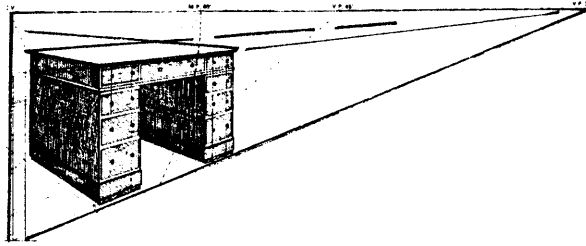


EDITORIAL



In this issue of *Radical Philosophy*, we offer a characteristically varied collection of contributions: two pieces which explore the relationships (actual and potential) between diverse social movements, a literary-philosophical analysis of Genet's *Prisoner of Love*, and an interview with one of France's leading post-war radical theorists, Cornelius Castoriadis.

One of the most promising and challenging of all contemporary developments on the left is the growing re-alignment of socialist and ecological politics. In the UK, Raymond Williams's pioneering pamphlet on *Ecology and Socialism* was a significant forerunner of such more recent events as the highly successful 'Red and Green' national conferences, and the formation out of them of a 'Red and Green Network'. In the USA theoretical work in the field is already further advanced, with the pathbreaking work of James O'Connor and his colleagues associated with the new journal *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*. European activists and thinkers, most especially those involved on the left of the German Greens, have, of course established the groundwork for these more recent advances. *Radical Philosophy* has made its own contribution to this growing literature, and in this issue we publish an important new article by Tim Hayward. The starting-point for Hayward's argument is a critical analysis of K. Lee's recently published *Social Philosophy and Ecological Scarcity*. Lee's attempt to span the analytical philosophical tradition and ecological social and political thought is commended by Hayward, and so is her attempt to show the importance of a socialist view of social justice in the meeting of 'concrete' needs to any ecologically sensitive social philosophy. However, Hayward shows that Lee takes insufficient distance from liberal conceptions of rights which, as Hayward shows, are incapable of sustaining the conclusions which Lee herself endorses.

Hayward goes on to acknowledge the force of several well-established ecological criticisms of Marx's view of historical development and human emancipation through a domination of 'humanisation' of nature, but nevertheless insists that it would be a mistake to follow Lee and many other ecological socialists in simply abandoning Marx in favour of the 'utopian' tradition defined by Fourier and others. A morally grounded rejection of our unredeemably ecologically destructive capitalism may well have, Hayward recognises, an important part to play in the formation of a movement for change, but it is clearly insufficient as a guide to its practical success. For this we need an adequate explanatory critique of the LMP's ecological limits and a practical strategy for change. The Marxian critique of Utopianism, in other words, still remains pertinent in relation to the ecological politics of today.

Carl Hedman's contribution to this issue of the journal is ostensibly a discussion of rival views on the relationship of the new reproductive technologies – in their tendency towards 'ectogenesis', the artificial womb – to the rights and well-being of women. It also turns out to be about the possibility of a creative re-alignment between previously independent oppositional so-

cial movements – in this case movements for class, gender, and racial equality. His vision is of a 'difference-respecting coalition' in multidimensional struggle against a system of multidimensional privilege. Considering diametrically opposed views of the political significance of the new reproductive technologies, Hedman uses this framework to show that a more fluid dynamic and even the possibility of resolution of these statically opposed positions may be achievable if two conditions are met. First, that the technologies are understood not simply and ahistorically, in terms of their current location in existing relations of power and domination, but in terms of their potential under conditions which might change in the course of feminist struggles themselves. Second, that feminist insights are set alongside and in reflective interchange with those of other oppositional social movements.

Though situated firmly within the field of philosophical controversy unleashed by post-structuralism, Simon Critchley's article addresses one of the central, perennial questions of philosophy – what is truth? The topic of Critchley's piece is Jean Genet's posthumously published *Prisoner of Love*. In it, he poses, through Genet's own words, and with asides on both Sartre's and Derrida's rival commentaries on Genet's earlier writings, the relation between a text and the truth it attempts to tell – in this case, that of the Palestinian revolution. Genet spent two years with the Palestinians on the West Bank, and more than a decade later, already terminally ill, wrote down his memories and experiences in this text. Genet himself had 'sworn to tell the truth in this book', but Critchley's hypothesis is that the *Prisoner of Love* 'is a book about the conditions for the possibility of truthful narration, and, more precisely, about what sort of narrative technique is required to tell the truth about a revolution'.

A change of pace, to a more informal and leisurely presentation and interchange of ideas is represented in this issue's interview between Peter Dews and Peter Osborne, for *Radical Philosophy*, and Cornelius Castoriadis. Possibly Castoriadis will be best known – at least to some of *RP*'s readership – for his involvement in the influential, though short-lived, French radical grouping 'Socialisme ou Barbarie'. Though disbanded in 1967, the ideas of the group had much in common with, and probably significantly influenced, the explosive revitalisation of revolutionary thought and action symbolised by the 'events' of Paris, May 1968. The interview offers some fascinating glimpses of Castoriadis's early days in the Greek communist movement, his move to France and involvement in Trotskyist politics and his increasingly radical departure from the Marxist tradition in favour of the notions of autonomy, self-management and his distinctive conception of the 'imaginary institution of society'. The interview continues with a wide-ranging discussion of these ideas, together with commentary on contemporary political and economic questions: market and plan, democratic self-government, and the significance of the recent revolutions in Eastern Europe.

Ted Benton