

Preface

One purpose of this Journal is to publish writing which goes beyond the bounds of academic respectability to a dialogical encounter with the changing historical moment. The characteristics of such writing are depth of philosophical insight, commitment to the confrontation of truth and reality, and the willingness, on the basis of systematic inquiry, to draw conclusions which both stretch thought to its limits and, in an intellectually directive way, exhibit the limitations of particular perspectives in political and social theory.

The contents of this issue continue to fulfil this purpose. While the present inclusions are characterized by a diversity of objects of inquiry, they are commonly interwoven by a *critique* of life intellectually conceived. It is testimony to the sheer richness of the contemporary theoretical tradition that this critical sensibility is not limited to any single school of thought, but extends to include oppositional perspectives, ranging from analyses sympathetic to the conservative persuasion in Canadian politics to existential and experimental Marxian investigations of the world problematic of bureaucratic imperative coordination. The intrinsic value and, indeed, ontological significance of thought motivated by the will to critique cannot be discounted in a Canadian intellectual setting which is only now beginning to emancipate itself from the spiritual and epistemological sterility of categories of thought foreign to human freedom. But "dialogical" thought also has another merit. It results in intellectual statements which, once appraised carefully, provoke fundamentally new theses on the construction of social reality. Such theses can, and, in fact, should be criticized. For it is in the struggle of thesis and its critique that dialogical inquiry contributes best to the conduct of philosophical life. While life, philosophically exercised, has its end in the transformation of reason into the very fabric of civilization, it has its beginnings in the interrelationship of a diversity of perspectives, whether the sociology of knowledge, hermeneutics, or philosophical anthropology, around the point-counter-point of intellectual critique.

Thus, in the first article, "The Myth of the Red Tory", Rod Preece challenges the intellectual currency of a leading concept in the interpretation of Canadian conservatism. In contradistinction to dominant perspectives on Canadian conservatism, Preece contends that, today, conservatism and liberalism are but opposite sides of the same coin: a coinage that was struck by the dissolution of the remnants of nineteenth century torism into the "conservatism" of Burkean Whiggism. For Preece, the possibility of Red Toryism in Canada presupposes the antecedent possibility of torism itself; and torism, Preece claims, while characteristic of reactionary absolutisms and political romanticisms, has not penetrated and, indeed, could

not penetrate the principles of conservative thought that have so shaped one important strand of Canadian politics. Consequently, Preece argues that the Red Tory is a myth and that the Progressive Conservative Party, by containing "no Hegelians, no romantics, (and) no corporate-organic-collectivist elements" binds together but various "proponents of different styles of Whiggery".

With Deena Weinstein's essay, "Bureaucratic Opposition: The Challenge to Authoritarian Abuses at the Workplace", the focus of inquiry shifts, quite dramatically, from political philosophy to critical social theory and, thereupon, from a retrospective analysis of the failure of toryism in Canada to a prospective consideration of resistance to formal organizational authority. Following eloquently in the tradition of Weber, Sorokin and Mills, Weinstein weaves together, in a new "synthetic ensemble", an in-depth critique of mainstream organization theory and an equally intensive examination of the material basis of bureaucratic oppositions. Noting that both functional and Marxian perspectives have failed to account adequately for the existence of informal resistance within large organizations to unjust authority, Weinstein adapts the categories of conflict theory to a provocative explanation of the origins, possible outcomes and institutional resistance to the formation of bureaucratic oppositions. Of particular importance is Weinstein's claim that while bureaucratic oppositions are not *necessarily* emancipatory in character, they are important sources of social change in a world increasingly dominated by the principle of imperative coordination.

The quest for possible sources of resistance to the organizational manifestations of imperative coordination continues with Ben Agger's article, "Dialectical Sensibility II: Towards a New Intellectuality". In an earlier article (see Vol. 1, No. 1), Agger developed a critique of the Frankfurt School on the basis of its inability to transcend the dialectic of negation to a more flexible attitude towards emancipatory tendencies in advanced capitalist societies. In the present essay, Agger describes a "new concept of radicalism": one which responds directly to bureaucratic imperative coordination by "democratizing" critical intellectuality. At root, radical intellectuality issues the master concept of "cognitive self-management": a concept which is likened to Marcuse's metaphor of "new science" and which is held to be the key to shattering the inherently dualistic character of late capitalism. While projecting a concept of intellectuality equal to the task of emancipating thought from its institutional bondage, Agger also pleads eloquently against the authoritarianism of the Left, particularly as imposed by the "mechanistic tendencies" of orthodox Marxism. In calling for the abandonment of Marxian structuralism and, hence, of "sacrificial models of change", Agger situates the dialectical sensibility in the vital impulse of an

“experimental” Marxism: a Marxism which generates a dialectical social order by attending to the silent tragedies of personal existences.

Ultimately, the new modes of praxis anticipated by the analyses of Weinstein and Agger require, for their inception, sustained metaphysical discourse on the *fundamentals* of the present public domain. Critical social theory and “principled” philosophical inquiry converge as but different vantage-points on the multidimensional and interrelated whole of human existence. Bureaucratic imperative coordination is embedded, albeit analogically, in the economistic principle of private property; and cognitive self-management finds its chief intellectual opposition in liberal-democratic thought which, while insisting on sympathy for the dispossessed, provides justificatory principles for the perpetuation of class differences. Orthodox Marxism is but one manifestation of “reactionary” anti-metaphysics in the contemporary world; and the emancipatory potential of bureaucratic oppositions is flawed by the same tendency that has plagued many libertarian movements, whether feminist, anti-colonial or environmentalist: the failure to make a radically new metaphysic of human action an *immanent*, and thus unnegotiable, principle of political action.

The conjunction of critical social theory and “grounded” philosophical discourse is *concretely* exemplified by the retrospective essays on Mary Wollstonecraft and R.G. Collingwood, grouped together in the common format of “On Metaphysics Lost”. While differing in their intellectual orientations, the retrospective articles are drawn together, and explicitly so, by two shared attributes: a mutual commitment, unassisted by the presuppositions of apologia, to a direct examination of the fundamentals of two important philosophical mentalities; and a common willingness to transform their reappraisals of the “lost” metaphysics of Collingwood and Wollstonecraft into thoughtful critiques of public life, democratically envisaged.

Thus, Patricia Hughes, in her article “Mary Wollstonecraft: Stoic Liberal-Democrat” goes beyond the traditional interpretation of Wollstonecraft (as noteworthy principally for her contribution to women’s rights) to an examination of her position in the history of political thought. Beginning with a perceptive analysis of the necessarily dualistic character of women’s emancipation, Hughes finds the promise of radical potential in Wollstonecraft’s attempt to interrelate the oppression of women and the poor as inevitable consequences of the relations of private property. Yet, in an elegant line of argumentation, Hughes formulates the thesis that Wollstonecraft’s revision of liberty and equality into their “natural” counterparts in the Stoic tradition vitiates the radical potential of her theory: condemning, in the process, its liberatory promise to remain but a haunting remembrance of what *could* have been. In the following article, “Democratic Politics and Ideology: R.G. Collingwood’s Analysis of Metaphysics in Political Philosophy and Moral

Civilization", Maurice Eisenstein examines Collingwood's achievement in developing a process of metaphysical inquiry which would be consistent "both with the traditional notion of metaphysics and with contemporary ideas of history, particularly with regard to the sociology of knowledge." In a fascinating series of passages, Eisenstein probes the interrelationships of philosophy, science and metaphysics. Claiming that metaphysics, for Collingwood, is a science of absolute presuppositions, Eisenstein proceeds to describe four oppositional modes of thought which strive to usurp the metaphysical function: pseudo-metaphysics and progressive, reactionary and irrational anti-metaphysics. The distinctions drawn among metaphysics and its "historical" oppositions ultimately provide the basis for an incisive commentary on Collingwood's understanding of the presuppositions, relative and absolute, of "moral civilization". In a concluding reflection, the spirit of which is redolent of Kant's *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Eisenstein recommends Collingwood's affirmation of "reason, judgment and the human will" as the best of all possible principles for the struggle of the science of metaphysics and, consequently, of moral civilization against barbarism.

In conclusion, the articles in this issue, together with a reflective array of thematic review essays and more focused appraisals of recent publications, join together in struggling on the side of the philosophical imagination. If, indeed, the barbarisms of the modern age require for their rectification the redemption of ontology, if not a new phenomenology of the human sensibility, then surely such a process begins, in part, with the creation of theoretical 'space' devoted to the integrity and dignity of reason.

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