

## ABSTRACTS FROM *INQUIRY*

Volume 17 (1974), No. 1

### FROM AN INTENTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE

RICHARD L. SMITH

In order to expound and defend the intentionalist thesis that human actions are intentionally determined by persons, selves, or agents *themselves* I first argue that teleological explanation, even though it is consistent with physicalism and scientifically respectable in the sense of being an attempt to establish the conditions under which things and events occur and to formulate laws that express such dependencies, is not exactly coordinate with and replaceable by mechanistic explanation. Then, I argue that living human beings must be *seen as* teleological systems relative to the purposes and goals of intentional activities even though the human body may come as close as possible to being a mechanistic system relative to physical responses and electro-chemical-mechanical movements on the basis of certain insights drawn from Wittgenstein's works. Finally, I expound and defend a very strong version of the intentionalist thesis drawn from C. A. Campbell's "Is 'Freewill' a Pseudo-Problem?" and criticize an influential argument against this view which is due to C. D. Broad, "Determination, Indeterminism, and Libertarianism."

### ACTION, MOVEMENT, AND NEUROPHYSIOLOGY

DON LOCKE

Action is to be distinguished from (mere) bodily movement not by reference to an agent's intentions, or his conscious control of his movements (Sect. I), but by reference to the agent as cause of those movements, though this needs to be understood in a way which destroys the alleged distinction between agent-causation and event-causation (Sect. II). It also raises the question of the relation between an agent and his neurophysiology (Section III), and eventually the question of the compatibility of purposive and mechanistic accounts of human behaviour (Sect. IV). For the two to be compatible it is necessary that, e.g. intentions and brain states be not merely co-existent but also causal equivalents, in a way which allows for the mechanical explanation of teleological states—or *vice versa*.

### EMERGENCY BEHAVIOR

LARRY WRIGHT

There is a class of actions—reflex actions—which seem not to spring from any intention, but for which we nevertheless wish to take responsibility. It is suggested that these actions are appropriately said to be done intentionally, in spite of our never having an intention to do them. And this grammatical anomaly indicates that the behavior in question requires a special kind of account; one which might be characterized as derivative: parasitic on the more paradigmatic sort of action explanation.

### PLESSNER'S PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IMPLICATIONS FOR ROLE THEORY AND POLITICS

FRED R. DALLMAYR

Philosophical anthropology is a broad-gauged study of man drawing on the findings of empirical sciences and the humanities. The paper is intended as a tribute to one of the pioneers

in this field. The first part outlines central features of Plessner's conception, focusing on man's instinctual deficiency and his "eccentric position" in the world; man from this perspective is an "embodied" creature in the dual sense of experiencing the world through his bodily organs and of "having" a body and being able to reflect on his mundane situation. In social terms the perspective implies that man can find himself only through embodiment in institutional settings and role patterns—settings which, however, remain open to reinterpretation and revision. Subsequently, Plessner's outlook is compared and contrasted with alternative views of the human condition. According to Gehlen, man's instinctual deficiency and openness need to be corrected through institutional stability and the standardization of role structures. Reviewing leading writings of the "counter-culture," a final section explores contemporary anti-institutional trends which see man as a fugitive from social constraints and his search for self-fulfilment as antithetical to role patterns.

### PROBLEMS IN RELATING THEORY TO PRACTICE

JENNY MELLOR

Two kinds of difficulties, which should be made explicit, face a researcher undertaking empirical work in an institution. First, he must explain how he chooses his theoretical framework, insofar as what he sees and the information he obtains will depend far more than is often admitted on the type of questions he asks. Secondly, he must try to clarify the way in which he adapts his original intentions in the light of the practical difficulties that occur in the actual research situation, and how he interprets the evidence he finally decides is relevant. These points are illustrated by the study of an "open" Borstal for girls. The aim of the study was to try to understand the workings of the institution, to outline the process which led to the Borstal sentence, and to attempt to discover the way the girls looked at the situation. The research was motivated by Matza's guiding principle, "to be true to the phenomena," but even this, as this paper tries to show, does not lead to an unambiguous body of facts which can be presented unequivocally as "findings."

### DISCUSSIONS

#### I. AN ANARCHIST REPLY TO SKINNER ON 'WEAK' METHODS OF CONTROL

CARL G. HEDMAN

B. F. Skinner has argued that those who are serious about ending war, pollution, etc., must face the fact that the received methods of changing behavior have proved ineffective. According to Skinner, we must replace "weak" methods of control such as control *via* praise and blame and control *via* Rousseau's "natural contingencies of things" with Skinner's "strong" methods of control. It is argued that Skinner's case for the *continued* ineffectiveness of such methods of control rests on the unargued assumption that we are stuck with the highly centralized forms of social organization that characterize present-day advanced societies, forms that place barriers between man and man and between man and nature. Drawing on the anarchist tradition in political thought, it is argued that a radical decentralization—which cannot be dismissed as utopian—would bring a new effectiveness to what Skinner dismisses as "weak" forms of control.

#### II. IN DEFENCE OF PAUL FEYERABEND

HANS PETER DUERR

### REVIEW DISCUSSIONS:

#### I. THE LATER HUSSERL

A.-T. Tymieniecka (ed.). *Analecta Husserliana*, Vol. II, WOLFE MAYS.

## II. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS AND PHENOMENOLOGY

W. Mays and S. C. Brown (eds.). *Linguistic Analysis and Phenomenology*, MAURICE ROCHE.

## III. TOWARDS A MORE HISTORICAL CONCEPTION OF BIOLOGY?

M. Ruse, *The Philosophy of Biology*, NILS ROLL-HANSEN.

## Volume 17 (1974), No. 2

## DO WE REALLY WANT A MORAL JUSTIFICATION OF OUR BASIC IDEALS?

JAMES R. FLYNN

It is commonly held that when there is a conflict of basic ideals, e.g. a humane man *vs.* an elitist or a Social Darwinist or someone who holds a revenge ethic, no moral justification is possible. This paper attempts to go further and show that such a justification would be undesirable, would carry a price few would be willing to pay. The thesis is developed to shed light not only on classical thinkers (Plato, Locke, Kant) but also on the attractions of naturalism and intuitionism—and to suggest the need for a nonmoral approach to justification, an approach emphasizing appeals to logic, self-interest, and personal happiness.

## ON BEING HUMAN

ROBIN ATTFIELD

After a clarification of the concept of concept the project of analysing the concept of man is defended (I), and it is concluded that to be human involves being both of a certain anatomical structure and a member of a race most of whose members are capable of theoretical and practical reasoning (II). Since, further, the development of essential capacities is necessary for members of a species to flourish, the ability to exercise the essential human capacities for theoretical and practical reasoning is necessary for a man to live well (III). Besides its bearing on ideals of human flourishing, this conclusion would have a crucial bearing on moral issues, were it granted that there is an internal relation between morality and human flourishing (IV). Finally, the conclusions of III are sustained against further objections (V). Educational and other practical implications of these conclusions are remarked upon throughout.

## CAN PHILOSOPHY BE ORIGINAL

T. E. BURKE

To what extent does the fact that a philosopher, in order to communicate, is constrained to use the same language and the same concepts as other members of his society, inhibit him from developing genuinely original modes of thought? Section I of this paper outlines arguments for the view that any attempt at radical originality, of the kinds traditionally expected of philosophy, must involve misuse of these shared concepts. Section II, however, on the basis of an examination of what it is for different members of a society to use the same concepts, argues that so doing does not rule out important differences over instantiations and logical interrelations. It then attempts to show that this latitude for difference is adequate to allow for certain kinds of philosophical originality, for example, that shown in the Whiteheadian philosophy of organism.

## OBJECTIVISM AND THE STUDY OF MAN (PART I)

HANS SKJERVHEIM

The purpose of this study is to show that the distinctions made by Wilhelm Dilthey and Max Weber between the natural sciences and the "Geisteswissenschaften" are sound in principle,

*pace* the arguments to the contrary within classical logical empiricism. It is held that intentional contexts are characteristic of social science. Intentional contexts are held to be more important in psychology than mental *states*, like toothache. If logical behaviorism is to have any plausibility, it has to be shown how intentional contexts can be dealt with. Carnap's programme was to reconstruct scientific discourse within a truth-functional language. It is argued that his reduction of belief-sentences was not successful. It is further argued that in the logical empiricist's discussions of the problem of *Verstehen*, only motivational understanding is taken account of, what Max Weber calls observational understanding is overlooked as we try to show through a discussion of Theodore Abel's well-known explication of "the operation called *Verstehen*." From this it is concluded that the foundational problems of social science are different from those of natural science, and this conclusion is further elaborated through an exposition of views held by authors in the German tradition, which, in the fifties, many philosophers held to be obsolete.

#### DISCUSSIONS:

##### I. CAPITALISM AND THE DESIRE FOR PRIVATE GAIN

THOMAS S. TORRANCE

That capitalism is a superior economic system because it elicits productive effort from individuals by utilizing the desire for material improvement, is a contention that can be defended if it could be established that this desire is a universal human motive and is to be found in non-capitalist as well as capitalist societies. In addition, it can be argued that within a market economy, if men pursue what is in their own interest, their actions are likely to have the unintended consequence that many others benefit; for under capitalism, one man's gain is not necessarily another's loss. Both these points are raised in reply to Richard Schmitt's alleged refutation of "the psychological defence of capitalism" (*Inquiry*, Vol. 16 [1973], No. 2).

##### II. REPLY TO TORRANCE

RICHARD SCHMITT

#### REVIEW DISCUSSIONS:

##### I. THE IDEOLOGY OF PHILOSOPHY

R. J. Bernstein, *Praxis and Action*, R. A. SHARPE.

##### II. HUMANISTIC SOCIAL SCIENCE

Maurice Roche, *Phenomenology, Language and the Social Sciences*, H. P. RICKMAN.

#### Volume 17 (1974), No. 3

##### OBJECTIVISM AND THE STUDY OF MAN (PART II)

HANS SKJERVHEIM

##### IMPOSSIBLE OBJECTS

KAREL LAMBERT

This paper deals with the Meinong–Russell controversy on nonsubsistent objects. The first part notes the similarity of certain contemporary semantical developments to Meinong's theory of nonsubsistent objects. Then it lays out the major features of Meinong's famous theory,

considers Russell's objections to same and Meinong's counter-objections to Russell, and argues that Russell's well-known argument fails. However, it is possible to augment Russell's argument against Meinong with sound Russellian principles in such a way that it presents at least a strong inclining reason against Meinong's theory of impossible objects.

## BELIEF AND THE LIMITS OF IRRATIONALITY

KEITH GRAHAM

(I) It is commonly held that a person cannot wittingly hold false or inconsistent beliefs. Edgley has argued that this follows from the normative implications involved in the concept of belief and the concept of a proposition, as expressed in the analytic principle "if *p*, then it is right to think that *p*." (II) But the principle, when taken in its analytic sense, does not have the required implications; and taken in the sense in which it would have those implications it is neither analytic nor true. (III) A person can not only hold a false belief wittingly, he can assert that he does. Examples are given to exhibit the legitimacy of the claim that such irrationality does not necessarily dissolve when recognized for what it is. (IV) The phenomenon of self-confessed irrationality involves the fusion of two general features of mental life. It comprises a mental state over whose existence one has no control, but which one can in some way detach oneself from and be critical of.

### DISCUSSIONS:

#### I. VON WRIGHT ON HISTORICAL CAUSATION

ELAZAR WEINRYB

In *Explanation and Understanding* von Wright argues that if, as he suggests, a practical inference schema is adopted as an explanation model for actions, then it follows that historical explanations are noncausal. My criticisms are principally directed against his version of the Logical Connection Argument which attempts to show that the verification of the action description to be explained and the verification of the intention description which explains it are interdependent. Von Wright blurs the important distinctions (1) between acting with an intention and acting intentionally; (2) between intention to perform an action and intention to bring about a consequence of it; and (3) between verification of intention descriptions in general and of a description of a specific intention. The "conclusion" of his practical inference schema cannot be the appropriate historical *explanandum* and the explaining procedure that he suggests is shown to be ultimately circular.

#### II. SELFISHNESS AND CAPITALISM

TIBOR R. MACHAN

Richard Schmitt's case against the psychological defense of capitalism (*Inquiry*, Vol. 16, No. 2) has merit, but in stating it he attributes to a defender of capitalism the argument that capitalism suits people's innate selfishness. The position more plausibly attributed to the author in question is not only resistant to Schmitt's own argument but is worth consideration in itself.

### REVIEW DISCUSSIONS:

#### I. CRIMINAL INSANITY

H. Fingarette, *The Meaning of Criminal Insanity*, HERBERT MORRIS.

#### II. QUINTON'S HALF-HEARTED ONTOLOGY

A. Quinton, *The Nature of Things*, T. L. S. SPRIGGE.

## III. COSMIC BIOLOGY AND THE "GREAT SHIFT"

S. Langer, *Mind: An Essay in Human Feeling*, Vol. II, EVA SCHAPER.

## Volume 17 (1974), No. 4

## OBJECTIVITY AND TRUTH IN HISTORY

J. L. GORMAN

Examples of historical writing are analysed in detail, and it is demonstrated that, with respect to the statements which appear in historical accounts, their truth and value-freedom are neither necessary nor sufficient for the relative acceptability of historical accounts. What is both necessary and sufficient is the acceptability of the selection of statements involved, and it is shown that history can be objective only if the acceptability of selection can be made on the basis of a rational criterion of relevance. 'Relevance' and 'significance' are distinguished. The conditions of rationality of a criterion of acceptability are examined with special reference to Popper's criterion of 'falsifiability', which is shown to fail to apply to historical writing. General conclusions are drawn about the implications of the argument for the possibility of the 'unity of science', and about the conditions which need to be met if history is to be objective.

## BEIM STERNENLICHT DER NICHTEXISTIERENDEN

ZUR IDEOLOGIEKRITISCHEN INTERPRETATION DES PLATONISIERENDEN  
ANTIPSYCHOLOGISMUS

J. C. NYÍRI

(English summary)

The paper surveys the Platonistic anti-psychologism inherent in the philosophy of Bolzano, the early Brentano, Twardowski, Meinong, Husserl, Frege, the early Russell, and the young Wittgenstein, and tries to provide a sociological and ideology-critical interpretation of it, as well as of traditional eighteenth-century psychologism. Nineteenth and twentieth century Platonism is construed as an expression of, or rather a reaction against, the decline of classical bourgeois values. In Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* the elements of both a Platonistic anti-psychologism and a relativistic, behaviour-oriented anti-psychologism are discernible: this work is thus interpreted as a vivid manifestation of the transition from classical to twentieth-century philosophical thinking and *Weltanschauung*, as a transition from the belief in eternal truths to the acceptance of a use-theory of meaning and its consequences.

## FREUD AND THE "HOMERIC" MIND

JERRY S. CLEGG

In spite of claims made by Freud himself and others in his behalf that psychoanalysis rests on clinical investigations alone, free of historical influence, there is good reason to believe that Freud's work belongs to the mainstream of Western intellectual history. His theories on the psychology of artistic creation, for instance, indicate that he was deeply influenced by Nietzsche but was moved to quarrel with him in behalf of even older contentions which date back to Plato. The very structure of Freud's theory of the mind can, indeed, be seen as the result of adjustments made in Nietzsche's psychology—adjustments which, in effect, amount to restatements of Platonic esthetic, political and social doctrine.

**DISCUSSIONS:****I. CORRECT VS. 'MERELY TRUE' ACT-DESCRIPTIONS**

ARTHUR R. MILLER

This paper is a critical analysis of David Rayfield's attempt to distinguish true from correct descriptions of human actions (*Inquiry*, Vol. 13 [1970], Nos. 1–2). It is argued that the analysis fails to do the job required of it for two reasons. First, the analysis of true descriptions is circular insofar as it turns on the notion of an 'unbound action'. Secondly, and independent of the charge of circularity, it is shown that the basis upon which Rayfield draws the true-correct distinction leads to certain unacceptable consequences for action theory.

**II. ON MILLER'S PARADOXES AND CIRCLES**

DAVID RAYFIELD

In this paper, I reply to A. R. Miller's "Correct vs. 'Merely True' Act-Descriptions" (this issue). I explain that my distinction between true and correct descriptions of human behavior does not turn on the notion of an "unbound action," and hence is not circular in the way Miller suggests. I also discuss his claim that the way I have drawn the distinction leads to "certain unacceptable consequences for action theory."

**III. RORTY ON BELIEF AND SELF-DECEPTION**

BÉLA SZABADOS

In this note I argue that although Rorty's programme (*Inquiry*, Vol. 15, No. 4) to bring into focus the role that belief plays in self-deception is a salutary one, her actual claims obscure that role. It is also contended that Rorty fails to demythologize self-deception, since her account is either paradox-ridden or else describes a concept recognizably distinct from the concept of self-deception.

**REVIEW DISCUSSION:****POPPER'S OBJECTIVE KNOWLEDGE**K. R. Popper, *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*, PAUL FEYERABEND.