

Cora Diamond: Reading Wittgenstein with Anscombe, Going On to Ethics. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press 2019, 331 pages, \$39.95 (Hardcover), ISBN 978-0-674-05168-3

In her new book Cora Diamond makes explicit her relation to two inspirations: Wittgenstein and Anscombe. What's more, we learn that it was in fact Anscombe who introduced her to Wittgenstein, through her 1959 *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (IWT). In other words, one of the most original and important current interpreters of Wittgenstein from the start read Wittgenstein through the lens of Anscombe, another difficult and controversial philosopher. In her own words, "What I have learned from Anscombe is reflected in everything I've written about Wittgenstein" (44).

One idea Diamond finds in Anscombe is that thought is something vulnerable to going wrong. Such is the focus of this book. This means that to the Wittgensteinian orientation which translates, as expected, in a thorough critique of the craving for generality in philosophy, and concomitant contempt for the particular case, Diamond adds "a kind of Anscombian-Aristotelian idea of the guiding of thinking being part of the *ergon* of thinking" (237). The ideas of guiding thinking and our responses to thought gone wrong unite the three parts of the book (Part I *Wittgenstein, Anscombe and the Activity of Philosophy*, Part II *Wittgenstein, Anscombe and What Can Only Be True* and Part III *Going On to Think about Ethics*). The three parts bring together seven pieces, written or presented after 1998. There are also three specific introductions to each the three parts, as well as a short initial *Introduction* which explains the composition and the structure of the volume.

One idea crucial to the articulation of the three parts of the book is Anscombe's idea of propositions which do not have a significant negation and which can nevertheless be true. Anscombe's example in IWT, discussed over and over, is "'Someone' is not the name of someone", used in a context of clarification. This, according to Anscombe, is a sentence the contradictory of which is nothing but confusion, a sentence whose negation peters into unintelligibility (72). Although Diamond thinks Anscombe goes wrong in her analysis of this particular example (75), Anscombe's speaking of "the sort of proposition which can be true or false", implying that there is another sort, called her attention to the fact that "some propositions come in pairs, some don't". One main criticism Anscombe makes of the Tractarian view of sense and nonsense is that Wittgenstein understands too narrowly the sort or sorts of propositions that do not have both the possibility of truth and the possibility of falsity (159). He thus treats as nonsense sentences which can be not only clarificatory but obviously true (as the example above, according to Anscombe). This is what Diamond is interested