

REASON & VIOLENCE, A Decade of Sartre's Philosophy, 1950-60

1964 by R.D. Laing & D.G. Cooper, with foreword by J.-P.S. (Humanism)
(Introd. is by both authors; Questions of Method by Cooper & Genet while Critique of Dial. Reason is by Laing.)

Introd.

pp. 11-12 (re totalization & rel. to PHEN.) "In the PHEN., Hegel sought to show many facets of reality can be unified into a consistent view of the world, in which of which particular events, experiences, actions, find their place & can be construed accordingly. However another synthesis equally consistent... completely contradictory the former... Each point of view is an absolute, at the same time absolutely relative; the collisions bet. points of view are the occasion of the endless instability of humanity...."

p. 13: "An absolutely key concept in such thinking is necessarily Hegel's aufheben. Sartre's term is dépasser. A totalization holds the field. It is challenged by another totalization... Thus it is negated as an absolute, conserved as a relative & subsumed in a later synthesis... A point of view, a synthesis, a totalization, in being dépassé in this 3-fold way becomes a historical moment."

p. 14: We 'constitute' ourselves into social collectivities by acts of totalization...

p. 15: Sartre sees the various theories of sociology & psycho-analysis as more or less partial realizations of some moment or moments in the dialectic. Since they are not grasped by dialectical reason they are blown up into total theories & inevitably run into contradictions.

p. 16: Thus a whole theory of society will be elaborated starting from the conflict bet. classes, without any adequate grasp of the classes themselves, being constituted by a prior dialectic beginning with praxis...

p. 17: reader's
(Re difficulty in/orientation even after guidance in Method) neither is it easy to rely on Sartre's earlier writings for his bearings. To use one of Sartre's favourite expressions, these works are now dépassé. Being-for-itself, being-in-itself, the fundamental categories of B/N, are absorbed into praxis & process. In fact, the pour soi is mentioned ONLY ONCE, almost dismissively in a fn. in the Critique. (the 3 ontological dimensions of the body are no longer in the Critique. (ff But are in St. Genet, the "transitional from earlier phil. into later" as are in Genet also good & bad faith, the dial. of freedom).)

One, Ques. of Method - 1. Marxism & Existentialism

p. 32: A phil. remains effective only as long as the praxis which produced it remains alive -- the praxis which maintains it & which it in turn illuminates.

Epochs of phil. creation in this sense are rare. These 3 philosophies (bet. 17th-20th c. Descartes-Locke; Kant-Hegel; Marx) each became in their the stuff (humus) of all particular thought & the horizon of the whole culture since the his. moment which they expressed had not yet passed... Those who come after the great phil. moments of creation & who give a practical function to the theories... These relative beings Sartre calls ideologists.

p. 35: (re Kierkegaard's existentialism as an idealist protest against idealism) which therefore was allegedly eclipsed by Mx & in fact: In its fight against Marxism bourgeois thought at 1st relied upon the post-Kantian, on Kant himself, & on Descartes. Only in the 20th c., at a stage when for the 1st time bourgeois thought was on the defensive did Kierkegaard reappear, when pluralisms, ambiguities & paradoxes were used against the Marxist dialectic. Bet. the 2 Ws a Ger. existentialism appeared as a stealthy attempt to resuscitate the transcendent... (against Jaspers & the existentialism that developed against Mx; but the other, ie. J.-P. S's own did not so develop tho it too started with Kierkegaard)

***** (p.36 takes up Lukacs's pamphlet on Existentialism & Praxis super' cialy on p.37: In the early phase of the SU when it was solitary, ... practice & theory split apart in the transformation of practice into an empirical without principles & of theory into pure & rigid knowledge. (As for Am. sociology "we have real acquisitions but theoretical uncertainty. Psycho-analysis got off to a flying start, but has tended to become fixed & rigid...lacks theoretical base)

p.40: re microphysics as "only valid theory of knowledge today" because it asserts experimenter is part of the experimental system. Theory of knowledge however remains the weak point of Mxism... (Then on reflection Mat-E-C, not Phil. Ntbks) In the 1st (K) knowledge is pure theory, non-situated observation, while in the 2nd (VII) it is simple passivity... One can lapse into idealism not only by dissolving reality into subjectivity but also by denying real subjectivity in the name of it.

2. Problem of Mediations & Auxiliary discipline

1939/40

NB NB NB J PS says he began research on B/H in (1939) Berlin under influence of Husserl & Heidegger who "presumably" (sic) was then full of "activism" & wd. out main method. principal conclusions in winter 1939-40 prior to Occupation experience. says nothing of how it was pub'd during Occupation) -- most vulgar material explanation & mechanical as to date, or one date)

3. The Progressive-Regressive Method The Project

thanks!
Hegel
PK

Part III--CRITIQUE OF DIAL. REASON

Itrod. a) Dogmatic dial & critical dial
b) Critique of critical experience
p.94-5: "This dogmatism has persisted from the beginning ever since Mx turned Hegel upside down. There is a sense in which Hegel's dogmatism is superior to a Marxist dogmatism & this superiority lies precisely in its idealism. For this very idealism is separation and a link existed bet. its knowing & its obj. It is this separation which gets lost in Mx. Mx says that the material existence of man cannot be reduced to contemplative knowledge. Praxis swamps mere knowing. But we are immediately in difficulties. Thought is at one & the same time being & knowledge of being. As such thought is subj. to dialectics as its law in the same way as any detail of his process. But thought as reason is also knowledge of the dial.

p.96: Whitehead said very accurately that a law of nature begins as an hypothesis and ends by becoming a 'fact'.....

p.100: "In one moment (in the Hegelian sense) man is subj. to the dial. as as enemy power. In another moment he creates it/ This 2nd moment is the negation of the 1st which is the negation of man. This is the original negation of negation.

p.101: The dial. is the law of totalization... Thus, in a materialist dialectic, as in the Hegelian, thought must discover both its own necessity & the necessity of its obj.... The dial. is the living logic of action. It will be for us to know that it is universally & necessarily present as a possibility, as the adventure of all. It can be nothing other than its own total translucency....

Thought must find its own necessity

p.105: While we may take exs. from the wkglass or the bourgeoisie it is not the primary intention of this study to define these or any particular classes, but rather to work out the way a class is constituted, its totalization & detotalization & all the time its dial. intelligibility, involving links of interiority & exteriority, its internal structures, relations with other classes etc

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Book I - From indiv. praxis to the practico-inert
p.107 "The original totalizing relation of this material being; a man, with the material world of which he is a part is defined as need/Need is an interiorization by the man-in-need of a lack in the exterior total field of satisfactions. Something is lacking or missing or scarce.

B. Human relations as mediation bet. different sectors of materiality

C. Matter as totalized totality & a 1st experience of necessity

I. Scarcity & mode of prod.

p.115: "In speaking of scarcity, some Marxists can often be quite dogmatic. Engels is often unintelligible & ambiguous. A form of scarcity they characteristically neglect, for instance, is the scarcity of time.

"In short, scarcity as the negation in man of man by matter is a principle of dialectic intelligibility. Man sees his action stolen & deformed by the world in which he registers himself. Scarcity is fundamental for the understanding of our his. It remains, however, a contingency

- 2. Worked-on matter as alienated objective of coll. & indiv. praxis
- 3. Necessity as structure of dialectic experience
- 4. Social being as materiality & particularly, the being of the group

D/Collectives

p.126: "There are in fact 2 dialectics: that of the indiv. praxis & that of the group as praxis, & the practico-inert field is the anti-dialectic of each, that is, the practico-inert (social) field is negated by indiv. & group praxis, & is the negation both of ind. action & of the praxis of the group. This is not recognized in the theory of Marx & Engels. Their mistake begins with their failure to see that all objectification is alteration. Every objectification becomes other because it is an obj. in the field of freedom of action of the other. This is the freedom that limits freedom. The failure of Hegel is that he does not recognize that materiality is the necessary intermediary bet. 2 freedoms. The 1st alienation (by objectification & alteration) is that one praxis steals the meaning from the other, or, at least, necessarily alters it....

The following therefore is a schema for the intelligibility of praxis--practico-inert--praxis: 1) The univocal relation of interiority. 2) The equivocal relation of a multiplicity of practical activities, of which each steals the freedom of the others (read more such gibberish)....

- 3) The transformation of all free praxis into exis.
- 4) @ " " each exis into passive activity by the free praxis of the other, whose projects & perspectives are other
- 5) " " into passive activity by the passive activity of the obj.

BOOK II - From the group to history

A. The Group, The Equivalence of Freedom as necessity & of necessity as freedom; limits & extent of all realistic dial.

B. Conclusions: the individual in a class society

p.176: "The scandal is not in the simple existence of the other, but in the violence undergone or threatened in each person's perception of the other as too-many through interiorized scarcity."

finis