



Review

Reviewed Work(s): *History and the Idea of Progress* by Arthur M. Melzer, Jerry Weinberger and M. Richard Zinman

Review by: George Klosko

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social ethics and revealed theology and of items that do not often feature in the literature (although several claims to priority are misleading). Description is a prerequisite for explanation. But one element necessary to explanation is absent from this book's structure, namely, a full recognition of Locke as an autonomous thinker. While some of his reading and some putative influences upon him are catalogued, there is little to show how or why Locke went beyond these, despite a sense that he did do (pp. 32, 62, 78). Why? It is a question of method and choice of subject. Description is not complemented by much analysis of content, so that it becomes difficult to see just how and why Locke could innovate. Hence, where Marshall attempts a sustained explanation of Locke's views, little primary data are adduced, and the result is highly speculative (e.g., pp. 62–72, 250–65). Marshall's choice of subjects—perfectly reasonable in itself—tends to increase the deficit of explanation by leaving out some central matters. Much of the *Second Treatise* is bypassed. This reflects the fact that religious matters (whether in the form of ecclesiastical affairs or revealed theology), along with social ethics, are the author's principal concern. Perhaps someone told him to insert something about the *Second Treatise*. (The citations of Filmer—whom the *Second Treatise* is said to answer—in this chapter are drawn at second hand from another study [pp. 207, n. 4 and 211, n. 9], and the book's structure would be more obvious without a chapter on resistance.) Yet by leaving out so much, Marshall deprives himself of a major resource for understanding other items in Locke's thought. Again, while it's fair to say that Locke's views about the human understanding are not central to Marshall's agenda, they were certainly central to Locke's; and on the occasions when they are mentioned, explanatory statements do appear (e.g., p. 154). By the same token, the author is able to do little to connect his areas of interest, except when the human understanding is adduced (e.g., chap. 8).

Marshall sees Locke as an eclectic. What of the substantive categories from which the collecting is said to have been done—latitudinarianism and Socinianism? Neither provides a new approach to Locke, though Marshall deploys them with a new pertinacity, so that the question is less about originality than success in explaining Locke's intentions. So far as this book takes us, latitudinarianism and Socinianism do little in this line. This much is suggested by Marshall's own words. We find Locke at once "aligning himself with the Latitudinarian wing" and "going very far beyond even the most eirenic of the clerical Latitudinarians" (pp. 58–59). A similar picture appears with Socinianism. A "general sympathy" and a "broadly Socinian" view are attributed (pp. 402, 416), and the ultimate destination of "unitarian heretic" is assigned (p. xv). Yet we are told that there is "no sign that Locke ever felt able to assert that there could not be three infinite persons of the Godhead" (p. 348). The difficulty is increased because Marshall never defines adequately either latitudinarianism or Socinianism (or most other key terms). He repels the best enquiry into the meaning of "latitudinarianism" (p. 39, n. 12); provides virtually no footnoted references to Socinian works, of which he lists very few in his bibliography; and neither quotes nor lists any work of Faustus Socinus (he never cites any foreign language text, except in translation). Locke stated, "De Socinianorum fide dubito" (see Klibansky's *Epistola de Tolerantia* [1968], p. 96).

There are inexact readings of crucial manuscript texts also. Take the view that the matter primarily requiring attention in the *Second Treatise* is resistance theory. Mar-

shall believes that the duty to preserve others—so central to the *Second Treatise*—had been stated in a manuscript of 1680 (p. 206; cf. pp. 142–43 on Bodleian Ms. Locke f. 4 fols. 145–49). But that note concerns God's *purposes* and not any *duty*. Had Marshall seen this, he could not have relegated the bulk of the *Second Treatise* to silence. The silence is self-defeating, for it means forgoing one of the principal means of dating that text. His case on *that* topic, which is interesting (as are his remarks on Ashcraft), has so slender an evidential base that one can hardly say that enough matter has been provided to establish it.

Textual optimism is evident elsewhere. In the extended treatment of Bodleian Ms. Locke c. 34, Marshall claims that Locke was "strongly advocating comprehension" (p. 98). Yet no advocacy of comprehension, strong or weak, appears when we follow up Marshall's references (p. 100). The text Marshall uses to emphasize his Socinian hypothesis, "General Reflections" (as Marshall himself observes) is not certainly Locke's composition (p. 421). The statement that Bodleian Ms. Locke c. 27 fol. 30^a concerns toleration for English Catholics (p. 110, n. 56) is curious, for that document proposes a test for *clerics* (it's entitled "The Particular Test for Priests"), requiring them to abjure tenets the writer took to distinguish Roman Catholicism. Examples could be multiplied.

It seems Marshall has not stepped clear of his doctoral thesis. Were there not a reference to "drafts of this book as an inordinately lengthy thesis" (p. xii), comparison between the book's prose and the smoother pieces he has issued elsewhere would suggest as much. One hopes that for the future, he will more definitely transcend this manner of historical enquiry.

History and the Idea of Progress. Edited by Arthur M. Melzer, Jerry Weinberger, and M. Richard Zinman. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995. 271p. \$37.50 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

George Klosko, *University of Virginia*

The papers in this volume were delivered originally at Michigan State University between October 1990 and May 1991. They present a series of reflections on the well-known "end of history" thesis of Francis Fukuyama, as presented in his article "The End of History" (*National Interest*, 16 [1989]). As many readers know, under the influence of Hegel, Fukuyama argues that with the end of the Cold War history has come to an end, because there no longer exist serious ideological alternatives to liberal democracy and the free market.

The result is a somewhat uneasy collection, comprising both investigations of the historical roots of the idea of progress and reflections on Fukuyama's thesis. Contributions of the first sort are Terry Pinkard's nonmetaphysical account of Hegelian teleology, Susan Shell on Kant's idea of universal history, wide-ranging ruminations by Joseph Cropsey, Harvey Mansfield's esoteric reading of Machiavelli, and Werner Dannhauser's highly readable account of Spengler and Nietzsche. As well as a further presentation of his own view by Fukuyama, general reflections are contributed by Samuel Huntington, Richard Rorty, Jean Elshtain, Christopher Lasch, Alan Gilbert, and Conor Cruise O'Brien. In addition to dividing according to theme, contributions also break down between highly scholarly pieces suitable for specialists (especially Pinkard and Shell) and the reflections, which are stimulating and of high quality but generally suitable for a popular audience.

The book's cover depicts Caspar David Friedrich's painting "Owl in Flight before a Full Moon." The reference to Hegel is apparent. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings as a stage of civilization draws to a close. But the owl is symbolic in another, unintended sense. Fukuyama's thesis, like any moment of Spirit's progress, is a product of its own time. The end of the Cold War brought with it a sudden clarity, but with the passage of time new complexities have emerged, and the owl of Minerva has spread its wings over "the end of history" as well. Indeed, O'Brien includes an Afterword to his essay, updating his analysis in the light of a few years' additional perspective (pp. 165–66).

The datedness of Fukuyama's thesis is a consistent thread throughout the commentaries. Huntington provides an expert overview of potential sources of conflict in the post-Cold War world. As one can imagine, Huntington argues that these conflicts are generally ethnic or religious and frequently within, rather than between, states. O'Brien strikingly makes the case for Marxism-Leninism as a (relatively) progressive offshoot of the Enlightenment, in comparison to retrograde systems of belief that have replaced it in several countries. Confronting Fukuyama head-on, Gilbert argues that the end of history has been taken over from Hegel "too easily" (p. 254 n. 5). Gilbert presents an ethical critique of existing forms of liberalism, which must move in radical directions in order to realize their implicit ideals.

In their contributions, Elshtain and Lasch explore strains within liberalism. Elshtain discusses tensions in liberal feminist thought, focusing on the inadequacies of rights-based liberalism as an ultimate ideology. Lasch presents a catalogue of social and intellectual decline. Having defeated its external enemies, liberalism is crumbling from within, especially because of its citizens' lack of civic virtue. In contrast, liberal ideals are stoutly defended by Rorty, who presents a withering critique of the kind of history Fukuyama takes to have ended. Rorty argues that what has passed is the idea of "History" as a "large, conceptually graspable object," a fantasy that has impeded the less grandiose but realizable goal of reducing avoidable human suffering (pp. 214–15, 212).

The weakest contribution to the collection is probably Fukuyama's. Although his original insight retains some of its lustre, his arguments for it are strikingly unconvincing. After rejecting economic explanations of historical change, he presents his own view, which is based on the "struggle for recognition," discussed in Hegel's analysis of the Master-Slave relationship, in the *Phenomenology*. According to Fukuyama, the need for recognition, which can be satisfied only in democracy, drives history. To support this grand claim, Fukuyama relies on the authority of selected figures in the history of political thought. Not only does he run together passages from different authors concerning human motivation (though it is not clear that all discuss the same phenomenon), but several of his readings are questionable. For instance, after a brief discussion of "vainglory" in Hobbes's *Leviathan*, Fukuyama declares: "Hobbes the great materialist ends up describing the nature of the 'first man' in terms not much different from those of the idealist Hegel" (p. 22). Fukuyama's claim that Hobbes views vainglory as the "first and foremost" cause of conflict is dubious, while he also fails to recognize that vainglory, for Hobbes, in part functions instrumentally, not as an end in itself, but as a means to self-preservation. Apparently in response to criticisms of his original article, Fukuyama concedes that his reading of Hegel might not be accurate, but is based on the interpretation of Alexandre Kojève, whom he refers to as Hegel's "great interpreter" (p. 27): "for the purposes of the

present argument I am interested not in Hegel per se but in Hegel-as-interpreted-by-Kojève or perhaps in a new, synthetic philosopher named Hegel-Kojève" (p. 242 n. 11).

I close with an observation from Cropsey's essay: "For history, rather than imposing capitalism as the scourge for which socialism was to be the remedy, appears to have ordained socialism as the failure destined to precede liberal capitalism in order to attest the truth and goodness of the latter. How curious, if the socialist regime whose only speculative support lay in the end-of-history thesis were to be consumed for the strengthening of that fickle theory . . ." (p. 103).

The Missing Child in Liberal Theory: Towards a Covenant Theory of Family, Community, Welfare and the Civic State. By John O'Neill. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994. 129p. \$40.00 cloth, \$14.95, paper.

Shelley Burtt, *Yale University*

To appreciate the merits of this ambitious, frustrating book, it is important to understand what it is not. It is not a work in political theory or the history of political thought. It is an unevenly written manifesto that rejects both liberal and communitarian visions of the good society in favor of what the author calls a "covenant theory" of political and family life. A covenant theory, in O'Neill's account, values what liberalism does not: the continuity of family and community life between generations and the moral norm of reciprocity. Do not read this book for any sustained, theoretically sophisticated elaboration of "covenant principles" because none is present. Still, O'Neill's elaboration of a covenant alternative to contract liberalism deserves attention for a number of reasons. First is his effort to place children and their families at the center of thinking about politics. This means shifting our theoretical focus from the rights and interests of "atomistic individuals" to the needs and challenges of the growing number of children at risk of poor social outcomes, something that O'Neill argues persuasively that liberal theories are unable to do. His primary focus is on the 20% of North American children who grow up in poverty, deprived of a wide range of resources provided routinely to children born into more fortunate circumstances. O'Neill's penetrating account of how liberals manage to live with such unequal beginnings for children and his explanation of why we should not are the strongest parts of his book.

By switching the focus of political theory from emancipating autonomous adults to ameliorating risky childhoods, O'Neill also provides a valuable perspective on the vexing "family values" debate. No one concerned about children's life chances could celebrate the "right" of young, low-income, low-education women to bear and raise children. (This is just one example of O'Neill's consistent rejection of the language of rights and entitlements as faulty foundations for state assistance to the needy.) Conversely, conservative moralizing about the irresponsibility of single mothers completely misses the point: The problem of "poorly resourced" families is a social one, created by our inability to nurture a "reciprocal regard for other citizens" (p. 35).

Despite an infelicitous prose style and the often rambling presentation of his ideas, O'Neill successfully presses his case against the foundational commitments of liberal society, arguing that its moral subordination of "embodied [family] ties" to "market ties" produces a world view lacking the conceptual and emotional resources required to sustain just political communities in the modern world. This