cerned with converting visual sensations into a picture. Drop from 'picture' the connotations of 'picturesque' and think in terms of visual enquiry and description. Thus, Cézanne's pictures are as much description and enquiry as mathematical pictures; symbolic logic pictures and pictures in physics - models. Cézanne studied objects and tried to grasp and present the relationships between them. Paul Klee argued that the artist's task was to 'render visible'.

Gropius and El Lissitsky utilised the discoveries of painting in their architecture.

Art is complex. Before continuing the attacks perhaps it should be made quite clear what is being attacked. It is wrong that only an élite can have the opportunity to understand Cézanne but the wrong rests not with art *per se* but with our social structure and educational policy.

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Reviews

Philosophy in China

K. T. Fann, *The Making of the Human Being in the People's Republic of China* - 3 articles, Far East Reporter, P O Box 1536, New York, NY 10017; n.d., 1974, 75¢

Serving the People with Dialectics
Essays on the Study of Philosophy by Workers and Peasants, Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1972, 8p

Philosophy is no Mystery
Peasants put their study to work, F.I.P., Peking, 1972, 8p

> *Liberate philosophy from the confines of the philosophers' lecture rooms and textbooks, and turn it into a sharp weapon in the hands of the masses*
>
> Mao Tse Tung

Philosophy and education in China have been at the very centre of the struggles during the Cultural Revolution and since. In both fields daring new experiments are under way, aimed at creating socialist forms of education and at 'liberating philosophy from the lecture rooms'. These 3 small pamphlets document and discuss these developments.

The pamphlet by Fann consists of 3 articles which arose out of a visit he made to China in 1972. The first of these articles, 'Philosophy in the Chinese Cultural Revolution', provides a brief and useful sketch of the Cultural Revolution and of its effects in education in general and in philosophy in particular.

As Fann makes clear, before the Cultural Revolution education and philosophy took surprisingly familiar forms and played surprisingly traditional roles in Chinese society. In 1949, at the time of Liberation, China was a poor and under-developed country (it remains so today, though much less so) and it had been shattered and devastated by decades of war. There was a severe shortage of educated people to become officials, technicians and teachers, a shortage which grew more acute as peace was brought to the country and the gigantic task of rebuilding commenced.

> *The Communist Party needed all the help and cooperation it could get - including the national bourgeoisie and especially the intellectuals. The whole cultural field or the superstructure - especially the artistic and educational institutions - was staffed by the intellectuals.* [p8]

Large parts of the superstructure (including, of course, the Party itself) thus remained under the control of intellectuals who had received their training and formative experience in the old society: mainly bourgeois intellectuals who continued to adopt the old attitudes and methods and run their institutions in the old ways.

In particular, higher education was dominated by such intellectuals. Although the *content* of education had been reformed in line with the Soviet model, so that Marxism-Leninism and Mao's thought were major components of the syllabus, the *form* remained relatively unaffected. Educational institutions remained cut off and isolated from the wider society - education went on 'behind closed doors'. Learning was purely theoretical - book learning, divorced from practice and practical experience. And by means of the familiar system of selection and assessment on purely academic grounds, by means of exams, the bourgeois intelligensia reproduced and perpetuated itself in positions of power and privilege.

However, the economic life of China was gradually being transformed towards socialism. Disagreements, conflicts and struggles emerged over the way in which socialism was to be built in China and over how politics and education and culture should contribute in this. It has been one of Mao's great contributions to Marxism to have recognised such struggles as *class* struggles: to have recognised, both in theory and in practice, that class struggle continues under socialism.

These struggles were brought to a decisive head by the Cultural Revolution. The mass of the people were mobilised to 'struggle against, criticize and transform' the political, cultural and educational institutions which were frustrating and blocking the emergence of socialism and dragging China back down 'the Capitalist Road'. This superstructure, however, was predominantly in the hands of the bourgeois intelligensia. Mao, in a political move of breathtaking imagination and daring, completely by-passed them, and issued the call:

> *It is right to rebel against reactionaries. Bombard the Headquarters!*

The struggles which ensued were intense and far-ranging. All areas of Chinese life were affected. Most institutions are now run by 'Revolutionary Committees'. In education, these are composed of representatives (a) of the working class, or in the countryside of the poorer peasants - the main responsibility of these representatives is to give political guidance; (b) of the teachers and students; and (c) of the academic administration. The monopoly of the bourgeois intellectuals has been broken. The system of selection and assessment has been transformed - marks and grades are no longer 'in command'. The doors of the schools and colleges have been opened. Students and teachers go out into society and participate in - learn from and contribute to - the life of the working people. Education is now designed to link theoretical knowledge with practi-

cal knowledge and experience; and it is closely related to the needs of the mass of the Chinese people.

These changes have occurred at all levels and in all areas of education, including philosophy. Almost everyone in China studies philosophy. Everywhere one goes there are groups of ordinary people - workers, peasants, housewives, soldiers etc - studying philosophy. They study, of course, from a Marxist standpoint. But, as Fann emphasises, it is important to understand that they study Marxism, not merely as an economic or historical or political doctrine, but also as a *method* of analysis - as a theory of knowledge and as a logic. The history of Chinese philosophy has also recently become the subject of mass study as part of the present movement to criticize Confucian attitudes and ideas.

The pamphlet *Philosophy is No Mystery* contains an account of how peasants of a Production Brigade (i.e. village) in Chekiang Province started to study philosophy and to use it in their work and in their lives. *Serving the People with Dialectics* contains half a dozen articles written by such study groups of workers and peasants, telling how they put the philosophy of dialectical materialism to use. Neither pamphlet contains any new or sophisticated philosophical ideas. The philosophical concepts they employ are crude and simple ones. However, the interest of these pamphlets lies elsewhere; they describe and explain how philosophical ideas can contribute directly to the solution of very practical and immediate problems.

We are so used to thinking of philosophy as an abstruse academic pursuit that it is impossible not to be sceptical about the idea of workers or peasants studying philosophy. One imagines the crudest sort of political indoctrination in Mao's thoughts being carried out under this title. Fann, however, reports otherwise:

> *In contrast with the traditional philosophy which begins with wonder, it may be said that for the Chinese, philosophy begins with a task. Bourgeois philosophers wonder about how to prove the existence of the external world, or wonder about the existence of other worlds. With good reason, these problems do not exist for the workers and peasants of China: the masses in China learn philosophy so that they can apply it creatively to solve specific problems. Contrary to the widespread belief in the West that the intensive mass study of Mao's writings breeds dogmatism in thought and conformity in action, it, in fact, inculcates open-mindedness and introduces the scientific attitude to the masses for the first time.* [p15]

The Chinese pamphlets also bear this out. For example, in *Serving the People with Dialectics* (what an unfortunate title!) there is an excellent account of how a poor peasant, guided by his studies of philosophy, employed scientific techniques to increase the yield of his peanut crop. Rather mundane, you may think; but one of the main practical benefits of the study of philosophy has certainly been to give rational, methodological and scientific principles of thought to the mass of the people. The mass study of Marxist philosophy may not reach great heights of subtlety and sophistication, but it has brought light and progress, where before were only the dark and incredibly backward beliefs and ways of the old China.

The line between education and indoctrination is not an easy one to draw. All education produces its share of dogmatists and conformists, and the Chinese are no exception in this. But if one concentrates only on this aspect of the philosophical education that is going on in China, one also loses sight of the vital fact that a grasp of Marxist ideas has enabled the mass of the people to participate in political life. The call has been made for the Chinese people to 'Participate in State Affairs!' Philosophical and political understanding are essential for this. The goal is participatory democracy and freedom. Fann quotes Engels as follows:

> *The whole sphere of the conditions of life which surround man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now [with socialism] comes under the dominion and control of man... The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face to face with man as laws of nature foreign to and dominating him, will now be used with full understanding and so mastered by him. Man's own social organization, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action... Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history.* [p11]

These are the ideals and goals, at least, towards which Chinese society is aiming. It would be absolutely wrong to give the impression that they have been achieved, however. Socialism in China is still young, and the incredibly backward habits and attitudes of the old China remain a strong opposing force. Socialism is not a fixed and established fact, but something which must be constantly struggled for.

Nevertheless, it is equally true that the experiments which are being undertaken in education and in philosophy are possible only within a socialist system. This is stressed in an interview which Fann had with Professor Fung Yu-Lan, a distinguished historian of Chinese philosophy at Peking University, and which is included in the Fann pamphlet (reprinted from *Social Praxis* 1/2, 1973). Prof. Fung says

> *Some foreign visitors are impressed by some of the specific measures in our educational system. They say 'this way of doing things is not bad; we should try it when we go back'. But this is nothing but daydreaming. What we are doing in China cannot be done in a capitalist society.* [p44]

As an example he cites teacher-student relationships. Prof. Fung is 77 years old, and he is evidently speaking from experience when he says

> *All social problems, in the final analysis, are problems of social system. The comradeship between teacher and student is the most natural thing under socialism, but it is impossible under capitalism... Under capitalism the teacher-student relationship is a business relationship. I sell my knowledge and you pay tuition to buy knowledge. As to whether the knowledge I sell you is of any use at all it is not my problem. This is just like the way capitalists sell their commodities - once the goods go out of the door they are no longer responsible. Teachers are only interested in fame and money. For example, if I publish an article in a famous journal then my marketability goes up immediately. This will bring me a raise and maybe a promotion. I may even get offers from better schools with higher salaries. As to the students, they pay their tuition in return for some knowledge and diplomas so that they can find jobs. It cannot be otherwise under their social system.* [p44]

In other words, none of the major problems in education and in philosophy in capitalist societies: the academicism, the lack of democracy and of cooperation between teachers

and students, the massive alienation from education and from society....!none of these problems can be resolved by isolated and specific changes within universities or colleges. They are problems of a wider social sort. Therefore, the struggles within colleges and within the different specialities - within philosophy for example - must ultimately take the form of a struggle against capitalism and for socialism if they are to succeed.

On the other hand, it seems to me that it would be fundamentally incorrect to conclude from the Chinese experience that the struggle within the universities is irrelevant and that one should therefore concentrate only on the struggle against capitalism in the wider society. For one of the great lessons of China is that the class struggle is not merely concerned with questions of the economic base, and it occurs not only in the struggle between workers and capital, but also in the superstructure. What one also learns from China is the extent to which the struggle within the universities and within the different specialities is a part of the class struggle, the struggle for socialism. And one also learns the extent to which the apparently universal problems of education are not a product of unalterable human nature or a necessary part of educational life. Great strides can be taken towards resolving them - but only within a social system in which education is for social use and benefit and not for private profit. Thus one learns that the struggle for true and meaningful education, so far from being irrelevant to the struggle for socialism, is a necessary part of it. And unless the struggle for socialism is conducted on all fronts at once - at the base and in the superstructure - the result will ultimately be only a disguised form of capitalism.

The remaining article in the Fann pamphlet, 'The Ethics of Liberation: The Example of China' (reprinted from *Monthly Review* April 1974) is perhaps the most interesting of the three. It takes up a more general and 'philosophical' theme: the role of morality under socialism and in the liberation of man. What he has to say on this topic is of the greatest significance for the debate on the nature of morality which has been occurring in *Radical Philosophy* during the past year. Important articles by Richard Norman, Tony Skillen and Andrew Collier have all, to varying degrees, expressed scepticism about the validity of morality and moral thought.

At the extreme, Collier dismisses all morality as oppressive ideology, alien to socialism. He says,

> *My assumptions at the outset are that any moral ideology serves a socially repressive function... the elimination of moral ideology is therefore taken as a rational desideratum.* [*RP9* p5]

Fann addresses himself to precisely such scepticism:

> *Living in bourgeois society, we are justified in viewing the moralizing of politicians and the preachings of ministers with extreme cynicism. And when we encounter a similar moral tone of voice in the pronouncements of liberation movements and their leaders we instinctively react with suspicion. But the apparent similarity is deceptive...* [p27]

After a damning account of the moral realities of bourgeois society, Fann writes,

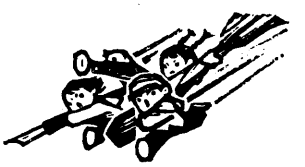
> *Liberation from this oppressive system requires, first of all, the reintroduction of ethics as a motivating force of the revolution. Commitment to a new ethical order is the first prerequisite of the revolutionary. This implies that the revolution must not only change the economic structure of the society, but also change man himself in the process ... Changed circumstances alone do not change man. This is the important message of the Cultural Revolution.* (pp32-3]

The changes in man to which Fann is referring are partly *moral* ones. And it is not a matter of abolishing all morality, but rather of continuing the class struggle in the field of morality, which means promoting socialist values and ways of life in opposition to capitalist ones. 'Fight selfishness, Repudiate Revisionism' was the great slogan of the Cultural Revolution. And Fann argues that

> *Unless and until man is transformed into the antithesis of the selfish, egotistical and aggressive capitalist man, capitalism will be restored.* [p33]

Liberation is not merely an economic or (in a narrow sense) political matter: it must also involve liberation from perverted forms of human relationship (such as those between teacher and student described by Prof. Fung in the above quotation). However, one must not make the opposite error of imagining that one is confronted by *merely* moral problems. The moral transformation of man in China has been one of the most impressive aspects of the Revolution - Western observers have frequently commented on it. (See Edgar Snow, *Red Star over China*, Penguin). But this moral transformation has been possible only because it has been a part (though an essential one) of the overall revolutionary struggle to establish and develop socialism in China.

In this country there is still considerable ignorance of events in China. These little pamphlets will have served a useful purpose if they succeed in awakening people's interest in the remarkable developments which are occurring there.



Sean Sayers

Practical Knowledge

Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, translated by John Viertel, Heinemann Educational Books £1.80, ISBN 0 435 82385 X.

Theory and Practice (TP) is the third volume of Habermas's work to be published in English translation, though most of the papers in it were written before the other two, *Towards a Rational Society* (TRS) (Heinemann 1971), and *Knowledge and Human Interests* (KHI) (Heinemann 1972). The two exceptions are Chapter 4, 'Labour and Interaction', which was written at about the same time as KHI, and should be read in conjunction with the first three chapters of that book; and an Introduction, written for the 1971 German edition of *Theorie und Praxis*, which both summarizes his work in TRS and KHI, and examines some problems about the organization of political practice. The discussion of this last topic draws upon his work since KHI was written, which is analyzed in a useful article by T. McCarthy (*Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, vol.3, 1973): see also Habermas's two articies in *Inquiry*, vol.13, 1970. As far as I can gather, the most important of his writings which remains untranslated is *Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften* (Tübingen, 1967), on the philosophy of the social sciences: some features of this are outlined in the first section of Wellmer's *Critical Theory of Society* (Herder and Herder, 1971).

In common with the early members of the Frankfurt School - such as Horkheimer and Marcuse - Habermas is centrally concerned with the implications of positivism for the relations between theory and prac-

tice. By restricting the area of legitimate knowledge to the results and methods of empirical science, positivism leads to a purely 'decisionist' account of values and norms, and the concepts of reason and rationality are confined to the means-end relations of technical efficiency. In Chapter 7 of TP - which is a good starting-point for reading this book - Habermas contrasts this positivist view with an alternative, traditional conception of reason, which is essentially linked to the values of human emancipation, and can thus provide a rational guide to practice. Habermas accepts the positivist separation of empirical science and values, but he rejects the elimination of values and norms as subjects of legitimate knowledge, and with it, the restriction of 'theory' to the discovery of empirical relationships.

For Habermas, empirical science is constituted as a form of knowledge by its relation to a specific human interest, that of 'technical control' over nature (see KHI for more on this). When, as in advanced industrial societies, science becomes definitive of knowledge in general, and is also an increasingly important force of production, the possibility of guiding political practice by an enlightened public discussion of norms disappears. It is replaced by the implicit values of technical control and domination, of both nature and society: for the social sciences are then also conceived on the model of the technically-oriented natural sciences.

Although this conception of the social sciences did not fully emerge until the nineteenth century, Habermas finds an important version of it in the writings of Hobbes. In Chapter 1, he discusses how Hobbes attempted to base his political philosophy upon knowledge of the laws of human motivation and behaviour in the natural state: he 'investigates the mechanics of social relations in the same way as Galileo investigates that of motion in nature' (p70). This knowledge functions both to specify the problem of political order - the war of all against all - and to indicate the possibility of its solution, by using the sanction of force to secure obedience to legal norms. Habermas argues that, in adopting this approach to political theory, Hobbes mades a decisive break with the classical conception of politics, as examplified in Aristotle. In the latter, politics is seen as the continuation of ethics, and to involve a form of knowledge lacking the certainty of science: instead it requires 'practical prudence', involving, amongst other things, the making of normative judgments by means of public dialogue and consensus. Further, in making this break (which, says Habermas, was partly anticipated by both Machiavelli and More), Hobbes is faced with a problem generated by an essential difference in the relations between theory and practice in the natural and social sciences:

> *... unlike the technical application of scientific results, the translation of* [political] *theory into praxis is faced with the task of entering into the consciousness and the convictions of citizens prepared to act...* [p75]

But Habermas argues that Hobbes can give no coherent account of the translation of his own theory into practice: if his view of the laws of human behaviour is correct, then any attempt to institute a political order of the kind advocated will be vitiated by the impossibility of controlling those who are assigned the task of fashioning the new arrangements in society, since their behaviour will be subject to the same laws.

Habermas argues that it is because of this latter problem that the essentially *liberal* intention of Hobbes's political philosophy - based on a modern, non-classical concept of Natural Law, according to which laws are instituted to guarantee areas of free scope for individuals to pursue their own interests - is devoured by the absolutism of the state and its sanctioning power. In Chapter 2, he examines the different ways in which the appeal to modern Natural Law functioned in the American and French Revolutions. Though both involved the declaration of a Bill of Rights, the Americans were mainly formating an inventory of the existing rights enjoyed by British citizens, which guaranteed the protection of a private autonomous sphere free from state intervention. The French, by contrast, were faced with the task of actually instituting these rights, and providing a theoretical justification for them. In America, the justification was found in 'common sense': in France, in philosophy. Further, Habermas examines the competing philosophical justifications present in the National Assembly discussions, distinguishing Lockean, Physiocratic and Rousseauan conceptions of modern Natural Law.

The next three chapters, 3-5, are all about Hegel. In the first, Habermas argues that, in his earlier writings, Hegel articulated a conception of philosophy such that it is possible for theory to be critical of the existing social order, and to thus guide a practice aimed at changing it. But in his later work, Hegel's conception of philosophy is such that it can only attempt to comprehend a reality that is already completed. Nonetheless, in both periods, Hegel is firmly opposed to revolutionary, violent political practice; and because of this, his attitude towards the French Revolution was always ambivalent. On the one hand, he celebrated the triumph of abstract right, the legal freedoms and principles of bourgeois society; on the other, he opposed the revolutionary activities through which these were in fact, and necessarily, realized. In Chapter 5, Habermas examines these changes in Hegel's attitude to political practice in more detail, by relating the purpose of his political writings, directed towards particular events in Germany and England, to his general conception of the relations between theory and practice.

In both chapters, Habermas gives support to Löwith's claim 'that the propositions of the Young Hegelians were anticipated by the young Hegel himself'[p129]. But in Chapter 4, his support for this, at least in the case of Marx, is more guarded. Here Habermas discusses Hegel's early Jena lectures on the Philosophy of Mind, in which he rejects Kant's conception of the 'I', and substitutes an account of self-consciousness which results from the interaction between the 'I' and the 'Other' in the medium of the process of mutual recognition. For Hegel, there are also two other media of this self-formative process: language, (the use of symbols), and labour (the use of tools upon nature). But in his later writings, these three irreducible and heterogeneous categories became subordinated as different real conditions in the

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'We are about to watch, from seats high up at the back of the stadium, a football match in which one of the teams is Japanese. One of the teams comes running into the area. I might say,
(1) "They look like ants";
or
(2) "They look like Europeans".
Now it is plain enough that in saying (1), I do not mean either that I am inclined to think that some ants have come on to the field, of that the players, on inspection, would be found to look exactly, or even rather, like ants. (I may know quite well, and even be able to see, that for instance they haven't got that very striking sort of nipped-in waist.)'
- J L Austin
Sense and Sensibilia

construction of spirit. Habermas concludes this chapter by making the same criticism of Marx that is made at greater length in KHI: that he fails to note the distinctive epistemological statuses of the knowledge involved in the technical control of nature (labour), and in communicative interaction; with this goes the tendency towards a mechanistic interpretation of the relations between base and superstructure.

In Chapter 6, Habermas makes a number of further criticisms of Marx, the most important of which concern the labour theory of value. Habermas examines some passages from the *Grundrisse*, where Marx appears to suggest that, as scientific knowledge becomes an increasingly important element in the forces of production, labour, as such, ceases to be the appropriate measure of value. Habermas argues that this is correct, and that Marx was mistaken in later abandoning this revision to his theory, in *Capital* But also, in this chapter, Habermas outlines the defects of various non-Marxist approaches to social science, such as role theory, systems theory, and the general tendency to dissolve the totality of society into a set of separate areas investigated by different social sciences. The chapter concludes with some remarks on changing conceptions of history, with respect to its being the result of human activity, and to the possibility of its being 'made' consciously and rationally for human emancipation.

To make history in this way, however, poses another set of problems about the relation of theory to practice: the nature of the organizations directed towards revolutionary political practice. In the Introduction, Habermas examines this problem - I think this is the most interesting part of the book, which, in general, I found less exciting than some of his later work. He argues that there are three distinct functions in political practice: the formation of theories about the nature of society from a critical standpoint; the process of enlightenment, by which, for example, the members of a class come to understand their objective interests and the distorted character of existing ideologies; and the making of tactical and strategic decisions about the conduct of political struggle in specific circumstances. He insists that these three functions:

> *... cannot be fulfilled according to one and the same principle: a theory can only be formulated under the precondition that those engaged in scientific work have the freedom to conduct theoretical discourse; processes of enlightenment (if they are to avoid exploitation and deception) can only be organized under the precondition that those who carry out the active work of enlightenment commit themselves wholly to the proper precautions and assure scope for communications on the model of therapeutic 'discourses'; finally, a political struggle can only be legitimately conducted under the precondition that all decisions of consequence will depend on the practical discourse of the participants - here too, and especially here, there is no privileged access to truth. An organization which tries to master all three of these tasks according to the same principle will not be able to fulfill any of them correctly. And even if this organization is successful according to the usual criteria of merciless history, as Lenin's Party was, it exacts the same price for its success which ambivalent victories have always exacted till now in the unbroken continuity of a history subject to 'natural' uncontrolled causality.* ['34-5]

The argument is conducted partly by reference to the possibility of transferring the model of psychoanalytic theory to the process of political enlightenment; a reading of Habermas's discussion of Freud, in KHI, is necessary to understand what's going on here. And, as with all Habermas's writings, there is a considerable obscurity and complexity of style and content. I've found it difficult, even where I thought I understood what he was saying, to then 'write it down so that it still made sense' - but I'm pretty sure it's worth the effort.

Russell Keat

Russian Semiology

V. N. Voloshinov: *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, translated by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik, Seminar Press (London and New York), 1973, 205pp, £5.40.

Voloshinov's text, first published in Leningrad in 1930, appears now in this English critical edition with supplementary essays by the translators, placing it usefully in the cultural context of Russian linguistic research during this fruitful early period. It makes a substantial sequel to the collection of Russian Formalist texts published recently by M.I.T. (1971), most of which followed out the more specialised critical implications of ideas which are here developed as a general theory of language. As the translators point out, Voloshinov is writing a compressed survey of ideas and terminology which had been current in Formalist circles for some years, and which received more refined and brilliant application at the hands of literary critics like Ejxenbaum and Baxtin. Nevertheless, the present text has virtues of its own, not least its impressive power of generalised statement and the striking sense of *déja lu* for those familiar with modern French criticism.

Voloshinov basis his broadly Marxist semiotics on the qualified acceptance of Saussure's linguistic paradigm. Saussure set out a programme of clear and rigorous distinctions for what Voloshinov calls an 'abstract objectivism' in language study. Taking issue with Bally and the systematic disciples of Saussure, Voloshinov rejects the notion that language can only be studied as an abstract articulate whole, divorced from the instance of individual utterance. On this assumption, he argues, there is no access to the crucial problem of linguistics, the constitution of all significant language by the interaction of subjective promptings (loosely ascribed to 'psyche') and objective social determinations. Philosophy of language needs both halves of the equation if it hopes to provide more than an impressionistic romp or an abstract and hermetic system of variables.

So far, one could parallel Voloshinov's argument with various Western philosophies lately fetched up to extend or qualify Saussure's semiotics: phenomenology, for instance, as combined by Merleau-Ponty with the concept of a social semiology. Voloshinov, however, is unconvinced that Husserl's phenomenology was more than a gestural reaction against the psychologism it sought to replace. No 'dialectical synthesis' has yet resulted from this 'dialectical flux of psychologism and antipsychologism'(p32). He proposes that the philosopher of language return to the primary concept of the Sign, but bear in mind the *extraverbal* - that is, the social and historical - as well as the intralinguistic functions of communication. 'Only an utterance taken in its full, concrete scope as an historical phenomenon possesses a theme' (p100). This is to take account of both the productive moment of language, its origins in perform-

ance, and the social conditions which encompass it. 'Theme', in this extended special sense, is 'a complex, dynamic system of signs that attempts to be adequate to a given instant of generative process' (p100).

The terminology is important here. 'Theme' is a theoretical concept which applies to language only in its social context of achieved communication. It is the attribute 'of a whole utterance only'; it can deal with an individual word 'only inasmuch as that word operates in the capacity of a whole utterance' (p101). Thus the socialising aspect of Voloshinov's theory consists in its taking the most complex and developed examples of language-in-use - 'whole utterances' - and calling up the widest possible context of social relations and conventions in order to explain them. This gives the linguist his methodological bearing on the 'generative' process of language, its origin in the dialectics of creative 'psyche' and social constraint. A 'generative' linguistics in this sense has little in common with the analytic procedures of Chomskyan grammar. Chomsky also takes the complex unit of language, the grammatical utterance, as the topic of enquiry; but he undertakes to provide a purely *immanent* analysis, arriving at his general theory only by abstracting from the internal properties of the well-formed utterance. It is interesting to compare these two senses of language 'generation' and their consequence for the theory of linguistics. Voloshinov appeals to context, to a rich and complex register of social communication which has to be accepted as an undifferentiated total experience before the various components of its many-levelled rhetoric can be sorted out. Chomsky, although he rejects the Saussurian concept of *la langue* as the abstract, synchronic field of linguistic study, still seeks to reduce the performative aspect of language - speech as process - to the theoretical basis of a classified system of forms and relations. By keeping the notions of 'competence' and 'performance' rigidly distinct, Chomsky is able to maintain a high degree of abstract generality. It may be noted that he recently met the criticisms of several linguists - George Lakoff among them - who argued that room must be found somewhere in the generative model for the modifying influence of social constraints and intimations - the understandings which often make sense of an otherwise impenetrable piece of common usage. To this extent, Transformational Grammar may be moving of its own accord into something like the area claimed for linguistics by Voloshinov.

However, the *rapprochement* is far from complete. Voloshinov takes a strong stand against Cartesian rationalism - Chomsky's avowed philosophy - especially where it gives rise to a Saussurian dualism in the concept of the Sign. A linguistics which views itself as existing over against the object of study, failing to perceive the interpenetration of knower and known, naturally cannot grasp the dialectical function of the social Sign as the very locus and creative implementation of man's presence in the world. Hence the self-confirming, solipsistic dualism of Saussure's semiology: the indefinite suspension of experiential content - the 'signified' - in theoretical favour of the abstract system of 'signifiers'. Voloshinov is able to show up the ideology of all such premature abstractions, leading back to the reductive rationalism of Leibniz and the 'universal grammar'.

It is here that Voloshinov's text bears most pointedly on the modern French structuralist movement deriving from Saussure. The critical notions given currency lately by Roland Barthes and the journal *Tel Quel* are here to be found in original form, with perhaps a clearer conception of their background philosophy. Barthes is the most important of later French exponents. His critical practice rests on the idea, expressed first in his *Mythologies* (1957), that sign-systems are best opened to historical criticism by exposing their *forms* and constantly refusing the supplementary *content* which bourgeois 'mythology' attempts to pass off as 'natural' meaning. This principled regression from content to form enables Barthes to defend, like Brecht, the idea of a Marxist critical formalism. This attitude carries over into his literary texts. In the recent book on Balzac (*S/Z*, Paris, 1970), Barthes adopts an ultra-formalistic technique of segmental narrative analysis, qualified evasively by occasional, offhand paragraphs re-emphasising the ambivalent, paradoxical, irreducibly 'plural' business of

productive reading. Barthes' formalism allows him only a null, reductive treatment of Balzac's text, saved from laborious triviliaty by his striking (but finally mystifying) appeals to the reader-as-subject.

In *Le Plaisir du Texte* (1973) subjective compensation is all that remains. Barthes now rejects the grim paternal law of the formalist approach, and suggests that the reader open himself to all the polymorphous pleasures of seduction by the hedonistic text. To recall Voloshinov's central distinction: Barthes has travelled from the one closed universe of abstract objectivism to the other of psychological individualism without conceiving of a semiological middle ground where individual experience discovers itself as part of the linguistic community. The same charge can be levelled at the critical practitioners of *Tel Quel*, whose radical philosophy remains a matter of abstract and mainly terminological persuasion. Such is the continuing attempt by theorists of the group to construct a rationale of textual 'production' joining the relativised Saussurian notion of the Sign to a loosely Chomskian grammar of 'productive' narrative competence.[2] This remains, for all its energising hints of analogy, a product of formal convention imprisoned by its abstract logic.

Voloshinov's positive arguments stand out more clearly against this negative history. Firstly, there is the insistence - as opposed to the hermitism of *Tel Quel* - on the material reality of the ideological Sign in communication. 'Ideology' in this sense has not the negative force it possesses automatically for Barthes and the exponents of a purely critical demythologising Marxism. The ideological Sign is the medium and theme of all possible social accentuations, and it is left to the later French ideologues to dream of a literature ideally devoid of all meaning and cultural compromise. Voloshinov speaks of signs - to which one might add *concepts* of the Sign - which withdraw from the social struggle, 'degenerating into allegory and becoming the object not of live social intelligibility but of philological comprehension' (p23). His own programme avoids the nemesis of abstraction by constantly working back, not from content to form in the structuralist manner, but from form to the amalgam of expressive content and the social real which is here contained in

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the practice and dilemmas of progressive/socialist teachers in state schools, especially as experienced by new teachers;
the concentration of educational problems in London schools;
the ways in which the power structure of society affects the organization and curriculum of schools;
the potential role of the school in the community and vice versa

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the general term 'theme'. This leads in turn to the concentration of linguistic philosophy on the higher-order units of language composition, whose organisation gives a hold to the synthesising critical mind. Thus, as Titunik shows in his Appendix, the real testing-ground of these theories was in the advanced literary studies of critics like Baxtin.

His concept of a 'thematic' linguistics allows Voloshinov to project a generalised typology of social discourse, distinguishing the various rhetorics of management entailed by changing social and political orders. In the present book this amounts to a survey of the forms of implicated speech-habit - reported speech, direct and indirect discourse - which characterise the different historical structures of social identity and submission to authority. Of course there is a valuation implicit in the analysis, and Voloshinov ends with a diatribe against what he calls the 'thematic depression' of language brought about by late-bourgeois subjectivism. He disapproves the extreme blurring of thematic and ideational boundaries in the now prevalent mode of 'quasi-direct' discourse, and calls for 'the word permeated with confident and categorial social value judgement, the word that really means and takes responsibility for what it says' (p159). Voloshinov finds plenty of passages for comment in Dostoevski, Pushkin and Gogol, where the texture-analysing subtleties of indirect discourse provide exactly the social orientation - satirical or otherwise - which makes them historically thematic.

His attitude to the quasi-direct marks a qualitative distinction which, once again, sets his work apart from the later structuralists. They have admired Baxtin for his more extreme formulations of textual 'polyphony', the conception of literary process in certain writers as a multiple dialogue of narrative voices in non-hierarchical arrangement, none of which therefore can be identified with the faded presence of the author himself. These ideas have been taken up by Julia Kristova (*Le Text du Roman*, Mouton, 1971), and are fundamental to Barthes' *S/Z*. They support what I have criticized as the undifferentiating semiology - the reductive abstract methodology - of French neo-structuralism. For literary critics, the chief importance of Voloshinov's text is that it places questions of *style* at the centre of linguistic study, and that style thus defined is an indispensable concept for historical criticism. Most of the book's outstanding passages - including the lucid discussion of Marxist base and superstructure - rest on this mediating theory of social semiology. Voloshinov never loses sight of the essential distance between ideology and material forces of production, or of the epistemological tact needed to argue their connection. One might reflect that the orders of discourse he describes are similar in kind and scale of complication to the rhetorics of class attitude distinguished by Bernstein. That Voloshinov reads a quite different history in the elaborated codes of literature is merely another token of the point he makes throughout, that ideological superstructures are not uniformly determined, and that the 'multi-accentuality' of the thoroughly social Sign is the measure of its dynamic independence.

In this respect, the translators are right to stress the absence from Voloshinov's text of explicit references to Marxist authority. On the other hand, as I have suggested, this is still a worthwhile contribution to Marxist theory of criticism, not least for its avoidance of the simplistic analogical arguments of the current French enterprise. The translation is clear and analytic, if rather artless, and the supplementary essays are useful pieces of documentation.

Christopher Norris

Furthermore, your laws seem to me to be contrary to the general order of things. For in truth is there anything so senseless as a precept that forbids us to heed the changing impulses that are inherent in our being, or commands that require a degree of constancy which is not possible, that violate the liberty of both male and female by chaining them perpetually to one another? Is there anything more unreasonable than this perfect fidelity that would restrict us, for the enjoyment of pleasures so capricious, to a single partner - than an oath of immutability taken by two individuals made of flesh and blood under a sky that is not the same for a moment, in a cavern that threats to collapse upon them, at the foot of a cliff that is crumbling into dust, under a tree that is withering, on a bench of stone that is being worn away.
[Diderot, *Supplement to Bougainville's 'Voyage'*, 1772]

Radical Psychology

Phil Brown, (ed) *Radical Psychology*
Tavistock £1.40

Psychiatry has suffered for several years from a lack of underlying theory. There has been no attempted revision, let alone revolution, of its theoretical aims and scope. In fact it seems that the last great upheaval was due to Freud, and the rise of Psychoanalysis and was based on the rather shaky anatomical ideas of the late 19th century. Thus Psychiatry seems to have remained a descriptive science, drawing theory from practice rather than using the theory-into-practice method of more experimental sciences. And where data were available they were epidemiological and statistical: even the currently fashionable drug therapy is based on the 'suck-it-and-see' ideology of the clinical trial.

The legacy of this descriptive background has been double-edged in recent years. Following the other biomedical sciences, one branch of Psychiatry has attempted to gain an experimental footing, a biomolecular validation: regrettably without much success. The other has involved the development of concepts largely divorced from experimentation, and thus, in some sense, is in the mode of its progenitor. There, however, the similarity ends, for Radical Psychology as the second likes to call itself, is an attempt to show up the old Psychiatry for what it is: the tool of a repressive society. This tool has been available to be used as a means of control over subjects who are malignant in the eyes of society, but not sufficiently criminal that they may be summarily incarcerated. Thus the therapeutic claims of Psychiatry have been neglected in practice, though played up for the sake of the public it might 'defend'.

Phil Brown's 'Radical Psychology' is an attempt to draw together the various threads in the anti-shrink campaign and, I suppose, put the Alternative case (at least, the case developed at Alternate U. at which Phil Brown taught). Feminist, Marxist, Freudian and Anti-Freudian, Psychiatrist and Anti-Psychiatrist, therapist and radical therapist: presented as though fully complementary. For instance, Szasz is taken at face-value in his views of the mental patient as scapegoat - forgetting his agreement with Popper on the poverty of Marxist historicism. Early work of Reich is taken as representative of the views of a man who later came to respect democracy and reject Communism. Anyone can change his mind - but surely editors should remember

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that and note it in their introductions.

The longest section is that on 'The Marxist Foundation', although it contains only one paper by Marx himself. The other papers are classics by such as Frantz Fanon, or essays on (and by) later Marxists like Reich: the paper by Keith Brooks being the new star in this familiar sky. Here he fairly convincingly destroys the notion of Freudianism as a Marxist view of psychology by contrasting the internalism of Freud with the socialism of Marx. He does, of course, lean on Marcuse's view of Freud, a view criticised sternly by Erich Fromm: the uncertainness of the premises do not detract from the excellence of the argument.

The shorter sections are on 'Sex Roles' (though Phil Brown's view of Freud as male chauvinist pig is made old hat by recent Juliet Mitchell); 'The Therapy Rip-Off' (where one finds Radical Psychology as she really is spoke!) and 'Fighting Back' (which is surprisingly very short and extremely disappointing). Apart from some of the articles on Marxist influence, those best known already in this neck of the woods are on 'The Sociological Approach' and 'Antipsychiatry', mainly because of Szasz, Goffman, and Laing and Cooper are well known here, though the latter's brand of existential psychiatry is now less trendy than hitherto. Perhaps more of the contributors will be household words (whatever they are) soon, for Penguin has just published an anthology of extracts from *Radical Therapist*, the journal-with-the-jargon to which they regularly contribute.

In his Preface and his Introductions to the sections, Mr Brown shows these to be the central points of value in a collection of readings. His criticisms of Szasz, who remains a prime member of the medical profession and a conservative in practice, are especially valid. Scheff and Goffman come in for similar criticism, this time for omitting the class differential in psychiatric diagnosis. The notes on Laing, *et al.*, are just as good and note the male-centredness of Cooper's view of approaching family dissolution. However, the Introduction to 'The Marxist Foundation' puts the psychology of alienation and class-related psychosis in the weakest of simplistic terms, such that everything of value is instantly doubted as a naïve con. For instance the point is valid that a people's psychology is only possible in a new, socialist society; but the mistake is that a trendy, cliquish approach is used to present that psychology which automatically excludes the 'people'. The style is thus irritating and condescending - in these sections only, thank heavens. My final criticism is that in this English edition all references are to American editions, even though English versions are usually available.

The basic attraction of this book, at least for the student, is not the *Varoomshkaesque* exterior, but that it is a collection of readings and comes in paper covers (at an almost reasonable cost). Many of the papers form part of larger individual works, but usually the essence is found here: possibly with little loss of detail but much gain in force. Better 28 readings for £1.40 than at a quid-a-time under separate covers - and just hope that the reader allows for editorial blinders. Perhaps this is the Age of Readings as much as it is of other pre-selected, predigested goodies, so it is a shame that the weeklies seem reticent to review this category.

Teifion Davies

Writings of Passage

Miriam Glucksmann, *Structuralist Analysis in Contemporary Social Thought. A Comparison of the Theories of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Louis Althusser*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, £4.50; Abner Cohen, *Two-Dimensional Man. An Essay on the Anthropology of Power and Symbolism in Complex Society*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, £2.75

In the course of a University life, the successful academic who writes is likely to produce discourses of several distinct types. First comes the Ph.D thesis; then the monographic studies, perhaps leading up to a major work; at some point, a textbook; later on, a reflective, synthesising or programmatic essay (perhaps a Professorial inaugural lecture); finally, a predominantly autobiographic work.

Ms Glucksmann became Dr Glucksmann on the basis of a Ph.D thesis which is the original text of her book. I doubt that the book much differs from the Ph.D. It is scholarly and objective, but also myopic and turgid. It signals to the reader evidence of its own exhaustiveness and labels those passages where 'evidence of original thinking' is to be found. It is an intellectual exercise which I found increasingly unreadable. At p109 I abandoned it.

At one time, theses in which the apprentice deepened his or her knowledge of a particular field and proved capacity for sustained intellectual work would sit on library shelves, at best consulted by fellow-specialists and friends, at worst gathering dust. Copyright would be jealously guarded, as anyone who has tried consulting theses knows, and as Gwyn Williams' recent difficulties (solicitors' letters for allegedly plagiarising a thesis on Gramsci) show. But nowadays the expansion of higher education guarantees a sufficient (mainly Library) market for publishable Ph.D's actually to be published.

In cases like the present one, it seems to me that the publication of these Ph.Ds functions as an obstacle to reading the really important original texts. Only by a supreme effort do I ever read Lévi-Strauss (or Marx, or Freud) and not yet another commentary. Partly, it is that there is imposed on any intellectual an obligation to keep up with *published* work in the field, though not on unpublished work. Partly, it is that one hopes for a short-cut. One hopes that Dr Glucksmann has done all the 'reading' that is necessary and that one can simply carry on from where she leaves off, dispensing with private note-taking on one's own reading of Lévi-Strauss or Althusser. We look to Dr Glucksmann's book for the benefits of a division of labour.

Unfortunately, it is rare for the commentary to provide the desired short-cut. Sometimes the short-cut is impenetrable unless the original works have already been consulted. Sometimes it is misleading, as when Dr Glucksmann writes that '*Les Structures Elémentaires* (1949) deals with the different types of communication system implicit in marriage rules but is little influenced by linguistics and makes no reference to it.' [p72]. But chapter XXIX, section V of *The Elementary Structure of Kinship* discusses the ways in which 'the progress of our analysis is thus close to that of the phonological linguist' [p493]; Lévi-Strauss does not merely make a 'reference' to Jakobson as Glucksmann states [p180], but says that 'a great deal' is owed to him 'for theoretical inspiration' [pxxvi]. On the other hand, the one reference to Saussure that Glucksman records (p108) is a reference to Raymond, not Ferdinand, whose *course in General Linguistics* does not figure in Lévi-Strauss's Bibliography.

Professor Cohen's book is of a different genre. The author of several monographs, he now turns (as only someone who has professorial status can) to an overview of the state of anthropology, and the isolation of a crucial dimension for future research:

Now, perhaps more than ever before, is the time to develop a discipline which analyses the interconnections between symbolic action - patterns of 'mumbo-jumbo' behaviour - and power relationships in modern society. [pp137-8]

This book is light, digressive, mildly interesting but unoriginal. At moments, Cohen's directive for future research reads like a last-ditch effort to save anthropology from extinction. Symptomatically, whilst the title alludes to Marcuse's famous work, the sub-title of *One-Dimensional Man* is incorrectly given in the Bibliography.

Readers of *Radical Philosophy* need read neither of these books. Anyone working on a comparison of Lévi-Strauss and Althusser is welcome to have my review copy of Glucksmann's book.

Trevor Pateman

Reschool!

Gabriel Chanan and Linda Gilchrist, *What School is for*, Methuen, 65p

This book looks at the positive contribution a 'radical' teacher can make in educational institutions now. There aren't many books or papers at present that do that. It examines what school is in society at the moment, and touches in quite a stimulating way on most of the current educational themes - de-schooling, middle class/working class culture, language codes, structure, subject divisions, curriculum evaluation, examinations ... and so on. All this in 130 pages and in highly readable form, which is no mean feat.

On the school as it stands, the authors say:

The most glaring fault of the schools is not their successful inculcation of undesirable values, but their failure to convey to most pupils even the questionable skills and knowledge they say they are trying to convey.

They say that school subjects rely heavily on university disciplines and bear no relation to future manager's requirements, let alone to the pupils themselves. The authors see the main reason for this inadequacy in teachers who make no attempt to make their subjects relevant to the wider culture that their pupils are part of outside schools and which they often share themselves. They don't think the fault lies in either compulsory schooling *per se* or in the traditional subjects themselves. De-schooling and 'progressive' de-structuring, they point out, run the risk of leaving the working class child more ground down, divided, and speechless than before. We may have been taught that traditional subjects were existing statements to be swallowed whole, but as they say

recorded knowledge is only suspended conversation of a highly organised kind

that needs a critical mind to engage with it to make it real. And traditional subjects can be made real and vital, they argue, if the teacher 'intervenes' in the experiences and questions students already have, and doesn't attempt to 'initiate' knowledge. In history, for instance, the industrial revolution is often taught to working class pupils as something totally alien to them, whereas

there is a sense in which the working class pupil knows more about the industrial revolution than the teacher ever will.

And it can indeed be taught to encourage just that critical faculty necessary for pupils to analyse their own situation. It's these things - intervention, the development of critical awareness and an ability to use the knowledge accumulated that should be available in education - that the authors see as the most important contribution a 'radical' teacher can make in school.

There are some things to criticise in the book. The authors become dangerously near to saying that schools can be vital organs of social change. And in their eagerness to show the complexity and tangled nature of working class and middle class culture they come near to suggesting that there is no such thing as class, just conflict in us all. I also don't think they're aware enough of the limitations imposed on teachers who are thought too radical in their approach. But - as a socialist and a teacher who has felt uneasy about deschooling (which seems like the ghost of laissez faire returning to haunt us) and equally uneasy about the view that there is nothing to be done in schools at all - I have found this book and some of its ideas important, and I urge you to read it.

Liz Peretz

Women's History

Sheila Rowbotham, *Women, Resistance and Revolution*, Pelican 60p, first published 1972, Allen Lane
ISBN 014 021615 4

When Sheila Rowbotham wrote this book the Women's Liberation movement was just beginning to get off the ground in England. Those of us who were refugees from the Socialist movement felt the need for general books which would connect feminism with Socialist and Revolutionary ideas in a way that Germaine Greer, Eva Figes, or even Simone de Beauvoir had not been able to do. This book and her two others, *Hidden from History* and *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World*, were written to fill that gap, and come out of that early experience.

It is still difficult for anyone involved in Women's Liberation to properly criticise its published work. We have a fragmented historical tradition and we are desperately anxious to keep this movement going, knowing how easy it is for autonomous feminist issues to get swallowed up in times of crisis. We need time and encouragement to deepen our intellectual positions and strengthen our politics. We also know how difficult it is for women to write about feeling agonies of self doubt about entering traditional male areas of achievement. (We usually feel safer exposing ourselves sexually, an 'allowable' area of female 'achievement'. It would be extremely interesting to analyse the one exception to this, that of women novelists, as Virginia Woolf tried to do in *A Room of One's Own*.) The reactions of Richard Cobb to Claire Tomalin's *Mary Wollstonecraft* and the normally sane Peter Sedgwick to Juliet Mitchell's *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* demonstrate how edgy men still are when confronted with ideas about women-sex-personal-political issues and how quickly they reduce the issue to an argument *ad feminam*. Even in the 'alternative culture', as *Radical Philosophy* shows, it is unusual to find articles by women on predominantly male subjects.

This is beginning to break down both here and in the United States. It's surely no longer possible to keep up with Women's Liberation literature as a sideline or for bed-time reading. Our published work does still tend to 'span the centuries' and we have a long way to go before we can persuade publishers that a feminist book does not have to be a general book on women's oppression from the stone age up to the present day. But within the movement and around a

number of academic subjects there is a lot of detailed and rigorous filling out of the problems going on. For example, Jean Gardiner's work on the political economy of housework (to be published shortly by *New Left Review*) is much more interesting and original than anything yet published on the subject.

Women, Resistance and Revolution is an attempt to trace the history of a certain variety of feminism -

It is a very simple idea, but one with which we have lost touch, that the liberation of women necessitates the liberation of all human beings.

The idea is picked up amongst 17th century Puritan sects in England and America where 'sexuality and female theorizing combined dangerously'. It turns up particularly strongly during the Enlightenment through Condorcet and Diderot and erupts magnificently, if briefly, during the French Revolution, where the revolutionary feminists argued, in a Petition to the Assembly in 1789,

You have destroyed all the prejudices of the past, but you allow the oldest and most pervasive to remain, which excludes from office, position and honour, and above all from the right of sitting amongst you, half the inhabitants of the kingdom.

This was echoed in England, of course, by Mary Wollstonecraft much of whose vitriol was directed against Rousseau's notion in *Emile* that

the education of women should always be relative to that of men. To please, to be useful to us, to make us love and esteem them, to educate us when young, to take care of us when grown up; to advise, to console us, to render our lives easy and agreeable.

(It would be interesting to compare this doctrine of Rousseau's with his detailed descriptions of women in *The Confessions*.)

Women, Resistance and Revolution also describes attempts to organise women and legislate for them within 20th-century revolutionary movements in Algeria, China and the Soviet Union. These chapters make sad reading. There is the familiar trajectory of hopeful beginnings on divorce, abortion, child care, legal and social equality, degenerating into an ignominious return to traditional forms. The one exception is work and educational opportunities. But scarcity and the need for a work ethic in post-revolutionary societies, always postpones changes in domestic arrangements, freer sexual life, experiments in living which would alter feminine stereotyping.

Sheila Rowbotham's great strength as a writer is that she has not borrowed the language of the male left - as Juliet Mitchell and other women influence by the New Left so often have. Her writing is simple, accessible and marvellously direct and she is particularly good on the relationship between the personal and the political, a subject feminist Socialists work hard on.

I think she underestimates difficulties, obstacles and failure. Because she has chosen to trace an expression of women's emancipation which happens to coincide with her own idea of what freedom for women should mean, she tends to make all the women who hold these opinions sound the same whether they are from Massachusetts in the 17th century, France in the 18th, or Algeria in the 20th. It becomes rather like jumping from the tip of one iceberg to the tip of another. Optimism is no substitute for an analysis of why, for example, revolutionary and social democratic movements, trade union and labour movements, actively discouraged autonomous feminist socialist practice; or of the effects on the suffrage movement in England of reaching its most militant and successful phase at a time when the working class was most disillusioned with suffrage extensions and parliamentary politics - in the ten years prior to the first world war.

It is an unfair criticism, of course, because these sorts of problems cannot be thoroughly discussed until the groundwork has been prepared by feminist historians digging away at local and national records. When the results of this kind of research begin to appear it will be much less tempting for us to idealise the socialist feminist heroine Sheila Rowbotham is interested in in this book. It will become easier, too, to see the position of women in the overall context of relations between the sexes.

Historians of black Africa, trying in the late 1950s to get away from a Euro-centred history of that continent, were forced to excavate sources which would normally be ignored. Hence botany was used to plot the course of a possible separate neolithic revolution in the Western Sudan; archaeology and carbon dating helped in assembling evidence of settlement and contact between societies; comparative linguistics could suggest Bantu migration patterns and a chronology of this dispersal; medical reports sometimes hinted at possible trade routes if new diseases had been brought across the desert by travellers; talking to old Arabic scholars and the skills of oral history often brought out old manuscripts which reported on events new and old, known and unknown. Herstorians please note.

John Burnett (ed.), *Useful Toil - Autobiographies of Working People from the 1820s to the 1920s*, Allen Lane, 1974, 2.50

To anyone interested in working class history this ought to have been a fascinating book. It contains written accounts by ordinary working people of how they saw their lives, and such first person accounts are rare. Information about the lives of working people usually has to be taken from witnesses giving evidence before government officials or from reports by dedicated middle class Victorian investigators. Beatrice Webb, for example, investigating the Lancashire cotton industry at the end of the 19th century, had to dress herself up in shawl and clogs and get a job in a mill before she could describe

conditions there accurately. It was highly unlikely that a working mill girl would offer her a written description of her work. The autobiographies collected here are mostly unknown and make extremely interesting reading.

The difficulty with the book is, I'm afraid, the attitude of the editor to his material. The very title, *Useful Toil*, taken from a nauseating little stanza in Grey's 'Elegy', betrays a sentimentality about the poor which is reminiscent of the days before Labour history's arrival. In fact much of the toil performed by these people was singularly useless, and they were very well aware of it. The domestic servants, when they weren't avoiding the advances of the young masters, spent much of their time in excessive dusting and polishing of the houses of the rich, putting up with gratuitous insults while doing so. One busy mistress of a big house is described as having deliberately left money or a pack of cards under the carpet every morning in order to catch out her maid - this trick serving the dual purpose of making sure the maid cleaned under the carpet and of checking on her honesty.

Burnett says there is not much evidence of class antagonisms in these accounts. But some of the descriptions by highly skilled men and women of how they did their work and what it meant to them, show a deter-

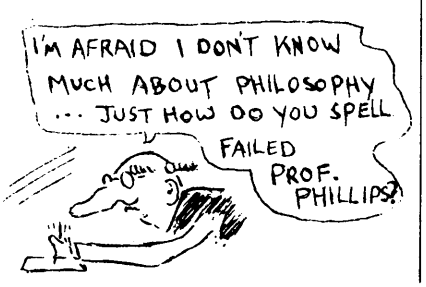
mined pride in doing it well, not to please their masters, but as a way of rejecting the humiliations to which capricious employers subjected them. This attitude to work is particularly noticeable in the rural areas where class relations are still personalised even towards the end of the 19th century. The urban accounts show a much more pronounced alienation from work, bitterness towards employers, and a greater mobility. Here, unemployment and the fear of it dominates many of the experiences and the ceaseless search for work all over the country means long separation from family and friends.

The real problem with this kind of material, as with the increasing amount of oral history being collected, is how much value the labour historian can place on it in comparison with the other sources such as newspapers, legal records, trade union and co-op histories etc. It is a question not just of faulty or distorted memory which has to be checked against more 'reliable' sources, but also of how far we can use personal reminiscences for making generalisations about the way the mass of the population lived, and, more generally, of what exactly *is* the relationship between an individual lived experience and its historical context.

It is particularly important for a social history of women that we start to think about this. We can use conventional historical methods in discussing the exceptional women or the organisations which they were active in, as Claire Tomalin has done in *Mary Wollstonecraft* [Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974]. We can also, as Anna Davin and others are doing, discover new ways of looking at existing documentation like local court records on marriage cases, or school board reports. But we are going to have to rely a great deal on oral history, particularly for this century, if we want to investigate the effects of the decline in the birth rate, the extended lifespan of women, the women's vote etc. How we deal with women's reminiscences will determine how good our history is going to be.

If the publication of this book means that there is an increasing market for this kind of history then we should welcome it. But it should also mean a lot more hard thinking about what we are going to do with the information than Burnett has provided.

Jean McCrindle



News

Chile

RP9 showed examples from Chilean childrens comics of the régime's virulent anti-left propaganda.

Evidence of the way in which repression continues in formal education comes from a report by John Platt-Mills QC, ex MP and defence lawyer to the Shrewsbury building workers, who was sent to Chile by the NUS. The following is based on his report:

The four man military government of Chile has set out to eradicate from the minds of Chilean young people any understanding or even knowledge of what happened in the three years of the Presidency of Allende and the Popular Unity Government and to install a highly nationalist and narrowly conservative system of education.

The minister of education Admiral Castrol says we have no time for politics of any kind in school or university. He is asked when will young people gain any sense of social responsibility and replies 'Plenty of time for that after they are educated; besides we are to have brownies and then scouting from the beginning.'

Indeed there is shortage of time in the curriculum: several weeks each year are devoted to the study of Chile's ancient heroes and such contentious international issues as the claim to Antarctica and to the Beagle Channel; 96 hours a year 'National Security' for every student, full military instruction for all students with three weeks in camp each year. There is an arbitrary approach to knowledge which is not consistent - every left book is purged and rewritten; many aspects of world history deleted, e.g. no French Revolution or Industrial Revolution or Russian Revolution or Cromwell; every publication and Radio or T.V. utterance under military censorship.

A military prosecutor in each university; every Rector an Admiral or General; military police in every College; all these have power of dismissal of students and staff without appeal, 22,000 students have been dismissed from universities for supporting Allende from a total student population of 160,000.

It seems that the junta aims at brainwashing a whole generation.

Yugoslavia

Repression of students

More information is available about the continuing harassment of the Philosophy Faculty at Belgrade University. The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation has reported that the jobs of the dissident teachers are once again in danger and has also obtained disturbing news of the persecution of students throughout the year, including 10-month prison sentences passed on six students currently awaiting trial.

In RP8 we reported on the background to the struggles which led to the threatened expulsion of eight philosophy teachers at Belgrade University. Their jobs seemed to have been saved when, following publicity and protests from the West, Tito advised against measures "which would do us more harm outside our country". However the Belgrade City Committee of the Communist Party, which controls half the seats on the faculty management committee (a concession wrung from the faculty in 1973), is understood to be re-mobilising and to have announced its intentions of dismissing Stejanovic Zivotic, Golubovic and others.

The recent series of measures taken against students in the Philosophy Faculty follows public declarations made by the students of support for the eight teachers, demands for the free development of Marxist criticism and the practical application of Marxist theory, and condemnation of bureaucratic interference in the running of the university.

The students' views were expressed in a draft resolution of the Students' Unions of Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana Faculties of Philosophy, of 31st January 1974. This text included statements to the effect that Marxist criticism was being strangled and that the Universities were becoming technocratic factories on the Western model. It came out in defence of the eight teachers and declared its support of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of a practical application of Marxist theory and of freedom of creativity.

On February 9th a temporary ban was placed on the draft resolution by a Zagreb Court. On the same day a search without warrant was carried out in Belgrade, six students were interrogated (several of them office holders in the Committee for Student Affairs), and a large number of textbooks, other books and private papers were confiscated. A few days later, with Faculty permission, the offices of the Faculty Committee for Student Affairs was unsuccessfully searched for copies of the draft resolution.

On the 26th of February, at the Annual Assembly of the Belgrade Faculty, Vladimir Palancin read out the entire decision of the Zagreb Court which banned the draft resolution. Palancin (but not the Zagreb judge) was charged with an act of hostile propaganda.

At the same Assembly Jovan Vukelic presented a resolution calling for normal conditions of work for all members of the Philosophy Faculty and condemning the use of administrative and bureaucratic measures in the campaign against the Faculty. Among the charges brought against Vukelic was that of making statements of a kind liable to arouse alarm among the population". The charges against him rested partly on a claim that the proceedings of the Assembly were unconstitutional. What seems to be at issue is the right of members to submit draft resolutions to their Assembly, and the right of the Assembly to publish those resolutions it accepts (Vukelic's resolution was passed by 864 votes to 4).

The University Communist League, which in 1972 drew up the list of teachers to be fired, has continued its attacks on the Philosophy Faculty. In June it issued a statement demanding the expulsion of six "extremist" students (including Vukelic), against whom legal action was being taken. This statement criticised the Philosophy Faculty for supporting "the extremist activities of a group of teachers and students" which, it claimed, were condemned by the rest of the University.

The indications are that the Philosophy Faculty has given strong support to the students, as it did to the teachers. In any case the voting figures on Vukelic's resolution belie the authorities' attempts to blame it all on a small group of extremists. Vucelik, says the First District Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade, "unauthorisedly and in spite of the opposition of a number of those present read out a Resolution which expressed his own personal attitudes..." All four of them shouting hard, one supposes. And the results of the case must further circumscribe free discussion in the Faculty.

It may be a measure of the effect of Western publicity and protests that when, earlier this year, Tito appeared to have called off the hunt against the Philosophy Faculty, the teachers, whose cases were well known, kept their jobs, but the students did not even get a reduction in their prison sentences. However, for such help as it does give, it is very important that protests are made in support of the students, as well as in further support of the teachers whose jobs are once again threatened.

JV

More from Yugoslavia

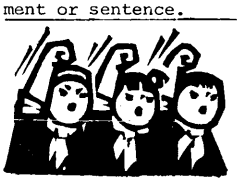
On 9th April 1974 at the Valjevo District Court, Dragoljub S. Ignjatovic was found guilty of the crime of hostile propaganda committed at the Winter Meeting of the Serbian Philosophers' Association.

Ignjatovic had described Yugoslavia as a "primitive economy, unprofitable and uncompetitive industry...inflation, poor health service, 19th century school system...etc." He had denied the existence of legal, civil and creative freedom and represented the government as totalitarian.

He was sentenced to three years and six months imprisonment and is banned from making a public appearance for two years after his release.

On 26th April 1974 the Titograd District Court issued a writ against Ljiljana Mijanovic-Jovicic, accusing her of damaging the reputation of the State, its bodies and president. The evidence included allegations that she had said "our society is heading for capitalism" and called Tito a pig.

There is no record of court judgement or sentence.



Cambridge Counter Course Conference

A national 'countercourse' conference was held in Cambridge at the beginning of November. It was a follow up to the Canterbury conference in March, reported in *RPS* It was organised by a group of Cambridge University undergraduates who are trying to devise alternative modes of intellectual work, and in general to make the actual contents of their courses a field for political action and organisation. 'You do not have to get out of the university and go down to the factory gates to find class struggle' said one speaker.

Several counter-course groups are established in Cambridge, and coordinated by a weekly lunch. There is the urban studies group (where students from geography, architecture, history, English, criminology and sociology meet to discuss the interdisciplinary study of the problems of the city, concentrating on the social geography of Cambridge itself); the women in literature group; the education group (formed to combat sexist education in children's books and which has produced an alternative children's story book already in use in schools); the science for non-scientists group; and the economists for non-economists group.

Both of the last two are forums where scientists and economists try to demystify their subjects and show how deeply they touch on the lives, welfare and interests of students from all disciplines. Academic work, they believe, should not be isolated and competitive, exclusively confined to the requirements of the academic curricula.

The conference fulfilled some ideals by adapting itself to participants' ideas and interests; in the morning the Plenary Session we had intended talking about the theory and practice of countercourses, but ended up discussing the role of higher education in society, because most people felt this was an essential startingpoint. The chairman was removed and the discussion was spontaneous without becoming chaotic.

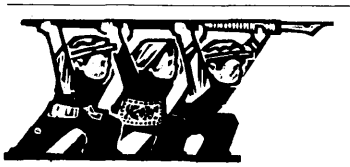
Two main approaches to countercourse were apparent: one which saw it as small groups of 'intellectuals' within universities developing a counter-culture, and the other which saw it as an attempt to reach outside the university and attack the structure of education in society. This led to a discussion of the present aims of higher education: it was agreed that universities are largely concerned with producing a self-perpetuating academic elite, doing research which is usually of little relevance to most people. But where it is relevant it is designed for the needs of capitalist production - providing the technologists and managers that industry needs to run itself.

Within higher education, subject division, teachers' authority and exams limit what we study and define the questions we ask: our own experience of life is irrelevant. And any breakdown in distinctions in one area makes the others seem still more arbitrary.

The evening session, after hearing the reports of the various afternoon discussion groups, went on to emphasise that countercourse should not be an intellectual wank, with privileged students simply improving the learning process to which they have access. They could use their knowledge to provide counter-information for those who need it: like trained lawyers who help people fight the conspiracy laws. Students researching into the financial interests of company directors should give workers information about them. This would be a useful but limited part of countercourse activity: it has a more continuous role in questioning the dominant ideology, the control a few people have over the means of communication, and developing alternatives.

It was felt that some coordinating body was needed for countercourse at a national level, and some members of the conference agreed to run a stall at the next NUS conference to spread information and stimulate discussion about countercourse. The NUS community action representative agreed to expand the section on Countercourse in the NUS magazine *Communus*, and as a result of the conference an additional countercourse group was set up in Cambridge, on the ideology of teacher training courses.

Some participants at the conference were depressed at the end of it and complained that it had not achieved anything. But others were more enthusiastic. The very occurrence of the conference was significant. Nothing like it would have happened a few years ago, and even if it only affected a small number of students, the countercourse movement was completely transforming their experience of education.



History or Philosophy

Kolakowski has now replied to Edward Thompson's Open Letter to him in the current number of the *Socialist Register 1974*, and the two met each other in a strange debate last month at Balliol College. Strange, because to hear them talk, as to read their respective contributions, is to realise that they communicate out of a historical experience of the past three decades which has produced in each of them totally different ideas about Socialism, particularly the potential of its future.

Thompson has always been a dissident