the everyday world. My teaching experience suggests that beginners need to be able to relate philosophy to their own life experience as well as to the rest of their academic studies. In addition it is at least an interesting contention that philosophy arises out of wider intellectual, social and political contexts. Hence students may be better able to understand the question of scepticism by locating it in terms of the experience and practices of advertising, political broadcasts, confidence tricksters or selling techniques rather than discussion of tables and chairs on the technical formulations of Hume's epistemology. Grappling with philosophical problems in this phenomenological fashion can also help us to see how scepticism can be disarmed. We do, for instance, question the methods, motives and language of advertisers, we can check on their claims, the gap between statements and conclusions and produce more rather than less certain judgements as a result.

Secondly on this issue there is the rather surprising suppression of the sort of arguments that Wittgenstein, Winch, Habermas, and others have raised about the social construction of knowledge and hence of philosophy itself. In the final paragraph O'Hear concludes that "moral and political argument has both a logical and an empirical aspect" (p. 299) but he ignores the counter claim that philosophy, logic, science, epistemology, moral and political theory also have a social, political and even economic aspect. In two short but suggestive passages, quoting D. Wiggins against D. Parfit on human nature, and some references to Aristotle and Bradley on their social location of ethics (pp. 251-252, 272-273) this style of argument is noted but contributions from Wittgenstein, Rorty and Oakeshott that argue philosophy is a conversation, that languages and knowledge are social, that forms of thought and theories need to be located in forms of life or practices are played down.

Referring to the re-emergence of rationalist individualism in Nozick and Rawls when compared to Bradley and Aristotle, O'Hear notes "the distance we have travelled from the perspective in which the rootless ego castigated by Bradley is really a fiction" (p. 277). But the route is not just academic but rather it is cultural, social, economic, and political. Hence the full significance to modern philosophy of Alistair Macintyre's After Virtue could have been revealed and tied in with contemporary French post-structuralist and British contributions to the "Fate of Modernity Debate".

In terms of my concerns the last two chapters are by far the most helpful in reducing my worries, though more on the nature of politics and the state would have been useful. The first three chapters will be a great help to specialist philosophers. But I feel that the book lacks general appeal to joint honours students and the interested amateur. Even in philosophy departments it is unlikely to nudge Bertrand Russell's Problems of Philosophy from the top spot on many first year philosophy reading lists.

John R. Gibbins

Moral Responses

Steven Lukes, Marxism and Morality, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985, 163pp, £12.50 hb

This is an uneven and inconsistent book - but it is not without value for all that. It reads as though it has been produced by tackling together disparate bits of writing. Nevertheless it gives a readable and quite helpful introductory survey of some of the major issues raised by the Marxist treatment of morality.

The book starts in a purposeful and confident tone, by describing a familiar paradox in the Marxist approach to morality. On the one hand, Marxists have tended to scorn any appeal to principles of justice or right, claiming that their own critique of capitalism is ahistorical and scientific in character. Morality is rejected as mere ideology: the product of particular historical conditions, the expression of specific class interests. At the same time, however, Marxist writing - and not least that of Marx himself - abounds in moral judgements, and contains a powerful, unmistakably moral, indictment of capitalist society. Many of the central concepts of Marx's theory - alienation, exploitation, oppression, for example - have strong evaluative overtones which are an ineliminable part of their meaning and force. In short, Marxism seems both to repudiate morality and to involve it.

Having spelled out this paradox, Lukes then boldly claims to "resolve" it with the help of a distinction between the "morality of Recht" and the "morality of emancipation". The morality of Recht is the morality of rights, which has formed an important (and currently flourishing) part of the liberal tradition. However, as Lukes argues, this theory is founded upon assumptions of a universal and unchanging, individualistic human nature, convincingly criticised by Marx. By contrast, Marxism involves a theory of emancipation: "a conception of the agent as a (potentially) self-directing being who achieves self-realisation in mutual identification and community with others" (p. 78). It envisages a classless society in which alienation has been overcome and in which the very conditions that require principles of justice and right have "withered away". That is to say, his own claims to the contrary notwithstanding, Marx does not so much reject morality as develop an alternative morality, based upon a "deeper and richer" concept of liberation than the negative and individualistic account characteristic of liberalism (p. 149).

This is a worthwhile and important line of thought: or at least it can be if it is thought through properly. Here, unfortunately, it is not. The book's account of the concept of emancipation is perhaps its most disappointing part. A sketchy treatment of Marx's theories of freedom, alienation and future communist society rapidly dissolves into a welter of sceptical doubts and questions, which seem more like an agenda for further work than a finished argument.

These doubts, however, become the vehicle for a
criticism of Marxism which constitutes the predominant theme of the latter part of the book. Marx was reluctant to speculate about future society; and this fear of "utopianism", Lukes argues, "has consistently inhibited [Marxism] from spelling out what the morality of emancipation implies for the future constitution and organisation of society" (pp. 45-56). In short, so far from developing an alternative morality of emancipation, Marxism is now criticised precisely for failing to do so.

In this way, the paradox with which the book begins is reinstated, in the form of a "sub-paradox": Marxism is an anti-utopian utopianism. But Lukes's treatment of this new paradox is quite different. He makes no attempt to "resolve" it. Quite the contrary, he uses it as the basis for criticising Marxism. Marx's anti-utopianism, he argues, has stood in the way of creative and imaginative thought about future possibilities - Marx's anti-moralism prevented him from developing an alternative moral vision; the ideal of emancipation is a mirage.

This is a familiar enough line of criticism of Marxism. It is best known, perhaps, in the context of the argument about means and ends. Through copious quotation, Lukes usefully presents the debates on this issue which occurred in the wake of the Russian revolution (between Lenin, Luxemburg, Kautsky, Trotsky) and in response to the Moscow Trials of the 1930s (Serge, Koestler, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty). As Lukes neatly puts it, the question is: "what is not to be done?" What actions, if any, are morally intolerable even if they are believed necessary to further the socialist cause? Although Lukes at one point notes that "Marxists across the world ... have been in the forefront of struggles against tyranny and oppression ... often in the name of human rights" (pp. 61-62), he tends to endorse the charge that Marxism, because of its distrust of morality, is incapable of an adequate moral response to these issues.

Quite apart from this problem that this cuts across the earlier line of argument, it is not satisfactory. The scientific and anti-utopian theme in Marxism is, indeed, an insistent one. It is also clear, however, that Marxism has been an extraordinarily powerful moral force and the source of the most potent and influential modern utopian vision; the ideal of a classless society in which all individuals can develop their powers and capacities in an all-round way. In short, the paradox of Marx's anti-utopian utopianism is just as real, and just as much in need of resolution, as his anti-moralism.

The whole issue of the Marxist attitude to morality is a complex and important one, which raises some of the fundamental questions of moral philosophy in their most pressing modern form. Though this book gives a helpful and clear introductory account of some of these issues, an altogether deeper and more thorough-going treatment is needed if they are to be resolved.

Sean Sayers

Freudian Turns


It has long seemed appropriate to read Freud's case histories as if they were short stories. Indeed Freud himself suggested the analogy. The majority of the contributors to In Dora's Case are teachers of literature whose literary approach is also informed by a Lacanian emphasis upon linguistics. (A relevant piece by Lacan is included.) It must be said that viewing Freud's "Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria" as a "narrative" does make a lot of sense. What Freud recounts is, after all, the drama of a young woman hopelessly embroiled in a complicated network of sexual passion, adultery, betrayal and illness. Moreover, ever the psychoanalytic detective, Freud shares with his readers the clues to the mystery of Dora's illness. But, of course, the story is left unfinished and a more fundamental mystery is unsolved. "Dora" abruptly terminated the analysis, and Freud felt obliged to raise, but leave unanswered, the question, "What did she really want from the analysis?" This in turn suggests the further question of what women in general want. The problem of female sexuality is thus at the heart of Dora's case. What is doubtful is whether the literary, and mostly Lacanian, approach really sheds much light on it.

The most explicitly Lacanian pieces are hard going, and anyone unfamiliar with Lacan's work will undoubtedly be mystified. Those unsympathetic to Lacanian theory will also find much to reinforce their hostility in claims such as "The penis ... becomes the epistemological object par excellence for Freud ... his penis must fill the epistemological hole represented by Dora" (pp. 6-7). It is thus unfortunate that the editors do not supply any kind of introduction to Lacan's work. Equally it is regrettable that they do not really attempt to draw out and summarise the major lines of interpretation contained in the book. Perhaps because of the Lacanian bias it is refreshing to read the piece by Maria Ramas (significantly the only historian amongst the book's contributors). She confronts the patriarchal assumptions of Freudian theory in a direct and accessible fashion, and argues that Dora (Ramas is the only contributor to give "Dora" her real name) to be a victim not of the desires Freud claimed for her, but of "the unconscious belief that feminity [sic?] bondage and debasement were synonymous" (p. 176). This belief is in turn subjected to a thorough historical and political critique. Yet, for all its originality, Ramas's piece is discussed only once, and then ungraciously, as advancing "little beyond a ... somewhat tedious resume of Freud's text" (p. 183).

Of course the scrupulous nature of a Lacanian attention to the text of Freud's report yields some insights. For instance, several writers rightly ironise the point at which, defending his discussion of sexual matters with a