

BOOK REVIEWS
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Essay Review
Cora Diamond on Ethics
edited by Maria Balaska

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Cora Diamond on Ethics is now the second collection of essays entirely dedicated to Cora Diamond's moral thought. Thoughtfully arranged by Maria Balaska, it brings together eleven original contributions, including a new essay by Diamond. The volume is divided into five thematic sections – Concepts, Moral Theory, Animal, Human, Narcissism – which, according to the editor, both represent “some of the topics that Cora Diamond [has] illuminated with her thinking” and “function as knots in the tapestry of her work” (p. 2).

The title of the volume may be subject to two sorts of misunderstanding. The first seems intended as a kind of intellectual tension, since it is expounded upon – yet sustained – in the editor's “Introduction”. The title *Cora Diamond on Ethics* may suggest that for Diamond ethics is one branch of philosophy on a par with many others, constituted by a separate subject matter, which is precisely the view that Diamond challenges. However, the tension present in the title seems to be accountable of the way in which Diamond challenges that view. Diamond does not introduce some alternative conception of ethics, but is working with the existing criteria of what belongs to ethics; it can be said that a significant part of Diamond's work has been devoted to changing our understanding of ethics from within. The issue of whether the area of ethics is a separate part of philosophy delineated by distinctively moral concepts is further discussed by Oskari Kuusela in his chapter “Defending Diamond against Harcourt: Wittgensteinian Moral Philosophy and the Subject Matter of Ethics”. In support of the reading that Diamond espouses a weaker claim – i.e. that there are distinctively moral concepts, but they do not exhaust what belongs to ethics – Kuusela advances an illuminating argument drawing on

Wittgenstein's lectures from 1933, that distinctively moral concepts do not demarcate morality, because their unity is complex and their application depends on non-moral concepts. Kuusela is right that Diamond does not make a stronger claim attributed to her by Harcourt, i.e. she does not deny that there are distinctively moral concepts. Nevertheless, it seems that Diamond's intention is to go beyond the weaker claim attributed to her by Kuusela. In arguing that moral character of a concept is a matter of its use, Diamond is not merely suggesting that – as Kuusela puts it – “there are no distinctively moral concepts such that the subject matter of morality can be identified [...] with reference to them” (p. 89), but also wants to challenge the very thinking about ethics in terms of *distinctively* moral concepts (cf. Diamond 1996a: 252f.; 1993: 142ff). The latter feature of Diamond's ethical thought is brought into view when we approach her as inheriting from Iris Murdoch. One of the important questions that comes forth when looking at Diamond's thought from Murdoch's perspective is the nature of distinctively moral concepts (cf. e.g. Diamond 2010: 54, 64, 71, 75f.). Furthermore, if we keep in mind that according to Diamond not only may *any* concept, but virtually *anything*, have ethical bearing – “a fundamental form of moral rationality is the *interpretation of something or other into practical life*” (Diamond 1996b: 108) – then the usefulness of maintaining that there are distinctively moral concepts ceases to be obvious.

The title may also mislead a potential reader by suggesting that the volume offers an overview of Diamond's moral thought. While the contributions to the volume connect in many different ways with the themes of Diamond's ethical writings – only some of which are captured by the thematic sections – they also diverge from it, in various directions. One such example is Garry L. Hagberg's essay “Improvisation within the Range of Implication: Cora Diamond, Henry James, and the Adventure of Literature”, which appeals to Diamondian threads of moral attention, imagination and perception, and then intriguingly connects them with detailed descriptions of jazz improvisation and inventiveness. Although this general strategy adopted in many of the essays contributes to the richness of the book and proves how stimulating Diamond's work in ethics is, it also makes it not a book to recommend to someone unfamiliar with Diamond's ethical views and looking for an accessible synopsis.

I cannot hope to do justice to the intellectual diversity of the volume. Therefore, in the remaining part of this review I shall engage more deeply with a selection of the chapters. First, I turn to the issues concerning concepts, animals and human beings. I bring together two essays – Ian Ground and Michael Bavidge's and David R. Cerbone's – which, when read together, shed light on each other. Reading them together also shows that what is usually referred to as “animal ethics” is not best thought of as a separate part of moral thought. Then, I discuss one inconspicuous feature of Diamond's moral

thought brought out by three different contributors – Stephen Mulhall, Maria Balaska and Richard G. T. Gipps.

In their essay “Ethology and Ethical Change” Ground and Bavidge raise an important issue in Diamond’s thought regarding what can bring about a moral change in our attitude towards other animals. Diamond is well known for endorsing the significance of – as she once called it – “literature and its neighbors” for moral thought (Diamond 1994b), an excellent example of which can be found in Alice Crary’s contribution “Seeing Animal Suffering”, whereas Ground and Bavidge spot a passage in Diamond’s 1978 paper “Eating Meat and Eating People”, which seems to them promising in opening up moral thought to such presumably non-literary resources as ethology.¹ In that passage Diamond (1991a: 329) writes:

I had thought that the extension of the ‘friendship’ range of concepts was obviously possible only in some cases, titmice and not hippopotamuses, e.g.; but recent films of the relation between whales and their Greenpeace rescuers show that I was probably taking an excessively narrow view.

Ground and Bavidge begin their argument with a thumbnail sketch of Diamond’s critique of what they call “simple Extensionism”. The proponents of “simple Extensionism” claim that moral reasons formulated on the basis of the possession of such chosen capacities as the capacity for suffering and enjoyment, should be consistently extended to all possible cases in advance, i.e. to all human and non-human individuals in possession of pertinent capacity. The authors contrast it with Diamond’s “complex Extensionism”, which they see both as a critique of the aforementioned tendency in moral thought to provide reasons for anyone – “a metric available in advance” – and an avoidance of falling into conservatism regarding existing practices – “practice which is immune to reform” (p. 154). Diamond rejects the model of extension of our moral concepts based on biological features of human and non-human individuals which is guided solely by consistency. Instead, Ground and Bavidge argue, her “complex Extensionism” suggests to “start with our traditions and our embedded social attitudes and move forwards to a not yet settled future” (p. 156). An example of this can be seen, according to the authors, in the quoted passage, in which Diamond takes the concept of friendship – settled in relation to human beings and some animals – and

¹ I am not suggesting that ethological writings are lacking literary features that may count as morally relevant. For a related issue cf. Diamond (1991b: 356–358). A difference between ethology and “literature and its neighbors” that can be pointed out in this context is the necessary non-fictionality of the former. However, Diamond has made it clear that the significance of literature for moral thought does not depend on its fictionality, see Diamond (1994a). On the other hand, in her occasional references to scientific research (e.g., A. R. Luria), her arguments also do not depend on its veracity, cf. Diamond (2020: 29).

extends it to whales after watching a film about Greenpeace activists rescuing them. Yet, Ground and Bavidge argue that it may be contentious what the real basis of Diamond's extension of the concept of friendship was. A critic could contend that Diamond's account passes by something that makes her extension of the moral concept possible at all, namely the psychological capacities of whales. Instead of rebuking the putative allegation, the authors use it as a stage setting for their main argument. They read Diamond as admitting that "new discoveries about the facts *can* change our constitutive attitudes" (p. 157). On this ground, they develop an account on which empirical discoveries about animal capacities – discoveries ethology is concerned with – are bound up with moral commitments. Therefore, Ground and Bavidge claim that the presupposition of both forms of Extensionism, simple and complex, should be called into question. They argue that

Extensionism presupposes that our moral concepts, embedded in our everyday life, do not *already* reach out to other animals. But our moral concepts do not *start off* being limited to the human case. The reason for this is that our psychological concepts do not *start off* being limited to the human case. And those psychological concepts bring with them moral commitments that are a necessary condition of the possibility of Extensionism. (p. 157)

The argument contains three strong theses: 1) Our psychological concepts do already reach out to other animals, 2) psychological concepts are bearers of moral commitments, 3) extension of moral concepts is dependent on moral commitments revealed after proper application of psychological concepts. In their essay, Ground and Bavidge account only for the first thesis which brings out the role of ethology in moral thought.² Here they appeal to Wittgenstein's remark in which he says that when we look at a cat stalking a bird we see "the natural expression of an intention" (PI: §647) and a passage from Raimond Gaita's *The Philosopher's Dog*, where he contends that concepts such as intention "are formed in responses to animals and to human beings together" (2005: 62). Ground and Bavidge take these two remarks as an expression of a general view of "the nature of psychological concepts" (p. 160), which allegedly states that "our psychological concepts are not [...] acquired in or restricted to the human world alone" (p. 159). The issue is extremely complex, and I cannot go into it in detail. Contrary to the authors, I think that there are good reasons to think that some psychological concepts were first formed in their application to humans and only now we (or at least some of us) apply them to animals as

² The authors write that "discoveries about the capacities of other animals do not figure as lemmata but instead elicit and evoke profound responses which are various, even conflicting" (p. 160) or that "[ethological] discoveries change the space which we share with other animals" (p. 168). But it is not clear how this hangs together with saying that "psychological concepts bring with them moral commitments".

well, and also that some psychological concepts are (at least for now) “restricted to the human world alone”. A good example of a psychological concept whose range of application to animals is not at all obvious is the concept of *hope*. This issue is discussed in Cerbone’s contribution, and I shall return to it shortly. Here I would like to point out something else. In the chapter from which the quotation used by the authors comes, Gaita contrasts an attitude – an *attitude* we may have towards other people and animals (cf. PPF: §22) – with an *assumption* we might make in ascribing psychological states to others. He comments that “[a]ssumptions invite questions about whether they are justified” (Gaita 2005: 61). Empirical discoveries made by ethology – like the ones mentioned by Ground and Bavidge, e.g. that Capuchin monkeys in Costa Rica can deceive their fellows – if taken as *empirical* discoveries, *are* more or less well justified scientific assumptions. Meanwhile, we are generally not in need of evidence to justify our attitude towards animals. When I say that my dog Manis is bewildered by the apartment rearrangements I had done while he was out for a walk, or that a crow sitting in a chestnut tree outside my window is giving me an intrigued look, I am not in a position to look for or give evidence for those ascriptions. They are expressions of my attitude towards them, ways of thinking about my life with them. And in the majority of cases, I am not even interested in knowing what is going on according to some scientific description. I think that there is a significant difference between responding to animals which in various ways are a part of our life and trying to figure out and describe the interactions between some group of animals living without much human interference. The former is a case of expressing our attitudes. In the latter, ascribing concrete psychological states is in many respects more like a case of making assumptions.³

The authors bypass the important issue of what use can be feasibly made of remarks such as those borrowed from Wittgenstein and Gaita within a science like ethology. I do not think that appropriating these for the advantage of ethology will work smoothly, but I shall set this question aside here (cf. RPP II: §29). Ground and Bavidge advance an argument according to which we first should get clear about the ascription of psychological concepts to animals – a domain of ethology – after which we will become aware of some significant moral commitments on which the application of the moral concepts is based. In my last engagement with this contribution, I shall raise some doubts concerning that dependence.

It is striking that the authors did not mention that in her 1978 paper Diamond (1991a: 324) writes that

³ The difference comes out, for instance, in the meaningfulness and the ways of questioning an attitude and an empirical discovery.

[t]he difference between human beings and animals is not to be discovered by the studies of Washoe or the activities of dolphins. It is not that sort of study or ethology or evolutionary theory that is going to tell us the difference between us and animals.

What is striking about disregarding this passage is that Diamond explicitly states here that the scientific discoveries of the sort provided by ethology do not contribute to clarifying *the difference* between human beings and animals (although they do throw light on the differences and similarities). And the difference between human beings and animals is one of “the ways in which we mark what human life is[,] belongs to the source of moral life” (ibid.: 333). On the other hand, Ground and Bavidge are right that Diamond’s bringing up a film about whales as having influenced her use of the concept of friendship may after all appear to confer some moral significance on ethological discoveries. So, does Diamond contradict herself, or is there a reading on which a documentary film may be seen as contributing to our understanding of *the difference* between human beings and animals? I want to suggest that we should read Diamond as holding that what for someone may be morally significant in an ethological discovery does not lie in its being a discovery. Given this, the kind of footing that is required by Diamond’s extensionism lies in a very different place from where the authors think it should be located – and secured by ethology (cf. Diamond 2010: 56ff). Diamond’s extension of the concept of friendship to whales was not an extension *in virtue of* whales’ psychological capacities shown in the film, which revealed the moral commitments that people should have towards them.⁴ Rather, it might have been that Diamond was “imaginatively touched” by the documentary about whales and their rescuers. And an “imaginative sense” of connectedness between whales and human beings entered her use of the concept of friendship.⁵ It can be called an extension of a concept or its deepening. But I think that it is important for Diamond that such a new use of concept is not underwritten by any metaphysical or empirical features of reality.⁶

⁴ Cf. Diamond’s discussion of Murdoch’s critique of the in-virtue use of moral concepts in Diamond 1996b: 93–95. In that paper Diamond talks also about “a deepening of our moral concepts” by events and experiences in our life (ibid.: 101).

⁵ I am drawing here on Diamond’s essay “The Importance of Being Human” (1991e: 42). In “Eating Meat and Eating People” – published several years earlier – Diamond gives a significantly different use to the concept of imagination. She writes there about “imaginatively reading into animals” e.g. expectations or an appeal to our pity. But I think that her use of the notion of contemplation in that paper is getting at something similar enough to justify my reading.

⁶ Cf. e.g. “there is no need to assume that philosophical-critical reflection on a mode of thought must take the form of investigating whether the mode of thought is appropriate to the nature of what is thought about. [...] As I read Wittgenstein, he does not give us a

Furthermore, I want to note that the extension of moral concepts is an activity that is not limited to the case of animals only. (The use of a generally non-moral concept in a moral way can also be seen as a kind of extension of our linguistic practices, cf. Diamond 1989: 31ff., 1991c: 27, 1996a: 248; Bronzo 2013: 273.) There are many examples of this in Diamond's writings, but I shall consider a different one which concerns the concept of friendship.

In the novel *The Black Lake* by Hella S. Haasse, a Dutch boy, the son of a plantation administrator, retrospectively tells the story of his shared childhood and adolescence with a native boy Oeroeg, the son of a Javanese *mandor*. The action takes place in the Dutch East Indies in the first half of the 20th century. The narrator describes his relation with Oeroeg in terms of friendship, but as we delve into the story, it becomes less and less obvious that it is really so. While the Dutch boy is almost completely unaware of the difference between the Dutch and the natives during the colonial times, Oeroeg only acts out his indifference. Being seen so often with a Dutch boy – but not as his *djongos*, servant – puts Oeroeg in a situation in which the majority of both the natives and the Dutch people openly express their contempt. The Dutch boy struggles to overcome the differences that set him and Oeroeg apart – the difficulties concerning language, social and economic status, dwelling places, schools – but as they grow older, the futility of his struggles becomes apparent to him. The paradox consists in that every successful effort to overcome a difficulty results in Oeroeg becoming more aware of *the difference*, up to the point of its acknowledgement ultimately leading Oeroeg to become one of the local leaders of the independence movement. The unnamed Dutch narrator leaves Oeroeg, with whom he can no longer achieve mutual understanding, and the Dutch East Indies to continue his education in the Netherlands. When he returns to Java after the end of the Japanese invasion, he meets someone of whom he cannot even tell with certainty if it is Oeroeg or not. At that point he realizes that the Oeroeg he knew, the Oeroeg he thought was his friend, was only a surface of a person, whom he never made an effort to get to know in depth.

My example is intended to illustrate a somewhat reversed scenario to the one challenged by Ground and Bavidge. In the novel, the concept of friendship starts off as not being restricted to the Dutch or to the natives of Java only. Also, there are no limitations on either side on the use of psychological concepts; the differences in the use of psychological concepts pertain only to the corresponding psychological differences in the characters. Nonetheless, the extended use of the concept of friendship made by the Dutch

different way of trying to meet the demand that we justify a mode of thought by features of what we are talking about, but rather enables us to see that such demands are themselves confused.” (Diamond 1991e: 62). See also *ibid.*: 47 on different aims that attention to empirical reality may have in moral thought.

boy turned out to be illegitimate. But the impossibility of friendship was not due to some differences in character or psychological capacities of the Dutch and Javanese people. The extension of the concept of friendship turned out to be illusory because of *the difference* between the narrator as a Dutch colonist and Oeroeg as a colonized Javanese.

I discussed Ground and Bavidge's contribution at length because I think that the authors touch an important point. In the times of popularity of ethological literature, there is a strong temptation to think that ethological discoveries will have an impact on our treatment of animals. When Diamond extended the concept of friendship to whales after watching a documentary film, it was a kind of "moral achievement". However, this does not mean that everyone after watching that film would be in a position to see the possibility of such an extension (cf. Diamond 1991d: 239). Not everyone will be imaginatively touched by what they see (or read). Moreover, a person blind to that possibility would not be using the concept of friendship in some incomplete or incorrect way. (Although it is not incorrect to say that one's concept of friendship is deep and rich or, on the contrary, shallow and impoverished; cf. Mulhall's chapter in the reviewed volume.) Ethological discoveries concerning the cognitive capacities of animals may carry moral weight, but not as scientific warrants for the extension of moral concepts.⁷ It is worth remarking that the authors also mention a different way in which ethology can bear on ethics. Ethology provides us with intelligible accounts of "the richness of the animal's life *in its world*" (160). This ability of ethology is closely related to its focus on a dense description of particular cases.⁸ In this respect ethological discoveries may elicit in us "wonder" and "humility", and a "realization that the world is not the object of human thought alone" (164, 166).

Now I would like to get back to Cerbone's contribution "Losing Hope: Wittgenstein and Camus After Diamond". The main theme of Cerbone's essay is the concept of hope and its importance in human life. He takes off from Diamond's paper "Losing Your Concepts" and goes on to argue unexpectedly that there may be concepts that cannot be lost, because they ineluctably belong to what it is to be a human being. (Two other contributions that also engage –

⁷ For the issue of the relation between psychological and moral concepts cf. e.g. Diamond's remark "[t]hat I ought to attend to a being's sufferings and enjoyments is not *the* fundamental moral relation to it, determining how I ought to act towards it" (Diamond 1991a: 325).

⁸ Ground and Bavidge's account of the distinctiveness of ethology has some interesting resemblances to Wittgenstein-inspired cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz's idea of thick description, cf. Geertz (1973). Compare also a contrast that Cray works with in her contribution to the reviewed volume, between plain, neutral empirical facts and charged accounts evoking our affective responses.

however differently – with that particular essay by Diamond are Roger Teichmann’s “Conceptual Corruption” and Anniken Greve’s “What Is In the Look?”.) In-between the exposition of main forms of conceptual loss distinguished by Diamond and the critical discussion of Camus’s *The Myth of Sisyphus* there is a brief part on Wittgenstein on hope. I shall focus entirely on that part and make a connection with the previously discussed contribution.

I have suggested that Ground and Bavidge oversimplified in their essay the problem of the application of psychological concepts to animals. In his essay Cerbone refers to some of Wittgenstein’s post-*Investigations* remarks on the philosophy of psychology to show how limited the application of concepts like hope or grief to animals is. Cerbone writes that

[t]he *day after tomorrow* is not something that can be said to figure into the life of a dog as the dog lives that life, and so even if the dog can take up a hopeful attitude toward something in its immediate surroundings, that attitude lacks the kind of indefinite projectibility that marks out the human capacity to hope. (p. 63)

Cerbone appeals to Wittgenstein’s analogy of “the tapestry of life” and presents “hope” as one of its “recurring patterns” (ibid.). He wants us to see that our capacity to hope or grieve is not an independent phenomenon, but interwoven with terms with which we mark time and with modal terms; it is in many significant ways dependent on our life with language. However, Cerbone wants to go further and for this purpose he notes, following Wittgenstein, a difference between hope and other emotions like fear or anger. While fear “could be explained ‘at a *single* showing” (p. 64), hope is more related to belief in that it has no characteristic expression in behaviour. Cerbone’s going further consists in stepping from that grammatical remark to a claim that therefore hope is more complex (p. 65), by what he means that the pattern of hope is more branchy and removing it would affect a significant area of “the tapestry of life”. This picture of hope is intended as a reminder for someone like Camus who thinks it is possible to, as Cerbone phrases it, “envision a way of living freed from the concept of hope” (p. 59). But this way of picturing the concept of hope comes at some cost. It leaves us with pictures of emotions like fear or anger as less complex and – therefore – easier to rip out. It also leaves us with an impoverished picture of lives of animals, as there is a suggestion that in a life without hope an individual may “simply *drift* from moment to moment without any kind of reaction to what those moments have to offer” (p. 65). When Wittgenstein writes that hope is not in any obvious way visible in our life and is in this sense akin [*verwandt*] to belief – contrary to fear or happiness that have “characteristic expression-behaviour” – I do not think he means to suggest that it is more complex and – for this reason – harder to remove from “the tapestry of life” (RPP II: §§16, 148). Rather, he was only pointing out that in case of fear or anger it would be in general much

easier to *specify* what could be ripped out from “the tapestry of life” – which Cerbone agrees with (p. 64) – but *not* that their patterns are less complex. I would like to point out that emotions like fear are also in many different ways modified by our life with language, interwoven with terms with which we mark time and with modal terms; think e.g., about FOMO (“fear of missing out”), fear over a *deadline* for a paper, fear whether the deadline *could be* prolonged, etc., or even FEAR of God.⁹ I do not want to imply that fear is dependent on language. I want to suggest – and I take it as something suggested by Wittgenstein – that presumably everything *we* mean by *fear* and many of its manifestations, is dependent on our life with language, simply because our life is a life with language. (Or, borrowing from Rush Rhees, we can say that an expression of fear is meaningful only within a language game. Thus, the fact that fear can be explained at a single showing does not imply that it is some kind of independent phenomenon which cannot be misunderstood.) And if a dog cannot take up a hopeful attitude toward the day after tomorrow, they cannot fear what may happen the day after tomorrow either.

In this connection, I want to point out two things. First, that there may be various kinds of “projectibility that mark out the *animal* capacity to hope” (or fear) which are important in their lives, and go beyond their “immediate surroundings”. For instance, I can hope to go out for a walk with my dog in 5 hours when I finish work. My dog can hope to go out for a walk with me after I get home. Cerbone is right that *in 5 hours* “is not something that can be said to figure into the life of a dog”. But what I think *may* be said to figure into the life of a dog – the kind of projectibility that belongs to his life – is *after his owner gets home*. There may be numerous ways in which different animals mark time and those ways of marking time may be interwoven with their emotional capacities. In philosophy – contrary to, e.g. ethology – we simply do not have resources to determine the forms and scope of animals’ projectibility. This brings me to the second thing – Wittgenstein’s remarks in which he mentions animals. In a different essay of his, Cerbone argues ingeniously that we should attend to Wittgenstein’s descriptions of various language games as *imaginary* scenarios whose “goal is a more perspicuous understanding of what we say and do, and not of someone or something else” (Cerbone 1994: 173).¹⁰ Insofar as these scenarios should be read as “devices to aid in recovering the naturalness and familiarity of our concepts” (ibid.: 159), Cerbone says that it

⁹ I am referring here to Cerbone’s distinction between hope in the colloquial understanding of the term, referring to matters of everyday life, and HOPE in the existential-metaphysical sense, e.g. HOPE for life after death (cf. 72ff).

¹⁰ The imaginary character of Wittgenstein’s remarks is obvious in cases like the wood sellers or the builders. I am not sure Cerbone would agree, but it seems to me that in the vast majority of his remarks, Wittgenstein clarifies the grammar of our language through imaginary or possible scenarios (as opposed to actual ones).

would be a misunderstanding of Wittgenstein's intentions to want to replace them by real cases. I agree with Cerbone that we would misconstrue Wittgenstein's intention of how to display the workings of our language if we found it necessary to replace his imaginary examples by real cases. But it is important to acknowledge, as Diamond recently pointed out, that in our responses to Wittgenstein's imaginary scenarios we draw on our familiarity with the relevant practices and concepts, our familiarity with what our lives in which these practices and concepts are present look like (Diamond: unpublished manuscript). Thus, I want to suggest that in reading Wittgenstein's remarks mentioning animals, we should keep in mind that they are *not about* animals and their cognitive capacities. Yet, if these remarks *were* to tell us something about animals, in reading them we should also draw on our familiarity with respective animals. And in this regard, it would not be out of place to open up philosophy to ethological descriptions.¹¹

While reading Bavidge and Ground's contribution it is instructive to keep in mind that some psychological capacities may be dependent on our life with language, and their ascription to animals is limited. However, it is equally instructive to turn to ethological descriptions in order not to sublimate some supposedly exclusively human capacities and lose sight of the importance of concepts applicable to both human beings and animals.¹² In the last part of this review I shall focus on the dialogical aspect of Diamond's moral thought.

I have suggested earlier that dialogicality is an inconspicuous aspect of Diamond's moral thought. As far as I am aware, Diamond does not make any significant use of the notion of dialogue in her writings. Nonetheless, a "dialogical intercourse" seems to underlie her conception of the ethical, as Mulhall argues in his chapter, since it marks the very concept of the human being. Balaska situates the dialogical feature somewhat differently. Elaborating on Diamond, she holds that thinking itself has an "essentially dialogical character" and when it ceases to be dialogical, it goes off the rails. Gipps does not deploy the notion of dialogue in his contribution explicitly, but he describes a private linguist as a Narcissus immersed in an illusory monologue, and the ethical task to relinquish narcissism leads into dialogical engagements.

¹¹ The point I am trying to make is that our knowledge about, e.g. the wood-sellers is limited to what is said about them in the remark and – as Cerbone indicated – the point of the remark is not to tell us anything about the wood-sellers. Insofar as the remark is intended to elicit our responses regarding certain concepts, it does not presuppose our familiarity with the community of wood-sellers, but – as Diamond pointed out – our familiarity with those concepts within our community. I think much the same can be said of Wittgenstein's remarks mentioning animals. However, if we are interested in the application of psychological concepts to animals, the kind of familiarity needed here can be provided by, among other things, ethological research.

¹² Many examples of animal emotions, including hope and grief, can be found in "Mama's Last Hug" by Frans de Waal (2019: see 39–46 for grief, 136–140 for hope).

In the following discussion I shall focus primarily on Mulhall's essay since he spells out the issue in greatest detail.

In "Moralism, Moral Individualism and Testimony" Mulhall is concerned with the exchange between moral individualists (Peter Singer, Jeff McMahan) and their critics (Cora Diamond, Raimond Gaita, Alice Crary) on the moral standing of human beings, and raises an apt worry that this exchange may "devolve into a dialogue of the deaf" (p. 182). He proceeds by contrasting moral individualism as a stance in which "all markers of moral discourse are present, but morality's spirit is absent" (p. 176) – i.e., as falling into moralism – with the moral spirit that is plainly visible in the examples provided by the critics of moral individualism. What is at issue is that the moral individualists, while acknowledging that the examples used by their critics undisputedly "activate a set of powerful emotional responses" (p. 181) and have some kind of moral bearing, maintain that these examples are not *rationally* grounded and, therefore, (allegedly) lack proper "markers of moral discourse". Given that, Mulhall decides to set aside the issue of the emotional aspect of examples provided by the critics of moral individualism and instead focus on a subtle presentation of some features of those examples in such a way that moral individualists might be willing to acknowledge them as rationally grounded. In this connection, he unveils the dialogical feature underlying Diamond's moral thought.

The pivotal move in Mulhall's argument is his appeal to Rush Rhees's critical discussion of Wittgenstein's notion of language games and his view of language in general. First, it enables him to reject a conception of language where its use is an operation carried out by human beings in accordance with a set of rules. That conception of the use of language seems to be congruent with moral individualists' assumptions, or – at least – something of that sort is reflected in their way of thinking about morality (cf. Ground and Bavidge's discussion of "simple Extensionism"). Second, it informs the very concept of human being as a "fellow speaker" (p. 187). A fellow speaker is someone oriented "towards a particular topic or a subject-matter" of a conversation and brings to it her "distinctive perspective" reflecting "not only the particularity of her own experience of the world but also the distinctive array of knowledge (as well as the distinctive modes of its acquisition) that she has thereby acquired or mastered" (p. 186). Mulhall argues that to think of others as fellow speakers requires us being open to taking into account *their* distinctive perspective as potentially affecting *our* own distinctive perspective. Further, he claims that a case of the distinctive perspective that contributes to one's understanding is precisely the content disclosed in the examples provided by the critics of moral individualism (p. 187). However, what is revealed is not something that must be unquestionably acknowledged. Mulhall argues that a method of evaluation is involved, which he reconstructs as having a "triangular structure: in every case, the philosophical critic's relation to the person or

persons whose moral standing is at issue is mediated by a third person” (p. 190). That structure is repeated in the use of examples by the critics of moral individualism: giving an example is an act of testifying to the authority of that example (p. 191) which further obliges the reader to evaluatively respond to that testimony (p. 192). Mulhall is careful enough to restrict that claim to only those examples of Diamond’s that he brings up in his essay, yet it should be mentioned that the “triangular structure” does not exhaust the ways in which Diamond uses examples in her ethical writings.¹³

Building on Rush Rhees’ critical extension of Wittgenstein, Mulhall argues that the “dialogical intercourse” (p. 188) significantly belongs to our linguistic form of life¹⁴ and – by that Wittgensteinian feature – it also underlies Diamond’s ethics. At this point, he raises a caveat that the capacity to engage in dialogical intercourse should not be understood as a much more restrictive “candidate criterion for a morally relevant individual characteristic” (p. 189). He says that assuming that the critics of moral individualism would be blind to self-undermining implications of such a view is “patently absurd” (189). I think that Mulhall’s argument could be further supported by arguing that even if dialogical intercourse is a practice the origin of which is dependent on our linguistic form of life, becoming a partner in that existing practice need not be dependent on the possession of linguistic capacities.

In the introduction to a volume of essays in honor of Cora Diamond, Alice Crary offered an influential reading of Diamond’s ethical writings as challenging the exclusive focus of moral thought on judgements. Crary suggests that Diamond’s moral thought is informed by a view of language inherited from Wittgenstein “on which particular sensitivities are internal to all our rational, linguistic capacities”. Thus, literary and real-life examples can “directly contribute” to our “rational moral understanding” insofar as they enhance the sensitivities that are internal to our conceptual capacities (Crary 2007: 10ff). If I understand Mulhall correctly, his chapter can be read as bringing out the rational act of evaluation involved in that directness, i.e. involved in the “direct contribution” of examples to our moral outlook. He claims that a very specific mode of evaluation is required here, namely “we must judge whether the testimony they [the anti-individualist philosophers] offer to that individual’s authority is itself authorized by their own words” (p. 193). This mode of evaluation is based on completely different criteria than determinant judgement.

¹³ Cf. e.g., Diamond’s use of vegetarian propaganda (1991a: 327), or her discussion of the use of abstract hypothetical examples in ethics (2002). See also her discussion of the relation between ethics and experience in Diamond 2020, especially p. 21f, 25.

¹⁴ Mulhall calls the dialogical intercourse “the horizon within which our lives with language are lived” (189), which brings to mind Hans-Georg Gadamer’s concept of the fusion of horizons.

In reading Mulhall's contribution I had a strong impression that in conveying Diamond's views he is, usually, consciously avoiding her characteristic terminology. This mode of presentation seems to stem from his efforts to overcome the threat of a "dialogue of the deaf" between moral individualists and their critics. However, his reading of Diamond strongly depends on Rhee's conception of language as a conversation aimed at growth of understanding, which differs significantly from Wittgenstein's. I think it remains an open question which conception of language Diamond is closer to.

Balaska takes a quite different perspective on the importance of the dialogical character of Diamond's conception of ethics. In her chapter "When a Mind Goes Up in Smoke: Thinking of Evil and Thinking" she is interested in the relation between thinking and the ethical, and between twisted thinking and evil in particular. She discusses Alexandros Papadimitris's novella "The Murderess" as an illustration of the bearing twisted thinking may have on moral life. What characterizes the thinking of the main character – and leads to a series of horrific murders of young girls – is its lack of "with-ness". As Balaska explains, "[w]ith-ness signifies being in someone's company, being in dialogue" (p. 262). Thinking which is not dialogical has a tendency to get twisted and may bring about a distorted moral vision and repugnant actions.

It seems that both Mulhall and Balaska connect the dialogical feature of morality to the very concept of human being. While Mulhall emphasizes the potential of dialogical intercourse with others to disclose new distinctive perspectives that may affect our moral vision, Balaska is focused on the dialogical dimension of thinking *per se*. In contrast, in his contribution "The Narcissism of the Private Linguist", Gipps discusses a reverse image of these cases. Gipps presents a psychoanalytic reading of the sections from the *Philosophical Investigations* concerning the so-called private language argument. His point is "not to expose psychological matters at play *behind* a philosophical façade, but instead to show the workings of the psychological *within* the philosophical" (p. 230). (In this respect he engages with some of Diamond's ideas concerning will and thinking.) He proceeds by construing the private linguist as "someone deploying a narcissistic response to anxiety" (p. 239), the worry that there seems to be no guarantee for the meaning of expressions. This philosophical narcissism consists in a "fantasy of normative self-sufficiency and inviolability" (p. 240). The ethical task of the private linguist to overcome narcissism involves turning with "trust" and "willingness" to "interpersonally available standards of correctness, [...] our shared life with language" (p. 241). It might be said that narcissism, which could be characterized as – borrowing from Balaska – ceasing to be "essentially dialogical" and thus devoid of "with-ness", can be overcome by recognizing others as – borrowing from Rhee and Mulhall – "fellow speakers". However, while Mulhall's "fellow speakers" reveal their "distinctive perspectives" to us, Gipps's private linguist needs yet to be reminded of the public character of

language, but precisely that may be the value of his distinctive perspective. I hope it is thus clear how the three essays just discussed address dialogicality as an implicit feature of Diamond's moral thought.

Cora Diamond is well known as a resolute reader of the *Tractatus*. The contributions to this volume testify that she is also a tender thinker, who continues to challenge us in her attentiveness to overlooked paths of thought, liveliness of imagination and genuine responsiveness. I did not discuss Diamond's contribution "Suspect Notions and the Concept Police", but sometimes it is better not to spoil others' intellectual pleasure. A central part of Diamond's essay pertains to the idea of a "concept police" that illegitimately limits significant conceptual possibilities in moral thought (she is primarily focused on Guy Kahane's and Jane Heal's narrow understanding of the concept of value and its implications). Yet I think it can be also read as attempting simultaneously to re-work the traditional ethical concepts of choice and action.

Those acquainted with Diamond's writings will find in *Cora Diamond on Ethics* many inspirational, if controversial, engagements with her thoughts. Thinking through them inevitably helps clarify one's understanding of Diamond's ethical views. Those for whom *Cora Diamond on Ethics* would be the first encounter with Diamond's thought may be surprised how a discussion of some traditionally ethical issues can turn out to be an adventure into unexplored territories of morality.

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