Issue No. 82 13/02/2019

The Wednesday

Weekly Magazine of the Wednesday Group - Oxford

Editorial Philosophy and Development Issues

hilosophy is well established in the academic setting, from Plato to the modern universities, but could philosophy go beyond academia? There is a general feeling that philosophy should venture outside its usual territory. This is acutely felt in English-speaking philosophy where the cultural setting is not used to having public intellectual figures. In contrast, French culture is well acquainted with public intellectuals, largely philosophers or writers with philosophical concerns. The café culture adds a special flavour to the French story, making philosophy and philosophers accessible to other intellectuals, students and the general public. The involvement with political issues locally and internationally is also an added feature that makes the philosopher an integral part of culture and society. Perhaps Bertrand Russell, in the English setting, came to represent such a role for the philosopher.

Martha Nussbaum takes up this issue within a particular context in her work with women in India and also with equality and justice in the developing countries generally (see her article 'Public Philosophy and International Feminism'.) She talks from personal experience and gives concrete examples from her co-operation with Amartya Sen in developing the concept of a 'capability approach' to justice and equality. She extends a call to philosophers in the developed countries of the West to get involved in issues of development in countries that need help in Asia and other continents. She also asks economists and policy makers to listen to philosophers and that both should work together.

What roles does Nussbaum see for philosophy? She thinks that philosophers have so much to contribute to development issues. Beside their training in detailed analysis, 'philosophers have thought with such subtlety and rigor about the nature of wellbeing and the foundations of human actions that they are equipped to cogently criticise the foundations of economics.' She thinks that 'philosophy has to be grounded in experience and concerned with practice, or it will rightly be dismissed as irrelevant.'

But why have philosophers not made the connections with social, economic and political issues? Nussbaum thinks that there is a reluctance because philosophy is still text-driven: philosophers talk to each other in a language that is very specialised. It is also because economists don't want to listen to philosophers. They don't seem to recognise that many concepts underpinning their work are well worked out by philosophers and that the task of examining concepts falls to philosophers. Philosophers are well equipped not only to examine concepts in other fields but also in their own field. That is because philosophy is a more reflexive activity.

What is needed is more than a theoretical contribution. There should be a genuine concern for others, especially in parts of the world where help is needed to provide concepts and analysis for their predicaments. The theoretical (conceptual) analysis empowers people and nations that lack the methodology and conceptual apparatus to analyse their situation or the world around them and how that affects them. But this helps the philosophers themselves, as Nussbaum has found out in testing her concepts and theories. This has provided her with empirical data to complement her a priori thinking.

Philosophers should also be aware of the ideological position they occupy, intentionally and unintentionally, and should face-up to a critique of their contributions. They should also not fall exclusively into one of two camps, the relativists who think each culture is self-contained and shouldn't be criticised and those universalists who think all culture should submit to their own 'universal' cultural hegemony. It is only by real involvement with local cultures that one comes to a balanced view based on first-hand information and a correct estimate of the situation.



Report

Wittgenstein Religion and Nonsense

Wittgenstein

The Oxford University Department for Continuing Education at Rewley House offered a weekend course in January on Wittgenstein, Religion and Nonsense, featuring two presentations each by Mikel Burley and Stephen Mulhall. Mikel is an Associate Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Leeds University whose interests include Wittgenstein and comparative and cross-cultural philosophy and religion. Stephen is a Professor of Philosophy and Fellow of New College Oxford whose interests include Wittgenstein, Post-Kantian and Post-Analytic Philosophy, Ethics, and Philosophy of Religion. Below is a report on the weekend.

CHRIS SEDDON

Mikel's first presentation exemplified his thesis that, contrary to some accounts, Wittgenstein's philosophical ideas had a significant impact on anthropology and the study of religion, in particular his ideas of 'family resemblances', 'forms of life', and 'primitive reactions'.

Family Resemblances

Wittgenstein gives an example of 'family resemblances' in the paragraph in which he introduces the term:

'I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than "family resemblances" ... for instance ... Why do we call something a "number"? ... we extend our concept of number as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres...' (Wittgenstein *Philosophical Investigations* paragraph 67)

The previous paragraph introduces an example which is better known and more widely referenced by Wittgenstein himself:

'Consider for example the proceedings that we call "games". I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all? – Don't say "There must be something common, or they would not be called "games"" - but look and see... you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that... Are they all 'amusing'? Compare chess with noughts and crosses... Think now of games like ring-a-ring-a-roses [sic]; here is the element of amusement, but how many other characteristic features have

disappeared!... the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing.' (*Philosophical Investigations* paragraph 66)

Wittgenstein's example in paragraph 67 of 'numbers' as a family relationship seems apposite: different types of numbers, such as the so-called 'natural' numbers used for counting members of a class, 'integers' used for counting steps in opposite directions, 'rational' numbers used for measuring proportions, 'real' numbers used to describe theoretically precise limits to such measurements, 'complex', 'hypercomplex', and 'p-adic' numbers and others with uses this non-mathematician does not even understand - all might seem to be connected by the possibility of converting subsets of some types to other types, and to use similar arithmetical operations such as addition, multiplication, subtraction and division etc to generate members of more than one type, but in fact the operations are essentially different for each type and other conversions are possible to what we would not call numbers. So in this example it may be granted that these are all types of number not because they all have just one feature in common, but because there are a number of features some of which any two will have in common - and crucially, we have not even decided, in advance, which common features would extend the concept of number beyond what we now imagine, and which would simply exemplify its current use.

Perhaps Wittgenstein felt that the example in paragraph 66 of 'games' as a family relationship was more familiar to a wider readership than the concept of 'numbers', but it seems noteworthy that it is not so convincing. All the examples he gives of real games are essentially activities with more or less well-defined rules devised for the purpose of amusement. There are people for whom chess is so important that life without it is not worthwhile, but the rules of chess have been devised simply for amusement - they serve no other purpose. The chess fanatic is fanatic about a form of amusement. Similarly, if a child throws a ball against a wall, they may change the rules at will to allow themselves to feel the same or less satisfaction catching it after one bounce on the floor as with no bounces on the floor, but the rules are there, and changed, for the



Mikel Burley

purpose of amusement only. Archery becomes a game only when it ceases to have an overriding practical function.

Forms of Life

Wittgenstein's real aim in talking about the concept of 'family resemblances' is to illustrate his claim that the concept of language itself is, like the concept of a game, simply a family resemblance with no one unifying feature. This can be seen as a reaction to his early work, in which the linguistic function of naming facts was presented as the essential feature of language, without any significant account of how this function relates to the diverse functions we see in everyday language. In his later work Wittgenstein attempts to justify his decision not to look for any such account. One such justification is the description of language as a 'form of life':

'It is easy to imagine a language consisting only of orders and reports in battle. - Or a language consisting only of questions and expressions for answering yes and no. And innumerable others. - And to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life.' (*Philosophical Investigations* paragraph 19)

Wittgenstein's idea of language as a 'form of life' is related to his idea of a 'language-game':

'In the practice of the use of language (2) [a primitive form of language comprising single-

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word commands] one party calls out the words, the other acts on them. In instruction in the language the following process will occur: the learner names the objects; that is, he utters the word when the teacher points to the stone. -And there will be this still simpler exercise: the pupil repeats the words after the teacher - both of these being processes resembling language. We can also think of the whole process of using words in (2) as one of those games by means of which children learn their native language. I will call these games "language-games" and will sometimes speak of a primitive language as a language-game. And the processes of naming the stones and of repeating words after someone might also be called languagegames... I shall also call the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, the "language-game".' (Philosophical *Investigations* paragraph 7)

And:

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'Here the term "language-game" is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life. Review the multiplicity of languagegames in the following examples, and in others: Giving orders, and obeying them - Describing the appearance of an object, or giving its measurements - Constructing an object from a description (a drawing) - Reporting an event - Speculating about an event - Forming and testing an hypothesis - Presenting the results of an experiment in tables and diagrams -Making up a story; and reading it - Play-acting - Singing catches - Guessing riddles - Making a joke; telling it - Solving a problem in practical arithmetic - Translating from one language into another - Asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying. - It is interesting to compare the multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used, the multiplicity of kinds of words and sentence, with what logicians have said about the structure of language. (Including the author of the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus)." (Philosophical Investigations paragraph 23)



D. Z. Phillips

resemblance', so too does language, in that each of the multiplicity of uses to which Wittgenstein rightly refers is itself a particular application of the use of recognisable signs to refer to potential facts. However, Mikel's presentation only attempted to demonstrate that Wittgenstein's ideas had a significant impact on anthropology and study of religion and did not rely on any assumption that they were as universal as Wittgenstein himself may have thought they were.

Primitive Reactions

The third idea, that of 'primitive reactions' reflects a continuum described by Wittgenstein from a 'primitive' non-linguistic form of expression towards a trained linguistic form of expression:

'How do words refer to sensations? ... Here is one possibility: words are connected with the primitive, the natural, expressions of the sensation and used in their place. A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new painbehaviour... the verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe [crying]' (*Philosophical Investigations* paragraph 244)

And:

'The primitive reaction may have been a glance

Just as games seem to share more than a 'family



Stephen Mulhall



Mikel Burley

or a gesture, but it may also have been a word.' (*Philosophical Investigations* part IIxi page 218e)

Mikel claimed that Wittgenstein's ideas influenced philosophers of religion including Rush Rhees, Norman Malcolm, Peter Winch, D. Z. Phillips, and Cora Diamond.

Mikel suggested that the concept of a religion might itself only be a family resemblance, although the class exercise intended to illustrate this suggestion brought to light two plausible common features: metaphorical behaviour and language, with an ethical purpose. Definitions of religion provided by professional theologians and philosophers were recognised as being less helpful. He also suggested that it might also be more helpful to understand the concept of certain religions - such as Hinduism - as being a family resemblance, with no single unifying essence.

Mikel went on to note remarks by Wittgenstein on *The Golden Bough, a Study in Magic and Religion* by James Frazer. In line with his trends of thought regarding primitive reactions and forms of life, Wittgenstein wants to resist explanations of 'savages' killing their priest-king in his prime in terms of their views about keeping the king's soul fresh, and instead prefers to say that the views and the practice merely occur together. Mikel adopted a much less dogmatic stance, that is, to withhold without further evidence any judgement as to whether the views caused the practice or simply co-existed with the practice.

Similarly, Mikel provided an example of burning effigies from modern-day North America. He argued plausibly that the pastor burning the effigies of politicians suspected of irreligious policies did not do so because he believed it would burn the politicians or stop the policies as a direct matter of causation. He made the connection with Wittgenstein's idea of a primitive reaction but did not seem to make any connection with the concept of religion as metaphorical behaviour with a moral purpose.

In his second presentation Mikel focused on Wittgensteinian parallels and references in D. Z. Phillips' philosophy of religion, notably *The Concept of Prayer*, *Philosophy's Cool Place*, *Religion and the Hermeneutics of Contemplation*, and *Wittgensteinianism: Logic, Reality, and God*:

Phillips: 'Belief and atheism... are rescued from what philosophy tries to make of them.'

Wittgenstein: 'My ideal is a kind of coolness. A temple providing a setting for the passions without meddling with them.'

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Wittgenstein: 'Philosophy can in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it.'

Phillips: 'Our task, with respect to "God", is the same as with any other word, namely, to bring it back from its metaphysical to its everyday use.'

Wittgenstein: 'What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use.'

Mikel concluded by examining the distinction between religion and superstition, with three alternative perspectives, which might helpfully be understood in terms of religion as metaphorical behaviour and language with a moral purpose, although he did not do so. Firstly, Richard Dawkins appears to regard all language as literal and therefore tends to regard all religion as part of an 'epidemic of irrational superstitious thinking'. Secondly, whilst Brian Clacks appears to accept that superstitious actions may be seen as part of the 'poetry of life', he maintains that the same is true of religion and a distinction is unworkable. Thirdly, however, Phillips substantiates his claim that such a distinction is important by pointing out that the extent to which a person's wider moral life conforms to a belief which may be expressed metaphorically by ritualised behaviour or language can vary, and that where there is a wide discrepancy one may regard the ritual as more likely to reflect a superstitious causal belief or simply an empty gesture, but where there is more general conformity one may reasonably regard the ritual as a religious metaphor which is acted out sincerely in the practitioner's life:

'the more tenuous the relation between the prayer and the rest of the person's life, the more suspect the prayer becomes; the likelihood of superstition increases.' (Phillips *The Concept of Prayer* page 115)

In conclusion, Mikel Burley established several ways in which Wittgenstein's ideas addressing the philosophy of language in his later work have had a significant impact on anthropology and philosophers of religion, without being taken to the dogmatic extreme suggested by Wittgenstein in his own studies.

Ethical Language and Nonsense

By contrast, Stephen Mulhall gave two presentations based primarily on Wittgenstein's earlier works, specifically the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and the *Lecture of Ethics*, although he also referred to the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, which appeared to take Wittgensteinian dogma much more seriously.

In his first presentation Stephen made a good case that Wittgenstein's 1929 lecture was a carefully crafted rhetorical application to ethics of his ideas in his 1921 tract. In this and his second presentation he attempted to demonstrate that, although according to Wittgenstein's analysis, ethical and religious language are nonsensical, the process of generalising beyond any practical context which makes them nonsensical somehow makes them useful to those humans who gain wisdom and insight from 'great' (as opposed to 'minor') riddles.

It did not appear that either Stephen or Wittgenstein considered the possibility that Wittgenstein's conclusion that ethical language is nonsense could have been based on an inaccurate analysis of the actual use of that language - in particular that ethical statements might have implicit parameters making them a particularly broad but not meaninglessly general type of relative value judgement.

It became clear in his second presentation that by 'religion' Stephen was thinking primarily of Christianity, and by 'Christianity' he was thinking of forms of Christianity which rely on authority as dictated by councils of the Church, and he came to the conclusion that whilst a Church council may not, from a nonsensical over-generalisation of religious language, dictate to believers how they may use religious language, they may from that same antecedent dictate to believers how they may not use religious language.

It was not clear what distinction was being made between prohibiting certain forms of language and enforcing contrary forms, and it was not clear how either could reasonably be justified by an inference from nonsense. Again, there seemed to be no attempt to question the analysis which suggested that a form of language in common widespread use was indeed nonsense.

Comment

On The Primal Paradox

I found William Bishop's article on The Primal Paradox in issue 78 of The Wednesday thought-provoking and profound. I think it is worth adding the following comment.

PAUL COCKBURN

illiam Bishop writes of a primal unity of Being which our human ancestors experienced in the past. We were then part of nature, connected to it in a fundamental and direct intuitive and participatory sense. This could be what many animals experience. As far as we know, and as Walt Whitman carries on to say in his poem 'Song of Myself', most animals do not concern themselves with metaphysics or whether there is a God. They probably do not have complex goals. They are not self-conscious, and they seem to live 'in the moment'. Self-consciousness splits unity into subject and object. With selfconsciousness we became separated from nature and to some extent from ourselves. We can also see the impact of our actions on other humans, and on nature.

William quotes from the *New Testament* – Jesus says, 'I am the vine and you are the branches.' The individual connects to the universal as the living branches connect to the living vine or tree. He uses this image to represent the restoration of the primal unity of Being which we need to rediscover. In Christian terms there are two symbolic trees mentioned in the *Bible*. I think you can interpret the Tree of Knowledge as the one in the Garden

of Eden at the beginning of time, and the Tree of Life (in Revelation) as the one in heaven in the future. Perhaps they are somehow the same tree in a different guise. Adam representing humanity disobeyed God by eating of the tree of knowledge, and this denies us the fruit of the tree of life. Knowledge in terms of reductionist reason impoverishes us, whereas participatory consciousness in life emphasizes living experience and an integrated whole.

The tree in the garden of Eden gave us the knowledge of 'good and evil'. This is not the same as reason and scientific rationality, but it may imply self-consciousness. However, it does seem that we now use technology, derived from science, in ways that are not holistic. The overall unity we are aspiring to has three connected dimensions: unity between people, unity with nature or the world and unity within our own individual self. Regarding nature, we now use technology on such a scale we are seriously damaging the environment. Regarding unity between people, new technology such as mobile phones enables us to communicate with each other more than in the past, but we do not seem to be more united!



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The Wednesday

Poetry



CHRIS NORRIS

Six Villanelles on Quantum Themes

1) Ultraviolet

The amount of radiation emitted in a given frequency range should be proportional to the number of modes in that range. The best of classical physics suggested that all modes had an equal chance of being produced, and that the number of modes went up proportionally to the square of the frequency. But the predicted continual increase in radiated energy with frequency (dubbed the 'ultraviolet catastrophe') did not happen. Nature knew better.

Hyperphysics

Things can't go on like this, you must agree. Unless the scale proves discrete it's a case Of ultraviolet catastrophe.

Good news: the black box comes with guarantee That things change stepwise, limits stay in place. We can't go on like this, you must agree.

It's quantum physics that provides the key; Discreteness rules so we'll not have to face Some ultraviolet catastrophe.

Start infra-red, shift wavelengths, then we'll see Just how we fare as things heat up apace: They can't go on like this, you must agree.

Discrete or not, discretion bids that we Grow warmer step by step lest it take place, That ultraviolet catastrophe.

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That's why, despite Planck's limit-point decree, The comfort's one we're hard-put to embrace. Things can't go on like this, you must agree; Fear ultraviolet catastrophe! Max Plank

2) The Copenhagen View

Bohr: Heisenberg, I have to say – if people are to be measured strictly in terms of observable quantities

Heisenberg: Then we should need a strange new quantum ethics.

Bohr: You've never been able to understand the suggestiveness of paradox and contradiction. That's your problem. You live and breathe paradox and contradiction, but you can no more see the beauty of them than the fish can see the beauty of the water.

The Copenhagen view: take both on board, Wave/particle; let contradiction thrive! It's logic's either/or we can't afford.

Both/and brings hope of harmony restored So our twin paradigms may co-survive. The Copenhagen view: take both on board.

Let those logicians henceforth be ignored When for strict bivalence they vainly strive: It's logic's either/or we can't afford.

Else their demand would have us lovers floored, Along with half the physicists alive! The Copenhagen view: take both on board.

So long as all appearances accord With our best theory, give it a high five! It's logic's either/or we can't afford.

Why emulate those realists who deplored Our line till their pet theories took a dive? The Copenhagen view: take both on board.

Then logic's apt to seem a mouse that roared And pipe down once anomalies arrive. It's logic's either/or we can't afford.

Yet still they tell us 'truth's its own reward' And say it's with unreason we connive. That Copenhagen view: take both on board.

Michael Frayn, Copenhagen

DERIVATION OF En and To FOR HYDROGEN-LINE ATOM (SINGLE ELECTRON SYSTEM)





Bohr

Poetrv

Could be that's why their case strikes such a chord With us who'd some good middle way contrive. It's logic's either/or we can't afford

To recognise, but there's a touch of fraud About the consolations we derive. The Copenhagen view: take both on board.

Let's face it, these are cat-box thoughts we've shored Against truth's quantum-state-reducing drive. It's logic's either/or we can't afford. The Copenhagen view: take both on board.

3) Hidden Variables

It can be argued that in trying to see behind the formal predictions of quantum theory we are just making trouble for ourselves. Was not precisely this the lesson that had to be learned before quantum mechanics could be constructed, that it is futile to try to see behind the observed phenomena.

Heisenberg

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Theoretical physicists live in a classical world, looking out into a quantum-mechanical world. The latter we describe only subjectively, in terms of procedures and results in our classical domain.

J.S. Bell, Speakable and Unspeakable in Quantum Mechanics

'No hidden variables', the rule-book goes. They'd take the weirdness out and set things straight. te. $E = mc^{2}$ Dimensions of $E = [ML^{2}T$ $[ML^{2}T^{2}] = [M][L$ = [M][L] $= [ML^{2}$ Why the equations work nobody knows.

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No in-the-source spin-values to disclose: They'd fix beforehand every change of state. 'No hidden variables', the rule-book goes.

Those realist-friendly theories fail to pose Such questions as our mystic times dictate. Why the equations work nobody knows.

New-agers jump at anything that throws A spanner in the works; at any rate 'No hidden variables', the rule-book goes.

It's any realist questioning of those Remote entangled particles they hate. Why the equations work nobody knows.

Again, the fear's not hard to diagnose: Love works so long as it stays part blind-date. 'No hidden variables', the rule-book goes.

Or rather: as the intimacy grows So must our light-year distances dilate. Why the equations work nobody knows.

Maybe that's why Bohr/Heisenberg first chose This way-out view of things to propagate: 'No hidden variables', the rule-book goes.

Quantum entanglement: the ratios Mean we're in touch though messages must wait. Why the equations work nobody knows,

But then, why worry? All the data shows They come out right where values commutate. 'No hidden variables', the rule-book goes.

Though Einstein kept the Bohr crowd on their toes With thought-experiments, they'd just re-state 'Why the equations work nobody knows'.

And us, let's not forget what closeness owes To distance and not share in Echo's fate. 'No hidden variables', the rule-book goes; Why the equations work nobody knows.

Einstein

Poetry

4) Decoherence

.... the nonevent in question is due to a 'Quantum Oblivion' effect, where a very brief virtual interaction undergoes 'unhappening'. Oblivion underlies quantum erasure and several other peculiar effects. [Some have proposed] a retrocausal evolution that accounts for such self-cancellation, involving exchange of negative physical values between earlier and later events.

Elitzur, Cohen and Shushi, 'The Too-Late-Choice Experiment'

No point our asking how it ended here. Wave-functions cancel; antecedents fade. It's our twinned histories that disappear.

Some word, some gesture came to interfere And so produced an outcome long delayed: No point our asking how it ended here.

First irony: though things now show up clear The past turns secretive, anterograde. It's our twinned histories that disappear.

And second: why then presuppose that we're The 'we' that launched this temporal glissade? No point our asking how it ended here.

This eigenstate's our only souvenir Of states once superposed but now decayed. It's our twinned histories that disappear.

Bit wasted, all that swish measurement gear, With outcomes macroscopically displayed; No point our asking how it ended here.

Says Feynman: it's when path-integrals smear That order quells the quantum-state cascade. It's our twinned histories that disappear.

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Says Bohm: allow a pilot-wave to steer The particle and then you've got it made. Still no point asking how it ended here.

Says Bohr: agreed, this quantum stuff is queer, But that's how the new physics game is played. It's our twinned histories that disappear. I say: small solace from the quantum-sphere For us old lags who've looked to it for aid. No point our asking how it ended here; It's our twinned histories that disappear.



Feynman

5) Many Worlds

The Many-Worlds Interpretation of quantum mechanics holds that there are many worlds which exist in parallel at the same space and time as our own. The existence of the other worlds makes it possible to remove randomness and action at a distance from quantum theory and thus from all physics.

All these different worlds and every arrangement of configurations are all there just like our arrangement of configurations, we just happen to be sitting in this one. It's possible, but I'm not very happy with it.

Richard Feynman

The access problem, but let's not despair. Let's give that Many-Worlds idea a shot. Things might go otherwise in worlds elsewhere.

We like to dream them up in our armchair Though robust types insist we'd better not. The access problem, but let's not despair.

Though wave-collapse precludes our being there It lets our counterfactuals hit the spot: Things might go otherwise in worlds elsewhere.

Why rule them out if life gets hard to bear And they're the only Shangri-Las you've got? The access problem, but let's not despair.

Why not hypothesise another pair Like us, our doubles in an upbeat plot? Things might go otherwise in worlds elsewhere.

Still we and they, our counterparts, could share No trans-world intimations of what's what: The access problem, but let's not despair.



Poetry

Some make-believe such happenings are rare Though possible, but they're the pop-sci lot. Things might go otherwise in worlds elsewhere.

It's that word 'might' that's set the hoper's snare Since wavicles first passed the double slot: The access problem, but let's not despair.

'We bring no this-world answer to your prayer', The experts say, 'no means to tie the knot: Things might go otherwise in worlds elsewhere.'

Still hold-out hopers may elect to err Since they've no expert's copy-book to blot. The access problem, but let's not despair; Things might go otherwise in worlds elsewhere.

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6) Many Minds

The Many Minds interpretation examines the consequences of the Everett Many-Worlds interpretation from the perspective of the mind. Rather than many worlds branching at each quantum decision point, it is the observer's mind that is branching.

Yoav Aviram

Let's see if Many Minds can do the trick. It's Many Worlds plus minds to sift and sort. Just one wave-function, so we two might click.

Those other quantum theories (take your pick) All have their points but finally fall short: Let's see if Many Minds can do the trick.

It says: if those world-versions seem to flick Past endlessly, let's put it down to thought. Just one wave-function, so we two might click.

It uses all the same arithmetic And all same equations we've been taught: Let's see if Many Minds can do the trick.

The difference is, this theory doesn't stick At disjunct worlds where mind-states go for naught: Just one wave-function, so we two might click.

It counts them both within its bailiwick Since minds decide for worlds: launch or abort! Let's see if Many Minds can do the trick.

Then maybe us two loners, if we're quick, Might co-perceive a world of first resort. Just one wave-function, so we two might click; Let's see if Many Worlds can do the trick.

The Wednesday

Editor: Dr. Rahim Hassan Contact Us: rahimhassan@hotmail.co.uk

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Published by: The Wednesday Press, Oxford

> **Editorial Board** Barbara Vellacott Paul Cockburn

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