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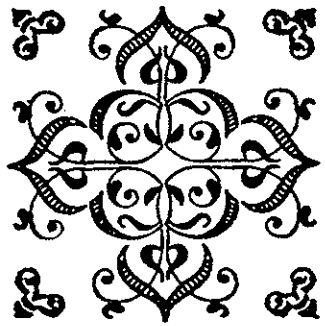

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the approach to the paradoxes that produces this problem for his account. This would be procedurally unwise, however. The question of the viability of a certain solution to the paradoxes ought to be independent of the choice of a theory of sortal incorrectness. (Lappin offers a similar kind of argument against certain views of Goddard-Routley on p 48.)

Lappin also has trouble with necessarily truth-valueless sentences created by 'rigidifying' definite descriptions. Thus Lappin thinks, contra Thomason, that 'what I am not thinking of is shiny' is sortally correct when the denoting phrase refers to the number 17 – all because the phrase 'what I am now thinking of' is a non-rigid designator which designates something in the sortal range of 'is shiny' in at least one possible world, if not in the actual world. Once the denoting phrase is rigidified, however ('what I am now thinking of as things *actually* stand'), the sentence should become sortally incorrect on Lappin's account. If the one sentence is sortally correct, however, the other should be as well. There are certainly ways in which Lappin can modify his NPT thesis even further to escape this objection, but the fact that counterexamples of this and other types are available suggests that an approach to sortal incorrectness in terms of the 'no-possible-truth-value' idea is at best problematic.

Lappin's monograph is well-written, with a 93-item bibliography and a good index. It is largely free of serious typographical errors. Some minor errata:

clause (d) of 5.24, should read: '. . . iff $\langle \text{ref}(t_1), \ldots, \text{ref}(t_j)\rangle \in R^2$ ($P^2_j 7$'; p. 146, A.31, should read: '. . . $\Vdash Vx_j\, Vx_i\, Qx_j\, X_i$'; p. 147, A.31, should read: '. . . $\Vdash Vx_j(\ x_j)\ (Qx_j\ x_i 7'$.

University of Auckland FREDERICK W KROON

31. *The Tragedy of Enlightenment*. By Paul Connerton. Cambridge University Press, 1980. 162pp. £10.50 sterling.

This book is 'an essay on the Frankfurt School'. It does not claim to be a systematic or historical study of the Institute for Social Research, founded in Frankfurt in 1923, or an 'epistemological' inquiry into the presuppositions and claims of critical theory as method. It is to be distinguished from the multitude of recent books on the Frankfurt School (and on Critical Theory) because it is precisely an essay – an interpretative attempt – to 'ask in relation to each of the thinkers generally considered representative of Critical Theory what they mean by critique . . . and to convey an overall sense of the continuities and discontinuities in their investigations' (x). The first problem is to distinguish Critical Theory as a method from the Frankfurt School whose membership was extremely diverse and whose history involves peregrination in the US before returning again to Germany in 1949. Connerton restricts himself to consideration of four thinkers – Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Habermas – whom he sees linked more by a set of preoccupations than by institutional affiliations; and he is right. He is less clear however on the question of what

constitutes critical theory as a method and this weakens his essay considerably. His aim is to situate the notion of critique within 'the framework of certain cultural conventions specific to German intellectual history' (1) and he writes persuasively of the intimate dialectical bonds between German social history and the theoretical developments and fortunes of the Frankfurt School; but he spends most of the essay interrogating the work of these four writers from the standpoint of immanent critique as favoured by Adorno in *Negative Dialectics*. There is a tension between these two approaches and the ultimate impression the book leaves is one of disappointment; Connerton promises much more than he can ultimately provide.

Connerton's argument is that Critical Theory must not be seen as just one more 'branch of sociology'. It can only be understood in reference to the social and intellectual context from which it emerged. The critical theorists are united in their rejection of German idealism and in the optimistic vision of Hegelian philosophy of history they recognise the 'tragedy of enlightenment'. Their aim was to restore the emancipating power of human reason by a careful critique of the myths of reason. As Adorno and Horkheimer put it in their 1944 work: 'we are wholly convinced . . . that social freedom is inseparable from enlightened thought', nevertheless 'mankind, instead of entering into a truly human condition, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism'. Critical theory aimed at 'the redemption of the hopes of the past' (*Dialectic of Enlightenment*; New York, Seabury Press, 1972; xv). Connerton concretizes this work of redemption by slotting it into its social context. In Germany between 1871 and 1945 'too much happened too quickly'. The collapses of 1918, 1933 and 1945 shook German confidence in their future and in history. Traditional academia in Germany after 1945 sought to repress the messages of history and German philosophies of history and relied heavily on a new imported rationality – the value-free, 'neutral' reason of American empiricist social science. The Germans retreated from their past and repressed it, concentrating on the building up of economic and institutional security. It is only with the younger generation of the sixties that the painful reassessment of the past began. Critical theory was rediscovered, it was part of the 'return of the repressed' (3). Even then it received only partial assimilation and belated acknowledgment. It proceeded by a hermeneutical recovery of the goals of German Enlightenment accompanied by a psychoanalytic exploration of the various levels of repression and resistance to liberate German consciousness from its internal conflicts. Even here however its own anti-systematic oracular style, its preference for irruption, ambiguity and aphorism prevented it becoming institutionalised as a central development of German intellectualism in the post-war period. The student occupation of Adorno's office in 1969 signalled the irrelevance of critical theory as a social force in German political reconstruction, it also highlighted the failure of critical theory to generate a 'critical public', an essential requirement if its programme of recovering the lost past was to be pursued.

Connerton is able to put the achievements of critical theory in perspective in the German social scene (although he does not attempt to situate

the later work of Habermas in its *social* context, preferring to criticise his work from an immanent standpoint) with clarity and deftness, but he does not follow through with this method to explain, for example, the resurgence of interest in Critical Theory in the English-speaking world in the seventies. Instead, he seems to abandon this work of social situation and concentrate on a careful historical inquiry into the meaning of *critique* itself. Here again the analysis is very good but its connection with the specifically German world is not clear. For the critical theorists Karl Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* was paradigmatic as 'an analysis of liberal capitalism that was critical in the sense that he analysed that system of production from the standpoint of the possible change inherent in its basic structure; he sought to locate the objective possibilities of change as they were already present, though latent, in pre-revolutionary conditions' (109). But the meanings of critique ran much deeper and the critical theorists also wanted to see critique as involving 'the essential activity of reason' (18) taking place in a context of a public, a 'republic of letters' in Bayle's expression of 1697. Connerton is at his best in disentangling the complicated strands in the meaning of critique through its Greek, Christian, Medieval and Enlightenment phases. He gives special place to the Kantian subversion of the concept of the critical republic of letters – for him critique is 'innersubjective' rather than inter-subjective (22). Hegel and Marx continue to develop this notion of critique as 'reflection on a system of constraints which are humanly produced' (24) and Freud carried this analysis down into the depths of the psyche itself. The various meanings which this history of the term throw up are seen by Connerton as putting pressure on the enterprise of critical theory itself, the distinctions between the different senses of criticism are not always observed. In particular the appeal to a critical public sphere 'which is never securely localised' (137) endangers the project of critical theory – its analysis of society increasingly uproots itself from consideration of the concrete forces of history, the proletariat, the capitalist-democratic state, the 'public' disappear into the mass of universal, administered humanity. While this point is exceedingly rich and quite original, Connerton fails to develop it to prove his assertion that this 'specifically German approach to the problems of the public world is intelligible only in the light of the belated, and constantly disturbed, consolidation of their nation-state' (137). He argues (without supporting evidence) that Germany's concentration on bureaucracy and state administration of the economy led to an effacing of the spheres of public and private, the development of fascism emphasised this even more; Germany failed to develop a critical public control of its institutions. 'The western concept of publicity, where publicity is viewed as embodying a value . . . achieved only limited acceptance in Germany'. Connerton states that this inability to accept fully the Enlightenment concept of a critical public as integral to the project of critique gave the movement both its force and its flaws. Much of the work of Connerton's four thinkers drew their strength from 'the incongruity between publicity as penetrative fact, and publicity as a tenuous value' (139).

Having drawn out these rich meanings of critique, Connerton continues by analysing in greater detail Horkheimer's programmatic essays on

critical theory. Here he finds Horkheimer reflecting a general *Weltanschauung* found in Husserl, Dilthey and others, involving a penetrating look at the claims of scientific rationality and enlightenment in order to overcome the oppositions between theory and practice, 'scientist and citizen' (33). In relation to Marx, Connerton finds Horkheimer becoming less and less direct between 1931 and 1937. A 'note of embarrassment' creeps in when Horkheimer refers to Marx in 1937. Horkheimer avoids close scrutiny of political economy even as he lauds it, and it is gradually replaced by a much broader notion – the critique of instrumental rationality The role of the proletariat in Marx and Lukács is replaced by an analysis of instinctual drives and constraints on the structures of public rationality. Specific problems of capitalism are subsumed in a general critique of fascism and totalitarianism. Connerton is correct in seeing the experience of fascism as the formative experience for the critical theorists of the thirties and forties. It was an experience which led them to a good analysis of the destruction of public critical opinion. However at the same time, their inability to champion Marxism may have been due to their difficult position as guests of capitalist and severely anti-red America.

Connerton devotes a full chapter to the joint study by Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Englightenment*. This book, with its subtitle 'Philosophical Fragments', signals Horkheimer's loss of faith in science. Now 'even the deductive form of science reflects hierarchy and coercion'. The book rises to a new level of abstraction, taking world history as its theme, and examines how human history should have been refined to such excesses of barbarism. Connerton correctly argues that this book posits domination as arising from every social formation, and the technological domination of nature is seen here as paradigmatic. Social domination is derived from control over external nature. This leads in Connerton's view to a loss of the intersubjective dimension (strong in Marx) and this is one of the central weaknesses of this important work, which indeed signalled a major change of direction for the Frankfurt school.

Connerton contributes two further chapters on Marcuse and Habermas, and reviews the achievements of critical theory in the final chapter. In Marcuse there is the recognition of the dissolution of the proletariat as a class (which Horkheimer has still believed in, following Marx) and the further recognition of the internal processes which hampered liberation (instinctual repression). Furthermore the covert system of repressive tolerance prevents the growth of a critical public central to the notion of critical theory. Connerton finds Marcuse ultimately caught in a vicious circle where the transformation of society has become objectively necessary, yet the need for such transformation is absent from those who were classically its agents.

The chapter on Habermas concentrates on the distinction between instrumental and communicative action. Instrumental action arises out of the struggle with nature, communicative action is the attempt 'to free us from the internalised pressure of obsolete legitimations'. The recognition of distorted communication leads Habermas to develop a theory of communicative competence. The ideal speech act which operates without constraint prefigures a form of social life where autonomy and responsibility

are possible. Connerton finds fault with Habermas at the point where he takes psychoanalysis as the model to explain the emancipatory effect of critical theory. In the long run, too, Habermas relies on terms such as 'emancipation' and 'autonomy' which are uncritically imported from the Enlightenment, repeating 'a bourgeois, pre-revolutionary abstraction'.

In his final analysis Connerton emphasises the break between the Frankfurt school and classical German philosophy of history. This however involves a retreat from idealism to a historical pessimism, expressed in a penchant for Schopenhauer. Critical theory finally is caught in a dilemma – wishing to be faithful to Marx's critique of capitalism yet suspicious of any appeal to history and the public masses, since Fascism has demonstrated where such a movement could lead. Thus in Germany 'the characteristic approach to the problems of the public world have remained encumbered by a vision which sees in public life a diversion from everything which is essentially human, a zone of activity where men necessarily become estranged from themselves'.

Connèrton's book is a fascinating interpretative attempt, full of rich insights and fruitful lines of analysis, which however is unfortunately marred by a lack of fuller investigation and development in detail.

St Patrick's College, Maynooth DERMOT MORAN

32. *Modern German Philosophy*. By Rüdiger Bubner, translated by Eric Mattews. Cambridge University Press, 1981. Pp xi+223. £18.50.

This volume deals with the various strands of thought which play a dominant role in philosophical debate in Germany since the Second World War. No mere survey of individual philosophical trends, it rather attempts to uncover a basic unity, a connecting thread in the various debates. The German *a priori* tradition is no longer seen as standing apart from the positivist Anglo-Saxon tradition as if hermetically sealed off from it, but rather Bubner studies the mutual interaction of both.

An introductory chapter gives a general orientation. In the following chapters Bubner deals with three main groups of topics: phenomenology and hermeneutics; linguistic philosophy and theory of science; dialectic and the philosophy of practice. As he says in his preface: 'To a certain extent the author's subjective view-point still prevails. He cannot leave out of account his own participation in current research and debate'. The reader soon becomes aware of Bubner's own participation in the debates. This is part of the fascination of the book. While Bubner's accounts of contemporary philosophers' ideas are lucid and impress one as sympathetic, his own enthusiasm for traditional philosophy – even that of Aristotle, but especially that of Hegel – shines through, not least in his tendency to highlight the historicity of *all* philosophical thinking: '. . . any historical judgment is open to yet later revision and the truth of a retrospective judgment can always be superseded in its turn' (220).

Bubner reveals the extreme complexity of the modern debate, reflecting ideas and methods that stem from Kant, Hegel, Marx, Husserl, Heidegger,

Gadamer, Wittgenstein, Apel, Tugendhat, Popper, Kuhn; the neo-Marxists, including Łukács and the Frankfurt School – with particular attention given to Habermas.

The problems posed for the translator of such a book are considerable. Few would want to quibble with the details of the translator's note on his handling of some individual German words like 'Sein', 'Existenz', 'Sorge', 'Geschick' etc. The difficulties of translating the works of German philosophers are well known (the extreme case is Heidegger), and basically Eric Matthews achieves his aim of combining 'accuracy with as natural an English style as possible'. He obviously agrees with Bubner that philosophical language cannot be reduced to the plain language of common sense, but on the whole the translation remains quite clear, despite the difficulty of the material. From time to time the German syntax has taken charge of Matthews' English with quite unsatisfactory results. For example, on page 90, translating an extract from Apel's work, Matthews has hardly found an 'English' equivalent: 'A "reconstruction of Kant's categorical imperative" presupposes, according to Apel, "that one reflect on the difference between the universalization required by the 'intelligible ego' of the 'maxim of the intention' of each individual, in the sense of an intersubjective validity thought of in a communication-free way, and an obligation, grounded in the rules of communication, to the *social realization of intersubjectivity* through the understanding of meaning and the formation of a consensus about claims in a communication community which is in principle unlimited"'.

In general this book represents a valuable scholarly attempt to mediate between the German and the Anglo-Saxon traditions of philosophy. A task which it performs succinctly and, on the whole, in a readable way.

33. *History and Structure. An Essay on Hegelian-Marxist and Structuralist Theories of History*. By Alfred Schmidt. Translated by Jeffrey Herf. Cambridge, Massachusetts. London: 1981 MIT Press. Pp xxvi+146.

The German original of this book was first published in Germany in 1971 by Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich. Alfred Schmidt is already acknowledged as a leading exponent of the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. In this translation Schmidt's highly sophisticated account of some fundamental Marxist problems is made accessible in English.

The book begins with a translator's introduction in which, curiously, there is no mention of the usual problems of translating. Indeed, Herf translates so efficiently that there seem to be none. Thus the introduction functions in fact both as an explanation of the context of Schmidt's essay and as an elucidation of the individual problems he is addressing.

This book is specialized and highly compact. Within the compass of about 100 pages of text, Schmidt evaluates the contributions of thinkers such as Gramsci, Althusser and Bachelard (amongst others) to the debate about the correct interpretation of Karl Marx's writings concerning the relationship between history and structure. Schmidt avoids having to