



The Fate of Wonder: Wittengenstein's Critique of Metaphysics and Modernity (Columbia Themes in Philosophy)

Kevin Cahill

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Kevin Cahill reclaims one of Ludwig Wittgenstein's most passionately pursued endeavors: to reawaken wonder for the mysterious place of human life and language in the world. Following the philosopher's spiritual and cultural criticism and tying it more tightly to the overall evolution of his thought, Cahill frames an original interpretation of Wittgenstein's engagement with Western metaphysics and modernity, better contextualizing the intentions and force of his work.

Throughout the course of his study, Cahill synthesizes several approaches to Wittgenstein's life and thought. He stresses the nontheoretical aspirations of the philosopher's early and later writings, combining key elements from the so-called resolute readings of the *Tractatus* with the "therapeutic" readings of *Philosophical Investigations*. He shows how continuity in Wittgenstein's cultural and spiritual concerns informed if not guided the development of his work between the writing of these texts, and in his reading of the *Tractatus*, Cahill reveals surprising affinities with Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*, a text not often associated with Wittgenstein's early formulations. In his recapturing of wonder, Wittgenstein both avoided and undermined traditional philosophy's reliance on theory. As he relays this bold endeavor, Cahill establishes his own innovative analytical methods, joining historicist and contextualist approaches with text-based, immanent readings, launching a sustained examination never attempted before with Wittgenstein's work.

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