

*Phil. or if you prefer,
anti-phil. doctrine*

Leszek Kolakowski, ALIENATION OF REASON
Preface: "to grasp the meaning, i.e. inferences to be drawn"

bring reader to closer understanding its ~~main~~ function in
OUR CULTURE

characteristics, themes: 1) Phenomenalism (NO diff. bet. essence & phenomenon)
2) Nominalism
3) Denial of cognitive value
4) Belief only in scientism

p. 90 "Positivism is a collection of PROHIBITIONS concerning human knowledge."

Wittgenstein & Carnap who merely wants to distinguish
"not only rejects cognitive but meaningful & unverifiable
claims of metaphysics; they refuse it any
recognition." vs. moderate wing which says SO LONG AS metaphysics
makes no scientific claims, it is legitimate

p. 215 According to Mach's theory, science is an extension of animal
experience & has no other meaning than the totality of experiences
on which it is based... but then

"HOW CAN WE ACC'T. FOR THE
PECULIAR FACT that over many CENTURIES man being has ascribed
to 'REASON' the ability to discover 'necessary' features of
the world & for so long a time failed to see that these features
are fictions of imagination? (Qtyped p.)

p. 210 "Science as a self-sufficient activity which exhausts ALL possible
ways of appropriating world intellectually."
"THE LANGUAGE IT IMPOSES EXEMPTS US FROM THE DUTY OF SPEAKING
UP IN LIFE's most important conflicts."

Bertrand Russell scientific ideology "pragmatic interpretation
of truth"

p. 211 HUSSERL interpreted 19th c. positivism as SYMPTOMATIC OF CULTURAL CRISIS
but thought it possible to overcome by phil. means & devoted
his lifelong labors to this task.

The philosophical work of our day has found itself
caught--to a great extent under the influence of
positivist criticism--bet. the phil. of life & the lurid
Manichean vision."

so-called phil. of life & empiric criticism have affinities with
PRAGMATISM, (pp. 154-174) "show how positivist postulates
tilt into their opposites."

p. 150: "Peirce explicitly goes so far as to say that the meaning
of the judgment is entirely exhausted in its practical
consequences & acc'ding to him this is what defines
PRAGMATISM." after 1890 he changed, criticized phil. determinism,
came out in favor of freedom, asserted new creations are possible..
abandoned his earlier nominalist interpretation of scientific
laws" BUT it is earliest & more famous phil. which is imp. in his of
positivism.

p. 160 spirit of utilitarianism carried to radical consequences
& extended not only to the world of value but also purely
COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS" What do I get out of this?
Dewey not so much interested in individual success

Ch.2-1 Positivism Down to David Hume "It is possible to begin the history of European positivist thought almost anywhere for many strands we regard as of primary importance in contemporary positivist doctrines had antecedents in antiquity."

long frame carried embossing
to ultimate

structural consequences of Hume's wk.

P32 "There is hard inflection
behind every sentence
that you speak," he said.

Hume's conclusions glaringly incompatible with his intentions.

Ch. #3 Auguste Comte; Positivism in the Romantic Age

Ch. 4 Positivism Triumphant 10 yrs. after Comte's death--Chas. Darwin
Galude Bernard, Introd. to Experimental Medicine
J S Mill, Herbert Spencer's "System" AND KM's CAPITAL.

Ch.5 Positivism at the Turn of the c.

EMPIRIO CRITICISM p.104: "an attempt to do away with subjectivity" J. S. Mill 1857

P.132: "World org'd. by science... is result of creative
human energy & hence that man is a way
responsible for the "thing" his scientific
thought constructs." This conviction was to
become the fundamental feature of OUR OWN CENTURY'S
THOUGHT & has exerted a long-lasting influence in
the most various quarters."

Ch.6 Conventionalism- Destruction of Concept of Fact concerned with problems posed by advance of Physics

MARCH WITH HIS HEY-CONCEPTION... --not to do away with epistemological but demarcate it from science. "They did this by ascribing a conventional meaning to scientific propositions."

PDE Ch6. Logical Empiricism: A Scientific
Movement. Defense of Theoretical
Constitutions

③ No soul, but as synthetic a priori judgments
(Most active center in Vienna 1923 - Carnap)

202 "logical empiricism, then, is the product of a specific culture, one in which TECHNOLOGICAL EFFICIENCY

... regarded as the highest value, the culture we usually call
TECHNOCRATIC".
Moralizing in the *scandal* *by* *John*
203: IT IS AN ACT OF ~~MAN~~ ANCIATION FROM TROUBLESONE PHIL. QUESTIONS
which it denounces in advance as fictitious; it also
rees us from the NEED TO STUDY HIS".
John *Perry* *204*

206 "The sheep in your fold."

.206: "The sheer rigor of the positivist rule has awakened intellectuals to their own responsibilities, & in my opinion have been of practical aid in counteracting attempts to blur the boundaries bet. the scientific & the obligation of the believer."

13014

To Ma [Handwritten note: Material is most useful for teaching purposes. There is also some smaller space for practice.]

HM on Positivism "as pervasive as the practice of men"

p.113: "the phil of common sense, appeals to the certainty of facts... amts. to giving up the potentialities of mankind, for a false alien world."

"the positivist attack on universal concept on the ground that they cannot be reduced to observable facts, cancels from the domain of knowledge everything that may not be a fact." Thus had you

P. 145: "Essence seeks to liberate knowledge from the worship of observable facts & from the scientific common sense that imposes this worship. Hegel recognized an intrinsic connection bet. mathematical logic & wholesale ACQUIESCENCE in facts & to this extent:

Dominic Brown ANTICIPATED MORE THAN 100 yrs. of the dev.of positivism
Decade after Hegel's death European thought entered era of POSITIVISM,
new SCIENTIFIC temper AFFIRMING existing order AGAINST negating it.
Very different from that which later positivism
Sometime 1830-1842

Comte-1830-1842 very different from that which later positivism
Stahl 1830-37 + since those elaborated after 1837

Schelling 1841 vs. those elaborated after 1877
Positivism conscious reaction against

critical & destructive tendencies of Fr. & Ger.
Stahl official Prussian rationalism

~~monarchy~~ phil out to destroy Hegelian phil "principle
Comte out to destroy heritage of Descartes & Eng. of rev."

1st of a Positivism destroyed metaphysics.

1st ¶ of c. Positivism destroyed metaphysical illusions esp. in the natural sciences — EXCLUSION of ALL that cannot be verified by observation. *Rational* *exclusion*

ORDERED INTO rather than EMANATING FROM
severed social theory from its connection

abandoned pol. eco. as root of social theory
renounces phil. critique by excluding phil. concepts from study of

obliterates opposition to social reality *very? why? Because felt*

and yet it has attracted some
perfectionist ^{but} ^{but} ^{but}
import

FE coined word His. Mat; Plekhanov that of diamat.
WHEREAS MARX's use of word material was to designation basic &
primary conditions of URBAN INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM.

primary conditions of HUMAN EXISTENCE & not just "matter" or physical determinism & Newtonian mechanics. ON THE CONTRARY, in direct opp. to mechanical mat., by way of DIALECTICS and actual class struggles developed HUMANISM.

proposed both new idealism (neo-Kantian) and was product of 1914

his empirio-criticism supported rising idealistic trend in

16/10/00 astronomy related to world trade

Jan 18, 1952 Schenectady, NY
Atomic Energy Commission

Matter different in 19th c. when it appeared to be the very stuff of nature.

turn of 20thc. When, for Mach, atoms were mental artifice not susceptible to sense experience

W. Heisenberg, "All elemental particles are made up of the
Atlantic Monthly, 11/59, p. 113 same stuff, ENERGY. Matter exists because

13014

To Ha.

(Material world is a domain of sense perception. The great "Other" world outside of us is a false space for reality.)

HM on Positivism "as pervasive as the practice of men"

Hegel, final immanent refutation of positivism.

"the positivist attack on universal concept on the ground that they cannot be reduced to observable facts, cancels from the domain of knowledge everything that may not be a fact." *This had effect*

P. 145. "essence seeks to liberate knowledge from the worship of observable facts & from the scientific common sense that imposes this worship. Hegel recognized an intrinsic connection bet. mathematical logic & wholesale ACQUIESCENCE in facts & to this extent

Darwinism ANTICIPATED MORE THAN 100 yrs. of the dev.of positivism

Decade after Hegel's death European thought entered era of POSITIVISM new SCIENTIFIC temper AFFIRMING existing order AGAINST negating it

Very different from that which later positivism since

Comte 1830-1842

Stahl 1830-37

Schelling 1841

+ vs. those elaborated after 1877

Positivism conscious reaction against

critical & destructive tendencies of Fr. & Ger.

Stahl official Prussian

monarchy phil out to destroy Hegelian phil principle rationalism

Comte out to destroy heritage of Descartes & Eng. of rev.

1st of c. Positivism destroyed metaphysical illusions esp. in the natural sciences - EXCLUSION of ALL that cannot be verified by observation.

ORDERED INTO rather than EMANATING FROM severed social theory from its connection with negative phil.

abandoned pol. eco. as root of social theory

renounces phil. critique by exclusion of all concepts from study of

society & thus founds sociology as ind. "science"

Obliterates opposition to social reality

*Pol. Econ. back to Comte
is not a science
Rationalism*

Product, how to do it very? Why? Because of
atmosphere some bad or pleasure Rationalist
import

FE coined word His. Mat; Plekhanov that of diamat.
WHEREAS MARX's use of word material was to designation basic & primary conditions of HUMAN EXISTENCE not just "matter".
or physical determinism & Newtonian mechanics. ON THE CONTRARY,
in direct opp. to mechanical mat., by way of DIALECTICS and actual class struggles developed HUMANISM.

*Theory of Feuerbach; Marx
is not a materialist
(neo) Kantian instead of V.V. style*

opposes both new idealism (as if world was product of idea)
old materialism instead of V.V. style

his empirio-criticism supported rising idealistic trend in

phil. of science & influenced Bogdanov after DEFEAT of 1905

[16/12/0] astronomy related to world wide

19th c. science

20th c. atomic physics & 1 for world war

Matter different in 19th c. when it appeared to be the very stuff of nature

turn of 20thc. when, for Mach, atoms were mental

artifice not susceptible to sense experience

now, when all physical phenomena of which

men are aware

W. Heisenberg, "All elemental particles are made up of the same stuff, ENERGY. Matter exists because ENERGY assumes form of elemental particle."

11081

from "Cronos" as from - well, you could almost
say "ourselves" thus Lenin's view on enjoys.

Cronos are ~~not~~ ^{only} limited to
those specifically devoted to that only
without ~~any~~ so much as a flute (There
are none ~~incidentally~~ flutes) in the Phil N.P.
World definitely doing the more or less vulgar
objection - Yet one could think that the few
remarques in P.D. ~~had~~ ^{had} greater weight
with ~~particularly~~ ^{as against} ~~more~~ ^{less} ~~machines~~ ^{machines} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~work~~ ^{work}

With ~~the~~ ^{the} Mrs. M.H. that she will go
Indeed, he leaves. on racing to
imposed air

Bev (After The Don Neoper
no doubt would be interested)

Mabel
Alma
Mabel

in Science

rel. phil. science + despite Black
attack of

who was close to S. + can

nevertheless credits Black - What
could that have possibly been?

13015

Philosophy of Subjectivism

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI THE ALIENATION OF REASON

"The primary aim of this subjectivism without a subject was to formulate the idea of "pure" experience. For this purpose it was necessary to track down those elements in the current scientific image of the world that had been "thought into" it... not necessarily, not even primarily, in order to reject them entirely, but in order to demystify them, to grasp their origin, and to assign them their proper place. This kind of positivism, the most complete philosophical expositio[n] of which is known as "empiricocriticism" was concerned above all with genetic problems. It inquired into the origins and function of knowledge." (p. 104)

"A second peculiarity of this philosophy, which also relates it to such else in the intellectual climate of the period, was what might be called its materialism. Its abandonment of the idea that human knowledge is the truer the more it submits to reality and the more faithfully it mirrors the laws governing it. Like the literary Naturalism of the period (in striking contrast to Zola's "experimental novel!"), the empiricocriticist interpretation of knowledge is in keeping with an idea of man as a being primarily characterized by his active role in the world." (p. 106)

"Lenin, however, launched a sharp attack on empiricocriticism, citing the philosophy expounded in such writings of Engels as were then known. His work is a defense of the materialist position, and in it he regarded empiricocriticism as a subterfuge in which lurks a content identical with Berkeleyan idealism. . . . Lenin opposed to this doctrine a materialist and realist doctrine that he called "the theory of reflection." (p. 122)

"Lenin agrees that there is no difference between the phenomenon and the Kantian thing-in-itself, but according to him this does not imply that the phenomenal world understood as a complex of impressions is the only accessible one; it implies only that there is nothing absolutely unknowable." (p. 129)

"Lenin also uncompromisingly criticized his adversaries for accepting empiricocritical interpretations of the most important philosophic categories. Among other things, he defended the concept of causality on the grounds that it describes actual necessary connections between events, and that it cannot be reduced to a purely empirical functional relation. He also defended Engels' view of the cognitive functions of time and space." (p. 130)

Stalin
"Lenin's book played an important part in the subsequent history of Marxism, particularly after Stalin summed up its main ideas in a popular article titled "On Dialectical and Historical Materialism," which for several years was obligatory reading in all Soviet Schools. . . . When we look back over the leading empiricocritical ideas, we are especially struck by the following features: (1) the philosophical destruction of the subject;" (p. 131)

Subjectivism without Subj.

Phil. destruction of the Subject

"Escape from Commitment"

13016

*Philosophy w/
of Subject*

*Subjectivism
without a
Subject*

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI THE ALIENATION OF REASON

"The primary aim of this subjectivism without a subject was to formulate the idea of "pure" experience. For this purpose it was necessary to track down those elements in the current scientific image of the world that had been "thought into" it... not necessarily, not even primarily, in order to reject them entirely, but in order to demystify them, to grasp their origin, and to assign them their proper place. This kind of positivism, the most complete philosophical exposition of which is known as empiriocriticism, was concerned above all with genetic problems. It inquired into the origins and function of knowledge." (p. 104)

"A second peculiarity of this philosophy, which also relates it to much else in the intellectual climate of the period, was what might be called its activism. Its abandonment of the idea that human knowledge is the truer the more it submits to reality and the more faithfully it mirrors the laws governing it. Like the literary voluntarism of the period (in striking contrast to Zola's "experimental novel"), the empiriocriticist interpretation of knowledge is in keeping with an idea of man as a being primarily characterized by his active role in the world." (p. 106)

"Lenin, however, launched a sharp attack on empiriocriticism, citing the philosophy expounded in such writings of Engels as were then known. His work is a defense of the materialist position, and in it he regarded empiriocriticism as a subterfuge in which lurks a content identical with Berkelyan idealism. . . . Lenin opposed to this doctrine a materialist and realist doctrine that he called "the theory of reflection." (p. 128)

"Lenin agrees that there is no difference between the phenomenon and the Kantian thing-in-itself, but according to him this does not imply that the phenomenal world understood as a complex of impressions is the only accessible one; it implies only that there is nothing absolutely unknowable." (p. 129)

"Lenin also uncompromisingly criticized his adversaries for accepting empiriocritical interpretations of the most important philosophic categories. Among other things, he defended the concept of causality on the grounds that it describes actual necessary connections between events, and that it cannot be reduced to a purely empirical functional relation. He also defended Engels' view of the cognitive functions of time and space." (p. 130)

"Lenin's book played an important part in the subsequent history of Marxism, particularly after Stalin summed up its main ideas in a popular article titled "On Dialectical and Historical Materialism," which for several years was obligatory reading in all Soviet Schools. . . . When we look back over the leading empiriocritical ideas, we are especially struck by the following features: (1) the philosophical destruction of the subject;" (p. 131)

Subjectivism w/o the Subject!

Phil. destruction of the Subject

Escape from Commitment

13016

13017

P. 2

Is positivism
a distinctive
whole?

"The purpose of this book has been to present a few doctrines important in the history of positivism and to show that each of them is an aspect of the cultural background out of which it arose. Each phase of positivist thought is a specific variation of the dominant intellectual style. At the same time, however, a diachronic continuity is clearly disclosed when we compare successive versions of positivism; . . . this leads to the question whether positivism also discloses cultural features justifying its treatment as a distinctive whole." (p. 207)

"Philosophers who, like Jaspers, do not look upon philosophy as a type of knowledge but only as an attempt to elucidate Existenz or even as an appeal to others to make such an attempt, do not transgress the positivist code. The latter attitude is nearly universal in present-day existentialist phenomenology. Awareness of fundamental differences between "investigation" and "reflection" between scientific "accuracy" and philosophic "precision," between "problems" and "questioning," or "mystery" is expressed by all existentialist philosophers, Heidegger as well as Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel." (p. 208)

"Suffering, death, ideological conflict, social clashes, antithetical values of any kind—all are declared out of bounds, matters we can only be silent about, in obedience to the principle of verifiability. Positivism so understood is an act of escape from commitments, an escape [masked] as a definition of knowledge, invalidating all such matters as mere figments of the imagination stemming from intellectual laziness. Positivism in this sense is the escapist's design for living." (p. 210)

The least restrained positivist-Avenarius—is the most radical. His neutralizing of experience is at the same time liquidation of the fictitious "inner essence" within which the "Outside" world supposedly manifests, discloses, or subjectivizes itself." (p. 214)

"Like all allegedly metaphysical riddles, the whole problem of necessary truths results from the abuse of words, from grammatical inertia (hypostatizing abstract terms, substantializing verbs and adjectives, etc. - Hobbes said the last word on this subject). In short, according to the positivists, we are dealing with an error." (p. 215)

"The enormous efforts made in the history of culture to discover this paradise were wholly chimerical. Nonetheless the vast amounts of energy squandered in these explorations and the extraordinary tenacity with which they were carried on are worth pondering, all the more because the explorers were perfectly aware of the technological inconsequences of their efforts. After all, what seventeenth-century writers called "moral certainty" - i.e., conditions under which we may recognize the truth of a given judgment although our reasons for doing so have no absolute character—is entirely sufficient in scientific thought. From the point of view of so-called knowledge, the desire for an epistemological absolute, i.e., "metaphysical certainty," is fruitless, and those in question of this certainty were perfectly aware of the fact. And yet, we repeat, philosophy has never given up its attempt to constitute an autonomous "Reason," independent of technological applications and irreducible to purely recording functions." (p. 216)

That Rovinsky does not
say here a peculiar thing makes him famous for
which as he writes, says he has already written
is the Humanism of Olson, spent by himself
for a good cause.

*of positivism
a distinctive whole?*

13017

"The purpose of this book has been to present a few doctrines important in the history of positivism and to show that each of them is an aspect of the cultural background out of which it arose. Each phase of positivist thought is a specific variation of the dominant intellectual style. At the same time, however, a diachronic continuity is clearly disclosed when we compare successive versions of positivism. This leads to the question whether positivism also discloses cultural features justifying its treatment as a distinctive whole." (p. 207)

*Possibilities
Cultural Continuity*

"Philosophers who, like Jaspers, do not look upon philosophy as a type of knowledge but only as an attempt to elucidate Existenz or even as an appeal to others to make such an attempt, do not transgress the positivist code. The latter attitude is nearly universal in present-day existentialist phenomenology. Awareness of fundamental differences between "investigation" and "reflection" between scientific "accuracy" and philosophic "precision," between "problems" and "questioning" or "mystery" is expressed by all existentialist philosophers, Heidegger as well as Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel." (p. 208)

Intellectual laziness

"Suffering, death, ideological conflict, social clashes, antithetical values of any kind-all are declared out of bounds, matters we can only be silent about, in obedience to the principle of verifiability. Positivism so understood is an act of escape from commitments, an excuse masked as a definition of knowledge, invalidating all such matters as mere figments of the imagination stemming from intellectual laziness. Positivism in this sense is the escapist's design for living." (p. 210)

Intellectual laziness

The least restrained positivist Avenarius is the most radical. His neutralizing of experience is at the same time liquidation of the pretentious "inner essence" within which the "Outside" world supposedly manifests, discloses, or subjectivizes itself." (p. 214)

Intellectual laziness

"Like all allegedly metaphysical riddles, the whole problem of necessary truths results from the abuse of words, from grammatical inertia (hypostatizing abstract terms, substantializing verbs and adjectives, etc. - Hobbes said the last word on this subject). In short, according to the positivists, we are dealing with an error." (p. 215)

Intellectual laziness

"The enormous efforts made in the history of culture to discover this paradise were wholly chimerical. Nonetheless, the vast amounts of energy squandered in these explorations and the extraordinary tenacity with which they were carried on are worth pondering, all the more because the explorers were perfectly aware of the technological inconsequences of their efforts. After all, what seventeenth-century writers called "moral certainty" - i.e., conditions under which we may recognize the truth of a given judgment although our reasons for doing so have no absolute character-is entirely sufficient in scientific thought. From the point of view of so-called knowledge, the desire for an epistemological absolute, i.e., "metaphysical certainty," is fruitless, and those in question of this certainty were perfectly aware of the fact. And yet, we repeat, philosophy has never given up its attempt to constitute an autonomous "Reason," independent of technological applications and irreducible to purely recording functions." (p. 216)

Intellectual laziness

What Dostoevsky does not say here is precisely what made him famous, for much as he might say he has never judged *The Idiot* or *The Brothers Karamazov*, he has done so in his *own* work.