

EuroJTh (1998) 7:2, 131

0960-2720

Truth-Could it be True?

Peter Hicks

Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996,
230pp., pb, ISBN 1-900507-16-1

RÉSUMÉ

Hicks aborde avec humour et simplicité les questions de la vérité et de la connaissance de la vérité. Il retient l'apport d'un large choix de philosophies, pour tenter d'élaborer une notion de la vérité plus riche et plus complexe que les idées réductrices habituelles. Le texte est écrit clairement, mais nous ne sommes pas convaincu que la notion de vérité développée par Hicks soit cohérente.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Um die Frage der Wahrheit und der Erkenntnisfähigkeit von Wahrheit geht es in dem humorvoll und unkompliziert geschriebenen Buch von Hicks. Er führt eine große Anzahl philosophischer Vorstellungen zusammen, um so die Wahrheitsfrage breiter und wesentlich umfassender beschreiben zu können als die übliche reduktionistische Wahrheitssuche. Der Text ist verständlich geschrieben, trotzdem ist der Rezensent nicht überzeugt, das das entfaltete Konzept für Wahrheit in sich schlüssig ist.

This small volume promises to be a book about philosophy which uses no philosophical terms and presumes no prior knowledge of philosophy. It fulfills this aim admirably. The style is pacy and the book is full of humour and helpful illustrations. If only all philosophy teachers could communicate with such clarity!

The book is a broad ranging investigation into the realms of belief and truth. Must one be able to *prove* something before one can accept it rationally (and what does one mean by *prove* in this context?) Certainly not in any strong sense is the answer. Can one prove God's existence? Not in any watertight sense although theistic arguments do carry some weight as evidence. Most of the book is an attempt at a positive construction of a view on the issues of knowledge and truth. Hicks sees genuine insights in a range of philosophical positions on truth and aims to plunder the Egyptians to construct the beginnings of a richer and more complex view of truth than philosophers usually tolerate. He wishes to hold on to the insights of realism (of course the term and those that follow are not used) that

one cannot simply invent truth but must discover it. Yet pragmatists also have a point in thinking that truth must be livable. Rationalists overlay the place of reason but many post-modern philosophers over-react and devalue reason. It, along with experience, relationality, love, will and goodness are all thrown into the melting pot to provide a wholistic view of truth. Of course, so many threads are left hanging that philosophers will end up pulling their hair out in frustration but then this is not a book aimed at philosophers. I must confess to finding myself rather confused by Hicks at times. Perhaps I like neat boxes too much but a range of epistemological and ontological issues seemed blurred into one with the use of the magic word 'truth'. The word seemed to be used in different ways at different times and yet we were led to believe that a *single concept* was under discussion-just a very rich and complex one. It is all very well hurling insights from rationalism, empiricism, pragmatism, realism and a range of other 'isms' together but I remain to be convinced that such insights are genuinely compatible. To Hicks' credit he writes with great humility and openness to correction and this is something all readers can take with them.

Robin Parry
Worcester, England

EuroJTh (1998) 7:2, 131-132

0960-2720

In Defence of Miracles:

A Comprehensive Case for God's Actions in History

R. D. Geivett & G. R. Habermas, eds.
Leicester: Apollos, 1997, 330pp., £11.99,
ISBN 0-85111-452-0

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage réunit de manière très utile des essais formant un tout complet sur la défense des miracles. La première partie expose à grands traits la position opposée aux miracles. La deuxième défend la possibilité du miraculeux. La troisième présente la vision chrétienne du monde qui donne sens à l'idée de miracle, tandis que la quatrième partie présente des études de cas de miracles d'un point de vue chrétien. Les auteurs sont presque tous des philosophes évangéliques compétents et écrivent avec clarté et concision.