

problems. Nothing new or constructive was being said: criticisms of the idea that history has ended are attacks on an easy target. The last item on the list was the 'world-wide power of the "phantom states" of the mafia and of the drug groups'. But Derrida was not moved to expand on the subject of this major social development, despite its having been drawn into the force-field of the lecture's main theme. This was symptomatic of Derrida's failure to engage genuinely with any of the social forces which he is concerned to regulate through revised, 'inspired' laws.

The lecture did not operate through the multiplying of contradictory, envisaged futures. There was no genealogy or symptomatology of the components of modern capitalism. There was no suggestion that the drug-marketing 'phantom states' might be integral to this system (in that they exacerbate the circulation of commodities) and that they could be crucial in the process of this form of capitalism undermining itself. Instead, there seemed to be nothing at the end except the pious hope that law-makers could learn to be taken 'out of themselves' (out of the modern 'programme') by 'ghosts' such as Marx – the hope that if we could all be agonised by 'undecidability' (like Hamlet?) we might be able to move a fraction closer to justice.

Justin Barton

Clear English

The First European Congress of Analytic Philosophy

Aix-en-Provence, 23–26 April 1993

Despite the flight from Nazism of German, Austrian and Polish analytic philosophers to America, there now exists a small but significant number of philosophers throughout Europe who count themselves as belonging to the analytic tradition. The European Society for Analytic Philosophy (ESAP), which organised the congress, was launched in Zinal (Switzerland) in 1990, in order to 'further contacts and collaboration amongst European analytic philosophers'. One hundred and eighty philosophers from most of the countries of the new Europe were in attendance, together with a good smattering from the US, Canada, Australia and Israel.

Promotional literature for the congress announced that 'the tradition of contrasting "Analytic" and "Continental" philosophy ... is inadequate, for the values of analytic philosophy are universal. Analytic philosophy is characterised above all by the goal of clarity, the insistence on explicit argumentation'. That analytic philosophy has the distinctive virtues of clarity and explicitness was also averred by Keith Lehrer in his fraternal address as Chair of the American Philosophical Association, going on to comment, in line with Popper's model for the sciences, that if a piece of analytic philosophy is false, at least it is capable of being proved false. What is meant by clarity, and what distinguishes analytic philosophy as a putatively distinctive way of doing philosophy are questions that analytic philosophers have thought and written about, and it would be mistaken to judge the official optimism of conference opening speeches as necessarily typical. It would also be pointless to deny that some idea of need for explicit argumentation does guide the endeavours and self-awareness of analytic philosophers: allusiveness and the like are definitely not on.

As someone once said, however, clarity is not enough. English is pretty important as well. English is not only a necessity if you want to publish in analytic philosophy, but, as a young German

delegate informed me, it is well nigh indispensable for thinking about it. A one-day meeting of the French *société de philosophie analytique* did take place immediately after the conference, with round table discussions on 'le réalisme moral' and 'l'argument de terre-jumelle'. It remains to be seen, however, whether non-English spoken analytic philosophy takes root.

If English is inescapably the language of analytic philosophy, the vision of analytic philosophy which informed the conference was decidedly American: exacting and scientific, preserving the spirit, if not the content, of logical positivism. There was intriguing talk among delegates of 'post-analytic philosophy', but this seems to refer to greater theoretical integration with cognitive science, and a strengthening of analytic philosophy's 'special relationship' with the sciences, rather than the rapprochement with continental philosophy anticipated by Putnam and Rorty.

Most of the eighty or so papers given fell within the categories philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and (mainly meta) ethics. There were no papers on either political philosophy or aesthetics, and scarcely anything on substantive ethics or the history of philosophy. Given the occasion and the place, one might have expected something of a sense of history, but this was little in evidence.

The second congress takes place in Sheffield next year.

Kevin Magill

Tom Bottomore 1920–1992

Tom Bottomore, one of Britain's most respected and best-loved sociologists, died suddenly on 9 December 1992, at the age of 72. He had made the study of Marxism and other varieties of social theory accessible to generations of students and teachers around the world in a wide range of uniquely readable and reliable books and through his teaching at the London School of Economics, the University of Sussex, and Simon Fraser and Dalhousie Universities in Canada. He also played a very active part in British and world sociology. He was president of the British Sociological Association from 1969 to 1971 and he was largely responsible for the successful development of the International Sociological Association, of which he was president from 1974 to 1978.

One of the questions to which Tom returned again and again was that raised in the 1950s by Maximilian Rubel (with whom he produced the classic reader *Karl Marx. Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy*, 1961) and Lucien Goldmann: 'Is there a Marxist Sociology?'. Or to put it slightly differently: Is Marx a Sociologist? Is there a sociology in Marx? Tom's answer, in a nutshell, involved 'accepting the dualism of fact and value', and seeing in Marx's thought both a science of society (sociology or political economy) and a normative social theory (the assertion and grounding of definite values and ends) which are distinct but related. He had argued earlier that '[Marx's] theoretical analysis and his allegiance to the labour movement were congruent and, in a sense, mutually supporting'.

Tom would have certainly been surprised to be called a radical philosopher, just as he vigorously rejected Kolakowski's lapidary claim at the beginning of his *Main Currents of Philosophy* that 'Karl Marx was a German philosopher'. But there was undoubtedly a radical philosophy in Tom's work – all the more impressive for the calm and measured way in which it was expressed. (A vulgar, as opposed to a Marxist materialist might try to make his ubiquitous pipe into an explanation of his intellectual style; it is at least a powerful image.) Tom had discovered Marxism while still at

school and he was briefly a member of the Communist Party. This meant that, after a first degree at LSE in economics and economic history, and a period of military service in postwar Vienna, he was unable to take up a Rockefeller fellowship in the United States itself. He went instead to Paris, where he found not only a vigorous Marxist tradition but a broader intellectual climate which influenced his thought for the rest of his life. (Looking at his books, which are to form a special collection at the University of Warwick, I was struck by the quantity of French material of this period, strategically located in his study book-case along with the *Marx-Engels-Werke*.)

Back at LSE, Tom worked on Marxism and sociological theory, and also increasingly on what was coming to be called the Third World, especially India, where he made many life-long friends. His textbook *Sociology* (1962) stood out for its attention to these three areas of the subject: Marxism, (the rest of) classical sociological theory and the Third World. Forty years before Fukuyama rediscovered Hegel's end of history, Tom had been through English evolutionary sociology and French Hegelianism. He transcended them in a characteristic conception of society which was essentially Marxist but involved a conception of objectivity which owed much to Max Weber, replacing what he saw as too easy appeals to dialectic and philosophy of history.

Tom had worked mainly on his own in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960s English-language sociology finally caught up with him and by 1968, when he returned to Britain to the University of Sussex after three years in Vancouver, sociological theory was changing beyond recognition. Simmel, Lukács, Gramsci, Lévi-Strauss, Althusser, Foucault, Marcuse, Habermas, and sometimes even Wittgenstein were coming into the sociological canon – against a background of a politics which was at least intellectually, if not in the end politically, revolutionary. Tom had been here before, and he guided generations of graduate students through the maze, sometimes warning against uncritical enthusiasm for the latest trends, sometimes drawing attention to neglected areas such as the work of the Austro-Marxists, always pointing out

intellectual genealogies and contexts. While not himself primarily interested in philosophical issues, he was unfailingly encouraging to those of us who felt that the social sciences, especially in the UK, needed to pay closer attention to such themes.

So Tom kept a sharp eye on developments in philosophy, especially as it related to social and ethical theory. A sharp eye in both senses of the term: though many of his friends, such as Roy Edgley and István Mészáros, are Marxist philosophers, Tom saw Marxist philosophy as a whole as something of a disappointment, if not a suspect project altogether:

whereas a Marxist sociology or political economy can be, and has been, developed on the basis of Marx's own analysis and investigation of modes of production and social formations, there is no real starting-point in Marx himself – in the sense that he provided any systematic and comprehensive treatment of philosophical issues – for the elaboration of a Marxist conception in any of the principal fields of philosophical inquiry.

If the above quotation suggests a desire for orthodoxy, this was far from Tom's intentions. This is not the place to argue how well his own philosophical convictions – notably, his striking scepticism about dialectics, his emphasis on the fact – value distinction and his conception of science and moral-practical reflection as distinct yet by no means unrelated activities – fit with more conventionally Marxist positions. But the way Tom put into practice his most private convictions about intellectual and personal honesty and rationality rightly made him admired and loved throughout the world. Tom lived through a long period in which radical social and political thought were in eclipse, another in which they flourished, and the beginnings of a third, the present, in which they seem again to be on the decline (although Tom's own view was more optimistic). His steadfast yet by no means inflexible pursuit of his convictions is a model of intellectual courage and integrity.

William Outhwaite

LETTER

Dear *Radical Philosophy*,

Whilst I agree with Sean Sayers that there is a need to defend realism and dialectic (Sayers, 'Once More On Relative Truth', *RP* 64), I think that his realism creates some unnecessary strains on the relationship between language/thought and reality.

Sean argues that when beliefs are false and their objects are merely *apparent*, they are interesting only as phenomena – for example, primitive beliefs and ideologies. Such phenomena would only tell us something about their causes, rather than saying something in their own right. However, I think the term 'phenomena' is wrong in relation to cultural beliefs because one of the first things to acknowledge about ideologies is that they produce *real effects*.

What I think Sean's view ignores in the traditional model of dialectics is its claim that for something to be real in its effects it must also be real *in itself*. Criticism of Hegel hinged largely on the observation made by Feuerbach that to supersede a theoretical position required one to recognise the reality embedded in that position. The process of negation, it was argued, was not one in which a position transcends something *separate, external*, but one of *self-mediation*; the reality of the negating position is already contained inchoately in what it negates. In other words, the relationship between an apparent object and its social effects only works because some reality *is* perceived in the former. Hence also, the relationship between something illusory and its effects is not one of externality or pure contingency.

What is needed here, as Sean recognises, is for realism to depart from the classical conception of causality – which is enshrined in the theoretical ideology of 'atomism'. This 'billiard ball' model indeed sees cause and effect as externally rather than internally related. Arguably, for realists, a better approach is the Althusser/Spinoza idea of systemic or structural causality. Here, causes themselves are always part of an interactive system and hence never purely causes, but also effects. In a nutshell: the cause is already conditioned systemically, and so determined by its effect; similarly, causes are immanent in their effects. In other words, false 'positions' which have an effect do so because they contain a reality which is sustained by their effects, as systemically mediated.

Sean's materialism seems to produce the drastic separation of ontology and epistemology which he seeks to avoid because it does not allow the unreal/false to contain the real/true. It therefore opens up a domain of contingency – against the spirit of realism – where things are only real in their effects. I would want to argue that the symbolic representations of illusory or 'apparent objects' do not have to be taken as entirely false or unreal. The causes of such representations would be immanent in their effects and, as such, constitute the material moment of the symbol. As Lukács argues in the *Ontology*, even magic makes some real connections. The symbolic process, which produces effects, belongs to the material universe even when it creates an illusory whole of which the reality is only a part.

Howard Feather