

W.M. - M.P.

MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY'S "IN PRAISE OF PHILOSOPHY" (1.15/53 Inaugural lecture
at the College de France, pub.
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p.3: "the man who witnesses his own research, that is to say his
own inner disorder..."

p.48: "Hegel had already identified them(his. & phi., ff) by making phil. the
understanding of his. experience, & his. the becoming of phil."

p.49: "The universal his. of Hegel is the dream of his. As in our dreams, all
that is thought is real, & all that is real is thought. There is nothing
at all for men to do who are not already taken up in the system... But
since he reserves the monopoly of meaning to himself (philosopher), it is
in the philosopher, & in him alone, that his. makes sense...."

p.50: "The novelty of Marx, as a critic of Hegel, was, therefore,
to identify the mover of his. with human productivity ~~not~~ to interpret ph.
as a reflection of his. movement, but rather to denounce the trick by which
the philosopher slips the system into his. in order then to recover it &
reaffirm its omnipotence precisely at the moment when he seemed to give
it up. Even the privilege of speculative philosophy, the claim of phil.
existence, as the young Marx said, to take up all the other forms of
existence, is itself a historical fact, not the bringing to birth of
Marx himself discovered ~~discovered~~ a his. rationality immanent in the
of men. For him, his. is not merely the order of fact, or of reality,
phi., with its rationality, will confer the right to exist. His. is
situation in which all meanings are developed & in particular the concentric
meanings of phi., in so far as they are legitimate. What Marx calls
~~praxis~~ is the meaning which works itself out spontaneously in
the intercrossing of those activities by which man organizes his relations
with nature & with other men. It is ~~not~~ directed at the beginning by an idea
of universal or total his. ... It is rather analysis of the past & present
which enables us to perceive in outline a logic in the course of things
which does ~~not~~ so much guide it from the outside as emanate from within it
& which will be achieved ONLY IF MEN UNDERSTAND THEIR EXPERIENCE & WILL TO CHANGE
IT.

p.51: "This elimination of the irrational can lead to chaos if
the forces destroying these forms do not know themselves capable
of constructing SOMETHING NEW out of them... a genesis of reason....
certain historical facts take on a metaphysical meaning. Phil. lives in
these facts...."

p.52: "When a man says that there is a dialectic in things, this can
mean only in things so far as he thinks them, & not objectivity
as the ex. of Hegel shows, ~~as the height of subjectivism. His~~ therefore, does not transfer the dial. into things; he transforms into man
understood of course with all their human equipment... Phil. is not
an illusion. It is the algebra of his. Furthermore, the contingency
of human events is no longer understood as a defect in the logic of
his., but ~~rather as its condition~~. Without such contingency there would
be only a phantom of his...."

p.53: "The 2 rival absolutes (God, his.) live only if, in full being,
a human project which challenges them is opened up. It is in his
that phil. learns to know this philosophical negativity..."

"If... Marx... ceased to understand himself in this way,
was because his original insight into ~~praxis~~ put in question the usual
categories of phi. & because nothing in sociology & in positive his. was