

## PREFACE

The creation in 1988, thanks to the initiative of Colette Michael, of our SAPLF (Société Américaine de Philosophie de Langue Française) offered a rallying-point for a number—a larger number than might have been expected—of philosophers working in the United States on diverse aspects of francophone philosophy. Through its constituent membership in the ASPLF (Association des Sociétés de Philosophie de Langue Française) it puts that group in touch with similarly interested colleagues all over the world. Such institutional ramifications apart, however, it did not represent an entirely new departure on the American philosophical scene, since there were already in existence several more specialized groups devoted to the work of particular French philosophers, among them the Sartre Society of North America and the Sartre Circle, affiliated with the American Philosophical Association.

In her capacity as editor of the SAPLF *Bulletin* Colette Michael envisaged from the beginning the periodical publication of issues devoted to the work of a single philosopher. Volume III, no. 3, for example, brings together several articles and some invaluable bibliographical material on Paul Ricoeur. Sartre was an obvious choice for such an issue, and the work of the Sartre groups an obvious resource. This issue is the result of an unequal collaboration between William McBride and myself—unequal in the sense that Bill took the initiative and did most of the work—and shows something of the vigor and variety of current Sartre scholarship. Most of the articles in it were presented at one or another meeting of the Sartre Society, while one or two were solicited from the Sartre Circle and one or two from elsewhere.

The articles, once assembled, seemed to fall fairly naturally into two groups, one consisting of work drawn from within the Sartrian corpus and the other of work that establishes connections between Sartre and other philosophers, or Sartrian thought and other philosophical problems. The former group is the larger; not the least of Sartre's philosophical benefactions, it seems

to me, is the sheer size of the textual domain he created and left to posterity. Part of the continued appeal of working on him is the pleasure that comes each time one re-enters this domain in search of new quarry, and part of that pleasure comes precisely from the French language, from the fact that in Sartre's hands it can be at once so massive and so light, so intricate and so fluent.

Apart from arranging the papers in this first group in an order roughly corresponding to that of the texts in question (the order of their composition, not of their publication) we have not attempted to give further internal structure to this collection. To all contributors we extend our thanks and those of the SAPLF.

**PETER CAWS**