



The Self: Naturalism, Consciousness and the First-Person Stance, by Jonardon Ganeri

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form of linguistic or conceptual competence. Instead, what we find, he suggests, is reliance upon more traditional argument analysis.

Towards the end of the book, Cappelen provides the reader with a series of lessons about what role cases might *actually* play in philosophical reasoning [188–90]. He suggests that the function of philosophical cases is to raise questions about ‘philosophically significant features of the world’, but the justification requirements are not satisfied by appeals to so-called intuitions. He notes here that the answers to philosophical questions that such cases raise cannot be solved through invoking a single kind of modality. He observes a kind of evidential promiscuity here, since some answers that we give to such questions will invoke metaphysical necessity, some conceptual necessity and others nomological necessity. Cappelen claims it is simply wrong to think of judgements about cases as rock-bottom points in philosophical discourse, for is there no point where reasons, arguments and justifications run out [192]. Equally we should not think—as some intuitionists do—that judgments accompanied by a special phenomenology, whatever that might be, play an important role in philosophical theorizing. He denies that philosophers seek—and what follows is quite a remarkable list—essences, necessary truths, or *a priori* knowledge when they engage in philosophical investigations, and they certainly do not seek the views of the folk.

If Cappelen is correct then a great deal of contemporary analytic philosophy is predicated upon mistaken assumptions, and revision of philosophical practice—or at least of our understandings of that practice—is urgently required. No doubt there will be substantive responses to Cappelen’s provocative theses in the near future by those wishing to defend intuitions. This is not the place for such a response, but some concerns should be noted. First, one might well question his choice of thought experiments: are the cases chosen truly representative? Moreover, is his analysis of them fair? Secondly, Cappelen places an enormous amount of importance on discovering a univocal definition of ‘intuition’. He discerns a wide variety of meanings and possible functions of intuitions in arguments. This is a valuable lesson in itself, but the implication seems to be that the presence of more than one conception is evidence that none of them is actually in play in our reasoning. Finally, it is odd that no mention is made of Rawls’s reflective equilibrium. Rawls’s discussion of the interplay between intuitions and considered principles provides a much smaller target for Cappelen’s critique than, say, the work of Bealer which affords intuitions much greater epistemic force. It would have been interesting to see what Cappelen said of Rawls’s work.

Such misgivings notwithstanding, this is a thought-provoking book that explores important questions about how philosophical research proceeds and, indeed, what philosophical progress might look like. Any future methodological work in philosophy that makes substantive use of the idea of intuitions needs to respond to Cappelen’s challenges.

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Ganeri, Jonardon, *The Self: Naturalism, Consciousness and the First-Person Stance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, xii + 374, £40 (hardback).

This masterly piece of philosophical scholarship and analysis should interest any philosopher of mind or scholar of Indian philosophy. Any Western philosopher diffident

about Indian philosophy should read it. Ganeri's book is a superb example of global philosophy, an unforced integration of Indian and Western voices in an account of subjectivity.

On the one hand, Ganeri presents a systematic, naturalistic, exploration of selfhood and consciousness, in dialogue with contemporary philosophers of mind and cognitive scientists, with the Western tradition from Augustine to the present, and with the classical and medieval Indian philosophical tradition.

On the other hand, Ganeri explores the history of Indian philosophy of mind. He devotes careful philological and historical attention to texts, some familiar but creatively reinterpreted, some rarely studied and, thus, brought into contemporary discourse for the first time. The book succeeds admirably at both these tasks, and each enriches the other.

Ganeri's thesis is

that in a full account of human subjectivity three distinct dimensions in the concept of a self are in play . . . There is an *immersed self*, the aspect of first-person presentation in the content of consciousness . . . a phenomenologically given sense of mineness. There is a *participant self*, the inhabitation of a first-person stance . . . involving the relations of involvement, participation and endorsement . . . Finally there is an *underself*, the procedural monitoring of all the states, autonomous or alienated, that one embodies . . . [14]

Ganeri ties all of this to the central idea of *ownership*—that to be a self is not simply to be a locus of subjectivity, agency or consciousness, or to be a complex of processes, but rather to occupy a position from which one *owns*, or *appropriates* one's own experiences, judgments, and actions. It is not clear that all of these pieces fit together. I am not persuaded, for instance, by Ganeri's account of the role of qualitative properties in experience, by his realism about subjective experience, or by his idea that ownership is essential to subjectivity. But these are hard matters, and whether successful or not, following Ganeri in this enterprise is worthwhile.

It is important to Ganeri—and, he argues, for most of his interlocutors—that any account of selfhood be *naturalistic*. Ganeri distinguishes a number of kinds of naturalism, generally tracking demands on the tightness of supervenience or reduction relations. He characterizes 'hard naturalism' as follows:

Observations about the workings of the natural world lead to the construction of parallel explanations [*sic*] about the functioning of mind and morality . . . There is a continuity between the methods by which the natural world is investigated and understood and the methods of philosophy. [28–9]

'Soft naturalism', according to Ganeri, merely recognizes some autonomy for what Sellars calls a 'space of reasons', and so the necessity for explanatory resources that transcend those of the non-intentional natural sciences. This weaker sense of naturalism, he argues, constrains theory in the contemporary context and he argues that each of the Indian schools he addresses is naturalistic in this sense.

The historical claim is controversial, and depends for its plausibility on the fuzzy boundary between philological fidelity and philosophical reconstruction. The more one is committed to the former the less satisfied one will be with Ganeri's reading of the Indian tradition, which adverts to enough *sui generis* cognitive phenomena in that tradition to give a Western cognitive scientist pause.

On the other hand, anyone committed to doing the history of philosophy through rational reconstruction will be very happy with Ganeri's approach, jettisoning commitments bound to particular socio-cultural milieus, and retaining the core insights

of Indian philosophical speculation. I am happy with much of his account, but if one is not familiar with Indian philosophy, when reading Ganeri's exegesis, *caveat lector*. Often tendentious readings are proffered without flagging their controversial status. I note some of these in the context of his discussion of Buddhism.

Ganeri's account of the classical Indian materialist Cārvāka position is superb philosophical reconstruction. Drawing on the shards of Bhspati's text that survive and on the refutations advanced by his opponents, Ganeri argues persuasively for several strains of Cārvāka thought, some relying on a supervenience model, others epiphenomenalist. The exegesis is never strained, and demonstrates the importance of Cārvāka thought in the Indian context. This analysis is certainly one of Ganeri's most important contributions.

A real gem is Ganeri's observation [81] that Cārvāka may have had direct impact on modern Anglophone philosophy. H. T. Colebrook, a scholar employee of the East India Company, lectured on Cārvāka in 1827, where J. S. Mill was probably present. Mill's account in *A System of Logic* of the emergence of novel properties from systems of interacting entities, Ganeri observes, is redolent of Cārvāka accounts of the emergence of cognition from matter, and in turn were influential on nineteenth- and twentieth-century British emergentists.

Ganeri is not as careful or as scrupulous when he turns to Buddhist philosophy, and here his exegesis must be handled with care. While his philological and philosophical novelties are intriguing, they take us rather far from 'straight' readings of the texts, and the tendentious, often problematic moves are often hidden from sight. Ganeri makes two such claims. First,

Buddhists do not [belong] to the camp of hard naturalists . . . [T]heir terms of reference are rooted in an intentional rather than a scientific stance. The bonds that bring the mental particulars into close relation are thoroughly normative and evaluative. [55]

A bit later:

Early Buddhist theory of mind . . . is one of liberal naturalism . . . For at least some Buddhists, what is described are not chains of causes and effects at all, but rather cluster-features in their phenomenological presentedness—'dependent origination' (*pratītya-samutpāda*) is then an account of temporal ordering within the structure of appearance, not a proto-Humean regularity theory of causation. . . [55]

Each of these claims is presented as though it is obvious, and each will strike many Buddhist scholars as wrong. *Pratītya-samutpāda* is in fact presented in virtually every canonical text as straightforwardly causal, and its standard Buddhist gloss, 'when this arises, so does that; when this does not, that does not', is as regularist, and as non-normative, as one could wish. There is no real textual support for Ganeri's revisionist reading, and while it might be an interesting way to *reconstruct* Buddhism, to present it unproblematically as *history* will mislead the Western philosopher new to this material.

In a discussion of Prabhācandra's account of the relation of self-awareness to the body, the two key technical terms *artha* and *ālambana* receive two very different translations in contexts in which coordination of these terms is essential. In the first context [59], *ālambana* is translated as *ground*, and *artha* as *thing*. In the second [62], *ālambana* is translated as *objective referent* and *artha* as *content*. Each of these translations can be correct, depending on philosophical context. But these two passages are part of the same discussion in which these technical terms are being contrasted. To change their English renderings in mid-stream is misleading, particularly for an audience unaware of their semantic range and technical usage.

Most disturbing is Ganeri's re-translation and dramatic reinterpretation of the central Buddhist terms for the aggregates or *skandhas* into which Buddhist analyses decompose the person [127 ff]. These translations and the interpretation in which they figure are also presented as though they are commonplace [127]:

I now want to examine a theory of mind which has had an unparalleled influence in many parts of the world over a period of many centuries. The theory in question rests on the following idea. Individual mental particulars such as particular moments of conscious experience have a compositional structure. Mental particulars are built out of five sorts of basic psychological activity, namely:

1. registering (*rūpa*)
2. appraising (*vedanā*)
3. stereotyping (*sajñāna*)
4. readying (*saskāra*)
5. attending (*vijñāna*)

This is simply wrong. First, *skandha* theory is *not* a compositional theory of *mental particulars*, but a compositional theory of the *person*. Nobody prior to Ganeri within or outside of the Buddhist tradition has suggested otherwise. Buddhist compositional theories of mental particulars are offered in the Abhidharma analysis of mental processes and mental factors, not in *skandha* theory.

The translations are also tendentious. *Rūpa* is almost always translated as *matter*, or *material form*. *Vedanā* refers to sensation, or hedonic tone. *Sajñāna* is perception. *Saskāra* refers to dispositions or cognitive sets, and *vijñāna* to consciousness. While these are not the only options, no serious scholar has deviated very far from them; Ganeri's choices are patent outliers.

Finally, note that the first *skandha* is *material*, and only the *last* is conscious. There is neither lexical nor doctrinal licence for Ganeri's renderings or interpretation of these as components of all conscious states. While Ganeri might be proposing an interesting *extension* of Buddhist theory, to present this as straightforward exegesis is misleading.

Ganeri's concern to find the 'phenomenal mineness' he takes to be essential to a self in Buddhist psychology also leads him to present tendentious readings of Yogācāra accounts of the foundation consciousness or *ālaya-vijñāna* as straightforward accounts of doctrine. The claim that a 'new additional type of item' [150] is proposed in this theory, a type of item never fully spelled out or identified, later characterized as a 'mineness maker' [167], receives no textual support in canonical Buddhist literature.

As a final example, consider Ganeri's translation of *prayatna* as *will* [229 ff]. *Prayatna* is usually rendered in English as *effort*. It is a *component* or a *characteristic* of an action. *Will*, by contrast, is a *faculty* of voluntary action. It is important to note that there is *no* Sanskrit equivalent for this term, precisely because it is an Augustinian invention, introduced in the context of theodicy. Indian psychology faces no such problem and recognizes no such faculty. Ganeri's translation hence obscures an important difference between these two traditions, suggesting homology where there is none.

This problem is exacerbated by the absence of a glossary. There is, of necessity, a lot of Sanskrit in the text. But those who are new to Indian philosophy would find a glossary useful when a term occurs a few pages beyond its introduction. There is also a lot of English in the text that, in the context of attributing positions to Indian philosophers, is translating Sanskrit. When these English terms are not standard renderings, the specialist is left wondering which Sanskrit term Ganeri is translating, while the non-specialist is oblivious of the tendentious reading.

Despite these problems, this is a marvellous book. It is an extraordinary example of the prosecution of a philosophical agenda through the fecund juxtaposition of two philosophical traditions. It is must-reading for any philosopher of mind, for anyone with an interest in Indian philosophy, and for anyone interested in the enterprise of cross-cultural philosophy.

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Garver, Eugene, *Aristotle's Politics: Living Well and Living Together*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012, pp. xi + 300, US\$40.00 (hardback).

This is not a book of exegesis of Aristotle's political development, nor a contribution to, or attempt at developing something like, an Aristotelian political philosophy; rather it is professedly a book on politics, simply, which, however, uses reflections, or meditations, on Aristotle's *Politics* as its vehicle. But then why not simply think directly about politics, today and now, if that is what we are interested in? Because 'we can do better in thinking about politics through the *Politics* than we could without the help of a great mind' [14]. Fair enough; however, Garver does not explain why we should choose Aristotle as the great mind to guide us—assuming we are to pick only one—instead of, say, Locke or Rawls (who surely have at least good minds), who would presumably help us in our thoughts in rather different ways.

Moreover, how are we to know if we have succeeded in thinking not merely *better* but actually *well* about politics, simply, after we have meditated thoroughly on Aristotle's *Politics*? The difficulty is complicated by the often alien, sometimes cranky or at least tortuous, exposition of that treatise, which Garver concedes makes one's use of that work rather like, in his analogy, how one had to use an early computer, by constantly monitoring the 'organs, functions, and various systems' which were at work and making a difference 'under the hood' [15]. Garver does not explain what would count as success, or how we could tell that we had become astute thinkers about politics. However, he does make it plain at the start that what commonly seems an obstacle to others is not, in his view, a genuine hindrance to his project: he holds that the *Politics* is less bound by and limited to a specific context than Aristotle's *Ethics*, and he thinks that the *Politics* is the more philosophical and philosophically interesting work [13–15]. He proposes his book as a kind of demonstration of these claims.

Although the book is not offering an exegesis, it does follow the order of the books of the *Politics*, devoting in general a chapter for each of that treatise's books, and posing in each chapter a big question, meant to be of general interest for politics, simply, which serves to focus or organize Garver's lucubrations—not necessarily systematic and certainly not comprehensive—about the corresponding book. For instance, the big question which Garver focuses on in the first chapter, as regards Book I, is 'how to form a community that aims at a common good out of people with the capacity and so the permanent possibility of aiming at despotism instead' [2, author's italics]. One may see in this question both the interest and the difficulty in Garver's approach. From the point of view of exegesis and interpretation, Aristotle's account of slavery looks to be a relatively minor and incidental aspect of *Politics* I, a putting into its proper place of simply one relationship that Aristotle thinks plays a role in a typical