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THE DEATH OF THE OBJECTIVE OBSERVER: SARTRE'S DIALECTICAL REASON AS AN EPISTEMOLOGY FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

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The social sciences, true to the English derivative rather than the Latin origin of their name, often mimic the natural sciences in striving for objectivity. While *scientia* merely means knowledge, social science's insistence on knowledge derived from objectively verifiable evidence based on "scientific" laws of cause and effect reflects the nineteenth century birth of much social science research. Yet contemporary social science, ignoring the Heisenberg principle of indeterminacy, still frequently strives to fulfill this nineteenth century scientific ideal of non-involved objective observation – as recent criticism of pioneer anthropologist Margaret Mead's "subjective" reading of Samoan life would indicate. Even Structuralism, which is not "cause and effect" oriented, ignores consciousness in favor of an objective analysis of social structures. This is why Jean-Paul Sartre insists that Claude Lévi-Strauss's work, valuable though it is, must be recast in existentialist terms for full comprehension. While Sartre would certainly agree that one must not substitute novel writing for anthropology, he at the same time would reject Structuralist Michel Foucault's pronouncement that man as an historical subject is dead.[1] In fact, Sartre questions the utility of analytical positivistic reason, determinist or Structuralist, to grasp its objects in the social sciences. What if, Sartre asks, by reducing men to statistical predictions or environmental effects and societies to structural or other relations, the social scientist leaves out the one ingredient which makes individuals and human groups intelligible? This ingredient is exactly what Sartre proposes to restore in *Search for a Method* and *Critique of Dialectical Reason.*[2]

The missing ingredient, as readers of *Being and Nothingness* might guess, is freedom – not a purely abstract freedom which is at liberty regardless of circumstances, but human "praxis"[3] acting as it is acted upon in the world. Human praxis – alienated, oppressed and oppressing,

relating to and creating structures of violence in a field of scarcity[4] – is nonetheless the motive force of human history. Analytical reason is well suited to grasp the objects of the natural sciences, since it is man (dialectically) making himself a human thing in order to grasp the thing world.[5] But to attempt to grasp the social world analytically, from the position of the objective observer, is to deprive it of intelligibility. In the social world, analytical reason can be useful as a moment in the dialectical process; but it will not fully elucidate the objects of study in the social sciences – human individuals, groups, or societies. Sartre's *Search for and Method* and *Critique of Dialectical Reason* propose to provide a critical tool for elucidating that object. I would therefore like to discuss in detail some of Sartre's ideas on sociality and the social scientist, concluding with a summary of their usefulness to the social sciences in general and to my own discipline, psychotherapy, in particular.

Sartre agrees with Engels that "men make their history themselves but in a given environment which conditions them." Human projects make sense on the face of a particular world; Sartre would not return to the purely interior existence emphasized by Kierkegaard and even more by Jaspers. He would, however, insist on the subjective as a moment in the objectification process – that it is "*the men* who make [history] and not the prior conditions."[6] To leave out the moment of interiority is to leave out the glue that binds the moments of objective history together. As R.D. Laing and D.G. Cooper put the matter in their book on the later works of Sartre, "Only the project as mediation between two moments of objectivity can account for history, that is, for human creativity."[7] Hence when I as a social scientist note the various structures, forces, and material circumstances within which individuals and groups make their histories, I only tell half the story. This is perhaps natural, since praxis itself is merely the making of a particular future on the basis of present material conditions. Once that future has been made, it looks determined by the past. Inevitability in human affairs is, however, retrospective, rather than projective; one can always "predict" the past, never the future. Once I have constituted the world as such, it seems inevitable, personally and historically. The social scientist, if he is faithful to his calling, must resuscitate the past praxes inscribed in the material (including the linguistic) world as these relate to present individuals and groups.

The stance of the objective observer looking at human groups as natural phenomena is intolerable for another reason than the fact that human groups are basically different from beehives and human history

from geological processes. This is that such objectivity is impossible, a sham. The objective observer does not exist, since the social scientist, if he does not look at a group as a member of that group, looks at it as a member of another group or groups. The de-grouped single individual, Robinson Crusoe, does not exist. The response of social scientists to this fact of human existence has been either to ignore it or (more recently) to consciously work to minimize the influence of the social scientist's own acculturation. The latter position would, in fact, be the only possible valid position from the viewpoint of analytical reason. From the viewpoint of dialectical reason, however, the sociality of the social scientist is a positive addition, provided he recognizes and uses his awareness of his own insertion into groups and his own intentionality to understand others. This form of understanding Sartre calls "comprehension," the understanding of an (individual or group) praxis in terms of the purposes of its agents. Implicitly, when I act, I comprehend the meaning of my action – whether or not I engage in the bad faith process of mystification or lying to myself about my intentions. Likewise, when I see another act, I understand his actions in terms of his ends – as when I see my friend get up to open a window to make the room less stuffy. Human history, likewise, is partially comprehensible through reconstructing group and individual praxes in terms of their ends. A purely objective observer, say a visitor from outer space, would be at a disadvantage over a human observer in achieving such comprehension.

Comprehension, however, is not sufficient to understanding human history and sociality. Comprehension must be supplemented with "intellection" – not the merely intellectual analysis of analytical reason, but a going beyond individual and group praxes where history itself goes beyond such praxes. It does so in the counter-finalities, processes without authors (because they are authored by multiple praxes), and anti-dialectical revenges of the material world which no one intended. If I am to understand human history, I must understand these as well as human significations – I must understand history as "praxis-process."[8] All this I must do dialectically – that is, I as an experimenter must willingly comprehend that I am part of the experimental system and use this comprehension to approach the object of my study. Dialectical reason, then, is a dialectical knowing of a dialectical object – which can, in fact, only be known dialectically.

What then does Sartre mean by dialectical reason? Obviously Sartre specifically rejects the idealism of the Hegelian dialectic while going beyond the Marxist, though he owes a debt to both. While Sartre con-

siders Marxism the philosophy of the age and accepts the idea that historical materialism provides the only valid interpretation of history and existence,[9] he believes that existentialism (presumably his own brand of existentialism) provides the only concrete approach to reality. Also, while Hegel understands objectification but not alienation and attempts to reduce being to knowing, Marx understands alienation but not objectification and fails to grasp the enriching mediation between knowing and being. Sartre's dialectic transcends these difficulties. Indeed while Sartre criticizes contemporary American sociology for foundering on a sea of theoretical uncertainty while providing riches of concrete information, he criticizes contemporary "Marxist idealism" for liquidating particularity in the interest of theory. For example, in one of those footnotes which provide an instant clarification of his discussion, Sartre attacks contemporary Marxist "idealism" for its non-elucidation of the Russian intervention in Hungary:

> I have already expressed my opinion on the Hungarian tragedy, and I shall not discuss the matter again. From the point of view of what concerns us here, it matters little a priori that the Communist commentators believed that they had to justify the Soviet intervention. What is really heart-breaking is the fact that their "analyses" totally suppressed the originality of the Hungarian fact. Yet there is no doubt that an insurrection at Budapest a dozen years after the war, less than five years after the death of Stalin, must present very particular characteristics. What do our "schematizers" do? They lay stress on the faults of the Party but without defining them. These indeterminate faults assume an abstract and eternal character which wrenches them from the historical context so as to make of them a universal entity; it is "human error." The writers indicate the presence of reactionary elements, but without showing their Hungarian *reality*. Suddenly these reactionaries pass over into eternal Reaction; they are brothers of the counter-revolutionaries of 1793, and their only distinctive trait is the will to injure. Finally, those commentators present world imperialism as an inexhaustible, formless force, whose essence does not vary regardless of its point of application. They construct an interpretation which serves as a skeleton key to everything out of three ingredients: errors, the local-reaction-which-profits-from-popular-discontent, and the exploitation-of-this-situation-by-world-imperialism. This interpretation can be applied as well or as badly to all insurrections, including the disturbance in Vendée or at Lyon in 1793, by merely putting "aristocracy" in place of "imperialism." In short, nothing new has happened. That is what had to be demonstrated.[10]

In other words, Sartre objects to the reduction of change to identity in contemporary Marxist analysis, a reduction which makes of Marxist idealism a "paranoiac dream."[11] What Sartre's dialectic would do is to provide American sociology a way of conceiving the particularities it often so accurately describes and Marxism a way of knowing the concrete world. As an addition to dialectical theory, *Critique of Dialectical Reason* is intended to overcome a weakness in Marxism: theory of knowledge.

Marxist epistemology is weak because it ignores the insertion of the concrete individual into the world. Hence while Marxism explains something important about the world, contemporary Marxism proposes a world of objects inhabited by men-objects moved like robots by the forces of production and exchange. The problem with this position is not its materialism – Sartre accepts subjectivity as a moment in the objective process; rather it is the fact that the world thereby becomes as incomprehensible as the world of bourgeois analytical reason. For example, Marxist theory explains Paul Valéry as a petit bourgeois intellectual whose thinking and writing are explained by his class affiliations. Certainly, Sartre says, Valéry is a petit bourgeois intellectual – but not every petit bourgeois intellectual is Valéry. Sartre's dialectic would achieve the concrete, presenting us with a Valéry or Flaubert or Genet[12] who are not simply products of class loyalties or class antagonisms, but rather concrete individuals who live their insertion in society in very particular ways.

In saying this, Sartre does not, as some Marxists claim, return to bourgeois liberalism and individualism – we have as much to learn about society from its treatment of Genet as about Genet from his response to society. Rather he goes beyond Marxist reductionism to understand the inevitably social individual in his dialectical particularity and to understand the group as constituted by such individuals to the extent that individuals (through internalization of the external) are constituted by groups. In other words, Sartre would not replace the particular by the universal (Marxist or bourgeois), nor would he reduce all human culture and individual achievement to mere epiphenomena – though he at the same time would not deny that the production of material life in general dominates the development of social, political, and intellectual life. Sartre's viewpoint, in fact, by allowing for originality in an alienated (in the secondary – Marxist – sense discussed below) society, introduces the possibility of a genuine future culture based on non-alienated reciprocity.[13]

The Sartrean dialectic, then, begins with the individual. No longer an

abstract law of nature or history, the negation of the negation occurs on the most basic level of human praxis. This happens because human beings live the present as a future lack – as the Emperor Constantine, for example, saw on the face of the Roman world of his time the material lack of a new Christian capital in the east. As creatures of need, human beings negate the negation (lack of food, a degree, Byzantium) in the direction of a (future) affirmation (satisfied hunger, the completed degree, the new capital). Not that one does not partially discover one's project in the context of realizing it, nor that the product one ends with is necessarily the one originally conceived. The new fullness is often realized as "counter-finality": One has indigestion, the job one hoped the degree would provide does not materialize, the city is attacked by barbarians – or, as Sartre points out, becomes a repository of Greek culture which undermines the Christian intent of its founding.[14] Indeed the anti-dialectic is worked matter (the "practico-intert"[15]) returning to haunt man in the form of a distortion or reversal of his intentions. An example which Sartre gives is the Chinese peasants who for years cleared forests for farmland, only to become the victims of erosion and floods. The effects of technological development on the environment is another obvious example.

Yet alienation in the Sartrean, not the Marxist sense, is even more basic than the discovery of the anti-dialectic. All objectification is alienation in that I can no longer identify my freedom with my completed project, which drops at once into the world of others and into my past. The universal human project, discussed in *Being and Nothingness*, is the project of achieving the in-itself-for-itself, freedom which is free yet secure in its being – in other words, the "useless passion" of man is the desire to be God.[16] The attempt, however, to identify with my objectification while yet remaining absolutely free (I *am* a banker in the sense that a rock is a rock and yet I am completely free to be anything at all) is doubly doomed: My objectification in the world is no longer my free project, and my free project is always created on the face of a particular world, which includes my past. This alienation from the product I make of myself in the world is primary alienation. As the ontological basis for all other forms of alienation, it cannot be overcome.

Other forms of alienation, secondary alienation, can be overcome. The exploited worker, whose objectification in work is dictated to him by the machine which he animates with his freedom together with the employer who uses him for his own ends, can, for example, band together with other workers to transcend this situation. Objectification itself, in a world where others make one an object and where matter and other

men produce counter-finalities to one's intentions, is a given of human existence. This does not mean, however, that I am justified in reifying the other along with objectifying him. I *must* see him (as he sees me) from the outside; however, if I treat him as a mere instrument, degrading his freedom while at the same time implicitly recognizing it by manipulating him, as the colonialist or the racist or the capitalist do, then I cross the line between objectification and reification. Reification is possible, of course, not because men are things but because they can be treated like things.[17] Analytical reason engages in reification when it conceives of men and human groups as things, ignoring intentionality in favor of the causative power of the environment. This is why analytical reason is the proper epistemology, Sartre says, of capitalism. As R.D. Laing notes, violence can be perceptual and conceptual as well as practical.[18]

In order to avoid conceptual violence, analytical or Marxist, Sartre proposes a dialectic which accounts for actions and processes, substituting the idea of "totalization" for that of totality. In fact, Sartre says the totality in human individuals and groups, like God, does not exist – at least, not short of death, at which time it is totalized by Others. In the social world, there are only totalizations, de-totalizations, re-totalizations. The importance of the totalization versus the totality in Sartrean dialectics cannot be over-emphasized. A totalization is a constantly developing process, supported by individual and groups praxes; it involves the grasp of possibilities not abstractly but concretely as the "presence at the very heart of the particular action" of the "future as *that which is lacking.*"[19] A totality is a fictionalized inert whole, the relationship of whose parts can be studied like a dissected frog in a laboratory. The problem is that in both cases the living reality is sacrificed to "scientific" analysis.

To grasp that living reality in human affairs, we must substitute the totalization for the totality – which must now be understood as an (imaginary) future projected whole.[20] We as social scientists must understand that our conceptualization of human individuals, history, society, is a developing interaction between knowledge and being – that the act of knowing itself, like all human activity, is a negation of a negation. Sartre says that "research is a living relation between men" which is itself a moment of history.[21] Hence he asserts that to understand is to change, to go beyond oneself, as the older Sartre came to understand Marxism in a way that Sartre as a student at the Sorbonne had failed to do – an understanding which came out of an encounter with French working class movements and society. In a

dialectical anthropology, then, a totalizing knowledge grasps the totalizations of others in the social field. In fact, Sartre uses the word "totalization" for both the act of totalizing the field and the field totalized. Hence the social scientist would make a totalization of totalizations – defined both as individual and group praxes and as the field totalized by a particular individual or group. In such a use of terms, one encounters the deep connection between consciousness and its objects – a connection which Sartre had elaborated in *Being and Nothingness*.[22] Everyday language also recognizes such connections, as when it refers to *work* both as the act of working and its product. Everywhere man inscribes his meaning in things, in what Sartre calls the practico-inert, matter infused with human meanings as a hammer is infused with the meaning of pounding. It is partially the task of the social scientist to decipher those meanings, to read in the objectification the objectifying praxis, to retotalize the totalization before him.

Where he deals with human groups in the social world, however, the social scientist must go beyond comprehension of individual praxis. He must understand how the individual is inserted into the group. Group praxis is, in fact, a different kind of totalization than individual praxis. The group is neither a totality composed of fixed functions and structures nor a hyper-organism. It is what Sartre calls the "constituted dialectic" to distinguish it from the "constituent dialectic" of individual praxis – which is its only source and sustenance. Sartre's theory of sociality, however, is not a contract theory. Groups arise, solidify, ossify, and decay as human responses to particular material and social conditions – and they are held together in a manner which has nothing to do with anything so deliberately intellectual as a contract.

Since groups originally arise out of seriality, Sartre begins his discussion of "practical ensembles"[23] with a discussion of serial existence. It is, I believe, one of his most important contributions to social theory. A human series is a collective of single individuals relating to a single objective situation. Sartre gives the examples of individuals waiting for a bus, non-unionized workers in a factory, people listening to radio or television, or anti-Semites or Jews in a country dominated by a strong policy or feeling of anti-Semitism. In so far as they relate to their common object, they are solitary, separate, interchangeable, identical. The first individual in the line enters the bus first, not the individual who most deserves or needs to enter the bus (to use only two criteria for differentiation). Yet the individuals in a series are aware of each other, as when I wonder whether I will be able to get a seat on the bus or when I turn off a particular broadcast with which I disagree in disgust

over its possible effect on the other listeners or viewers.

Indeed serial reality, and Sartre notes that there are serial behavior, serial feelings and serial thoughts, is a reality of alterity – of "everyone's interiorisation of his common-being-outside-himself in the unifying object" as one among many, that is, as the Other.[24] For example, scandal is a serial curse, occurring when I apply to a particular situation the fantasized disapproval of the Other; the "they" of "they think" is everybody and nobody – its locus is always *elsewhere*. Sartre puts the matter this way, "Everyone is the same as the Other in so far as he is Other than himself."[25] Serial behavior is thus characterized by what Sartre calls "recurrence," my acting as I know the Other will act because my interest requires me to do so. For example, Sartre discusses price as recurrence:

> The price imposes itself on me, as a buyer, because it imposes itself on my neighbour; it imposes itself on him because it imposes itself on his neighbour; and so on. But, conversely, I am not unaware that I help to establish it and that it imposes itself on my neighbours because it imposes itself on me; in general, it imposes itself on everyone as a stable collective reality only in so far as it is the totalization of a series.[26]

To undo this situation, I would have to go in turn to each individual buyer and get his agreement in an enterprise which would be doomed because the moment I moved on to the next buyer, the individual with whom I had made contact would become Other again. In a series, Sartre says, the collective object, while it evokes my behavior on the basis of what I expect will be the behavior of the Other in this practico-inert field, is "an *index of separation*."[27] The horrifying thought arises that U.S.-Soviet relations may be presently lived as recurrence – with each side acting as Other in response to the Other in a field of scarcity where each lives its own violence as "counter-violence," believing that the Other is "'the one who started it.'"[28]

Impotence, in fact, is the bond between members of a series, whether they are factory workers or investors in the free market. Sartre comments that the "celebrated *inexorable laws* of bourgeois economics in the nineteenth century have never been anything but the effect of scarcity appearing in a practico-inert field of serial impotence."[29] Another example is the Great Fear of 1789, which Sartre uses to demonstrate the way in which a historical process may be motivated by serial impotence. The French peasantry of that time were in a relationship of alterity to Paris – they were the objects, the Parisians the

subjects who were making history. Out of this situation, there arose the Great Fear, which was characterized as a "fear of bandits." Any events or persons viewed from a distance were thought to be bandits – often described as "Englishmen" or "foreigners" – or the work of bandits. This is interesting considering Sartre's idea that the Other in a field of scarcity tends to become the anti-human, the alien evil absolute Other. What these peasants were doing, in their serial impotence and in the face of the information gap which existed between themselves and the historical subjects in Paris, was reacting to their situation with a fear of the absolute Other who would make them impotent objects – as in fact the historical agents in Paris might be doing at this very moment.

Sartre's final example of serial impotence is perhaps his most important. He defines class as "a totalized series of series."[30] Not simply the working class, but members of all classes experience seriality as a link of impotence in the socio-economic world.[31] It is the capitalist as Other who buys a new machine because his competitors will soon have one, or in order to outstrip them, or because he must keep up with them. The plight of the worker is, of course, more thoroughly impotent – since the capitalist through the factory objectifies himself in his own work. The worker, on the other hand, "feels himself confirmed in his inertia by the inertia of all the Others....the Other [Sartre is specifically discussing the period of the first industrial revolution, to around 1900] is primarily the serial totalization of Others (in which he features as an Other), that is to say, of all those, including himself, who represent for everyone the possibility of being out of work or of working for lower wages."[32] Sartre concludes that if, as Marx often said, "everything is *other* in a capitalist society, this is primarily because atomisation, which is both the origin and the result of the process [of capital], makes social man Other than himself, conditioned by Others in so far as they are Other than themselves."[33] Seriality, in the modern milieu of mass media and class conflict, is not freedom (though it is constituted and sustained by human freedom), but counter-finality. Hence Sartre believes that "the worker [and the capitalist?] will be saved from his destiny only if the human multiplicity as a whole is permanently changed into a group praxis."[34]

Since dispersal creates the impotence of seriality, this impotence can be overcome by banding together in common action. Sartre says that groups "constitute themselves as determinations and negations of collectives"[35] on the basis of need against perceived danger. In other words, it is the practio-inert which calls forth group praxis. In the

"group-in-fusion," which is obviously Sartre's favorite kind of group, each individual immediately comprehends his own future in the future of the Other. For example, the people of Paris after 12 July 1789 perceived their common danger as the possibility of massacre by the king's troops. The result was the common action of a group-in-fusion in storming the Bastille. Originally an impotent series, the object of troop massification, the group was "constituted by the liquidation of an inert seriality under the pressure of definite material circumstances."[36] From the unity of the series, which is always *elsewhere*, the serialized individuals moved to the unity of the group-in-fusion, which is always *here*. It is I as a "common individual," the member of the group who acts in this way or that to further the group praxis – which, though not the praxis of a hyper-organism, can achieve what is impossible for individual praxis. A single man storming the Bastille would be a madman; a group is the inception of the French Revolution. As such, the group is the negation of a negation – in this case the serialized individual's perceived impossibility of living if stormed by the troops.

But how does a series transform itself into a group? Why do men in a situation of common danger not simply quarrel over food like dogs, as Sartre notes that they sometimes do?[37] Obviously, individual praxis can grasp the usefulness of acting in concert in particular situations, but this does not explain the whole experience of being grouped nor does it indicate how the group can continue to exist after the crisis has subsided. How, for instance, does it command an individual's loyalty and duty? Sartre finds the answer in the fact that the group, as a group-in-fusion or in any other form, implies a ternary relationship. In proposing this, Sartre opposes the usual sociological conception of the group relationship as binary: individual-community. The Third, who binds the group together by totalizing the others at the same time that he realizes himself as integrated into the group by partaking of the common danger and the common praxis against that danger, is a positive extension and modification of the Third in *Being and Nothingness*. There the Third unifies the couple from the outside, as an *us object*, thereby making himself the hostile Third to the reciprocity of the duo. Us objects still exist in *Critique*, both as individuals and as groups. But within the group the Third is a unifying force, the basis of group solidarity. Neither subject nor object, the Third forges the group as a union of "myselves," the we subject of common praxis (which, of course, is not a union of consciousness, but rather the product of the individual praxes of various Thirds). Totalizing the others as he is totalized by them as a member of the group, each

Third acts, obeys, commands for the group and demands that the others do likewise. Thus the Third sustains group praxis by his individual praxis. In the group-in-fusion, with its lack of role differentiation, anyone may perform any function – the person nearest the stump becomes the "myself" who urges the others on to the Bastille. In organized groups, the situation changes, though the group in so far as it maintains solidarity remains a union of Thirds.

The Third is also the source of the pledge, implicit or explicit, by which the group seeks to maintain itself once the immediate danger is past. As constituted dialectic, the group, though able to achieve more than the individual in the social field, has a double praxis or work to perform. The group must overcome both external and internal obstacles, must work on the world and work on itself. The flourishing new field of organizational development and group process perhaps attests to the difficulty of this second kind of work. In any case, the work of a group on itself is primarily achieved by what Sartre calls Fraternity-Terror. As a group member, I have certain rights and obligations. Where those duties are difficult or dangerous or perhaps simply onerous, each Third in the group (and I myself as Third) keeps me in line by insisting that I keep my pledge (even if this pledge was given beforehand by my birth into a particular group, as, for example, the pledge of military service by a young male) on pain of death, or what amounts to the same thing, ostracism from the group. As the Third, I wish to count on all the others, and hence I enforce Fraternity-Terror, as the other Thirds enforce it on me. Treason and desertion become meaningful terms simply because of this demand that individual praxis support group praxis – and they are designated as such in order to keep the organic individual acting as a common individual. My pledge to the group is my guarantee against my (future) exercise of my own freedom. As the group is forged by an external threat, it is maintained by an internal threat of violence.[38]

Internal violence is necessary because the negation of seriality from which the group was born constantly threatens to reappear and cause the group to disintegrate. Hence as the group-in-fusion gives way to the pledged or statutory group, the statutory group gives way to the organization, and the organization to the institution. Each of these groups has more structure and more differentiation of function than the last, and each is more invaded by seriality to the point where the institution, especially if it is also bureaucratized, is permeated with seriality. External structure, while it is an attempt at efficiency and control over group praxis, signifies internal ossification. Sometimes

the group solidity is personified in a sovereign or sovereign group, which is supposed to hold the group together. Unfortunately, the sovereign becomes the only subject (although a "common subject"[39]) with the group as his object – that is, he apparently objectifies himself through the group. Hence seriality is reintroduced in the relation of everyone to the king.

Thus we come to understand group praxis as a double negation: the negation of seriality at the same time that it is the negation of an external situation. The balance falls between internal and external violence. Seriality re-enters as the group solidifies and ossifies and individuals lose interest and enthusiasm for its endeavors. The dead institutions which a new generation opposes (or sustains) were once living realities. Hence individual praxis, having constituted the group, becomes the downfall of the institution.

Groups, of course, do not exist and evolve (and Sartre places no order on the evolution and devolution of groups[40]) in a vacuum. Born of a response to the practico-inert or to other groups, they exist in a social field where they struggle and may be transcended by other groups or frustrated by the anti-dialectic of matter. Indeed the dialectic of history includes those moments in which one group attempts to negate another, only to discover itself negated by the other group. An example which Sartre gives is an army in the process of fulfilling a certain plan, only to discover that its enemy has anticipated its plan and used it as a trap. Another example might be a strike which results in the shut-down of a factory. Most often, groups act, react, and interact in various situations which change the practico-inert field in ways which no one intended or could have fully predicted. Throughout all this, human interaction, individual or group, implies reciprocity, the recognition of the Other as intentional, whether this reciprocity is positive or negative or even mystified and denied – as when the racist pretends to believe that the other race is subhuman at the same time that he humanly comprehends and attempts to anticipate the reactions of its members or groups.

Granted, then, that Sartre's dialectic provides a way of looking at human sociality, how then do we use it as a methodology for the social sciences? First of all, Sartre himself has sketched an outline for a methodology which is in harmony with his epistemology. Despite his criticism of contemporary Marxism, it is from a Marxist writer, Henri Lefebvre, that Sartre draws the outline of his method, which he calls the "progressive-regressive method." Lefebvre recognizes three moments in studying human groups (for example, the French peasantry)

in a way that preserves their full complexity: (1) phenomenological description – observation informed by experience and general theory; (2) an analytico-regressive moment – a regression backward into the history of the group and its earlier stages; and (3) a synthetico-progressive moment which moves from past to present in an attempt to rediscover the present in all its particular complexity. Synchronic and diachronic, Sartrean anthropology (in the European sense of the human sciences in general) would study human individuals and groups in terms not simply of the material conditions and social structures which they presently live, but the past which they live by transcending it in these particular ways. The meanings inscribed in things, together with the intentionality of individuals and groups in living these particular material and social conditions, would be important to Sartrean history, political science, sociology, anthropology (in the American sense), and psychology. In looking at the past through the progressive-regressive method, human beings would not be reduced to objects in the natural world and human history to the play of natural forces. Rather, in the synthetico-progressive moment, meaning would be placed back where it belongs: at the heart of all human undertakings, individual or group.

I think the usefulness of Sartre's ideas in *Critique* and *Search for a Method* to historians, political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists should be fairly obvious. In addition to the progressive-regressive method, which is useful in all the social sciences, his ideas on the practico-inert field, on praxis-process, on class struggle, and on reconstitution of history in terms of individual and group praxis would be useful to the historian and the political scientist. His ideas on groups, the Third, constituent and constituted dialectic, and totalization versus totality could be adopted by the political scientist, the sociologist or the anthropologist. But what of the single individual psyche which is the subject matter of psychology? Has it gone out of style with Sartre's abandonment of the emphasis on the individual in *Being and Nothingness*?

As a psychotherapist interested in individual struggle, I must admit that I was at first disappointed with *Critique* in comparison with the psychological riches of *Being and Nothingness*. Now, however, I think *Critique* may be more important than *Being and Nothingness* in providing the basis for a truly human psychotherapy. At least, as a theory of how knowledge can be acquired in the social sciences, it provides a much needed supplement to the "existential psychoanalysis" of *Being and Nothingness*. Interestingly enough, it was two well-known psy-

chiatrists, R.D. Laing and D.G. Cooper, who wrote one of the most interesting books on the later works of Sartre (*Search for a Method, Saint Genet*, and *Critique of Dialectical Reason*[41]). Writing to Laing in the foreword to *Reason and Violence*, Sartre has this to say,

> In addition to your perfect understanding of my *La Critique de la Raison Dialectique*, what attracted me in this and your earlier works was your constant concern to find an 'existential' approach to the mentally sick. Like you, I believe that one cannot understand psychological disturbances *from the outside*, on the basis of a positivistic determinism, or reconstruct the illness as lived and experienced. I also believe that one cannot study, let alone cure, a neurosis without a fundamental respect for the person of the patient, without a constant effort to grasp the basic situation and to relive it, without an attempt to rediscover the response of the person to that situation, and – like you, I think – I regard mental illness as the 'way out' that the free organism, in its total unity, invents in order to be able to live through an intolerable situation. For this reason, I place the highest value on your researches, in particular on the study that you are making of the family as a group and as a series – and I am convinced that your efforts will bring closer the day when psychiatry will, at last, become a truly human psychiatry.[42]

Obviously, Sartre believes that Laing has applied the principles of *Critique* to psychotherapy. In a BBC interview with Max Charlesworth, Laing himself elaborated on the debt to Sartre which he had previously acknowledged in *Sanity, Madness, and the Family* and elsewhere. *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Laing said, "contained a number of theoretical terms which I found extremely useful in attempting to bring some theoretical order to the phenomena that I was studying in families."[43] Especially relevant to his own work, Laing said, were Sartre's idea of the totalization versus the totality: his theory of groups, the insertion of the individual into groups, and the relationships between groups; his distinction between praxis and process; and his insistence on "retaining a human theory of human beings."[44]

From the viewpoint of psychotherapy, I believe with Laing that Sartre's insistence on retaining, in the face of objectivism in the social sciences, a "human theory of human beings" is his most important contribution. Other psychotherapeutically useful concepts in *Search for a Method* and *Critique of Dialectical Reason* include the concept of "hexis"[45] versus praxis, the idea of the individual as always social though particular, the idea that psychoanalysis is the only method for discovering the insertion of the individual into his class and thereby

into history, the idea that it is a movement toward future meaning which defines human praxis, and the idea that it is not merely material conditions but the past (one's own past and the past of the group) which one lives dialectically by transcending it toward the future. The past, in other words, is part of the material conditions on which "individuals make history."

Sartre uses hexis to denote a stable condition which the individual or group perceives as untranscendable. As an example, he cites certain peasants in the south of Italy who, constantly malnourished, live their hunger as hexis – they only expect one meal a day or every other day and degrade their physical vitality to live in a state of semi-starvation. An example of overcoming hexis is the workers in a factory who, having previously lived semi-starvation wages as "the way things are," organize to overcome this situation through group praxis. Translated psychologically, the individual who learns to live his needs for love, touch, stimulation, acceptance, individuation, or creativity as hexis as a child must come to grasp them as praxis. He must cease to degrade himself in these ways. Hence revolutionary praxis can be individual as well as social.

With respect to the individual as always grouped, it seems to me that psychotherapists often ignore the particular world of the individual in favor of psychological structure. Understanding a person's way of living his social class and his groups (including his family group) with their structures of Fraternity-Terror is important to comprehending his individual praxis. Not only this, Sartre's discussion of thought as the thought of the Other, rather than as one's own thought, and of one's actions as recurrence can be important to the de-mystification and de-reification of individual praxis. The importance of the family not simply as an individual entity, but as the vehicle of an individual's insertion into his class, can enrich psychotherapeutic explorations into an individual's past.

Indeed Sartre's discussion of the past and the future as ground and meaning provides, I believe, a major contribution to psychotherapeutic theory, explaining perhaps both the possibility of remaking one's project and the ways in which certain projects seem to have been short-circuited by having no viable future (leading to the creation of a fantasy future). The way in which an individual lives his past dialectically is, of course, one of the major inquiries of psychotherapy – and its object is to recover the past in the interest of creating a different future. Obviously, recovering the past as intentionality and meaning, rather than as determinism, is important to making different life

choices – to remaking one's fundamental project."[46]

On the basis of what seems to be its revolutionary significance for psychotherapy alone, I am therefore tempted to accept Sartre's *Critique* as what he would have it be: "Prolegomena to any future anthropology."[47] As the dialectical knowing of a dialectical object, "the foundation of anthropology is," as Sartre says, "man himself, not as the object of a practical Knowledge, but as a practical organism reproducing Knowledge as a moment of its *praxis*."[48] As a psychotherapist, I know that the dialectical relationship between knower and known is the only effective instrument of change.[49] I am therefore willing to accept the death of the objective observer, in place of the death of man as an historical subject, in psychoanalytic theory. I also believe with Sartre that his time may have come as well in history, political science, sociology, anthropology, academic psychology, and even economics.[50] After all, not only does the objective observer not exist; our very attempts to bring him into being may well obscure those human significations which are the real intelligibility of the social sciences.

Obviously this does not mean that as a social scientist, I should return to the purely subjective – that, like the bad psychotherapist who imposes his own illness on his patients, I should read others as projections of myself. Rather, it means that I must use my own knowledge of myself as signifier to relate to and decipher the significations of others – groups or individuals, past or present. Indeed Sartre notes that it is as a signifier that I comprehend the human world, past and present:

> Thus significations come from man and from his project, but they are inscribed everywhere in things and in the order of things. Everything at every instant is always signifying, and significations reveal to us men and relations among men across the structures of our society. But these significations appear to us only insofar as we ourselves are signifying. Our comprehension of the Other is never contemplative; it is only a moment of our *praxis*, a way of living – in struggle or in complicity – the concrete, human relation which unites us to him.[51]

Finally, as Sartre says in the conclusion to *Search for a Method*, the role of existentialism "is not to describe an abstract 'human reality' which has never existed, but constantly to remind anthropology of the existential dimension of the processes studied":

> Anthropology studies only objects. Now man is the being by whom becoming-an-object comes to man. Anthropology will deserve its name only if it replaces the study of human objects by the study of the various processes of becoming-an-object. Its role is to found its *knowledge* on rational and comprehensive *non-knowledge*; that is, the historical totalization will be possible only if anthropology understands itself instead of ignoring itself. To understand itself, to understand the other, to exist, to act, are one and the same movement which founds direct, conceptual knowledge but without ever leaving the concrete – that is, history, or more precisely, the one who *comprehends what he knows*. This perpetual dissolution of intellection into comprehension and, conversely, the perpetual redescent which introduces comprehension into intellection as a dimension of *rational non-knowledge* at the heart of knowledge is the very ambiguity of a discipline in which the questioner, the question, and the questioned are one.[52]

Most psychotherapists know the importance of wedding intellection to comprehension in practice.[53] Are social scientists prepared to accept this in theory as an epistemological principle? If so, we would then have a tool for understanding what has formerly been inexplicable in the human sciences: novelty.[54] We would cease to reduce change to identity.

NOTES

1. Michael Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 387. The abandonment of scientific cause and effect thinking in Structuralism is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the first chapter of Claude Lévi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970, where Lévi-Strauss discusses the structure of magic and the structure of science ("The Science of the Concrete," pp. 1–34). Noting that both kinds of thinking are cause and effect oriented, Lévi-Strauss is interested more in comparing and contrasting their structures than in discovering their relative truth value. Sartre himself greatly appreciates the contributions of Lévi-Strauss, although he would translate Lévi-Strauss's structural objectivism into his own dialectical system, as he does in *Critique of Dialectical Reason* I, trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith (London: Verso/NLB, 1982), pp. 479–504.
2. I am using Alan Sheridan-Smith's translation of *Critique of Dialectical Reason* and Hazel E. Barnes' translation of *Search for a Method* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968). I am grateful to Hazel Barnes for pointing out to me the French original on such important matters as *group-en-fusion*, for which I have used the translation "group-in-fusion" rather than the Sheridan-Smith translation of "fused group" with its quite different connotation. A group-in-fusion is a group in the nonreflective process of forming/acting. Afterwards the "pledged

group" (*le groupe assermenté*) ensures this fusion by reflectively pledging the freedom of everyone; hence this group would more properly be called "fused" rather than "in fusion."

3. The use of the word *praxis* to denote human activity is as old as Aristotle. Sartre's immediate predecessor is Marx, who uses praxis to mean social activity. Raymond Aron suggests in his book *Marxism and the Existentialists* (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper and Row, 1969) that Sartrean *praxis* is little different from being-for-oneself in *Being and Nothingness* (p. 168). While praxis *is* similar to being-for-itself, the emphasis in *Critique* has shifted from desire as the human motivating force to need and the social context of that need. Sartre says, "*The entire historical dialectic rests on individual praxis in so far as it is already dialectical*, that is to say, to the extent that action is itself the negating transcendence of contradiction, the determination of a present totalisation in the name of a future totality, and the real effective working of matter" (*Critique*, p. 80). See footnote 20 below for Sartre's distinction between totality and totalization.
4. Sartre's theory of scarcity is a social theory, since there are for Sartre no facts which are not social facts. For example, the fabulously rich heir to a mine might experience scarcity as "dispersal, poverty of means, and the resistance of matter" constituting impediments which threaten to slow down production. "For the heir, scarcity is the possibility of not coming into his inheritance unless he reorganizes his field of actions as soon as possible" – rather than a threat to his physical existence as such (*Critique*, p. 739). His workers might experience it as the lack in this particular field of decent work and wages. In certain phases of capitalism, scarcity might be a scarcity of consumers, rather than products, leading to an expansion of markets. Or scarcity might be scarcity of time. Men in a primitive society might experience scarcity still differently – as ritual repetition, rather than as history. In "our history," however, scarcity is the source of that "antagonistic reciprocity" which characterizes its movement. Because scarcity is a "*human fact*, rather than the malignity of a cruel Nature," (*Critique*, p. 140), however, it might be overcome – though at present man, according to Sartre, must be defined as "a practical organism living with a multiplicity of similar organisms in a field of scarcity" (*Critique*, p. 735). Scarcity is likewise the source of that Manichaeism which is at the heart of morality – of that sense of the Other as an evil anti-value or anti-praxis which has to be destroyed. As Sartre says, "At the most elementary level of the 'struggle for life,' there are not blind instincts conflicting through men, but complex structures, transcendences of material conditions by a *praxis* which founds a morality and which seeks the destruction of the Other not as a simple object which is dangerous, but as a freedom which is recognized and condemned to its very root" (*Critique*, p. 736). Hence the scandal of existence is not, as Hegel supposed, "the mere existence of the Other, which would take us back to a statute of unintelligibility. It lies in suffered (or threatened) violence, that is, in interiorized scarcity" (*Critique*, p. 815). In a world where three-fourths of the population are still undernourished, it lies in the fact that each is a real threat to the other's existence – at a variety of levels.

5. Sartre suggests that while further scientific investigation might reveal a "dialectic of nature," especially in the passage from inorganic matter to living bodies and the evolution of life, this is at present no more than a "metaphysical hypothesis" (*Critique*, p. 34). It would not, in any case, change the description of the social dialectic in *Critique*. What Sartre objects to is the tendency of Marxists and positivists alike to reduce living human praxis to a dialectic of nature. Sartre explains and condemns the reification procedure which accomplishes this reduction in the following passage: "The procedure of *discovering* dialectical rationality in *praxis*, and then projecting it as an unconditional law, on to the inorganic world, and then returning to the study of societies and claiming that this opaquely irrational law of nature conditions them, seems to us a complete aberration. A human relation, which can be recognized only because we are ourselves human, is encountered, hypostasized, stripped of every human characteristic and, finally, this irrational fabrication is substituted for the genuine relation which was encountered in the first place. Thus in the name of monism the practical rationality of man making History is replaced by the ancient notion of a blind necessity, the clear by the obscure, the evident by the conjectural, Truth by Science Fiction (*Critique*, p. 33)." It is the discovery of "man making History," in place of "unconditional laws," that distinguishes what Sartre calls the "critical" from the "dogmatic" dialectic.
6. *Search*, p. 87.
7. R.D. Laing and D.G. Cooper, *Reason and Violence* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), p. 87.
8. For a fuller discussion of "praxis-process," see *Critique*, pp. 549–559. Sartre defines process as "the permanent obverse of common praxis," which sustains and moves it (p. 552). Group process, Sartre says, "is comparable *neither* to an avalanche nor to a flood, *nor* to an individual action, since it is constituted by the directed action of a multiplicity of individuals"; it is instead "suffered inertia" since it is dependent not only on my activity here but the activity of others elsewhere on a common practical field (*Critique*, p. 549). Hence while processes might be mistaken for destiny, they really proceed not according to the exterior laws of analytical Reason, but from "an external law of interiority" (*Critique*, p. 551). When one becomes their dupe, processes appear not as temporalizations, but as temporalized realities or destiny. Hence Sartre contends that American sociologists like Lewin, Kardiner, and Moreno explain praxis as process – without seeing that the "fundamental truth of all process is still praxis" (*Critique*, pp. 551–552). Social scientists using a dialectical approach would reverse the usual direction of social science: They would explain process as the outside of praxis, rather than praxis as a passive reflection of process.
9. Indeed Sartre specifically says that existentialism is an "ideology" (or minor application of major ideas) within the philosophical territory of Marxism, which is the philosophy of our age. Between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries, Sartre recognizes only three philosophical moments which he designates by the names of the men who dominated them: the "moment" of Descartes and Locke, that of Kant and Hegel, and that of Marx: "These three philosophies become, each in turn, the humus of every particular thought and

the horizon of all culture; there is no going beyond them so long as man has not got beyond the historical moment which they express. I have often remarked on the fact that an 'anti-Marxist' argument is only the apparent rejuvenation of a pre-Marxist idea....As for 'revisionism,' this is either a truism or an absurdity. There is no need to readapt a living philosophy to the course of the world; it adapts itself by means of thousands of new efforts, thousands of particular pursuits, for the philosophy is one with the movement of society" (*Search*, p. 7). If this movement stops, it is either because "the philosophy is dead, or it is going through a crisis" (*Search*, p. 7). Sartre believes that Marxism, which is yet in its infancy, is going through such a crisis – partially produced by the Stalinist bifurcation of theory and practice, partially by an epistemological insufficiency. Existentialism, as an ideology within Marxism, has as its task the return of the "human dimension (that is, the existential project) as the foundation of anthropological knowledge" (*Search*, p. 181). When this has been accomplished, "existentialism will no longer have any reason for being. Absorbed, surpassed and conserved by the totalizing movement of philosophy, it will cease to be a particular inquiry and will become the foundation of all inquiry" (*Search*, p. 181). Marxism itself will also one day be surpassed by a "philosophy of freedom," but not until the material conditions for its existence have been surpassed. Until that happens, we will have "no means, no intellectual instrument, no concrete experience which allows us to conceive of this freedom or this philosophy" (*Search*, p. 34). In other words, Sartre takes philosophy seriously as the living engagement of an age with its material and social realities.

10. *Search*, pp. 29–30.
11. *Search*, p. 53.
12. Sartre has, of course, presented us with such an analysis in *Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York: George Braziller, 1963) and his three volume work on Flaubert, of which the first volume, *The Family Idiot*, has been translated into English by Carol Cosman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). The whole work has been discussed by Hazel Barnes in her book, *Sartre and Flaubert* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
13. Sartre does not describe this genuine future culture, since he believes it will have to be discovered in the process of creating it. He does, however, give some hints about its features. First of all, it could not come into existence without the elimination of scarcity, since it is scarcity which makes of other people our "demonic double" (*Critique*, p. 132). However, even alienated reciprocity rests on simple reciprocity, the recognition of the other as a consciousness like my own. With the elimination of scarcity, this reciprocity could conceivably emerge as the caring of each for all. In *Critique* Sartre has outlined the ways in which community becomes possible through the liquidation of serial impotence. In the genuine future culture, however, a value would have to be placed on what Sartre calls "immaterial matter" (*Critique*, p. 183) – the divesting of things of their power in the interest of "a true inter-subjective community in which the only real relations will be those between men" (*Critique*, p. 307). Obviously, socialist societies as well as capitalist societies suffer from scarcity and from that reification of men by machines which Sartre has described so well. And they are especially subject to that limitation

to "true unification" which Sartre has described as the serial impotence of bureaucracy. Sartre says: "Bureaucracy, in effect, is the Other erected into a principle and a means of government: it means that the decomposition of the group has totally enclosed men in the internal field of the practico-inert. It is not that man has ceased to be the future of man, but that the man of the future comes to man *as a human thing*" (*Critique*, p. 306). Sartre's genuine future culture, then, in a society no longer forced to "discreetly select its dead" (*Critique*, p. 129), would be a culture which was constantly in the process of overcoming seriality through group praxis (especially the "sudden resurrection of freedom" characteristic of the group-in-fusion, *Critique*, p. 401) and of overcoming the tendency of groups to ossify and the practico-inert to dictate the relations of men through the creation of "immaterial matter" – that is, through making free praxis the "sole ethical relation between people in so far as they dominate matter" (*Critique*, p. 249).

14. Sartre uses the example of the founding of Byzantium in *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 559–561, to demonstrate the way in which consciousness lives its objects as a future lack. This is the same lack which is the basis of the Sartrean dialectic in *Critique*, though the emphasis there has shifted from "desire" to "need."
15. *Practico-inert* is, of course, a word coined from the notion of matter (the inert) infused with praxis. If hell is other people in *Being and Nothingness*, then hell is the practico-inert in *Critique*. Actually, one might say that in both books, hell is objectification – since it is the other's objectification of me which creates misery in the former while it is my objectification of myself (together with the objectifications of others) which creates the practico-inert hell of the later book. What Sartre calls "the shifting hell of the field of practical passivity" (*Critique*, p. 219) is a "place of violence, darkness, and witchcraft" (*Critique*, p. 318) because of its power to steal my actions from me and to limit my freedom in terms of my own past actions and the actions of others.
16. Sartre says, "Is not God a being who is what he is – in that he is all positivity and the foundation of the world – and at the same time a being who is not what he is and who is what he is not – in that he is self-conscious and the necessary foundation of himself? The being of human reality is suffering because it rises in being as perpetually haunted by a totality which it is without being able to be it, precisely because it could not attain the in-itself without losing itself as for-itself. Human reality therefore is by its nature an unhappy consciousness with no possibility of surpassing its unhappy state" (*Being and Nothingness*, p. 140).
17. There is a form of reification, like alienation, which is universally human. This occurs when man makes himself a thing in order to manipulate the thing world. The material world thereby becomes inscribed with the human, the human with thingness. Sartre says that "things are human to precisely the extent that men are things" (*Critique*, p. 180).
18. Laing and Cooper, pp. 14–15.
19. *Search*, p. 94.
20. One reason the notion of totality makes sense is its connection with that other Sartrean impossibility, the in-itself-for-itself, by which man attempts to make himself free and yet complete, like God. Another is the easy move-

ment from objectification to reification. The notion of totality is in fact useful as a "regulative principle of the totalization" (*Critique*, p. 46), so long as one remembers that a totality, unlike a totalization, is imaginary: "Thus, as the active power of holding together its parts, the totality is only the correlative of an act of imagination....our present action makes them [a painting, a symphony, a machine, or consumer goods] seem like totalities by resuscitating, in some way, the *praxis* which attempted to totalize their inertia" (*Critique*, p. 45). A totalizing praxis sustains all that is.

21. *Search*, p. 72.
22. This connection is, of course, presented in *Being and Nothingness* in the form of negation. Consciousness is *nothing* but its objects. The for-itself encounters the in-itself as a lack of being, since the for-itself is aware that it is not its objects. Another way of saying this is that my being is always behind me in the world, like a comet's tail – hence when I work, I produce *work*; when I totalize, I produce a *totalization*. My meaning is inscribed in its material objectification, which I am perpetually beyond.
23. The subtitle of *Critique of Dialectical Reason* is "Theory of Practical Ensembles."
24. *Critique*, p. 264.
25. *Critique*, p. 260.
26. *Critique*, p. 288.
27. *Critique*, p. 288.
28. *Critique*, p. 149.
29. *Critique*, p. 304.
30. *Critique*, p. 315.
31. Sartre, following Marx, comments that this was not always so, since there is "no trace of atomisation in medieval communities," where the relation of man to man was one of personal dependence (*Critique*, p. 306).
32. *Critique*, p. 312.
33. *Critique*, p. 308–309.
34. *Critique*, p. 309. I add "capitalist" because of Sartre's very interesting analysis of the ways in which nineteenth century "bourgeois respectability" is "the presence in the oppressor of the oppressed in person" (*Critique*, p. 771). The bourgeois of that time, Sartre argues, became bourgeois by suppressing his own needs as well as those of his workers. One wonders if a similar psychosocial analysis could be made of capital-labor relations at the present time.
35. *Critique*, p. 248.
36. *Critique*, p. 361. Sartre comments that it really does not matter that the government seems not "to have had any very precise plans" for exterminating the populace because "the deployment of troops and the beginning of the encirclement bore their objective meaning in themselves" (*Critique*, p. 353).
37. *Critique*, p. 350. A horrifying example of the kind of situation in which individuals do "quarrel over food like dogs" rather than re-grouping is Colin Turnbull's description of the cultural disintegration of a hunter-gatherer tribe in *The Mountain People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972).
38. Sartre comments that when he discusses groups as maintained by a threat of mortal danger, he is not referring to anglers clubs or old ladies book exchanges, which are superstructures or secondary groups within a larger totalizing move-

ment of class structures, class against class, and national and international organizations (*Critique*, p. 350). The experienced member of secondary groups wonders, however, if they too do not have their share of Fraternity/Terror.

39. Sartre says that the "true function of sovereignty" is "the institutional re-interiorization of the exteriority of institutions or, in so far as the latter are the reifying mediations between passivised men, it is the institution *of one man* as a mediation between institutions." Since the institution of sovereignty is "based on the impotence of its members," the sovereign himself becomes "a reflexive synthesis of dead-practices which were tending to be separated in a centrifugal movement" (*Critique*, p. 618). Since the sovereign "in himself is no more than the institutional system lived in a reflexive synthesis of interiority," his practical possibilities are limited because they are determined "by the unifying ensemble of institutional instruments" (*Critique*, p. 619). Whatever his personal idiosyncrasies, the sovereign is a "common individual" in so far as he lives his role of unifying a social system threatening to disperse into seriality because of institutional ossification.
40. Sartre says that "there is no formal law" to compel groups to pass through the logical succession from group-in-fusion to institution: "A fused group may either dissolve instantaneously or be at the beginning of a long development which will lead to sovereignty; and in the complex world glimpsed here, the sovereign group itself may arise directly from the collective itself (or rather from its sector of other-direction). But it cannot really arise unless all the formal rules of its statute (separation, the institution, the exteriorisation of practices, and reinteriorisation by the untranscendable third party) are given simultaneously in their mutual conditioning. But in itself this should cause no surprise, and only the whole historical complex can determine whether the group will emerge *already half-petrified*, since in concrete reality, this is to say, in every moment of a temporalisation, *all statutes of all groups*, whether alive or dead, and *all types of seriality*...are given together as a tangle of strict relations and as the dispersed raw material of the developing totalisation" (*Critique*, p. 676). Hazel Barnes points out that the translation "status" for *statut* almost always makes better sense than "statute" – as seems to be the case here in the first use above. In the second use, the translation "constitutions" rather than "statutes" would seem to be clearer.
41. Sartre's volumes on Flaubert had not appeared when Laing and Cooper wrote *Reason and Violence* in 1964. Sartre's biography of Flaubert further illustrates the later thinking of Sartre along lines outlined by Laing and Cooper – especially Sartre's idea in *Search for a Method* that "a life develops in spirals; it passes again and again by the same points but at different levels of integration and complexity" (*Search*, p. 106).
42. Laing and Cooper, p. 6.
43. Max Charlesworth, "Sartre, Laing & Freud," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, Vol. XVII, No. 1 (1980–81), p. 27.
44. Charlesworth, p. 28.
45. Hazel Barnes reminds me that the breath mark (*ἕxis*) makes the Greek word *hexis* rather than *exis*, as it is transcribed by Sheridan-Smith. Praxis and hexis are the same words Aristotle uses in his *Nichomachean Ethics* to denote action and conduct on the one hand versus a state of mind or character on the other.

46. The fundamental project of being, discussed at length in *Being and Nothingness*, is the individual's way of throwing (*pro-jecting*) himself into the world in the direction of the future. The world always becomes *this world* in the light of my project; if that project changes, the world changes. I believe this insight of Sartre's is of major usefulness to psychotherapy, since it does away with that subject/object dichotomy which can create such therapeutic confusion and instead characterizes therapy as a world-remaking process.
47. *Critique*, p. 66.
48. *Search*, p. 179.
49. Since in this case the known is a living individual who has entered into a contract for therapeutic intervention, the known also becomes the knower in the joint project of reflectively examining the patient's way of living his life in the world.
50. My hesitation about applying Sartre's ideas to economics has less to do with their usefulness to this field – his suggestions appear to be rich indeed, as his analysis of inflation in seventeenth century Spain and his analysis of the structure of capitalism in the two phases of the industrial revolution, to take only two examples, would indicate – than with my own lack of knowledge of this field. It does seem to me that Sartre provides a social theory for understanding economics, rather than a purely economic theory, but I am unsure how far his comments would revise economic theory.
51. *Search*, p. 174.
52. *Search*, p. 174.
53. Even Freud, Laing says, from his own letters and case histories, seems "to have had a very human relationship with his patients." Yet when Freud came to write psychological theory, he seemed "to feel that it was his scientific obligation to translate all that happened in human terms into terms of things" (Quoted in Charlesworth, p. 32). In practice it was the combination of intellection and comprehension which aided Freud in working with his patients. If Laing is right, Freud did not reify in the office as he did in the library.
54. Sartre says that "if there is any such thing as dialectical Reason, it must be defined as the absolute intelligibility of the irremediably new" (*Critique*, p. 58). Only a dialectic resting on the shoulders of free individual praxis can explain the irreducibly new. Every other social theory, with the possible exception of certain theological approaches, is reductive in principle.