

RADICAL PHILOSOPHY 1

JANUARY 1972

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Radical Philosophy is philosophy which deals with fundamentals. This means that it has to penetrate the surface presentation of issues; it cannot take its problems straight from some unexamined list of received "philosophical puzzles". In this sense, then, radical philosophy just is philosophy.

Why then the pleonasm radical philosophy?

First, we think that philosophy as it is generally practiced in Britain today lacks this quality. Its professional practitioners, including ourselves, have become trapped in self-perpetuating institutionalisations, habits of thought, of what philosophy is about. (In this issue Jonathan Ree attempts to bring this out with special reference to Oxford.) To do proper philosophical work, we think, philosophers have to come into active conflict with these accepted and institutionally reinforced structures -- to be radical in their practice of philosophy.

Secondly, we are aware of the role of uncriticized "philosophies" in supporting an oppressive social structure. Academic philosophy, and most obviously political, moral and educational philosophy has not penetrated these ideologies. Rather it has contributed to them. In criticizing and going beyond this sort of philosophy, then, we shall be calling more than bad philosophy into question. In this way we want to establish the tie between radicalism in philosophy and in wider political life.

We are embarking on a co-operative project in the Radical Philosophy Group and we want this to be reflected in the journal. We hope to share the work of editing among the different areas where there are groups. We want to be able to circulate contributions to people who we think will be able to offer useful comments. (For this reason we would like material to be sent in triplicate where possible).

In this issue we are publishing material written independently of any conscious group. Perhaps this is the explanation of the lack of political bite in what we have received. We are now looking for contributions for future issues, and we hope that in these a more

incisive radicalism will begin to emerge. We do not want articles reduced to insubstantiality to protect them from possible refutation.

We shall make it a regular policy to reprint important philosophical work which is not readily available. Please send us any suggestions. In this issue we are pleased to republish an article by Lucien Goldmann. Thinkers of the stature of Goldmann (and Georg Lukacs, both of whom died last year) have been too long ignored by professional philosophers in this country.

We also hope that people will send comments and letters, as well as more news items and revealing extracts from books, articles, newspaper editorials, etc. We would like to start a regular section containing reports and criticisms of philosophy courses and discussions of new ideas and experiments. Book reviews will also be a regular feature; if you would like to review a particular book write to: Peter Binns, School of Philosophy, University of Warwick.

Deadline for the next issue is 10th March, 1972.

Finally, we regret the high price of this issue. The price is determined by the size of our circulation. We cannot at present risk printing too many copies; but if our circulation grows sufficiently it will be possible to reduce the price. Please help (there is a subscription form on the inside back cover).

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The Radical Philosophy Group is hoping to compile a list of people who have papers to read or who would like to lead discussions. Such a list will be very useful to local groups who want to invite outside speakers, as well as to Secretaries of Philosophy Societies etc., If you have a paper or would be prepared to lead a discussion on a particular topic, please send us your name, address, and title of your paper/topic, together with a very brief synopsis if possible. Please let us know if you would like a copy of the list when it is prepared. We hope to revise it from time to time, so please keep us informed.

"Rouse up, O Young Men of the New Age! set your foreheads against the ignorant Hirelings! For we have Hirelings in the Camp, the Court & the University, who would, if they could, for ever depress Mental & prolong Corporeal War."  
Blake