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in their complexity. Some of the later argument about the problem of power strikes the right balance but, for the most part, Hyland favors the second option.

If the book does lose much of its audience, I am afraid it will be early in Chapter One. Here we encounter an attempt to present the metatheory of normative analysis in the context of the history of twentieth-century philosophy. My guess is that this will engage most graduate students, stretch the very best final year undergraduates, and alienate the rest. As an exercise in convincing average students that they "can't do theory," the opening paragraphs of this chapter could hardly be bettered.

Shortcomings of this sort continue. The style is overly careful and the content far too detailed. Hyland frequently qualifies his broad characterizations and judgments, seemingly trying to cover his back against criticism at a deeper or more detailed level than a work of this type can hope to achieve. This will not help the average reader very much. It distracts from the masterly way the broad brush is sometimes applied. The fine nib should have been left aside, to be used on other occasions. Its excursions may be enough to deflect criticism but are insufficient to enlighten those seeking an introduction to these matters, beyond signalling problems to the more advanced student. Those tempted to skip the early chapters in order to enjoy the real meat of the argument—and there is real meat to be found here—will be dismayed by the frequent return to metatheoretical issues and the repeated reference back to the status of the analysis.

As the argument develops it becomes more concrete and able to engage a wider audience. But here it looks a little old-fashioned. The metatheoretical arguments are located in the worries of the 1950s and 1960s. Dahl is a major actor and influence; Habermas gets a single mention. Gender and difference surface only as examples of perennial problems. For the most part, the later discussion focuses on the old favorites, and there is little to suggest that it might not have been written twenty years ago. Of course, it isn't old-fashioned in any important sense. Solid analysis should never be dated. But it does fail to confront the recent trends in analysis (using the word rather loosely) very directly. Students exposed to postmodernist concerns may require more than Hyland provides. This would be a pity. Those looking for an exploration of democracy as a means to negotiate identity at the interstices of public and private space might go elsewhere. Better, they should read this book and try to follow its arguments until they re-

alize that their own interests are well served by more concrete and pointed inquiry.

Disregarding the "textbook" intentions, this is an important contribution to the substantive literature. The first chapter, while entirely unsuitable as an introduction to democratic theory, analyzes the relations between empirical and normative inquiry in depth too rarely found. All the argument is acute, but part of Chapter Four, exposing the assumption of all or nothing policy choices in simple majoritarian arguments, is particularly nice. Chapter Six demonstrates the inadequacy of attempts to reconcile liberal and democratic values more conclusively than is achieved elsewhere. And, above all, difficulties arising from shaky philosophical foundations are followed through to the practices and problems of actually existing liberal democracies. These are but a few of the many valuable insights to be found here.

It may be that the author has made concessions in an attempt to package these ideas in a form suitable for a wide audience. If so, he should have conceded much more and resisted the natural temptation to proceed from the abstract to the particular. This is an excellent introduction to democratic theory for those already versed in modern philosophy. It is a provoking excursion into philosophical foundations for those already familiar with democratic theory. For those without a grounding in either field it offers little.

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**Dante's Interpretive Journey.** By William Franke (Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 1996) xi + 250 pp. \$45.00/£35.95 cloth \$16.95/£13.50 paper.

This book, published in the series "Religion and Postmodernism," sets out to examine the possible relationship between Dante's *Commedia* and modern theories of hermeneutics. Franke suggests that this relationship is, in fact, a reciprocal one, that

Dante's epoch-making work of interpretation can illuminate some of the major questions in and around "hermeneutics" today, and that conversely certain theoretical instruments and insights offered by contemporary speculation in this area can be illuminating aids in pondering Dante's poem (4).

Franke's analysis takes as its starting point the poem's many direct addresses to the reader. Through these, Dante's text comes to be seen in terms of a "discursive event" (40) that invites active interpretation as the only possible means of arriving at the "truth" which the poem intends to convey. *Inferno IX's* appeal to those readers who have "li 'ntelletti sani" to seek "la dottrina che s'asconde / sotto 'l velame de li versi strani" is used as an example to illustrate this point. The practical obstacles impeding the progress of Dante's pilgrim outside the City of Dis are shown to be reflected in this hermeneutic impasse, which serves to shift attention away from the immediate dramatic events towards a deeper meaning. This can be arrived at only through interpretation. Thus, by reaching out to a reader who interprets the poem in her or his own place and time, the poem is able to embrace a transcendent truth, above and beyond the mere words on the page.

However, the question of truth is, as Franke acknowledges, a vexed one for Dante studies, and one of the aims of his book is to establish just what may be understood by the *Commedia's* claims to truth, or what is meant by the fiction—in Singleton's famous formulation—that the poem is not a fiction. Franke suggests that the truth of the poem lies not in its "realism"—not, that is, in its presentation of a real journey through the afterlife as it actually is—but in the way in which it engages its readers in an interpretive quest that reflects that of Dante himself. The story that the poem tells is seen as being true insofar as it is grounded in the historical reality of the poet and of his experience of conversion. From this point of view, even the poem's most obviously fictional elements "have everything to do with Dante's interpretations of his past and his defining for himself of his future, and in this sense they have everything to do with his real, personal historicity" (161). Moreover, the poem's truth, in this sense, is not limited to Dante's own time and experience. Rather, the historicity of the author has its counterpart in the historicity of the reader, a reader whose existence is inscribed within the poem itself. The reader is invited, moreover, through interpretation, to share in the poet's experience of conversion, so that the poem becomes true for whoever reads it with commitment, whenever and wherever such a reading may take place.

Franke's final chapter provides an illustration of this point via an extended discussion of the Statius episode of Purgatorio XXI-XXII. Statius is examined above all from the point of view of his readings—or rather, his misreadings—of Virgil.

Franke shows that what is important about Statius's understanding of the Virgilian text is not that he understands a denunciation of avarice as a criticism of the opposing vice of prodigality, nor that he interprets Virgil's purely secular prophecy of a return to a Golden Age in Christian terms, but rather the deep meaning that Virgil's text takes on for him personally. Dante's Statius thus epitomizes the notion that the truth of a text lies not so much in the author's original intention as in the act of reading itself, which allows for the creation of meaning by each individual reader. In this way too, Franke's reading of Dante comes to constitute a challenge to the modern hermeneutic notion of the impossibility of a transcendent truth.

This is a dense and sometimes difficult book that approaches Dante's great poem from an original and often illuminating perspective. Franke speaks to those concerned with questions of hermeneutics and to Dante scholars alike, and situates his work carefully within the broader contexts of both hermeneutic thought and Dante studies. There are a number of typographical errors (see, for example, pp. 24, 28, 50, 66, 74, 106, 113, 154, 180, 201, 221), but overall Dante's *Interpretive Journey* provides a valuable contribution to the critical debate about the *Commedia's* truth, while also providing an interesting discussion—on a narrower and more specific level—of several major episodes within the poem, such as the entry into Dis, the descent on the back of Geryon, the encounter with Statius, and so on.

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**The Prosecution of International Crimes: A Critical Study of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.** Edited by Roger S. Clark and Madeleine Sann (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, Transaction Books, 1996) xi + 502 pp. \$49.95 cloth.

This book reflects the ambiguous nature of international law relating to crimes against humanity. The book's thirteen authors analyze an area of international law that is not well developed and in an area of the world, alas, that has not been seen by the major powers as a fundamental national interest. Owing to the topic, the authors leave the reader with many questions left unanswered. Indeed, all of the chapters were written before Croatia struck against the Serbs in the Krajina and the conclusion of the Dayton Accords. Nonethe-