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barrier was a barrier before evolution, and I see no reason to think the barrier fell for the evolutionists.

Which brings me finally to Richards's third level, in which he uses his history as a case study for his philosophy. And, in view of the success of his history, I have to start beating a retreat from the position I just stated above! As a historian, Richards does show, brilliantly, that one does have ideas thrown out, struggle (or, if you like, "struggle") with winners and losers. Conceptual change is evolutionary, in a sense. Occasionally, I did feel that the randomness of new ideas was being overstressed, but this was probably just the churlishness of a loser on my part.

I am still not convinced that the naturalistic fallacy is no barrier to the kind of ethics Richards endorses. If Spencer is right and G. E. Moore is wrong, then my world will collapse. But, all in all, I acknowledge a wonderful piece of history and a subtle piece of philosophy. This is a book that can be read by philosophers and historians with much profit.

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Frank M. Oppenheim. *Royce's Mature Philosophy of Religion*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987. Pp. xviii + 403. \$32.95.

In the current revival of interest in the Classical American philosophers, Josiah Royce (1855–1916) has rarely received the detailed treatment of such thinkers as C. S. Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. Oppenheim's book should compel many scholars to reevaluate Royce's contribution to current debates in hermeneutics and the philosophy of religion. In addition, it will serve to remind us of the profound richness and complexity of Royce's mature thought, which grapples with Peirce's early semiotic and with Royce's own understanding of the writings of St. Paul and their relation to the primitive church. In the period around 1912, Royce freed himself from his earlier formulation of the nature and role of the Absolute and forged a theory of the interpretive community that represents one of the most challenging idea-clusters in the Classical American tradition.

Oppenheim devotes considerable attention to the ideas of Spirit and community as they both serve to enhance and refine Royce's mature conception of God. A detailed analysis is given of the various conceptions of community in Royce's epoch-making *The Problem of Christianity* (1913). Interpretive communities, which exhibit the will to interpret, are contrasted with merely natural communities, which are bound by a common cause but remain exclusivistic. Within the heart of the community of interpretation lies the grace-filled Beloved Community, which stands as the teleological core for all hermeneutic communities. Oppenheim shows how social psychology works in concert with Royce's metaphysics of community to generate a profound and flexible theory of human communal and personal transactions.

One of the most important features of this book is the detailed treatment of Royce's largely unknown and still unpublished theories of logic. Royce, in dialogue with the

logical theories of Peirce and Russell, developed what he called "system Sigma," a logic of orders dealing with systems of extreme generality. Oppenheim argues that system Sigma operates as a hidden architectonic within the hermeneutic and religious analyses of *The Problem of Christianity*. Royce's unique logical system was concerned with the relation between human volition and the various dimensions of ordered systems. In particular, Royce redefined the notions of relation, class, series (open, closed, dense, and well-ordered), and operation along the lines of a voluntaristic and infinitely ramified system of suborders. Royce's O-relation served his implied pluralism by opening out the sheer infinity of logical and semiotic subsets. The core of system Sigma was the triadic structure of comparison by which one sign was compared and contrasted with another to produce a more general "third" that served as the more encompassing order. Oppenheim shows in detail how the seemingly unstructured analyses of *The Problem of Christianity* are governed and guided by system Sigma.

Underlying Royce's theory of community is a general semiotic that sees all of nature as a sign series or series of systems, which have intrinsic semiotic contours. While Royce, in emphasizing the paradigm of self-consciousness, shares many traits in common with idealism, his general sign system firmly places sign activity within the innumerable orders of nature. The world is interpretive through and through and exhibits its own hermeneutic structures. Given the contemporary devaluation of nature and the reference relation, this semiotic naturalism is a welcome correction.

Oppenheim shows that Royce adopted Peirce's general methodology of "interpretive musement" as the means by and through which signs are examined and ramified. Musement is not bound to prefabricated methods and remains open to the Spirit of Interpretation that animates all loyal interpreters and their communities. Paul's understanding of the nature of love as the deepest expression of loyalty serves as an ethico-religious core for interpretive musement. Oppenheim carefully links love and musement to show that Royce was fully aware that all semiotic and hermeneutic acts required a reconciling spirit that could only come from a source outside the living communities of interpretation.

While Royce did not leave us with any concrete studies of those political or business practices that fragment the Beloved Community, he did provide a general theory of religion that served to support and animate his theories of interpretation and community. Royce's post-1912 reflections on the Spirit and the teleological forces within grace-filled communities stand as remarkable frameworks within which contemporary thought can find new strength and confidence. Oppenheim is deeply concerned with showing the continuing relevance of the mature Royce for the moral, hermeneutic, and religious tasks of the present. In his richly nuanced and carefully researched book, Oppenheim has given new life to a major thinker who deserves to be brought out of the shadows.

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