

call the “historical confluences” of phenomenology and eschatology. The first of the three, dedicated to an analysis of the early Heidegger’s writings on Luther, Paul, and Augustine, does a fine job of raising the question of Heidegger’s relation to a set of discourses that are grounded in a set of primary enactments rather than theoretical description or speculation. In this sense, the article raises questions that converge with those raised by Papagiannopoulos. The final two essays are dedicated to the work of Michel Henry, another French phenomenologist whose work is closely connected to Christian themes. Each essay provides a very good glimpse into Henry’s work and will be very helpful for those unfamiliar with his project. The collection ends with an appendix that is a reproduced section from Jean-Luc Marion’s *God Without Being*. According to the editors, this provides a “classic example of the inter-penetrating influences of phenomenology and eschatology” (p. 11).

Overall, the collection is well worth the attention of scholars in philosophy, theology, and religious studies. It is a well-edited collection full of thoughtful essays by some of the major scholars in the field. Given the present interest in apocalyptic theology, the “new phenomenology” emerging from France, and the interface between philosophy and theology in general, the book will find numerous audiences who will learn much from the essays present within it.

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***Ludwig Wittgenstein on Race, Gender, and Cultural Identity:  
Philosophy as a Personal Endeavor***

BÉLA SZABADOS

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Béla Szabados has been mining off-the-beaten-track themes in Wittgenstein’s philosophy for a long time, and in this collection he discusses Wittgenstein on autobiography, self-deception, women, Jews, music, ethics, and religion. Each essay provokes as well as informs, and it is a relief to encounter “another Wittgenstein.” While Szabados’s topics may be “minor,” they are none the worse for that — and doubly so given the attention (some would say over-attention) typically accorded to propositions, rules, private language, and the like.

The book opens with a discussion of philosophy and autobiography with particular reference to Wittgenstein on writing about oneself. Szabados discounts the idea of philosophy as autobiography but not the idea that “the deliberate attempt to efface ourselves when doing philosophy is a source of danger” (p. 24). Philosophers are not scientists or high priests, and Wittgenstein correctly regards the subject as a “deeply personal endeavour” (p. 16). In fact he reveals his true colours when he says: “I must be nothing more than a mirror in which my reader sees his own thinking with all its deformities and with this assistance can set it in order” (p. 13). (Szabados’s subtitle “*Philosophy as a Personal Endeavour*” is well chosen.)

It is a tricky question how philosophy, understood as autobiography, effects the “passage from ‘I’ to ‘we’” (p. 13). In Szabados’s view the answer in Wittgenstein’s

case is that “philosophy involves identifying and overcoming self-deceptions, prejudices and preconceived notions” (p. 15). There is a lot to this. But there is, I fancy, more to be said about Wittgenstein’s tendency to speak for everyone and use “we” without qualification (he does this even in some of Szabados’s quotations). Still, Szabados is surely right that Wittgenstein advocates “a fresh attitude to the doing of philosophy, an attitude that struggles to free itself of smugness” (p. 8), an attitude Szabados applauds.

The second essay treats Wittgenstein’s discussion of autobiography in more detail. With reference to *Culture and Value* and other material (as well as sidelong glances at Augustine and Rousseau and critical remarks about Rorty), Szabados assembles evidence showing that Wittgenstein rejects traditional philosophical views of self-knowledge and insists that “[w]riting about oneself [be] re-placed into life and its pushes and pulls” (p. 42). This is a complicated idea and Szabados has interesting things to say about differentiating “truthful self-description” from “rationalization” (p. 50). My only worry is how much of this transfers to “non-self” knowledge and what exactly Wittgenstein has in mind when he speaks of philosophy as a matter of “working on oneself” (p. 54). Cannot one work “[o]n one’s own conceptions” while massively deceived about oneself? And does not Wittgenstein contrast “writing about yourself and writing about external things” (pp. 6, 40)?

Having discussed the relationship of philosophy to autobiography, Szabados considers cases of Wittgenstein “working on himself,” starting with his thinking about women. He does not exempt Wittgenstein from the charge of misogyny, preferring instead to set his views in context and to underline that “philosophy is for men” has a long history. But mostly Szabados dwells on Wittgenstein’s evolving response to Weininger’s *Sex and Character*. He argues that pre-1930 Wittgenstein was (mostly) sympathetic to Weininger’s views while post-1930 he was (mostly) opposed to them (p. 64), all the while appreciating the “greatness” of Weininger as “a mirror in which one can discern the contradictions in the culture of the West” (p. 81).

Weininger also figures in the following essay on Wittgenstein’s Jewishness and his seeming anti-Semitism. As when discussing his attitudes toward women, Szabados does not let Wittgenstein off the hook but provides some context, this time the Vienna of his youth. And he again sees him as shifting his position in 1930/1931 when he embraced “anti-essentialism” (p. 121), a development that also set him against Weininger’s conception of Judaism as intrinsically effeminate. This is an intriguing suggestion but I wonder whether the monster has been slain once and for all.

The topic of the next essay, Wittgenstein on music, has received even less attention than Wittgenstein on women and Jews. Szabados details Wittgenstein’s incredibly negative remarks about Mahler and isolates his reasons (‘prejudices’ might be a better word), noting that he deplores Mahler’s lack of courage (p. 148), judges him bourgeois (p. 154), and finds his music inauthentic, even self-deceptive (p. 155). (Szabados also observes that at times Wittgenstein seems to echo Wagner’s anti-Semitism but exculpates him somewhat since he extols Mendelssohn’s violin concerto.) The main theme of the essay, however, is that Wittgenstein “sees, or better still, hears himself in Mahler” (p. 160) and worries that his “temptation to seek theories” is like “Mahler’s quest for melody” (p. 161). In addition, Szabados notes that Wittgenstein’s criticism of Mahler squares poorly with his later philosophy (pp. 164–168).

In his penultimate essay Szabados discusses why there is next to nothing about ethics in Wittgenstein’s later work. This is a problem he takes seriously since he sees

Wittgenstein as eschewing a form of foundationalism that leaves no room for ethics in favour of a form of anti-foundationalism that leaves ample room for it (p. 179). (Szabados quotes to good effect, in opposition to those who claim there was no major break in Wittgenstein's philosophy, Wittgenstein's 1930 comment (p. 182) that his "main movement of thought is a *completely different* one today from 15 to 20 years ago.") The solution to the problem of Wittgenstein's silence about ethics, Szabados avers, is that appearances are deceptive. Wittgenstein's philosophy as a whole is ethically motivated (p. 206) and Wittgenstein says a great deal, albeit not in his main texts, about ethics understood as concerned with fear, joy, vanity, and other similarly "thick" moral concepts as opposed to the "thin" theoretical concepts philosophers usually discuss (p. 194). The essay concludes with a couple of suggestions as to why Wittgenstein might have wanted to keep his thinking about morality under wraps (p. 207).

Wittgenstein takes ethics and religion to be closely allied—Szabados shows he has "a distinctively religious conception of ethics" (p. 223) — and the last essay in the book is devoted to Wittgenstein's supposed "fideism." Focusing on Kai Nielsen's critique of Wittgenstein's treatment of religion (but covering far more than one philosopher's critique), Szabados argues that Wittgenstein is neither a fideist nor a friend of fideism. Insofar as religion involves "a passionate orientation of one's life" (p. 215), he contends, it is no "mere" language game. Detached from metaphysics, it may still retain "enough doctrinal/creedal core to serve as a peg on which to hang [religious attitudes, feelings, and deeds]" (p. 231).

Szabados does not purport to prove that the personal permeates the philosophical in Wittgenstein — to attempt that would be quite out of character for Wittgenstein and, following him, Szabados. Rather he paints a picture of Wittgenstein's way of thinking, one he would allow can be filled out, clarified, and modified here and there. He forces us to confront the fact that the man who wrote the *Investigations* wrote the remarks in *Culture and Value*, and gives those of us who focus on "the philosophy"—especially those who take Wittgenstein to be a hard-line, utterly resolute, debunker — plenty to ponder. The "personal remarks" reveal the sort of mind that produced the "philosophical remarks." And reading Szabados, it becomes plain that a one-sided diet of texts is as debilitating for understanding Wittgenstein's writings as Wittgenstein deemed a one-sided diet of examples to be for philosophy itself (*Investigations* §593).

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### ***Embodiment and Agency***

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*Embodiment and Agency* is an edited volume whose germination began at the 2005 Canadian Society of Women in Philosophy conference of the same name. Its artefactual composition manages to break new ground in feminist agency studies and can be taken as a continuation of foundational volumes such as *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self* (2000) and *Feminists Rethink the Self*