

## Johnny foreigner

Simon Glendinning, ed., *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1999. xiv + 685 pp., £80.00 hb., 0 7486 0783 8.

If the *Encyclopédie* project of Diderot et al. is remembered today, it is not because it is much consulted, but for the tremendous Enlightenment optimism that made its conception (if not its completion) possible. In historical terms, it is the *idea* of the *Encyclopédie* that is most important, not what is contained within the volumes themselves. The idea of *the* or even *an* Encyclopedia is, however, beginning to look increasingly like a Borgesian fantasy. Most contemporary encyclopedias are decidedly (purposefully) limited in scope; to be successful they must function, immediately and with some enduring relevance, as sources of reference and information to be used in piecemeal fashion. To this extent, *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy* works.

*The Edinburgh Encyclopedia* is also, however, the expression of a grand idea. To this extent, it does not work. The aim of the encyclopedia, according to its editor Simon Glendinning, is to reveal to the world of Anglo-American analytic philosophers that so-called continental philosophy is neither dangerous nor stupid; that there is no compelling philosophical explanation for the continental/analytic divide; and that if they – the analytic philosophers to whom Glendinning's Introduction is wholly and unambiguously addressed – were only to read some continental work 'in the right spirit and ... with goodwill' this would become clear.

Glendinning adopts the strong thesis that the idea of 'continental philosophy' does not just originate with analytic philosophy, but survives only as its defining 'not-part'. 'Continental philosophy' staggers under the burden of its constitutive negative implications. According to the analytic philosophical tradition which coined it, it means inferior philosophy: what, *qua* analytic philosopher, one *does not do*, but also what *ought not to be done*. For what one hears coming from the continent is not the clearly enunciated vowels of 'ordinary' English but the incomprehensible jabberings of Johnny foreigner, not just odd and perverse but morally pernicious.

If this is a caricature, it is one that analytic philosophers have, on occasion, lived up to. Glendinning

quotes Ryle (of whom one might have expected better) addressing an audience in France at a supposedly bridge-building conference in 1958, explaining how analytic philosophers have avoided the puff and pretension of the continent. In contrast to the likes of Husserl, says Ryle,

British thinkers have showed no inclination to assimilate philosophical to scientific enquiry.... I guess that our thinkers have been immunized against the idea of philosophy as the Mistress of Science by the fact that their daily lives in Cambridge and Oxford Colleges have kept them in contact with real scientists. Claims to *Führership* vanish when postprandial joking begins. Husserl wrote as if he had never met a scientist – or a joke.

Perhaps the reference to *Führership* (alluding, as Glendinning notes, to Husserl – a Jew) indicates what the character of this postprandial joking might have been like. In a slightly different vein, Glendinning quotes R.M. Hare from his lectures on British philosophy, this time to various German audiences in 1957:

We do not think it a *duty* to write books; still less do we think it a duty to *read* more than a few of the books which others write.... Our duty is to discuss philosophy with our colleagues and to teach our pupils to do the same – books and articles are an unconsidered by-product of this process; their content is generally quite familiar from verbal discussion years before they get published ... [British philosophers] find it hard to discuss philosophy with, or read the books of, people who do not even seem worried about convincing the sceptic that their philosophical propositions mean something.

The lesson that Glendinning draws from these quotations – and others like them – is that this arrogant doltishness is more or less all that characterizes the analytic justifications for any substantive differences between analytic and continental philosophy. (Glendinning, though, is a tad more polite, given that it is the analytic side that he is addressing.) Ryle's and Hare's standards of philosophical rigour dissolve on contact with this question, and there remains no *philosophical* reason for the division of philosophy into two incompatible streams. They have always been and are

now held apart, Glendinning writes, by 'gulf-seeking polemics' for which a psychoanalytically structured explanation is more appropriate: externalization of (analytic) philosophy's internal possibility of failure – sophistry. The category of 'continental philosophy' survives, according to Glendinning 'only as long as the thinkers and themes [of continental philosophy] are not only supposed not worth reading but, in fact, *are not seriously read*'.

That Glendinning's imagined readership comprises analytic philosophers is clear, given that the 'long obscure books' to which Hare refers are in fact *seriously read* by quite a few non-analytic philosophers in the Anglophone world. It also betrays – whether consciously or not – a certain accommodation to the supposed analytic audience, which misses much of the point of the practice of 'continental philosophy' in Britain over the last few decades. There is no suggestion, for example, that the will-o'-the-wisp nature of the category of *analytic* philosophy will also be revealed. Rather, continental philosophy, once read and understood, will be assimilated into the analytic tradition, because there is no good philosophical reason not to do so. In a connected manner, the idea that the phrase 'continental philosophy' is primarily a disparaging one fails to acknowledge those who use it otherwise: for example, those who set up courses in 'Continental Philosophy' in British university philosophy departments, and the students who choose

to study them. For whilst Glendinning may be right that the label first spewed forth from Oxbridge, it has subsequently been appropriated precisely in order to gain some critical distance from the Ryle/Hare mentality exhibited above. Continental philosophy in Britain, especially, has achieved a level of self-determination which Glendinning's remarks fail to recognize – a self-determination which long ago dispensed with the fawning need for Oxbridge acceptance.

Were Hare a young man today, his attitude towards publication would, of course, make him unemployable. And so much the worse for British intellectual life, a chorus of voices cry. But the principle of the RAE funding system – suitably adjusted to dispel the fiction of that level playing field on which one plays cricket in white – looks veritably meritocratic compared to the aristocracy of Oxbridge philosophical hegemony. To be fair, Hare is, of course, a dinosaur and an easy target here. To many in the thriving non-xenophobic analytic and post-analytic scene (viz., Glendinning) Hare's comments are excruciatingly embarrassing, because, on the whole, analytic philosophers are not like this any more.

On the other hand, British philosophy is still dominated – numerically, culturally, financially, and in terms of institutional power – by Oxbridge or practitioners of the Oxbridge style. According to Glendinning, the hostility towards continental philosophy from these quarters is based primarily on political and cultural



differences masquerading as philosophical disagreement, and his hope is that a philosophical appreciation of analytic/continental commonalities would cut across the political-cultural and institutional divide. However, this overlooks the inextricable intertwining of the philosophical with the cultural-political, which is one of the first principles of twentieth-century continental philosophy. Glendinning's 'solution' actually reaffirms the location of the problem in the realm of philosophy, a location that it claims to deny. In effect, Glendinning envisages an overcoming of the continental/analytic divide in Idea only. In Britain, however – the only place, really, where the distinction is significant – this is not a problem that is going to go away whilst the various institutional and political conditions which gave rise to it remain in place. Ryle and Hare's references – implicit and explicit – to high table, the senior common room, the tutorial system, the intimate, male-dominated coterie of the colleges and so on, highlight the origins of the problem. It is no accident that continental philosophy made and continues to make its mark primarily in 'new' (i.e. redbrick) universities and ex-polytechnics.

Even so, perhaps a first step in this particular revolution would be for some of the bourgeoisie to go over to the side of the proletariat, and *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy* might be the bait. Unfortunately, though, no analytic philosopher who is not already sympathetic will be in the slightest inclined to change his or her mind on the basis of this encyclopedia. This is not the fault of the encyclopedia itself, although a few of the entries are truly very bad, and would be seized upon with glee by the prosecution in the case against continental philosophy. But even where the entries are well-informed, well-argued, interesting and useful, it is difficult to imagine them having the appeal that Glendinning expects. With regard to the French philosophers of the last fifty years – those who are emblematically 'continental' for some analytic philosophers today – it seems most unlikely that these essays will do much to dispel the sort of attitudes peddled by Sokal and Bricmont in the minds of analytic sceptics. This is – to repeat – not because the essays are badly written, or because their subjects *are* intellectual imposters, but because the working out of these philosophies involves a set of methods, assumptions, aims and philosophical commitments that are often alien or anathema to those of the analytic tradition.

Most of the essays in *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy* work in so far as they are preaching to the perverted. Each of the eight thematic

sections comprises a general introduction and six or so essays of some five or six thousand words on individual thinkers or, more rarely, on sub-themes. However, there is little editorial coherence in the scope and ambition of the essays. In probably the best of the sections, 'The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory', the essays on Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Benjamin, Bloch and Habermas all attempt to cover the intellectual careers of their subjects in their entirety, and each is about as authoritative an introduction of this length that one is likely to get. In the section on 'Classical Idealism', on the other hand, the essay on Kant deals only with the *Critique of Pure Reason* and that on Hegel restricts itself to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Within these self-imposed limitations each of these pieces would certainly function well as an introduction, which is, in fact, how the encyclopedia will actually be used. Still, given the importance of Kant and Hegel for postwar continental philosophy in both Germany and France, their treatment here is decidedly unencyclopedic, and symptomatic of the limits of the project as a whole. There is no mention, for example, of Kant's aesthetics, and no section or even subsection on aesthetics more generally, perhaps one of the most important areas of contemporary continental philosophy.

In contrast, Sartre appears as sole or joint protagonist in at least four of the essays, covering his relation to Heidegger, the relation between existentialism and literature, existential ethics, and the phenomenological aspects of his work. De Beauvoir, on the other hand, commands no individual essay, appearing only in relation to Sartre's existential ethics and in the essay on 'Feminism and Phenomenology'. If, as the author of this latter essay argues, 'A strong case can be made for the position that Simone de Beauvoir was a principal, if not the principal, originator of existential phenomenology, and later, the founder of feminist existential phenomenology', why does her work not deserve the recognition that the ascription of an individual essay affords other thinkers here? In fact, no woman warrants a separate entry in the *Edinburgh Encyclopedia*. Those who are included are mostly lumped together in essays on feminist philosophy where they receive but scant attention. The essay on 'French Feminism' in the section on poststructuralism begins by pointing out that the thinkers discussed under this rubric – Irigaray, Cixous, Kristeva, Witting, Kofman and le Doeuff – have almost nothing in common except the fact that they live (or lived) in France and write (or wrote) in French. Le Doeuff, for example, is profoundly antipathetic to Irigaray's work, and Cixous, unlike the others, is primarily known

as a playwright. The indignity and deceptiveness of this sort of homogenization is widely recognized; its repetition here is, at best, lazy.

Glendinning justifies the theme-based approach with the idea that 'it is probably most helpful to think of Continental philosophy as comprising a number of smaller, relatively interrelated, schools or movements of thought.' While this works with, for example, 'Classical Idealism' and 'The Frankfurt School', collecting together 'Politics, Psychoanalysis and Science' is arbitrary and awkward. Sartre apart, postwar French philosophy is divided into 'Structuralism' and 'Post-structuralism'. Most authors are sensitive to the potentially misleading character of these labels, but this just leaves the reader to question the wisdom of the structuring division in the first place. It also leads to a few manifest absurdities. Levinas, for example, is categorized as a poststructuralist, when much of his work predates the flowering of French structuralism and his basic philosophical commitments are quite at odds with poststructuralist orthodoxy.

Other themes and thinkers that one might expect in an encyclopedia of continental philosophy encompass-

sing end-of-the-century diversifications are also absent. Despite sections on existentialism, phenomenology and psychoanalysis, there is no concerted treatment of the work of Fanon, for example, and the apparent decision not to include 'continental' work from the USA (although most of the contributors work and live there) means that issues of race and ethnicity are not tackled, except in the introduction to the section on 'Philosophy of Existence', which is, unfortunately, one of the worst essays in the collection. Lest it should be objected that precious space needed to be reserved for more important thinkers, one might ask why the longest bibliography in the encyclopedia (seventy-eight entries across more than two pages, compared to Kant's seventeen and Hegel's twenty-five) goes to... Dumézil – as the bookend to a purely anthropological essay with a touching one-page postscript defending the political credentials of this self-confessed 'homme de la droite'.

**Stella Sandford**

## Seduction and serenity

Jean Laplanche, *Essays on Otherness*, Routledge, London and New York, 1998. vii + 279 pp., £15.99 pb., 0 415 13108 1.

In the foreword to their classic *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, Laplanche and Pontalis explain that they are analysing the 'conceptual equipment' of psychoanalysis, or the set of concepts it has gradually elaborated in order to account for its own discoveries. The greater part of Laplanche's extensive body of work has been devoted to this task of analysis or conceptual archaeology. He is perhaps the most reflective of all French psychoanalysts. He is certainly one of the most erudite. The five volumes of *Problématiques* published between 1980 and 1987 (summarized in *New Foundations for Psychoanalysis*, published in French in 1987 and in translation in 1989) represent a major exercise in conceptual history. Those volumes examining the concepts of anxiety, castration and symbolization, sublimation, the unconscious and the id, and transference, are important works in their own right. Laplanche is also the scientific director presiding over the slow production of a new and complete edition of Freud. The new edition is both a further exercise in Freudian archaeology and a useful reminder that Lacan's famous

return to Freud was all too often a return to dubious translations and poor editions.

The appearance in translation of a new selection of essays by Laplanche, all from the 1990s, is welcome, but both the publisher and John Fletcher, in his otherwise excellent editor's introduction, overstate their novelty. Many of the themes dealt with are already addressed in *New Foundations* and in the 'dossier' on seduction, translation and drives compiled by John Fletcher and Martin Stanton for the ICA in 1992. The ten short and elegant essays collected here are a restatement rather than a new breakthrough.

As in all his work, Laplanche is concerned here with the genesis and fate of Freud's concepts. The development of psychoanalysis is not viewed as a linear process: new concepts do not emerge full fledged, and original insights are obscured as Freud reverts to biology, to phylogenesis or evolutionary theories in an attempt to consolidate his metapsychology. In his more evolutionist moments, Freud liked to cite Haeckel's law, which states that the ontogenesis of the



individual reproduces the phylogenesis of the human race. Laplanche reformulates this as 'Laplanche's law': the development of theory reproduces that of sexuality and the unconscious. The classic example, referred to elsewhere as the theory of Big Sigmund and Little Hans, is the hypothesis that castration provides the explanation for sexual difference: Freud both recognizes and fails to recognize that this is, precisely, a childhood theory of sexuality which predicates sexual difference on a phallic/non-phallic duality rather than a more complex distinction between 'masculine' and 'feminine'.

Freud famously likened the discovery of the unconscious to the Copernican revolution: the sun does not revolve around the earth and the ego is not master in its own house. Laplanche demonstrates that psychoanalysis also has a tendency to revert to Ptolemaic thinking. The decentring gives way to recentring. Insight and blindness as Paul de Man would have said. Laplanche refers to it as innovation and going astray. In astronomy, the Copernican revolution took science from a closed world to an infinite universe. Freud's 'Copernican revolution' remains incomplete. Again and again, Freud blinds himself to his own insights. The unconscious that was initially defined as an 'internal foreign body' implanted within the human being becomes a body of repressed memories that can be recovered through verbalization. If the unconscious is no more than a set of memories, the goal of analysis must be to eradicate the unconscious itself: it is no more than a pathological and pathogenic kernel that can be excised. If it is no more than a repository of hidden meanings that can be deciphered, psychoanalysis is nothing more than a variant on the ancient art of hermeneutics. Freud alternates between the view that the unconscious is a product of repression, and the thesis that it is a primordial entity, a phylogenetic inheritance or a quasi-biological id. Again and again, the unconscious is domesticated as psychoanalysis attempts unsuccessfully to come to terms with its own discovery that the unconscious is other, strange and alien. Psychoanalysis goes astray. Having decentred the human subject by discovering the unconscious, it recentres it on the ego.

According to Laplanche, we have to go back to the beginning and accept that psychoanalysis begins with the seduction theory of the 1890s. Few areas in psychoanalytic theory are more contentious. 'Seduction' is, perhaps, an unfortunate term. Children are not 'seduced' in the sense that Don Juan's victims are seduced: they do not surrender after a struggle with their own sense of virtue. They are always-

already sexualized beings who encounter an adult sexuality that is not theirs. Freud's use of the term is euphemistic and it covers everything from the 'accidental' exposure of the child to adult sexuality (all those nursemaids, wet-nurses and indiscreet parents), to actual sexual abuse and rape. Elaborated in the 1890s, the original seduction theory held that neuroses stemmed from an actual sexual trauma, the memory of which was repressed in childhood and then reactivated at puberty. In September 1897, Freud rejected his own theory: the unexpected frequency of hysteria implied an improbably high number of perverse and abusive fathers. The reminiscences from which hysterics suffered were constructions and reconstructions, fantasies and desires pertaining to the Oedipal desire for the parent of the opposite sex. Despite the claim that Freud's suppression of the seduction theory was, as Masson has it, an 'assault on truth' motivated by a failure of the moral nerve, Freud did not deny the reality of the sexual abuse of children; in the 'Outline of Psychoanalysis' of 1938, he describes it as 'common enough'.

Laplanche is not suggesting that psychoanalysis should return to a literalist version of the seduction theory, but he does insist that a truth or theoretical insight can be extracted from it. It provides a general theory that accounts for the formation of the unconscious but whose theoretical problematic is insufficiently elaborated. Laplanche describes it as the general theory of primal seduction. Seduction is an encounter with adult sexuality and an enigmatic signifier, and it is inherent in the child-adult relationship. Unlike Lacan, Laplanche does not equate 'signifier' with a verbal structure. It could be a gesture or an action. A woman who breastfeeds her baby is not simply meeting its nutritional needs; she is also communicating with it, addressing signifiers to it. Laplanche rightly points out that for Freud – to say nothing of Klein – the breast is an eroticized object for the baby, but not for its mother (Luce Irigaray would no doubt add that Laplanche strays away from his own insight by failing to see that women are not one sex and have two breasts). Breastfeeding, or simply holding and handling a baby, is suffused with sexuality for both adult and baby. The adult is not fully aware of all its implications: the gesture, signifier or action has an unconscious meaning.

If the signifier-gesture is enigmatic to the adult, it is also quite enigmatic to the child too. The enigma is the stimulus to theorize, to speculate, for instance, that sexual difference might originate in castration. To theorize is to translate, to attempt to replace the enigma

with a meaningful signifier or string of signifiers. But the translation is always a failure: something remains enigmatic. There is always an element of otherness, of alienness, that cannot be captured or reduced. It is the enigmatic signifier (or thing-presentation) that is repressed and forms the core of the unconscious. The unconscious is not a primordial or biological id, but something alien that is implanted within the human being during the encounter with the other. Winnicott remarks that there is no such thing as a baby: no baby exists outside the relationship with the carer. Laplanche takes a similar view to the extent that he rejects the idea that there is – or was once – some monad-like organism closed in upon itself, which gradually opened itself up to the outside world and the other: this is biological solipsisms or idealism. The enigmatic and repressed thing-presentations – the other within – exert pressure from inside and are described by Laplanche as the ‘source-objects’ of the drives. Sexuality and the drives come from the outside or from the other, and they remain alien and non-integrated. The dimension of otherness is always there.

Based upon enormous erudition and a lifelong familiarity with Freud, Laplanche’s theses are seductive. They are also unsettling. The value of the exegesis is beyond doubt but the introversion and introspec-

tion do induce a feeling of theoretical claustrophobia. Laplanche denies being a historian of ideas, rejects the view that the Freudian unconscious has anything to do with other nineteenth-century theories of the unconscious, and chides Freud for his self-deprecatory comment that Schopenhauer had anticipated his discoveries. It is rather as though psychoanalysis were a continent unto itself, as though there were nothing outside it or alongside it. For anyone outside or even on the fringes of that continent, Laplanche’s theses look suspiciously like the contention that, unlike the human subject it decentres, psychoanalysis is self-centred, self-regulating and self-sufficient.

There is something disquieting about this serene self-sufficiency. The silence about actual child abuse is disturbing. To say, like Freud, that it is ‘common enough’ and then to say no more is not good enough. Nor is it good enough to remain as silent about it as Laplanche does, if only because – to parry the alternative accusations that psychoanalysis implants ‘memories’ in its patients or that it is too close to being a form of recovered-memory treatment – psychoanalysts will have to involve themselves in what they see as a debate that is taking place elsewhere. There is nothing enigmatic about the rape of children in care.

**David Macey**

## Virtue after *After Virtue*

Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*, Duckworth, London, 1999. xiii + 172 pp., £14.95 hb., 0 7156 2902 6.

Stuart Hampshire, *Justice is Conflict*, Duckworth, London, 1999. 93 pp., £10.95 hb., 07156 2950 6.

MacIntyre and Hampshire were already well known when I was a student in the sixties. Now they are both at that end stage of their careers where they are giving distinguished lecture series, which is what these books are made up of. They well illustrate the different paths the two thinkers have taken.

Hampshire established an early reputation as one of the more independent and original thinkers of the generation of Oxford philosophers who came after Ryle. He wrote a couple of much admired books (*Spinoza* and *Thought and Action*); but then he became Warden of Wadham College, Oxford, the sort of job which seems fatal to serious thought (perhaps it is all that sherry). Anyway, this book of his Tanner Lectures shows the after-effects. It is a tired and sorry piece of work, a mere assertion of a Rawlsian, proceduralist account of justice, without any attempt to set it in

a contemporary context or defend it against recent criticism.

MacIntyre, too, had a brilliant beginning. He was associated with the New Left in its early days but, after an unhappy spell as a dean in Essex at the height of the student movement, he moved to the USA where his work seemed to become stalled. There were mutterings about his failing to live up to his early promise; but then, suddenly, *After Virtue* appeared and rapidly established itself as one of the definitive works of contemporary philosophy.

His Paul Carus lectures, which make up the present book, continue and extend the arguments of *After Virtue*. The audience at the lectures must have been bemused, but their loss is our gain. Instead of the philosophical easy-listening that is usually served up on such occasions, these lectures have the density and

tight construction of a text that is written to be read. They constitute a single, brilliantly sustained piece of philosophical argument in which a 'Thomistic Aristotelian' form of virtue ethics is developed and defended in the context of current ethical positions. Such an ethic is central to the argument of *After Virtue*, but what it involves is only sketchily indicated in that book: these lectures add detail and substance to the notion. There is no better account of how Aristotelian ideas can be developed and deployed in modern ethical thought.

In *After Virtue*, MacIntyre repudiated what he called the 'metaphysical biology' underlying Aristotle's ethics. He has thought better of that now. A major theme in the present work is that we are physical, biological beings, and ethics must be grounded in our bodily, animal nature. The discussion of the issues raised by our animality is the most interesting part of the book. MacIntyre challenges the widespread and deeply rooted tendency to separate human beings from the rest of the animal world and to treat them as 'exempt from the hazardous condition of "mere" animality', despite the well-nigh universal theoretical acknowledgement of the truth of evolutionary theory.

This tendency is strong in both analytic and continental work. In the analytic tradition it is evident in the Davidsonian view that only human beings, as language users, can be said to have thoughts and beliefs. Heidegger arrives at a similar conclusion when he insists upon a fundamental distinction between being which is not Dasein (including animal being)

and Dasein, human being, which has a 'world' and can apprehend something 'as' something. In the most closely argued part of the book, MacIntyre criticizes both sets of views. He draws on recent studies of dolphins to question the notion that there is a sharp dividing line between humans and other animals. Such animals, he argues, have many of the capacities which are at the basis of language use, and we should regard them as 'pre-linguistic' rather than non-linguistic creatures.

As bodily beings we are vulnerable to many kinds of afflictions, injuries and disabilities. This is the second main theme of this study. As MacIntyre observes, there is little reference to vulnerability and dependence in the history of Western philosophy, which has stressed rather the notions of human autonomy and independence. This may well be connected with the failure or refusal to acknowledge the bodily dimension of human existence. A central aim of MacIntyre's argument is to redress this balance and to draw out the moral, social and political implications of such a changed perspective. He goes about this in Aristotelian fashion, by developing an account of the 'virtues', the conditions for human flourishing. 'The virtues of rational agency need for their adequate exercise to be accompanied by what I shall call the virtues of acknowledged dependency.'

Recognition of our bodily being does not prevent MacIntyre from acknowledging that humans also differ from other animals in crucial respects. Language use gives us abilities which other animals lack; notably the

ability to stand back from our desires and needs, and reflect upon and evaluate them. If we are to flourish as human beings we must develop our distinctive human capacities as rational beings. We must develop from infantile dependence and animality to become 'independent practical reasoners'.

Language use is not the only condition needed for such development. The realization of our rational nature occurs only in and through relationship with others: with parents, teachers, and a wider network of social relationships. MacIntyre goes on to give an interesting account of the form these relationships must take if



we are to develop into independent practical reasoners. MacIntyre refers to these conditions as 'virtues'. Though it has become fashionable again in recent years, such Aristotelian language still sounds stilted and antiquated. Nevertheless the ideas expressed by it are of great importance. They embody a naturalistic approach which, on the basis of a theory of human nature, aims to give account of the moral, social and ultimately political conditions required for human flourishing.

We all begin life as physically dependent creatures, and many of us will become so again in old age. Moreover, illness and disability are conditions which may afflict us all at any time in our lives. These facts lead MacIntyre to insist that we need patterns of social relationships of 'giving and receiving' which are not purely reciprocal. Parents, for example, have 'unconditional responsibility' for their children's welfare. Such relationships cannot be understood as forms of market exchange, in contract theory terms (as suggested by rational choice theorists). Indeed, MacIntyre argues, the institutions of contract and free market exchange themselves presuppose prior communal understandings and practices.

The needs created by human dependency cannot be met either by the family or the state, according to MacIntyre, but just how they are to be met in the modern world is left open. At this point, his account becomes notably sketchier, vaguer and, as he puts it, 'utopian'. Unfortunately, however, no specific 'utopian' suggestions are even indicated and, in this context, the phrase seems to mean little more than 'unresolved'.

There is work still to be done here. But whether it can usefully be done by further pursuit of the sort of Aristotelian virtue ethics that MacIntyre has been developing is, it seems to me, questionable. For it is doubtful whether the forms of social and political life needed for individuals to flourish in the modern world can be specified in purely moral terms, or that they can usefully be thought of as forms of 'virtue' to be derived from a universal account of human nature in the Aristotelian fashion.

For example, the kinds of institutions and social relationship needed for the disabled and elderly to lead satisfactory lives in a modern capitalist society is not simply an issue about 'virtues', though no doubt certain social attitudes of universal human concern and care must underlie such institutions and relationships. How to realize such attitudes, however, is a social and political matter which can be decided only in the context of a specific society. In other words, this is not just a moral question; it is a matter of social

policy which can be intelligently discussed only on the basis of some understanding of contemporary social and political realities. Care of the elderly and ill, which would have been the responsibility of the family in early periods (from Aristotle's time until very recently), is now being taken over by the state. Whether or not this is a desirable development is not simply a moral issue, and to explore it properly we need to go beyond the limitations of Aristotelian ethics.

Aristotle himself was well aware of this sort of point – his *Ethics* leads directly into his *Politics*. MacIntyre's arguments lead him in a similar direction. In the ethical sphere, MacIntyre is happy enough to recognize that Aristotle's account of human nature needs to be supplemented with modern theories of biology, animal behaviour, psychology, and so on. It seems equally clear that MacIntyre's latter-day Aristotelianism similarly needs to be supplemented with modern social and political ideas. It is MacIntyre's view, one suspects, that the resources for this job are best provided by Hegel and Marx; but he is reluctant to acknowledge this explicitly. These figures, it seems, are presences lurking somewhere in the background of MacIntyre's philosophy, silently exercising an influence but seldom explicitly invoked. As this book more than ever makes clear, it is impossible to complete MacIntyre's project of a modernized Aristotelianism without drawing on the sort of social and political theories which these figures provide.

**Sean Sayers**

## Q&A

Penelope Deutscher and Kelly Oliver, eds, *Enigmas: Essays on Sarah Kofman*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1999. xvi + 284 pp., £ 37.50 hb., £14.50 pb., 0 8014 2912 9 hb., 0 8014 8141 4 pb.

If you wish to become a French philosophical guru, there is, in the words of E.C. Bentley, a great deal to be said for being dead. Sarah Kofman now fulfilling this condition, the process of canonization has begun, in which this collection of essays is an important step. Two questions immediately arise. What is the exact object of the exercise? And is the subject worth it?

The answer to the first question is fairly obvious, and *Enigmas* makes a very good case for it. Kofman is the author of more than twenty books. Her range is impressive: there is hardly a philosopher dear to the heart of contemporary French culture, from Freud to



Nietzsche, from Marx to Derrida, on whom she has not written. Besides, the author herself is a source of interest: not only because of her associations (with Derrida – some of her texts were first written for his seminar – but also with Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe), but also because of her life (her father was a rabbi murdered by the Nazis, she spent part of her childhood in occupied Paris and barely escaped with her life: the last book she wrote was an autobiography, *Rue Ordener, rue Labat*).

There is more to it, however, than this. This is when the construction of Sarah Kofman becomes a necessity: she is not only an interesting philosopher; she is also a woman philosopher and a feminist, and as such a member of a rare species. The trinity of French feminist theorists, Cixous, Irigaray and Kristeva, is in need of reinforcement, especially on the philosophical front, since Cixous never claimed to be a philosopher, and Kristeva is better known as a psychoanalyst. Only Irigaray can be said to have produced a feminist philosophy. And Kofman certainly is a philosopher: by profession and by taste. This makes her all the more respectable, in an atmosphere where the old theory-without-frontiers is being quietly recentred on philosophy proper – thus, Deleuze the philosopher is beginning to overshadow Guattari, the stray psychoanalyst.

So the work of construction this collection undertakes can lay claim to a form of historical necessity: the need for a new French philosophical guru is clear (at least in Anglo-Saxon countries: I am not sure Kofman has survived so well in France). But here the second question interferes: is she really worth the operation? A first reading of *Enigmas* will raise doubts, for a simple reason. The essays collected here are very good, some are excellent, but the best ones are often not really about Kofman, references to her work being of the order of a pretext. The structure of a typical essay seems to be: ‘on Kofman and X’, where X turns out to be more interesting, or more important, than Kofman. Thus, Paul Patton’s essay on metaphor is remarkable, but I have learnt more from it on conceptions of metaphor in Derrida and Deleuze than on Kofman. Again, we have essays on Nietzsche or Freud, where Kofman makes a somewhat modest appearance. Even if her reading of Marx (in *Camera Obscura*) is shown to have influenced Derrida (who never really acknowledged the debt), we are left with the impression that *Specters of Marx* is the real thing and that Kofman, as a philosopher, is interesting but slight.

This is unfair to a number of pieces, which are real tributes to Kofman’s contribution, notably Duncan Large’s, on Kofman’s Hoffmann, which is admirable. In fact the problem is neatly formulated by Françoise Duroux, in her essay ‘How a Woman Philosophises’, where she makes a distinction among philosophers between professors and inventors. Most of us spend our lives writing commentaries on the masters; only a few are ingenious enough to become inventors and prospective masters. She, of course, would like to argue that Kofman is an inventor. But if she is, where are her inventions, or, if we adopt a Deleuzian definition of the task of philosophers, how many new concepts has she invented? And echo answers: none.

There is, however, a less negative answer to the question, and this is where the book is entirely justified. It can be found in Duroux’s essay or in the essay by Penelope Deutscher, ‘Complicated Fidelity’, which deals with Kofman’s relation to Freud. According to Duroux, Kofman’s contribution to philosophy is not a set of concepts, but a technique of reading, or how a woman philosophizes: not ‘the intelligent, conscientious and respectful exegesis’ of a classic text, but a questioning of the motivating forces behind the construction of a system, of the economy of the concepts involved, of the interest of the speculation. In a similar vein, Penelope Deutscher analyses the complicated process of fidelity whereby Kofman identifies with her author (in this case Freud on woman), appropriates and ‘stylizes’ him, and reconciles her deployment of masks for her author with close and critical readings of the texts.

This is where the interest and importance of Kofman’s work becomes clear, where we can see that she is entitled to survive, or to be revived. She is an extraordinary practitioner of an art, the art of close reading, that we have learnt to associate with the name of Derrida, but which is in fact the product of a long and venerable French academic tradition that concerns all the human sciences, as well as philosophy and literary studies. It is one of the strong points of the French academy that would-be philosophers and literary critics are trained in the techniques of *explicitation de textes* (techniques of close reading much neglected in Anglo-Saxon universities). Kofman is a typical product of this education, except that she brings an exceptional talent to the practice. This alone should make her an inventor. The essays in this collection, even those which give rise to the uneasy feeling that they are not primarily about Kofman, establish this with considerable efficacy.

**Jean-Jacques Lecercle**

# Out of its time

Max Blechman, ed., *Revolutionary Romanticism*, A Drunken Boat Anthology, City Lights Books, San Francisco, 1999. xii + 250 pp., \$15.95 pb., 0 8728 6351 4.

In the mid-1960s Arthur O. Lovejoy announced that 'we should all cease talking about Romanticism': 'The word romantic has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing.' If this remains so, if 'romanticism', by itself, is a hopelessly self-referential signifier, how much more meaningful is it when it is married to the term 'revolutionary'? There is, to be sure, a comforting specificity to the phrase 'Revolutionary Romanticism', but it gives rise to as many problems as it solves.

For a start, as Max Blechman's mysterious muse insists in the Preface to this provocative collection of essays, 'That's a tautology – romanticism *is* revolutionary.' For another thing, that's not entirely true anyway: it is also an oxymoron – the nostalgic impulse of romanticism is frequently counter-revolutionary, as in Balzac's novels. In fact, a crude Lukácsian case could be made for saying that it is tautologous in its first phase, before the defeats of 1848, when it is flush with democratic fervour, and oxymoronic thereafter, when it becomes more and more mystic, in the face of a triumphant instrumental rationalism. This account is unnuanced because it ignores the fact that, as a *Westanschauung*, romanticism is simultaneously reactionary and radical – it rejects the anaemic emptiness of modernity, the disenchantment of everyday life in the shadow of industrial capitalism, but it does so in the name of an immemorial past whose imaginative promise offers hope of its re-enchantment or transformation. Perhaps the only safe way of interpreting romanticism is to appreciate that it represents a spectrum of political positions, as the typology of romantic anti-capitalism in Robert Sayre's and Michael Löwy's *Révolution et mélancolie* proposed.

Lovejoy's plea for an end to the discussion of romanticism was poorly timed. For in the late 1960s, the students of literary critics like Northrop Frye and M.H. Abrams, who had dominated the academic debate about romanticism in the 1950s, took it out of the lecture halls and into the streets. They set it on its feet and tried to teach it how to march. Prophetically, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Henri Lefebvre had hailed the first signs of this fragmentary yet generalized refusal – encompassing 'acts of verbal or physical insubordination, rebellions, revolts, protests, abstentions' – as a 'new romanticism'. The situationists

and their followers, sadomasochistic lovers of the old Marxian dialectic of modernity, were the pioneers of this politics. If Walter Benjamin, in a phrase from Daniel Blanchard's memoir in this volume, regarded renunciation of the 'aura' as necessary 'in the name of his melancholic subjection to modern technicity', then Guy Debord promised to redeem it, parodically, in his drama of situations, which succumbed to the logic of the spectacle even as it mocked it behind its back. The spectre of situationism stalks the pages of *Revolutionary Romanticism*.

For Blechman, an American writing his doctoral dissertation in France, the situationists embody the romantic spirit of the great revolutionary upheaval of his parents' generation. And it is this spirit that he wants to resuscitate before it dies out with the memories of its participants. Blechman, one can't help feeling, is 'a dreamer of dreams', 'born out of its due time', like the poet of William Morris's *Earthly Paradise*. Like Morris, he appears belated in relation to his immediate romantic precursors (though he turns this tardiness to his advantage, as we shall see). Blechman's project for the regeneration of a revolutionary romanticism confronts a cultural situation in the present not unlike that of post-Napoleonic France, in which, according to Lukács, 'a whole generation, growing up with the gleams of unlimited possibilities, suddenly found itself condemned to inaction'.

But if Lukács's melancholy reflections originally invoked a sense of historical tragedy, their reprisal today points to its repetition as farce. Postmodernism is one name for this spectacle of the experience of defeat, acted out with a kind of frenzied euphoria in the Western academy. Recent postmodernist accounts of romanticism tend to depoliticize it by insisting, in somewhat sinister tones, on its 'special relation' to postmodern theory. In *Fantastic Modernity*, for example, the central claim of Orrin Wang's 'Dialectical Readings in Romanticism and Theory' is that both discourses structure themselves around the trope of modernity. It is as if modernism itself, and especially its more romantic mutations, from the surrealists to the situationists, did not also grapple with this trope or, rather, the *reality* of modernity. *Revolutionary Romanticism*, in its reaffirmation of the now unfashionable optimism of the *soixant-huitards*, is a surreptitious attack on the *epigoni* of postmodernism.

The title of Blechman's book, then, is as much prescriptive as it is descriptive: it promises a polemical reassessment of the libertarian and utopian tradition of romanticism, and at the same time offers reference points for the renewal of a leftist, futurist romanticism (what Ernst Bloch called its 'unfinished forward dream'). How does the book fulfil this promise? In its final essay, Blechman revealingly asserts that 'The Situationist International was the pinnacle of the revolutionary avant-gardes of romanticism that began with the *Frühromantik* and that end with their autonegation.' In a sense, the volume is an attempt to prove this line of descent. It begins with his own account of 'The Revolutionary Dream of Early German Romanticism', and follows the tradition through a series of essays, on Michelet, Morris, Mühsam and Marcuse among others, before arriving at Blanchard's reminiscence of 'Debord in the Resounding Cataract of Time'. A powerful, if impressionistic, sense of a revolutionary romantic genealogy emerges. The individual essays are of uneven quality though. Miguel Abensour's treatment of *News from Nowhere* as an 'experimental utopia' is utterly compelling, and Christopher Winks's account of the mnemic power of monuments and symbols in the Commune is also fascinating. However, several others, like Annie Le Brun's comments 'On the Subject of Romantic Women', are weightless and insubstantial.

In his Preface, Blechman boldly asserts that the strength of *Revolutionary Romanticism* 'lies in the power of its perspective as much as in the quality of the individual essays'. As much or more so. It is Blechman's overarching narrative that lends coherence and conviction to the volume. And it is this that creates its difficulties. At times, the narrative seems to have been imposed rather too forcefully, a fact betrayed by the diction of Blechman's editorial acknowledgements (Arthur Mitzman, we are told, has 'radicalized – in fact, restored' an essay published elsewhere, while Peter Marshall's contribution is 'a romantic spin' on his book on Blake). The problem is perhaps that, with the exception of Blechman's pieces, the essays don't deal in sufficient detail with revolutionary romanticism itself. Maurice Hindle's essay on 'Revolting Language' is typical in this respect: if it offers a fruitful 'political reading' of Keats's ode 'To Autumn', it fails to reposition him in relation to revolutionary romanticism. Blechman's framing essays carry the polemical burden. Unlike some of his essayists, he displays an obvious political commitment to the revolutionary romantic project as he constructs it (see his 'Reply to Agnes Heller', *RP* 99, which is as much a manifesto as an intervention into questions raised by her inter-

view in *RP* 94). It is as if the other contributors are the critical equivalent of session musicians, turning in workmanlike performances in their specialist field for the sake of the prodigious upstart with his experimental ambitions (Löwy, in this light, is the Ernest Ranglin of studies in revolutionary romanticism).

Blechman's own performance, like his persistent editorial presence, is seductive. In particular, his 'Reflections on Revolutionary Romanticism', the ten theses with which the volume reaches its suitably vatic conclusion, are a rousing plea for the future: 'the failure of the great romantic revolt of '68 does not only suggest how *revolutionary* romanticism must yet be; it also indicates how *romantic* the movements for changing the world must yet become.' Blechman's 'new millennium' arrived early – the first indication of 'a renaissance of revolutionary romantic struggles' were manifest outside the WTO conference last November. In this sense, certainly, there is nothing belated about his situationist romanticism. The anticapitalist protesters at the Seattle demonstration, in all their colourful confusion, are at least potentially the heirs to his tradition. The irony is that, in the face of an almost spontaneous anticapitalist movement on that scale, the 'unitary demand' of Blechman's 'romantic imperative for a universal regeneration', '*All power to the imagination!*', at the moment of its seeming triumph, suddenly sounds inadequate. The utopian function of a new 'new romanticism' might have been reactivated more effectively if the 'great march of organized labour' arranged for the second day of the Seattle protest had converged with the other demonstration, instead of being diverted by the union leaders.

**Matthew Beaumont**

## Sequencing

William D. Blattner, *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, £35.00 hb., 0 5216 2067 8.

Despite Heidegger's pronouncement on the opening page of *Being and Time* that time serves as 'the possible horizon for any understanding of being', the attempt to substantiate this claim has received scant attention among its interpreters. Typically, studies of *Being and Time*, while focusing on the rich and innovative Division One, tend to downplay or even leave aside the difficult and complex issues of temporality. In *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*, William Blattner



contributes to an overcoming of this deficit by offering an extensive analysis of the role of temporality in Division Two of Heidegger's early masterpiece.

Like much recent American scholarship on Heidegger (Dreyfus, Okrent, Olafson, Haugeland, Guignon), Blattner's broadly pragmatist and analytic approach combines impressive textual knowledge with a strong emphasis on conceptual analysis and common-sense illustration. Given the seemingly wilful obscurity and complacency of so much that currently passes for Heidegger scholarship, such an attitude, at least to this reader, is appealing. Conjoined with this approach, however, is the obvious risk of trivializing the claims under scrutiny. *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* is brimful with tedious examples, involving Smith, Jones, Brown, and others in a very American way of life. But philosophically more worrisome is the implied conflation between ontical and ontological research. According to Blattner, *Dasein* is simply a person; for no apparent reason he thus disregards Heidegger's painstaking attempt at distinguishing his existential analytic from empirical human science.

Another difficulty that follows from Blattner's pragmatist approach arises from the claim that 'at its core Heidegger's enterprise is explanatory'. By invoking the impersonal, quasi-scientific language of *explanandum* and *explanans*, though softened to denote a relation of dependency, Blattner overlooks the modernist inspiration of *Being and Time* – the sense in which Heidegger's interpretive explorations of the ordinary, rather than discounting subjective response, aim to master it in exemplary ways. An existential analytic, since it analyses that entity which in each case is *mine* (*Dasein*), aims at the attainment of the self; its inherent perfectionism proceeds by means of self-reflection, not

proof. Perhaps Blattner would have come up with a different assessment of the status of Heidegger's discourse had he paid more attention to the issue of authenticity, yet both authenticity and historicity, the two great existential and political themes of *Being and Time*, are largely omitted from consideration.

According to Blattner, Heidegger (along with his predecessors Plotinus, Leibniz and Kant) proposes a species of temporal idealism: 'If *Dasein* did not exist, time would not obtain.' As being, or more precisely the being of entities, interpreted as an ontological framework 'in virtue of which an entity is an entity and an entity of the sort it is', is to be understood in terms of time, it follows that being is also dependent on *Dasein*. Thus the early Heidegger, he argues, is an *ontological idealist*. But this is not the only comprehensive message of *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*. Construed as an expression of ontological idealism, *Being and Time* ultimately fails. Having realized this, Heidegger's *Kehre* – on this issue Blattner does not have a lot to say, though – amounts to a thinking about being that escapes the subjectivism of his early thought (as well as any recognizable realism) in favour of 'an antimetaphysical understanding of the clearing as the space in which being, and hence entities, can stand out as what they are'. Although the later Heidegger's 'quasi-mysticism' seems rationally indefensible in a *positive* sense (Blattner is by no means a mystic), it enjoys a certain credibility in view of the sheer lack of rationally plausible alternatives.

Defending such strong claims is a vast and challenging undertaking, yet Blattner constructs a strong case for his view. The first chapter deals with Heidegger's notion of care (*Sorge*). Particular attention is here paid to the so-called 'unattainability thesis', which amounts to the claim that *Dasein's* proper ability-characteristics, though to be pressed ahead into, are not attainable. It follows from *Dasein's* existentiality (its questionability) that the realization of its self-interpretive 'for-the-sakes-of-which' can never simply be *attained* but are forever deferred, to be realized. *Dasein* is an ability-to-be; it is not to be identified with any specific ability. Moreover, the seemingly unrestricted freedom entailed by the unattainability thesis, its expression of groundlessness, gets modified by the so-called 'nullity thesis', which holds that *Dasein* 'cannot press into how things matter to it'. In conjunction with the notion of 'falling', Blattner's



reconstruction of care presents a powerful account of human finitude and freedom which avoids some of the pitfalls of more abstract, non-situative conceptions of freedom (e.g. Sartre). It also serves as the basis for his interpretation of originary temporality (originary temporality makes care possible), the meaning of which is supposed to explain the occurrence of ordinary, physical time.

Blattner's reading of Heidegger's derivation of ordinary time from originary temporality (and hence from *Dasein qua care*) involves several steps. Stripped to the bone, the contention is that world-time (the flow of time, understood as a sequence of pragmatic Nows, experienced by *Dasein* in an everyday way), while dependent on originary temporality, is explanatory of ordinary time. Thus if at least one link in the chain of derivation goes to pieces – this is Blattner's overall point – then the whole edifice collapses.

Turning to the first step of the argument, the account of originary temporality, Blattner rightly, in my view, disengages the notion of originary temporality as such from that of authenticity. As opposed to a host of commentators, he realizes that 'authentic temporality is ... one mode of originary temporality'. Moreover, originary temporality is plausibly reconstructed in terms of non-sequential temporal 'ecstases' (future, past, present), where each of these correspond to one of the three modalities of care: existence, facticity and falling.

Where Heidegger first slips up is in the derivation of world-time from originary temporality. While succeeding in accounting for datability, spannedness, significance and public time (the four *official* dimensions of world-time), he fails to make good how sequentiality, the fifth and unrecognized, yet according to Blattner necessary, aspect of world-time depends on originary temporality. But if the derivation of sequentiality fails, then so do the remaining dimensions of world-time, since they ultimately presuppose sequentiality. In arriving at this conclusion, Blattner rests his case on the view that 'the sequence of world-time Nows must reflect the sequence of tasks dictated by the for-the-sake-of-which'. The difficulty Heidegger allegedly faces consists in showing that the purposive chains of originary iteration of the Present always generate the right sequence of world-time times. However, nowhere does Heidegger make such a strong claim. Nor is it evident that he should. In my view, rather than having to show that there is an actual match between the sequences, it would be sufficient to argue that since multiple tasks cannot be executed simultaneously, they would only be possible on the

assumption of world-time sequentiality, hence world-time is sequential.

Blattner also argues that Heidegger, though offering a fairly convincing argument for the thesis that ordinary time is levelled-off world time, does not entirely succeed in demonstrating that being is temporal through and through. On this point I agree, and in particular with the charge that Heidegger largely fails to develop the notion of *praesens* – which is not to say that it cannot be done. Seemingly, the most promising way of conducting such an elaboration would, as Blattner points out, be to link *praesens* with the comprehensive notion of enpresenting.

Despite its shortcomings, this rich and rewarding book is likely to be the most advanced study of *Being and Time* currently existing in the English language.

**Espen Hammer**

## Henri who?

John Mullarkey, ed., *The New Bergson*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1999. xvi + 235 pp., £40.00 hb., 0 7190 5380 3.

Henri Bergson, *Duration and Simultaneity: Bergson and the Einsteinian Universe*, edited by Robin Durie, Clinamen Press, Manchester, 1999. xxviii + 211 pp., £16.99 pb., 1 903083 01 X.

The 1907 publication of *Creative Evolution* established Henri Bergson's reputation as Europe's foremost philosopher and earned him international acclaim. But, as John Mullarkey remarks in his introduction to *The New Bergson*, few philosophers have witnessed such a rapid decline in the influence of their ideas. As Mullarkey goes on to argue, the widespread diffusion of Bergson's philosophy was also its dissipation; the pervasiveness of its appropriation resulted only in its effacement. By the mid-1920s Bergson's predominance had all but evaporated. In the ensuing decades (with a few notable exceptions – among them Gilles Deleuze, whose 1956 essay 'Bergson's Conception of Difference' is published for the first time in English translation in this collection), his books were little read or discussed.

The renewed interest in Bergson's philosophy that these essays demonstrate risks a renewed dissipation. The context of contemporary philosophical interests – both analytic and continental – within which Mullarkey chooses to situate Bergson's thinking, and so test its current significance, might again lead to its particu-

larity becoming effaced. However, it is only through Mullarkey taking the risk of effacement that *The New Bergson* can emerge. Through the dissipation of interest in Bergson's ideas, through the risk of effacement as these ideas are reconsidered in order to ascertain their current relevance, the possibility is opened of an effacement that, through its dissipative movement, prompts Bergson's return. This is not the effacement of Bergson's particularity; it is an effacement through which Bergson's particularity can continue to arise. Bergson's philosophy of change and transformation is generated out of, and perpetuated by, a continual, dissipative process of self-effacement. To renew and extend Bergson's philosophical project is to create and recreate ideas that go beyond it, thereby repeating the self-effacement out of which that project launches a movement beyond itself.

The two essays organized in Mullarkey's collection under the heading 'Life' are sensitive to these levels of (self-) effacement. In focusing attention on the evolutionary movement of life as a process of invention and differentiation beyond the boundaries of the organism, rather than one of filiation and descent that prescribes such boundaries (Keith Ansell Pearson), and in arguing for openness and interconnectedness, against pragmatic division and the exclusiveness of abstract systems with regard to societies and the environment (P.A.Y. Gunter), both essays implicitly acknowledge effacement as, at once, an open and indeterminate process of differentiation, and a divisive and immobilizing act of closure for the purposes of utility. They assume – as Marie Carriou does in her rather sceptical appraisal of Bergson's account of memory – that every representation of Bergson's thought, every sentence that defines it, is a death sentence for its fluid mobility. Yet, if the movement of invention that has come to be known as Bergsonism is to be relaunched, it is only through the inertia and fixity inflicted by representation; a representation that is aware of its own dissipative movement and, hence, its own provisionality.

Not all of the essays Mullarkey selects demonstrate an awareness of the movement of ceaseless invention and transformation they address, nor of the movement of effacement inherent in their own writing as a result. Mark Antliff, although offering a fascinating glimpse of Matisse's creative process as it repeats the process of Bergsonism, ends his essay with a static juxtaposition of representations that draws Bergsonian duration together with Rosalind Krauss's eroticized temporality and the Surrealist art of Ernst and Duchamp. Similarly, Paul Douglass, in his account of

Bergson and cinema, attends only to the conventional narrative and spectatorial aspects of cinema, rather than pursuing the repetition of cinematic movement to be found in Bergson's thought.

However, the essays Mullarkey gathers together under the heading 'Mind', in so far as they are more directly concerned with a close reading of particular books (*Matter and Memory*, in the case of the essays by Frédéric Worms, Marie Carriou and Eric Matthews, and *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, in the case of F.C.T. Moore), move through and beyond static reception and representation. In the closing section of Frédéric Worms's 1997 *Introduction à Matière et Mémoire de Bergson*, which Mullarkey excerpts, on the Summary and Conclusion with which Bergson ends *Matter and Memory*, a formal relation of this summary is articulated with all that has gone before in terms of an accelerated repetition of the prior movement of the book. In reading *Matter and Memory* so as to grasp the complex movement of its interacting speeds and slownesses, Worms effects the repetition and furthering of the experiment of Bergson's thought.

This movement of experimentation recurs throughout Mullarkey's collection. The experiment with dualism and with the image is taken further by Mullarkey's inclusion of a previously unpublished 1913 letter from Bergson to John Dewey. In it Bergson defends what he terms the *partial realism* of his doctrines against Dewey's criticisms, situating his extensive use of the term *image* in *Matter and Memory*, midway between realism and idealism. The experiment with philosophical time – a time that Einstein was to deny – is pursued in Timothy S. Murphy's essay. This is augmented and deepened by the republication of the English translation of Bergson's *Duration and Simultaneity*, extended, in Robin Durie's new edition, with a number of appendices detailing its hostile reception, Bergson's subsequent defence, and the eventual effacement of the book from the Bergson canon.

Through the depth and complexity of the tendencies of differentiation that Deleuze describes in his 1956 essay, the movement of Bergsonism is actualized in the inverse movement of any writing that returns to reconsider it. To return to Bergson is, through looking back at him, to enter into coincidence with the forward-moving process of his thinking. The success of Mullarkey's book lies in its ambition, and often in its ability to effect this coincidence, and so create Bergson anew.

**Mark Ryder**