

Review of
CLAIRE ORTIZ HILL, *RETHINKING IDENTITY AND
METAPHYSICS*

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This book has two main parts: *The twilight zone* and *The quest for a clear extensional ontology*. The first part is divided into six chapters: 1. *Unfettering reasoning*, 2. *The equals sign*, 3. *Confusing sign and object in identity statements*, 4. *Confusing names and descriptions in identity statements*, 5. *Confusing concepts and objects in identity statements*, 6. *Equating equality and identity*. The second part includes five more chapters: 7. *Identity and Frege's foundations for arithmetic*, 8. *Russell on the origins of the set-theoretical paradoxes*, 9. *Russell's paradoxes and his theory of definite descriptions*, 10. *Propositional attitudes*, 11. *Modalities*. There follows a *Conclusions* chapter. All this is preceded by a long list of *Acknowledgments*, and completed by a fourteen page *Bibliography* (plus *Notes* and *Index*).

The main goal of the author is to vindicate *intensions*. According to Ortiz Hill, the modern logic tradition has neglected, if not altogether removed intensions from logical theory, in favor of *extensions*. The connection between this principal content of the book and its title is easy to see. On the one hand, intensions have a great metaphysical value: they are “part of the ultimate furniture of the universe” (p. 152); on the other hand, the “desintensionalizing” (p. 53) of modern logic has been caused by a confusion of full identity and mere equality. Thus, removing such a confusion from our conception of identity or, more generally, *rethinking identity*, should lead, through the recovery of intensions, to a better appreciation of metaphysics. Responsible for the confusion was Gottlob Frege: “Logical maneuvers by which a lesser form of equivalence becomes equated with identity have played a fundamental role in logic since Frege began writing such devices into the foundations for logic, mathematics, and philosophy in his *Foundations of Arithmetic* (§§62-69)” (p. 45).