

Editorial

People continue to discover previously unknown works, or fragments of works, by Sartre and his contemporaries such as Camus and Merleau-Ponty. This is the case of the two very short pieces on democracy which are the result of detective work undertaken by our Special Projects Editor, Ron Aronson. He is in the process of completing a study of the two authors and has been kind enough to provide an introduction to these translations. In spite of their brevity, each contains the kernel of the author's thinking at the time and deserves to be read by a wider audience. Sartre's piece provides a snapshot of the author as "fellow-traveler" and Marxian thinker while Camus' piece provides a useful insight to some of the ideas he expressed in *The Rebel*.

Our next section entitled "Sartre, literary critic, novelist and autobiographer" is composed of four articles which deal with aspects, elements and themes found in or developed by Sartre in *Situations I* and *II*; *The Roads to Freedom* and *The Words*. Sartre began his career as literary critic with a series of occasional book reviews in prestigious French journals such as the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. His peremptory and radical judgments of the work of Mauriac and Nabokov, his insightful comments on the use of language in Camus' *The Outsider*, and his pithy summary of the relationship of literary technique and the author's vision in the case of Faulkner's novel have made these articles required reading for students of modern literature and have inspired such writers and critics as Alain Robbe-Grillet, Roland Barthes, Tsevetan Todorov and Gérard Genette who have taken some of his comments on the role of the narrator and the description of objects, on style, the distinction between prose and poetry and the importance of temporality in new and different directions. The article on Sartre and Merleau-Ponty lays bare the changing relationship and the continuous intellectual interaction between these fellow philosophers and one-time friends. Even if their friendship did not endure, Sartre maintained a great deal of affection and respect for this thinker whose sudden death shocked everyone. The articles on *The Roads to Freedom* and *The Words* are very timely in

their approach, but they are of a different nature. Both plunge below the surface of the text in an attempt to reveal the profound affective and psychosexual relationships that Sartre may have entertained with his long dead father, a male friend and his mother. In respect to Sartre's relationship to his father and the phobias with which it may have imbued him, Isabelle Feldbruegge goes very far and a number of readers may well object to some of the author's inferences. If such be the case, we expect to hear from them immediately in order that we may publish their comments and the author's rejoinder in the near future and keep the debate going just as we have done in the past with certain controversial articles published in previous issues. The article on *The Words* is not just timely in regards to its approach but also because there is a burgeoning interest in literary circles in autobiography since the ground breaking work by Philippe Lejeune and others in this area. In this respect it is noteworthy that more and more monographs are being published both in the French and English speaking world on specific works by Sartre and that some of these do not just focus on the text in question but provide an excellent introduction to Sartre's work and thinking in general. One of us has just finished reading in French a condensed introduction by Sophie Bilemdjian to Sartre's *Existentialism is a Humanism* (*L'Existentialisme est un humanisme de Jean-Paul Sartre*, PUF, Paris, 2000) and one by Geneviève Idt to *The Words* (*Les Mots: une autocritique "en bel écrit"*, Belin, "Lettres SUP", Paris, 2001). Both works situate these works in a broader Sartrean context, include comments by other critics and can function to some extent as general introductions to Sartre's enormous output in multifarious directions. In other words, introductions of this type can be of great use to both students and teachers of Sartre because they grant us at once an appreciation of specific works and allow us to situate the particular work in a broader overall context. We recommend both these very compact works highly and hope that the approach—specifically the synthesis of Sartre's thinking and writing—continues to be emulated. In a similar manner, and as our contributors know already, we insist that wherever pertinent, they include considerations of later developments of Sartre's thought and of recent critical trends in the area under consideration.

Turning away from the literary toward the philosophical dimension of Sartre's work, we present a detailed critical study of Sartre's early phenomenological conception of imagination by Beata Stawarska. Stawarska takes the development of Husserl's theory of imagination away from an early conception centered in the image as picture as a

clue to the discernment of a similarly non-pictorial conception of the image in Sartre's work which contests the pictorial conception which otherwise dominates his efforts to understand imagination. The author argues for the superiority of this non-pictorial conception on its own terms but also as a more adequate realization of Sartre's attempt "to theorize imagination *not* in the (traditional) sense of a substitute and servant of perception but ... (as) an attitude irreducible and equal in dignity to perception." She concludes with a consideration of the implications of this conception of imagination for our understanding of the role of alterity in the constitution of consciousness.

We conclude this issue with book reviews by David Detmer of several of the recent short introductions to Sartre's work and Farhang Erfani of Jean-Marc Mouillie's *Sartre, Conscience, ego et psychè* and Michel Rybalka's Notice Board which, as usual, is replete with new information on Sartre and is of immeasurable help to all Sartre scholars who need to keep their research up-to-date.

We wish to thank Nicholas Gaskill (Birmingham-Southern College) for assisting Steven Hendley in the preparation of this issue.

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