

Report  
9, 11, 12  
Raya Dunayevskaya

"Sartre's Search for a Method"

(1) The author's definition of methodology (given on p. 11) is so broad that it does not provide a structure to the exposition. If the scope of the essay was reduced and attention focused on a particular issue or set of specific issues greater continuity and clarity would result. As the exposition stands now much of the discussion appears elliptical and there are apparent discontinuities which are probably the consequence of the very broad ranging discussion.

(2) The author seems to presume considerable familiarity, on the reader's part, with Marxist literature. Certainly the author's discussion about Lenin's epistemological views would require more elaborate argument than that provided on pages 10 and 11. It is difficult to draw out the implications of Lenin's aphoristic statements---and certainly the confidence with which this is done in the essay requires more support than that provided in the text. The author has interesting and original things to say of Marx's analysis (pages 9, 11 and 12)---but again the account is not developed and as fully documented as such an analysis has every right to be.

(3) The essay is a review-essay rather than an attempt at analysis of any specific philosophic issues. But the author's judgments are so definitive and so negative that a more adequate treatment of each issue seems required. If Sartre's book is so bad surely there seems to be no need of over twenty pages to say it. But if the intention is to show in what specific instances it is bad then the author might have more effectively concentrated on one or two particular issues and fully developed the arguments.

(4) The subject matter and the treatment accorded it seem aimed at a specific audience rather than the broad philosophical community. A more suitable vehicle for this essay, which has many interesting facets, might be Science and Society or Studies on the Left.

12840