Reviews

From philosophy to practice

André Gorz: *Socialism and Revolution*, London, Allen Lane, 1975

André Gorz is clearly different from the other 'revisionist' theorists of modern capitalism who emerged during the fifties and sixties: he does not attempt a radical revision of Marxist class analysis, he shares none of Marcuse's pessimism, and he does not attempt to subordinate the revolutionary transformation of advanced capitalism to revolutions in the Third World. His position seems neither dated nor overshadowed by events since 1968. The majority of essays in this collection are digests or texts of lectures delivered in various parts of the world in the mid-sixties, covering the political development of the student movement, the nature of the 'socialist bloc', trade unions and the modern capitalist state, imperialism and the relationship between reform and revolution. The specially written introductory essay is a general survey and a programmatic development of his ideas on the revolutionary party in the light of the events of May '68. There is a fairly coherent overall analysis running through all of them, and I hope the following summary does not do it too much violence.

His starting point is the increasing dominance in modern capitalist society of one section of the ruling class - the monopoly bourgeoisie. The technological development and organisation of monopoly capital urgently requires long-term planning and social and economic stability and to this end the monopoly bourgeoisie must transform the state from the arena for compromise between different sections of the ruling class to the direct instrument of its power; economic and political power moves to corporate planning bodies and parliamentary assemblies are left with real but limited power only in the area of civil liberties. Bourgeois democracy maintains its liberal forms but the democratic content is eaten away from the inside; the system as a whole becomes increasingly inflexible in the face of traditional wage demands and reform programmes. The sections of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie excluded from the decision-making process have neither the economic nor the ideological ability to challenge the process - real opposition can come only from the working class. In order to secure its position, monopoly capital must integrate the trade unions themselves into the planning structure, and this was the task attempted by the social democratic parties that came to power in Europe during the last decade - by no means successfully.

This, taken with the inflexibility of the system in the face of traditional demands, means that effective opposition must come to challenge the capitalist organisation of production as a whole if it is not to be drawn into the planning structure and castrated. However, this generalisation of the class struggle must take place in the context of a capitalism that no longer bases itself on naked oppression, but rather on a complex network of ideological institutions which emphasise in particular the system's ability to supply, and go on supplying in ever increasing quantities, luxury consumer goods that satisfy the needs of its workforce. The basic demands that stem from poverty are no longer capable of questioning the basis of social and economic organisation. In this context, the traditional forms of working class organisation and politics are likely to become irrelevant.

However, there are new contradictions emerging in modern capitalism that offer the basis for the development of a revolutionary socialist movement. In the first place, of course, the affluence of modern capitalism is by no means universal: there are sizeable sections of the population, in Europe often made up of immigrants, who are deprived of all but the minimum necessary to keep them working; their existence appears to be essential to the maintenance of capitalism yet their deprivation, glaringly obvious in the consumer society, is a constant source of danger. These groups are always likely to explode into collective violence and there is a continuous undercurrent of individual violence - 'consumption by destruction' - of what they are not allowed to consume in any other way. By themselves, however, these explosions do not present a fundamental threat to capitalism; the serious threat still comes from the industrial working class, the only conceivable agent of change, and here a second contradiction comes into play. The technological development of capitalism requires a work force increasingly intellectually capable and flexible, but the hierarchical social and technical division of labour required by capitalist relations of production is unable to countenance any autonomy on the part of the worker; the response is to attempt to train narrow specialists, uninterested in anything outside their specialism, but the rapid development of knowledge and the work situation itself in technologically advanced industry demands more than narrow specialism. Gorz analyses the growth of student militancy in this context, but beyond students he sees the contradiction as the source of the 'real needs' of the modern worker, the needs that will lead to challenging the capitalist system as a whole. The essential need is for power to control his own life and work, to break free of the oppression of work as it is experienced in the framework of capitalist relations of production.

The ideology of the 'consumer society' of course acts to mask this need, to substitute for it the false need for luxury consumer goods. The worker is persuaded to accept the oppressive and destructive nature of his work in exchange for what he can get outside his work, to accept a quantitative compensation for a qualitative deprivation; as a consumer, moreover, the worker is isolated from his fellows, his needs are defined as private needs for which he must seek private satisfaction; he becomes isolated and impotent. Here we find the roots of the surface contradiction, noted by some bourgeois economists, between 'private affluence' and 'public squalor', and there is an implicit critique of the privatisation theme of modern sociology. 'Consumerism' can play a similar role in Eastern Europe, and Gorz rightly criticises the 'liberalisation' that involves the partial reintroduction of the 'free' market, and the production of goods for individual consumption rather than the improvement of communal services.

The task of the revolutionary party is to generalise the class struggle and break through these mystifications, and for this task, the traditional form of Bolshevik organisation is no longer appropriate. It must of course provide leadership but not by imposing itself on the various groups involved in the struggle, subordinating some to others and all to itself. Rather it must articulate the 'real needs' of the modern worker through showing how the discontents and demands of each group find their ultimate significance in the socialist organisation of society. The revolutionary party must not set itself up as a straight alternative to the social democratic leadership, it must claim to be no more than an *instrument* in the class struggle; it cannot be set up in isolation from the class, but only on the basis of a spontaneous struggle that has revealed a need for it, and, in its early stages, it is little more than a servicing organisation for otherwise isolated militants. Its policy and strategy is developed through theoretical, educational and ideological work that involves all its members in an active way, and its eventual aim is to be the means by which

power is taken and transferred to the class, not to set itself up as an agency to hold power on behalf of the class. If it reproduces within itself the centralised organisation of the capitalist state and the bourgeois political parties, then it defeats its own object, which is precisely the destruction of that form of organisation. Its goal - socialist democracy - must be reflected in the internal organisation of the party and the lives of its members; it must offer a *qualitatively different life*, not just an alternative analysis of the economic system. Finally, it must be able to expand and *contract* with the ebb and flow of class struggle - an organisation bigger than it needs to be can only result in bureaucratic deformation.

There is obviously a great deal even in this sketchy summary that is worth further research and argument, and there is much more in the book itself, yet it remains an oddly disappointing and frustrating work. In part it is due to the form of presentation: perhaps inevitably in a delivery that falls between polemic, empirical survey and theoretical argument, the tendency is towards overgeneralisation and the glossing over of problems, the production of empty formulae rather than solutions. The scope of the introductory essay, for example, prohibits a proper treatment of any of the topics covered. There is more to it than that, however. Gorz is one of the few Marxists anywhere to have been directly influenced by Sartre's theoretical Marxism, and the essay 'Sartre and Marx', reprinted here in a rather more readable form than in its first appearance in *New Left Review* in 1966, is one of the best introductions in English to Sartre's untranslated work. Gorz does not play pupil to Sartre's master, systematically developing or employing the latter's theoretical framework, but the influence is clear and it is worth tracing for several reasons. In the first place it is rare that a complex philosophical Marxist humanism such as Sartre's can be found behind an attempt to analyse concrete situations and develop a practical strategy, and Gorz's inadequacies and his insights illustrate the central dangers and possibilities of Sartre's Marxism; secondly, an examination of some of Sartre's ideas enables a much needed clarification and even an extension of some of Gorz's more promising analyses and prescriptions.

Sartre's philosophy is primarily one of praxis, of action rather than structures, and he aims at a philosophical foundation of Marxist concepts such as class and mode of production, not at their refinement or employment which must take place on a different epistemological level. In this sense, he can be grouped with writers such as Lukacs or those connected with the Frankfurt school in that they all fail to provide a satisfactory way of analysing specific concrete social and economic structures and situations, a means of 'hard' empirical analysis. Hence the way is open for Gorz's generalisations about class structures and economic developments, his tendency to simple assertion, perhaps backed up with the odd empirical fact and research acknowledged in a footnote. This style of analysis is dangerous because it is open to attack from empirical sociology which can always produce damaging facts pointing in the opposite direction, and disappointing because an essential difference between Sartre and other philosophical humanists in the Marxist tradition is that Sartre leaves a 'space' in his work for the development and employment of the scientific concepts necessary for 'hard' analysis.

It is predictable that a 'philosophy of praxis' will have most to offer to an analysis of consciousness and action, and Gorz's most interesting ideas are centred around his critique of the consumer society and his prescriptions for the revolutionary party; even here however there is the same tendency to generalise, slipping into what appears to be a combination of moral criticism and wishful thinking, where some indication of a firm theoretical foundation would be more productive. The foundation, however, is not hard to find in Sartre. In his exploration of the limits and potentialities of human praxis - the 'dialectic of freedom and necessity' that he finds in Marx - Sartre develops what can best be called a phenomenology of social formations, an analysis of the possible structures of relationships that may form between individuals and groups on the basis of their membership of a social class. Two of these seem to be particularly important for Gorz, although he does not refer to them by name outside of his essay on Sartre. The first is the 'series': a structure of interpersonal relationships conditioned by economic scarcity and dominated by social and economic structures that have become independent of human activity. Each individual is assigned his place within and by these structures which separate him from those around him: he grasps himself as 'Other' than those around him, isolated and dependent upon their actions; to the extent that his action is limited and guided in this way from the outside, he is also 'Other' than himself - a profound double alienation that leaves him impotent and, as we shall see, open to manipulation. The second formation, the 'group-in-fusion', is the radical opposite: under an external threat that defines the series as a group, serialised individuals come to grasp themselves as the 'same' as each other through the actions, initially separate and individual, they take to protect themselves. The group-in-fusion is the essence of the revolutionary movement, and Gorz's description is as good as any:

> *The active unity of human praxis which then emerges ... is the paradigm of all egalitarian concepts of what a liberated, fraternal community should be... In the fused group alienation is - at least temporarily - abolished.* (pp258-9)

Gorz is right to emphasise that, for Sartre, the triumph is short-lived; the necessity for the group to organise and maintain itself sets it on the path to institutionalisation and re-serialisation; nonetheless, it remains the means by which men collectively and freely make history.

It should be evident that a notion of serialisation lies behind Gorz's critique of the consumer society, and a notion of the group-in-fusion behind his ideas about the revolutionary party, although in neither case is it simply a matter of applying Sartre's concepts. In the first case - in this collection at any rate - he only begins the critique of modern capitalism that Sartre makes possible; clearly, the creation of needs related to personal consumption reinforce, if not create, serialisation and impotence, but the 'consumer society' involves more than just this: Sartre argues that serialisation provides the basis for manipulative control, what he calls 'extero-conditioning' (a notion not mentioned by Gorz even in his exposition of Sartre). The class or class fraction in power (or rather its 'sovereign') 'works' upon the series to push seriality to the limits and endow it with a false unity. Each individual, in his isolated impotence, is kept separate from others and at the same time encouraged to become more like them through the adoption of various 'external' anonymous qualities: ways of dressing, tastes, clichéd political beliefs etc. The alienation is cemented: in my serial isolation and impotence, I am persuaded that I can find power and unity by making myself more like other people I do not know, that - in the last analysis - nobody knows. This provides a way into an analysis and critique of a host of cultural and political institutions not touched on or only mentioned by Gorz yet which play vital roles in maintaining the present system. The notion is useful not just on the level of fashion and popular culture - the most obvious examples - but it is also applicable to the mass media and parliamentary democracy itself. Extero-conditioning gives rise to a whole 'rhetoric of anonymity' through which news is filtered and political questions posed: 'public opinion', 'the silent majority', the wishes of the Portuguese people', 'the ordinary working man' become anonymous arbitrators, points of identification for those addressed as 'free independent individuals' by the media and politicians; and all serve to mask the possibility of taking real collective decisions in co-operation with specific other people in concrete situations.

The need to work against this conditioning offers a justification for some of Gorz's prescriptions for the revolutionary party which would otherwise appear to have a utopian

or ethical basis only; in this respect, Gorz illustrates a further danger of Sartre's position: that of producing a rhetoric of liberation and freedom as a substitute for analysis of organisation and strategy.

Gorz argues rightly that the theoretical and organisational activities of the revolutionary party must not be the preserve of specialist intellectuals, but must involve everybody in a positive and active way: it is not a matter of handing down a line but of articulating and theorising common experience. Given the analysis of extero-conditioning, the reason for this is clear: the alternative is a counter-conditioning that reproduces, within the organisation, the very serial impotence that it is trying to overcome in the wider society. Yet in his emphasis on this aspect of organisation, Gorz tends to overlook the point that he makes very clearly in his exposition of Sartre: the necessity for organisation and survival requires some form of centralised hierarchy and control, and this is true before as well as after a revolution - in a sense it is more necessary before than after since the capitalist state is still capable of resorting to physical oppression of a type against which a completely open revolutionary organisation would have no defence. There must be a constant strain between two necessities: the necessity for internal democracy advocated by Gorz, and the centralised organisation necessitated by the fact of being involved in struggle. The fact that Gorz frequently ends by presenting only a more attractive, but equally empty, set of formulae in opposition to the traditional Leninist version serves to illustrate one of his own points: the need for a 'new language' in which experience inside and outside the party can be expressed, for, if the balance is to be maintained, it is essential that relationships within the organisation be discussed honestly and clearly. Conceptual formulations - whether Sartre's or Lenin's - can, in this context, all too easily serve to hide what is really happening.

Ian Craib

Method in Marx

Karl Marx: Texts on Method
translated and edited by
Terrell Carver, Blackwells, 1975,
£5.50

Two posthumously discovered manuscripts are presented here: Marx's Introduction (1857) to the *Grundrisse*; and Marx's *Notes on Adolph Wagner* (1879-80). The *Notes* have not been easily available in English hitherto. In the case of the 1857 *Introduction*, however, the English translation of 1904 had long been out of print when a veritable explosion of translations started a few years ago. In this case Carver is in direct competition with S.W. Ryazanskaya, David McLellan and Martin Nicolaus.[1]

Each of the texts is a little over forty pages long, while Carver surrounds them with no less than one hundred and thirty-seven pages of editorial matter, not to mention notes in the texts themselves. This allows him to deploy the full scholarly apparatus (in truth definitely over-full).

Since Carver rightly considers that the texts 'demonstrate that Marx brought his studies in philosophy, logic and history to bear on political economy', the translations tend towards philosophical, rather than everyday, usages.

One useful innovation in the 1857 text is the rendition of *vereinzelter Einzelne* as 'individuated individual' rather than the more usual 'isolated individual' (p90). This gets round the difficulty that the latter phrase has the connotation of physical separation and independence, whereas the individual of 'civil society' has a multiplicity of social relationships on which he depends. Marx's point is that 'the different forms of social connection first confront the individual as a mere means for his private purposes, as external necessity', in the 'civil society' of the eighteenth century. Later in this section Marx refers to 'production by an individuated individual outside society', i.e. an isolated individual.

However, in this same passage Carver reverts to 'bourgeois society' (instead of 'civil society') to render *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, even though this commits him to rendering a quotation from the *German Ideology*: 'Bourgeois society as such is developed only with the brougeoisie'. (p91) What sort of insight is that![2]

The truth is that Marx had inherited a tradition in social philosophy in which the term 'civil society' referred to the social organisation developed directly from production and commerce. It was *ideologically* presented by bourgeois theoreticians as the network of transactions established by 'free' and 'equal' individuated individuals having property in their own persons and possessions. Marx linked this latter ideological content to an historically determinate society arising when property relations had been set free. The 'individuated individual' is thus an historical result rather than the starting point (p48). The bourgeois ideologist presents the self-image of a *modern* form as an ahistorical or abstract assumption. Furthermore, rather than a very Eden of the innate rights of man, this individualistic 'civil society' should be seen as a *class* society, developed concomitantly with bourgeois rule. This insight by Marx into the connection of 'civil society' (understood as the ideologists presented it) and the bourgeois epoch, is obscured by the tautological translation above.

It might give something of the flavours of the four translations of the 1857 *Introduction* to compare their versions of a nice remark Marx makes about the rule of law. Marx is discussing the claim that it is a precondition of production that property is safeguarded. Now we have:

The bourgeois economists have a vague notion that production is better carried on under the modern police than it was, for example, under club law. They forget that club law is also law, and that the right of the stronger continues to exist in other forms even under their 'government of law'.
(McLellan)

The bourgeois economists have merely in view that production proceeds more smoothly with modern police than, e.g., under club-law. They forget, however, that club-law too is law, and that the law of the stronger, only in a different form, still survives even in their 'constitutional state'.
(Ryazanskaya)

All the bourgeois economists are aware of is that production can be carried on better under the modern police than e.g. on the principle that might makes right. They forget only that this principle is also a legal relation and that the right of the stronger prevails in their 'constitutional republics' as well, only in another form.
(Nicolaus)

The bourgeois economists have in mind that a modern police force lets us produce better than, for example, the law of the jungle. They simply forget that the law of the jungle is also a law, and that the law of the stronger persists in another form even in their 'Rechtsstaat'!
(Carver - and in the note the following definition is given of the German term: 'A state whose aim is the protection of the rights of all its citizens')

Marx's point here is that the bourgeois contrast between 'the law of the jungle' and 'the rule of law' does not compare like with like. There are really *four* terms. In 'the jungle' there is a mechanism of dominance (physical strength) and *a kind of order*. In civilised conditions there is the order of 'the rule of law' and *a different mechanism of dominance*. Marx does not of course identify these different forms. For one thing the order imposed in 'the jungle' by 'the stronger' represents their rule in *unmediated* fashion. The rule of 'the stronger' in 'civil society' is mediated by 'the rule of law'. The rule of law is an impersonal objective mechanism under which both plaintiff and defendant are 'equal'. This allows the protection of property to appear as a function of the social order generally, rather than as the dominance of the bourgeois class.

Readers may consider for themselves which of the four versions above seems most felicitous. However, it must be said that, on

this occasion, Nicolaus is guilty of a mistranslation, in equating '*Rechtsstaat*' with 'constitutional republic'. The question of republican and monarchical forms is not the issue: the issue is the rule of law. The *Rechtsstaat* could be a constitutional monarchy; even Hegel's political programme is comformable with the concept.

Carver's plausible case for the importance of the 1857 *Introduction* is that in it Marx comes to views and conclusions which were used in various later works. In the manuscript he recorded certain methodological innovations which provided him with the impetus to embark on the *Grundrisse*, the first rough draft of his critique of political economy.

Turning now to the *Notes on Wagner*, it should be observed that, although this text is roughly the same length as the 1857 *Introduction*, it is less 'meaty' because of its form as a scrappy response to another text. Nevertheless serious students of the method of Capital should consult the key sections on the derivation of the concept of value (pp189-208). It is here that Marx contrasts Wagner's quibbling over the *word* 'value' and its supposed species 'use-value' and 'exchange-value', with his own starting point, a *concretum* - the commodity. It is commodities that on the one hand have use-value, and on the other hand have value in exchange.

> *I do not start out from 'concepts', hence I do not start out with 'the concept of value' ... What I start out from is the simplest social form in which the labour-product is presented in contemporary society, and this is the 'commodity'.*(198)

On the question of Marx's analysis of commodity exchange, Carver permits himself a rare criticism, via a passage from Wittgenstein! Marx says that commodities exchange on the basis of something common to them - value (which is wholly independent of the various use-values). Carver (p173) counterposes to this Wittgenstein's well-known adage - 'Don't say there *must* be something common...' Yet Carver has already given us a long paraphrase of Marx's point that he does not deal with concepts in a vacuum but with 'social forms' and 'the economically given social period'. And, in the passage referred to above, Marx twice points to the term 'value' in chemistry (in true Wittgensteinian fashion) in order to show that it is no good starting with words instead of concrete social forms. In demarcating one social form from another even where they are superficially similar Marx is doing exactly what Wittgenstein recommended, namely 'look and see whether there is anything in common'. For example:

> *Objects that in themselves are no commodities, such as conscience, honour etc., are capable of being offered for sale by their holders, and of thus acquiring, through their price, the form of commodities. Hence an object may have a price without having value.*[3]

Carver, by the way, is out of sympathy with Marx's theory of value, because, as he has made clear elsewhere ('Marx's Commodity Fetishism', *Inquiry* 1975), he himself holds 'a subjective view of value'.

Although Carver's editorial commentaries on the texts provide some useful background, his mode of work does not permit a systematic enough discussion of the issues to make a major advance in the debate on Marx's method. In conclusion: libraries must get a copy of this book, but I cannot see many individuals finding it worth while to lash out £5.50 on the present edition - especially when one considers that the *Grundrisse* (in paperback) contains one of the two texts involved.

Notes

1 Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* trans. S.W. Ryazanskaya, ed. M. Dobb, London, 1971; *Marx's Grundrisse*, ed. David McLellan, London 1971 and 1973; Marx, *Grundrisse*, trans. Martin Nicolaus, London, 1973. McLellan's version is based on N.I.Stone's 1904 translation. The version appended to Marx and Engels *German Ideology* Part One, ed. C.J.Arthur (1970) is an earlier draft of the one in the aforementioned Dobb edition of the 1859 *Critique*.

2 Carver actually gives a reference to the English translation that gives 'civil society': Marx and Engels, *German Ideology*, London, 1965, pp48-9.

3 *Capital* ch.3, p102. See also A. Anton's article in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* March 1974.

Chris Arthur

Latin American Revolution

D. C. Hodges: *The Latin American Revolution: Politics and Strategy from Afro-Marxism to Guevarism*, William Morrow & Co Inc, New York, 1974, $9.95

Written after the dust of the sixties has begun to settle, this is the best book in English so far to survey the revolutionary process in Latin America from the period initiated by the Mexican and Russian Revolutions to the present. Hodges, viewing events from the perspective of the mid-seventies, avoids the twin errors of enthusiastic support for the immediate prospects of the Latin American revolution and of assuming that the defeat or 'stalemating' of most rural-based insurrectionary movements in the revolutionary offensive of the mid-sixties (e.g. ELN in Bolivia; MR-13 and FAR, Guatemala; ALN, Brazil; MIR and ELN, Peru) and the killing or imprisonment of key leaders (e.g. Guevara, Marighella, Sosa, Blanco) signifies an end to the continuing displacement of the Latin American revolution 'toward the left or toward ever more revolutionary alternatives.' In fact, Hodges maintains the thesis that the repressive military dictatorships which spread through Latin America in the sixties are a sign of the ultimate strength of the revolution, are unstable in the long-run, and, being explicitly counter-revolutionary (with the exception of Peru), have unmasked 'democratic regimes as flimsy facades readily sacrificed by the oligarchies in the event of a major crisis'.

Based on first-hand interviews and primary sources, and containing some new interpretations, Hodges' work is an original contribution to the history of Latin America, but it is important to notice that the book is at the same time a philosophical work. Hodges notes in his 'Preface' that his study embodies 'a way of doing political philosophy that combines field work and historical investigations with critical analyses of revolutionary documents and their intellectual foundations'. The philosophical tools of logical analysis, discrimination of ambiguities etc, are used to clarify what is involved in the complex and heated disputes between various left-wing groups and to assess the bearing of practical experience on the resolution of these disputes. Thus, though not primarily intended for this purpose, the book serves admirably as an introduction to left-wing politics, as a vehicle for beginning to achieve a rational grasp of revolutionary issues. More importantly, however, it helps make the intuitive notion of a 'logical' development in the revolutionary process usably precise without becoming bogged down in the analysis of such abstract Marxist ideas as that of 'praxis' and of 'dialectical development'. This is not to say that these notions are irrelevant to Hodges' study, but to say, rather, that the philosophical recommendation implicit in Hodges' work is to use the concrete in order to get a handle on the abstract. So the philosophic mood evidenced by the book seems closest to what Hao Wang, in a different context, has called 'substantial factualism' in contrast to positivism, linguistic philosophy or phenomenology. The point of substantial factualism is to insist on the importance of 'gross facts' to philosophy and to criticize traditional epistemology for being too 'detached from actual knowledge, often too one-sided to take into consideration the anthropic element in the pursuit of knowledge, often too piecemeal to permit the emergence of any larger connected and coherent outlook.'[1] Again, substantial factualism is after what is important, fundamental and general and is anxious, accordingly, to avoid the 'shift from the fundamental to the ultimate and to feel that unless ultimate truths are a

priori, we have not found a solid foundation.'[2] From this point of view, then, the power of Hodges' book is to force upon philosophers a series of questions which commonly go unasked.

The final chapter of Hodges' book, for example, is on the first socialist revolution in the Americas. It is a gross fact of the contemporary world that while there has been little progress toward reducing the inequality of income and wealth since the turn of the century in capitalist nations such as the US, England and even such welfare oriented countries as Sweden[3] (much less Latin American countries), Hodges' study brings out the progress toward distributive justice made by the relatively poor and underdeveloped country of Cuba in roughly fifteen years. The ratio of maximum to minimum incomes has been legislated (with relatively few exceptions) not to exceed eight to one and a ceiling of 450 pesos monthly has been placed on salaries. Hodges argues that this indicates considerable progress toward both a more just society and also towards socialism (defined in the sense of ending the exploitation of man by man). He argues further, following Fidel Castro, that given the realities of population growth and modern technology, 'almost three times the investment is needed to obtain the same per capita growth rate (1% per annum) as the European countries achieved during the initial stage of industrialization a century ago' and that such a rate of growth - involving an investment rate of 25% of the GNP per year - is not possible within a capitalist framework and only possible in a socialist framework under the conditions of what Hodges terms 'the parallel construction of communism' (a uniquely Cuban concept). The clear implication of this argument is that, for underdeveloped countries, distributive justice and a general level of material well being is unthinkable outside of a socialist framework. Surely, such facts, even if they are not indisputable, must be relevant to any 'living' social and political philosophy of the day. They show us that the question of distributive justice cannot easily be separated from the questions of capitalism and socialism.

The theme of 'the anthropic element' in human knowledge and the need for a large connected and coherent outlook are again brought out in Hodges' logical dissection of left-wing debates about theory and practice. Hodges distinguishes, in the first place, between politics and strategy. 'Politics' is 'defined as the art of formulating collective goals and preparing for concerted action on the basis of a knowledge of historical realities and possibilities; strategy, as the complementary art of achieving those political objectives'. Politics, here, obviously involves a theoretical account of the socially possible and impossible, but just as obviously, the interest in certain sorts of possibilities and the choice of some possibilities over others cannot be understood independently of 'the anthropic element'. The profound import of these points can be illustrated by Hodges discussion of the conflicting roles of the Communist and Socialist parties in the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende in Chile (1970-73). As Hodges notes, the Chilian CP, like other CPs in Latin America (with the exception of Colombia, the Dominican Republic after 1965 and Bolivia after 1971) manifested 'the Krushchev syndrome'. They had decided to retain only 'the outer shell of a Leninist vanguard party - its centralized and bureaucratic structure and its policy of a united front against imperialism' while dropping all of the other main features of a Leninist *strategy* (as opposed to politics): opting for the parliamentary road to power, accepting the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism, dropping Lenin's dual strategy of simultaneous preparation for both legal and illegal struggles, opening their ranks to anyone willing to accept party discipline rather than insisting on a vanguard of professional revolutionaries. Their *politics*, however, remained Leninist in the sense of calling for an anti-imperialist agrarian revolution, accepting Lenin's diagnosis of our times as 'the epoch of imperialism and the eve of proletarian revolutions' and assuming the possibility of proletarian power through class alliances, prior to the proletariat's being a majority class in society and the military being under the control of the proletariat. Thus, for the Chilean CP, 'the fundamental alternative was a national revolution or no revolution at all'. Under the influence of the Cuban Revolution, the Socialists argued that the anti-imperialist agrarian revolution and the socialist revolution were to be accomplished simultaneously or not at all. Strategically, this difference came down to whether to dilute revolutionary goals and even temporarily retreat from power in order to win over middle sections of the population, and not antagonize the military, or to retain the goals of the revolution and isolate middle sections from the 'big bourgeoisie' by promoting the organized strength and demands of workers, peasants and the unorganized and unemployed. Allende, of course, was caught in a crossfire between the CP and the Socialists which, despite enormous political skill, forced him finally to accede to CP pressure and not veto the gun-control law in 1972, and he thus gave the armed services a free and legal hand in enforcing this law. Curiously, Hodges holds that either the CP or the Socialist strategy could have succeeded if it had been followed consistently and had the firm backing of the other party. Such a view, despite its noble anti-sectarian implications, seems implausible to me.

A Leninist way of formulating this question is in terms of subjective and objective conditions. 'By objective conditions', Hodges tells us, 'Lenin meant those that were beyond the control of a revolutionary class; by subjective conditions, those under its control'. The notion of subjective conditions, as is well known, was crucial to Lenin's break with Kautsky and the Second International. But it is less well-known, as Hodges brings out, that Guevara sought a theoretical basis for widening the concept of subjective conditions. Whereas Lenin was concerned with the conditions necessary to seize and hold power in the context of a mass uprising, Guevara was concerned with 'forcing the facts' when such conditions do not obtain. For him, therefore, subjective conditions concern what is necessary 'to begin an insurrection (or revolution) and survive and grow in struggle against repressive forces'. Lenin's notion presupposes the existence of an economic, political, ideological and/or military crisis, whereas Guevara's notion concerns the possibility of precipitating such a crisis and, in this way, creating a revolutionary situation. It follows from this that 'fascism today is the price that revolutionaries must be willing to pay for failure in a revolutionary situation.' But Hodges argues that the development of Guevara's ideas into various forms of urban guerrilla warfare and the ultimate untenability of repressive military regimes in Latin America indicate the possibilities in Guevara's view.

At any rate, the lesson for contemporary Anglo-American philosophers in all of this discussion is clear. The current debates over the nature of practical reasoning are doomed to remain sterile until it is discussed how real options are determined and how real sequences of collective actions can bring about these options. Piecemeal concentration on cases where what is believed to be possible obviously coincides with what is actually possible, where theory is not a factor in determining possibilities, and where collective agents can be treated on analogy with individual agents, leaves out of account most of what is interesting in the relation between theory and practice in the important context of revolution.

What emerges, in fact, from Hodges' description of the Latin American revolution is that the *concept* of revolution cannot be understood in terms other than those of a long extended, international process, having a definite direction. 'The revolutions throughout Latin America,' Hodges tells us, '... are not isolated occurrences but interconnected aspects of a single ongoing process constituting the mainstream of Latin American development... One cannot describe this movement accurately by referring only to its earlier stages or even to the last act of the revolution in a single country.' In Hao Wang's

terms, this is a fundamental, though not *a priori*, point about our concept of revolution. It involves the notion of indirect as well as direct consequences of revolutionary activity. It is impossible to grasp the Cuban revolution of 1959, for example, or the shortlived Guatemalan (1945-54) or Bolivian (1952-64) revolutions without grasping their 'intentions', their point of origin, in the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance founded by the Peruvian Haya de la Torre in 1924 and extending its influence throughout Latin America. But the distinctive characteristics of the APRA movement (the attempt to struggle for national democracy on a continental scale, the abandonment of the concept of a proletarian vanguard, the acceptance of progressive aspects of imperialism in Latin America and the attempt to create a unified, anti-imperialist movement including the national bourgeoisie), cannot be grasped except as de la Torre's response to and as an indirect effect of the ultimate reversal of the Mexican Revolution and of the sense of inadequacy of the Comintern, European analysis of Latin American reality. The failure of APRA-style parties in the brief Cuban revolution of 1933-34, Guatemala (1945-54), Bolivia (1943, 1952-64), Peru (1945-48), and other places invalidates the APRA conception, but, as a response to such failures, men such as Fidel Castro and Caamano Deño of the Dominican Republic, formerly committed to APRA-style politics, were led to the views of the new left, stressing Guevara's conception of the insurrectionary foco, which, in turn, as a result of initial failures and under the influence of 'the legendary Joe Baxter of Argentina', gradually becomes transformed into the strategy of the urban guerrilla. Similar developments take place with respect to the failures of the CPs in Latin America in relation to the development of what Hodges terms 'the revived left', namely the Trotskyist and Maoist left. Though Trotskyist groups in particular have made numerous contributions to the progress of the Latin American Revolution, Hodges argues, ultimately they have either come to converge strategically with the Castro-Guevara inspired New Left or they have been superseded by the New Left.

It is with the concept of 'supersession' that the book comes open to criticism and the Marxist abstractions of 'praxis' and 'dialectical development' return to haunt it. One wants to grasp the rationality that Hodges suggests is implicit in the Guevarist abandonment of Leninism. Related to this, one wants to grasp why, rationally speaking, Latin American revolutionaries are willing to pay 'the price of fascism' for failure in a revolutionary situation. A simple but inadequate reply stresses the test of practice: success in practice is a test of rationality and failure is proof or irrationality. But here is where Dr Hodges' book is weakest. His explanations of revolutionary failures are often facile; under-emphasizing, for example, the extent of the indirect economic warfare waged by the US against the Bolivian and Chilean revolutions and placing all emphasis on the strategic and tactical question of armed struggle and policy toward the military. Or again, Hodges often argues for the irrationality of sectarianism, insisting that there is no *one* model for revolution in Latin America, whereas the situations he describes, as in Chile, tend to show the impossibility of rational strategic, if not political, agreement. The major criticism of this book is, then, that while it admirably *describes* and *analyzes* the theoretical and strategic issues of the Latin American revolution, its approach to *resolving* these issues (in principle, if not in practice) is less clear and Hodges' anti-sectarian principle of tolerance for united actions stands in need of further argument and development.

There are some other minor, though related, criticisms to be made. Hodges is often arbitrary in the definitions he uses to explicate the process of revolution. For example, he distinguishes between Marxism and Leninism, by associating Marxism with what he styles as the parliamentary, proletarian majority attitude of the later Marx and by associating Lenin's politics with Marx's political writings 'between 1848 and 1850, which were directed to formulating a model for revolution in Germany.' But this is written as if Marx never wrote on the Paris Commune in the 1870s or never, in effect, advocated a worker-peasant alliance in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* and as if Lenin never read Marx's writings on these subjects. Again, a central premiss in Hodges' argument is the so-called dependency thesis characterising relations between neo-colonialism and its colonies (at the level of the market) in terms of limits and types of economic growth imposed on colonies, but the relation between the dependency thesis and the various issues in the Latin American revolution is only rarely and unsystematically brought out in the text (e.g. in discussing the 'Balkanization' of Latin America or in discussing the defense of a proletarian as opposed to a national line by the Argentine Trotskyist, Silvio Frondizi). There is a need to describe the explicit connection between theories of this sort and the politics and strategy based upon them and, also, to describe the politics and strategy implicit in theoretical debates about the dependency thesis. Furthermore, the present reliance on material incentives in Cuba is unrealistically minimized and, thereby, the 'subjectivity' of the Cuban Revolution is unrealistically maximized. Moreover, though the book is presented as an introduction and is written in a lively, energetic manner, it is dense with new information, subtleties of interpretation and simply assumes familiarity on the reader's part with the social and economic misery in Latin America which is behind the political and strategic issues of the Latin American revolution.

In sum, the book is excellent as an introduction to the over-all sweep, unity and development of the Latin American revolution; it has the additional merit of raising profound philosophic questions in a clear and realistic manner, but it does not pursue these questions sufficiently for a total account of its subject-matter and it pursues them in greater detail and depth than would be suitable for an introductory account. Yet, whatever its defects, Professor Hodges has produced a work that is original and, one would hope, seminal both as history and philosophy. This is a remarkable achievement.

Notes

1 Hao Wang, *From Mathematics to Philosophy*, Humanities Press, NY, 1974, p19

2 *Ibid*, p2

3 A general survey of the evidence with respect to these matters in the US, Great Britain and Sweden can be found in J.H. Westergaard, 'Sociology: the Myth of Classlessness' in Robin Blackburn (ed.) *Ideology in Social Science*, Vintage Books, Fontana, 1972, pp119-163. For the US, see Richard Parker, *The Myth of the Middle Class*, Harper & Row, NY, 1974. See also Letitia Upton and Nancy Lyons, *Basic Facts: Distribution of Personal Income and Wealth in the United States*, Cambridge Pol. Inst (2nd printing), Cambridge, Mass, 1974.

Anatole Anton

Culture and Nature

Richard Spilsbury, *Providence Lost: A Critique of Darwinism*, Oxford University Press, £3.50

The publisher's blurb states that Richard Spilsbury is a philosopher who 'has studied genetics, and is thus able and prepared to challenge both philosophers and scientists in their own terms'. In his preface, Spilsbury complains about the narrowness of most academic philosophy and expresses the belief that it is possible for philosophers to make 'a critical and constructive contribution to questions of natural philosophy that have the deepest relevance for our world view'. Specifically, he is concerned with questions about the nature and origin of man and with an exploration of the limitations in scientific thinking about man as expressed in the Neo-Darwinian concept of evolution which, he suggests, cannot account adequately for the uniqueness of man. He claims to have reformulated the perennial objections to Neo-Darwinism, to have added some new ones, and to have 'laid bare underlying assumptions on the acceptance of which the theory depends'.

I found something of interest in this book, but not much. With respect to Spilsbury's more general points concerning the complacency, superficiality and dogmatism of much present-day writing in biology, I am in agreement. I also think that there is substance in his claim that the extension of Neo-Darwinian concepts to cultural phenomena is ideological: 'Darwinism has stood as a kind of representative paradigm or symbol of the dominant philosophy of our times and our culture'. His brief discussion of the relations between this 'dominant philosophy', i.e. empiricism, and Darwinism in terms of a common principle of *a posteriori* selection, was for me the most interesting part of the book.

However, when Spilsbury actually comes to discuss human phenomena, the results are disappointing. There are chapters on language, music (treated here as an area of human experience not susceptible to formulation in verbal or mathematical i.e. 'scientific' terms), consciousness, pain, love and death; I found them for the most part rambling, superficial and plain dull and it was an effort to read to the end. He touches on all the perennials: materialism, physicalism, reductionism, genetic determinism, chance and necessity etc, but seems to have little to say that is new. I found the constant references to the author's powers of imagination or belief irritating and pointless: 'It seems extraordinary...'; 'I cannot believe...'; 'Surely there must be more...'. Although the inability to 'imagine' may be a necessary condition for the rejection of a theory, it can hardly be a sufficient one. However, there is also some argument and a good deal of this stems from what the author sees as a basic and unsatisfactory dualism between ideas about the organic world and particularly organic evolution - seen as purposeless and mechanical - and those about the human world - seen as the creation of purposive agents. Such a dualism, Spilsbury contends, 'throws doubt on the adequacy of present evolutionary concepts'.

I can see no substance whatsoever in this argument. I certainly agree with Spilsbury that the relation between Culture and Nature is a central issue and I believe that most writing on this problem from an evolutionary point of view in which the human world is assumed to be an extension of the biological is rubbish. Variations in human eating and sexual behaviour, for example, cannot be explained in biological terms, for what sharply distinguishes the human order from the natural one is that all human activities, including those that man has in common with the animals, take place within, and constitute, symbolic systems which give them specifically human meanings. But I think it is true to say that we have only the most rudimentary understanding of how this is possible and therefore of how culture is possible. Until we have a theory which accounts for this difference between natural and human, and for the variations in the latter in terms of its own specific organisation, there is no possibility of a fruitful discussion of the relation between Culture and Nature and the emergence of the one from the other. In the absence of a specific theory of culture, individual human phenomena provide no evidence one way or the other with respect to a theory of the organic world and organic evolution. Spilsbury's argument, since it is based on the same assumption of a necessary continuity between the natural and the human is, therefore, no better than that of evolutionists which he is attacking.

It would take too much space to consider Spilsbury's discussion of biological theory in detail, but in general I felt slightly more sympathetic towards those sections of the book dealing with biological problems (though not towards Spilsbury's 'alternatives') than I did towards the rest. There is indeed much that is facile and uncritical in the writing of contemporary biologists and Spilsbury manages to highlight some of this. His example of the migrating birds, for instance, with their 'star-informed genes', whose 'germ cells have become a kind of coded microcosm of the heavens' accurately reflects an attitude not uncommon among molecular biologists which manages to combine mechanical preformationism with mysticism in its attribution of almost magical powers to the DNA.

With regard to Neo-Darwinism, Spilsbury claims that this is an unsatisfactory theory not only within the domain of the human but also within that of the biological in that it can not account for the fact that genetic variation which is independent of the environment results in organisms which 'match' the environment: 'How can changes that are independent match or mirror one another?'. Spilsbury regards orthodox explanations as 'paradoxical' - 'inner changes as chancing to reflect outer conditions'. He suggests as an alternative that the causal independence of inner and outer changes constitutes the ideal condition for their matching, on the assumption that there has been a 'purposive guidance of evolution' which brings about 'useful correspondences which would not otherwise be effected, but rather hindered by the unassisted operation of causal laws'. I do not understand what this means.

Spilsbury's dismissal of orthodox theory is perverse in its failure to acknowledge the considerable successes of Neo-Darwinism in dealing with those biological problems that can be formulated in terms of the theory. On the other hand, he is obviously correct in insisting that 'no theory should be turned into an institution'. There are problems within evolution theory and it seems to me quite possible that there will be changes - perhaps of a drastic sort - in the future. Whether these will come about as a result of the sort of 'philosophical criticism' with which Spilsbury is concerned is a moot point. Within biology, however, theoretical innovation in the problem areas of individual development (epigenesis) and ecology is almost certain to have some effect on evolution theory. At the moment we have no theory of epigenesis and progress here may well lead, as Spilsbury hints, to modifications in our views of the mechanism of inheritance. As far as orthodox Neo-Darwinism is concerned, inheritance is Weismannist - that is, changes in the hereditary 'material' (the genotype) are independent of changes in the soma (the phenotype) which develops under coded instructions (the 'genetic programme') embodied in the former; and Mendelian - that is, atomic, the hereditary factors existing in discrete, alternative states. An adequate theory of epigenesis may well lead away from this static, material-based conception of inheritance towards a more dynamic state-based or process-based theory; such a theory might well lead to profound changes in the concepts of genotype and phenotype and to the relations between them and to an understanding of the constraints which are placed upon selectable (phenotypic) variation and therefore on possible evolutionary trajectories. In addition, a theory of epigenesis is required before questions about increases or decreases of complexity in evolution can be framed in a meaningful fashion. This is one of the 'perennials' which crops up in Spilsbury and it is a real problem. Within ecology, theory is also required to understand the factors involved in the stability and instability of interacting populations and therefore evolutionary changes at this level such as species diversification within an ecosystem. Within both these crucial areas it is possible that theory will come from the ways of dealing with complex systems recently developed by René Thom. From this perspective (if I understand it correctly) evolutionary changes in biological systems are viewed not in terms of the random fluctuations of a set of specific determinants (the genes) but in terms of a set of possible trajectories having certain relatively stable features in which the genotype is only one factor in the total set of processes. In this view the specificity of epigenesis would reside in the various alternative states or trajectories which are possible for the system rather than, as in current thinking, being embodied as a 'programme' in one material part of the system.[1]

These ideas, though somewhat speculative, seem to me potentially more fruitful for biological theory than Spilsbury's vague 'alternative' of a 'suprahuman but limited rationality operative in evolution'. Whether such ideas, if they do produce changes in our view of the organic world and organic evolution, will enable Providence to be Regained is another matter. What Spilsbury seems to find necessary, and lacking in Neo-Darwinism, is a concept of nature which provides the basis for a religious view of life, a 'sense of the deep-rooted dependence on the non-human'. This indeed seems to be

the crux of his objections to Darwinism and those who are sympathetic towards it may get more out of this book than I did.

1 It is perhaps worth mentioning that these ideas have their source, at least in part, in speculative philosophy. Thom's concepts, as applied to biological problems, are formal developments of some ideas of Waddington which he derived from Whitehead's metaphysics. Those who wish to pursue them might look at the various volumes of *Towards a Theoretical Biology*, ed. C H Waddington, Edinburgh University Press.

Gerry Webster

Frankfurt Views

Max Horkheimer and Theodore W. Adorno *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, London, Allen Lane, 1973, 258pp, £3.50

As the joint and seminal work of Horkheimer and Adorno - leaders of the Frankfurt School and two of Europe's most influential postwar thinkers - the *Dialectic* is an important text in the history of modern thought. Its philosophical task is directly related to the authors' understanding of contemporary society. Placing freedom at the centre of their theoretical concern, they aim at 'the discovery of why mankind is sinking into a new kind of barbarism' (p.xi). They see liberating reason or enlightenment as subject throughout history to a dialectic wherein it all too easily gives itself an absolute status over against its objects, thereby constantly collapsing into new forms of the very conditions of primeval repression which it earlier set out to overcome. In the development of this thesis, their procedure could be characterised as a re-opening of certain fundamental themes of German thought within a Marxist context. Thus their demand that 'Enlightenment must examine itself' (p.xv), is not a call to the traditional forms of philosophical criticism. On the contrary, the critique of reason hitherto exercised within epistemology can only be accomplished now, they argue, if the socio-historical experience of Western man is recognised as an internal and essential element of the whole enterprise; our meditations can no longer be Cartesian in character.

This becomes clearly evident in the *Dialectic* from their use of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*. Whereas Kierkegaard (on whom Adorno wrote in 1933) had frozen the *Phenomenology* in religion at the moment of Unhappy Consciousness and Marx began with the economic relationship of Master and Slave, they take their philosophical bearings in the section which examines the contradictions of social experience, the moment of 'Spirit' (*Phen.* VI) at which individuality finds its universal content in the order of society. And within that section they draw particularly on 'Spirit in Self-Estrangement' (*Phen.* VI.B), for in contrast both to Kierkegaard who raised the Unhappy Consciousness to a universal *theological* condition and to Marx, who saw the Master-Slave structure as a *material-historical* condition, with Adorno and Horkheimer alienation becomes the general *spiritual* condition of society.

Even this, however, does not indicate the full extent of their relation to the *Phenomenology*. Beginning his analysis of 'Spirit' with an examination of Man's social pre-history, Hegel posits a tension between the individual and the social order which finally results in repression by the absolute 'lord of the world' (*Phen.* VI.A.c). Now it is precisely awareness of this tension which characterises the *Dialectic*, and just as Hegel's source here was the Graeco-Roman world, so Horkheimer and Adorno turn to Homer. For Hegel, furthermore, Western civilisation is marked by its Baconian mode of knowledge; it treats knowledge as power, as the tool by which man obtains control over both fellowmen and nature. Again, directly picking up Hegel's reference, the *Dialectic* opens with a long quote from Bacon defining rationality as control. And it is from Hegel's treatment of the Baconian theme in his section on 'Enlightenment' (*Phen.* VI.B.ii) that Horkheimer and Adorno draw the fundamental elements of their critique of reason as domination, with its dictatorship of the subject (cf.*Phen.* p55) resulting in a social order of utility and reification (cf.*Phen.* p579).

At this point, however, their use of Hegel becomes a Marxian inversion; indeed, it is this very section on 'Enlightenment' which provides them with their basic objection to his thought. Utilising his own insights against him, they see his absolute concept of reason as absolutist, as culminating both epistemologically and historically in the very 'Terror' (*Phen.* VI.B.iii) he had recognised to be a threat which constantly accompanies the effort of enlightenment. Thus Hegel succumbs precisely to that repressive and absolutist moment in the dialectic of enlightenment which he so brilliantly elaborated and which it was the very motive of his philosophy to transcend.

In contrast, recognition of this dialectic as a continuing condition of Western historical effort is, for Horkheimer and Adorno, the peculiar achievement of Nietzsche (*Dial.* pp44-45). And it is his insight here which offers them the possibility of a radical reinterpretation of Homer's *Odyssey*. Nor is their analysis of the *Odyssey* to be mistaken for a weird scholarly eccentricity. Their intention, instead, is to save 'the basic text of European civilisation' (p46) from its traditional role in classical scholarship as the Western sacred dawn which legitimises subsequent Western history and society (pp44-45). In liberating the text, so to speak, from its repressive cultural cocoon, Horkheimer and Adorno are attempting to endow hermeneutic activity with a transformative function. Against the crude activism of orthodox Marxism, their analysis is offered as a model enactment of the practical role of theoretical engagement. Moreover, the very choice of a literary text to develop an adequate historical perspective on Western man strikes at all forms of historical reductionism. The *Odyssey* is represented as delineating crucial areas of freedom and domination inaccessible to an orthodox materialist approach. And by directly relating its contents to the social aspects of Freudian ego-theory - with its themes of sacrifice, renunciation, etc - Horkheimer and Adorno wish to expose, against Marxist economism, the *spiritual* relations of repression. Such an analysis, furthermore, no longer allows the specificity of a literary text to be reduced to the status of epiphenomenon. The *Odyssey* is not conceived of as a mere receptacle of important experiences whose real substance is independent of their expressive mode. On the contrary, the overall structure and movement of the text is recognised as a substantive content which enacts the dialectic of enlightenment. Thus the *Odyssey* becomes, in itself, a mode of knowledge and insight, and as such stands on the side of liberating enlightenment. Indeed, Horkheimer and Adorno argue (*Dial.* pp78-79) that its narrative structure is a form of memory - for Hegel the very element that saves the repressed Spirit (*Phen.* p565) - through which it retains awareness of the primeval 'lands of origin' (*Dial.* pp40,42) when man had not yet adopted the posture of dominance. It is precisely its memory of this original condition which enables the poem to 'point beyond thralldom' (*Dial.*p78); in fact, Horkheimer and Adorno see it as marked with what Hegel recognised to be the characteristic of Western enlightenment - 'the stain of unsatisfied longing' (*Phen.*p589; cf. *Dial.* p76). But the Odysseyean homecoming of Western man (a central motif of German thought) cannot be the philhellenic - and fascist - phantasy of a return to remote antiquity. Rather, for Horkheimer and Adorno it must be a movement towards a homeland understood as 'wrested from myth'; homeland now becomes 'the state of having escaped' (p78), through reason, from the repressive (mythical) forms into which reason so easily collapses.

Clearly, however, Horkheimer and Adorno are here engaged on much more than the interpretation of a single, albeit important, Greek text. Indeed, their work plainly involves the development of the concept of the dialectic of enlightenment as a philosophy of history. But this is not offered as a structure which can be systematically imposed from above. Such philosophies of history have all too often contributed towards actual historical repression (*Dial.* pp224-5). Rather, the philosophy which Horkheimer and Adorno wish to bring to bear upon history, aware as they are of the ever-

present threat of domination in the dialectic of enlightenment, is critical rather than constructive in form. Thus, in line with the book's subtitle, 'Philosophical Fragments' - unforgivably omitted from the title page of the English translation - the authors offer their philosophy of history in the Kierkegaardian spirit as a 'project' (cf. *Philosophical Fragments*, chap. I). This is brilliantly developed, in the various chapters or 'excursi', through examinations of certain representative historical forms taken by reason and its dialectic; besides the *Odyssey*, they treat the eighteenth-century polarity of Kant and de Sade as in fact a complementary relationship, as well as examining the modern culture industry and the phenomenon of anti-semitism. Finally, there is a closing series of 'Notes and Drafts' which anticipate later works and themes. But the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is much more than a prolegomenon. It stands in its own right as an original and important contribution to neo-Marxist philosophical thought.

J.A.Bradley

Not What I Expected

Viktor Shklovsky, *Mayakovsky and his Circle*, translated from the first (1940) Russian edition by Lily Feiler
Pluto Press, 1975, 259pp
£2 paperback, £4.50 hardback

If, tomorrow, we were propelled fifty years forward, many of us would bring back from the future our past.

Broadmindedly, Benois discussed all world art as slowly progressing toward *The World of Art*.

Presumably, there would be no time. There would be a bloc of right-thinking people; thus humanity, developing correctly, on the whole, would attain at last the ability to wear ties, read the morning papers and be concerned about responsible government.

I believed that art was not a method of thinking, but a method of restoring sense perception of the world; I believed that art forms change in order to preserve the perceptibility of life.

The death of objects. Strangeness as a means of fighting the familiar. The theory of shift. The task of Futurism is to resurrect objects, to restore to man his ability to sense the world.

Vladimir Vladimirovich made a very funny imitation of Bryusov waking up in the middle of the night, howling:

'I'm afraid. I'm afraid!'

'Afraid of what?'

'Afraid that Mayakovsky won't amount to much.'

Mayakovsky's usual method is revealed in this witticism: the transference of emphasis onto a secondary word, the reinterpretation of that word, and the destruction of a familiar meaning.

Mayakovsky was saved by the October Revolution.

He enjoyed the Revolution physically. He needed it very badly.

The first conference of OPOYAZ (Society for the Study of Poetic Language) took place in the kitchen of the abandoned apartment on Zhukovskaya Street. We used books to make a fire, but it was cold and Pyast kept his feet in the oven.

Tolstoy restored the perception of everyday reality by describing it in newly found words as though destroying the habitual logic of associations he distrusted.

This new attitude to objects in which, in the last analysis, the object becomes more perceptible, is that artificiality which, in our opinion, creates art.

The Symbolists studied the sounds of the language, but attributed emotive and even mystical meanings to the sounds themselves.

As early as 1916, we published collections dealing with the theory of poetic language and in the first book, we printed translations of Grammont and Nyrop. They were French and Danish scholars who demonstrated fairly accurately that sound as such has no fixed emotional value but is variously emotional. We thus cleaned the table on which we were going to work.

Mayakovsky succeeded in reforming Russian verse because he aimed at reflecting the new world.

I argued the complete independence of art from the development of life. I had an incorrect theory that poetic genes develop spontaneously.

Because of this incorrect attitude toward the Revolution, I found myself an émigré in Germany in 1922.

No 2 Lubyansky was then the home of the Moscow Linguistic Circle.

There in the fireplace, I burned up cornices and the cases of the butterfly collection, but still did not get warm.

Denikin's offensive was under way. It was imperative that the streets should not be silent. The shop windows were blank and empty. They should bulge with ideas.

Before Mayakovsky, each window was a random collection of drawings and captions. Each drawing was a separate unit. Mayakovsky introduced central ideas: a whole series of drawings connected by a rhymed text that went from picture to picture.

Mayakovsky is said to have done 1500 windows, and that is true.

We are not priests of art, but craftsmen who fulfill a social command. The practical examples printed in LEF are not 'definitive artistic revelations', but only samples of our current work.....

- V.V.Mayakovsky, O.M.Brik

(Trevor Pateman)

R. Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science*

This book is published by Alma Book Company and not Leeds Books as stated in the last issue. It may be obtained from booksellers or direct from Alma Book Company, 10b Low Ousegate, York, England

Free Speech Again

It is presumably gratifying to know that RP sometimes makes an impact in non-academic circles, even if it is only on the feature writers of the THES. Not surprisingly, Roy Edgley's article on Free Speech and the Huntington affair (RP10) has attracted the attention of one Kenneth Minogue (THES 31.10.75). Minogue's portrait, which accompanies his article, presents him as combining intellectual toughness with a lightness of touch. The article belies the image: it is superficial and clumsy, if not downright incomprehensible. The argument - if one can call it that - pivots on a radical distinction between thought and action, and an associated distinction between open and closed minds, both of which were criticised in Edgley's article. But to no avail. Armed with these dichotomies, Minogue first has a swipe at RP for being a 'hybrid' - for 'Radical' implies a 'settled conclusion about practice', and 'Philosophy' an open-minded pursuit into 'theoretical presuppositions'. He goes on to criticise Edgley for being melodramatic, because he used the example of a paper on the final solution to the Jewish question to argue that constraints on free speech might be necessary in an academic context. However, Minogue does not propose that such a paper should be tolerated. On the contrary, he asserts that it has no place in academia, 'not because it is an evil proposal, but because it is any sort of proposal at all'. Universities are not supposed to deal in proposals, which Minogue implicitly links to practice and to closure, but 'with hypotheses', which are tentative and encourage openness.

One could not hope for a more sweeping or absurd restriction on freedom of speech. For example, it condemns to silence any suggestion as to what course of action to follow in order to solve a problem raised in a 'Work in Progress' seminar. Ironically, it also denies to Huntington the right to put forward any proposals in an academic milieu - including his forced draft urbanisation policy. And since Huntington has proposed this in academic journals, we might expect Minogue to be sympathetic to those who wished to deny him a platform. Of course he is not. On the contrary, Minogue suggests that the freedom of the academic rostrum is sacrosanct. Good manners and civility (servility?) demand that speakers be given an unimpeded hearing - but presumably only after the academic censors have eliminated in advance all proposals from the paper in question, leaving only the hypotheses. (This exercise is guaranteed to generate a flood of papers on the general topic 'Hypothetical imperatives: Are they hypotheses or are they proposals?'.)
One can only wish that Minogue had extended his criteria to his own article. At least readers of the THES would then have been spared the idiocy of his proposals for 'dealing with the freedom appropriate to an academic rostrum'.

J.K.