

Diskussion/Discussion

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A Reply to Six Critics*

Abstract: Professors MacIntyre and Rosenberg are more inclined than I to believe that 'philosophy' names a natural kind -- a distinctive sort of inquiry with a continuous history since the Greeks. Their criticisms of my book reflect this disagreement. Mr. Montefiore brings to light various ambiguities in my use of such terms as "edifying philosophy" and "Continental philosophy". His criticisms make good points against the concluding portions of Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. Professors Bennett and Turnbull rightly say that I have over-simplified the current situation in Anglo-Saxon analytic philosophy, but I would hope that these simplifications do not affect the gist of my argument. Dr. Köhler very helpfully traces connections between my metaphilosophical views and my discussion of certain first-order issues.

I find Professor MacIntyre's depiction of three possible worlds - one in which the term 'philosophy' ceased to have a use, one in which it continued as a name for all learned inquiries lumped together, and the actual world in which it names one discipline over against others - very helpful in trying to answer his objections to my position. He and I would agree that the second world is impossible, thanks to the need to bureaucratize learning. So the question becomes which of the two possible worlds, the actual one or the one in which there ceased to be a distinct discipline called 'philosophy', would have been preferable. I favor the latter. He seems to favor the former.

MacIntyre says that the disadvantages of the latter world would include the fact that "what are substantially the same philosophical questions (would) be posed separately in a number of distinct and different disciplinary contexts" (MacIntyre 1982, 104). This seems a minor disadvantage in efficiency, largely offset by the fact that people in one discipline would, as now, read books outside their own discipline. A second disadvantage MacIntyre suggests is that

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"no discipline would have any specific responsibility for those problems which arise, for example, when the beliefs about human responsibility which inform the moral and legal practices studied in such disciplines as ethics and the sociology of law are confronted with beliefs about the causal determination of human action which inform a good deal of psychology, biochemistry and neurophysiology." (104)

As a good Humean compatibilist, I would think that - had philosophy not intervened to assure everyone concerned that there was a deep and difficult problem in the area - this confrontation would have led rapidly to the realization that whatever responsibility was, it did not presuppose unpredictability. On my view, Kant's dramatization of the free will problem was one unhappy result of attempting to put a discipline called 'philosophy' on the secure path of a science. More generally, the existence of philosophy as a distinct discipline seems to me to have caused a lot of scratching where it really had not itched very much. That is my only reason for preferring the first of the two possible worlds.

MacIntyre and I disagree about whether there are recurring problems which emerge at the boundaries of disciplines. In the example at hand, we disagree about whether compatibilism is as obvious as Hume thought, and thus about the importance of a 'correct analysis' of 'He moved his hand of his own free will.' From my point of view, this and a lot of other problems which should have been disposed of by Hume's irony and Reid's common sense unfortunately reemerged in Germany, and thus got a new lease on life. But MacIntyre will say that what I call "dissolving an pseudo-problem" is really just buying in on a certain disputable solution of a real and recurring problem. So, he can say, it is just as well that we have a distinct discipline called 'philosophy' to examine those disputable recurring solutions. He can invoke the Aristotelian argument that you cannot help but do philosophy, since a dissolver of philosophy counts as a philosopher. Such a criticism of my position as self-referentially inconsistent is suggested when MacIntyre says that I must claim to be presenting "a philosophical theory" about the "nature of ... standards of work within philosophy and history", a theory which I "take to be true in the sense in which realists understand that predicate" (109). For MacIntyre thinks that people who "dismiss 'objective' or 'rational' standards" nevertheless claim to be writing "true history" and that the practice of writing such history requires "implicit or explicit references to standards of objectivity and rationality" (109).

As I see it, those who, like MacIntyre and myself, write revisionist history in the form of what MacIntyre has called "dramatic narratives", no more appeal to "standards of objectivity and rationality" than novelists appeal to "standards of good novel writing" or than Newton appealed to "standards of scientific inquiry". Typically a new history or a new theory or a new novel succeeds by striking its readers as "just what we needed". Later,

perhaps, somebody may come and construct some 'standards' which the latest successes satisfy, but that is just ad hoc pedagogy. If there were such things as 'standards of objectivity and rationality' which determined what counted as a good argument about the nature of objectivity and rationality, then they would either be forever immune to change, for their critic would be convicted either of self-referential inconsistency by invoking them, or of irrationality by not invoking them. So I take it that there are no such standards. There are just communities of informed readers who are open to persuasion.

Do those who wish to persuade such communities of the goodness of their histories or theories need to believe that their histories or theories are "true in the same sense as that in which realists understand that predicate" (109)? I take it that the sense in question is one which contrasts with "acceptable to the informed judgment of the intended audience", and also with "the best idea to have turned up so far". I think that such glosses on 'true' are enough, and that the realists' gloss - 'corresponds to reality' - is an unhelpful addition. MacIntyre says that if I decline to invoke the realist's gloss then he is "unclear just what (Rorty) is claiming". I think of myself as claiming the sort of thing which I take MacIntyre to claim for his After Virtue: that if you retell the story of various events in European intellectual history in this way then you get a new and useful appreciation of what is worth arguing about and what isn't. If either MacIntyre or I are asked 'Yes, but are your stories really true?' I should think we would both be inclined to respond that the question is either shorthand for a lot of smaller and more manageable questions (e.g., 'Do the stories misquote? Do they contain generalizations to which there are clear counter-examples?') or has not got much point. He and I both believe that intellectual history comes first and that views about the reality of such putative problems as 'free will vs. determinism' come later. What we disagree about are the stories we tell.

A further illustration of this sort of difference is our contrasting attitudes towards the issue of "realism vs. instrumentalism" (108). MacIntyre's story is of two batches of people - realists and instrumentalists - who use the word 'true' in different senses. He thinks that clashes between these two sorts of people recur within the natural sciences, e.g., in the seventeenth-century problem of how to interpret Galileo's observations. He takes Galileo and Bellarmine to have been debating about whether to say "the earth really does move" or merely "it is very useful for certain purposes to say that the earth moves", and to have taken the issue seriously because the former view leads to the conclusion that Scripture is wrong. That is certainly what they thought they were debating, but since I have trouble making sense of 'really does', I have to see them as really debating the question "How can we arrange social and educational institutions so that Scripture and astronomy do not get in each other's way?"

- a reasonable topic which is only obscured by asking what 'really' happens (not to mention asking what 'really' means in this context). Where MacIntyre sees issues I dismiss as 'merely philosophical' turning up within the other disciplines, I see scientific and political issues being obfuscated by being cast in philosophical terminology.

How is one to determine which way to see things? Only, I should think, by writing both more sweeping and more detailed intellectual history and placing the 'history of philosophy' within it - just as MacIntyre recommends in the closing paragraph of his paper. My hunch is that such large-scale intellectual history will be more successful if it treats freedom-vs.-determinism and realism-vs.-instrumentalism as condescendingly as it does the Arian-Orthodox conflict - seeing all three topics as unhelpful ways of discussing genuine issues. MacIntyre has the opposite hunch. Everybody who writes intellectual history has some hunches which he is testing out as he writes. One cannot after all, take every issue ever discussed at face value and still hope to offer an intelligible and dramatic narrative. My difference with MacIntyre is thus over the question of whether the best story is told by using relatively permanent 'philosophical problems' as strings on which to hang the episodes of one's narratives or whether (in the manner of, e.g., Foucault and Blumenberg) to see discontinuities (between, e.g., the ancient, medieval and modern periods) so great as to forbid the description of older intellectuals as concerned with 'the same problems' as are contemporary philosophers.

Unlike MacIntyre, I think that intellectual history is most successful when it treats the distinction between philosophy and other disciplines rather cavalierly. I would want to take more seriously than MacIntyre himself does his remark that "philosophy just is conceptually self-conscious inquiry in whatever field". My Quinean suspicion of the conceptual-empirical distinction would, however, lead me to alter this definition to something like: "philosophy just is the kind of dispute within a community of inquirers which leads to friction with, or attachment to, other such communities." What MacIntyre calls "conceptual self-consciousness" I think of as awareness of the fact that what one wants to say about one's own concerns may run counter to things people elsewhere are saying about their distinct concerns. So I am startled when MacIntyre attributes to me the claim that "philosophy once was a genuinely unitary discipline, distinct from all other forms of enquiry, and that it lost this unity and distinctness at a certain point in its modern history." I had thought I was saying that when philosophy ceased to mean something like MacIntyre's "conceptually self-conscious inquiry", and became something separate and unified and distinct it lost its point. I did not mean that philosophy was in good shape when it had some "specifically philosophical problems" which provided a unified discipline with "its own distinctive and unifying subject matter". I had wanted to say that, once an institutionally distinct dis-

cipline had (unfortunately, on my view) been set up, it proceeded to attempt to legitimate itself by formulating "specifically philosophical problems". This seems to me to have led to high morale within the newly-founded institution, but to an increasing disconnection between that institution and the rest of culture.

There is considerable overlap between MacIntyre's and Rosenberg's criticisms. Both see more continuity of problems than I do, and both are less willing than I to see philosophy as continuous with avant-garde literature on the one hand and the more controversial portions of scientific and political discourse on the other. Rosenberg, for example, gives a list of ten recent philosophers (ranging from Rawls to Derrida) and sixteen historical figures (ranging from Aquinas to Mill) and says that they are all concerned with the following problems:

"The nature of physical and of social reality, of good and evil, of right and wrong and justice; the intelligibility of the encountered world; the place of persons in the world; their capacities as knowers and as doers; their rights and their responsibilities; death and time; consciousness and self-consciousness; experience and thought." (Rosenberg 1982, 116)

My problem with this list is that concern with these problems is equally a mark of Baudelaire, Alexander Hamilton, Darwin, Pericles, Walt Whitman, Paracelsus, Brecht, the shamans of primitive tribes, the priests of Baal, etc. The list is of no use in delimiting what Rosenberg calls

"a *distinctive* (my italics) intellectual mission within any reflective culture worthy of the name, a necessary project of synoptic self-understanding and self-appraisal. ..."

This mission is that of the all-round intellectual, but not of the philosopher, in the sense of the inhabitant of a distinctive discipline. Such a description of a mission is of no use in explicating Rosenberg's distinction between "conversation" (which has a "point") and "chat" (which does not), and between "chatting about our failings and our excesses" (his description of my own article) and "getting back to business" (what Rosenberg will do after chuckling and nodding at what I have written)(127 f.). To know when one is pursuing a business-like point and when not one would need, in addition to a list of problems like the one I have cited, a description of what counts as a distinctively philosophical, pointed, and business-like approach to them.

To satisfy this requirement, it is not enough to say that the strategy of philosophy has always been "dialectical" - in contrast, for instance, to being 'observational', 'experimental', or 'poetic'" (118), nor to say that the philosopher advances "a rational vision, that is, one which has a legitimate claim on our reasoned assent and which can be coherently sustained in the face of rational criticisms" (118). Few people who use speech rather than

guns do not advance such a vision. If one wants, as Rosenberg does, to get Derrida and Heidegger, as well as Rawls and Sellars, in under the description 'philosopher', then one is going to have to explicate 'rational' so broadly that Baudelaire and Brecht and Hamilton will also be advancing "rational visions", and practising a "dialectical" method. Rosenberg's overall argument presupposes the possibility of an historical narrative of the development of European culture which provides illustrations of the splits between the "dialectical" and the "observational", or the "dialectical" and the "poetic", of the sort he requires. I do not think there is any way to defend the panoply of distinctions he brings to bear save by writing such a narrative, the story of "a coherent discipline, one having its own unique and distinctive intellectual mission", one in which "the historical problem space of philosophy" does not exhibit "any significant discontinuities".

I doubt that such a narrative can be made convincing, but of course I cannot demonstrate this negative claim. All I can do is point to the increasing dissatisfaction with past attempts to write one - the sort of dissatisfaction which lies behind such revisionist histories as MacIntyre's, Foucault's, Heidegger's, and Blumenberg's. Those who attempt such revisionist narratives have in common the view that it is not very clear what 'getting back to business' would amount to, and that it is not as clear as had been thought which discourses have a point and which are mere 'chat'. Rosenberg writes as if one could tell whether one was conversing or chatting by the way it feels, much as pre-Wittgenstein writers on psychology suggests that one could tell what one meant by introspection, and as pre-existentialist moral philosophers suggested that one could discern the right thing to do by the same means. But some of the writers who are discursively concerned with the problems he lists - e.g., Derrida and Heidegger - have tried to show that it is only with great difficulty, and with the help of considerable attention to history, that one has a chance of knowing whether one's discourse has a point, or whether one is just chattily running through routines laid down by the institutions within which one was brought up.

I take it that Rosenberg's excursus on the nature of natural science is intended to illustrate the difference between something that is clearly a conversation, clearly has a point, and "edifying philosophy's apparent pointlessness". Rosenberg suggests that if I had a better appreciation of the point of science, I should not be so attached to edification. My difficulty with his account of natural science parallels my difficulty with his account of philosophy's "distinctive mission". His remark that the conversation of natural science has an "inescapable 'third partner'" - the world - seems to me to hold for every area of culture. In the sense in which Galileo's observations "closed certain roads", so did Eliot's reading of Shelley and Samuel Adams' reading of the Stamp Act. Anything which can be formulated in a proposition and is believed by someone closes certain roads, in the

sense that the web of belief of those who come to believe that proposition will have to be readjusted to take account of it. But in order to have an account of natural science which makes it relevantly different from politics and poetics one would have to say a lot more about the role of observation in science than Rosenberg tries to say. One would have to overcome the standard objections to the logical empiricists' attempts to show that observation plays a special role in this area of culture. Perhaps they can be overcome, but it will not help to say with Rosenberg that

"Scientific revolutions' are not consequences of 'arbitrary' sociocultural forces and ... 'incommensurable theories' are not, for all their 'incommensurability', immune to rational comparison and evaluation." (124)

It would be very difficult to find someone who affirms what Rosenberg here denies, or who would quarrel with his claim that "A 'scientific revolution', despite its radical and holistic character, is still accountable to something. ..." (124) So, after all, are political and literary revolutions. Kuhnians are dubious about distinguishing distinct modes of accountability in physics and politics, not about the existence of accountability in either area.

Rosenberg runs together what I called "hermeneutics" and what I called "edifying philosophy" when he calls the activity of my "informed dilettante" an example of "edification". However, this is a common confusion and certainly as much my fault as his. In Part III of Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, I made three distinctions - one between "systematic philosophy" and "edifying philosophy", another between "epistemology" and "hermeneutics" and another between "normal discourse" and "abnormal discourse". I discussed a fourth, that between "analytic philosophy" and "Continental philosophy". All four have been run together by reviewers of the book, and I obviously did not do enough to keep them apart. I realized that I had written a weak last chapter when I found readers of my book concluding that I was calling on philosophers to go out and edify. I managed, alas, to produce the impression that I was both recommending edification as "the new mission of philosophy", and setting a good example by doing a bit of edification myself. This was disastrous. I had meant to suggest that there were about as many edifying philosophers in a century as there were great and original poets or revolutionary scientific theories - perhaps one or two, if the century was lucky. It is a status I would not dream of claiming for myself, nor do I wish to recommend edifying philosophy to the young as a career objective. Nor should I have come so close to identifying "Continental philosophy" with "edifying philosophy", but merely have remarked that tolerance for the latter was higher among philosophy professors on the Continent. The final chapter of the book was so badly constructed, however, that Alan Montefiore is quite justified in asking whether my book is not a case of "writing as if one was expressing a

view on a subject of common concern and then refusing to admit the relevance of critical treatment of it as such" (Montefiore 1983).

This question is raised by Montefiore in connection with a passage where I am discussing the difficulty which writers like Nietzsche (my paradigm "edifying philosopher") raise for philosophers who belong to the tradition which such writers criticize. I say there that such writers are misconstrued as having views about how things are. It would have been better to have said that they are misconstrued as having views about how certain particular things - things discussed by the tradition they would reject - are. Such writers would like to say "Don't try to shove me into one of the seventeen textbook positions on free will vs. determinism or realism vs. instrumentalism; I am trying to teach you, by example, a way of speaking which will enable you to hold no view on those questions". More traditional philosophers often reply: "Your position on a lot of other issues seems clearly to presuppose a familiar position on these topics - e.g., compatibilism on the free will question, instrumentalism in the philosophy of science. So you had better be prepared to defend yourself against the standard objections to these positions."

The edifying philosopher can always be challenged along the following lines: "How could you show that Q is a bad question save by showing that it presupposes P and that P is false? If you wish to say that Q', the question to which P is frequently viewed as an answer, is also a bad question, then must you not show that P', presupposed by Q', is false? At some point you are going to have to stop playing around and argue for the falsehood of some proposition, some proposition which states what you sneeringly call a 'textbook position on a familiar philosophical issue'." To this the edifying philosopher may be inclined to reply: "OK, since Q contains the term 'a' and I wish to drop this term, how about my denying the presupposition of Q that says that 'a' is a relevant and useful term in this context? That at least isn't a textbook position on a familiar issue." But now his critic rejoins that it is one thing to refuse to use a term and another to give a reason why one should drop it. Doing the latter involves saying why the phenomena presently handled with the help of that term are handled better in other ways.

This kind of exchange can go around another few dialectical turns, but the structure of the impasse is clear. The edifying philosopher wants to change the subject, but he can do so 'rationally' only by building a bridge between the old subject and the new. The traditionalist thinks that the present vocabulary of philosophical argumentation provides sufficient common resources to permit rational meta-philosophical argument about what problems ought to be discussed. He thinks that the language of current discussion, and the platitudes we exchange to provide contextual 'definitions of use' of the terms of that language, impose no limits on rational

argumentation. To fail to employ those, and only those, resources when urging changes in vocabulary is thus to be 'prophetic' or 'literary', or something other than 'rational'. By contrast, the edifying philosopher thinks that to agree to make use only of these resources is already to abandon hope of escaping from the stifling intellectual climate of the times.

Here we can recognize the same artificial problem as came up in connection with MacIntyre's "objective and rational standards". If there were such standards, or if there were a vocabulary employment of which constituted rationality, then they would be uncriticizable. There would be no way 'rationally' to substitute some new standards or some new vocabulary. I call this an artificial problem because I think that it is solved everyday, ambulando, by people gradually becoming bored with old platitudes, beginning to treat as 'literal' what they had once treated as 'metaphorical' and conversely, and insensibly ceasing to discuss Q not because they doubt its presupposition P but merely because they have found better things to discuss. The changes from pagan to Christian, from Christian to Enlightenment, and from Enlightenment to Romantic and historicist ways of speaking cannot be analyzed as 'rational', if that means that a speaker of 4th century B.C. Attic would 'in principle' have been able to formulate the arguments for and against making these changes. But nobody wants to say that this sequence of changes in the Western mind was 'irrational'. The opposition between 'rational argument' and 'irrational persuasion' is simply too coarse to describe what happens in intellectual history.

I take it that Montefiore would agree with this general line of thought. I certainly agree with him that "the acceptance of conditions of recognizability by one's actual or potential partners is a condition of one's own meaningful participation" (91) in conversation. One can't be too neologistic and still be said to be conversing. All I need for my purposes is a point Montefiore grants - that "Occasional floutings of the very norms on which such floutings are - by definition, as it were - parasitic are unlikely utterly to destroy them." (91 f.) You can alternate between argument, jokes, and narrative, while still carrying on the same conversation. At the points at which Montefiore and I do disagree, alas, Montefiore now seems to me largely right. I should not have run together "abnormal discourse", "hermeneutics", "sweeping historical stories", and "Continental philosophy" in the way that I did. I created far more confusion than any point I wanted to make could justify. So let me try to distinguish these four more clearly.

By "abnormal discourse" I meant the sort of discourse which sounds strange to the ears of a given audience, and is indeed so far removed from what they are accustomed to hearing that it is pointless for them to ask for definitions and translations. It is a matter of picking up the jargon,

getting into the swing, becoming assimilated to a new form of life. This is the sort of thing that happened when the Palestinian Christians began trying to convert Romans, when Galileo tried to persuade Paduan astronomers, when Wordsworth and Coleridge tried out their new poetic forms, and when Nietzsche tried to get the mind of Europe to overcome itself. The abnormal discourses - the ones which survive, rather than being dismissed merely as kooky or chatty - are the gifts of what Hegel called world-historical individuals, the sort of people whose names have to come into the narrative one tells about the development of our culture. But just as one cannot study to become another Galileo or another Jesus, one cannot study to be an edifying philosopher. The term names an achievement which succeeding generations may recognize, not an activity to which one might devote oneself.

By "hermeneutics" I meant an activity for which one can study, and to which one can devote oneself - a relatively routine sort of activity. One important part of this activity is telling "sweeping historical stories", the sort of dramatic narrative in which MacIntyre specializes and which, despite the renewed attention to the history of philosophy in America which Turnbull accurately describes, is still rather rare in American philosophical life. But just as Continental philosophy is not to be identified with edifying philosophy, so it is not to be identified with hermeneutics either. It is not to be identified with anything in particular. The only connection between the analytic-Continental distinction and the other distinctions I drew is that philosophy professors in France and Germany have, at the moment and on the average, more interest in the philosophers I call "edifying" and in sweeping historical narratives than their British and American colleagues.¹

Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature was meant to be an exercise in hermeneutics, partly reinterpreting old books in the light of new ones, partly the reverse. It included swatches of, and prospectuses for, a sweeping historical story. It was not meant to edify, but to suggest some new ways of connecting some of the big names in contemporary philosophical discussion with the names of some world-historical individuals. So it was unfortunate that in "Zur Gegenwartsfrage ..." I decried the attempt at 'bridge-building' between Continental and analytic philosophy. Montefiore is quite right in saying that such bridgebuilding is natural and inevitable. I hope he is wrong, however, in saying that I "provided plenty of open warning that the discourse of (my) book and paper is, broadly speaking, of the parasitically abnormal kind". I didn't think of either the book and the paper as using abnormal discourse, although of course I quoted, and occasionally (rather unhappily) tried to imitate, samples of such discourse. I thought of both the book and the paper as saying something like: "Try looking at what was happening in the seventeenth century, or is currently happening in American philosophy departments, as an episode in a nar-

rative that goes like this, rather than as episodes in the narratives offered by, e.g., Windelband or Reichenbach or Rosenberg - narratives which neglect the discontinuities to which I want to call attention." I took such redescription of history to be part of the 'normal' discourse of contemporary philosophy.

The unfortunate sentence about bridge-building was an awkward attempt to disassociate myself from the kind of view which Rosenberg expresses when he says that the works of Continental philosophers contain "positive insights ... which could, in principle, be recast in that logico-semantic expository idiom" which analytic philosophers "embraced as a methodological aid to avoiding the snares and pitfalls of linguistic appearance" (Rosenberg 1982). Rosenberg retains the notion that analytic philosophers are particularly good at "making sense", a feat accomplished by taking account of a distinction between the superficial and misleading surface appearances of language and the deep structure of language ("logical form"). I regard this "distinction between appearance and reality with respect to language" as part of what the later Wittgenstein enabled us to put aside. My most firmly held metaphilosophical view about analytic philosophy is that what Rosenberg calls "a more congenial expository idiom", the "logico-semantic", is no more perspicuous than Heideggerese, if "perspicuous" means "letting one see what is really there". If "perspicuous" means merely "drawing attention to the sort of thing which a given community has traditionally attended to", then the "logico-semantic" jargon is of course congenial to some communities, as Heideggerese is to others. But clarity is as relative as similarity and familiarity. The idiom one uses in philosophy will be the one which one thinks best calculated to convince a particular audience. Philosophical audiences are formed by the books they have previously read, books which have produced a view about what problems or people are crucial. If one wants to persuade an audience to give up beliefs about what questions are important, rather than simply to change their minds about which answers to give to familiar questions, then one has to persuade them that they have read the wrong (or not all the right) books. Rosenberg, like many analytic philosophers, thinks that "the logico-semantic idiom" is important not because it is easier to discuss certain questions in it, but because it is somehow intrinsically clearer. On the historicist view I share with MacIntyre, there is no such thing as intrinsic clarity, but only familiarity to an audience at a time. This means that philosophical reform starts with revisionist historiography, not with unveiling logical form.

The sort of bridge-building which Rosenberg envisages when he suggests that Continental thought can be recast in an analytic idiom has its counterpart in suggestions from the 'Continental' side that the "skills and techniques" of analytic philosophers might be better employed in dealing with the "more important" questions discussed in France and Germany than

in resolving the "barren" issues discussed in Britain and America. I think that the idea that analytic philosophers have skills and techniques which are something more than a familiarity with a vocabulary tailor-made for discussion of certain questions is the same sort of mistake as thinking that their favored idiom possesses an intrinsic clarity. Philosophical problematics do not change, or improve, independently of the historiography of philosophy. So I think the sort of bridge-building which tries to recast Continental insights in analytic jargon, or to apply analytic skills at Continental depth, will not get anywhere. We should stop trying to isolate what is especially good about analytic philosophy or what is especially good about Continental philosophy, and instead just encourage everybody to read everybody else's books. Then we may get the sort of unselfconscious bridge-building which gradually and simultaneously changes idiom, skills, problematic, and philosophers' sense of the past. This is the sort of bridge-building Montefiore commends, and he is entirely right in doing so.

On the other hand, if in fact nobody reads anybody else's books, if we wind up with two cultural traditions - so that 'philosophy' simply ceases to have a common referent on the two sides of the Channel - this would be, as I said in "Zur Gegenwartsfrage ...", no tragedy. It would be no more tragic than the current separation between departments of religion and of philosophy, or of philosophy and psychology. A desire for more complex conversation is not greatly impeded or facilitated by bureaucratic rearrangements within universities. It is of the essence of the sort of history I want to write (as opposed to the kind Rosenberg and MacIntyre want to write) that 'philosophy' does not name a natural kind. So it does not matter if it is used to refer to two different regional specialities, thus becoming straightforwardly ambiguous rather than simply vague.

I shall end my remarks on Montefiore's article by mentioning, hastily and with embarrassment, another unfortunate (because simply false) sentence to which he directs attention - the one which suggests that the analytic-Continental distinction coincides with the distinction between skill in argument and the ability to see visions (93). This sentence makes just the sort of mistake I criticized in the previous paragraph. Montefiore is quite right in saying that "the differences between analytic and Continental philosophy" cannot be "connected in any serious way with differences of personal gift, aptitude, or taste" (95).

Whereas Rosenberg thinks that I misunderstand the genius of analytic philosophy because of philosophical failures - not appreciating the special nature of natural science and the "distinction between appearance and reality with respect to language" - Bennett and Turnbull suggest that I fail as a sociologist. On their view, I overemphasize superficial features of the contemporary American philosophical scene while neglecting others

which are more significant. Bennett says that I overlook "the commitment to thoroughness, consistency, and integrity - to following the argument where it leads - to looking for the ways in which one's views on one matter may make trouble for one's views on another" (Bennett 1982, 98) characteristic of analytic philosophers. He suggests that this, rather than cleverness in argument, is what such philosophers mean by "philosophical ability". Certainly the moral virtue Bennett describes is something quite different from the intellectual talent I described. But I do not see that it is more prevalent among analytic philosophers than among classical philologists, electrical engineers, or Heideggerians. The virtue in question amounts to not succumbing to the temptation - increasingly available as one's intellectual sophistication increases - to patch up whatever one has been saying by ad hoc additions, to take advantage of the holistic character of knowledge and inquiry to save oneself from having to give up what one has previously said. As a matter of the sociology of the intellectuals, I do not think that philosophy in the English-speaking world changed in regard to possession of this virtue when it became 'analytic'. The analytic philosophers, the Thomists, the process philosophers, and the idealists, each wield idioms in which one is able to save any given position by making a distinction, denying a presupposition of a criticism, or making various other dialectical moves which can insulate propositions from competition with other propositions. There are no rules about when it is fair and when it is cheating to make such moves, either within analytic philosophy or within any of the other movements I have mentioned. There is only the movement's communal moral sense. Bennett thinks that the moral tone of the analytic movement is notably high, whereas I think that it is about average.

One reason one might hold Bennett's view is that there is more sharp and pointed criticism of other philosophers' positions within this movement. This is due to the difference between the atomist and the holist style. Whereas the only good reply to a revisionist history (e.g., Hegel's or MacIntyre's) or a systematically neologistic redescription of a topic (e.g., Whitehead's or Heidegger's) is an equally long alternative history or system, the analytic movement has encouraged the production of articles devoted to the defense of a single proposition, thus encouraging lots of short sharp discussion notes directed to the ipssisima verba of the author criticized (rather than to his 'outlook', or 'perspective', or something equally fuzzy). This difference does not, however, do much to show a higher moral tone. In assessing the prevalence of intellectual humility one has to look at reactions to criticism as well as to its presence. I am struck, as Bennett is not, by the compresence of so much detailed criticism with so little change of philosophical view (as opposed, for example, to grudging qualification and ad hoc distinction-making). Most careers in analytic philosophy - though by no means all - resemble careers in other sorts of philosophy and in other humanistic disciplines: one finds a

gimmick early on and defends it, with elaborate defensive qualifications, until retirement.

I am also struck, as Bennett is not, by the fact that analytic philosophy no longer has a sense of destiny, a sense of what Bennett calls "looking down on the past" (100). I see the contrast between the way we do things and the way others do them as essential to the vitality of intellectual movements, and I am inclined to think that analytic philosophy began to go stale, and perhaps even sour, about the time we lost the ability to state this contrast-effect historically. When that happened we had to resort to very general and ahistorical terms of self-commendation (e.g., Bennett's "intellectual humility" and "love of wisdom", or Rosenberg's "making sense").

Bennett thinks it absurd to suggest that "we had to stop looking back at the past as soon as we were compelled to stop looking down on it" (100), but I am not so sure. It seems to me that the looks back we analytic philosophers take nowadays offer considerably less interesting views than the ones we used to take when we were priding ourselves on having surpassed the giants on whose shoulders we were standing. In the days when what MacIntyre accurately calls the "millenarian" hopes of analytic philosophy were still alive, there was a kind of lively agonistic relation to the past. This has been replaced by what seems to me a less interesting relation - what Bennett calls "doing philosophy in the company of, and with the help of, some of the great philosophers of the past" (100). Whatever the advantages or disadvantages of this substitution of mateship for parricide, I think it is a less common attitude than Bennett's article suggests. I do not think that "living contact with great philosophical texts of past centuries" is very frequent among analytic philosophers, despite the good example set by Bennett himself. It is true, as Turnbull says, that there has recently been more work in the history of philosophy in Anglo-American philosophy departments than in the early decades. But it is still a marginal activity. Further, although such work has often gotten off to a good start (e.g., with Vlastos' and Owen's work in Greek philosophy, and with Strawson's and Bennett's Kant books), it seems to me that these various attempts to revitalize the study of the history of philosophy lost momentum precisely because readers of Vlastos or Bennett typically have no sweeping historical narrative to serve as a matrix within which to conduct such study. The assumption of "continuity of problems" which Bennett shares with Rosenberg and MacIntyre would lead to lively and interesting work only if it were seen as a highly debatable assumption rather than an unquestioned starting-point. The fact that there is virtually no dialogue between the sort of revisionist historiography of philosophy offered by Heidegger, Foucault and Blumenberg on the one hand, and Anglo-American historians of philosophy on the other, suggests that this assumption is made too easily.

Bennett believes that "it is one of the glories of analytic philosophy that it throws in this great extra bonus" - viz., "living contact with great philosophical texts of past centuries" (100). This suggests that Bennett thinks that people like T.H. Green and Bergson and Dewey did not have such contact, or not as much of it. Such a suggestion would only be plausible if Bennett is seen as agreeing with Rosenberg that analytic philosophy had found a hermeneutic key for reading these texts, one which was previously unavailable - presumably the sense of the "distinction between appearance and reality with respect to language" which I discussed above, the realization that language is not "a transparent medium for the expression of thoughts". I am not sure to what extent Bennett actually would sympathize with Rosenberg's Tractarian account of this matter. But some such account of some such distinctive philosophical discovery is needed if he is to claim this particular glory for analytic philosophy.

I think that Bennett is right to rebuke me for invoking the distinction between the sophist and the sage. That is, as he says, "too crude to capture the reality of analytic philosophy as currently practiced" (100). A slightly more apt distinction would be one that expresses the disagreement between Bennett and myself about the sociology of the analytic movement at the present time. Where Bennett sees the love of wisdom having been given a new lease on life by a discovery of new truth, I see a self-deceptive attempt to continue a decaying tradition frustrated by intellectual honesty. My picture is of a movement which, deprived of millenarian hope, is trying rather desperately to say simultaneously "We are doing the same sort of thing as Aristotle and Descartes and Kant", and "We are doing it with the aid of some insights which make us able to do it much better". What I called the "slow suicide of the notion of logical analysis" seems to me to have left us quite unable to say what those insights might be. For lack of such ability, we have, on my view, become increasingly parochial, defensive and self-involved. MacIntyre is quite right in saying that my article was "a work of millenarian consolation". My sense of the analytic movement nowadays is of a community of inquirers who are beginning to feel the effects of their isolation from the larger intellectual world and from the past, and who badly need some consolation. Bennett sees it as a community which has found an invigorating and self-renewing sense of moral purpose in its ability to do philosophy in a new and better way. It sounds as if we were talking about two different batches of people. That is a frequent phenomenon when two sociological observers with different philosophical leanings describe the same community. They tend to take different individuals as representative.

Turnbull and I also offer different sociological reports. Turnbull sees our difference as that between the inhabitant of a trendy milieu, in which current fashions are matters of importance, and the inhabitant of a more relaxed and reflective part of the philosophical world, a region in which

the big broad picture can be more easily seen. There is certainly something to this, but I should like to view it instead as a matter of answering distinct questions. Turnbull is answering the question "What is American philosophy like these days?" and I am answering the question "Is there anything in American philosophy to justify the hopes of German philosophers who are discouraged with their own traditions and inclined to look hopefully across the Atlantic?"

Turnbull rightly points out that the majority of American philosophers do not think of themselves as fighting it out in a "jungle of competing research programs" in the "hot" and "central" areas of philosophy - the scene I described in my article. Such fascination with trendiness is, indeed, a relatively local phenomenon.² It is also a generational phenomenon. Young philosophers who have just received their Ph.D. tend to take the question "what's new?" more seriously than they do ten years down the road. Then, having had to teach lots of courses on historical material, they begin to feel more like lovers of wisdom, coworkers with the great dead philosophers, than they had felt on leaving graduate school. On the other hand, it is just the question "what's new?" - in the sense of "where is the action?" - which is on the lips of German philosophy students arriving on our shores, hoping to bring back to Europe something of the movement which was sent into exile in the '30's.

MacIntyre claims that my characterizations of analytic philosophy attach too much importance to the logical empiricists, and to notions like 'logical analysis'. Turnbull echoes this when he reminds me that there is a lot going on in American philosophy departments which is not philosophy of language or metaphysics. My defense is that if we are going to keep on using the term 'analytic philosophy' at all we cannot let it mean simply "the (vacuous) least common denominator of Moore, Russell, Wittgenstein, Ramsey, Popper, Lewis, Sheffer, Ryle and Austin". (These are the names MacIntyre cites in urging that many analytic philosophers were influenced "only marginally or not at all" by logical empiricism, a claim which seems to me considerably over-stated.) We have to let the term have, if not a millenarian sense, at least a sufficiently ideological one to explain why it once served as a rallying cry, and why it serves even now as a beacon of hope to young European philosophers. So when Turnbull, at the end of his article, runs through five features which mark a lot of work in the "deep structure" of American philosophy (as opposed to "a small number of clever people" on both coasts) (Turnbull 1982, 236 f.), I am inclined to agree that these features are there. But I would rejoin that listing them does not help us see contemporary American philosophy as an example of 'analytic philosophy'.

I think that Turnbull is right in saying that a lot of analytic and non-analytic philosophers in America, and most German philosophers, would

agree in rejecting the idea that intuition gives us "a peek at REALITY", and would be content to say that intuition "evinces some feature of our language which must be taken into account" (235). There would be exceptions to this claim, notably among those philosophers who, under the aegis of Kripke's "new theory of reference", have joined in the swing away from holism and towards a kind of neo-Aristotelianism. But, apart from these exceptions, something like such a consensus does seem to be a worldwide mark of philosophy in the late twentieth century. Those who were not persuaded by Russell and Carnap of the 'logical' or 'linguistic' character of philosophical problems have been persuaded by Heidegger and Gadamer and Derrida that language goes all the way down. So I agree with Turnbull that American philosophy is, in an underground sort of way, "rather closer to developments in Continental philosophy than it is generally thought to be".³ But it seems to me that only by not, as the French say, "thematizing" this consensus is analytic philosophy able to retain anything like a coherent self-image.

Perhaps Turnbull and I could agree that the distinction between analytic and nonanalytic philosophy is no longer of much interest. Bennett and Rosenberg, however, would not be happy with this conclusion, nor would the majority of American philosophers who count themselves as "analysts". At the moment, analytic philosophers in America seem to me to be trying to have things both ways. Many of them want to put aside the écrasez l'infâme rhetoric of the early, millenarian, days of analytic philosophy and to be genially receptive to contemporary Franco-German philosophy. At the same time they thank Providence that they themselves were born under the sign of "analysis". In the meantime, the generation of French and German philosophers which is turning in the direction of analytic philosophy hopes to find a movement which, if not millenarian, is at least heading in a specific direction. I suspect that they will be disappointed. Despite the reigning consensus, philosophical activity on both sides of the Channel seems to me presently in a trough rather than at a peak. Neither Americans who look to the Continent nor Europeans who look across the Channel are likely to find a new wave on whose crest they will be carried. They will find only ripples left by stones thrown some time ago.

Köhler's article contains few if any criticisms of my article, and instead shows the connections between my views on metaphilosophical topics and on some first-order issues. I am very grateful to him for his careful and sympathetic treatment of my writings, and especially for the concluding pages of his paper, which emphasize and clarify my attempt to blur the boundaries between disciplines, particularly between 'literature', 'science' and 'philosophy' - and, of course, between the Naturwissenschaften and the Geisteswissenschaften. From my point of view, making too much of the latter distinction has been a failing common to both analytic and continental philosophers. Both have, as MacIntyre says of Reichenbach, described

not natural science but "natural-science-interpreted-in-logical-empiricist-terms". The Deweyan view that human physiology, moral philosophy, sociology and the novel of manners are tools useful for different purposes, rather than differing in "method" or "irreducibly distinct subject-matter", seems to me the principal moral of Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. The unfortunate notions of "reducibility" and "irreducibility" have dominated practically all the lines of philosophical thought (Continental as well as analytic) in our century. These notions parallel those of "compatible with Scripture" and "incompatible with Scripture" as used by theologians. If we are ever to stop treating our favorite sort of scientist as a priest-surrogate, and to stop treating either Nature or Man as God-surrogates, then we shall have to stop worrying about whether a given way of speaking is "reducible" or instead "necessary". We shall have to see the various vocabularies we use, and the various institutions (e.g., laboratory science, the judiciary) which crystallize around these vocabularies, as instruments for doing something which somebody wants done, or once did want done.

The only quibble I have with Köhler's way of putting all this is with his use of Entscheidung in his penultimate sentence: "Es scheint, daß die Unverzichtbarkeit der Personensprache - wenn sie denn unverzichtbar ist - Ausdruck einer Art von Entscheidung ist, nur das Verhalten menschlicher Wesen moralisch zu bewerten". (Köhler 1983, III) I agree that questions of Unverzichtbarkeit boil down to questions about what we want to do, but I think it misleading to suggest that such questions are settled by "decision" as opposed to "inquiry" or "argument" or "discovery". Such antitheses seem plausible only if one retains something like the Cartesian opposition between intellect as a quasi-visual faculty and will as a faculty which chooses but does not see. This kind of duality chimes with the various dualisms between "hard" and "soft" science, between literature and science, and between "hard" and "soft" philosophy which it seems to me important to overcome. The position I called "epistemological behaviorism" wants to picture the Quinean network of belief and desire as seamless, in the sense that any change of belief about anything may give us reason to alter a belief or a desire somewhere else. On this picture, there is no place for "decisionism" or "voluntarism", for there is no such thing as getting outside the web which constitutes oneself, looking down upon it, and deciding in favor of one portion rather than another. There is no room for a faculty of choice any more than for a faculty of mental vision. So I would say that the question "Should we treat only the actions of human beings as morally significant?" or the question "Can we describe humans in neurological terms and still retain a sense of the moral dignity of certain collections of neurons?" becomes apt only when somebody gives us a detailed set of considerations in favor of changing our ways or our descriptions, only when a long story is told, only when the question becomes what William James called a "live option". This is, I think, the force of the

traditional pragmatist claim that only when "philosophical" questions are given some links with "practice" are we in a position to think about them. From this point of view, pragmatism, or epistemological behaviorism, is the opposite of decisionism.

Another area in which the topic of decisionism is relevant is that of semantics, the area in which Köhler invokes Dummett's distinction between "realist" and "antirealist" theories of meaning. I am dubious about this distinction. Dummett uses it in such a way as to leave the impression that the choice between these two theories of meaning for a given area of discourse (e.g., moral judgments, or statements about other minds, or about the past, or about metaphilosophy) is unmotivated, a matter of philosophical taste. But I am not sure that anybody ever makes this choice. Dummett's favorite model for philosophical preference - the choice between intuitionistic and Platonist metamathematics - seems to me an attempt to introduce an artificial neatness into metaphilosophy by modeling philosophy on an area of inquiry which has no 'practical' implications at all. The topic of intuitionism in metamathematics is the closest contemporary analogue to the sort of question which the scholastics used to be accused of debating - a question which has no ramifications in any other area of culture. Dummett's attempt to see it as modeling, in petto, lots of the traditional "great questions of philosophy" seems to me to introduce the sort of spurious precision typical of suggestions that a new, true, map of philosophical space has been discovered, thus enabling us to see what "the real options" are (and, typically, posing them in such an eerily abstract way as to suggest that only an act of "decision", or the development of an informed "taste", will let us resolve them).

The irrelevance of Dummett's distinction to the issues I want to discuss is suggested by Köhler's remark that "Ein Antirealist nimmt selbstverständlich nicht an, alle wahrheitsfähigen Sätze seien an sich entweder wahr oder falsch; des Tertium-non-datur gilt für ihn nicht" (103). As far as I can see neither Davidson nor Dewey nor I have any reason to doubt the principle of 'tertium non datur'. This principle is central to Dummett's account of anti-realism, but it is irrelevant to a lot of the philosophers whom he wishes to bring under the "anti-realist" rubric. For Davidson, the issue is whether there is anything more to be said about truth after one has described the inferential connections exhibited in the behavior of speakers of a language. He thinks there is not, and in particular that here is no point to the question "Is the linguist describing the truth-conditions of the sentences of the language, or rather their assertibility-conditions?" To say that this is not a useful question is to say that 'true' is not the sort of term which is going to get explained, defined, analyzed, or usefully contrasted with some mighty opposite such as 'assertible'. I think that Davidson is right about this, and I regret that I obscured this Davidsonian point in Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature by trying to associate it with

the Deweyan claim that "Truth is warranted assertibility" or the Peircean one that "Truth is the opinion fated to be held at the end of inquiry".⁴ Both these claims attempt to define a term which needs no definition. We search for definitions only because of the bad question "What does truth add to assertibility?" - a question which is as bad as "What does moral rightness add to being the best thing to do in the circumstances?"

The trouble with both questions is that they suggest that the fact that one could go wrong when deliberating what to believe or to do means that there is some overriding factor, different in kind than the sorts of concrete details which one takes into account in one's deliberations, something called 'truth' or 'rightness'. Davidson and Dewey join in debunking this suggestion, whereas Dummett's attempt to make an interesting distinction between two sorts of semantics reinforces it. So when Köhler says that perhaps Davidson and I prefer truth-conditional semantics because we think thereby "die realistische Spitze nehmen zu können" (105), I would reply that neither of us recognizes the presupposed distinction. It is more a matter of "die realistische Spitze nivellieren". Davidson, as I understand him, wants to dissolve the realism-antirealism issue (as I certainly do). It is only Dummett who wants to keep it going, in the interest of his own account of the history of philosophy - his own description of where the crucial issues come, of what problems are real and important.

As I said at the outset when discussing MacIntyre, it seems to me that it is one's narrative account of the history of philosophy - the implicit or explicit *Geistesgeschichte* in terms of which one reads contemporary discussions - which determines which controversies will seem significant and which scholastic.⁵ So I would reiterate that my differences from my critics are probably best argued out by comparing and contrasting our respective stories about the history of philosophy. Such questions as "Did the analytic philosophers find a new hermeneutic key?" (as Bennett and Rosenberg suggest) or "Was analytic philosophy a distinctive and radical movement or just an unfortunately millenarian way of describing the twentieth-century drift away from 'peeking at REALITY' and towards 'inspecting what is built into our language, our form of life?'" (as suggested by Turnbull and Montefiore) are best discussed by spinning historical narratives. That is why I do not think that I have, or could have, answered my critics in these pages. All I could do was to suggest how long-winded and complicated a full-fledged discussion of the issues they have opened up would have to be. I am most grateful to them for their attention to my work, and for giving me a chance to think out my views more fully.*

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Footnotes

1. As an example of the sort of thing I have in mind, consider the account of modernism and postmodernism offered by Habermas in his recent lectures at the Collège de France. The idea of getting straight on the contemporary philosophical scene by retelling a story that starts with Hegel and runs up through Nietzsche and Weber and Heidegger to Foucault would not occur to most Anglo-Saxon philosophers. I discuss Habermas' narrative in "Habermas and Lyotard on Post-modernity", forthcoming in Praxis International.
2. A button being passed out at the meetings of the Western (i.e., Mid-western) Division of the American Philosophical Association last year read "Stamp Out Coastal Arrogance!" Sympathetic Californians who admired the button were coolly informed that it referred to both coasts.
3. Indeed, this is a point which I made much of in my 1982, XVIII-XXI.
4. I try to disjoin Davidson from Peirce, and to offer a defense of Davidson against Dummett, in "Pragmatism, Davidson, and Truth", forthcoming in a Festschrift for Davidson, edited by E. LePore, to be published 1985 by the University of Minnesota Press.
5. I argue for the importance of Geistesgeschichte as canon-formation in "The Historiography of Philosophy: Four Genres", forthcoming in Philosophy in History, ed. R. Rorty, J.B. Schneewind and Q. Skinner (Cambridge University Press, 1984).

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