

can freedom be grounded by a discourse free from constraint, when such a discourse is possible only if freedom has been obtained?" (p 96). Supporting Gadamer in his debate with Habermas about the relationship between critical theory and hermeneutics, Davis argues that the impulse to freedom is grounded not merely in rational discourse but also in tradition and collective experience.

A detailed consideration of the concept of critique, especially within the Marxist tradition, leads him to argue for the development of a 'critical theology'. "... faith, together with theology, cannot be a genuine protest against domination and injustice, unless it acknowledges that itself and its own past history are the products of unfree society and therefore subject to criticism and revolutionary transformation. Critical theology is ineluctably the critique of religion and of theology as instances of domination ... Religious faith as a thrust towards plenitude and totality, as a pursuit of transcendent truth and value may surely be counted among the sources of emancipatory experience ..." (pp 130-131).

Davis also argues for the value of religious language – transcending the banally factual, it provides a utopian and theological dimension to 'discourse' and politics.

Similarly, the Christian emphasis on the individual is exactly the opposite of the post-Enlightenment bourgeois notion of individualism.

Yet, granted the signal failure of the Frankfurt School writers to establish a working relationship between social and political theory and political practice, Davis' choice of the work of this group of writers as the starting point for his call for a 'critical theology', which is to establish an effective relationship between theology and social practice, is perhaps unfortunate. Moreover, in his emphasis on "religious faith as a thrust towards plenitude and totality", Davis is no more helpful than the Frankfurt School writers when it comes to dealing with the question of the precise institutional structures which characterise and secure a society based on "plenitude" and "totality". Finally, if Davis is correct in arguing that "... the truth of Christianity ... is socially and politically mediated in its entirety", and if the 'critical theology' he advocates is "the critique of religion and of theology as instances of domination", is Davis not forced to agree that Christianity is what Marx always claimed it was – merely an ideology?

STEPHEN SALTER

#### **CONTEMPORARY ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY, by Milton K. Munitz.**

*Macmillan, 1981. pp 434 £9.50.*

Analytic philosophy is thought of in some quarters as one of the tools of Satan. Be that as it may, this book is an absolute godsend, though 'contemporary' in its title could be thought misleading.

The book is basically an introduction to the philosophy of language and meaning as that has progressed in the English-speaking world from the latter half of the nineteenth century to the present time. It is mainly concerned with Pierce, Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, the logical positivists, Quine and Kripke. It therefore neglects Davidson, Dummett, Strawson, Putnam and Tarski, and that is regrettable. But it is still a very good book, one which, to my mind, is entirely without equal. Bernard Harrison's *An Introduction to the Philos-*

*ophy of Language* (Macmillan, 1979) covers similar ground, and it does so with more originality. But it is rather obscure in parts and is best recommended to those who already know something about the writers it discusses. Munitz's text, on the other hand, is a model of clarity, and its exposition is ideal for beginners. Any obscurity in it lies, I should say, almost entirely in its quotations (of which there are many), for the contents of which Munitz of course, is not responsible.

So if you want an informative, intelligible survey of the writers Munitz deals with, something to get you going on them, Munitz's book is the thing to buy. I should add that it has a good bibliography.

BRIAN DAVIES O P