

theoretical requirement in any metaphysically acceptable account of the nature of the phenomenon that we call 'change'.

The last essay in the collection, apart from Mellor's reply to the contributors, is Nathan Oaklander's 'Presentism: A Critique', the chief target of which is William Lane Craig's version of presentism, which at least has the virtue—according to Oaklander—of attempting to offer an *ontology* of time capable of providing truthmakers for past- and future-tensed truths. According to Oaklander, Craig's theory, despite his protestations to the contrary, falls foul of McTaggart's famous paradox—a verdict with which, unsurprisingly, Mellor wholeheartedly agrees. I would only venture to say that a presentist would be well advised to *deny* that past- and future-tensed truths have presently existing truthmakers. They would do better to say that all *propositions* are present-tensed, and that a past-tensed *sentence*, such as 'Caesar crossed the Rubicon', may presently be assigned the value 'true', not because it has a presently existing truthmaker—what on earth could *that* be?—but rather because the present-tensed proposition that *Caesar is crossing the Rubicon*, while it is not *now* true for want of a presently existing truthmaker, *had* a truthmaker which no longer exists. What do I mean by saying that it *had* a truthmaker, it may be asked? That would be a pertinent question if, in the immediately preceding sentence, I had been purporting to offer an account of the *meaning* of the past tense, for then my account of it would have been blatantly circular. But I don't believe that an account of the meaning of the past tense *can* be given that doesn't at least implicitly rely upon a prior grasp of it. I don't believe that someone who didn't already grasp it could have this meaning *explained* to them and thereby *acquire* a grasp of it. I was not purporting to offer such an account, however, merely addressing, on behalf of the presentist, Oaklander's complaint against those of them who do not seek to identify presently existing truthmakers for past- and future-tensed truths—the complaint that they 'lack an ontology' for such truths. Well, *of course* they lack one!—for they hold that (most) things that *did* exist *no longer exist*, and that (most) things that *will* exist *do not yet exist*: exist, that is, in an *absolute* sense. They utterly repudiate the eternalist's view that to say that something—for example, Caesar, or the event of his crossing the Rubicon—'no longer exists' is not to deny that it exists *simpliciter*, but just to deny that it has a temporal location at the time of utterance. That, indeed, is why I think that, *pace* Oaklander, they do *not* fall foul of McTaggart's paradox.

E. J. Lowe

Department of Philosophy
University of Durham
50 Old Elvet
Durham DH1 3HN
UK
E.J.Lowe@durham.ac.uk

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Tom Rockmore is not in a reconciliatory mood. He has written a book whose chief aim is to spoil the party for those who think that analytic and continental philosophy can be reconciled through Hegel. Rockmore writes in conclusion that analytic and continental approaches, in 'nearly everything relevant to the philosophical enterprise, are often

different, incompatible, irreducible to a single common denominator, a shared theme or point of view' (p. 224). The argument's chief targets are Rorty and Brandom, though there is much ire directed against the 'analytic establishment' generally. Part of Rockmore's strategy is to unearth the roots of the contemporary misappropriation of German idealism; to do so he goes through the main figures of British Idealism and American pragmatism, sketching the views of Bradley, Moore and Russell, Neurath and Carnap, Quine and Sellars. This text is less a work that expounds philosophical arguments, and more a series of complications and denunciations that attempts to problematize appropriations of Hegel by analytically inclined philosophers. As such it is sure to stir debate, and in so far as this polemical and at times hyperbolic account prevents a too easy consensus, it is a valuable check on the assimilation of the projects of German Idealism to our own concerns.

Though Rockmore's own Hegel does not appear until the end of the book, we get hints of his reading throughout. Because his account of Hegel is not worked out in detail in this book, and is the subject of three other book-length studies, I will concentrate in the body of this review on Rockmore's critique of appropriations of Hegel. Yet a few words are in order on Rockmore's reading of Hegel, since aspects of it are rather idiosyncratic; I mention these without much comment to encourage suspicion of Rockmore's criticism of other readings of Hegel. Rockmore takes his bearings almost exclusively from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, leading to some questionable claims about the character of Hegel's idealism. He writes that Hegel 'constructs a view of knowledge with no pretense about knowing the way the world is . . . by confining knowledge claims to conscious experience' (p. 132). Rockmore reads Hegel as a kind of Kantian 'constructivist', though he claims that 'Hegel, unlike Kant, consistently rejects a priori reasoning of any kind' (p. 43), and 'Hegel objects to all forms of transcendental philosophy, hence to apriorism' (p. 238, n. 153). Rockmore also claims that 'Hegel does not, in fact cannot, distinguish sharply between nature and culture' (p. 122). While Rockmore's reading quite rightly emphasizes Hegel's proximity to Kant, it raises more questions than it answers, and does not help solve the central problem for the thinkers examined in the text, namely how Hegel's idealism is supposed to be the best (and not merely second best) account of reality that there is.

The central problem that Rockmore has with analytic philosophy is what he sees as its commitment to 'metaphysical realism', which he parses as 'getting it right about what is as it is' (p. 120). Finding in every analytic author claims for such a realism, and a consequent neglect of idealism, Rockmore declares the goals of Hegel's project and of analytic philosophy completely at odds. Rockmore repeatedly points out that there are many types of idealism, and that identifying Kant's or Hegel's idealism is a very tricky issue. Unfortunately, Rockmore's realist enemy appears as essentially undifferentiated. The most varied kinds of positions are stamped with the same label, despite the fact that many of the authors have grappled explicitly with the challenges to realist metaphysics. Further, Rockmore claims that a striking feature of the recent revival of interest in Hegel 'is the lack of attention to idealism' (p. 31). This claim, which he levels specifically against Brandom and McDowell, seems to me simply false. One can charge recent authors with misinterpreting Hegel's idealism, but to say that it has been ignored is just mistaken, and threatens to miss much of the impetus behind the interpretations.

The long Chapter 2, 'Pragmatism, Analytic Neopragmatism, and Hegel', is the heart of the book and includes Rockmore's polemic against Rorty and Brandom. Rockmore begins, however, by recounting the relation of the classic American pragmatists to Hegel's idealism. This is supposed to set the stage for Rockmore's attack on the claims of contemporary neopragmatism to be following aspects of Hegel's thought. As with his discussion of the British Idealists in Chapter 1, Rockmore's aim is to complicate the overly

general standard picture of the movement, and to call into question the relationship of specific figures to Hegel's philosophy. Rockmore takes Dewey to be the pragmatist closest to Hegel, but then only uses this proximity as further evidence for just how wrong the most prominent Deweyan, namely Rorty, has gotten Hegel. Rockmore finds Rorty's inimitable charity towards other philosophers very frustrating, in so far as Rorty blurs the distinctions between various positions. More provocative, though, is Rockmore's insistence that Rorty must be a skeptic in the end, rather than the anti-skeptical pragmatist that he claims to be. Rockmore suspects that Rorty's critique of foundationalism comes with an acceptance that foundationalism is the only answer to the question of knowledge, which results in Rorty giving up on knowledge entirely.

I pass over Rockmore's suggestive mentions of Neurath and Quine as originators of analytic neopragmatism, for Rockmore recognizes that the central figure for the past thirty years of mid-century analytic neopragmatism is Sellars. The guiding text for Rockmore's reading of Sellars is 'Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man', which he takes as evidence of a strongly metaphysical realist scientific view. Oddly, Rockmore attributes this (far) right Sellarsian reading to left Sellarsians, such as Brandom, as if any allegiance to Sellars commits one to a narrow scientific realism. In any event, Rockmore certainly reads Sellars against the grain, as in his mention of 'the scientism resulting from his appeal to the so-called space of reasons' (p. 103). Far from the space of reasons resulting in scientism, it is an idea that has been employed to great effect as a way to avoid scientism. To be sure, Sellars is a difficult writer with views that shifted throughout his career. But unlike many of Rockmore's targets, Sellars had an impressive grasp of the history of philosophy, and could not have been so far off in self-identifying, during his most influential period, as a Hegelian.

Of all the positions examined in this book, Brandom's work comes in for the harshest criticism. Unfortunately, Rockmore does not reconstruct enough of Brandom's position for the criticisms to be genuinely informative. So while he correctly identifies inferentialism as the core of Brandom's view, Rockmore takes it to be synonymous with Brandom's expressivism, and simply declares that he finds neither conception to be very clear. One result of not working through Brandom's ideas is that much of the criticism seems forced. As evidence of Brandom's ineptitude as a historian of philosophy, Rockmore cites a 'series of slips [that] shows a certain uncertainty in Brandom's understanding of Hegel' (p. 128). These two 'slips' are Brandom's claim that Hegel contrasts the understanding and Reason, and that Brandom cites as Hegelian terminology the notion of 'positing' something determinate. As if exposing the emperor, Rockmore claims that Brandom should have contrasted understanding and Spirit, and that talk of Hegel and positing 'is obviously a slip, since the term "posit" is Fichtean, not Hegelian' (p. 129). But far from showing up Brandom as a careless reader of the texts, these slips are much more revealing of Rockmore straining to put Brandom in his place. For Hegel is quite clearly concerned to invoke Reason against the understanding, even though Reason plays a different role than it did for Kant and is itself incorporated into an account of Spirit. Rockmore's claim that Hegel does not invoke 'reason in the Kantian sense of the term at all' is misleading as a reading of the complex appropriation of Kant that Hegel worked out in his mature writings. These writings are replete with the term 'setzen', which did gain currency through Fichte's writings, but which was also central to Hegel's method. I take it that the real challenge is to understand how Hegel fits Fichtean positing within his own dialectical logic.

Rockmore's evident strain on these points might be excused as minor when the big issue is whether Brandom's project is really on the same page as Hegel at all. But while Brandom is certainly open to criticism as departing from the letter of Hegel's philosophy, I do take the core of Brandom's position to be consonant with Hegel's. The central term

that any reading of Hegel must come to grips with is 'negativity'. This term figures not only in Hegel's well-known theory of determinate negation, but at every level of his theory of knowledge, nature, and human institutions. I understand the core of Brandom's position as an attempt to read negativity as the basis of a (very complicated) theory of normativity. One of the virtues of Brandom's reading is that it demystifies Hegelian negativity through the language of incompatibility and exclusion. Incompatibility relations as the bedrock of determinate normativity can take on an infinite variety of forms. Inference in Brandom's sense and Hegelian negativity can be read as pragmatic because inferentially articulated norms are essentially bound to contexts of use, to the social and historical processes crystallized in determinate action.

While the doctrine of negativity is usually a stumbling block for realist readings of Hegel, Rockmore manages to read Brandom's appropriation of negativity as crucial evidence for Brandom's supposed metaphysical realism. The idealism vs. realism question is exceedingly tricky, especially for Hegel, who takes genuine idealism to result in a form of realism. I am not sure that Brandom has adequately worked out his own conception of how social and historical processes constitute the world in a robust sense. Yet I don't see that his inferentialism commits him to anything like a metaphysical realist view. Rockmore seems to think that Brandom's use of 'material incompatibility' points in a metaphysically realist direction. But Brandom's use of 'material' is meant to contrast with logical formality, not with the 'ideal' in the sense of what is experienced. The point is that we begin with content that we actually use (where the mere notion of content is neutral with respect to the metaphysical question), then proceed to draw out the logic that expresses explicitly what is implicit in our practices. Brandom is trying to figure out how we can be said to get things right, and he follows Hegel in holding that such an account must at least begin from past attempts at getting things right that have proven unsustainable.

Perhaps the most important question that Tom Rockmore raises in this book is whether it would be good if there were more philosophical convergence on the methods and goals of philosophy, and who would be in a position to declare such a convergence. Addressing the claims by Brandom and Rorty to have brought the two sides together, Rockmore writes of a 'power play in which analytic philosophy takes over from continental philosophy' (p. 138). In making this accusation he is primarily taking issue with the tendency of analytic authors to claim ownership of the standards of lucidity. While I do not find Rockmore's chosen polemical mode very conducive to sorting out what these standards are, his book does point to the need for reflection on the parameters of philosophical communication. Hegel himself is partly to blame for making this reflection difficult. A central paradox of Hegel's mode of presentation is that while he insists on explicitness and the general availability of philosophical content, his writing, like much of 'hard core' continental *and* analytic writing, is very difficult to follow. In the end I think the debate between analytic and continental readings of Hegel is more a matter of style than it is a substantive doctrinal contest that deserves to continue. For the real battle going on today, between reductive naturalism and normatively oriented accounts of rational practice, all readers of Hegel should be on the same side.

Dean Moyar

Department of Philosophy
 Johns Hopkins University
 347 Gilman Hall/3400 N. Charles St.
 Baltimore, MD 21218
 USA
 dmoyar@jhu.edu