

Book Reviews

Gregory Moore. *Nietzsche, Biology and Metaphor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 228pp. Hardback \$55.00. ISBN 0-521-81230-5.

Gregory Moore's *Nietzsche, Biology and Metaphor* explores the influence of nineteenth-century biological thought, represented by Charles Darwin and his followers, on the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche's use of the vocabulary of biology is apparent even to a casual reader, and yet his biological theories are largely incompatible with the theories of Darwin. Moore argues that Nietzsche ultimately remained unable to emancipate himself from the predominant biological theories of his day. By illuminating this point, Moore's work highlights a central tension between Nietzsche and Darwin: Nietzsche deliberately distanced himself from the adherents of Darwin and deeply resented those people who sought to confirm Darwin's ideas in Nietzsche's writings. Yet, Nietzsche remained dependent on the biological argument to develop his philosophy. In fact, Moore argues, "The central project of [Nietzsche's] later thought—the much-vaunted 'transvaluation of all values'—rests precisely upon an appeal to the explanatory power of a newly confident biology to demonstrate the inferiority of prevailing ideals and to overturn them" (p. 3). In exploring the tension between Nietzsche and this intellectual tradition, Moore relates that Nietzsche, the philosopher who sought endlessly to transcend his own timeliness, remained rooted in the prevailing ideas of his time. Moore is an articulate writer who commands his reader's attention with clear prose and a superior grasp of the intricacies of Nietzsche's philosophy. Moore opens the book with a discussion of the conceptual shift in Europe following the publication of Darwin's *Origin of the Species*. The first section, "Evolution," assesses Nietzsche's interpretation and critique of Darwin. Nietzsche positions himself largely in opposition to Darwin. Moore here takes the opportunity to criticize the deficient, piecemeal reading of Darwin in vogue among intellectuals in the late nineteenth century, something that Nietzsche unwittingly perpetuates. Moore examines, in

Chapter 1, the three primary aspects of Darwin's thought that Nietzsche attacks. First, Nietzsche disagrees with Darwin's teleological view of nature, a stance that Moore shows to be wrought with tension for the philosopher. Second, Nietzsche criticizes Darwin's theory of the organism as a united, composite being. Rejecting this harmonious picture, he argues that the organism is, in fact, an amalgam of disparate parts, each in competition with the others because he "envisages life itself—the will to power—as a struggle of unequal parts . . . According to Nietzsche, there is not only a struggle for existence; existence is itself an incessant struggle" (p. 46). And finally, Moore notes, Nietzsche rejects the Darwinian theory of self-preservation. In contrast to Darwin's passive notion of the struggle for survival, Nietzsche envisions the will to power as an active, driving force, through which the individual strives to increase its life and power.

The subsequent chapters in part 1 examine the way that Nietzsche's ambiguous position in relation to evolutionary biology shaped the development of his mature philosophy. Although Nietzsche refuses to align himself with Darwinian theories of evolutionary biology, he leans on them to explicate his own philosophy, developing, at times, his ideas in contradistinction to the figures whom he is attacking. Moore cites Nietzsche's moral theory as an instance. Nietzsche, argues Moore, unfolds his moral theory using Herbert Spencer as a foil, "effectively turn[ing] on its head the British philosopher's conviction that evolution tends toward the refinement of altruistic impulses" (p. 62). Additionally, Chapter 3, "The Physiology of Art," demonstrates how Nietzsche's writings coalesce with the nineteenth-century inclination, seen in Konrad Lange and later in Ernst Haeckel, to locate the purpose of art in biology. Nietzsche envisages evolution as an artistic process—a process that inspires humankind to perpetuate humankind by triggering innate desires to reproduce and to expand.

The second part of the work, "Degeneration," examines Nietzsche's use of the theme of "the decadent modern age". In the "nervous age" of the nineteenth century, people outside of society's norms came to be seen as degenerates who threatened the stability of the society at large—and Nietzsche, Moore shows, shares in the fears of his age and exploits these fears to achieve

his philosophical ends. This is particularly evident in Nietzsche's utilization of evolutionary biology to attack Christian morality. Nietzsche "subverts and ironises the discourse of degeneration so that it becomes his chief rhetorical weapon in his struggle against modernity and the movement in which, according to his genealogy, modern values have their origin: Christianity (p. 138)." Nietzsche finds, in the nervousness of his age, the product of Christianity's rejection of worldly existence and cultivation of compassion and therefore orients his argument against Christian morality by leaning on the precepts of evolutionary biology.

Within this discussion of the critique of Christian religion, Moore's analysis of Nietzsche's opinion of the Jewish people, examined in relation to those of his contemporaries, constitutes one of the most enlightening and intriguing sections of the work. Evolutionary theories of the Jews became commonplace in the late nineteenth century. As Moore details, Richard Wagner drew on evolutionary theories to support the belief in the superiority of the Aryan race over the Jewish people. Moore details how Nietzsche twists and turns Wagner's own biologicistic argument for the inferiority of the Jewish people in order to distance himself from Wagner. Nietzsche rejects Wagner's idealized "Aryan" Christianity (—purportedly purged of its Jewish influences—) by arguing that both Judaism and Christianity stem from the same diseased source. Conflating Christianity and Judaism, Nietzsche undercuts Wagner's own anti-Semitic argument by way of "an inversion of contemporary tropes associated with Jews (p. 164)." In his *Case of Wagner*, moreover, Nietzsche employs these tropes against the composer himself, characterizing Wagner as an archetypal nervous individual and, interconnected with this, suggesting that Wagner himself may be of Jewish descent. Evolutionary biology represented for Nietzsche a potent means with which to realize his personal agenda and to affirm his philosophical ideals. Moore concludes his book with a brief survey of the scholarly reception and interpretation of Nietzsche's biologicistic argument.

Touching on Max Scheler, Oswald Spengler, Georg Simmel, Theodor Lessing, and others, the final chapter demonstrates the myriad ways in which Nietzsche's ideas were inherited and utilized—and, in discussing the intellectuals leading up to the period

of the German Third Reich, Moore ends the book by establishing the broad significance of his study: "To recognize," he writes, "that biologism is a significant thread running through the fabric of much post-Nietzschean German thought . . . prevents us from making the rash and unhistorical attempt to trace a direct line of descent from Nietzsche's philosophy to National Socialism simply on the basis that both are couched in the same language of evolution and degeneration" (p. 211). Moore's correction of this common misconception is itself a noteworthy contribution to scholarship.

One shortcoming of Moore's work, however, is the author's reluctance to address the ways that the work's subject matter could have relevance for contemporary debates in biology and philosophy. The book is narrowly focused on an aspect of Nietzsche scholarship that has not received adequate treatment, but it must be acknowledged that Moore does a superior job. The substantive value of this book lies in Moore's ability to reveal how Nietzsche rejected evolutionary biology and how he remained confined within it. Although Nietzsche disagreed with his predecessors and contemporaries about the veracity of Darwin's theory, the philosopher remained unable to emancipate himself completely from the grasp of this theory. Nietzsche's biologism "functions as a unifying framework connecting and supporting the major themes of his thought" (p. 194), such as his aesthetics and moral theory, and therefore is inextricably embedded within his philosophy. As a result, the relation of Nietzsche's philosophy to the evolutionary theories that he encountered is one of tension and ambiguity. In revealing the dual aspects—positive and negative—in which Nietzsche is influenced by Darwin's theories, this book reveals an aspect of Nietzsche's thought that has largely gone unnoticed, and raises questions to be answered by future scholarship. An insightful and thought-provoking contribution, Moore's book will appeal to scholars of Nietzsche, history of science, and those interested in German intellectual history.

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Daniel O. Dahlstrom. *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xxx + 462pp. Hardback \$59.95. ISBN 0-521-64317-1.

Given the stereotypical two-party system that has developed in Western philosophy over the course of the past century, it has indeed become difficult to find a common discourse on logic between the two camps. One is reminded of exchanges between Husserl and Frege nearly 100 years ago. It would indeed prove quite difficult to convince a contemporary philosopher of logic that, of all people, Martin Heidegger, Carnap's favorite target of disdain, could contribute something to the philosophy of logic. Yet, in many ways, this is what Daniel Dahlstrom attempts to do in *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*. Dahlstrom evaluates Heidegger's engagement with logic to be a "philosophical logic" that "distinguishes itself in not taking formal logic and the possibility of the truth or falsity of premises for granted" (3). In total harmony with his philosophical method in the period surrounding the construction of *Being and Time* and the Marburg lectures, Heidegger's philosophical logic is concerned with finding the *conditions* for which logic is possible. In other words, despite his never using the term, Heidegger sought to develop that which one calls a 'transcendental logic'.

Heidegger's critique of and response to (what Dahlstrom deems) the "logical prejudice" provides the overarching theme of the book. Dahlstrom characterizes the logical prejudice as "a certain way of speaking and thinking about truth or, equivalently, a theory of suitable uses of 'truth' and its cognates that is traditionally construed as a cornerstone of logic" (xvi). *Heidegger's Concept of Truth* is an explication of Heidegger's contention that logic, as it has been traditionally constructed, presupposes certain beliefs which prohibit a proper comprehension and clarification of truth. In fact, it is the logical prejudice that Heidegger sees as complementary to philosophy's ontological misapprehension (—its "forgottenness of being"). As Dahlstrom makes clear, "[t]he main objective of the following study is to elaborate Heidegger's early conception of truth (formulated in the Marburg lectures and in *Being*

and Time) as it proceeds from his critique of a particular history of the logical prejudice" (xviii).

During the period of the formation of *Being and Time* and his Marburg lectures, Heidegger produced detailed commentaries on the analyses of truth provided by Hermann Lotze, Edmund Husserl, and Aristotle. Dahlstrom constructs *Heidegger's Concept of Truth* so that each of the first three chapters addresses Heidegger's analysis of these figures. In chapter one, Dahlstrom illustrates how Heidegger blamed Lotze for giving the paradigmatic expression of the logical prejudice. Lotze provided for the 19th Century entrenchment of the prejudice in neo-Kantian circles. In addition, chapter one even places Heidegger's account of truth within the milieu of analytic discourse: ". . . performative and pragmatic theories of truth come much closer to Heidegger's approach to the question of truth than do redundancy and semantic conceptions" (28). However, "the pragmatic turn is no less oriented than those other theories of truth toward the assertion or judgment as the *terminus a quo et ad quem* for the determination of truth" (as detailed in chapter four, for Heidegger, the primary nature of truth is disclosedness). Chapter two presents Heidegger's appraisal of Edmund Husserl who, according to Heidegger, has an insight into the limitations of the prejudice, yet never finds a way to move beyond it. And chapter three paints Aristotle as the culprit responsible for introducing the prejudice, yet also the first philosopher to provide hints for how to overcome it.

Of these three chapters, the one on Husserl is the most intriguing. I find much value in Dahlstrom's defense of Husserl's project, especially in his identifying the "ways in which Heidegger's basic criticisms of Husserl's phenomenology, while not unfounded or without merit, nevertheless remain seriously and, indeed, suspiciously wanting" (53). Dahlstrom's case is built on Heidegger's ignoring Husserl's distinction between objectifying and non-objectifying acts, misunderstanding Husserl's use of 'state of affairs' in the first concept of truth in the *Logical Investigations*, and remaining equally obscure in his own presentation of truth in the nonrelational acts. Dahlstrom points out that Heidegger's conception of the timeliness that constitutes being-in-the-world is anticipated by Husserl's analyses of time-consciousness alongside the

prereflective and kinesthetic constitution of experience. Despite Husserl's genuine breakthrough in introducing the notions of intentionality, categorical intuition, and the original sense of the *a priori*, Heidegger sees Husserl as orienting his analysis of these three notions in a way that remains within the assumptions of the logical prejudice.

Dahlstrom's defense of Husserl against Heidegger's critiques is indeed quite helpful for the neophyte phenomenologist to understand the various interpretations of Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenological approaches. Dahlstrom states that Heidegger's so-called 'radicalization of Husserl's approach' is "a shift in the center of gravity, a shift that becomes even more pronounced in Heidegger's later thinking" (170) rather than a complete rejection of the Husserlian project. The early Husserl takes truth to be the identity of what is meant and what is given. Heidegger moves the analysis away from an emphasis on the absence and presence of what is meant and given to the unfolding of that presence from its absence. In this way, Heidegger's emphasis on disclosedness allows for a notion of being that is not identified with presence. But as all good Husserlians know, such ideas were not completely absent in Husserl (e.g. internal time-consciousness, and later on, the lifeworld). Dahlstrom correctly asserts: "...it would seem that the sum of the discrepancies between Husserl's and Heidegger's phenomenological conception of truth speaks for their continuity and by no means the necessity of some fissure between them" (173). In other words, the two approaches can be seen, as Dahlstrom effectively argues, as complementary; while Husserl is concerned with a formal ontology and Heidegger with that of a fundamental ontology, neither project cancels the other. In summarizing one possibility for why Heidegger sought to criticize his mentor, Dahlstrom offers a quite intriguing proposition:

This is not the first time an ex-seminarian from southwestern Germany displays an uncanny capacity of assimilating and criticizing in a single stroke the work of a philosophical mentor who is more at home with epistemological issues in science than with the passionate reflections of questioning believers.... To the question of why Kant's transcendental phenomenology becomes

transformed into Hegel's metaphysics and to the question of why Husserl's transcendental phenomenology becomes transformed into Heidegger's fundamental ontology, there is a single, truncated, but no less true answer: religion. (173-174)

Dahlstrom portrays a Heidegger that is concerned with the phenomena of human experiences in a way reminiscent of those cloaked in religious faith. Such a concern leads him to construct a philosophy that can deal with such phenomena analytically. As Dahlstrom claims in the final chapter, "theology's relation to belief and philosophy's relation to existence are homologous in [Heidegger's] account.... Just as theology is the ontic science of what is revealed in Christian belief and makes it possible ('the Crucified God'), so fundamental ontology is the ontological investigation of what is disclosed in being-here [i.e. Dasein] and makes it possible (time)" (440-441).

Chapter four summarizes Heidegger's description of "existential truth," i.e. the original disclosure of the senses of *da* in Dasein—the "(t)here" of "being-(t)here" (it is worth noting Dahlstrom's strict translation of all Heideggerian terms—*Dasein* is always "being-here," *existentiell* as "existentiel," etc.). Such truth, as it is presented in *Being and Time* and the Marburg lectures, is the disclosure of time as the sense of being-(t)here. By re-evaluating the way in which truth is to be understood, Heidegger provides a new critique of the logical prejudice; one in which the question of being is not forgotten. Dahlstrom simplifies Heidegger's concept of truth into a five-step argument (a quite un-Heideggerian move, yet helpful for many philosophers), the first three of which argue for the three structures that constitute the way that *Dasein* (we) exists and discloses itself as being-in-the-world, the fourth of which argues that a sort of timeliness constitutes the sense of *Dasein* as the disclosure of the sense of being, and the fifth of which states that we must discover the most primitive meaning of "timeliness." Hence, Heidegger's profound contribution to the philosophy of logic is the argument for time as a "formal indication" which guides the nonobjectifying language of Heidegger's fundamental ontology. The importance of the formal indication is its role in producing the primitive experience of being which makes it possible to uncover enti-

ties in whatever way is appropriate to them. After filling out this five-step argument throughout chapter four, Dahlstrom concludes by presenting an argument for Heidegger's everyday notion of time, as it is derived from the alleged necessity of ecstatic-horizonal timeliness, in a quite "analytic-friendly" (and admittedly un-Heideggerian) fashion, i.e. equipped with numbered premises, conclusions, and conditionals.

As a segue into his critiques of Heidegger in the fifth and final chapter, Dahlstrom utilizes the critique of Heidegger's existential truth, advanced by Ernst Tugendhat. This critique charges Heidegger with destroying the primary significance of the very concept "truth" by equivocating the term with the mere display of things (as opposed to the display of things "as they are"). In this way, Tugendhat's critique is presented as a defense of the logical prejudice in spite of Heidegger's attack against it. Dahlstrom sees Tugendhat's criticism as useful in pointing out a problem in Heidegger's fundamental ontology, and not in defeating Heidegger's position (particularly because he fails to properly address the transcendental character of Heidegger's concept of truth: transcendental/primordial truth as disclosedness *does not* cancel out the critical function of truth in propositions—it is meant to found it). A seeming problem in Heidegger's fundamental ontology that is exploited by Dahlstrom is the issue of its status as science: "...Heidegger portrays philosophy as the 'objectification of being as temporal or, better, transcendental science, ontology'. Yet is any objectification of the sense of being possible or appropriate? Is not the very sense of being, the ecstatic-horizonal timeliness, radically at odds with any objectification?" (433). Objectification can only properly occur if an entity is capable of being present-at-hand. Heidegger attacks the logical prejudice because it assumes that everything can be made present-at-hand.

Dahlstrom's critique of Heidegger is that he cannot present the ecstatically-horizonal timeliness without construing it as present-at-hand. For Dahlstrom, this means it must conform to the demands of formal logic and proper communication for it to be grasped *as* timeliness and not something else. Hence, although Heidegger provides an effective argument against the logical prejudice and the concept of truth that is a consequence of it, he nevertheless

fails to account adequately for the self-reflexive issues at work in his analysis. Dahlstrom sees Heidegger as failing to give a sufficient account of the governing principles in *Being and Time* and the Marburg lectures. In addition, and not in a wholly unrelated way, Dahlstrom faults Heidegger for his flirting “with a suspension of the principle of noncontradiction” (446). Despite these issues within Heidegger’s analysis, which Dahlstrom finds problematic, we are left with his support of Heidegger’s argument for “the original phenomenon of truth” (as disclosedness) and its effective critique of the logical prejudice: “[E]ven if these objections [i.e. Heidegger’s self-reflexivity and failure to provide a ground for the principles within his analysis] are conceded and Heidegger’s own criticism of his early work is accepted, they do not entail the failure of his account of the ‘original phenomena of truth’—and consequent exposure of the logical prejudice” (455).

Although one might agree with Dahlstrom concerning the legitimacy of Heidegger’s concept of truth and corresponding criticism of the logical prejudice, one might wonder if it is appropriate to be so dependent on classical logical models as a means of criticizing some of Heidegger’s insights. Dahlstrom states, “The logical prejudice is one thing, the principle of bivalence another. Adherence to the law of excluded middle for all nonvague assertions is not tantamount to an endorsement of the assumption that truth is exclusively the property of a proposition, nor does acceptance of that logical principle amount to a presumption of the ontological status of the state of affairs depicted by a true proposition” (446-447). And again, “...the principles of formal [i.e. classical] logic guarantee the possibility of communication. ...Flaunting the principles of logic or maintaining that they can be suspended at some level (even in regard to a manner of being, a disclosing, that they allegedly presuppose) spells the doom of communication, of authentic talk among those who are-here” (448).

Perhaps the self-reflexive problems in Heidegger’s analysis are the very reason why one should question the legitimacy of classical logic in addressing the complexities of truth and *Dasein*. One way to re-emphasize the early Heidegger’s point is that even our systems of logic must defer to *Dasein*’s disclosedness. Is logic not itself dependent on the formal indication that Heidegger speaks

of? Dahlstrom is not nearly radical enough in allowing Heidegger's analysis of the prejudices of classical logic to reach its full potential. Is it really the case that communication and "authentic talk" are "doomed" if the laws of excluded middle and noncontradiction are not given infallible authority over every propositional evaluation? Heidegger need not reject these laws in *every* case, only some (e.g. self-reflexive propositions, discussions of being and nothing, etc.). It is simply another form of the logical prejudice to assume that such things as the law of excluded middle or law of noncontradiction hold in *all* cases. Again, examples abound where these laws conflict with what is disclosed in *Dasein* (see Kant, Hegel, Fichte, and Heidegger himself for starters; their metaphysical works thrive on presenting antinomies that the laws of excluded middle and noncontradiction cannot account for). In support of such ideas, it is worth noting that much research has been done in the past fifty years supporting the legitimacy of non-classical logics (the most impressive being the work of Graham Priest). This research might in fact reveal more of the genius at work in Heidegger's critique of the logical prejudice. Then again, there are always the party lines to consider ("but we don't *do* logic—they do"). In the end, although Dahlstrom provides an overall commendable work for those interested in the early Heidegger's concept of truth, his own final critique remains trapped within the very prejudice that is thematically criticized throughout the book; i.e. Heidegger's (all too?) effective critique of the logical prejudice.

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