the blue. There were thirty or forty of us in the one room with the one teacher, who, when Darien went into a seizure, would scramble through the aisles to the back where we two shared a desk. The teacher would then take over the business of holding Darien during his spasm.

As to the Court case—things began to go better when a lawyer, Bunney, on reading of my case in the newspapers offered to represent me. (There is something to be said for sensationalist press.) The magistrate ceased to bark at me. The forces exerted on the Scales were more balanced when it was he and Gunn vs. Deutscher and Bunney. Then a new intervention. The minister at the major Methodist church in Adelaide appeared in court, on his own initiative, to say that although (as the Court had insisted against me) pacifism was no part of Methodist doctrine, still it was considered seriously within Methodism, and that the church, in any case, upheld the rights of its members to act upon conscience. (I have to construct what he probably said. I was too surprised at the time to see him there at all and to have some public voice in support, to take in his very words.) With his German name, too, Vogt acted bravely in coming forward in Anglo Adelaide, thus to confront Scales. (Scales, I was told later, was some pillar of the Anglican Church.) Vogt tipped the balance of forces not only within the court. He tipped my own attitudes towards the operations of law. I was able to move away from feeling the anger as of a powerless student in confronting an irrational and vicious headmaster. The actions of Bunney and Vogt enabled me to understand, even respect, how the law is steadied in its exercise of institutional force.

For, things might have gone very badly. In an early consultation with Bunney after one of the hearings, I said that I was prepared to go to jail rather than be conscripted. He told me that I must avoid that at all costs. I would be sent to a military prison, and he (whether by hint or explicitly) let me know of the abusive treatment I would surely receive there, including the risk of rape, against which I would have no resort. My father also, who did not agree with my stand (though he did not attack it) wrote me a letter warning me of the risk of playing the martyr in such situations. It was after this new trauma, this dawning realisation of the ways of the world, that Vogt made the appearance in court that I mentioned; he lent me what institutional support he could, and expressed his belief in my integrity. Talking to me again after that hearing, Bunney said that he was sure that I had won my case, and that at the next hearing I could succeed in refusing any association with the army.

I was (as one is at 17) in any case super-sensitive about my motives in all of this. I did not want to think of myself as objecting only in order to get out of something unpleasant. In an earlier hearing I had rejected the suggestion from Scales that I agree to conscription into the Medical Corps rather than the University Regiment. I was prepared to engage in medical assistance but I had discovered (from Bunney I guess) that not only did being in the Corps involve the same basic weapons training but also that medical staff, like any service personnel, could be ordered into armed combat. (Thus the extended legal discussion about 'non-combatant' duties.) But at the next appearance, having now been told by Bunney that I was in a strong position with my objection, I told the court (against his advice) that I would agree to go into the army for the full period of conscription. What I required was a written guarantee from the Court and the Army that I was not to be issued with arms and not to be involved with training in the use of weapons.

After various legal manoeuvres (in which I was not involved) this resolution was accepted. Thus, at induction into the army a few months later (at the end of that academic year) I had a rolled document in my pack at all times ready to present in order to parry the disbelief of corporals and sergeants – when issuing us with our gear, for instance. (As soon as I entered camp, the army authorities had attempted to place me in the University Regiment anyway!) Still, I must say, in all fairness, that the platoon corporal and his sergeant, who had to work out what to do with me, treated me decently. The sort of thing that I had to put up with was not persecution but, rather, the embarrassment an adolescent has in standing to one side while every one is rushing at straw bags to stick bayonets into them. Because so

much of the Medical Corp's training was spent in weapons drill, the sergeant, it must have been, unofficially assigned me to a part time role in the Band. Since the Band, too spent most of its time in weapons training, I often spent my own days in the band hut, practicing the B^b bass (brass) and transposing music for the instruments in their various registers.

There were horrible aspects of army life—propaganda sessions in the evenings to induce us to hate the North Koreans, for instance. Nevertheless there were some in authority who, like the sergeant who made me an informal Band member, were capable of a generous decision. The members of University Regiment (to which I would have belonged) left camp three months earlier than anyone else so as to begin the semester in March. I cannot remember how it was arranged—I must have asked the sergeant if anything could be done, and he must have sent my request up the chain of command. Someone up there bent or eased the rules so that I was given leave, two evenings each week, to ride my motorbike the thirty miles or so to Adelaide to start the courses in philosophy and psychology in which I wanted to enrol. (I had failed a subject and thus lost my science scholarship as a result of the preceding year's commotion.)

I knew I must understand something about psychology. I am not sure, though, how I came to think of philosophy as a program of study. My father, like my mother, (who also had only a primary school education) was interested in books. Further along the row from her Dickens, and the romantic poets, I had found Russell's *Introduction to Philosophy*. I cannot recall now, but I must have looked it at about the time that I was preparing the case that the Court would not let me read. Being beset by the question of whether it was *true* that one ought not be involved in warfare, I do recall looking at Russell's chapter on 'Truth'. On reading his analysis of the *truth* of 'Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio', I realised that philosophy was not going to give me any kind of answer. What I read fascinated me anyway, though. Not only the wealth of claims and arguments but even more, I seem to recall my pleasure in the sense of steady calm that Russell maintains, while caught in controversy.

It must have been in the aftermath of the trial that I was thinking for a moment whether to pray (feel free to laugh!) about what to do—how could I handle myself as a non-combatant in an army. I found myself thinking something *tout autre*: 'What would be the difference between this 'praying' and my *thinking* about the problem?' The philosophy course began. We read Descartes under J.J.C Smart's

(then) Rylean influence. ‘When would we *say* anything like ‘I exist’, Smart would ask. (Perhaps as a neglected member of a harem’, he suggested, once.) I read Descartes’ arguments for the existence of God. I asked Smart if there were any better ones. I guess he pointed me to those of Aquinas. Well, I had done enough thinking during the science lectures to know that every explanation becomes, in turn, what you have to explain. There is no mystery in that. So I found myself, having done with religious thought, out of the church. (During the period of the trial, members of a ‘Peace’ group—perhaps the Quakers –had approached me. I went to one of the meetings but felt uncomfortable, though they were so friendly.) I recall starting to read Descartes’ *Discourse on Method* one night in camp on sentry duty –unarmed of course! I was charmed by his story of locating himself outside the perimeter of an army encampment in order to think, free of material cares or interference. If the pressure to *believe* now made me feel out of place in a peace group, being free to doubt made me feel I knew where I was going. Perhaps I parked the need for commitment at the back of my head while I enjoyed myself in philosophy at Adelaide, Oxford, Monash and then Macquarie. For it was about fifteen years later (1969) after three years spent in setting up philosophy at Macquarie that I went on leave at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore and found myself involved in anti-war events there. Back in Australia, I was then alive to the nature of that incinerating war on Vietnam and the predicament of students (along with every male of that age) in being conscripted to take part in it.

PAUL CRITTENDEN’S READING OF *SUBJECTING AND OBJECTING*

Fabrizio Elefante, in *Faith in Democracy* writes about the way the ‘Faculty’ body immunises the institution from foreign bodies, reducing or eliminating friction between academy and society. *Subjecting and Objecting* (as explained in the Preface) was written in the aftermath of a large-scale failure of that immune system, when social and political life beyond the campus erupted within the academy. The ‘six o’clock news as a horror movie’ put that immune system under strain. The conscription of students caused, not total but still widespread collapse in that immunity. So, in the introduction to *Subjecting and Objecting* you find:

‘On that note of ‘observations’; the experiences and observations which lie behind the direct assertions and affirmations [are] gained in about equal measure from private and public involvements. ... So far as public involvements go, I learned most from working in the ‘Moratorium’ opposing conscription and Australia’s ‘involvement’ in the war in Vietnam. [For] apart

from the debates about the war itself, there were the debates and fights [within and outside the academy] about the proper role of intellectuals and academics themselves; whether the objectivity which they were supposed to provide to the public who paid them was negated by their involvement on one side or the other, or whether, rather, any serious objectivity required such involvement. All the old shibboleths about objectivity were trotted out [by those who insisted on ‘neutrality’ within academic life.]¹

Those words are part of an *apologia* I might offer for the rough treatment of Marxism, and of religion, to which Paul pays critical attention. As he sees, it is only in a few of its moments that the book includes a response to any particular assertion by Marx. The animus is directed at the (then current) Marxism-in-action within universities and its acceptance of military violence as a means of revolution. So too, what is written against (Christian) religion is a response, not to the thoughtful words and enigmatic parables of a ‘Jesus’ figure, but rather to ‘religion-in-its-daily-impact-on-thought-and-feeling’. The critical jibes at Marxism are not even momentary critiques of Marx’s analysis of capital; I imply some admiration for Marx’s energetic exposure of systems of oppression and alienation. I do hazard the judgement, however, (Paul cites it) that if we understood Marxism as a political practice (real or fantasised) that is directed towards the violent overthrow of the capitalist order, then it *exploits* our feelings of outrage at the injustices endemic to capitalism. I say ‘exploits’ not only because violent revolution delivers power into the hands of military forces and military values but also because those feelings are aroused so as to demean, appropriate or expunge our wider range of concerns with art, relationships, literature and entertainment. The revolutionary movement subordinates cultural and aesthetic values not only for the period of revolutionary war, but permanently, as befits a revolutionary society. So the animus against Marxism-in-action is directed not only at its acceptance of war as the means of revolution, but at the prospect that such politico-military Marxism offers. The prospect is even worse than that offered us during conventional war during which ‘we people’ may dream of a time ‘after the war’ when we are released from our imprisonment within the ‘war effort’ and return to ‘normal’ life. A revolutionary society dedicated to ‘eliminating the forces of reaction’ can never accept human interests that have no interest in the revolution.

As to non-revolutionary politics, while endorsing *being liberal* in the sense of being broad-minded and generous, I do criticise *liberalism* for its acquiescence in the economic exploitation that fuels Marxism-as-a-movement:

Not to idealise liberal attitudes, it may be best to admit that [they] are as liable to cowardly self-serving retreats as is political radicalism to taking the initiative in the use of guns and bombs (70) ... In being *liberal*, [on the other hand] one rejects the militarist rhetoric (but not all the militant rhetoric) of people's liberation struggles [even as] one supports the need for radical social change Equally, one rejects the cold war real politik rhetoric of Kissingers and Haigs, and Reagan's new smiling old-face of cowboy-fascism (71)²

As Paul suggests, I also spoke too roughly of Christianity-in-daily-action as *exploiting* our feelings about guilt and death. I did not care, then, to look into the many forms of religious culture. It would be rough justice, certainly, to condemn every form of social and cultural life that is characteristically 'Christian'. The criticism I do make of one common ethos of *Christianity* does, in any case, run at a tangent to the circle that contains the historical person and textual traces of the 'Jesus' figure. I feel the force of Paul's critique. I feel it in the care I have to take now in recovering more nuanced judgements on Marxism and religion than those that he observed as typical of *Subjecting and Objecting*.

Also Paul observes, critically, that while I want to use Husserl's transcendental phenomenology as redressing something lacking in analytical philosophy of mind, I also can exhibit a dismissive attitude to his theories. (Paul is kind to remark that I have done better in some subsequent work on phenomenology.) I had ambivalent feelings about Husserl's methods and language then; in responding to Paul now, I discover that this ambivalence remains, despite having written a later book that endorses Husserl's legacy in Sartre and Beauvoir, and despite my regrets that analytical philosophy has developed so far in ignorance of Husserl that it can no longer be moved by the scope and depth of his achievement. (*It's too late baby, now*).³ I have much the same ambivalence about Heidegger's philosophical language.⁴ His writings, also, act as a powerful contrast with the relentless cheerfulness—an *unbearable lightness of being*—of an 'analytical' philosophy that can discuss, in the one remote tone, knifings, poisonings, rapes⁵ and Sophie's Choices. The language of phenomenology is a relief from the mood in which flourish doctrines that the whole world of personal language is a 'folk psychology' to be surpassed; you can love the gravity of the language of *Being and Time* and relish the 'glossolalia' (*pace* Paul Edwards⁶).

At the same time I cannot wish to write *in* Heidegger's terms, even to find my way beyond them. The work is designed to keep the reader within its mazes. (The same might have been said of *Being and Nothingness* were it not for the fact that Beauvoir, and then critics 'who no longer spoke existentialsese' showed us how to adapt it, radically.) It is not only that to do so would be derivative. You might, after immersing yourself in their work, write like Quine or David Lewis, or like Mary Wollstonecraft or Michèle Le Dœuff but you do not have to abandon their language in order to work your way out.⁷ Michèle Le Dœuff describes this phenomenon of hermetic enclosure in terms of *l'unique sujet parlant*. The enclosure is achieved by constructing a voice that speaks as if for the whole world—as if it is the one voice the world has. The voice of *Being and Nothingness*, of *Being and Time*, of *Philosophical Investigations*, of *Phenomenology of Spirit*—is hermetic. You can study those writings, be inspired or repulsed, or write about them only as from a scholarly distance, certainly. Each is a hermetic entirety in itself, however. In becoming a philosophical writer you cannot get progress if you write like them; you cannot weld other discourses on to them. You can be a commentator and critic, but to make anything of them that can be used to take philosophy further you have to appropriate their language into another's, with at least the liberty and daring of the best of translators who produce, for instance, new classics of the English language when they translate *Anna Karenina* or *War and Peace*.

In these last few paragraphs I have been constructing a context within which to reply to Paul about my conflicting attitudes towards the Husserl of *Cartesian Meditations* and *Crisis of European Sciences*. Certainly, it would be unreasonable to complain about the fact, in itself, that a contemporary philosopher cannot solve their problems directly from within a Husserlian text. To explain why analytical philosophy stood in need of it from the very beginning of its rise after the second world war we must depart from it, learn another language and then return. Only then can explanation can be written. What Paul reads as flippancy in some of my responses to Husserl's language is my reaction to the power of his language and of his conception of the philosophical predicament of a '*subjective object that would like to be an objective subject.*' (But there I go again. I have to let his idea emerge in post-Sartrean terms in order to *use* rather than *mention* it.) I use his profound conceptions just so long as I may, even in admiration, send up his 'transcendental ego' as vanishing, endlessly. Husserl himself begins to deconstruct that *ego* in the *Crisis of European Sciences*:

It is unthinkable, and not merely contrary to fact, that I be *man in the world*

without being a man. There need be no one in my perceptual field, but fellow men are necessary as actual, as known, and as an open horizon of those I might possibly meet. Factually I am within an interhuman present ... I know myself to be factually within a generative framework ... [which] is as unbreakable, as is the form, belonging to me as an individual ego, of my original perceptual present with a remembered past and an expectable future.⁸ (*Crisis*, 253).

MICHÈLE LE DŒUFF, THE PHYSICALIST PROJECT, AND TALKING ACROSS PARADIGMS

In responding to Michelle Boulous Walker's generous and comprehending remarks about my work over the years on 'mind' and 'judgement' I shall refer to what she says about the significance of Le Dœuff for my methods and language, the nature of my involvement in—and partial repudiation of—the physicalist project, and finally, Michelle's desire for conversation between me and Lyotard. I find Michelle's remarks upon the significance of Le Dœuff in my work to be very helpful as well as generous. It is helpful in that her generosity makes it easy for me to learn, from the angle of someone else's approach, what it is that I have been doing, and how to work and where to go in getting further with the problems—about 'mind' and 'consciousness' if you can bear the terms. What she reads in the way I come at the need to judge (*so as* to be judged) connects, for her, with Lyotard's concern to converse with those who differ so radically that you are not sure there is a common language, or whether it can ever be devised. The fact that she is able to so effortlessly (or so she makes it appear) cast a new and yet acceptable light on a body of work does give one hope that more can be done. Thus I am interested in her desire that I include Lyotard along with those others (Kant, Husserl, Sartre, Arendt, Le Dœuff herself) with whom the work of finding a critical language has paid dividends in areas as diverse as thinking about mental processes as identifiable as cortical, to considering the nature and role of judgement.

I have not yet managed to bring together, for publication, the many pieces I have written over the years concerning the bearing of Le Dœuff's 'critical epistemology' upon the perennial tendency of philosophical thought towards some version of a 'transcendental ego'. Perhaps I may use, here, the concluding remarks of one of these essays in which I observe the reasons for the failure of one attempt within analytical philosophy to break free of its limitations:

One might be in sympathy with Searle's attempts, for example, to resist the sway of a neo-metaphysics that takes the form of reductive physicalism. In his way of resisting physicalism, Searle carries on in the same way that produced the outlook to which he objects. When he writes about a form of philosophy—Derrida's—that is further from his home the limitation becomes crippling to him and oppressive for the reader. As Gayatri Spivak puts it in her analysis of the famous Derrida/Searle debate:

Searle's method of disciplinary practice is to take everything "inside the circle" as self-evident and everything "outside the circle" as irrelevant; a clear case of the exclusion of the 'other' as such, so that a normative interior can be defined.⁹

An attraction of Le Dœuff's practice, in this context, is that it avoids setting up an inner discourse, whether of 'ordinary' language or of the conceptual systems of the special sciences. We ourselves can detour behind the forms of philosophy that Le Dœuff's inter-textual practice opposes, such as neo-metaphysics; behind conceptual analysis, behind its cross-channel competitors of late phenomenology and early deconstructionism, right back to Husserl's founding work in phenomenology. As with conceptual analysis, Husserl's method of placing one's normal commitments in suspension - of bracketing them out - can lead to its own kind of absolutism. And yet it was intended to achieve a complete freedom from presuppositions. It is possible to naturalise this transcendental method, however.¹⁰ What Le Dœuff says about the transcendental subject in her work on the relation between Shakespeare's characters and Descartes' philosophical narrator suggest the possibility of such a naturalisation.¹¹

Let me return now to what Michelle says about my approach to the nature of judging. I appreciate the scrupulous care she has taken in reading the account of judging as *being pleased at* something's being the case—pleased that it be the case if possible. It is easy (particularly in the midst of anxieties about judgement being only 'subjective') to misread this view as permitting the practice of *being influenced* in making a judgment *by being pleased at* some fact (or the prospect of that become a fact). But that permission is, just as commonsense philosophy decrees, to subvert the process of judgement. The process of coming to judge is not that of saying or doing what you feel'. You would be closer to the mark to say that coming to judge involves coming to *feel what you say* (or do). Just as we suggest to one who

abuses ‘free speech’ not to *say what they think* but to *think what they say*.

To be pleased at what you judge simply *in its being the case* (or in the prospect of its becoming so) may be no easy matter. That is why there is the work of judgement. Judging as *being pleased at* lays upon us the demands of all that we have to take into account in order to be pleased, overall, that something be the case, be done, be made as likely as possible. Someone judges that they have made the right allocation in their will, of their assets, to family, friends and causes. They have to bear with some pain at some aspects of that allocation—that someone may be disappointed or aggrieved. Nevertheless, to judge that the allocation is right requires that the one who judges *is* pleased at the overall allocation, and would be displeased to have it otherwise, though that would make one of the beneficiaries happier. We see how the traditional qualities associated with having good judgement—of strength of mind, for instance—take their place within such a view.

It is always easier—particularly for philosophers—to write at length about what they disagree with. We are never so full of words as when we go to set an issue to rights. You have to learn new skills to write at length, and say something more about, work that fundamentally you admire. In writing about Le Dœuff, and then Arendt, the challenge, in admiring their work, was to carry the discussion further—by an inflexion of terms, juxtaposition with other writers they do not rely upon. Fundamentally, one must ‘return to the themes themselves’ (to adopt Husserl’s cry) while keeping a close eye on the work of those who have done so much, so well. Such a project is at the opposite pole from eulogy and hagiography.

Michelle’s sketch of my involvement in and subsequent disenchantment with the ‘physicalist’ *identity* theory¹² stirs me to go further into the relation between ‘analytical’ and ‘continental’ philosophy, undeterred by the fact that despite the best efforts of many, the situation remains almost unchanged. The attempt was not so much to *refute* the identification of mental with cortical processes but rather, to help to shift the project away from the radically reductive mode that it had engendered. It was in that spirit that I turned to Husserl’s analysis of the enigmas of being at once body and ‘transcendental ego’, as he put it. I searched for a language that recovered something of what I admired and thought extraordinarily promising in Husserl, that remained true to the spirit of what he was doing and which nevertheless ‘transcended’ Husserl’s language towards a usable contemporary idiom. The most likely figures to draw upon were Ryle, as standing behind the upsurge in a ‘physicalist’ identity theory, and Sartre as writing his own trans-

formation of Husserl into *his* new idiom of *l'être* as against *le néant*, *néantisation* and so on.¹³

If there were a solution to the incommensurability between analytical and continental philosophy, it would not be a *rapprochement*—‘approaching’—a coming out of the corners of the boxing ring to shake hands before the bout. Rather it would be to come together so as to *not* slug it out. In terms of philosophers sharing their academic space socially, at least, that has occurred to some extent. There is no longer much tendency for the handshake to be a preparatory gesture before polemical haymakers are thrown in the hope that they are ‘knock-down’ arguments. (‘There’s glory for you’, as Humpty Dumpty defined it.) For the resultant situation to shift beyond Marcuse’s *repressive tolerance*, however, we must all handle ourselves as not *contained* within a mode. Diverse modes of philosophy are resources rather than fields of enclosure. It is not enough to ‘respect the difference’ of those beyond our borders if we repel incomers who lack a visa. It was as acquainted with classical European phenomenology and (English) conceptual analysis that I could, on a visitor’s working visa, write about thinking and judging. That double familiarity was what I needed in order to learn something in the land of Arendt and her fellows.¹⁴

Arendt herself, in writing the works for which she has become most famous, had been forced into a rupture with the tradition of European philosophy that produced that phenomenology. Apart from politics and current affairs she reads her English contemporaries such as Ryle and Strawson, while finding no acceptance by analytical philosophers in the United States. (They would have appeared as a US version of the European ‘professional’ philosophers with whom Arendt, in disclaiming the title of *philosopher*, also refused to identify when she disclaimed *being* a philosopher.) For my own part,¹⁵ bred as a conceptual analyst in Ryle’s briar patch, I was more attracted to moving between different kinds of discourses so as to work with Arendt’s. For me it involved drawing on Husserl and Sartre with one hand while welcoming Ryle and J L Austin with the other. (The other main influence in writing on judgment was Kant, of course, who precedes the ‘analytical/continental’ split by a comfortable margin.)¹⁶

What someone is saying is not a ‘thing’—a ‘meaning’ that exists separately from every way of saying it. Nevertheless, when we converse with some success we recognise *what is being said* in different languages, periods and cultures. We gain a sense of a *major issue* that appears in the interaction of different discourses. Such

interaction occurs not out of politeness or tolerance, but because we are ready and determined to use whatever resources we have at hand.¹⁷ With his love of puzzles, conundrums and regresses, Ryle may, with relative ease, be drawn within a discussion that already includes the Sartre of *The Transcendence of the Ego*, *The Imaginary*, and *Being and Nothingness*. In comparison, it would have been virtually impossible to draw the David Lewis of *On the Plurality of Worlds*¹⁸ within the discussion between Ryle and Sartre; their account of imagination sets out from rejecting imaginary objects. Lewis cannot countenance a *figurative* truth for his *possible worlds*; the three cannot be got to ‘read from the same page’. Perhaps one day you might write parts for them to read, as different characters in the plot of a story or play that deals with the themes themselves—of what is possible, what can be imagined, and what it takes to imagine change.¹⁹

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NOTES

1. Max Deutscher, *Subjecting and Objecting* (University of Queensland Press and Blackwell, Oxford, 1983), 2.
2. *Subjecting and Objecting* was published in 1983.
3. Lyric by Carole King.
4. I respond to Paul Edwards in “Being Paul Edwards,” *Crossroads* IV:1 (2007), 33-42.
5. An analytical philosopher was welcomed at an Australian university to read a paper, ‘What’s wrong with rape?’ Many philosophers reckoned that feminists’ objections were ‘anti-academic’, ‘against free speech’.
6. *Heidegger’s Confusions* (Prometheus: New York, 2004), 34-37.
7. In that post-war era when, at last, you could do so without having Greek, I did postgraduate work at Oxford on Plato. I showed Gwil Owen, then Professor of Classical Philosophy, some of my work on the *Theaetetus*. ‘You’re writing like a Jowett translation’, he said.
8. Edmund Husserl, *Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Northwestern University Press: Evanston, 1970)
9. “Revolutions that as yet have no model: Derrida’s Limited Inc.,” *Diacritics* Dec. 1980, 31.
10. I develop a way of thinking about them in later chapters of *Subjecting and Objecting*. I also discuss this issue in “Husserl’s Transcendental Subjectivity,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 10 (1980), 21-45, reprinted in *A Hundred Years of Phenomenology*, ed. Robin Small (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2001), 2-24)
11. ‘Textualist, Imaginary and Operative Practice’, read at the University of Cardiff, 2001.
12. I refer to the theory usually considered part of ‘analytical’ philosophy—that processes of thinking, feeling, recall and the having of imagery as being one and the same as certain cortical processes.
13. If you see Ryle as deeply influenced by the Husserlian structures, rather than shaking himself free of them, you can then read Ryle with Sartre—each correct Descartes’ deviation from radical critique towards dualism.
14. I take that as defined by Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty—not to exclude the many other major writers in that tradition, but as a way of defining phenomenology by its exemplary exponents.
15. Conceptual analysts were rejected by ‘analytical’ philosophy particularly for their deconstruction of ontology.
16. Phenomenology and deconstruction has made attention gravitate towards Kant’s *third Critique*.
17. Thus the significance, as Michelle observes, of Le Dœuff’s practice of ‘operative’ philosophy.
18. The ‘plurality’ arises from taking *how the world might be* as a *possible world* that *is* that way.
19. Quine and Heidegger, as ham radio enthusiasts, talk across their differences (‘Martin and Willard on Air’, *Crossroads* 4:1 [2009], 23-32).