

that this is an effective reply. An essential element of Wittgenstein's thought about the self-ascription of sensations in the present tense—an element Ayer does not do justice to—is that they are not *based* on anything, in the sense that when someone sincerely asserts that he experiences a sensation he does not possess a reason for believing that his sincere assertion is true. Because these self-ascriptions are criterionless, in the imagined case in which a person's sensation is supposed to be disconnected from any natural expression in behaviour there could not be any criterion of correctness for the applicability of a private name of the sensation. Ayer's reply leaves the nerve of Wittgenstein's argument unexposed and unimpaired.

The inadequacies of Ayer's treatment of Wittgenstein's consideration of rule-following and words for sensations are not representative of the quality of Ayer's examinations of Wittgenstein's views. But they are usually too brief to be helpful and sometimes—as in the case of the cursory half-page on seeing-as—are too slight and casual to serve any useful purpose. Ayer's book throws no new light on Wittgenstein's philosophy and it is not a good introduction to his work. It has the usual virtues of Ayer's philosophical style: clarity, rationality, charm and ease of flow. But Ayer is the least self-effacing of commentators and his book gives the impression of a greater concern with his own philosophical ideas than with those of Wittgenstein.

*University College London*

MALCOLM BUDD

*Hume's Skepticism in the Treatise of Human Nature.* By Robert J. Fogelin. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985. Pp. xii + 195. £12.95

According to Robert Fogelin Hume's *Treatise* 'is packed with skeptical arguments'. In spite of this, he claims, most recent Hume scholarship has either neglected or downplayed Hume's scepticism. Hume commentators have tended to underestimate the importance of sceptical themes in Hume's philosophy because, following Norman Kemp Smith, they tend to over-emphasize Hume's naturalism. In opposition to this trend Fogelin seeks to establish that Hume's scepticism is a 'central feature' of the *Treatise*. An understanding of the relationship between Hume's sceptical arguments and his 'naturalistic program' (i.e. his intention to provide causal explanations for mental phenomena) is, it is argued, 'one of the central problems for interpreting the *Treatise* as a whole'. Hume's 'general posture', Fogelin says, 'is that of a moderate skeptic recommending that we modestly restrict our inquiries to topics within our ken and, recognizing our fallibility, adjust our beliefs to probabilities' (p. 2). However, the relationship between this moderate (Academic) scepticism and Hume's naturalism 'needs no special explanation' as it 'complements Hume's overall naturalistic program'. What particularly interests Fogelin, therefore, is the relationship between Hume's stronger, Pyrrhonian scepticism and his naturalism. Fogelin's book is primarily an attempt to understand the relationship between these two aspects of Hume's thought.

Fogelin begins by drawing several useful contrasts between various types of scepticism which may or may not have concerned Hume in the *Treatise*. On this

basis he makes a few general claims regarding the nature of Hume's scepticism. The subsequent chapters of Fogelin's book consider various particular sceptical arguments as they appear in the *Treatise* and examine the way in which these arguments relate to his naturalism. In this way, Fogelin's book touches on a number of well-trodden aspects of Hume's philosophy (e.g. causality, induction, external world, self, morals, etc.) as well as some relatively neglected aspects of his philosophy (e.g. extension and scepticism with regard to reason). Throughout *Hume's Skepticism* Fogelin seeks to establish that 'the deprecation of reason is . . . a persistent theme in Hume's writings' (p. 116).

Lying at the heart of Fogelin's interpretation is an illuminating distinction between 'theoretical' and 'prescriptive' scepticism. A radical theoretical sceptic claims that there are no rational grounds for some system of beliefs. A more moderate theoretical sceptic holds that the beliefs in question are less well-grounded than commonly thought. A prescriptive sceptic calls for a suspension of belief; or, more moderately, calls for greater caution in giving assent. Fogelin notes that one may be a radical theoretical sceptic without recommending suspension of belief. It may be argued, for example, that beliefs are not in our control and therefore it is pointless to issue such recommendations concerning them. According to Fogelin Hume accepts a theoretical scepticism that is 'wholly unmitigated'. For Hume, it is argued, 'nothing except the immediate contents of sense is immune to this scepticism'. By contrast, Hume's prescriptive scepticism is 'carefully circumscribed'. Hume does not recommend a radical suspension of belief because he holds that our beliefs are causally determined and not dependent upon our will. In common life we discover that many of our beliefs are psychologically immune to the undermining influence of sceptical arguments. However, this is not true of all our beliefs. When our beliefs 'go beyond our natural capacities' (e.g. as in theology and speculative metaphysics) then sceptical arguments will tend to induce a suspension of belief. In short, while Hume's theoretical scepticism is 'wholly unmitigated' his prescriptive scepticism is of a more moderate nature. (Fogelin has characterized this position elsewhere as 'mitigated Pyrrhonian scepticism'.)

Fogelin's general interpretation of Hume's scepticism places particular emphasis on Hume's discussion of scepticism with regard to reason. Fogelin claims that the important arguments of this section of the *Treatise* (Iv, iv, 1) have been either played down or ignored by most commentators. Hume's arguments in this section, Fogelin suggests, lead to 'a scepticism unlimited in its application and wholly unmitigated' (p. 14). In this section Hume argues that it is impossible to refute scepticism by any reasoning and that when the understanding acts alone it is thoroughly self-destructive. It is, however, at this point that Hume's naturalism comes into play. Balancing the belief-inhibiting influence of Pyrrhonism we have the influence of the imagination (i.e. natural belief and instinct). The mitigated scepticism which Hume recommends is not arrived at by way of argument but is rather the *causal product* of these two competing influences. Hume's general 'deprecation' of reason in the theoretical sphere, Fogelin argues, extends to the practical sphere. Just as Hume denies that reason can 'yield knowledge or . . . well-founded belief', says Fogelin, so too he denies that reason can 'regulate our passions' or 'govern our conduct' (p. 110). Furthermore, according to Fogelin

Hume holds that reason is incapable of providing any 'rational justification of our moral ascriptions' (p. 139).

In my view the general tendency of Fogelin's interpretation is to exaggerate the extent of Hume's sceptical commitments and to play down or ignore those aspects of Hume's philosophy which emphasize the importance and indispensability of rational procedures and principles. In the theoretical sphere, for example, there are a number of passages, especially in Part III of Book I, which clearly suggest that Hume adhered to the principles of probabilism (i.e. the view that we can provide at least *some degree* of rational support or justification for our beliefs). Of particular importance in this context are Hume's discussion of the distinction between philosophical and unphilosophical probabilities (I, iii, 11–13) and his discussion of the 'rules by which to judge of causes and effects' (I, iii, 15). Nor is it evident that Hume 'deprecates' the role of reason in the practical sphere to the extent that Fogelin suggests. On the contrary, in various sections of Books II and III Hume emphasizes and draws our attention to the role of reason in the practical sphere. For example, Hume assigns reason a vitally important role in preventing our moral sentiments from being biased (e.g. by self-interest or partiality) or founded upon 'unreasonable belief', and a particularly significant role in determining the 'artificial' principles of justice. In short, in order to be fully persuaded by Fogelin's claim that 'the deprecation of reason is a persistent theme' in the *Treatise* I would need to see Fogelin consider in much more detail the various aspects of Hume's philosophy which extol the role of reason in human life and scientific practice. Moreover, even if we confine our attention to Hume's remarks in Part IV of Book I—that is, the part of the *Treatise* which Fogelin regards as particularly congenial to his interpretation—we discover several passages which bring Fogelin's interpretation into question. In the context of the penultimate paragraph of the Conclusion of Book I, for example, we find that Hume reasserts his optimism and enthusiasm for the project of the science of man. Hume says that his intention is to 'contribute a little to human knowledge' and to point out to philosophers 'more distinctly those subjects, where alone they can expect assurance and conviction' (THN, pp. 273–4). These hopes seem wholly incompatible with the supposition that Hume is a radical theoretical sceptic. That is to say, if Hume is a Pyrrhonian at the theoretical level then he must be interpreted as openly torpedoing his own project of a science of man. (Fogelin's attempt to address this difficulty (p. 148 f.) is, I believe, rather unconvincing.)

Although I am unconvinced by Fogelin's claim that Hume was a radical ('wholly unmitigated') theoretical sceptic he has nevertheless drawn our attention to the fact that Hume, as he puts it, 'traffics' in some strong Pyrrhonian arguments and that this raises some important problems which we need to consider. In particular, given that Hume claims that the Pyrrhonian cannot be refuted by philosophical arguments it follows that Hume's probabilism or moderate theoretical scepticism cannot be defended by reason alone. (THN, p. 187 and p. 269). How, then, do we account for Hume's move from a seemingly inescapable Pyrrhonism at the theoretical level to a moderate theoretical scepticism? I believe that Fogelin has pointed out the relevant causal influences which account for this 'move' (how *satisfactory* this move is, it should be noted, is another question). That is to say, Hume's moderate scepticism is, as Fogelin suggests, the causal

product of, on the one hand, the sceptical principles of reason, and on the other hand, the principles of the imagination. It is through the interaction of these competing forces that we arrive at Hume's moderate (theoretical) scepticism. The process by which he arrives at this position is rather similar to that by which he arrives at the ontology of 'double existence' (as presented in his discussion of scepticism with regard to the senses). Neither moderate theoretical scepticism (i.e. probabilism) nor the philosophical system of double existence have any 'primary recommendation' to either reason or the imagination. However, both these positions go some way towards satisfying the conflicting demands made by these principles. In this way, while Hume recognizes that moderate theoretical scepticism is incapable of rational justification he points out that its principles, unlike Pyrrhonian principles, are both durable and useful in common life. In light of these considerations Hume claims that 'the conduct of a man, who studies philosophy in this careless manner [i.e. who is as diffident of his philosophical doubts as of his philosophical convictions], is more truly sceptical than that of one, who feeling in himself an inclination to it, is yet so over-whelm'd with doubts and scruples, as totally to reject it' (THN, p. 273). In short, Hume's final position on scepticism is highly paradoxical because this position is the outcome of 'conflicting' and 'irreconcilable' forces: viz. reason and the imagination. Fogelin's error, in my view, has been to try and eliminate these tensions and paradoxes from Hume's scepticism at the theoretical level.

In his preface, Fogelin claims not only to be offering a general interpretation of Hume's scepticism, but also to be offering a general interpretation of the *Treatise* as a whole. This is a much more ambitious project and, in this respect, I find Fogelin's book less than successful. The most serious weakness in the general interpretation is that it does not begin to do justice to the nature of Hume's concerns regarding the project of the 'Science of Man' itself. Related to this short-coming is Fogelin's failure to provide his interpretation with any adequate historical foundations. As a result Hume's philosophical intentions are generally presented as 'free-floating', fragmented, and lacking any real direction. In my view the key to an adequate understanding of Hume's intentions in the *Treatise* is to be discovered in the fact that Hume's 'Science of Man' is modelled after Hobbes's similar project in *The Elements of Law* and the first two parts of *Leviathan*. (I have argued for this in the *J. Hist. Ideas*, 1985, pp. 51-63) The immediate significance of this observation is that it reveals the unity of Hume's thought in the *Treatise* and shows that his primary concern in that work was to put forward a secular, scientific moral and political philosophy. Fogelin's failure to recognize the Hobbesian nature of Hume's project has, in my view, contributed to his tendency to exaggerate the extent of Hume's sceptical commitments and to overlook some of his most fundamental objectives and concerns. Furthermore, I believe that a close examination of Hume's writings and their historical context will reveal that the principal target of the sceptical arguments of the *Treatise* was Samuel Clarke, the most eminent Newtonian philosopher in early eighteenth century Britain, and a severe critic of Hobbes. In his *Discourse Concerning the Being and Attributes of God* (1705) Clarke sought to demolish Hobbes's 'atheistic' philosophy, and, following Locke, he endeavoured to introduce demonstrative reasoning into the spheres of metaphysics and morals with a view to defending the Christian Religion. In the light of these observations I would argue that the

scepticism and the naturalism of the *Treatise* should be viewed not so much as ends in themselves as powerful weapons which Hume wields in order to refute Christian dogmatism and to construct a secular moral and political outlook. In short, contrary to most Hume scholars I take the view that Hume's fundamental philosophical intentions are best characterized as 'atheistic' or anti-Christian in nature rather than as simply secular or naturalistic. Hence, as I understand it, even within its own sphere, Fogelin's general interpretation of Hume's scepticism fails to come to grips with his fundamental objectives and concerns in the *Treatise*.

It is quite obvious that I have a number of reservations, both of a general and of a specific nature, concerning Fogelin's interpretation(s). I am, however, happy to recommend the book as stimulating, clearly written, and in several respects very illuminating. I would only add that it should be read with a scepticism appropriate to its subject-matter: that is, a moderate theoretical scepticism!

Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge

PAUL RUSSELL

*Marxism and Morality*. By Steven Lukes. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1985. Pp. xiii + 159, £12.50

This book relates political philosophy to major historical questions in ways that are both scholarly and interesting. Steven Lukes tries to resolve a paradox in the Marxist treatment of morality (pp. 2 f.). On one side of the paradox are the Marxists' moral-looking political demands. On the other are Marxist attacks on morality as 'bourgeois prejudice', as 'ideology' and as historically ineffectual. Lukes attempts to resolve the paradox by distinguishing a juridical morality of *Recht* that Marxism rejects from the Marxists' own non-juridical morality of emancipation. Lukes maintains that the morality of *Recht* relies centrally upon the concept of 'rights' and the logically connected concepts of 'justice' and 'obligation' (p. 28). He argues that Marxists attribute the morality of *Recht* to the social conditions that Hume called the 'circumstances of justice' (pp. 31-3). In the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* and elsewhere Marx advocated political action to emancipate mankind from the morality of *Recht* (pp. 29, 57).

Lukes also detects lacunae in Marx's morality of emancipation and examines the connections between these lacunae and the 'moral disasters of marxism in practice' (p. xi). He concludes that Marxism is a form of ultra-consequentialism (pp. 137, 142, 144). Probably its greatest moral lacuna is its silence as to exactly which political methods are permitted, and which morally prohibited (pp. 12 f., 145, 148). Another concerns communist society. Lukes argues that the Marxists are over-optimistic in supposing that the circumstances of justice would not obtain under communism. If class conflicts ceased, other conflicts would remain. Some type of morality of *Recht* would still be indispensable (pp. 32 n. 1, 35, 90, 94). These lacunae in Marxism have 'disabled it from offering moral resistance to measures taken in its name' (p. 141).

Although Lukes rightly perceives that the moral paradox in Marxism is more complex than first appears his approach cannot resolve two of its philosophical dimensions. The epistemological dimension is the contrast between the Marxist attacks on morality as ideology (that is, as cognitively and epistemologically