Introduction

To his colleagues and many friends, the news of Gerald Hanratty’s unexpected death on 9 October 2003 came as a deeply personal shock. Gerry was a profound, simple, and uncomplicated person, universally held in fond regard; one never heard even the slightest negative comment about him—lamentably a rare tribute even among philosophers. There was nothing special or extraordinary about Gerald Hanratty’s life; in the manner of his living, devotion to learning, and dedication in the service of others, however, he was unique.

Born in Co Roscommon on 26 May 1941, where his father was a primary school teacher, Gerry attended Blackrock College, Dublin. In 1958 he entered Clonliffe, seminary of the Dublin Diocese, and also began his philosophical studies at University College Dublin. He graduated with an MA in 1962. He attended the Pontifical Irish College in Rome from 1962 to 1966, pursuing theological studies at the Pontifical Lateran University. He received a BD in 1964 and an STL in 1966; in the same year he was ordained a priest for the Dublin Diocese. He moved to Switzerland, in order to write his PhD under the direction of Professor Norbert Luyten at the University of Fribourg. In 1970 he completed his doctorate on the mind/body problem in Anglo-Saxon philosophy.
In 1968 Gerald Hanratty was appointed to the Department of Metaphysics of University College Dublin; in 1976 he was promoted to College Lecturer, and in 1997 to Senior Lecturer. Generations of philosophy students appreciated Gerry’s wisdom, openness, good humor, reflectiveness, and generosity. He was highly popular also with students of the Department of Psychology, to whom he provided service lectures in philosophical psychology. Throughout University College Dublin, among academics and nonacademic staff, Gerry was a popular friend and colleague. In addition to working as an academic, he was chaplain for years to the Holy Family Home at Roebuck, located beside the UCD campus. He was devoted to the residents, ministering to their spiritual needs and providing company, encouragement, and friendship. A most moving sight was the guard of honor formed by aging residents along the avenue as Gerry’s funeral cortege departed the grounds.

Gerry loved philosophy and often read into the early hours of the morning, kindling and smoking his pipe in tranquil recollection. His was the proper attitude of the university person who took an interest in all aspects of culture; he was widely read in literature and history. He bore his learning lightly, however, and never sought to impress. His nonacademic interests were few and simple; for years he played soccer with the UCD staff club. All his life he was a passionate follower of Gaelic games; while visiting a famous church in Bavaria one Sunday in early autumn, as a friend extolled the beauties of baroque architecture, he wondered aloud: “I wonder how Roscommon are doing in Croke Park.” He looked forward to monthly meetings with priest friends from his student days. He enjoyed a cross-country run in the Phoenix Park and an occasional meal in a good Italian restaurant. His brother Seamus was also a great friend, and they dined together almost every evening. He made an annual trip to Paris, enjoying the musty atmosphere of a Parisian hotel whose elegance was a nostalgic relic of the trendy twenties.

Gerry had a wonderful sense of humor—a profound sense of levity, one might even say. He loved to laugh at the apparent absurdities of life—and especially at philosophers who took themselves too seriously. He enjoyed life to the fullest and was permanently in good
humor. All of this stemmed from the grounded spirituality of someone who was deeply happy within himself, with his neighbors, and with God.

The present volume is a tangible token of genuine affection from Gerry’s philosopher friends—colleagues, former students, and professors. The essays reflect Gerald Hanratty’s philosophical interests, dealing with central questions of the nature of human existence and ultimate meaning of the universe. Whether engaged in historical investigation into Gnosticism or the Enlightenment, Gerry’s reflections were concerned with fundamental and final themes. His interests covered a wide range of topics and historical periods under the broad span of the philosophy of religion and philosophical anthropology. All of his writings and thinking were concerned with the search for the ultimate meaning of human beings and the world. He liked to quote the playwright Eugene Ionesco: “There is no way for fundamental questions not to exist in human consciousness.” (A selection of Gerald Hanratty’s writings is available at www.ucd.ie/philosophy/archive.)

The title of the volume, “Human Destinies,” is both fortuitous and intentional. On the day after Gerry’s death I received an e-mail from an undergraduate who wanted to express her sympathy with his colleagues. The words she was reading the moment she heard the news were Heraclitus’ fragment, “Character for man is destiny”—words, she well remarked, which fitted Gerry most eminently. For Gerry, philosophy had to do with life; otherwise it had no value. In his calm outlook, philosophy was an earnest of the revelation of the mystery which can only come with death. As Cardinal Desmond Connell, former head of the Department of Metaphysics, said at his funeral, Gerry’s death was the greatest moment of his life, the moment he had anticipated in faith, hope, and love.

Gerry would himself be embarrassed by this gesture of pietas; he was self-effacing and shy of attention. The greatest reward for the contributors is to know that he would be embarrassed yet grateful. In the spirit of Gabriel Marcel, one of Gerald Hanratty’s favorite philosophers, the commitment of true friendship is the affirmation that life continues, that truth, goodness, beauty, and love endure. This collection is a token of that belief and a tribute to a true friend and a truly noble person.
One of the striking features of the present volume is the wide diversity of topics collectively addressed by the various contributors. A unifying concern nonetheless pervades the ensemble insofar as each engages with one or another aspect of the central task of what it is to be human or addresses the question of the wider horizon of the human enterprise. A number of essays deal directly with human nature, others with the nature of philosophical thought in its attempt to illuminate the human situation. The question of God and the practice of religion are addressed, as are the nature and importance of interpersonal relations. Specific areas of action are considered—artistic, literary, economic—in light of ultimate human purpose and fulfillment. Some essays are thematic in approach, others historical. A variety of thinkers from the ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary periods are considered; for this reason the contents have been ordered in a broadly historical sequence.

In the opening essay, “Human Nature and Destiny in Aristotle,” I have aimed to provide an overview of the nature and destiny of man as understood by the Stagirite. Discerning a variety of particularities in man’s physical makeup, Aristotle evaluates all of these as subservient to the higher power and activity of human logos. Nature allots to man a unique place in the cosmos: equipped for the good life of reason and virtue, he alone partakes of the divine. The human soul is unique among natural substances—open to the totality of the cosmos and manifesting immaterial powers and activities. Aristotle is faced, however, with serious difficulties in reconciling any possible immortality of the soul with the indissolubility of soul and body in the human individual, which seems to be demanded by his hylomorphism. Significantly in Aristotle we find intimations of personality—one might even say that he conveys a pronounced sense of the self: of the I as I, for whom individual life and activity is a goal to be achieved and enjoyed.

This theme is further developed by Peter Simpson in a chapter entitled “Aristotle’s Self.” The essay contrasts the understanding of the self typical of modern philosophies with the self that is present, if sometimes only implicitly, in the thought of Aristotle. The modern self is either the individualist or solipsist self generated by Cartesianism
and its legacy, or the social self generated by the modern reaction to Cartesianism. Aristotle’s self is, by contrast, neither solipsist nor socialist. Because of his robust metaphysical and empirical approach to things, he has both real, substantial individuals, the individuals who are living bodies, and individuals who, in the concrete exercise of their rationality, are able to engage with each other in the real sharing of communal goods in virtuous friendship. Aristotle’s understanding of the concrete lived reality of human beings is best revealed in his discussion of friendship in his ethical writings. That discussion also shows how people, who are naturally ontological selves, become, through virtue, moral selves or, through vice, fail to become moral selves but are left dissipated and fragmented. Aristotle’s self is thus neither solipsistic nor a social construct. Instead it keeps to the mean between these two modern extremes, and by so doing it achieves a higher degree of selfhood and of community than either. Simpson suggests that Aristotle furnishes us with a better basis, not only for the ontology of the self and consciousness, but also for a morality and a politics that give genuine and equal worth to individuals and community instead of subordinating one to the other.

The question of human agency is analyzed from an Aristotelian perspective by Rowland Stout in an essay entitled “Mechanisms That Respond to Reasons: An Aristotelian Approach to Agency,” in which he works out in detail what it is to be responsive to reason. He argues that this can be explained in causal terms only if causation is itself understood in the way Aristotle understands it, namely, as the realization of a potentiality, rather than in the way philosophers since David Hume have understood it—as a special sort of relation that holds between events. Stout adopts the Kantian assumption that what characterizes agents is that they are responsive to reason: agents are those beings which have the potentiality to make things happen in the way they should according to practical rationality. As he puts it, agents are reasons-responsive mechanisms. The rationalistic and mechanistic slant of this position is slightly softened by Stout’s flexible conception of practical rationality, which includes space for emotional rationality. It follows that a mechanism that is sensitive to practical rationality is not governed by determinate laws.
The question of human destiny according to another ancient thinker is considered by Andrew Smith in his essay “Plotinus on Fate and Free Will.” Most Greek philosophers tried to maintain human free will within a system of cause and effect. Plotinus, who regarded the failure to solve this issue as dangerous to morality, approached it through his distinction of a higher and lower self, the correlate of transcendent and physical levels of reality. The higher could be aligned with providence, the lower with a negatively conceived fate. The individual finds his freedom in the former. Although the higher realm, too, involves necessity—most importantly for the human that his soul must descend to the physical world—this is an aspect of the soul’s nature and hence different from the compulsion of fate. But although human freedom is located in the transcendent world, it operates more widely, and Plotinus is no otherworldly escapist. For in the physical universe the soul has the freedom to become more or less involved with body than is necessary. In this relationship with the bodily, virtue is deemed to be active, immorality passive; true freedom is found in the active reasoning soul rather than in passivity, which is ignorance (yet still our responsibility). Moreover, providence as a whole extends to this world insofar as it is an image of the higher realm. Similarly, the individual can and should exercise an active relationship to the physical world through the resources provided by his higher self, his intellect.

Neoplatonist elements are beneath the surface in Eoin Cassidy’s essay entitled “A Zealous Convert: The Legacy of Augustine’s Break with Manichaean Gnosticism.” A key theme that marked the philosophical output of the late Gerald Hanratty was an analysis of the persistence of Gnostic speculation in the history of European culture; Cassidy’s essay is a contribution to furthering the scope of this work. In its reflective analysis of the extent to which Augustine’s struggle with Manichaeism influenced both his life and his literary output for well over two decades, it offers a telling reminder of the manner in which this struggle has also shaped the intellectual history of Christianity. For example, he argues that if it were not for Augustine’s rejection of the Manichaean denial of free will it is unlikely one would have had that remarkable Augustinian synthesis of the relation between free will and grace, which has in turn prompted the most sublime of spiri-
tual writings in the history of Christianity and the most violent of controversies over the course of the last fifteen hundred years.

Augustine is made to engage in a confrontation of quite a different kind by Cyril O’Regan in an ambitious and wide-ranging essay entitled “Answering Back: Augustine’s Critique of Heidegger,” in which Augustine and Heidegger are brought into critical dialogue. O’Regan rehearses in detail Heidegger’s explicit critique of Augustine’s view of time and self in Being and Time and of Augustine’s Platonic commitments in the even earlier lectures on Augustine. O’Regan expands this further by bringing out the implied critique of Augustine in Heidegger’s work after Being and Time, which concerns the bishop of Hippo’s view of transcendence and way of being in the world. What is remarkable about the essay is the way O’Regan reverses the direction of argument and allows Augustine to interrogate the “later” as well as the “earlier” Heidegger on precisely those topics of time, self, transcendence, and worship that Heidegger finds so problematic in Augustine.

An encounter between another pair of giant figures is rehearsed by Michael Nolan in his essay “Man’s Natural Condition: Aquinas and Luther on Original Sin,” which presents their respective and opposing views regarding human nature and the conflict between good and evil. Nolan argues that according to Luther human nature is perverted but that Aquinas takes the opposite view: while we are not perfect, we have a knowledge of good, and this knowledge leads us to appreciate the natural law. Nolan challenges what appears to be a deeply embedded attitude of the typical Christian mind, namely that we have a strong inclination to evil. Humans do wicked things, sometimes exceedingly wicked. But for the most part we have an inclination to good. Indeed, if we had an inclination to evil there would be so much wrongdoing that the human race could scarcely survive.

In his study “Philosophical Sources of Aquinas’ Quarta Via,” Patrick Masterson charts the main lines of the philosophical sources of Aquinas’ fourth argument for the existence of God. These are early Greek, Neoplatonic, medieval, and Arabian sources. He discusses the interplay in the argument between Platonic and Aristotelian influences and elucidates the priority accorded by Aquinas to the latter. The discussion calls into question interpretations of the proof which deny
importance to the textual reference to the principle of efficient causation. It therefore disputes interpretations in terms of exemplarism which suggest that our comparative judgments are possible only because we possess a virtual but real knowledge of God as the ultimate object of our intellectual desire. (A detailed defense of the argument in terms of efficient causation is provided in the author’s recent book The Sense of Creation.)

The relation between philosophy and theology, and the autonomous grounding of philosophy, are explored by Tim Lynch in his essay “Philosophy and Its Value: Reflections on Fides et Ratio.” Lynch draws upon the papal encyclical Fides et Ratio to outline the emergence of philosophy in the native wisdom carried by the traditions and stories of all cultures and societies. The development of philosophy in a more formal sense is then traced to the deliberate consideration given by some ancient Greek thinkers as well as later Christian writers to the evidence for prospective judgments and to the logical grounds for potential conclusions. The sense in which formal philosophy depends upon its informal predecessors is explored, and in this light views attributed to Cottier, Russell, and Heidegger are critically assessed. The legitimacy of philosophy’s quest for the originative source of all things is affirmed, so that the naturalism of thinkers like Quine and Sellars is brought into question. Lynch’s essay then examines the view that the philosopher seeks truth merely for the joy of the quest and asserts the irrationality of withholding judgment when the evidence is given. The achievement of true judgment is not desertion from the cognitive quest but rather its partial fulfillment. Some brief reflections on the usefulness of philosophy with regard to ethical questions, to the special sciences, and to theology are added, and the piece concludes by affirming the intrinsic value of the subject, so that there is a sense in which philosophy is quite useless.

A somewhat different approach is adopted by James O’Shea in his contribution “Kant and Dennett on the Epistemic Status of Teleological Principles.” O’Shea investigates the vexed issue of how to correctly interpret Kant’s attempted justification of the use of teleological principles in natural philosophy (in particular, in biological explanation), which he seeks to illuminate by means of a comparison with
Daniel Dennett’s views on the “design stance.” The central difficulty is that while well-known aspects of Kant’s critical philosophy entail the objective primacy of mechanistic explanation and seem to rule out the possibility of any objective purposiveness in nature, Kant also argues plausibly that the attribution of adaptive functional forms to living things is typically indispensable if we are to successfully explain their behavior. It is not enough to respond to this problem by pointing out that Kant characterizes his regulative maxims of teleology as “merely subjective” heuristic principles. Kant’s account is more than just the unsatisfying conclusion that we must treat nature “as if” it were governed by principles that we know, objectively, cannot really be true of nature. By means of a comparison between Kant’s teleological maxims and Dennett’s views on the intentional stance and the design stance, O’Shea offers a compelling argument that Kant’s views on the status of teleological explanation are more insightful than has often been thought. In attempting to defend a conception of the quasi-objective and norm-laden explanatory ascription of purposes to organisms, while simultaneously contending for the objective primacy (in principle) of mechanistic explanation, Kant was not merely offering an implausible patch-up job in response to ruptures in the critical system. Rather, he was grappling with a crucial philosophical problem that continues to raise structurally similar conceptual challenges, as Dennett shows, even within the post-Darwinian framework of contemporary evolutionary biology.

In his contribution “Human Nature and One-Eyed Reason,” Ciarán McGlynn considers the limitations of the Enlightenment’s understanding of human nature by exploring Whitehead’s famous image. He argues that the metaphors and mode of abstraction dominating Enlightenment thinking, and much of contemporary science, have facilitated the construction of a diminished ontology. The metaphor of one-eyed reason has the merit of suggesting that the Enlightenment worldview is deficient in what it sees to be the extent of reality. This limitation is particularly evident in the case of human nature: first-person ontology is notoriously difficult to fit into the third-person view of contemporary science. Having surveyed how Enlightenment thinkers and their progeny addressed or eschewed the problem of
human nature, McGlynn argues that the existence of consciousness is the deep mystery eluding contemporary theories of human nature. The monocural approach of the Enlightenment legacy needs to be revised by first being detached from the metaphors that have bewitched it in the past. It is necessary to have a more encompassing view of the self and to recognize that such a view will involve elements not currently offered by any theory of human nature.

In her essay “Relativism and Religious Diversity,” Maria Baghramian investigates the phenomenon of religious diversity and disagreement. She outlines five possible approaches to the phenomenon of diversity and finds them unconvincing. She then considers relativism as a solution to the problem of religious disagreement; she argues that the relativist achieves a resolution of the initial problematic at the cost of undermining the claim that religious beliefs can be true or objective. To accept religious relativism as a solution to the problem of diversity is to deprive religion of its power to convince or persuade the nonbeliever. If diversity of religious belief is a fact, then the only reasonable approach, she suggests, is to adopt an ethical stance of mutual tolerance and respect for such diversity.

In his contribution entitled “The Plagues of Desecration: Roger Scruton and Richard Rorty on Life after Religion,” Mark Dooley challenges the solution to the question of religion proposed by Richard Rorty, who writes that getting rid of God-talk is “no big deal.” From his neopragmatist perspective, it is simply a matter of reweaving a particular belief that has run its course. Mark Dooley asks whether our webs of belief and desire can be rewoven so randomly. In seeking an answer to this complex question, he turns to the writings of the English philosopher Roger Scruton, who argues that even though the “human world is a social world, and socially constructed,” we cannot follow Rorty in constructing it “simply as we please.” There are, Scruton argues, “constants of human nature”—moral, aesthetic, and religious—which we defy at our peril and which we must strive to obey. Dooley seeks to defend Scruton’s position and to show (pace Rorty) that mankind’s “peculiar metaphysical predicament” persists in spite of neopragmatism in particular and postmodernism in general. For Scruton, that predicament is revealed in the tension between the
subjective viewpoint and the world of objects, a tension that ultimately “gives rise to the experience of sanctity.”

The most militant, programmatic challenge to religion in recent philosophy is commonly associated with the writings of Richard Dawkins. “Dawkins’ Fear of Reason,” by Brendan Purcell, might be seen as an “open letter” to Richard Dawkins. It begins by situating Dawkins’ *God Delusion* in the Vienna School’s reduction of reason to the rationality of the natural sciences. There, what alone counts as evidence is reducible to sense perception—a criterion not established in any scientific experiment. Next, Dawkins’ blind spot in philosophical theology, his conflating of God with religion, is considered. And, given Dawkins’ attack on religion, his avoidance of the one non-religious tradition where the notion of God emerged—classical Greek philosophy—is strange, if not intellectually weak-kneed: Xenophanes and Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle, all formulated their understanding of God in terms of reason, yet go unmentioned in *The God Delusion*. Dawkins’ core argument against the existence of God is that of complexity, since the existing complexity of the world must be explained by a more complex cause, while traditionally God is held to be simple. Purcell suggests that Dawkins’ own practice of advocating what he regards as a simple theory (natural selection) to explain complex realities should at least have given him pause. On another front, Thomas Nagel and John Cornwell criticize Dawkins’ refusal to consider what has always been regarded as a philosophical starting point for the question of God, namely contingency. The final sections of the essay question Dawkins’ assertion that religion is primarily a by-product of fear and wonder whether Dawkins himself is fearful of the radical openness to the *logos* to which Pope Benedict XVI has invited all genuine truth seekers.

In his essay “The Experiential Argument for the Existence of God in Gabriel Marcel and Alvin Plantinga,” Brendan Sweetman argues that the work of Gabriel Marcel makes an important contribution to the question of what is involved in an experience of God. He develops this position by means of an elaboration of Marcel’s key themes in the philosophy of religion and by concrete illustrations of the experiences of fidelity and hope. The paper concludes with a comparison of
Marcel’s approach to religious experience with that of Alvin Plantinga from the Anglo-American tradition in recent philosophy of religion. Sweetman argues that Marcel’s approach can be more fruitful than Plantinga’s for an analysis of religious experience and its connection to the existence of God.

A different perspective on religion is offered by Ciarán Benson in a meditative reflection entitled “A Secular Spirituality? James, Dennett, and Dawkins.” Benson writes as a secular humanist anxious to defend the category of “the spiritual.” Taking Richard Dawkins and Daniel Dennett as his interlocutors, he is fully accepting of the evolutionary account of human being but critical of the ways in which cultural-historical achievements, with their attendant structuring of symbolic consciousness, are diminished by Dawkins in particular. The work of the Canadian evolutionary psychologist Merlin Donald finds much greater favor with Benson. Dennett fully acknowledges the continuing power of William James’ magisterial *The Varieties of Religious Experience* while arguing that the explanatory power of James’ analyses of subjective experiences is superseded by the reach of evolutionary forces. Against this, Benson argues that the category of “the mystical experience,” as unfolded by James, retains its importance today, if not in many contemporary evolutionary psychological approaches, then certainly in the field of what may be called the “poetic imagination.” In support of this he draws on the reflections of many prominent contemporary poets. Benson argues for the neglected potency of “poetic apprehensions” of the world as a counterbalance to “scientific apprehensions.” He endorses the view that art and religion have common evolutionary and historical experiential roots, and he reminds us that the divisive nature of contemporary religious debate within and between religions, as well as between orthodox religions and forms of atheism, is due not to what James understood as the originating mystical sense of “the More”—the reality of which might be accepted across the board—but rather to the institutionalization of what James called “over-beliefs.”

Art and religion are central also to Richard Kearney’s essay “Eucharistic Imagination in Merleau-Ponty and James Joyce.” Kearney compares a phenomenology of the flesh with James Joyce’s writing on
sacramental epiphanies in *Ulysses*. Starting with an analysis of Husserl’s phenomenological account of the lived body, Kearney goes on to show how this is radically developed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty in his notion of sacramental sensibility in *The Phenomenology of Perception* and other writings on literature and art. In the second part of the essay, Kearney relates this to Joyce’s literary exploration of an aesthetics of everyday incarnation and eros where the sacred and the secular intertwine.

A number of other contributions also treat themes central to the phenomenological movement. Dermot Moran’s wide-ranging essay is entitled “Immanence, Self-Experience, and Transcendence in Edmund Husserl, Edith Stein, and Karl Jaspers.” Moran argues that phenomenology, understood as a philosophy of immanence, has had an ambiguous, uneasy relationship with transcendence, the wholly other, or numinous. If phenomenology restricts its evidence to givenness and what has phenomenality, what becomes of that which is withheld or cannot in principle come to givenness? In his essay he examines attempts to acknowledge the transcendent in the writings of two phenomenologists, Edmund Husserl and Edith Stein (who attempted to fuse phenomenology with neo-Thomism); he also considers the influence of the existentialist Karl Jaspers, who made transcendence an explicit theme of his writing. Moran argues that Husserl does recognize the essential experience of transcendence within immanence; even the idea of a physical thing has “dimensions of infinity” included within it. Similarly, Husserl asserts profoundly, every “outside” is what it is only as understood from the inside. Jaspers too makes the experience of transcendence central to human existence: it is the very measure of my own depth. For Edith Stein, everything temporal points toward the timeless structural ground which makes it what it is. Transcendence is an intrinsic part of being itself. Furthermore, the very lack of self-sufficiency of my own self shows that the self requires a ground outside itself, in the transcendent. There is strong convergence between the three thinkers studied on the concept of transcendence, which is indeed a central, if largely unacknowledged, concept in phenomenology in both Husserl and his followers (Stein) but also, through Jaspers, in Heidegger.

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It is perhaps apt that, tackling as it does the challenge to phenomenology from intersubjectivity, Belinda McKeon’s essay, “Presuming the Other from Stein to Husserl: Empathy and the Margins of Experience,” moves from personal reminiscence to an analysis of the difficulties and complexities of accounting phenomenologically for the Other. When McKeon was a postgraduate student in the School of Philosophy at UCD, Gerald Hanratty, knowing that she was working on Husserlian theories of intersubjectivity, loaned her his own heavily annotated copy of Edith Stein’s *On the Problem of Empathy*. In the act of reading another’s annotations on yet another’s words (indeed, on the translated words of another, lending to the encounter a fourth level of distance and fallibility), McKeon finds a metaphor for the fraught process of intersubjective empathy with which Stein and Husserl grappled in their phenomenology. Her essay shows how Husserl’s *Cartesian Meditations* (1931), which is regarded as his mature work on intersubjectivity and which approaches that subject through the lens of empathy, allows him to trace in intricate detail the way in which the Other is experienced as Other by the ego. However, Husserl’s empathy-driven process is, as McKeon shows, problematic because it fails ultimately to account for the experience with the limit-Other, the subject who is truly radically Other to the intending ego for whom the question of empathy persisted as a serious challenge throughout his career. The *Cartesian Meditations* represents a departure, on the question of empathy, from the manuscripts and research notes on which Edith Stein would have worked with Husserl at Freiburg. But since it was Stein’s editing and reworking of those manuscripts (and, some argue, her writing of some sections) which gave shape and focus to the sections of *Ideen* II which reckon with the question of empathy, Stein’s shadow—her pencil marks, so to speak, in the margin—can be seen, too, in the work which is regarded as Husserl’s mature work on intersubjectivity, the Fifth Cartesian Meditation, which dates from 1928. Like Stein, Husserl argues in the Fifth Meditation that empathy is a specific mode of consciousness which puts us in touch with the feelings and beliefs of others in a manner that is not direct but is still highly reliable. But like Stein he struggles with the problem of pre-
sumption—the presuming of the other, which comes as an unavoidable corollary of the kind of empathic understanding traced and described by them both.

Three essays are concerned with Husserl’s most famous—and controversial—pupil, Martin Heidegger, as his thought relates to others in the ongoing tradition of Western philosophy. In “The Unity of Thought in Aristotle, Kant, and Heidegger,” Brian Elliott assesses Heidegger’s contribution to understanding human cognition. Within accounts of Western philosophy it is generally assumed that Kant’s critical project marks a definitive break with the metaphysical tradition founded by Aristotle. Through detailed analysis of certain aspects of the theories of cognition offered by Aristotle and Kant respectively, Elliott questions this standard assumption. One salient feature of convergence between the two thinkers is the notion of imagination as a key mediating cognitive act or function. Both thinkers also endorse what might be called a vertical hierarchy of cognitive powers, with sensation or sensible intuition counting as basic and primitive, and rational thought as ultimate and most advanced. The overriding concern in both the Aristotelian and Kantian accounts is to identify an effective act or source of cognitive unity. In both cases a form of imagination is seen as key to such unity, though the respective analyses of imagination offered fail to give consistent and cogent grounds for assuming that such unity can in fact be achieved through acts of the imagination. In his 1929 work Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, Heidegger identifies Kant’s notion of the transcendental imagination as key to his critical account of cognition. Heidegger claims that Kant’s account of the imagination brings the traditional concern for unity within Western thought to the edge of an abyss, an abyss that he identifies as human freedom. Rather than offering an interpretation of Kant that effectively clarifies the nature of this “abyss,” Heidegger’s account turns on putative contradictions and tensions within Kant’s text that are in fact testimony to the subtlety and complexity of the Kantian account of cognition. Instead of offering a genuine alternative to the concern for ultimate rational unity that characterizes the tradition of Western thought, Heidegger’s concept of “ecstatic temporality” constitutes a less subtle, more strictly univocal reaffirmation of such a concern.
In her study “Communication, Struggle, and Human Destiny: Ricoeur’s Judicial Praxis and Heidegger’s ‘Power of Destiny,’” Eileen Brennan explores parallels between Heidegger’s notion of “Destiny” and Paul Ricoeur’s concept of ethical judicial praxis. Martin Heidegger famously declared that only in communicating and in struggling does the power of destiny become free. Brennan documents the references to communication and struggle in Paul Ricoeur’s account of ethical judicial praxis and considers the possibility that there might be something akin to Heidegger’s “power of destiny” in Ricoeur’s social and political philosophy. She notes that, on Ricoeur’s account, communication and struggle take place in and around the phenomenon of legal argumentation and provide the conditions for the emergence of the “better argument.” She observes that because it has both a “probabilistic logic” and an “ethics of argumentation,” (i.e., Audi alteram partem, “Hear the other side”), this winning argument has the power to more or less constrain the court to find in favor of the litigant who has made that argument. She draws attention to the fact that Heidegger saw the “power of destiny” as the very antithesis of a power to constrain. She concludes that there is no direct link between Ricoeur’s judicial praxis and Heidegger’s “power of destiny.” Nonetheless, she is convinced that had it not been for the communication and struggle that took place among Ricoeur’s contemporaries in the 1990s, it is unlikely that the problem of the seriously dysfunctional French justice system would have been properly identified and tackled. She suggests that Ricoeur’s engagement with French intellectuals, jurists, and politicians provides an illustration of the very power that Heidegger spoke of in § 74 of Being and Time.

Heidegger is also at the center of Liberato Santoro-Brienza’s contribution, “Forgetting Aristotle? Heidegger’s Reflections on Mimesis.” The paper aims to show that, in his scattered reflections on the nature of art, Heidegger seems to imply that art has been understood—in the Western tradition, since Plato—primarily as the activity of copying and re-presenting, rather than as disclosure of Being: as aletheia. He devoted much attention to Plato’s reflections on mimesis and art, but—to begin—he gave us a simplified and impoverished version of Plato’s conception. More significant, however, is the fact that Heideg-
ger shows a baffling lack of interest in what Aristotle had to say about both mimesis and art. The interpretation of Aristotle’s understanding of mimesis sheds light on a considerable lacuna in Heidegger’s awareness of the complexity of the issue. His forgetfulness of Aristotle’s conception of mimesis renders Heidegger’s reflections on the subject either confused or unconvincing.

In his essay “Immanent Transcendence? Adorno’s Reconception of Metaphysics,” Brian O’Connor examines the efforts of Theodor Adorno to develop a new metaphysics in the face of widespread hostility in twentieth-century philosophy. As criticized by the Analytic and Continental philosophical movements, metaphysics appears to be inextricably grounded in certain quasi-theological philosophical commitments that are no longer defensible within philosophy. O’Connor demonstrates that Adorno’s reconception of metaphysics operates consistently from within historical materialism. It is therefore a modification of that position in view of historical materialism’s conventional eschewal of metaphysics. O’Connor’s essay reconstructs Adorno’s idea of nonidentity in order to assess whether, as Adorno contends, it can provide a new philosophical articulation of “metaphysical experience.”

In his essay “On Losing Uniqueness: Singularity and Its Effacement in Derrida,” Timothy Mooney considers the French philosopher’s thesis that the irreplaceable uniqueness or singularity of every person is ultimately lost by graphic writing, which effaces it and leaves nothing but its trace. This view is already enunciated in Derrida’s early work. He goes on to contend that only in the perceptual experience of the Other can we apprehend something of what he calls his or her “intersection of singularities.” In this latter account Derrida might seem to privilege the apprehension of singularity through bodily presence. Mooney seeks to show, however, that he affirms the defeasible character of such experience, since he is attentive to the ineliminable roles of iterability, culture, and context, and indeed to various possibilities of dissimulation.

In “The Person and the Common Good: Toward a Language of Paradox,” David Walsh considers one of the great problems in political language: how to talk about the common good when individuals always exceed it. Individuals are of course parts of the political whole
and subordinate their private interests for the sake of their common interest. The difficulty is that individuals are not simply reducible to this role. Their significance constantly overflows their contributions to the common good. We recognize that in the most fundamental sense the value of individuals vastly surpasses any social good. This is why we accord them the inalienable protections of rights. Yet the ordinary political language of parts and wholes utterly fails to do justice to this most fundamental perspective. A notable exception is the contribution of personalist philosophy, although even it has fallen short of what is required. Personalism still discourses about persons as if it could treat them from the outside. What is needed is a willingness to accept the existential impossibility of stepping outside the horizon of personhood even while talking about persons. To confront the challenge, political language must embrace the language of paradox. Only by including in the linguistic formulations themselves the sense that persons are always more than we can say about them can we properly say anything about them. This is what Maritain aimed at in suggesting that society is “a whole composed of wholes.”

Finally, in his essay “Ethics and Economics: Friends or Foes?,” Gerard Casey examines the relationship between economics and ethics. While there is a prereflective belief that ethics and economics could, in principle at least, engage with each other, both of them dealing with human action, the received wisdom is that they differ essentially, inasmuch as economics is descriptive, ethics prescriptive—the one telling us the way things are; the other, the way things ought to be. As such, then, while their interests may coincide materially, their formal perspectives appear to be ineluctably diverse. Not everyone accepts the received wisdom, so Casey traces a discussion between sharply opposed views on the appropriate way to conceive the relationship between economics and ethics. His conclusion is that two recurrent temptations must be resisted: the first, and more historically prevalent, is to fail to recognize the intrinsic constitutive order of economics by taking it to be merely a branch of ethics; the second, more recent and more potent temptation is to fail to recognize the limits of economics by attempting to make ethics a province of economics’ empire.