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Space, Time & Causality. by R. Swinburne

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or about the nature of belief itself. But perhaps one can grant that these assumptions are disputable without thinking, as it seems the invariantist must, that someone who adopted them all would be led into error quite regularly and systematically. I should have liked to have been told more at this point about the repercussions for common-sense psychology of the invariantist's line. We have the idea that falsehood in people's beliefs obstructs their doing what they want. Is this an assumption which has to be rejected by the invariantist?

Something the invariantist is certainly obliged to reject is a prevalent view about semantic intuitions, which has it that our elicited responses to examples are simple intuitions of the semantic facts about our language. Unger challenges this on the invariantist's behalf (though, as he insists, the semantic relativity thesis does not require the prevalent view to be mistaken, only that it not be the best view). This leads him to take issue with the Causal Theory of Reference and its basis in our (purported) intuitions. He describes some wildly hypothetical cases, in which our judgements differ from those which Putnam or Kripke would predict. Unger himself thinks that our judgements are to be accounted for by a psychological hypothesis about our egocentric bias.

Semantic relativity has application to sentences in which such terms as 'know', 'can', 'cause', and 'explains' occur. It follows (granting the relativity) that certain philosophical problems about knowledge, freedom, causation, and explanation (and whatever else) admit of no determinate solution *au fond*. How disturbing is this conclusion? Well, in the cases of causation and explanation, it seems clear that Unger's thesis does not put the philosopher out of a job; for in these cases the philosophical issues apparently extend beyond those on which the relativity bears. In the cases of knowledge and freedom, it must remain a matter for debate how much dissolution or disillusion semantic relativity could achieve. Certainly Unger shows that *some* of the pressures to be sceptical rather than not, and to be incompatibilist rather than compatibilist, arise from our succumbing to the attractions of the invariantist's line, rather than the contextualist's; but this is not yet to show that the sources of scepticism and incompatibilism reside here alone.

But one need not think that one's view of philosophy's prospects have to be greatly affected by it to think that there is something worthwhile to be got from this provocative and very readable book.

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*Space, Time & Causality*. Edited by R. Swinburne. Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1983.  
Pp. 205. £21.25.

This collection of papers ranges over a wide variety of issues. It is of course not surprising, after all, each one of the topics, Space, Time, and Causality, covers a very large area. In addition, the contributors differ considerably in the approaches they have adopted. Some deal with purely metaphysical aspects of their subject, others concentrate on scientific methodology, yet others employ advanced formal techniques, and their discussions border on pure physics.

At this last end of the spectrum we find two papers devoted to a number of basic issues in quantum mechanics. This is a very special area where philosophical

and scientific problems are inseparably interwoven. Nancy Cartwright touches upon one of the most fascinating questions raised by modern physics, namely, is it true that human consciousness, because of its fundamentally non-physical character, radically changes the observed results when interacting with natural phenomena? One of the important and interesting points that become apparent in the course of her discussion is that in order to provide an adequate answer to such a typical philosophical question it is essential to settle first a number of purely scientific problems requiring expertise in quantum mechanics.

On the other end of the spectrum we have John Mackie's substantial essay dealing with some basic, general, and purely metaphysical principles. One of these is the time-honoured Principle of Sufficient Reason and the way it has been applied to the investigation of some of the aspects of Space. Mackie, in keeping with his good old-fashioned empiricism, declares 'there is no sufficient reason to accept the Principle of Sufficient Reason'.

It may be worth indicating very briefly why such extreme opposition to aprioristic reasoning could be claimed to be self-defeating. To pick one of many examples, all agree that inductive arguments must not be based on biased sample classes. It has, however, been noted long ago that every finite sample class is bound to be biased; we can always find common features among the members of any given class that are not shared by the next instance to which we may wish to apply the generalization we have arrived at. The standard reply has been that only when there is sufficient reason to believe that the common aspect constitutes a damaging bias must we refrain from applying induction, but in the absence of a sufficient reason we may assume the bias to be harmless. The underlying assumption amounts to presupposing the validity of a special version of the Principle of Sufficient Reason without which no empirical argument can get off the ground.

The editor, R. Swinburne, points out in his paper the fundamental importance of verificationism to an understanding of the nature of space and time. In an attempt to describe the basis for adopting the verifiability principle he says: 'The general feeling which leads to verificationism is the feeling that we cannot have knowledge of that which is beyond the range of experience' (p. 63). This is not very illuminating; verificationism is not a theory of knowledge but a theory of meaning. There should have been some explanation why unknowable facts can never meaningfully be described.

Later we are told: 'Word-verificationism makes whether a sentence has truth-value depend, not on its own verifiability, but on the verifiability of similar sentences' (p. 65). Swinburne manages to raise the question (in footnote 3), what about 'Saturday opens the door', which is similar to 'John opens the door'? His answer is that if the former sentence is to be regarded meaningless then the 'word-verificationist' has to postulate 'that similarity of form to that of verifiable sentences includes similarity in respect not merely of syntax but of categories' and Saturday is of course not the kind of thing that can have the property of opening doors. Absolutely no clue, is, however, provided anywhere in the paper how to handle any non-trivial case for which verificationism might be of some genuine interest. For example, why is a logical positivist likely to regard 'Everything in the universe has moved one mile to the north' as devoid of meaning even though it is similar in all relevant aspects to the fully verifiable 'Everything throughout Yugoslavia has moved one mile to the north'.

The paper enters, however, into a truly remarkable phase with the following assertion: 'These arguments yield a form of verificationism which does not insist even on the logical possibility of verification, only on the actual ability of speakers to verify in appropriate circumstances (the occurrence of which may not even be logically possible)' (p. 69). On this view nothing is not easily verifiable. For example, 'everything in the universe has moved one mile to the north' could simply be checked by observing how everything has changed its position relative to a dozen lampposts that have remained put. There is no point in complaining that postulating such lampposts contradicts our own very assertion that *everything* has moved; 'the appropriate circumstances', we have been explicitly told, need not be logically possible!

Some readers might be put off by the amount of mathematics they will find in the last two papers by M. Redhead and P. Gibbins respectively. I should like to point out that one need not understand all the technical details in order to gain a fairly good idea what the interesting arguments (concerning the Einstein/-Podolsky/-Rosen paradox) contained in these papers are all about, Redhead believes that the solution to the paradox lies in postulating velocities greater than that of light under certain circumstances. Gibbins, on the other hand, maintains that what is required is the realization that everyday logic does not fully apply in the realm of sub-atomic particles.

It is to be noted that not only are there a number of widely differing suggestions as to the solution of the E/-P/-R paradox but different physicists have also interpreted the problem itself and the significance it has in greatly different fashions. Some have seen in it a most serious threat to the very foundations of quantum mechanics. Others, however, have refused even to call it a 'paradox', since all that has been shown is that objective reality is incompatible with the assumption that quantum mechanics is complete and that this conclusion is without any implication for the further development of physics. (Cf. A. Pais, 'Einstein on Particles, Fields, and Quantum Theory', in H. Woolf, ed., *Some Strangeness in the Proportion* (Reading, 1980), pp. 232-4.) Be it as it may, for a philosopher wishing to assess the significance of contemporary developments, the topic has not diminished in importance.

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*The Rejection of Consequentialism.* By Samuel Scheffler. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982. Pp. viii + 133. £9.00.

Utilitarianism is concerned, typically, either with the maximization of pleasure, or some other mental-state view of utility and value, or, increasingly, with the maximization of the satisfaction of desires or preferences. It focuses upon the totality of, e.g., desire-satisfaction in the world, and this total is determined by summing or aggregating desire-satisfactions across persons. Accordingly, the theory has been accused of not taking seriously the separateness of persons, a charge that has recently achieved pride of place in the litany of complaints against utilitarianism, even though at least some interpretations of it seem amenable to utilitarian justification. Among utilitarians who regard (some interpretation of) the