an ultra-modern state where European languages, not Hebrew, would be spoken, and it certainly had nothing to do with Nietzsche’s speculations about cosmology.

These errors of judgment may be connected with Golomb’s interest in Nietzsche as an existentialist. He maintains that “a ‘pure’ Nietzschean [would be] a thinker who urges us to overcome our entire cultural upbringing and historical roots and to exist, as it were, in an ahistorical vacuum” (81). Hence he claims that his chosen Zionists responded to Nietzsche’s teaching on authenticity and tried to attain individual harmony. That certainly seems to apply to Ahad Ha’am, the proponent of cultural Zionism, whose dispute with Berdichevski’s vitalism is recounted here in detail. When we come to the early Martin Buber, however, a concern with Nietzschean authenticity is only one element in Buber’s program for a Jewish renaissance. In many essays, including the famous Three Speeches on Judaism delivered in Prague in 1909 and 1910, Buber set out a psychology, physiology, and pathology of the Jew that owe a considerable though diffuse debt to Nietzsche’s exaltation of the body over the spirit (see, for example, “Of the Despisers of the Body” in Zarathustra). This aspect of Buber’s Nietzscheanism receives only vague and cursory discussion.

Golomb’s particular approach to Nietzsche prevents him from investigating whether Zionists also responded to Nietzsche’s political ideas, his contempt for democracy, his praise of aristocracy, his call for a masculinization of Europe, and his gleeful anticipation of tremendous future wars. The Nordau chapter does contain an excursus on Nordau’s concept of “muscular Jewry” and its adoption by the Zionist militarist Ze’ev Jabotinsky, but Golomb argues that Nordau and Jabotinsky misunderstood Nietzsche’s theme of “strength” as meaning physical strength, whereas they were surely reacting, like Buber, to Nietzsche’s praise of the body. The Nietzsche behind this book is a rather pallid, sanitized figure who owes much to Walter Kaufmann.

St. John’s College, Oxford


ANTHONY K. JENSEN

Robin Small’s new monograph is an example of the increasing tendency in Nietzsche scholarship to engage seriously both nineteenth-century traditions and contemporary discourses in science and philosophy in order to best explicate Nietzsche’s thought. In doing so throughout Nietzsche and Rée: A Star Friendship, Small avoids two chief temptations. First, he does not treat Nietzsche’s biographical and ideological context simply to pronounce “that’s where Nietzsche got it!” Rather, with an eye critical of generalized appropriations, Small presents the relationship of Nietzsche and Paul Rée as a “Star Friendship”—a period of mutual development in which each thinker’s assumptions were questioned, refined, and often enough criticized by the other, from the height of their reciprocal admiration until the time of their relationship’s breaking. Second, Small resists forcing Nietzsche to speak with our twenty-first-century terms. His discussion of Nietzsche’s and Rée’s aphoristic style is contextualized in the language of the French moralists, whereas a description of their positions on determinism and moral responsibility is tied together with references to their reading of Dühring and Lamarck. Doing so circumvents a tendency to codify Nietzsche in the technical jargon of either postmodern or analytical discourses that can only awkwardly accommodate his thought.
Small’s method is to book-end the intertwining development in Nietzsche’s and Rée’s respective philosophies between lengthy discussions of the historical and biographical details surrounding them. Chapters 1–3 characterize the intellectual environment in which Nietzsche found himself during the early 1870s, outlining his growing dissatisfaction with the Wagner circle, with transcendental interpretations of Schopenhauer, and with the academic discipline of classical philology. These factors, combined with his budding interest in naturalism and the contemporary scientific landscape, readied Nietzsche for a new friendship and a stimulating new intellectual circle. This he found in the company of Rée and Malwida von Meyenburg during their year spent together in Sorrento. It was from 1876 to 1877 that Nietzsche’s thought underwent a rather significant development toward what he called “Réalism,” when Rée’s impact is felt in the freshly naturalized perspectives on morality, epistemology, and science found in Nietzsche’s Human All-Too-Human. Upon Nietzsche’s return to Basel in 1877, old friends like Wagner and Erwin Rohde were disappointed to see returned to them an almost completely new Nietzsche, a champion of “cool and ironic skepticism” (31).

Chapters 8, 9, and 12 illustrate the fateful breakup between Nietzsche, Rée, and Lou Salomé and the consequences this entailed for the early reception of Nietzsche. Small acknowledges the documented biographies of the emotional but nonerotic triangle among the three thinkers. His own explanation adds a theoretical dimension. Some of the increasing rancor between Rée and Nietzsche was due to the new developments in Nietzsche’s thought away from “Réalism” combined with an unfortunate stagnation of Rée’s creative capacities. By 1883, Nietzsche had already envisioned the Eternal Recurrence, while Rée was considered a man “with no ideals, no goals, no obligations, no instincts, content simply to be Lou’s companion, if not her servant” (148–49). The gap in the two men’s ideas was no longer bridgeable by approximately equal intellectual abilities.

But Small’s book is more than biographical. Having already made significant gains in “contextualizing” Nietzsche in his last monograph (Nietzsche in Context [Ashgate, 2001]), Small utilizes the positions of those contemporary authors Nietzsche and Rée read thoroughly in order to better define their own positions, sometimes in agreement with and sometimes in opposition to those sources. An example is Small’s discussion of morality. In the period of Human All-Too-Human, Rée and Nietzsche agreed that moral phenomena like holiness, altruism, and asceticism ought to be explained on the basis of a psychological naturalism that seeks to uncover the material drives and impulses that lie under the surface of human agency. Insofar, they expose their shared desire for a naturalistic adaptation of Schopenhauer’s moral theory. These theses appeared in Rée’s chapter “On Religious Things” in his Psychological Observations and in Nietzsche’s “On the Religious Life” section of Human All-Too-Human at nearly the same time. Where they part ways is in the manner they relate the development of moral phenomena to their particular formalizations of the evolutionary theory. More the strict utilitarian, Rée held that while Darwin missed an opportunity to account for the evolution of specifically moral phenomena, he might have done so by showing how moral approval and disapproval follows in terms of the direct utility gained within a particular society. Actions increasing the general welfare of the community are praised as “moral,” encouraged, and thereby socially engendered—a thesis borrowed from Lamarck—while actions harmful to the community are scorned as immoral. Altruistic actions do exist, Rée admits, but they present little significant “evolutionary gain” and are far more frequently dominated by egoistic “selfish” impulses. Nietzsche’s position, on the contrary, is more historically nuanced and takes as its starting point the insights into the origins of civilizations presented in Walter Bagehot’s 1872 Physics and Politics. At Gay Science 117, Nietzsche argued that in primeval times individuality and individual choice was a deeply threatening notion, since it implied being isolated and defenseless against the dangerous and unknowable forces of nature: “The more the herd instinct rather than any personal sense found expression in an action, the more moral one felt.” And at Human All-Too-Human 54, “The whole community shared the guilt arising from the wrongful behavior of any of its members, and feared the wrath of the gods would fall on all alike.” Nietzsche and Bagehot, contra Rée, emphasize
that humankind’s earliest laws and customs were not explicable in purely utilitarian terms—utility was only a later consideration. Originally, their purpose had been simply to compel obedience. Irrational forces like chance or the wanton will to dominate play little role in Rée’s evolutionary picture. For Nietzsche, they are fundamental from the start (128–29).

Another example of Small’s method is his detail of the two interlocutors’ stance on determinism. Both Nietzsche and Rée endorse a doctrine of causal determinism that takes every human action to be a necessary event; “occurrence” is for each thinker tautological to “necessary occurrence.” Each denies moral responsibility: human beings are faced with dilemmas wherein several impulses come into conflict, and the outcome is invariably determined by the relative strength of the motivating forces. The strength of a motive is in turn determined by a previous history, starting with innate drives and proceeding to their modification through the influence of the environment and society (94). The capacity for “acting differently than I did” implies that that drive was already in my nature at that time, and that my agency could have been swayed by it under other circumstances, for instance, if a thought or sensation had been even slightly different. Nietzsche was initially attracted to Rée’s formulation in the latter’s Psychological Observations, and he employed it as the basis for his own remarks on moral responsibility and blame. But later, Small tells us, Nietzsche would locate the impulse toward moral responsibility in the enforcement of contractual agreements, without reference to the question of free will. He would become progressively less concerned to prove the validity of determinism as a thesis in proportion to his growing engagement with determinism’s “implications for life,” a question for which Rée had ostensibly little regard (96–97).

Such analyses exemplify the care with which Small presents his reading of Nietzsche and Rée, as well as the advantage we readers will discover in handling his arguments in their richly contextualized historical formats. Small sets right the prejudiced biography of Nietzsche’s sister that spoke of the relationship as one of discipleship. He allows Nietzsche to appear less the solitary prophetic hermit and more the philosopher interested in his contemporary intellectual environment. Moreover, he avoids sweeping claims about Nietzsche’s positivism or nonpositivism, his Darwinism or anti-Darwinism, but shows with liberal evidence the degrees to which Nietzsche engaged and disengaged these traditions on very particular issues, and shows in detail the way Nietzsche’s philosophy developed in conjunction with the details of his biography.

While this reviewer is largely convinced of the merits of Small’s book, I am not convinced of the extent to which Rée altered or complemented Nietzsche’s early thinking. Specifically, Small portrays Nietzsche’s first interests in naturalized psychological explanation as a consequence of his “Star Friendship.” I think Small is correct to say the “naturalized” aspects of this are caught up with the conversion to “Réalism,” but this seems, at least to me, more like an adapted form than a fundamentally new approach of the rather speculative psychologizing we find throughout his philology (e.g., the psychological portraits of Diogenes Laertius, Homer, and Theognis), his lectures (on the “personalities” of the Preplatonic philosophers), his diagnosis of the “Apollonian” and “Dionysian” impulses in ancient tragedy, and again in his remarks on the “drives” of the various types of historians—all of which predate Nietzsche’s friendship with Rée. The allure of psychological explanation for a diversity of phenomena appeals to Nietzsche from the very start; it is his exposure to Réalism, I would suggest, that propelled Nietzsche in the more naturalized direction Small finds him during the writing of Human All-Too-Human.

Moreover, Small tends to assume the “naturalistic character” of Nietzsche’s thought during this period. His Nietzsche in Context monograph was a powerful argument for that position, and as such it complements the growing list of works that maintain such a thesis. Now, while Small may well be correct that this is the best line of interpretation, it is one about which there is yet some scholarly debate. To the non specialist reader, whose choice of commentators has been perhaps limited to Kaufmann, Danto, Heidegger, or Nehamas, Small’s Nietzsche will look somewhat foreign. While it is such interpretations the author is trying here to supplant, in order to make his case more strongly
he would have been well advised to outline more precisely what the overarching thesis of naturalism entails for Nietzsche and how it influences his thinking on specific philosophical issues. Without having addressed those interpretations more directly, the nonspecialist is left unsure as to how deeply the contrast runs between Small and those other interpreters. Worse, the nonspecialist may fail to see the genuine hermeneutic advantage Small gains over the others by means of his contextualizing efforts, by means of his outlining the dynamic relationship between Nietzsche and Paul Réé.

Emory University


ROBERT GUAY

If, as both Michel Foucault and Bernard Williams suggest, the significance of Nietzsche lies in the uses to which his thought can be put, then we should welcome the appearance of Christine Swanton’s Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View. By putting Nietzsche in the service of contemporary analytic virtue ethics, Swanton contributes to clarifying just how wide and deep the range of suitable appropriations of his work is. Anyone who reads this book will learn an immense amount about the intricacies of current discussions of virtue ethics. Furthermore, by situating Nietzsche’s immoralist psychology in relation to her own favored ethical outlook, Swanton forcefully addresses a number of issues that arise in almost any appropriation of Nietzsche for ethics. This is therefore a valuable book, even if it perhaps ultimately leads up a garden path.

The contemporary flourishing of virtue ethics arguably begins with G. E. M. Anscombe’s claim for the priority of moral psychology to ethics. Her argument is, roughly, that it is necessary to have a correct account of the proper functioning of persons and agency in order to consider the normative standards that are appropriate for human beings. With respect to this basic position, Swanton follows in the tradition of Anscombe. She looks to Nietzsche, and also empirical psychology, for “psychological theories of character which give a sufficiently deep account”(6) of those fine inner states that constitute virtues. This is an incisive use of Nietzsche. If we take Nietzsche as offering an especially radical or “deep” version of moral psychology, then Nietzschean psychology should have a profound effect on the ethical approach that Anscombe has in mind.

Swanton, accordingly, identifies her main appropriation of Nietzsche in this way: “Nietzsche’s importance to ethical theory, in my view, lies not only in his characteristic emphasis on the expressive component of morality, but also in his view that depth-psychological analysis reveals that apparently valuable responses can express disvaluable states”(130). Nietzsche, for Swanton, informs us that human activity is distinctively meaningful, perhaps as revelatory of inner states. Moreover, Nietzsche provides us an account of how this meaningfulness, although dependent on superficial psychological explanations, ultimately arises out of “deeper” psychic structures. Swanton also makes use of a number of other, more specific Nietzschean psychological claims. She claims that a Nietzschean moral psychology demands that we “lower our sights” in identifying the virtues: “If the views of Nietzsche and post-Nietzscheans on human nature are correct, it is vital that we form a conception of virtue that is appropriate for what Nietzsche has called ‘the convalescent’”(64). She finds in “undistorted”(12) will to power an account of “self-love . . . as a bonding with oneself”(134) that is a “crucial depth-psychological component of virtue”(11). She also seems to find in Nietzsche an ally in her broad approach, especially with regard to the importance of creativity (53), a pluralist