

philosophy of language—the pragmatist traditions, for example, based on Pierce's theory of semiotics? It would seem that, at least on first acquaintance, there might be in pragmatist thought, emphasizing as it does man as an *active* being, whose knowledge is intimately bound up with *praxis*, a rather better philosophical partner for Eagleton's Marxism.

Often the participants in the dialogue between Christianity and Marxism are suspected by each side of being a kind of fifth column within their own camp. The average churchgoer (if he is aware of the dialogue) can never convince himself that his fellow who takes seriously the Marxist position is still fully a Christian. (Indeed, it is instructive that this highly significant feature of twentieth-century thought has been depicted as a *dialogue*—since this designation assumes that we are witnessing an interaction between two distinct and even opposed positions, thus tending to exclude the possibility of one's being a party to *both* sides of the argument at once.) Eagleton demonstrates that it is possible to be consciously and honestly *both* a Christian and a Marxist at the same time.

Having said this, and in spite of the thoroughness of Eagleton's *commitment* to both Christianity and Marxism, there is evident throughout the book a considerable intellectual tension between the two. He insists throughout the book on the thoroughly historical character of human nature: a position which is central to Marxian thought. In Marx's work, the climactic development of this historical process is the overcoming of alienation. His attempt to accommodate Marx's expectation to a

Christian eschatology appears to present him with difficulties.

By their faith in Christ, the eternal word made animal, Christians subscribe to a belief that this absurd vision is the future reality of man: that the opaqueness of our present bodies will be transfigured into pure transparency by the power of God. (p. 55.)

Does Eagleton resort, at this point, to a 'leap out of history' of a kind to which Marx could never have subscribed?

The replacement of Marx's *proletariat* by the biblical *anawim* also presents us with signs of this tension. The weight which Eagleton gives to Christ's saying, 'the poor are always with you', as a starting point for a Christian politics, seems to fly in the face of orthodox Marxist thinking about the nature and historical role of the proletariat. He may be substantially *correct* in his understanding of the need to make the 'unclean', the weak, the rejected—the 'dirt which falls outside the carefully wrought political structures of society'—the linchpin of a Christian politics, but to most Marxists his position is likely to appear merely reformist, rather than revolutionary. (The same tension and ambivalence which Eagleton finds in Raymond Williams' theory of tragedy is thus in many ways reflected in his own writing.)

But no exploratory work, such as *The Body as Language*, is without tensions of this kind between the various elements of its attempted synthesis. Indeed, it is this tension which makes the book such an excellent example of this particular growing edge of theological thought.

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**MARX BEFORE MARXISM**, by David McLellan. *Macmillan*, London, 1970. 233 pp. 65s.

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF LUDWIG FEUERBACH**, by Eugene Kamenka. *Routledge & Kegan Paul*, London, 1970. 190 pp. 40s.

**FEUERBACH ET LA THEOLOGIE DE LA SECULARISATION**, by Marcel Xhauffaire. *Les Editions du Cerf*, Paris, 1970. 397 pp. N.P.

The contemporary Marxist debate is slowly seeping into English: in the last year or so, Adorno, Kolakowski, Althusser, Benjamin been translated; this year Bloch, Lukacs and Habermas are promised. Slowly, too, the Marx canon itself is becoming available—since 1961, four versions of the early writings have appeared; the crucial *Grundrisse* remains, however, untranslated. But the context in which those early writings originally appeared is still largely undiscovered territory in the English-speaking world—though, for example,

Weitling has at last been translated and some of the early English 'Marxist' journals are being reprinted (*Red Republican; Democratic Review*). Even secondary work in English on the crucial 1840s is meagre; Karl Löwith's *From Hegel to Nietzsche* is still, perhaps, the only overall survey of any standing.

David McLellan's *The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx* (1967) gave a useful account of the thinkers who provided the categories in friction with which Marx's own contribution developed. His *Marx before Marxism* parallels and supple-

ments this with a detailed intellectual biography of Marx himself up to 1844. Kamenka's *The Philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach* offers, for the first time in English, a similar biography for the other main figure of the period. Both books, within a short compass, supply essentially a selection of quotations linked by summaries and biography. Kamenka's comment adequately characterizes the approach of both works: a 'modest attempt to provide the material for an understanding of Feuerbach himself'. Neither engages in much assessment or criticism; Kamenka's, in fact, so concentrates on basic outlines that even crucial criticisms of Feuerbach's philosophy which Feuerbach himself recognized, and tried to counter, are barely noticed—the obvious example being Feuerbach's rejection of 'analogy', the traditional alternative version of his 'projection'. McLellan is slightly less self-effacing, quietly taking up positions: his title, with the date-limit of 1844, is itself an assertion on a highly controversial point, while his casual suggestion (197) that Marx overlooked rather than was influenced by the 'master/slave' passage in the *Phenomenology* should equally set a few experts humming. He usefully corrects two important mistranslations (168n, 173n) in Tucker's influential *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, and generally deflates Tucker's thesis. But for the most part he eschews polemic, merely noticing possibilities (e.g. Schiller's influence, 188) without probing, or contenting himself, for example, with collating self-descriptions to conclude that 'Marx became a communist in the first three months of 1844' (184)—the precise meaning of that statement resting on the trajectory presented in the book as a whole. One could demur at certain points: the drastic brevity of the opening survey of the intellectual context; the meagre documentation to support a picture of the student Marx as quite so 'romantic' (46f); more seriously, I am not convinced that the Paris MS on 'alienated labour' can be so readily 'continued' by appeal to the excerpt-notes on Mill (175ff); and on a minor note, the Frankfurt School is omitted from the concluding survey of twentieth-century Marxist developments (212). Both these books, then, competently, reliably, if rather unexcitingly, provide a basic service—though I would be tempted rather to invest in a selection of primary texts; excerpts linked by summary is relatively thin gruel.

At first glance, Xhaufflaire's *Feuerbach et la*

*théologie de la Sécularisation* seems simply an extended Kamenka; pages 23-103 offer an intellectual biography of Feuerbach, pages 104-265 cover the same ground again from a more internal angle—the developing logic of Feuerbach's thought is traced in detail through its three main phases. The treatment is far more complete, rigorous and alert than Kamenka's, though unnecessarily extended by the irritating habit of first summarizing and then quoting a passage. But these sections, useful as they are, and comprising the main body of the book, are not, it seems to me, where the main thrust of the work lies. The book's motto (from Feuerbach) gives the first hint: 'Only he who has the courage to be absolutely negative has the power to create anew.' The preface then speaks of a group of young thinkers trying to find 'a new way of working theologically in the Church', in which can be found 'the fragments of what can perhaps be called a "critical theology in the form of a critique of theology"'. The compressed Introduction, revealing a wide knowledge of contemporary theological and Marxist debates, then asserts that 'if there is one thing that has to become clear to theologians, it is that "secularization" creates a historical possibility for man which presupposes the rejection of every form of metaphysical thinking, or at least the necessity of beginning without it' (15). The promise here, of (at last) a secularization of "secularization", is thereupon postponed, through 300 pages: Feuerbach is examined; Marx's critique of Feuerbach is, essentially, rehearsed (266-305); reactions to Feuerbach (Barth, Bonhoeffer, Tillich, the theologians of 'dialogue', etc.) are analysed (307-340); finally, only in the last forty pages, the punch is delivered: the theologians of "secularization" are, pretty convincingly to my mind, demolished.

By a series of inversions, revealing shared premisses, such figures as Gogarten and Metz (Xhaufflaire's thesis-director at Münster) are placed in alliance with the transcendental subjectivists (Bultmann to Rahner), as simultaneously capitulating before 'the modern world' and seeking (a self-contradiction) to assert the 'necessity' of Christian faith for a 'true secularization'; at root, such theologies are still 'idealist', dealing in the clash of unreal concepts, not the real relation of a faith in history with the rest of actual history, seeing their own position as preserved from that historicity they acclaim as the insight

of secularization, even duplicating the dualist conception of the world they criticize in the positivist theologians. They remain fixed in an intra-ecclesial problematic while demanding the emancipation of all areas from ecclesiastical hegemony. Xhaufflaire in these pages redeems his promise (298ff) of taking Marx's critique of Feuerbach as the paradigm of his own critique of contemporary theology. A few pieces remain standing, or at least unchallenged: Moltmann, the very recent 'political theology' of Metz, one essay of Schillebeeckx (E.T. as ch. VI of *God the Future of Man*), but one feels that these have only received a stay of execution. The final crunch comes with 'For the theology of secularization, only faith is not secularizable' (363); in the penultimate short section, Xhaufflaire, secularizing faith itself, demands a movement in 'theology' from theory

to 'praxis', a demand he acknowledges as unclear; such a theology cannot live in 400-page books; his final section is therefore entitled 'En guise de conclusion'—but one recalls that the preface also spoke of this 'critical theology', 'which presents more a strategy and a method than a system', as having already received 'an initial practical confirmation, since it inspired the formation of new groupings, notably in Belgium and Pays-Bas'. The final section has a motto from Overbeck—which is appropriate: Löwith ends his survey with Overbeck, as the figure who faced again, in 1870-1900, the questions of the 1840s. In the 1970s, even in England, we are again in that problematic: a spate of books on Marxism is one sign of the fact.

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**THE YOUNG HEGELIANS AND KARL MARX**, by David McLellan. *Macmillan*, London-Melbourne-Toronto, 1969. + 170 pp. 55s.

David McLellan, lecturer in Politics and Government at Canterbury, is also known by his books, *Karl Marx: The Early Texts and Marx Before Marxism* (1970). This latter book is a sort of follow up to *The Young Hegelians*. It is McLellan's intention to show the development of thinking of the young Marx. He performs this task with great objectivity and perspicuous understanding in *Marx Before Marxism*, tracing the concrete situation in which Marx elaborated his first writings. He is able to carry out this task by the careful study he devoted to Marx's relations to the young Hegelians in his former book.

The Introduction to *The Young Hegelians* comprehends three themes. First of all a short account of the Hegelian School in the years immediately following the death of Hegel (1831) and a sketch of the social and economic background of the period. Afterwards the author gives a very interesting description of the mentality and activity of the young Hegelians in general. The third part of the introduction describes the founding of the *Deutsch-französische Jahrbücher* and gives an account of the origins of German socialism.

There are then four chapters, successively on Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, Max Stirner and Moses Hess. His study of these authors is most helpful in understanding the inspiration and many of the dominating themes in the thinking of the young Marx. Among the many subjects here carefully treated by the author, the idea of alienation in the thinking of Bruno

Bauer is of particular importance. An understanding of this intermediary stage in the development of the idea of alienation between Hegel and Marx can help us to grasp the meaning of this difficult concept in Marx's thought.

The thesis sometimes put forward today, that the Marx of *Capital* is without importance for philosophical thinking, is nonsense; but it is certainly true that Marx's philosophical (and economic) thinking is only intelligible if one sees the underlying inspiration which is so clearly revealed in the early writings. But to understand this inspiration, it is necessary to understand the young Hegelians. The author is absolutely right to say, as he does in his Conclusion:

'The demonstration of these influences, and even borrowings, does not imply any diminution of Marx's intellectual stature. On the contrary: it is only a knowledge of the contemporary intellectual scene and of the concepts peculiar to it that enable a just appreciation of so complex a thinker.'

At the end of the book there is an index of persons, and subject matter, together with a select but very good bibliography, giving editions of the fundamental texts of Hegel, Bauer, Feuerbach, Stirner, Hess, Marx and Ruge, and at the same time the standard commentaries. The author has written a book of great value for the understanding of the true thought of Marx.

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