

believes “‘the lion is tawny’ is sense-equivalent to ‘all lions are necessarily tawny’” (p. xvi), but this is a much stronger claim than Sellars himself ever commits to. The editors also claim that Sellars’s famous Ryleans—protopersons who have not yet become conscious of their own psychologies—“perform only linguistic acts, not actions” (p. xx), which is contradicted by Sellars on page 271. Sellars’s theory of perception is called a “version of direct realism” (p. xxii), but surely it is more accurate to call it a version of *critical realism*. The thumbnail of “Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man”—Sellars’s best known paper after EPM—does not distinguish properly between the Original Image and the Manifest Image and claims that Sellars thinks the scientific image falls short in not being able to “explain social activity,” whereas Sellars really thinks that the scientific image lacks “the language of community and individual intentions” (p. 408). The point of the language of intentions is not to interpret or explain the world, but to change it.

The bottom line is unmistakable, however: Here are central works of the most profound and fertile American philosopher of the post-war era: everyone should have these essays.—Willem A. deVries, *University of New Hampshire*.

SETIYA, Kieran. *Reasons without Rationalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. xii + 131 pp. Cloth, \$29.95—This is an excellent book: original, intricately argued, yet admirably compact. It makes important contributions to both the philosophy of action and ethics.

Early in the book Setiya argues, roughly, that a consideration counts as a reason for ϕ -ing just in case the disposition to be moved to ϕ by that consideration is a good disposition of practical thought—that is, just in case it is good *as* a disposition of practical thought. (No claim of metaphysical or epistemic priority is intended here; this is just a biconditional.) But dispositions of practical thought are also traits of character; they consequently can be evaluated *as* traits of character. How are these evaluations related? Setiya’s central thesis is that they are one and the same: being a good disposition of practical thought *just is* being a disposition of practical thought that is good as a trait of character. Setiya calls this the *virtue theory* of practical reason. Putting his claims together yields the view that a consideration counts as a reason for ϕ -ing just in case the disposition to be moved to ϕ by that consideration is a virtue of character.

Setiya’s master argument for the virtue theory of practical reason is simple and arresting. If being a good disposition of practical thought is *not* the same as being a virtuous disposition of practical thought, then there must be something in the *nature* of practical thought that explains why it is subject to its own standards of evaluation. Setiya dubs attempts to derive standards of practical thinking from the nature of practical thought *ethical rationalism*, and he spends most of the second half of his book arguing against all possible versions of the view. He rejects most versions because they presuppose something he argues against in

the first half of the book, namely that intentional action always takes place under “the guise of the good”—that is, that acting for a reason necessarily involves taking one’s reason to provide some degree of *justification* for one’s action. Recognitionists, who hold that good practical thought is thought that shows a proper sensitivity to normative or evaluative facts, assume that practical thought is thought concerning what we have reason to do, or what will promote the human good, or some such. Constructivists, who attempt to derive standards of practical thought from a conception of what it is to be a rational agent, assume that rational agents are those who seek to justify their actions. But not all versions of ethical rationalism presuppose the guise of the good thesis. Setiya also rejects versions presupposing that practical thought is thought about how to satisfy one’s final desires (or, somewhat more obscurely, that it is thought ultimately “triggered” by one’s final desires) or that it aims at self-knowledge. His discussion of this last view, which is associated with David Velleman, is especially important because Setiya’s account of intentional action is quite similar to Velleman’s. Setiya argues that despite the similarities the correct account (his own) is insufficient to support Velleman’s version of rationalism.

In one way or another, most of Setiya’s arguments against ethical rationalism rely upon claims he defends in the first half of the book. There he advances his account of intentional action, according to which intentionally ϕ -ing is a matter of ϕ -ing because of a desire-like belief to the effect that one is ϕ -ing at least in part because of that very belief. Crucially, the “because” that figures into the content of this belief is explanatory, not justificatory: intentionally ϕ -ing involves having a belief about what is *motivating* one’s action, not about what justifies it. Since Setiya thinks the primary argument for the guise of the good thesis is that it follows from a correct understanding of intentional action, he takes the truth of his account to undermine that thesis. He also briefly considers and rejects some other possible rationales for the thesis.

Setiya’s overall argument is long and complex; there are numerous points at which one might try to dig in one’s heels. Many will resist Setiya’s account of intentional action (although his arguments for it should not be dismissed lightly). But even such readers will find the rest of the book well worth studying. Is Setiya right that if it is possible to act for a reason without seeing that reason as providing some justification for one’s action, then it cannot be that practical thought is good *as such* only if it yields justified action? Is he right that the virtue theory of practical reason is the only non-skeptical alternative to ethical rationalism? Setiya has done us a real service by raising such questions and by giving us such subtle and powerful arguments to wrestle with.—Matthew Hanser, *University of California, Santa Barbara*.