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Eric Voegelin, From Enlightenment to Revolution

ch. VII. The Religion of Humanity and the French Revolution 160-194

179 The permanent revolution of the liberals

180 The articles of Charles Comte and Dunoyer have their impor-

tance because the Censeur represents the liberal restoration at its best. We see here developing an attitude towards the crisis which remains typical in later liberalism and we can observe in its origins the growth of an escapist cliché. The rhythm of Revolution and Restoration is considered a stupid exaggeration of the process of social reform, the violent swings of the pendulum ought to be toned down -- under the title of the "permanent revolution" -- to the gentle process that is known today as "peaceful change." The problem of the crisis itself disappears and is swallowed up in the category of progress under the guidance of reason. We have characterised this as escapist because it skillfully dodges the real issues of the crisis. A society is by definition in a state of crisis when its remedial forces, while perhaps present, are socially ineffective. The social problems which urgently require a solution cannot be solved because the spiritual and moral strength for the task is lacking in the ruling group. In this situation the counsel to do what is not done because it cannot be done is not only vain, it even adds to the gravity of the crisis because it distracts attention from a true alternative. The progressive council of Charles Comte and Dunoyer (and this has remained a constant factor in the aggravation of the Western crisis) poses the alternative of stagnation in the solution of social problems and intelligent gradual reform. This alternative does not exist concretely; the fact of the tardiness in the solution of explosive social problems is proof that on the level of pragmatic politics the alternative of intelligent gradualism does not exist. The true alternative would be the restoration of spiritual substance in the ruling groups of a society, with the consequent restoration of the moral strength in creating a just social order. The problem of the crisis must be stated in the Platonic terms of spirit and power. The pragmatic value of this alternative as experience has shown, is not very high. The appearance of Plato did not change the course of the Hellenic crisis, the case of Nietzsche did not serve as a warning example for Germany, nor did the appearance of Dostoyevshy make a dent in the tsarist system. Nevertheless this is the true alternative: and we must be clear on the point that a propaganda for gradualism which ignores and obscures the true issue has become a serious factor in the aggravation of the crisis.

180 The idea which emerges from the articles of the Censeur is so particularly grave in its consequences because it implies the further fallacy that the abolition of a social injustice will automatically result in a satisfactory & social order. The revolutionary abolition of a regime that is experienced as oppressive by a powerful stratum of society will // 181 // certainly satisfy the successful revolutionary group, but it is not at all a guarantee that the new group will be more fit than the old one to discharge the obligations of rulership competently. Spiritual disorder is not the privilege of a ruling class; the revolutionary which displaces it may be quite as deficient in this point and even more so. The spiritual and moral incompetence of the bourgeoisie in handling problems posed by the industrial proletariat and the growing lower middle class was certainly a match for the incompetence of the prerevolutionary aristocracy in handling the problem posed by the rising bourgeoisie. The record of the German lower middle class in the National Socialist revolution is no more edifying. The worst problem in the dynamic of the Western crisis is the fact that the resistance of the ruling class of the moment against "peaceful change" can derive a degree of spiritual legitimacy from the qualities of the revolutionary groups. The liberal and progressive idea of the "permanent revolution" of the editors of the Censeur ignores this whole class of problems, and it must ignore them because the spiritual problem of the crisis is obscured for them by the enlightenment cliché of "reason." But the light of reason is a dubious guide in the night of the spirit.

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ch. X. Marx: Inverted Dialectics, pp 240-272

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240 .. a considerable body of manuscripts remained unpublished until the volumes of the Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe began to appear in the years 1927-32. Within the Marxist movement of the first generation there had arisen the legend of an early philosophical Marx who, circa 1845, broke through to his true insights in economics, sociology, and philosophy of history. Hence, according to this legend the early work was not worth reading. As a consequence, for the wider public Marx became the author of the Communist Manifesto and Das Kapital, the founder of the First International and, in a wider sense, of the Communist movement; he became the Marx of the Marxists and the Father of the Russian Revolution. Practically in his lifetime the historical Marx disappeared behind the mythical ancestor of the movement that bears his name. The transfiguration was so thorough that the question of the real Marx became the question whether he was the Marx of Bernstein and Karl Kautsky or the Marx of ~~Karl Kautsky~~ Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin. The question whether the claims of diadochi and epigoni were not altogether doubtful was never raised seriously... As a consequent of this curious development, a serious interpretation of Marxian ideas got under way only after 1932.

241 Behind this story of misinterpretation and rediscovery lies the tragedy of an activist mystic. In the fundamental structure of his activist mysticism Marx conforms to the well-known pattern. He was aware of the crisis of the age and his awareness was intense to the degree of an acute consciousness of epoch. He experienced the age as "a parting asunder of the times," the old world of corruption and iniquity to be followed by a new world of freedom. The contemporary bourgeois society "closed the prehistory of human society" and after an epochal upheaval the real history of society will begin. The transition from the old to the new world will not be achieved by a simple change of institutions but, like Bakunin, Marx assumes a metanoia, a change of heart, as the decisive event that will inaugurate the new epoch. For its production Marx relies on the revolution itself. "For the mass creation of communist consciousness, as well as for the achievement of the object itself, a mass change of man is necessary which can occur only during a practical movement, that is during a revolution. Hence the revolution is necessary not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because

because only through a revolution can the overthrowing class gets rid of the old filth (Dreck) and becomes capable of a new foundation of society." The revolution then is conceived as an intramundane process with two main functions: (1) the function of an institutional overthrow, and (2) the function of purification

The fundamental structure is conventional and the tragedy of the idea is foreknown: if the predicted revolution should ever take place, the heart of man will not change and the new world will be exactly as prehistorical and iniquitous as the old world.

242 .. Marx did not like earlier sectarians first create a "People of God" with changed hearts and then lead the People of into a revolution. While for Marx personally the ~~xxxxxxx~~ overthrow of the bourgeoisie was senseless unless the revolution produced a change of heart, the historical proof that the overthrow was not the proper method for producing such a change would only come after the revolution had occurred.. .. the idea could not break on the rock of reality before the damage had been done.

The vision

Marx is distinguished among the revolutionaries of his generation by his superior intellectual powers. As a mystic he could evoke a new world, but as a shrewd thinker he would not fall into the various traps that beset the path of eschatological speculation. From his insight into the evils of the industrial system he would not jump to the conclusion that the industrial system ought to be abolished nor would he indulge in the type of socialist fantasies which he stigmatized as "utopian."

... Whatever the new world would bring, it certainly would have an industrialized society like the old world, only more so.

// 243 // Moreover not for a moment would he entertain the Comtean metamorphosis of French-Catholic traditions with its priesthood of positivistic intellectuals and its temporal power consisting of the ~~xxxxx~~ managerial class. Through Hegel and the young Hegelians he was steeped in the traditions of intellectualized Lutheran Protestantism, hence his new world would have to be a "true democracy" THAT IS a society in which the new spirit would be realized in the concrete existence of every man. Marx, thus, envisages a new world in which mankind operates an elaborate industrial apparatus for the satisfaction of its wants, while spiritually men have entered a new realm of freedom through the "emancipating" experience of revolution.

243 We have drawn the general outline of his vision and we shall now turn to the account that Marx himself gave of it. For this purpose we shall not use the formulations of the early works but rather the last account to put it beyond doubt that the vision of Marx was not a peculiarity of his "philosophical" youth, but was the motivation of his thought to the end of his life.

In volume 3 of the Kapital, Marx reflects on the advantages of the capitalist system of production... This excellent system must be maintained after the revolution for it alone makes possible the reduction of the workday and the corresponding creation of leisure time for the broad masses of mankind... "The realm of freedom begins only where work that is determined by need and external aims ends; in the nature of the case it lies beyond the sphere of material production in the strict sense." Civilized man, just as primitive man, must struggle with nature in order to satisfy his wants... This "realm of natural necessity" will even expand with advancing civilization for wants will multiply and increase. As far as there is any freedom in this realm at all, it will consist in the ~~XXI~~ "rational regulation of this metabolism ~~x~~ with nature." "Socialize man"... will bring the metabolism under their "communal control" instead of being dominated by it as by a blind power; they will dispose of it with a minimum of effort and under conditions that will satisfy the dignity of human nature. In spite of all such improvements, it "still will be a realm of necessity." Only beyond such necessity ~~XXI~~ "begins the unfolding of human forces that can // 244 // be considered an end in itself"; only here "begins the ~~x~~ true realm of freedom -- which however can only blossom out of the realm of necessity as its basis "

Kapital III, 354 ff. Edited by Engels, Hamburg 1894.

245 The analysis of Marx's vision will enable us now to understand the interlocking of the following problems:

- (1) the derailment of Marx in his later years
- (2) the derailment of his ideas in the Marxist movement that followed
- (3) the legend of a "philosophical" early Marx
- (4) the miscarriage of Marxism as far as the realization of Marx's vision is concerned; and
- (5) the political success of Marxism in a form that would cause Marx, if he could see it, to pronounce his favorite four-letter word.

245-255 The derailment (summarized p 254)

- (1) in Marx himself as it becomes manifest after the February revolution of 1848 (Marx settled for preparing organization of the revolution)
- (2) in German revisionism (work through democracy, parliament)
- (3) in Russian communism: opportunity for fulfillment; realm of freedom not realized; apocalyptic of Soviet patriotism substituted
- (4) in Russian imperialism after WW II.

255 Whence the persistent appeal of the communist idea?

Not only a substantially sound analysis of the actual state of Western society, but also a part of the crisis itself. Only because the idea was the manifestation of a profound spiritual disease, only because it carried the disease to a new extreme, could it fascinate the masses of a diseased society.

245 .. when Marx seemed faced with the alternative of sinking into revolutionary existence in the manner of Bakunin or of lapsing into silence, the grandiose possibility for writing and acting opened that filled the rest of his life: it was the preparation of the revolution.

This possibility was rooted in the structure of his idea. If Marx had been obliged by his idea to create the realm of freedom as to its substance, if he had been obliged to produce a revolutionary renovatio in his fellowmen through his spiritual authority, not much would have followed except his personal tragedy. But no such obligation was imposed on him. Freedom would be the result of the revolution and the revolution itself would be enacted within the realm of necessity. In order to engineer the



245 revolution marx did not have to appeal to the spirit; it was sufficient to move the Acheronta in man. In his idea Marx wanted to save and ultimately secure the dignity of man; in his action he could indulge his contempt of man...

246 In brief: the maieutic work within the realm of necessity could and did become for Marx an occupation in itself. He did not become the leader of a revolution; instead he wrote the Communist Manifesto -- the call, not for a revolution, but for the organization of the forces that would execute the inevitable revolution. He did not write a treatise on the future communist society, instead he wrote the Kapital, the analysis of a moribund society. In the first half of the 1840's, we may say the mood of Marx was still close to the mood of Bakunin's revolutionary existence; from then on, the emphasis of his life and work shifts increasingly to the ~~mid~~ midwifery of the revolution. This shift from making to preparing a revolution is what we call the derailment of Marx.

#### 255-258: Inverted dialectics

255 .. We have reached the situation where every day we encounter the assertion that nobody has // 256 // a right to talk about politics who has not understood, and is able to apply, the profound insights stemming from Marx. The philosophical dilettantism, and sometimes their plain silliness, of the theories involved, has proved no obstacle to their mass influence. In view of this situation the present analysis of Marxian dialectics may be excused.

The term "dialectical materialism" poses a problem in so far as it is a contradictio in adiecto. Dialectics, whatever other qualifications one may introduce into the definition, is an intelligible movement of ideas. The concept may be applied not only to a process in the mind but also to other realms of being, and in the extreme case dialectics may be used as a principle of gnostic interpretation for the whole of the universe, under the assumption that reality is intelligible because it is the manifestation of an idea. Hegel could interpret history dialectically because he assumed the logos to be incarnate in history. When reality is not conceived as the incarnation of the logos, the talk of a dialectic of reality becomes senseless. While the term in question, thus, contains a contradictio in adiecto,

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the train of thought which has led to the senseless formula may still be intelligible. We cannot dismiss the problem out of hand but must inquire into its origin. Nevertheless, as a point of sociological interest, we should be aware that the senselessness of the formula has never disturbed a Marxist, and in the Russian abbreviation of diamat it has become one of the sacred symbols of Communist doctrine.

Marx himself has given the most mature formulation of his theory of dialectics in the Foreword to the second edition of the Kapital in 1873. There he says: "In its foundations my dialectical method does not only differ from the Hegelian but is its direct opposite." When in the first edition he declared himself a disciple of the great thinker, he did so so rather out of spite against mediocrities who treated Hegel as a "dead dog." In opposition to epigoni he wanted to stress that Hegel was after all the first thinker who presented the movement of dialectics in a comprehensive and conscious manner. Nevertheless, "for Hegel the thought-process (which even he transforms into an autonomous subject under the name of Idea) is the demiurge of the real which is only its external garment. We mean on the contrary the ideal is nothing but the material transformed and translated in the head of man." He then distinguishes between the "mystified" and the "rational" forms of dialectics. In its "mystified" Hegelian form it glorified whatever exists. In its rational Marxian form it is obnoxious to the bourgeoisie "because in understanding the existing positively it also implies the understanding of its negation, that is of its inevitable perishing." Rational dialectics understands "every form of becoming in the flux of movement"; it is "not impressed by anything; it is essentially critical and revolutionary." [Das Kapital, 4th ed. by Engels Hamburg 1890, I, xvii f.]

The passage is brief but rich in implications. Above all, we can see that the Marxian intention of "turning Hegel upside down" (umstülpen) in order to put dialectics on its feet is rooted in a fundamental misunderstanding of Hegel's metaphysics. The Idea is for Hegel, of course, not the demiurge of the "real" in the sense in which Marx understands the term that is in the sense of empirical reality. Rather it is the demiurge of the "real" only in so far as reality is the revelation of the Idea.

Empirical reality contains for Hegel a good deal that is not the unfolding of the Idea. It is precisely because empirical reality and the reality of the Idea are not identical that the problem of the Idea arises, or to formulate it more fundamentally: Hegel was a philosopher and in this capacity he was concerned with the most basic philosophical problem, namely, with the nature of reality. Empirical ~~xx~~ reality could either be a disorderly flux of events (which it is not) or it could have a discernible order; in the latter case, this peculiar structure of reality inevitably becomes a problem for the philosopher and he must distinguish between the source of order and the source of the elements which do not fit into that order. Hence when Marx says that his rational dialectics stands Hegelian dialectics on its feet, he does not correctly describe what he is~~a~~ doing. Before the actual inversion begins, he has done something much more fatal: he has abolished Hegel's problem of reality. And since only the answer to this problem is specifically Hegelian, while the problem itself is a general one, he has by this act abolished the philosophical approach to the problem on principle. The Marxian position is not anti-Hegelian, it is anti-philosophical; Marx does not put Hegel's dialectics on its feet, he refuses to theorize.

258 Voegelin quotes S. Landshut and J. P. Mayer, Introduction to Karl Marx, Der Historische Materialismus, Leipzig 1932, I, xxii.

As the editors of Marx's early writings have formulated it: "He tacitly argues from a position that is unphilosophical on principle" and the justification of this position ~~xx~~ "is simply assumed." The position from which Marx undertakes his critique is a plain, not explicitly discussed, negation of the philosophical position as such. By simply referring to what in common ~~xx~~ parlance is called reality, the philosophical question concerning the nature of reality is cut off."

259 Logophobia or the Fragesverbot

summary

Landshut and Mayer (loc cit) wrote: "Marx -- if we may express ourselves in this manner -- misunderstood Hegel as-it-were deliberately." Voegelin is not satisfied with this, transposes the issue to the level of pneumopathology (BL counter-position), finds the most glaring symptom of this disease Marx's "fear of critical concepts and of philosophy in general. Marx refuses to express himself in any other terms than precritical unanalysed

concepts. The deeper causes for this fear we shall discuss later. For the present we have to characterize the symptom and since a pneumopathological terminology is hardly developed (BL: lack of religious conversion), we shall coin the term "logophobia" for this symptom."

260 For further characterization V turns to Engels' Anti-Dühring

Engels reflects on the new materialistic science of the nineteenth century. "Modern materialism" recognizes history as the evolutionary process of mankind and tries to discover the laws of its movement. Moreover it has abandoned the static concept of nature still held by Newton and Linné, and also recognizes nature as process and evolution under discoverable laws. With regard to history as well as nature, "modern materialism" is "essentially dialectic and no longer needs a philosophy above the other sciences." This is for Engels the decisive point: when science is occupied with the discovery of process and evolution, philosophy becomes superfluous. Why this curious result should follow does ~~not~~ not become quite clear. Engels insists: "As soon as each particular science is approached with the demand to become clear about its position in the total context (Gesamtzusammenhang) of things and of knowledge of things, a particular science of the total context becomes superfluous." All that remains of philosophy as we know it is the "science of thinking and its laws -- that is formal logic and dialectics." "Everything else is dissolved in the positive science of nature and history." F. Engels, Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft (1878), 19th ed. (Stuttgart 1919) pp. 10 f.

After dissecting and finding no sense in Engels' position, V reverts to logophobia "now quite outspokenly as a desperate fear and hatred of philosophy. We even find name the ~~a~~ specific object of fear and hatred: it is 'the total context of things and of knowledge of things'." Engels, like Marx, is afraid that the // 261 // recognition of critical conceptual analysis might lead to the recognition of a "total context," of an order of being and perhaps even of cosmic order, to which their particular existences would be subordinate."

261 footnote 18

V turns to Lenin's encyclopedia article on Marx where the connection between materialism and atheism is formulated explicitly.

"Marx decidedly rejected idealism, always connected in some way with religion." The sentence follows a quotation from Engels' Feuerbach, where the author characterized the idealists as persons who declare that spirit exists before nature and therefore assume that the world was created, while materialists are persons who regard nature as primary. Lenin adds that any other philosophical usage of the terms idealism and materialism would be "only confusing."

261 Marx, and Engels, have created a specific medium of expression for themselves: whenever a critical point ~~xx~~ arrives at which ultimate clarification would be required, their discourse blossoms out into metaphorical language which forces relations between undefined terms. Take as an example the previously quoted sentence from Marx's Foreword: "With me the Ideal is nothing but the Material transformed and translated in the head of man." The sentence sounds excellent and carries a vivid impression; it would have to be considered brilliant if it were an occasional rhetorical flourish that metaphorically expresses what has been set forth with critical thoroughness in another context. The trouble is that the other context in which this metaphor would receive // 262 // its critical meaning does not exist in the collected works of Marx. The metaphorical sentence is all that we ~~x~~ have... Nevertheless to the kind of reader who swallows that ~~x~~sentence hook, line, and sinker, it conveys an awe-inspiring picture of an intellectual giant who performs such wonderful metaphorical feats as "turning dialectics upside down" and putting it "on its feet" while formerly "it stood on its head."

The nature of this technique of expression will become even clearer when we consider not a single sentence but a series of sentences in which the thought of Marx moves from more concrete problems to an ultimate general formulation. As an example we shall use the famous passage from the Kritik der Politischen Oekonomie (liv lv) which is considered Marx's authoritative formulation of his materialistic interpretation of history. The passage begins: "In the social production of their means of existence men enter into definite, necessary relations which are independent of their will productive relationships which correspond to

a definite stage ~~and~~ of development of their material productive forces." With this sentence we are, on the whole, still on safe ground. All necessary explanations of terms are given by Marx in other contexts (Kapital I, 45). The beginning of the next sentence is a definition: "The aggregate of these productive relationships constitutes the economic structure of society." We are still on safe ground. Then Marx goes on: "The economic structure of society is the real basis on which a juridical and political superstructure arises and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond" (KPÖ p lv). Here we may begin to question: Why is the economic structure the real basis and why are the other structures in society, such as the political, a superstructure? What is a social form of ~~x~~ consciousness and what does it do when it corresponds to the real basis? In part, these questions are answered by the next sentence: "The mode of production // 263 // of the material means of existence conditions the whole process of social, political, and intellectual life." (ibid). But this answer shows that we are already running off into intangible metaphors. That economic structure is basic and all other structures are superstructures is now justified, indeed, in so far as the basic structure "conditions" the other ones. But what does "conditioning" mean? The term is hardly clarified by an earlier formulation/that political forms are "rooted~~x~~" in material relationships. Now when critical clarification is urgently required, comes the typical Marxian climax: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being; it is, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness" (ibid p lv). We have arrived at terms like "being," "social being," and "consciousness" at large and ~~the~~ the relation between them is no longer/conditioning but/determining.

p lv/

one of/ of/

.... But again let us stress that the collected works of Marx contain nothing that would be of any help in establishing the precise meaning of such terms as "being" and "consciousness." The great formula is not the beginning of a discussion, it is the dictatorial instrument ~~x~~ which cuts off all discussion on principle. The reader will now understand more clearly why a critical analysis of Marxian doctrine is impossible. To put it bluntly: A Marxian theory of historical materialism does ~~not~~ not exist.

#### 263 Pseudological speculation

Even if there is no theoretical content in the so-called theory of historical materialism, obviously there is *Something to it.*

What Marx has to say is not theory, but it is not unintelligible nonsense. We must return to our paradoxical question: How can one theorize without theorizing? We encounter certain terminological difficulties since spiritual disease has never been made the object of systematic inquiry (BL counter positions vs int mor rlg conversion) and no suitable vocabulary has been developed for its description. In // 264 // order to speak with convenience of theorizing in the nontheoretical medium that we have just analysed, we shall coin the term "pseudological speculation." Into the meaning of this term will enter the following elements: (1) that ~~the~~ speculation of this kind is theory in appearance only, not in reality; (2) that in the intention of the thinker who indulges in it, it is meant as genuine theoretical speculation; (3) that historically it ~~presupposes~~ presupposes the existence of<sup>a</sup> genuine philosophy of the logos which furnishes the subject matter that can be translated into the pseudological form.

(BL (1) and (2) hold for all counterpositions that appear to be theoretical; (3) presupposes the prior emergence of positions)

264-270 Complex analysis of Marx-Engels with respect to Hegel.

265 Engels rightly attacks Hegel for his attempt to interpret history as the unfolding of an Idea that has reached its conclusion in the present. The total meaning of history can be construed only as a transcendental drama, not as a mundane drama that comes to a close within empirical time. This is the fallacy of historical gnosis ~~which~~ which inevitably comes to grief through the fact that history continues (emphasis added). From both the theoretical fallacy and the empirical failure of gnostic interpretation, one should properly advance to the insight that the empirical course of history must not be interpreted as the unfolding of an Idea.

This however is not the argument of Engels. First of all, he misinterprets Hegel when he argues that the process of history, by its nature, cannot find its ~~its~~ intellectual conclusion through the discovery of an absolute truth. On the contrary, this is the only way in which it can find its intellectual conclusion but because (1) this is the only way, and (2) the empirical ~~stream~~ stream of history is not closed, "absolute truth" must remain transcendental. The fallacy of gnosis consists in the immanent-

ization of transcendental truth. Correctly, Engels would have had to say that the immanentist intellectual conclusion does not stop the stream of history and, hence, must not be used for its interpretation. What then does Engels gain by his misformulation? The second part of the argument shows the gain: it is an empirical reality which meaning as if it were the unfolding of an idea but it is not burdened with the conclusion of the unfolding. Theoretically of course this is nonsense, for meaning is not meaning unless it is concluded, at least in imaginative anticipation. Nevertheless this is the purpose of the argument: Hegel's reality of the unfolding Idea is abolished and empirical reality has become meaningful as it were an Idea. With this result we also touch on the deeper motive of the "as-it-were deliberate" misunderstanding of Hegel's problem of reality in the early Marx: by substituting empirical reality for the reality of the Idea, // 266 // Marx and Engels can draw the meaning of the Idea into reality without encountering the problem of a metaphysic of the Idea.

## 2 70-272 Inversion

We can be brief on the problem of inversion proper. Our analysis has shown that it is a complicated operation. We have, first, isolated the anti-philosophical attack which results in the establishment of an empirical pragmatic reality as the object of further investigation as well as a special linguistic medium for its expression. This first phase of the operation is not an inversion of dialectics but the logophobic destruction of philosophical problems in general. Within the new medium of expression, nothing is inverted; the Hegelian gnosis is translated as a whole into pseudological speculation. The inversion in the technical sense occurs in a third phase in which the result of the first two operations is construed as an interpretation of the realms of being from the bottom of the ontological hierarchy. On this third phase, however, we can be brief, because Marx has said next to nothing about it beyond assuring us that this indeed was his intention.

The execution of this plan would have involved a philosophy of culture. First, he would have had to explain the nature of cultural phenomena; secondly, it would have been necessary for him to show that these phenomena could be interpreted from whatever

the bottom of existence as for instance →



matter; and finally it would have been necessary to explain what this bottom of existence is. Of this whole plan, as far as principles are concerned, nothing exists but the previously analysed formula of the consciousness that is conditioned by existence.

Beyond this formulatin of ~~the~~ the principle we have a few meagre passages concernring the sphere of culture which he designates by the term "ideology."

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276 The starting point for the independent movement of Marx's thought seems to be a gnostic position which he inherited from Hegel. Specifically, the Marxian gnosis expresses itself in the conviction that the movement of the intellect in the consciousness of the empirical self is the ultimate source of knowledge for the understanding of the universe. Faith and the life of the spirit are expressly excluded as an independent source of order in the soul. Moreover, this conviction/ from the beginning accompanied by an attitude of revolt against "religion" as a sphere which recognizes the existence of a realissimum beyond human consciousness. This is the Marxian position as it appears in his doctoral dissertation of 1840-41 [Karl Marx, Über die Differenz der demokratischen und epikureischen Naturphilosophie, Gesamtausgabe, vol. I]

In the preface to the dissertation Marx attacks the "theologizing intellect" of Plutarch who dares to criticize a philosopher like Epicurus. Against such presumption Marx defends the "sovereignty" of philosophy. "Philosophy does not make a secret of it. The confession of Prometheus: 'In one word, I hate all the gods,' is its very own confession, its own sentence against all heavenly and earthly gods who refuse to recognize human self-consciousness (das menschliche Selbstbewusstsein) as the supreme divinity. And none shall be held by its side." Human self-consciousness is the god for the philosopher and "prometheus is the foremost saint and martyr in the philosophical calendar." Ibid., p. 10.

274 The sovereignty of consciousness and the attitude of revolt are present in his thought from the beginning. They enter as motives into the reflections of Marx on the philosophical situation

that had been created by the system of Hegel.....

275 The attitude of revolt becomes historically effective through the fascinating program of incarnating the logos in the world by means of revolutionary human action. For Hegel, the logos ~~in the world~~ (reason) was incarnating itself in reality, and because reason was in reality, its manifestation could be discovered through the reflection of the philosopher. His philosophy of history was a contemplation of the Idea in reality. Never could the unfolding of the Idea be made the intention of human action. We should be aware in particular that Hegel's definition of the great historical figure as a person whose actions are in conformance with the movement of the Idea is not a recipe for becoming a great historical figure by producing this conformance at will. Nevertheless this is precisely the perversion in which Marx indulged. Instead of abandoning gnosis and restoring true contemplation, Marx abandoned contemplation and translated gnosis into action.

..... Neither the fact that the logos in the Christian sense had been thinned out in Hegel to the Idea nor the ~~the~~ verbose // 276 // antireligiousness of Marx should obscure the fact that Marx was a Paraclete in the best medieval style, a man in whom the logos had become incarnate and through whose action in the world mankind at large would become the vessel of the logos.

This characterization must be qualified, however, in so far as Marx does not conceive the logos as a transcendental spirit descending into man, but as a true essence of man which comes into its own through the process of history. May, that is, the ~~the~~ true man, must be "emancipated" from historical encumbrances which still hold him in fetters in order to achieve his completely free existence in society. The true essence of man, his divine self-consciousness, is present in the world as the ferment which drives history forward in a meaningful manner. At some point, this essence will break through -- first in one man, then in a few, until the great revolution will bring the full social ~~the~~ realization of ~~the~~ true man..... The Marxian spiritual disease, thus, like the Comtean, consists in the selfdivinization and the self-salvation of man; an intramundane logos of human consciousness is substituted for the transcendental logos. What appeared on the ~~the~~ level of symptoms as antiphilosophism and logophobia, must etiologically be understood as the revolt of immanent consciousness against the spiritual order of the world.

276 On the fundamental problem of the conflict between philosophy and the new nonphilosophy, Thesis 11 informs us: // 277 // "the philosophers have only interpreted the world in their various ways; the point is, however, to change it. This sentence is the key to the understanding of the aggregate of theses. If the opposition of "interpretation" and "change" were related to the traditional Aristotelian division of theory and practice, there would be no point in the antithesis. Philosophers of course interpret the world, for that precisely is the function of the bios theoretikos; to deprecate this function by pointing to the relevance (es kommt darauf an) of changing the world would be senseless, for nobody maintains that contemplation is a substitute for practice or vice versa. Moreover one cannot change the world as one can interpret the world; one can only act within the world. This curious terminology, however, reveals the intention of Marx of embodying into "practice" the attitude toward the world that is possible only as contemplation. The "practice" of Marx can change the world, because the world is understood as a stream of existence within which the idea, or reason, moves concretely. The logos is not an unchangeable order of the soul and the world, to be discovered in contemplative detachment from the world, it is instead a dialectically moving idea within the world, and we can come to grips with this moving idea only by embedding ourselves through practice into its historically concrete motion. The Marxian "practice" we may say, is a pseudological practice, corresponding to the pseudological speculation that we discussed previously.

The "world" is the concrete stream of history. The life of man is essentially social, a part of the life of mankind in history. Man has no destiny of the soul in the religious sense, apart from the destiny of the social, historical world of mankind. From this position, Marx criticizes Feuerbach because the latter has dissolved religion psychologically as an illusionary construction of man but still left standing the nature of individual man as the originator of the illusion. According to Feuerbach, God is an imaginary subject, projected by the mind of man, to which are attributed the highest human values. "The absolute being, the God of man, is the being of man ~~himself~~ itself." ~~That is to say~~ ~~that the essence of man is God~~ God is "the mirror of man"; into God man has projected "his highest thoughts and his purest

feelings," God, therefore, is the essence of man." The great turning point of history will come when "man becomes conscious that the only God of man is man himself." "Homo homini Deus!" "The spectre of God must be laid, and man must take back what he has thrown away by projecting it into a divine, supernatural existence." [cf H de Lubac, *Le drame de l'humanisme athée*, pp. 23 ff.] With all this Marx is in hearty agreement, He is not satisfied, however, with what he calls // 278 // Feuerbach's dissolution of "the religious essence into the human essence" (thesis 6). Such human essence is an nonexistent abstract (6 and 7). Feuerbach assumes an "isolated" individual as the creator of the religious illusion. The individual however has no "human essence"; in its reality it is "the whole of social relationships" (6). The "religious mind" in itself is a social product and an individual feels religiously because it (he) "belongs to a specific social form" (7). Feuerbach has correctly seen the "fact of self-alienation" in the creation of a supernatural divine existence and, in its wake, "the duplication of the world into a religious and a mundane world." He has, indeed, "reduced the religious world to its mundane basis." But he has not seen the most important problem: that there must be a reason why "the mundane basis distinguishes itself from itself, and fixes for itself an independent realm in the clouds." This peculiar process can be explained only through "a schism and self-contradiction within the mundane basis." Feuerbach's analysis does not go far enough. The contradiction in the mundane basis itself must be "theoretically understood and practically revolutionized." (Thesis 4).

We must read a summarizing sentence like "Social life is essentially practical" (Thesis 8) with these clarifications of the meaning of practice in mind. We should not misunderstand the practice of social life as a basis for a life of meditation in solitude. The attributes mean that all life is social, that it has no dimension of solitude, and that all life is practical, that it has no legitimate dimension of contemplation in the Aristotelian sense. Hence "all mysteries that might induce mysticism in theory will find their rational solution in human practice and in understanding this practice" (8). In his zeal for closing the stream of ~~mix~~ existential practice hermetically against all deviations into contemplation, Marx expressly condemns any attempt at producing social change through education. Such an attempt

would overlook the fact that the educations must be educated themselves; it would split ~~the~~ society into two parts of which one is superior to the rest in a miraculous manner. Circumstances can be changed only through human action and this change and action coincide so that in fact a change of circumstances is a self-transformation. ~~This self-transformation~~ This self-transformation is the very process ~~that~~ that must be understood as "revolutionary practice" (Thesis 3). The idea of a subject of cognition and morals as distinguished from objects of cognition and moral action must be abolished and the subject itself must be conceived as "objectual" (gegenständlich) and human activity as "objectual activity." Reality on the other hand must not be conceived as object for a subject but as "sensuously human activity" (sinnlich menschliche Tätigkeit) (Thesis 1). In terms of philosophical tradition // 279 // revolutionary practice is thus defined as an existential stream in which the subject is objectified and the object subjectified. This is the position which Marx calls his "new materialism". It is the position of "human society or social humanity" as distinguished from the position which recognizes individual man and bourgeois (bürgerliche) society (Theses 9 and 10)

Cf Voegelin's remark p 276: The Theses on Feuerbach are important for us principally as concise dictionary that enables us to relate the Marxian terminology to traditional philosophical terms. On the fundamental problem of the conflict between philosophy and the new nonphilosophy, Thesis 11.....

p 279 n 13. For an entirely different interpretation of the Theses on Feuerbach the reader should refer to Sidney Hook, From Hegel to Marx (London 1956) pp. 272-397.

#### Critique of heaven and critique of the earth

279 The Marxian critical practice starts with the critique of religion and it ~~then~~ proceeds to the critique of politics and economics. The problem of this ~~xx~~ systematically second phase has been formulated by Marx in the Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie ("Einleitung" 1843, Gesamtausgabe I 607 ff.). "The critique of religion ends with the insight that man is the highest being for man; this implies the categorical imperative to overthrow all relationships in which man is a humiliated, oppressed, neglected,

despised being" (Ibid 1, 614 f.). "The critique of religion is the presupposition of all critique" In the illusionary reality of heaven man "has looked for the superman"; instead he found the reflection of himself. Now he realizes that he himself is the superman and he will no longer be satisfied with recognizing himself as the non-man (Unmensch) that he formerly believed himself to be. "Man makes religion, not religion man." "Religion is the self-consciousness and self-feeling of a man who either has not yet found himself, or who has lost himself again." This man, however (directed against Feuerbach!), is not an abstract being outside the world. "Man is the world of man," that is state and society. This social world produces religion as "a perverted consciousness of the world because it is a perverted (verkehrte) world." Religion is the general theory of a perverted world. It gives "imaginary reality to human essence (Wesen) because human essence has no true reality." "The struggle against religion is the struggle against that world of which religion is the spiritual aroma." Religious misery is the manifestation of real misery, and at the same time a protest against it. Religion is the cry of oppressed creatures -- "it is the opium of the people." (Ibid 607).

The destruction of religion is the beginning of the revolution not its end. The "illusionary happiness of the people" must now be replaced by // 280 // "its real happiness." ... Now that the "beyond of truth" has disappeared, it is the "task of history" to establish "the truth of this world." "The critique of heaven changes into a critique of the earth," the critique of religion and theology into the "critique of law and politics." (Ibid 607 f)

When Marx embarks on his critique of law and politics, however he does not criticize actual institutions; instead he criticizes Hegel's Philosophy of Law. In justifying this procedure he has made a contribution to the understanding of German politics and of its conflict with Western political culture that even today is well worth reading as a whole...

summary 3  
pp 280-282

England and France had already got beyond their feudal anciens régimes; the bourgeois class had succeeded in effecting a revolution accepted by the nation as a whole; while that was not possible in Germany, a proletarian ~~xxx~~ revolution was possible. Germany's revolution had been led by the monk, Luther; its next revolution would be led by the philosopher.

Emancipation and alienation

282 Emancipation is the general category under which Marx conceives the advancement of man to his complete freedom. "All emancipation is reduction of the human world, of relationships, to man himself."  
 // 284 // Religious emancipation is the reduction of religion to the religion-making consciousness of man as accomplished by Feuerbach "Political emancipation is the reduction of man, on the one hand to a member of bourgeois society, that is to the egoistic, independent individual, on the other hand to the citizen, that is to the moral person." This schism of man must be overcome through the next and last step in emancipation. Only when "the real, individual man takes back the abstract citizen," only when as ~~an~~ individual man he has become generic being (Gattungswesen) "in his empirical life, in his individual work, in his individual relationships," only when man has "recognized his 'forces propres' as social forces and organized as such," only when as a consequence he no longer "separates social force from himself in form of political force," is human emancipation completed.\*\*

\*\* Zur Judenfrage, op cit, p 599.

284 The course of past history has been the alienation of man, the task of future history is his emancipation. In alienation or self-alienation man loses himself to the beyond of religion and social institutions, through emancipation he draws these objectified sectors of his essence back into his existence. We have arrived at the core of the Marxian philosophy of history. The history of emancipation (from religious, through political, to ultimate social emancipation) is the reversal of ~~the~~ the process of alienation. In order to arrive at the critical solution, the revolutionary thinker must have a critical understanding of the genesis of the evil. The contemporary evil has its origin in the relation between man and nature; it can be overcome only through bringing nature under the control of man so that freedom beyond nature can unfold. The vicissitudes of man's relation with nature are the subject matter of history. We must trace the history of man from its most primitive beginnings when man emerges from the animal condition. We must follow it through the various phases in which man becomes ever more deeply involved in the process of production to the point of complete self-alienation. We must further study the possibilities of emancipation which grow parallel with increasing



alienation, and we must finally conceive the idea of the revolutionary overthrow of the order of alienation and its replacement by the order of freedom.

#### Substance and process of history

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287 All critical history must start with certain "presuppositions." They must however not be of a dogmatic nature; they must be "real presuppositions." They are "the real individuals, their actions ~~and~~ and material conditions of life." The first presupposition is "the existence of living human individuals" with a bodily organization and the relation to the rest of nature which is conditioned by this organization.\*\* Man distinguishes himself from ~~the~~ animal as soon as he starts producing his means of life; in such producing men indirectly produce their material life. Their way of production becomes their way of life (Lebensweise). From this starting-point Marx traces the differentiation of production from sexual reproduction and division of labor on the level of the family, through further differentiation on the tribal and other local levels, to the system of production and division of labor under the conditions of modern national ~~and~~ societies and their interrelation in a world market. Parallel

\*\* Deutsche Ideologie (1844-45), Gesamtausgabe, 5 p 10

with this differentiation of production goes the development of ideas in politics, law, morals, religion, and metaphysics in close correlation with the process of material production of life. Consciousness can never be anything but conscious being (Bewusstsein, bewusstes Sein), and the being of man is his real life-process. "Not consciousness determines life; it is life that determines consciousness." With the development of critical history "philosophy loses its medium of existence." It can be replaced at best "by a summary of general results that can be abstracted from the study of the historical development of mankind." Such abstractions however are worthless if they are separated from real history. They ~~can~~ can only facilitate the ordering of historical materials -- in the ~~the~~ manner in which Marx is doing it.

The "material process of product" and its differentiation through division of labor are established as the irreducible substance of history. This process of differentiation contains ~~and~~

an inevitable conflict of increasing acerbity, that is the conflict between the interest of the working ~~man~~ individual and the interest of the larger group of individuals who are engaged in production through division of labor and exchange of products. "As soon as labor is divided, a definite exclusive range of activity is assigned to everybody; this range is imposed on him, he cannot escape it; he is hunter, fisher, herdsman, or critical critic, and he must // 286 // remain it unless he wants to lose his means of life." (Ibid p 22) While under more primitive technological conditions such dependence on specialized activity is still bearable because even specialization on this level leaves a broad field for diversified human work, the situation becomes disastrous under conditions of ~~production~~ industrial production for a world market. "The fixation of social activity, the consolidation of our own product into objective power (sachliche Gewalt) dominating us, growing out of control, crossing our expectations, destroying our calculations, is one of the principal factors in historical evolution." (Ibid pp 22 f) "The more wealth he produces and the more his production gains in wealth and power, the poorer he becomes the worker.".....

Oekonomische-philosophische Manuskripte (1844) GesampT 3, 82-93.

286 This alienation of human productivity is inherent in the division of labor; it has nothing to do with higher or lower wages. A rise in wages would be nothing but <sup>a</sup>better ~~pay~~ salary for slaves; it would not for the worker and his work recover their human destiny and dignity." "Even an equality of income, as demanded by Proudhon, // 287 // changes only the relation of the worker to his work into that of all men to their work. Society would then become Capitalist in the abstract," (Ibid)

287 ... Social reform is not a remedy for the evils which Marx has in mind. This evil is the growth of the economic structure of modern society into an "objective power" TO WHICH MAN MUST submit by threat of starvation. The principal characteristic features which appear off and on in the descriptions of Marx can now be summarized:

- (1) The separation of the worker from his tools (it is a whole factory)
- (2) Job dependence (he has to find a job or starve)
- (3) Division of labor and consequent specialization (4)
- (5) Economic interdependence, dependence on remote factors causes decisions of management government etc.

Socialistic man 288-290

## summary

All these characteristics are intrinsic to the industrial system, Marx has no intention of abolishing the industrial system, what then does he hope for from the communist revolution?

It is a point commonly neglected. Marx says little about it, but the little, while unbelievable, is clear enough.

288 Wild as it may sound, he (marx) wanted to retain the industrial system of production with its inevitable technological differentiation of work, but he wanted to abolish human specialization....

This evil was to be overcome in "Communist society, where nobody has an exclusive range of activity, but everybody can train himself in every branch; where society regulates general production and thereby makes it possible for me to ~~be~~ do one thing today and another thing tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, to fish in the afternoon, to be a husbandman in the evening, and to indulge in critical work after supper, as it pleases me, without any necessity for me ever to become a hunter, fisherman, husbandman, or critic" (Ibid, p 22)

## summary

289 The appropriation of a totality of instruments of production is the development of a totality of faculties in individuals.

Only proletarians are capable of this because their interest is not limited by property. The proletarian without property is the fit ~~xxxxxxxx~~ agent to bring a mass of productive instruments X "under each individual" and to subsume property under all.

To subsume all ~~x~~ means of production calls for the universal association of proletarians on a world scale. Only after this revolution will self-activity coincide with material life. Cf Ibid pp 57 f, 63 f, Kapital I 42-46; Fetischcharacter der Warenwelt pp 39 45 f.

289 The "total individual" or in other contexts "socialistic man" is the aim of history. Man must regain himself completely from his alienation in order to become the perfectly free and independent being which in essence he is. The "liberation from property" is the last act of this drama. Let us now turn to a passage in which marx has concisely formulated the connection between his idea of social revolution and his original revolt against God. "A being is independent only when it stands on its own feet; and it stands on its own feet only when it owes its

existence to nobody but itself." A man who lives by grace of somebody else when "he has created my life," when the source of my life lies outside // 290 // myself. Creation, Marx reflects sadly, is an idea that is rather deeply rooted in the consciousness of man. The being-through-itself of nature and man is inconceivable to him because it contradicts all tangible experiences (Handgreiflichkeiten) of practical life. Man knows himself as a link in the chain of being, and of necessity he will ask: where is this chain suspended? And what can we answer to the inopportune questioner? Marx gives the same answer as Comte: don't ask such questions; they are "abstractions"; they make no sense; stick to the reality of being and becoming! (Oekom phil MS (1844) 3, 124 f) As in the case of Comte, at the critical moment we are faced by the demand not to ask idle questions. The man who does not ask such questions is, by definition, socialistic man.

[BL: Marx rejection of the Handgreiflichkeiten as ultimate criterion show that he is not simply naive realist; what we have is the autonomy and sufficiency of science and history; cf quotes from Engels, pp 260 especially, and 265-270.]

Crude communism and true communism p 290-

290 For socialistic man the "whole so-called history of ~~the~~ world" is nothing but the production of man through the work of man. In this process he has under his eyes "the irresistible ~~x~~ proof of his birth: Through himself, of his genetic process." The essentiality (Wesenhaftigkeit) of man in nature is given to sensual intuition and in the fact of this experience the quest of an alien being beyond nature becomes a practical impossibility. "Atheism, as the denial of this nonessentiality~~x~~ (Unwesenentlichkeit), no longer makes sense, for atheism is a negation of God and through this negation posits the existence of man." Socialism needs no such mediation. It starts immediately with the sensuous consciousness of man in nature as true essence. It is positive self-consciousness of man, not mediated through the denial of religion. And in the same manner, "true life" is the positive reality of man, not mediated through abolition of private property, that is through communism. For the next phase of history communism is positive as the negation of the negation but communism as such is not the aim of human development-- it is not the form of human society. Communism like atheism is

is a counter idea to a historical state that must be overcome. Marx, like Bakunin, is aware of the danger that lies in facile attempts to content to the vision of the future by elaborating a catalogue of concrete demands which ~~xxx~~ can be nothing but negatives of present evils. Communism is not an institutional reform; it is rather a change in the nature of man.

With this danger in view, Marx has distinguished carefully between "crude communism (roher Kommunismus) and "true communism" or socialism. Crude communism is the positive expression of abolished private property; it establishes general private property which is only // 291 // a generalization and perfection of private property. The domination of the property in things is so enormous that crude communism wants to annihilate everything that cannot be owned as private property by everyone. It considers physical immediate ownership the only purpose of life.; it wants to destroy all distinguishing talent by violence, etc. The nature of this type of communism becomes particularly clear in its idea of the communalization of women. "We may say that the idea of a community of women reveals the secret of this crude and thoughtless communism"; woman leaves marriage and enters into general prostitution..... The crude communist manifests the perfection of this desire for levelling from the position of an imagined minimum. .. it negates civilization in its return to an unnatural simplicity of poor people who are not beyond private property but have not yet arrived at ~~xx~~ it....

... True communism is the return of man to himself as social man "within the wholewealth of human development up to this point." It is a completed humanistic naturalism, "the true solution of the conflict between man and nature." "It is the solved riddle of history and knows itself as the solution." Communist society is the true resurrection of nature, the realized naturalism of man and the realized humanism of nature." O-P MS 111-116.

The Manifesto 291-296

292 .. a masterpiece of political rhetoric.

Tactics 296-29

296 The manifesto was published in February 1848. In the same month the revolution in Paris broke out. In 1850, when it was clear that the time for a proletarian world revolution had not yet come, the eschatological excitement of the Manifesto subsided and the problems of revolutionary tactics came to the fore. We may conclude this study of the genesis of the Marxian idea with a few passages on tactics from the Address to the Bund der Kommunisten of March 1850.

[Voegelin's references are to Ansprache der Zentralbehörde an den Bund, reprinted in Karl Marx Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozess zu Köln (Berlin 1914).]

The immediate problem for communists was no longer the seizure of power in a democratic revolution. The democrats who were capable of winning a revolution were not communists. The immediate problem was the alliance with revolutionary democratic groups wherever they started moving, and the ruthless fight against allies on the morning after the common victory. It was already substantially the situation that we experienced in the Popular Front ~~xxxxxxxx~~ politics of the 1930's and the resumption of the fight against democracy after the Second World War. Marx informs his listeners that the "democratic petty-bourgeoisie want to // 297 // conclude the revolution as fast as possible" as soon as they have taken care of their own interests. But "it is our interest and task to make the revolution permanent until all more or less propertied classes are removed from power, until state power is conquered by the proletariat, and until/association of proletarians has advanced not only in one country but in all important countries of the world to the point where the rivalry between proletarians in different countries has ceased and at least the decisive productive forces are concentrated in their hands. We are not interested in a change of private property but only in its annihilation, not in the conciliation of class antagonisms but in the abolition of classes, not in reforms of present society but in the foundation of a new one" (p. 44). In order to carry on the fight, as far as possible a stabilization of the political situation must be prevented. During the conflict as well as immediately afterward, the proletarians must counteract all attempts at calming down the revolutionary excitement.

The democratic parties must be held to their most radical promises and their most terroristic threats. Mob violence should not be prevented or even only tolerated, it should be fostered and organized by the communists in order to compromise the democrats (p 132). In the special German case the communists must oppose any attempt at a federat~~z~~ive construction of the constitution.

"Under no circumstances must it be tolerated that every village, city and province can oppose revolutionary activity which must proceed from a center in order to be most effective" (p 135). When a constitutional settlement is reached at last, the communists must top every legislative reform measure proposed by the democrats by a more revolutionary demand of their own. "When the petty--bourgeois propose the purchase of railroads and factories, the workers must demand that these railroads and factories should be confiscated by the government without compensation because they are the property of reactionaries. When the democrats propose a proportional tax, the ~~democratic~~ workers demand a progressive one; when the democrats propose a moderately progressive one, the workers insist on a tax which rises so fast in the upper brackets that big capital will be ruined. When the democrats propose a regulation of the public debt, the workers demand a declaration of public bankruptcy. Hence the demands of the workers must always be guided by the concessions and measures of the democrats" ~~(p 137)~~ (p 137).

The details of the advice will change with the situation. The pattern // 298 // is clear and ~~a~~ well-known to all of us: it is the systematic disruption of society in the hope of creating such disorder that the Communist minority can rise to victory.

Conclusion p. 298-301

.. At the root of the marxian idea we find the spiritual disease, gnostic revolt. Not much need be said about it. The disease shows the same symptoms that we have observed in the case of Comte, and the Comtean characteristics in their turn belong to the larger pattern of the scientific, antireligious disease that preceded him. The soul of Marx is demonically closed against transcendental reality. In the critical post-Hegelian situation he cannot extricate himself from his difficulties by returning to the freedom of the spirit. His spiritual impotence leaves no way open but derailment into gnostic activism. Again we see the characteristic combination of spiritual impotence with the mundane lust for power resulting in a grandiose mysticism of Paracletic existence. And again we see the conflict with reason, almost literally in the same form as in Comte, in the dictatorial prohibition of metaphysical questions concerning the ground of being, questions that might disturb the magic creation of a new world behind the prison walls of the revolt. Marx, like Comte, does not permit a rational discussion of his principles -- you have to be a Marxist or shut up. We see again confirmed the correlation between spiritual impotence and antirationalism; one cannot deny God and retain reason.

Spiritual impotence destroys the order of the soul. Man is locked up in the prison of his particular existence. It does not however destroy the vitality of intellectual operations within the prison. The Theses on Feuerbach, whatever we may think of them, are an unsurpassed masterpiece of mystical speculation on the level of a demonically closed existence. Marx knew that he was a god creating a world. He did not want to be a creature. He did not want to see the world in the perspective of creaturely existence -- though he admitted that man has his difficulties in getting out of the rut. He rejected the great diremptions of being that are given in experience, the diremptions of man and world, of immanent being and transcendent reality, of man and God, subject and object, action and contemplation, the diremptions that point to the mystery of creation. He wanted to see the world from the point of the coincidentia oppositorum, that is from the position of God. He achieved this view in the



Theses through the construction of the hermetically sealed stream of existence in which the opposites are transformed into each other. He created the symbol of the closed world ~~in which~~ in which ~~the~~ subjects are objects and objects a subjective activity; where things are what they are and at the same time are their opposites. In brief, in describing his stream of existence he used the methods of speculation which mystics use in translating the experience of God into world-immanent language. By standards of mystical speculation, the construction is impeccable. It is probably the best worldfetish ever constructed by a man who wanted to be God.

We must realize the full seriousness of this undertaking. The spectacle of a man who indulges in such demonic extravagances may be loathsome, but the loathesome and perhaps comic aspects of the performance make it no less socially dangerous. There are a good number of men who want to be gods. While Marx was quite justified in his pessimism with regard to the abilities of the average man for pulling himself up to divinity by his own boot straps, the average man is quite able to run after a self-created superman who promises to make him a superman, too, at low cost.

The effectiveness of ~~the~~ the Marxian idea, however, does not rest in the strength and intellectual consistency of his antitheistic revolt alone. Marx has laid his finger on the sore spot of modern industrial society, on the cause of serious trouble (even if the trouble does not take the form of a general communist revolution), that is the growth of economic institutions into a power of such overwhelming influence on the life of every single man, that in the face of such ~~the~~ power all talk about human freedom becomes futile. With socially irrelevant exceptions, in an industrialized society man is not the master of his economic existence. Marx has treated the problem under the title of "alienation" and we have quoted at length from his inexhaustible variations of the theme. His model case was the fate of the industrial worker, but it is a fate which is engulfing practically our whole society. How far the disease has advanced we know through the dire experience of the National Socialist revolution in which the carriers of the movement were not the industrial workers but the lower middle class -- very much to the dismay of orthodox Marxists who believe that industrial workers have a monopoly on the misery of economic insecurity and of threatening unemployment, and consequently a monopoly on revolution.

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Though Marx/erred with regard to the extent of the evil, he has not erred with regard to its nature. Marx is the only thinker of stature in the nineteenth century (and none has followed him) who attempted a philosophy of human labor as well as a critical analysis of the institutions of industrial society from his philosophical position. His main work, Das Kapital, is not an economic theory like that of Adam Smith, or Ricardo, or John Stuart Mill and one cannot dispose of it by showing the defects of the Marxian theories of value, of interest, of ~~the~~ accumulation of capital, ~~etc.~~, all of which are certainly defective. It is, as its subtitle states a critique of political economy; it is an attempt to reveal the social myth that is contained in the concepts of economic theory, and to penetrate to the core of the matter, that is the relation of man to nature and to a philosophy of this relation, that is, of labor. That no economic theorist after Marx was sufficiently interested in the philosophical foundations of his science to explore the problem further, that no modern school of economic theory exists that would understand and develop the very important beginnings of Marx, casts a significant light on this whole branch of science.

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The result of the Marxian attempt/we have seen, is dubious. The idea of the "total individual" that will "appropriate" ~~the~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the working range of an industrial system into its "self-activity" like a Robinson Crusoe who does his chores, is empirically unrealizable; and the eschatological part of the solution, the change in the nature of man through the experience of the revolution that will make the ~~the~~ feat possible, is a piece of drained intramundane mysticism. Nevertheless, the diagnosis of the evil is on the whole sound. The industrial system in present society looks empirically like a human impasse, threatened by a communist revolution whenever the stop-gap remedy of buying off the revolution through "prosperity" and the "rising standard of living" should fail for any appreciable length of time. And what this communism most probably would look like Marx has described in his impressive characterization of "crude communism."

While "crude communism" in its most horrible form is an unmistakable ingredient in the social revolution spreading westward from Russia, and while ~~we~~ we must consider it a possibility that it will generally mark the next phase in the decadence of Western

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society, this course is not an historical necessity. In his construction of history Marx has conceived the development of economic forms as occurring in an abstract mankind with an appendix of ideologies. In fact, the development occurs in historical societies and the ideological appendix is nothing less than the spiritual life and the civilization of these societies. The formidable economic problem has a noneconomic setting, considered by // 301 // Marx as a quantité négligeable, and the existence of this noneconomic environment makes it impossible to predict what ~~xx~~ means may be found to alleviate the world consequences of "alienation" and generally to grapple with the problems of industrialized society.

Let us, finally, consider the most interesting practical question that is raised by the antirationalism of the Marxian idea. We have seen that Marx can maintain his philosophizing on the level of spiritual revolt only by prohibiting unpleasant questions. What havoc the perversion of theory into pseudo-logical speculation must work in the life of the intellect we could observe in the burlesque of Engels and the low comedy of the German Revisionist Social Democrats. A climax of grotesque nonsense is Lenin's idea that the dialectics of history is concerned with transforming the Kantian Ding an sich into phenomena. When the Marxian idea becomes a public creed, obviously such dilettantism and downright stupidity can be protected against ridicule only by a radical prohibition of philosophy. What consequence a prohibition of philosophy will have for a society on the industrial level of production, which for its survival depends on ~~the~~ strict standards of rationality in the sciences, only the future can show. Incidents which are reported from Russia, such as the Lysenko affair, seem to indicate that irrationalism to the degree of mountebankery has made inroads even in the natural sciences. Russian "philosophical" ~~xx~~ articles ~~which~~ which have been published in American journals live up to our worst expectations. We cannot exclude ~~xx~~ as a possibility that a society in which Marxism is enforced as the official creed will commit suicide through intellectual dishonesty.

Epilogue

The expansion of the will to power from the realm of phenomena to that of substance, or the attempt to operate in the realm of substance pragmatically as if it were the realm of phenomena -- that is the definition of magic. The interrelation of science and power and the consequent cancerous growth of the utilitarian segment of existence have injected a strong element of magic culture into modern civilization. The tendency to narrow the field of human experience to the area of reason, science, and pragmatic action, the tendency to overvalue this area in relation to the bios theoretikos and the life of the spirit, the tendency to make it the exclusive preoccupation of man, the tendency to make it socially preponderant through economic pressure in the so-called free societies and through violence in totalitarian states -- all these tendencies are part of a cultural process that is dominated by the idea of operating // 302 // on the substance of man through the instrumentality of pragmatically planning will. The climax of this is the magic dream of creating the Superman, the man-made being that will succeed the sorry creature of God's making. This is the great dream that first appeared imaginatively in the ~~works~~ works of Condorcet, Comte, Marx, Nietzsche, and later pragmatically in the Communist and (the) National Socialist movements.