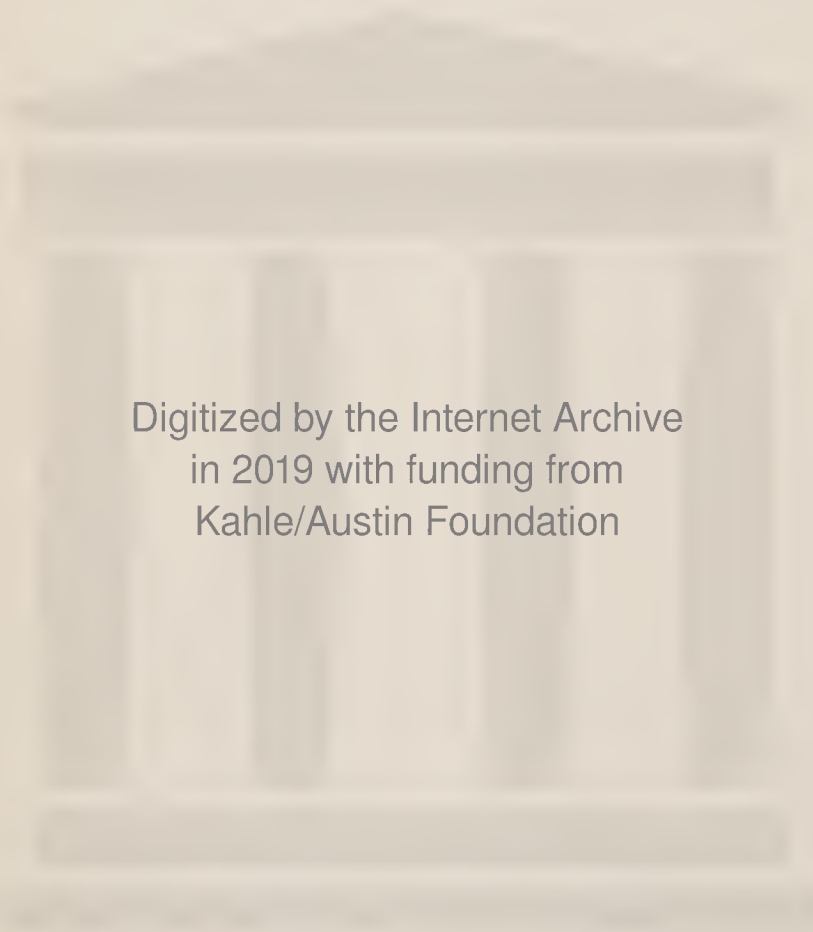
THE
ORIGINS
OF
MARXIAN THOUGHT

AUGUSTE CORNU, PH.D.



# THE ORIGINS OF MARXIAN THOUGHT

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*The Origins of*

# MARXIAN THOUGHT

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# PREFACE

THE PURPOSE of this essay is to determine the place of Karl Marx's work in modern thought. The original plan was to have been an analysis of the connections between Marx and Hegel; this is why, of the three sources of Marxism: Hegelianism, French materialism and socialism, and English political economy, the first is dealt with at such length. Such a procedure may perhaps be justified if we consider how dominant an influence Hegelianism was during the period when Marx's views were taking form.

Actually, the other elements of his thinking entered into the Hegelian dialectical framework. Marx gave the Hegelian dialectic a materialist basis in the place of its original idealist cast. By doing so he went beyond Hegelian idealism, mechanical materialism, utopian socialism, and the basic notions of English political economy, and fused all these elements into a new dialectical and materialistic conception of history on which scientific socialism is based.

If our comparison of Hegel and Marx takes Marx's thought out of history, we shall fail to understand it. We have to set it in its place in the large movement of modern thought in order to show how Marx undertook to solve problems which had already been raised.

The present essay, presenting the formation of Marxism as a chapter in the history of ideas, brings the development down to the *German Ideology*, that is to the point at which the ideas of Marx and Engels are already fixed in their general outlines. Being an intellectual history, as it were a history of the concept of integration, it inevitably

becomes more or less schematic, presenting a rich and complex historical reality in the form of simple and rigorous logical necessities. In particular, it gives too little weight to the evolution of social and productive forces, and too much weight to the role of ideas in history and to the influence of Hegel on Marx. I trust, however, that despite this emphasis, the general picture of Marx in his relation to modern thought is a valid, and, at least in part, a new one.

A. Cornu

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# THE ORIGINS OF MARXIAN THOUGHT

*Chapter I*

# RATIONALISM

## *The Origin of Rationalism*

MODERN THOUGHT took form under the influence of the great discoveries of the 15th Century, which tremendously enlarged the horizons of the world and increased human needs and desires greatly, and called into being a new economic and social organization based on greater freedom in the production and circulation of goods. The previously prevailing feudal order had been relatively stable in its production and way of life. The new system broke with the old social and economic forms, radically altered men's ways of living and gradually changed the static way of looking at things into a dynamic one dominated, like the new system itself, by the concepts of freedom, movement, and progress.

The social and economic liberation which the new regime gradually effected was accompanied by a spiritual liberation manifested on two different levels by the Renaissance and the Reformation. The Renaissance challenged the principle of authority by rejecting tradition and arbitrary rules; it asserted the right to freedom of thought and criticism. This movement toward freeing the mind marked the first step in fitting the general conception of the world to the new system; it was completed by the Reformation, which too constituted an effort toward spiritual freedom in the field, an essential one at that time, of religious conscience. In that field it reflected the political battle of the bourgeoisie against the feudal nobility.

The same movement of spiritual liberation was continued in rationalism, which added the concept of progress to the idea of freedom. This notion was conditioned by the continual advance of the capitalist system and formed the second step in adapting the general world view to the new way of life. In the name of reason rationalism, the philosophy of the rising bourgecisie, upheld and justified the revolutionary actions and economic, political and social aims of that class. It rejected the notion of an eternal and immutable pre-established order, criticized the existing state of things as irrational, and declared the necessity of changing the world in order to give it a content and a character in keeping with reason.

Since the incipient bourgeoisie was unable to realize its political and social aims, and the economic and scientific development of the time was inadequate to supply an organic explanation of the world as a total and as in process, early rationalism came to view liberty primarily from a spiritual point of view and to limit progress to spiritual progress, reducing the evolution of the world to the development of reason. It carried the Christian conception over to the philosophical plane, treating spiritual reality as the central factor and opposing mind to matter, man to nature. It tended to confine progress to man alone, while reducing human development to intellectual progress and moral improvement.

Meanwhile, however, as capitalism developed, instead of leaving progress in the status of a moral postulate, it gave it an economic and social basis and content. Correspondingly, rationalism became less exclusively spiritual, and evolved toward materialism, expressing in the ideological sphere the increasing role that concrete material reality was playing in the organization and development of human life.

This passage from the Renaissance and Reformation conception of a spiritual liberation to the rationalist conception of a rational progress in freedom, did not take place in a parallel and uniform way in the three countries that were at that time the most important in Europe: Germany, England and France; the reason for the differences was the different extent of their economic and social development. Germany was the slowest to develop. Ruined by the discovery of America and the Indies, which took away the trade which had made it and Italy prosperous and turned that trade over to the nations on the Atlantic seaboard; its revolutionary drive broken by the failure of the Peasants' War, which weakened the bourgeoisie and strengthened the nobility; and ravaged and split by the Thirty Years War and the Treaty of Westphalia: Germany was for almost 200 years in a backwater, removed from the great social and economic movements that transformed England and France.

The Germans, confined in a narrow way of life through which no new breath stirred, turned inward upon themselves to find in religion the essential nourishment of their spiritual life. This is seen in the paramount influence of the Reformation and in the slow progress made by rationalism, which appeared only in the attenuated form of the *Aufklärung*. This German Enlightenment, an application of rationalist thought to religious conceptions, was but a pale reflection of English and French rationalism, which expressed the more rapid development of the new productive system there.

England was the first country where the new system took deep root. There the bourgeoisie gained access to power by means of a compromise with the monarchy and the nobility. Rationalism took on a quasi-conservative cast there, and tended to justify immediate concrete reality,

together with the bourgeois socio-economic organization. Instead of contrasting mind and matter, and setting man against nature, English rationalism undertook to show the ties that bind man to the environment he lives in; it evolved more quickly from spiritualism to materialism, and took the form of empiricism and sensualism.

In France the new economic system developed less rapidly. The bourgeoisie were unable to attain power at once, as in England, and supported the monarchy against the nobility. At first rationalism did not express the bourgeoisie's aims on a concrete level, as in England, but more abstractly and theoretically, in an ideological way, expressed the change that was taking place in the economic and social organization, and showed how progress is attained in the course of history by the operation of reason. It gave progress an essentially spiritual character; it gave man the function of rising by means of greater knowledge and higher morality to a stage of perfection in which the individual merges in all of humanity. French rationalism thus ended in the abstract notion of a universal human type embodied in every individual.

However, in the 18th Century, under the influence of the rapid economic and technical development which was increasingly integrating men into the world, this first rationalist conception was supplanted by a new one which brought spiritual life closer to concrete reality. Rational progress was seen as determined not only by intellectual and moral development, but also by man's increasing mastery over nature. French rationalism, influenced by English empiricism and Cartesian mechanism, tended to abandon spiritualism and assume a materialist character in keeping with the bourgeoisie's need, in its fight for political power, to break free from spiritualism in order to fight the church, the chief support of monarchy and no-

bility. This materialism also stressed the increasing importance of concrete material reality in human life as a result of the constant development of production. It is in this context that the Encyclopedists, and in particular Diderot, La Mettrie, Helvetius and d'Holbach, no longer think of mind from the viewpoint of a soul contrasted to matter, but as integrated by perception and action into all of reality. They sought to show the relationship between the progress of industry and that of reason by stressing the role of scientific and technical development in historical evolution.

Rationalism, however, remained essentially dualistic, and whether in its materialistic or its spiritualistic form opposed mind to matter and man to nature. Materialist rationalism sees essential reality in matter rather than in spirit; instead of subordinating nature to man, it subordinates man to nature and arrives at a mechanistic, deterministic view of the world.

And yet the new system of production, as it developed, was integrating men more and more into the world, bringing them closer together in their economic and social activity; it was inevitable that it should thereby transform the dualism of mind and matter, man and the external world, individual and society, into an organic conception of man as integrated into the world in all its richness and unity.

The pre-socialist attempts to go beyond individualism and eliminate the opposition between individual and community failed, however. They transposed the economic and social problems of the time to an abstract ideological plane and offered merely utopian solutions to them.

In the middle of the 18th Century Rousseau and Kant made attempts at a closer correlation between man and his natural and social milieu.

### *Rousseau*

Rousseau's work depends on the two opposed tendencies of the capitalist social order: the tendency to integrate man into his milieu, which arises out of the development of production, and the tendency toward individualism, which arises out of competition and profit-seeking. In his desire to go beyond individualism, Rousseau integrated the individual into an imaginary environment, first an idealized nature and then an idealized society.

He started with an individualistic and atomistic view of man. By an ideological transposition of the struggle the bourgeoisie was then waging against feudal society, he pitted the individual against society, which he condemned as artificial, although actually it is man's natural milieu. In its place he set an idealized primordial nature, endowed with all the purity of its divine creation and adapted by a pre-established harmony to all men's needs and desires. In this idealized nature the opposition between individual and society disappears; man enters into communion with every being and all things, freely integrates himself into his environment and there freely unfolds.

False and utopian as this conception was, it made it possible, at least in principle, to ge beyond individualism and dualism. It is no doubt this attempt to integrate man fully into his environment that accounts for the tremendous immediate repercussion of Rousseau's work.

In the *Social Contract* he went beyond this rather ingenuous notion. No longer associating the individual with the life of nature but rather with the development of society, he undertook to prove that man, in order to pass from the animal stage, where he is dominated by instinct, to the stage of morality, where he lives by reason, must adapt his particular existence to collective life, that is, the

life of society. Society is now thought of not as a means of oppression, but as an organism born of spontaneous agreement between free and equal men; it is their natural milieu.

The effect of Rousseau's first conception of man's integration into his environment appeared in such day-dreams of a return to the state of nature as we see in Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie;* the influence of the *Social Contract* was to be seen in the attempts at social rejuvenation which the great revolutionists of 1789 made in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity. These revolutionists, especially Robespierre and Saint-Just, spoke for the rising bourgeoisie by accenting the principle of liberty. Like Rousseau, however, these men wanted to go beyond so egotistic an individualism and subordinate the individual to the state; but they maintained and defended the essential principle of bourgeois society, private property and profit, which are the real basis of individualism, and hence they could avoid individualism only in a utopian way by integrating the individual into an imaginary state inspired by an idealization of the ancient city-state. After their downfall the Directory replaced their pipe-dream by a form of state better suited to the needs and interests of capitalism.

### *Kant*

A similar effort to integrate man into his natural and social milieu was made in Germany, parallel to Rousseau: first by Kant, and after him by Goethe and the romantic idealist philosophy. Despite Germany's economic and social backwardness, the German thinkers, who took an active part in the general movement of ideas in Europe, went through a development parallel to that in France, toward a unitary and total conception of the world. In

Germany however this conception did not correspond to economic and social realities, and became more abstract in these thinkers, who understandably tended to give an ideological solution to the problems which the English and French had to face on the level of concrete actuality.

The abstractness of their explanation of the world is seen clearly in the first of them, Kant, who falls even further short of a positive solution than does Rousseau. In him the idea of totality does not get past the phase of pure form, and this formalism prevents him from effectively overcoming dualism either in the field of knowledge or of action.

For Kant human activity is primarily spiritual, and concrete reality is limited to the essentially inaccessible thing-in-itself. In contrast to the thing-in-itself is the phenomenal world, subject to the *a priori* forms of knowledge. Man's integration into his environment, his union with the external world, is limited to the forms which mind imposes on objective reality.

The same formal sort of integration is seen in the realm of the moral consciousness, practical activity. Man's actions are not ruled by the facts of life but are subject to absolute duty, a categorical imperative; they are determined *a priori* by a purely formal law.

Yet despite this formalism, which severs objective reality from knowledge and leaves a basic dualism between the world of causality and the world of liberty, each frozen in its ideality and impermeable to the other, Kant's work already contains elements of a monistic and organic world view. The application of the *a priori* forms of knowledge to the external world requires a pre-established adaptation of the world to those forms; the primacy of the moral conscience or practical reason implies the subordination of the world of causality to the world of liberty.

These two conditions made it possible to present society and nature somehow as organisms evolving toward liberty. Actually, Kant's philosophy of history declared that an unceasing progress of mankind toward freedom arises out of the interplay of human passions, and his *Critique of Judgment* pointed out how nature rises to liberty through art, which is its symbol.

*Chapter II*

# ROMANTICISM

GERMAN romantic idealist philosophy rejected both dualistic rationalism and Kant's formalism, and arrived at an organic and vitalist conception of the world by extending the mystical notion of union in God to all nature, and superposing it on the philosophy of Spinoza, who saw mind and the external world as two manifestations of the divine, differing in form but alike in essence.

## *Goethe*

This idealist philosophy started from Goethe, who made Spinozism dynamic and assimilated the revelation of God to the profound effect of nature on man. Man must enter into nature to participate in the universal life which animates the world. As Goethe argued in *Werther,* this integration takes place essentially by means of intuition and sentiment, but it is also brought about, and in an even deeper way, through action. The decisive role of action in human life appears in Faust's remarkable commentary on the opening phrase of the Gospel according to St. John, "In the beginning was the Word," in which "Word" means successively mind, force, and finally action.

This new organic and vitalist world view of Goethe's opened the road for romanticism's efforts to realize the dynamic unity of spirit and matter, of man and the world, by reducing essential reality to spirit.

## *Romantic Idealist Philosophy*

The German romantic philosophers, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, added to Goethe's pantheistic notion of the

organic unity of man and nature the notions of development and progress, which rationalism had tended to confine to man's spiritual and moral activity, and which they extended to all beings and things. Their new conception no longer regarded the world as an ensemble of externally controlled things functioning as a mechanism, but as the manifestation of a single life animating all beings, as an immense organism eternally evolving by its intrinsic forces and laws.

These philosophers were deeply imbued with Christian thought, and had inherited rationalism's faith in the primacy and omnipotence of the mind. It was natural that they should think of man's integration into the world as performed by the mind, and should subordinate all reality and activity to spiritual activity, reducing world evolution to the evolution of spirit.

In this they were followers of Kant, who had held that the spirit is integrated into reality by imposing its forms on it. This purely formal unity leaves the basic dualism of matter and spirit untouched. The romantic philosophers held that reason can penetrate the world and determine its development only if spirit constitutes the very essence of what is real. They abolished the thing-in-itself, which left concrete reality an existence independent of the thinking subject, and postulated that the universe is spiritual in essence. Where Kant had denied that mind could create concrete reality, since the objective existence of a being or thing can not be deduced from the simple idea of it, these thinkers reduced all reality to mind, and held that mind not only penetrates what is real, but creates what is essential in it.

Mind thus constitutes not merely the instrument of knowledge but the creative and directing element of the world, which is but its mutable expression. What is more,

mind becomes subject and object at once: reality is the same thing as knowledge, in which the subject who knows and the object that is known merge; the movement of reality is explained by the self-determination of mind, the logical development of ideas.

The efforts of these philosophers to show how spirit begets and directs the world brought them to a first notion of evolution, as a middle term between the static and the dynamic conceptions of the world.

The idea that change has its basis in things themselves was foreign to them. Instead, they gave a transcendental explanation of change, attributing it to a first principle superior to the world but immanent in it as its cause and purpose, its origin and goal. They made God an absolute self-existent spirit who creates the world by externalizing what he potentially contains, by alienating into it his own substance, which he progressively re-assumes into himself by penetrating and spiritualizing the world.

Their first principle thus finds itself what it originally was in potentiality; that is, evolution for these philosophers tended to turn into a sort of involution, of return to self, which links their systems more or less to the old static conception of the world.[1]

The goal of this evolution is liberty, which these philosophers saw as the manifestation of divinity in the world. The primacy ascribed to liberty was implicit in their systems which, as they postulated the determination of reality by the spirit, could not but assign as the essence of spirit, liberty, that is an unbounded possibility of rationally transforming the world.

The primacy of liberty corresponded to at least their initial political and social views. For, just as these philosophers' conception of the world as process reflected the essential features of the new economic system by stressing

the notions of change, development and progress, so by setting the realization of freedom as the goal of history they expressed the tendencies of the bourgeoisie, who appealed to the principle of liberty in the domains of economics, politics and society.

In setting liberty as the end-point of world history these philosophers were inspired by the French Revolution which they considered, at least in its early stages, as the triumph of truth and reason. It seemed to them to signify the rational transformation of the world, in two ways: 1) as a result of the will of men in effectual action, it went beyond the immediate reality, the old economic and social order, and 2) it went beyond the egotistic individuality of man by exalting the national ideal, which led man to subordinate his private interests to the public interest, to put aside egotism for a higher, nobler way of life.

The integration of the individual into the nation and the state had raised concrete social, economic and political problems, which they now transformed into problems of philosophy. They transferred action to the level of thought, convinced as they were that by reason of the correlation between the development of material reality and that of spiritual reality, it is possible to act on the world and transform it by mere force of thinking.[2]

Despite their idealism, these systems expressed the basic trends of the new bourgeois social order and marked an essential stage in the transition from the metaphysical conception of the world to a historical and dialectical one.

Three essential notions appeared in this philosophy:

a) Concrete reality is the creation of the thinking subject, which is inseparable from it. By setting up a unity and interdependence of mind and matter, of man and his milieu, this notion implied the necessity of considering

ideas, facts, beings and things no longer metaphysically, in themselves, but dialectically in their reciprocal relations, and as process.

b) This led to the replacement of the idea of transcendence, which postulates a first principle outside reality, by the idea of immanence, which makes reality its own *raison d'être*. The primacy of the idea of immanence in these systems is seen from the fundamental importance they attach to historical process, which as it were puts the absolute back into things.

c) The essential element of the real does not lie where the static and metaphysical conception of the world asserted it to be, namely in identity, which denotes the cessation of all change and development, and freezes reality in the immutability of death, but rather in opposition and contradiction, which are the source of an unending transformation of ideas, beings and things, and hence are the source of life and process.

The merit of this conception of the historical and dialectical evolution of the world was that it enabled the romantic philosophy to solve, at least on the plane of idealism, the hitherto insoluble problem of the organic union of thought and being, of man and the external world, by showing how the world develops as a living totality. Its weakness, which it shared with all idealist doctrines, was that by reducing all reality to spirit and by making all things and beings the handiwork of spiritual activity, it replaced the concrete world by an imaginary one.

The idealist philosophical systems were marked by a growing tendency toward realism, and came to accord the world, which they had originally thought of as a mere outcropping of spirit, a more and more objective and concrete reality. In going from Fichte to Hegel we go

from an absolute idealism, which denied the external world any objective reality, to a more realistic idealism that strove to integrate the spirit into a world that keeps its concrete character.

### *Fichte and Schelling*

In dealing with the evolution of the world, Fichte, voicing the revolutionary hopes of the period, had in mind essentially the goals to be achieved. He stressed, not an outworn past nor an unchangeable present, but the future that it is their function to prepare. In the absence of a progressive bourgeoisie in Germany, Fichte reduced revolutionary action to the activity of reason as the moral will. As utopians do, he contrasted present reality and the ideal it is to embody, what is and what should be. He cancelled the external world as such, reducing it to the non-Ego, to a creation, expression and instrument of the thinking subject, the Ego.

The evolution of the world was reduced to knowledge, in which, Fichte held, the object that is known and the subject that knows merge. He made the real the perpetual creation of the thinking subject, the Ego who constantly sets up a non-Ego against itself in order to define itself and raise itself by a dialectical process to an ever greater autonomy and an ever higher morality. This dialectical development determines the rational transformation of reality and at the same time the surpassing of the individual Ego, which gradually merges in the collective will represented by the State.

One of the consequences of this system is the notion that the spiritual Ego, the thinking subject, does not exist in and by itself as an abstract entity, and that it can only become aware of itself and develop by means of its relation with the non-Ego, the external world. Another con-

sequence is the idea that the action and reaction that arise out of the relations between Ego and non-Ego, between man and the external world, generate the dialectical development of history.

Nevertheless, this system gave only an illusory integration of man into the external world. Besides the general defect of idealistic doctrines, the abrogation of concrete reality as such, it had the special weakness of using the constant opposition of the Ego to the non-Ego in order to establish a dissociation and perpetual contradiction between human activity and the external world, between what should be and what is, between the ideal and the real.

The efforts of succeeding romantic philosophers, Schelling and Hegel, lay in the direction of giving more reality to the external world, while conserving the essentials of Fichte's system. Schelling's philosophy was a first step from absolute idealism, which reduces all reality to the thinking subject, toward a more objective idealism. In contrast to Fichte, he gave a reactionary rather than a revolutionary interpretation of the world's organic evolution, accenting the past rather than the future.

Schelling stressed the essential role of the origin or source in all development. In the name of the past he condemned not only any revolutionary movement but any idea of progress at all. In his eyes the essential element of the present lies in the past, toward which we must reascend to attain truth and freedom. This ideal past seemed to him to be incarnated in the Middle Ages, a time of high and strong spirituality, when the spirit entered effectually into all the elements of life and the world, and the union of spirit and matter found its definitive form in works of art, especially the cathedrals.

This general view of the world determined his entire

system, which, as compared to Fichte's, gave concrete reality more importance. It was also marked by a certain esthetic and contemplative trend, which reduced the role of action and of dialectics in the historical process.

Schelling rejected Fichte's opposition between the Ego and the non-Ego, which had led Fichte to do away with the concretely real as such. Schelling conceded a reality outside the Ego to nature and the external world, which he appreciated only to the extent that they were charged with spirituality; after the fashion of Spinoza and Goethe, he considered spirit and matter as two expressions of the divine, different in form but alike in essence.

Like all the romantics, he took for granted the primacy of the spirit, and, following Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, showed nature as rising gradually to spirit, which for its part penetrates nature and realizes itself there. In the work of art the world arrives at a totally undifferentiated state in which spirit is nature and nature spirit. His esthetics had a great effect on the romanticism of the counter-revolution.

*Chapter III*

# HEGEL

The work of Hegel expressed the hopes and interests of the German middle class, the bourgeoisie taking form at that time, which wished to free itself from the still dominant feudal regime, as the French bourgeoisie had done, but could not, and was compelled to come to terms with the survivals of the past.

Hegel rejected both Fichte's revolutionary tendencies and Schelling's reactionary ones. His own world view was conservative. He set himself to justify, not the future like Fichte, nor the past like Schelling, but the present. There he called a halt to the dialectical development of the world. He gave the present an absolute value, regarding it as the necessary and perfect result of rational evolution. In his desire to justify the present Hegel tried to make romantic idealism more concrete by showing that mind actually exists only to the extent that it participates in objective reality.

This idea was suggested to him by the French Revolution and English economic development, striking examples of the power of the human mind to transform reality and give it a rational character. In France and England rational activity was bound up with concrete life, with economic, political and social organization, whereas in backward Germany Hegel had to consider activity essentially from the spiritual point of view; like the 18th-century rationalists, he reduced it to a development of knowledge, an elaboration of concepts.

### *The Main Outlines of the Hegelian System*

Hegel failed to understand reality as the object of man's practical, concrete activity, and thus he did not get at the efficient cause of the world's transformation. He remained essentially an idealist. He considered the real as the object of spiritual activity, and his chief concern was to show how concrete reality is effectively one with its spiritual representation, how the development of spirit not merely expresses but determines the evolution of the world.

In order to establish the identity of material and spiritual reality, Hegel diligently divested concrete reality of the substance proper to it, which he transferred, at least in its essentials, to spirit, making it thus the expression of the spiritual element in which it finds its *raison d'être,* and its truth. In Hegel, as in Fichte, concrete reality becomes the creation of the thinking subject, the objectivization of the spirit; but where Fichte, in his desire to make the world over, had made it the work of an absolute will that no determinate reality can satisfy, Hegel derived the development of the world not from will but from a form of reason higher than individual subjective reason—objective reason, which combines in itself spirit and being, and is at once both subject and object.

Hegel endeavored to show how this union is realized in the course of history by a progressive integration of spirit into the world; actually, in his system the movement of reason is a figure of speech for the progressive rationalization of the world that has been effected by the long effort of mankind all through history.

His conception of the determination of the real by the activity of spirit derives from the Christian notion of the creation. For Hegel, God is the Spirit of the World, the absolute Idea who creates all reality by externalizing

or alienating his substance; conceiving this act of creation mystically as a return from separation to primordial union, Hegel showed how the absolute Idea, after externalizing its substance in the world, reassumes it progressively into itself and so arrives at full self-consciousness.

Since Hegel's aim was in essence to justify present reality, he stressed not so much the fundamental opposition between God and the world, between spirit and concrete reality, as their deep-seated union, symbolized in his eyes by the figure of Christ. The pessimistic view of the world, characterized by the "unhappy" or "contrite" consciousness *(ungliickliches Bewusstsein),* withdraws from present reality to a vanished past or an illusory future; against this view Hegel pitted the optimistic vision of a union in God in the present reality. This union in God, which Hegel transposed to the philosophical level in the form of the union of the rational and the real, is not serene and immediate, but makes itself known by the progressive rationalization of the real, which is the fruit of men's travail all through the ages.

This reconciliation by sorrow and effort, without which there is no profound life, and of which the figure of Christ is a symbol, constitutes the root idea of Hegel's system. He applied this conception of opposition followed by union to the entire life of the spirit, which only succeeds in making the real rational by overcoming the oppositions constantly engendered by the development of the real.[1]

The identity of the real and the rational that originally obtained in the absolute idea is broken by reason of the externalization of the rational in a reality that at first seems alien to it. Thereafter the identity is progressively restored by the activity of the spirit, which eliminates the irrational elements from the real and brings it increasingly to surpass itself and take on forms and a content more

and more adequate to reason. The progressive union of spirit and being that is determined by this rationalization of the world is accomplished in the form of concrete ideas or concepts, which are not mere representations which man makes of objects and beings, but constitute reality itself in its most essential aspect.

Since the material and the spiritual elements merge in the concept, the concrete idea, Hegel, assimilating the role of the concept to that of Christ, made it the necessary bond, the intermediary, the middle term between man and the external world. In this way he effected the synthesis between spiritual and material realities, and asserted that spirit effectively contains the very essence of things and governs their evolution.

Once the world has thus been integrated into the spirit, whose substance it is, the idea, which is indissolubly bound to the real, has value only if it is concrete, loaded as it were with the reality it represents. The movement of the idea is not determined by subjective consciousness, contrasted to its object, but by objective spirit, which is subject and object at once.

Now the realization of this idea does not take place in abstract thought and pure logic, but is linked to the general evolution of the world, the process of history. Hence the twofold character, logical and historical, of the development of the spirit according to Hegel; and hence the central importance of history, in which the identity of subject and object is achieved by the union of thought in action and the concrete fact. This association of logic and history is characteristic of Hegel's system.

Since the development of the idea is linked with that of being, which finds its true reality in the idea, and since therefore the rational must coincide with the real, Hegel rejected dogmatism, which speculates apart from the

facts; abstractness, which takes no account of concrete reality; and empiricism, which by not departing from concrete reality misses its essential aspect, its spiritual character.[2] He condemned dogmatism, which separates thought from reality and thereby makes it impotent and sterile; he rejected all utopian doctrines that subject reality to an arbitrary idea based on an abstract principle;[3] since it is vain to seek an ideal outside of present reality, he assigned the philosopher the task of understanding the real as the expression of reason.[4]

In rejecting dogmatism and abstraction, Hegel conceded that empiricism has the great merit of devoting itself to the study of concrete reality, which is the only way of access to the truth;[5] yet pure and simple knowledge of the world was not enough for him. The real is valid, he held, only in so far as it is an expression and product of the spirit,[6] and he blamed empiricism for not rising above the immediate data of concrete reality and for getting lost in the infinite mass of facts and things, instead of picking out their spiritual essence.

For essential reality, the reality in which spirit is embodied, was in Hegel's eyes equally remote from abstraction, which is devoid of real content, and from immediate reality, which is accidental and contingent. Essential reality is bound up with the development of the idea, whose substance it is; it is both rational and necessary. It is only this essential reality that is worth knowing, for it alone embodies reason.[7] Hegel therefore disregarded those elements of the real that are not related to its rational concatenation, *viz.*, the contingent and the accidental. Out of the ensemble of facts, beings and things he retains only those that express an aspect of the idea and do the work of reason.[8]

Since concrete reality essentially finds both its form and

its substance in spirit, real necessities are one with logical necessities. Therefore the laws of the spirit apply to the external world, and logic, i.e., the movement of ideas, becomes the creator of the real, whose development is now deducible merely by the operation of thought.[9] The conception of the idea realizing its essence in the world ends up in a panlogism in which Hegel explains evolution by the unfolding of what the idea virtually contains; he subordinates the march of history to the march of logic; the sequence of events in time is determined by their rational order.[10]

In this scheme the development of the world is subordinate to the end it is to embody. Evolution becomes dogmatic and utopian; it is determined *a priori* by the fundamental identity between its principle and its goal, and by reason of this identity becomes a sort of involution or return into itself, with progress merely illusory.

The movement of the idea, which includes spirit and being, is determined by concrete reason. Abstract reason functions analytically and can dissociate but not construct, while concrete reason functions synthetically, grasps all reality in both its identity and its diversity, in its unity and its multiplicity, sharpens the contradictions and oppositions within the real, and provokes a continual development, a constant progression of the world.[11] The concrete reason gives rise to a new dynamic logic, dialectics. The old logic corresponded to a static conception of the world. It considered beings and things in the light of eternity and immutability, and proposed essentially to fix them in their identity by excluding contraries. Dialectics however rejects the principle of identity, which implies isolation and the cessation of all development and can therefore explain neither the bonds which unite the various elements of the real nor their transformation.

Dialectics considers these elements as in change and process and shows how instead of merely including or excluding each other, as the old logic would have it, they reciprocally imply each other and have the origin of their transformation in their interrelation.

The old logic operated on a spatial plane of inclusion or exclusion designed to establish the identity of beings and things by the elimination of contraries; dialectics is based on the notion of time, which enables it to explain change, development, becoming; and when it applies the notion of space to the notion of time, it gives that notion a dynamic character, not a static one like the old logic. Kant had admitted that change is not conceivable in space but is so in time, where a single being can pass through different and even contradictory states. This simple succession is not enough for Hegel, for it conserves identity and immutability at a given instant, something contrary to the very notion of becoming, which implies a continuous change.

Hegel considers beings and things in their ceaseless transformation; the oppositions and contradictions that are inherent in living reality are at the heart of every spiritual or material reality, idea, fact, being or thing; the contradictory elements, far from being mutually exclusive, as the old logic had it, condition each other reciprocally and their transformation determines the evolution of the real.

Every one of the antithetical contradictory elements that co-exist in every real thing is real and rational, since it expresses a moment or aspect of the idea or being; but (and this is one of the fundamental points of Hegel's dialectic) from the point of view of process or becoming, it is the contradictory term, the negative element, that is the essential.[12] Far from being purely negative and dis-

solving into nothing, as static logic holds, negation or contradiction becomes determinate in character and content when it is the negation of a determinate element of reality; and by the change it determines, becomes the living source of process.[13]

In dialectics the values of the old logic are reversed. Identity, which was there the positive, fundamental element, is in dialectics the sign of arrested development, of stagnation and death; it is a negative element. Negation or contradiction, to which static logic assigned only a negative role, takes on an essentially positive value, becoming the active or fertile element without which there is no development and no life. The positive character of the antithesis, the non-Ego, had already been seen by Fichte; but in his system, where the will is the soul of reality, the non-Ego played a passive rather than an active role, being merely the instrument which the Ego creates in order to define and develop itself. In Hegel negation becomes the positive element, the moving force that asserts itself in the form of opposition and criticism against everything that endeavors to persist in its identity.[14]

Out of contradiction, negation, the antithesis, conceived of as the element that causes reality to change, there flows the character of the Hegelian synthesis. Hegel rejected the solution given by the old logic, the exclusion of contraries, which impoverishes reality and does not allow it to develop; he showed instead how contraries unite to realize a higher unity. This union can not be the result of a compromise or accommodation between the contraries that would mask the necessary and vital antagonisms and, by blunting the oppositions and contradictions, would end in a stagnation of reality. On the contrary, this union is the outcome of an exacerbation of the antagonisms between the contradictory elements to the

point where they can no longer co-exist. In the course of the resulting crisis the contrary elements, thesis and antithesis, are abrogated as such and reabsorbed into a higher and qualitatively different unity, the synthesis.

It is in this dialectic process, where contraries are transformed and unite in syntheses within which new contradictions appear, to be reabsorbed in turn into new syntheses, that there appears the development of spirit, which in its effort to go beyond the incessantly reborn contradictions progresses from notion to notion, from concept to concept, each one uniting in itself a new stage of reality, material and spiritual.[15] This general conception is Hegel's starting point for his tremendous attempt to reconstruct and explain reality, reduced to concepts, and to show how it follows a rational path in its development and expresses the very movement of spirit.

### *The Phenomenology of Spirit*

Before dealing with objective reality and human society, Hegel analyzes the development of the forms of consciousness and thought, a development that determines the evolution of the world. First he undertakes to show, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, how mind gradually grows to self-consciousness by enacting the whole series of its forms, from empirical consciousness, which corresponds to sense experience, up to absolute spirit, which expresses perfect truth.

Since spirit does not exist in itself, independent of concrete reality, which constitutes its substance, Hegel studies it in its relations with the external world and shows the transformation of those relations between consciousness and the object. Hence the fundamental problems of philosophy, concerning the nature of subject and object, of consciousness and the world, are not conceived as abstract

and merely philosophical, but as problems affecting all of human life. In studying them Hegel abandons the metaphysical point of view for a historical and dialectical one, in order to express the relation between man and the world.

But since the development of concrete history reduces to the evolution of the spirit, by reason of the integration of the real into the concept, Hegel transforms individuals and the external world into conciousness and objects of consciousness, and their interrelations into different attitudes that consciousness takes toward its object.

At first the object, the external world, appears to have a reality independent of consciousness; knowledge takes the form of sensory certitude, and consciousness, the subject of knowledge, still entangled in the real, appears as empirical awareness. However, consciousness progressively takes possession of concrete reality, in correspondence historically to man's ever greater mastery of nature, thanks to reason; in the process the thinking subject realizes that its object is not independent of it and that the external world only exists, really, because of the subject's power of understanding, which constitutes true reality.

To get free of the grip of the external world and recognize in it his own reality, man must convert the object into his creation, a thing of his own, whose evolution coincides with the development of consciousness; the high points of history, which mark man's progressive emancipation, correspond to the successive modes of consciousness freeing itself from servitude to the world, and attaining liberty. In this liberating process consciousness, which at first was one with sense experience, breaks free from it by an act of reflection on itself, changing from empirical consciousness to self-consciousness.

Sense experience limits itself to immediate reality and

considers the world as a totality of objects independent of the thinking subject. Self-consciousness goes further, however. It recognizes itself in objective reality and thus arrives at the notion that behind the appearances there is no object independent of the thinking subject, which actually constitutes the true essence of the sensible world. With this step self-consciousness gets free from immediate reality and objective experience and realizes that the world is but the realization of spirit. This realization is effected by work, whose product is not a dead thing, but the very expression and making manifest of the human essence.

Hegel goes on to analyze the nature, role and effects of work. Its essential traits are those of the capitalist system of production and may be summed up as follows: progressive transformation of the world by human activity, which increasingly integrates man into the objective reality which he progressively humanizes by adapting it to his needs; increasingly closer association of individuals in the mode of production, which takes on a collective character and rouses feelings of solidarity in men; contradiction between a collective mode of production and an individualistic mode of appropriation that sets men against each other and hinders both their integration into society and the development of this feeling of solidarity.

Hegel's analysis of work gives an ideological interpretation of its nature and effects under the capitalist system. Thus he presents the essential effect of human activity, which enables man to dominate the world and transform it, as domination by consciousness of the object, in which it realizes its essence. He gives an equally ideological rendering of the collective character of work and its joining of men in the performance of common tasks; in his version man can only realize his essence through other men, and his veritable existence is to exist for others.

Again, he gives an ideological interpretation of the way in which human solidarity is broken in present society because of the quest for profit, which sets the individual's interests against those of the public. In his analysis of the relations between master and servant,[16] Hegel emphasizes not only this basic opposition but the general unfreedom produced by the power of money under capitalism. He would like to go beyond this opposition, but since he defends the private property society which engenders it, he can go beyond it only in a utopian way.

His argument is that work, which divides men by the social inequalities that it creates among them, also makes possible the integration of the individual and the community, by overcoming individualism and egotism. Instead of tying this integration up with the actual transformation of the mode of production as socialists do, he reduces the process of social change to a change of consciousness which, by rising to self-consciousness, gives the individual the feeling that his true essence is to exist for other people.

The working world is divided into two spheres: that of the servant and that of the master. The essential role of the servant is to create objects that belong to others. Since he cannot exist apart from these objects, he is dependent on the man who possesses them, and his real nature consists in this servitude. However, insofar as he is aware that by his work he helps keep the world going, he frees himself from this servitude and becomes conscious of himself, in the idea that his true essence is to exist for others. Thereafter he recognizes himself in the things he creates; and the products of his labor, embodying his consciousness in an external form, no longer appear to him as foreign bodies that enslave him, but as ways in which his being fulfills itself.

The master arrives at consciousness of self by an inverse

process. Unlike the servant, he feels himself independent of the objects which are at his disposal without his having had to create them or alienate part of his essence into them. But in treating these objects as his property he makes them a part of himself and thereby renders himself dependent on the being who makes them for him, on his servant that is, and thus, like the servant, he comes to the awareness that his true nature consists in being for others.

As master and servant both come to be aware of their true being in the product of labor, in the object, the initial difference between subject and object that gave rise to the opposition of master and servant disappears; and to both the object appears, no longer as something external or foreign, but as the objectivization of their own consciousness, and that consciousness constitutes the true substance of the object.

This identification of consciousness and substance, of subject and object, raises consciousness from self-consciousness to a third stage, the stage of reason. Reason does not become self-conscious by opposition to the world, but in the product of its activity; by recognizing that reality is identical with its own nature, reason realizes that it constitutes true substance, the very essence of the world.

At this point consciousness, recognizing itself in the reality it creates, merges with the knowledge in which the concrete world appears as the realization or objectivization of the thinking subject; and the object itself only reaches its true reality by taking the form of the concept, by becoming the expression of the development of consciousness. This identification of consciousness and objective reality takes place in the spirit, which knows itself as the principle and essence of the real which it encompasses in all its determinations as so many moments or aspects of itself.

When Hegel thus made the real the product of the activity of consciousness, and stressed the domination of the consciousness over the object, he was actually translating to the ideological plane man's actual activity, which drives man on to dominate the external world. At the same time Hegel emphasized the essential and contradictory effects of this activity in a capitalist system. A first effect is that man becomes more and more deeply a part of the world by means of the productive process; Hegel expressed this integration by saying that the thinking subject, consciousness conceived as creative activity, constitutes the substance of the object. Along with this integration, Hegel showed the ever-closer bonds of solidarity among men, bonds which lead them to subordinate individual interest to the general interest; he expressed this by saying that the subject, consciousness of self, has its true essence in others. Finally, he analyzed the opposition between men that arises out of the system of private property and the world of individualistic appropriation, an opposition whose effects he had emphasized in studying the relations between master and servant.

Hegel pointed out the servitude that arises under capitalism out of the individual's subordination to the product of his activity, to the object of his work, by virtue of the alienation of his own essence to that object; he showed the need of enfranchisement from that servitude by breaking the mastery of the object over the subject. But since he did not want to annul private property, which he held to be the basis of the human personality, he could only effect the emancipation of the subject from the domination of the object in a utopian manner. The phenomenon of alienation, which is determined by the system of private property and the resultant servitude, raises a social and economic problem, which he transforms into a problem of the relations between consciousness and

its object. At his hands, man's liberation from the servitude that makes the very object of his labor lie on him as a burden is reduced to the rise of consciousness to a higher plane on which it recognizes itself in its object.

### *Logic*

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel had shown the historical and logical evolution of the forms of consciousness in its relation with the object, and had reduced the latter to the concept, by identifying consciousness and substance. In the *Logic* he went on to describe the evolution of the spirit and show the world of ideas and concepts in their development.

In its relations with the concretely real and empirical consciousness, it will be remembered, becomes self-consciousness, and then reason. By an analogous evolution the concept, which originally exists in itself, in the form of Being, becomes subject, in the form of essence, by an act of reflexion that contrasts it to what is other than itself; and finally the concept becomes idea by becoming aware that in it subject and object are one.

At the outset the concept is immersed indistinguishably in unconscious nature; it is merged with immediate Being. Like the empirical consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit,* it is subject to the influence of the world instead of determining it. Next, Being contrasts itself to immediate reality, in which it had hitherto been merged. It gradually becomes aware of its own true nature, or essence, and makes its determinations so many aspects of its realization.

Having become essence, Being is thus transformed into a subject and from this point on is swept along in a continuous evolution, in the course of which it is led, in order to realize its true nature, to deny any particular mode of

existence, for each mode, by being determinate and definite, constitutes an obstacle to its development. The contradiction between its essence and its particular conditions of existence are manifested in the form of the Should-be, which brings it, by going beyond every determinate mode of existence, to realize all the possibilities it contains.

In this continuous surpassing of immediate reality to attain essential reality, the unity of Being does not appear in a stable, rigid, fixed form, but in its changeableness, as a process of differentiation and unification in which it is enriched by everything it takes up.

This process is incompatible with static logic, which it rejects and replaces by dialectics, a new logic that denies absolute value to immediate reality, but tends instead to transform it and adapt it to its essence.

The fundamental element of dialectics, which is the general law of life, is negation or contradiction, which drives every being to go beyond its determinate mode of existence and arrive at a new mode of existence in which it realizes its essence, in the course of a process in which the possibilities it contains come to light.

The negative principle which thus brings Being constantly to deny its phenomenal forms in order to attain its essence and realize its true content, does not have, as in Fichte, the character of an indeterminate Should-be. Negation, as negation of a particular content, has a positive, determinate character; and so does the negation of negation, which is the overcoming of this opposition, and by means of which Being realizes its essence.

The evolution of the concept does not end with essence. The contradiction between the concept and the real disappears when the concept becomes aware that it constitutes the very substance of things, and in this way frees

itself from reality considered as a thing alien to the thinking subject.

At this point the essence changes into the idea, in which the concept becomes aware of its entire reality, both subjective and objective, and identifies itself with the real as a totality. The passage from essence to idea implies going beyond immediate reality considered as a thing, which is transformed into rational truth, at once subjective and objective, made real in the concept. The activity of the thinking subject, in which the very substance of the real is expressed, becomes a part of the movement of the idea, which realizes within itself the identity of the subject and the object, in the process of conceiving all reality as its own substance.

In the *Logic,* as in the *Phenomenology of Spirit,* Hegel seeks to overcome the contradictions that stand in the way of man's complete integration into the world and his rational mastery of the real. Hegel regards society founded on private property as the necessary and rational mode of economic and social organization; he tries to overcome the contradictions of capitalism on the plane of these same contradictions. He proposes to bring about absolute freedom and perfect reason, not by changing men's living conditions, but by shifting human activity to the realm of thought or the idea, which is said to contain all of reality and have no object other than itself, and so to be completely free and easily victorious over the contradictions of reality.

Since practical activity is reduced to knowledge, existence is considered essentially in its spiritual aspect, purified of all material immediate reality, and sublimated into concepts. From this point, the idea, which combines within itself thought and being, subject and object, be-

comes the sole reality. It creates itself by the development of its own substance and turns into God, the creative World Spirit.

Having made a theology out of the *Logic*, Hegel undertakes to show how this act of creation takes place. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the *Logic* he had described the more or less theoretical evolution of spirit up to the moment when it becomes perfect reason and absolute idea. Now he goes on to show how the absolute idea first manifests itself in rudimentary form in nature, which appears as its antithesis; how it then manifests itself more or less perfectly in history, in which it gradually works free from objective reality, regarding the latter as an expression of its own substance; and how finally the absolute idea reaches its highest embodiment in art, religion and philosophy, its end-point being the Hegelian philosophy, which encompasses the world as a rational totality in which the identity of subject and object, of thought and being, is realized.

In this immense effort to turn the entire world into the progressive realization of the absolute idea, Hegel reduced facts and things to concepts. This enabled him to show how their development follows a rational course and expresses the movement of spirit. This procedure however can not be uniformly applied everywhere, and its application proves to be more and more difficult the further we get from the sphere of pure thought. There it might be relatively easy to establish a rational concatenation and dialectical order among concepts; it is already harder to do so in history, where the contingent and the accidental play a greater part; and by the time we come to the realm of nature, this assimilation of the real to the rational can be carried out only by extremely arbitrary procedures.

### *The Philosophy of Nature*

Here is the explanation of the weakness and outlandishness of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*. Hegel rejected the scientific method, which eliminates the qualitative element of reality and keeps only the quantitative element, setting up measurements and thereby making mathematical reasoning possible. Hegel, on the philosophical and logical plane, tried to reduce the natural concatenation of phenomena to the dialectical evolution of concepts.

Since this reduction proved to be difficult, Hegel explained Nature's inability to realize the concept by the fact that nature is the alienation or externalization of the idea in the form of something other than itself, that nature is in a sense the negation of the idea, something which is seen in the large element of contingency and irrationality it contains.[17] Estranged from reason, nature is subject to chance and blind necessity; in it, change is mechanical (as in minerals), unconscious (as in plants) or instinctive (as in beasts), and does not proceed, as in human activity, from an act of the will aimed at making reality rational.[18]

However, since Hegel held that the real is rational in its essence, he asserted that nature, although it seems to be alien to the spirit, conforms in its essentials to reason, which is able to permeate it, at least by and large.[19] Without professing to deduce all of nature, he strove to establish a rational order and development within it, in order to show deductively everything essential it contained. To this end he started from the general data of the empirical sciences, whose role he saw as that of providing the raw materials of the speculative sciences. His effort was to set up a dialectical linkage among the phenomena, once brought to such a degree of generality that they could be reduced to concepts. In this way he planned to set up a logic of nature.

The reason for the replacement of mathematical explanation by this process of logical succession was that change, for Hegel, can only be explained by the movement of the concept; as a result his conception of evolution is diametrically opposite to the modern conception.[20]

### *The Philosophy of History*

Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* had described how the Idea manifests itself, still in a rudimentary way, in the physical and organic world. In the *Philosophy of History* he showed how the Idea realizes itself more and more completely in the course of human development, through the ever-closer union between thought in action and the real.

His initial postulate is that reason governs the world and determines its development.[21] Then he reduces history to the development of the absolute idea, culling from the totality of historical events the essential factors that mark the successive steps through which the spirit passes. History is thus inserted into the framework of the Hegelian logic, within which the course of history is but the reflection of the movement of the spirit. In history the spirit becomes what it intrinsically is: its essence, its own substance.[22] As a result of this reduction of historical evolution to a logical development, Hegel's *Philosophy of History* has a deductive and *a priori* character far removed from narrative history. Out of the huge mass of facts, the multitude of individuals and infinite succession of events, whose inordinate number merely obscures the march of history, Hegel retained only those that express a moment, an aspect and stage of the idea, and do the work of reason.[23]

This *a priori* conception of history as expression of the spirit's rational and hence necessary development brought

Hegel to regard the real sequence of events as secondary to their logical concatenation, and to subordinate their order in time to their logical succession. In this way he proceeded deductively to set up the general lines of historical development.

However, for Hegel the idea is inseparable from reality and has value only to the extent that it expresses reality. History is therefore not something abstract, not merely a spiritual evolution. On the contrary, Hegel's aim was the complete integration of the development of the great ideas: nation, liberty, democracy (which for him are the essential things in history), into the development of positive concrete historical reality. Moreover, his *a priori* deductive conception of history, which implies the elimination of the contingent and accidental, seems to be invalidated by his numerous declarations of the supreme value of the facts in themselves, and of the necessity for the historian to proceed empirically, not dogmatically.[24]

But these affirmations of the paramount importance of the real are much like those in which he stressed the attention to be given to the data of the empirical sciences. If the rational character of the march of history results from examination of the facts and is confirmed by them, the facts in themselves prove nothing, and only get their true meaning when they are interpreted and organized into a logical order by speculative philosophy. Since Hegel used the concrete data of history only in the measure that they show the movement of ideas, he twisted the facts towards the goal they should realize, erecting them into concepts in order to fit them into a logical development.

His conception of history as a logical development was based on the notion of progress that was common to all the rationalist philosophy, a notion that was the ideological expression of the rise of the bourgeoisie and justified

its coming to power as something inherent in the process of history. Hegel voiced the strivings of a bourgeoisie that was half-conservative, and not revolutionary like the French bourgeoisie of the 18th century, and hence his idea of progress is attenuated by his effort to justify existing reality, so that he attached overwhelming worth to what is real and dismissed as futile any attempt to go beyond it. That is the meaning of the celebrated aphorisms, "World history is the world's arbiter," and "The owl of Minerva begins its flight only at dusk." They signify, first, that the phases of historical development are their own justification and can not be judged and delimited *a priori* in terms of any abstract principle; and secondly, that since reason is linked to reality and progressively realizes itself in reality, the philosopher must confine himself to recording the work of reason and discovering its sense, without attempting to speculate as to the future.

The basic contradiction of the *Philosophy of History* is the contradiction between the infinite dialectical movement of the spirit, which determines historical evolution, and the cessation of that movement at the moment of writing, as seen in the apologetics for the Prussian state and the Christian religion, to both of which Hegel attributed absolute value.

Progress in history is determined by a first principle or transcendental subject, the absolute Spirit that by stages becomes aware in the world of its essence, which is freedom. This becoming aware is reflected in the development of humanity, which too gradually rises to consciousness of liberty, which it brings about in the course of history's great periods. Liberty gives human history its specific character. Unlike other beings, objects, plants, animals, which are blindly and passively influenced by their environments, man is a thinking being and as such

the active subject of his existence, which he freely determines; and it is this free activity that characterizes human history.[25]

Confusing the course of history with the path taken by the spirit enabled Hegel to attribute logical necessity to historical development and to equate the stages of human evolution to the stages of the spirit.[26] The idea of the evolution of humanity by stages had occurred before Hegel, in Kant and Herder; but their systems considered each stage separately and were thus semi-static, whereas Hegel tried to study historical evolution not only in its several stages by indicating the essential character of the stages, but in their motion by showing what determines the dialectical passage from one stage to another.

In this evolution Hegel attributed value and importance to individuals only in the measure that they are the instruments of higher purposes and incarnate a phase of absolute spirit. The role of great men like Alexander, Caesar or Napoleon is to be the executants, usually unconsciously so, of the world spirit. In furthering their individual interests, which bring them to overthrow the established order, they establish a new order and effect the truth of their epoch, by what Hegel calls a ruse of Reason, or a trick of History *(List der Vernunft);* they determine both the development of truth and the progress of history.

This progress is manifested essentially in the series of great historical peoples, each of whom represents a new height reached by the world-spirit, a new form given by it to liberty. The moment in which a great people realizes its mission is also the moment of its decline, for it determines the truth of its antithesis, that is, a new stage in the evolution of the world-spirit, which it is another people's task to realize.

This conception of history as a succession of great

peoples, each incarnating a stage of the world-spirit and a form of liberty, does not jibe with the facts, for the activity of a people is not limited to applying a single principle; and moreover, Hegel distributes the stages of historical evolution badly among the various peoples, whose development as a rule is not successive, but parallel, and of whom only a few reach full unfolding. By exaggerating the role of these favored few, Hegel makes history into one immense drama, with one people occupying the stage at a time, a drama in three acts by and large, each marked by a definite stage of the consciousness of freedom.

In the Oriental world, which is the first stage of the liberation of the spirit, and in which mankind rises from savagery and barbarism to reason, liberty, in the form of the rational will, is in the despot, who alone is free. In the Greco-Roman world, where spirit reaches greater self-consciousness, liberty is in the aristocracy, which alone is free. In the Germanic world, imbued with Christianity, spirit comes to full self-consciousness, and liberty is realized in all mankind.

The development of freedom in history is seen essentially in the transformation of the forms of the state, which is the incarnation of the world-spirit that is the active subject and decisive factor of historical process. Really, there is no history for Hegel outside of the state, and all previous social formations (savagery, barbarism) belong more to animal life, where spirit is absent, than to human life.[27] History begins with the formation of the state, which appears when individuals organize their relationships rationally. It was the French Revolution that inspired Hegel with so lofty a conception of the state and showed him the overwhelming role that it plays in the fate of a nation. This attitude was also in keeping with his conservative leanings.

The evolution of states is decided by a constantly re-

kindled conflict between reason and the irrational character assumed at a given moment by the existing political and social organization. This conflict provokes the destruction of the present form of the state and its replacement by a higher form. The goal of this evolution is found in the Prussian state, the rational state, in which the agreement of the will of the individuals and the general will makes it possible to unite individual freedom and authority, and to make voluntary subordination to the law the supreme principle of society. In Hegel's eyes this state was based on respect for law and order, and equally far from arbitrary power and revolutionary democracy, and was therefore the best guaranty of the general interests of humanity, which he identified with the essential interests of the bourgeoisie. Hegel considered this state the perfect incarnation of the world spirit, and with it he ended the march of history.

### *The Philosophy of Law*

This conception of the State as an incarnation of absolute spirit dominates Hegel's *Philosophy of Law,* in which he justified the state not so much historically as from the legal and moral point of view, and showed its relationships to individuals and to society.

For Hegel law, like history, is the expression of rational will, progressively realizing itself as freedom, and therefore its development, like that of history, has at once a logical and a historical character. He rejects the rationalistic view of law as something absolute, outside of history, derived from eternal and universally valid principles which apply to all societies and govern historical evolution. He reproaches rationalism too for taking an atomistic conception of society as its starting point; for considering the individual in man and not the social element; and for thus

subordinating law to the satisfaction of the desires and needs of individuals without considering the higher necessities of society and the state.

Hegel criticizes reactionary romanticism, but goes along with the romantics in agreeing that law must be linked to social reality and historical development, and that the individual must fit into the collectivity and subordinate himself to it. He refuses to follow the romantics in reducing law to customary law and thereby making it not rational but empirical; he will not go so far as to limit the subordination of the individual to the community to a passive submission to the forces and institutions of the past, which the romantics, for example K. von Haller, justified in the name of traditional, "positive" law.

Thus Hegel represents the desires of the German middle class and combats both revolutionary and traditional law. In theory he adopted the new principles of jurisprudence proclaimed by the French Revolution, but leaned more and more toward the counter-revolutionary tendency of the Holy Alliance. The total subordination of the individual to the absolute authority of the state is the fundamental principle of Hegel's *Philosophy of Law.*

In Hegel, the integration of man into the community takes place in an ideal state which differs from the actual state in not being the mirror and instrument of society but rather its antithesis, representing over against it the general interest and the collective life. The state in his *Philosophy of Law* is the final goal of law, whose evolution, like that of history, represents the progressive rationalization of the real through the realization of freedom.

He conceives freedom itself not from its subjective side as expression of the individual will, but as the freely consented subordination of the individual to the general principles of objective morality, of which the state is the

perfect expression. He assimilates the principle of freedom, the essential element of law, to the principle of private property, which he justifies legally and morally. The rational will out of which liberty arises tends of necessity, says Hegel, to appropriate its objects. This faculty of appropriation, the objective expression of liberty, is thus linked to property; but since property implies the exclusion of others, the mere fact of appropriation makes it *private* property. The rational will is founded on freedom of appropriation, and is the essential element of capitalism. The first form in which it appears is as individuality, personality, which is shown outwardly by the rights it acquires over things, that is by property attested by contracts and sanctioned by the laws. Personality is egotistical and its activity is essentially determined by individual interest.

However, contracts create obligations among men by recognizing the property of others; they go beyond individual interests to give rise to a new form of morality, no longer subjective but objective; and so a higher stage of law arises. This objective morality is incarnated in the family, society, and the state.

The development of objective morality is not the result of the natural development of mankind, but is determined by the evolution of the spirit, as are the development of nature and of history. The spirit, after stooping to the family and society, modes of being which are still imperfect and confine its essence, frees itself from these forms and finds its complete expression in the state, and there becomes self-conscious. Hegel does not regard the family and society as the constituent elements of the state, which cannot exist without them or independent of them. He makes the state the element that determines *a priori* the development of law.

He does not however reduce this evolution to a succession of abstract concepts. In the *Philosophy of History* he had tied the development of the concept of freedom to the sequence of great historical periods; and similarly, in the *Philosophy of Law* he connects the evolution of objective morality to the evolution of political econmy. But the analogy goes further. Just as in his treatment of empirical science in his *Philosophy of Nature* and of narrative history in his *Philosophy of History,* political economy merely serves to furnish him the materials for a speculative construction aimed at justifying, in the name of morality and the law, the political and social state he finds desirable.

Family, society and state are the three successive stages by which the individual rises from subjective to objective morality, in which the goals to be realized by the individual merge with the needs and the aims of the community.

In the family, the first stage of objective morality, the individual learns to subordinate his individual interests to a higher collective interest, the general interest.

The association of families makes up society, which Hegel conceives of not as an aggregate of individuals but as an organism into which they are integrated. His conception of society is not inspired by an undifferentiated society ruled by natural law, as the 18th Century conceived it, but by capitalist society, whose essential features already appeared well-marked at the beginning of the 19th Century, and which he calls, after the name of the dominant class, bourgeois society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*).

Bourgeois society, which is based on competition and the profit motive, seems to Hegel to be the scene of an irreconcilable clash of private interests. Because indi-

vidualists predominate, the development of property, which is the basis of personality and liberty, is thwarted and a true social order is contravened. For the profit motive brings with it the subordination of the rights of people to the rights of things; man is led to treat himself as an object, to alienate himself by selling his labor and services; the profit motive increases inequality among men, bringing excessive riches along with excessive poverty.

Despite these flaws, Hegel does not condemn the bourgeois society which is founded on private property, for the abolition of that property would suppress free individuality and therewith human personality. Moreover, despite its defects bourgeois society denotes the passage to a higher stage of objective morality by bringing the individual to realize his true essence (partially, it is true, and still imperfectly) by integrating himself into the community. Although the quest for profit leads the members of bourgeois society to satisfy their needs and desires egotistically, they come together in collective work and enter into social frameworks. Thereby they go beyond individualism and the exclusive search for their individual interest, and understand the general interest.

Nevertheless the supremacy of the general interest can not assert itself in the framework of society: for that is contrary to the essence of society. That supremacy must be imposed, against the will of individuals, by an organism superior to society, namely the state. It is in the state, the end-point of objective morality, that the integration of the individual into the community is perfectly realized by the subordination of individual interest to the general interest.

The essential role of the state is to neutralize the evil effects of the conflicts between individual interests that would make society founder in anarchy if a higher order

were not realized in it. Since the state is the guarantee of the general interest, it can not be created by individuals, involved as they are in the pursuit of their own interests. It comes from a will above the will of individuals, a rational will that enforces itself on individuals.

Therefore, the relations between individuals and the state necessarily differ from the relations among individuals within the framework of society, which are regulated by contracts that presume the equality of the contracting parties. In relations between individuals and the state, there are no contracts; instead there are the notions of duty and subordination that give the sovereign state an authoritarian character.

With this concept of the state as representing the general will, rationally regulating and organizing particular interests, Hegel opposed Rousseau, who had seen the essence of the state as freedom but considered this freedom or rational will as the sum of individual freedoms united by a contract; at the same time Hegel repudiated Haller, who regarded the state as the expression of a super-individual will but reduced that will to the arbitrary and absolute power of the monarch.

Hegel's notion of the state was largely inspired by Napoleon, who seemed to him to have realized a perfect synthesis of individual and general interest in the powerful state he had created, combatting both the excesses of individual liberty that had led to civil war and the Terror when left to itself, and the outworn feudalism that opposed all liberty.

In its mission of bringing about a true social order, which society can not create, the state should respect the rights of the free individual. It can do this because the individual finds in it his true essence, the collective entity, and because in it the particular will and the general will are

one. The embodiment of this identity is the law, the expression of rational will, which is therefore freely assented to by the individuals. To establish this rational order, the state relies first on justice and the police, who curb the individual wills by repressing crimes and misdemeanors and see to it that law is strictly enforced; and secondly, on corporations regulated and directed by the state, which by laying obligations on their members bring individuals, within the framework of their social activity, to subordinate their particular interest to those of the community and thus to confer on them a general character that enables them to form part of the state. The authority of the state is personified in the monarch, whose power is both guaranteed and limited by the constitution and the chambers, who bring together the representatives of the propertied classes and form the organic link between ruler and people.

### *The Philosophy of Spirit*

The *Philosophy of Spirit,* which crowns Hegel's work, is dominated by the notion of the absolute idea making its essence real in the world. This realization is made triadically: by art, which is the sensible expression of absolute spirit; by religion, which is its symbolic representation; and by philosophy, in which it attains full self-consciousness.

Hegel eliminates the mystical and irrational side of religion and reduces its dogmatic content to symbols, which express the fundamental concepts of philosophy in the form of representations or images. In the series of religions Hegel assigns a special place of honor to Christianity, in which he sees the symbolic expression of his own philosophy. Thus, the Trinity becomes for him the symbol of the triadic movement by which the unity of

contraries is realized; Christ represents, by his double nature, divine and human, and by his reconciliation in himself of man with God, the image of the union of the universal and the particular, the synthesis of thought and being made real in the concrete idea; the dogma of the Fall and the Redemption becomes the symbol of spirit externalizing its essence and then surmounting this dualism and contradiction to arrive at full self-consciousness, at objective and eternal verity. As he had done in the case of the Prussian state, Hegel attributed an absolute value to the Christian religion, and with it he called an end to the development of the spirit on the religious plane.

Finally, the spirit found its supreme expression, no longer in the form of symbols, but in the form of ideas, in philosophy. The great philosophic systems trace the evolution of the divine in the world, and the last of them, Hegel's own, was the definitive and perfect revelation of absolute spirit.

### *Conclusion*

Hegel's doctrine marked the end of the romantic idealist philosophy, which came after rationalism and, on the ideological plane, constituted a progressive expression of capitalist economic and social development, which by increasing production increasingly transformed the world and integrated man more fully into his natural and social milieu. Hegel's philosophy brought to the fore the notions of movement, of change and of progress that characterized the new mode of production; it advanced from a semi-static conception of the world to a dynamic one; it strove to reduce the dualism of spirit and matter, of man and external reality, to a vitalist organic monism, by reducing the development of concrete reality, nature and society to the development of spirit, conceived as the creative and

regulative principle of beings and things. His doctrine united thought and reality, consciousness and being, in the movement of history. As a social phenomenon, it was an ideological expression of the revolutionary development of the rising bourgeoisie, and presaged the end of the old static philosophy and speculative metaphysics.

Hegel's explanation of historical movement embodied a formulation of the objective reality of contradictions, and the necessity of their dialectical elimination as source and form of becoming. But instead of analyzing the concrete dialectical movement factually in its historical development, he considered it on the conceptual level, made it abstract, general and formal, and gave the solution of the contradictions an equally formal character.

This idealism leads to the contradictory nature of his system, which is a sort of compromise between a semi-static and a dynamic-revolutionary world view, between transcendental idealism, which postulates the principle and goal of things as lying outside of things, and realism, which, influenced by the idea of immanence, reinstates the principle and goal of things within the things themselves, and explains the development of things as coming from their own nature.

Hegel's system reflects the increasing influence of industrial development on economic and social life; he was no longer satisfied, therefore, with a purely idealist and abstract world view, but strove to grasp reality as a whole, and integrated the development of the spirit into the development of concrete reality. Thus he gave his system a historical character. The predominant place accorded to history is clear evidence of his effort to give up the metaphysical and transcendental standpoint and consider things in their immanent and concrete aspect.

Despite these realistic aspects his system remained

essentially idealistic. Hegel eliminated the particular and determinate from concrete reality in order to be able to equate reality with the concept; in so doing he deprived the particular of its specific nature and substance. History, reduced to a development of the concept, was confused with logic; only in Hegel's logic, and nowhere else, did the integration of man into the world take place.

Looked at from another point of view, Hegelianism was a compromise between the static and dynamic world views. It marked the high point of the romantic philosophy, which stressed the ideas of life and change and refused to accept the notion that movement comes from a principle outside of and alien to things; but the inadequacy of the causal explanations of this philosophy kept it from seeing that this principle of movement coincides with the things themselves.

Hegel's philosophy was dynamic through and through, for it undertook to explain the continuous change and unbroken evolution of beings and things; but this dynamism still appeared as determined by a higher principle, the absolute Idea, which exists in itself from all eternity. The absolute Idea is the stable element in the eternal process, whose cause and goal it is at the same time. It contains all of reality within itself and puts reality into the world in order to take it back up into itself in the course of history. As such, the end of its development finds it the same as it was in the beginning. The dialectical evolution was only specious; it was an involution, a return to itself, and this made Hegel's theory akin to the old static world view.

Politically, this compromise between a static and a dynamic world view was marked by the attempt to combine a conservative system that regarded the Prussian state and the Christian religion as the final and definitive forms of the absolute Idea, and that thus put an end to the evo-

lution of the spirit, with the dialectical movement of history, which entails constant change and can not be assigned a given political, social or religious form as its frontier and goal.

*Chapter IV*

# THE HEGELIAN LEFT

Hegel's efforts to patch up a stable compromise between idealism and materialism, between a static conservative system and the revolutionary dialectic method, could not produce a lasting solution. It is true that at the time of his death, in 1831, his doctrine seemed to the majority of his German contemporaries solid enough to defy the lapse of time. Most of his disciples were content to comment and to expand in orthodox fashion the various parts of this vast encyclopedia, in which Hegel had epitomized the knowledge of his time.

Meanwhile the revolution of 1830, which destroyed the system of the Holy Alliance and the Restoration, and the economic revival of Germany after the formation of the *Zollverein* in 1834 could not but touch off the contradictions inherent in Hegel's monumental doctrine and disrupt it. The rapid development of industry made the changing of the external world a more and more important factor in human life. It became increasingly difficult to reduce all concrete reality to the Idea. Among the effects of this economic revolution was a rapid transition, as in France in the 18th century, from a spiritualist to a materialist conception of the world, accompanied, as in 18th century France and for the same reasons, by a liberal movement favored by the rise of the bourgeoisie, with a tendency toward completely rejecting Hegel's conservative political system, already undermined by the revolution of 1830.

### *Liberal Radicalism*

The Hegelian school itself was split between a conservative Right, composed of orthodox disciples of the Master, and a liberal Left that strove to adapt Hegelianism to the new economic, political and social conditions.

The Hegelian Left, expressing the political and social aims of a bourgeoisie strengthened by the rapid development of commerce and industry, dissociated and transformed the Hegelian philosophy in order to adapt it to liberalism. They rejected the static and conservative elements of the system and retained only the revolutionary dialectical element as a doctrine of action; but the semi-conservative tendencies of the German bourgeoisie left the Young Hegelians without any real support, and like the romantic philosophers before them they confined their action essentially to the spiritual domain.

Hence, unlike the French Encyclopedic movement of the 18th century, Left Hegelianism, with no revolutionary bourgeoisie to support it, soon foundered as a liberal political movement. Its action, losing any real object, became an abstract criticism of reality, a mere mental game. The failure of revolutionary liberalism led a part of the Hegelian Left to turn from the conservative bourgeoisie to the new rising class, the proletariat, and to make their action concrete and practical rather than theoretical and abstract. First Feuerbach completely reversed Hegel's philosophy and came to a mechanist materialism like that of France in the 18th century, in which man is subordinated to nature and undergoes the influence of his milieu without transforming it. Then Marx made this materialism dynamic and showed how man, by his incessant work of transformation on the world, integrates himself more and more into it. Marx linked action to man's concrete practical activity, to economic and social activity, and not to a

spiritual development, as the idealists had done; he developed a historical and dialectical conception of materialism and, from there, a new conception of communism as the expression of a proletariat with full consciousness of class.

The severance between the right and left wings of Hegelianism took place when the latter, imitating the French Encyclopedists of the 18th Century who supported the bourgeoisie in its struggle for power by criticizing religion and the absolute monarchy, asserted the necessity for unlimited progress of reason and liberty, and criticized two basic constituents of Hegel's conservative system: the Christian religion and the Prussian state. Since it was less dangerous to attack the former, the Hegelian Left, again like the French Encyclopedists, directed its first attacks against religion, before going into action on the social and political level.

**D. F. Strauss.** Under its religious and philosophical appearance this polemic was essentially political in its nature and goal. Its first manifestation was D. F. Strauss' *Life of Jesus* (1836). The central issue was whether religion and philosophy were the same in essence, as Hegel had said, or whether they were different and mutually incompatible. In the *Philosophy of Religion* Hegel had equated the content of religion with that of philosophy, maintaining that there was only a formal distinction between them, since religion revealed in symbols the rational content of philosophy. Strauss protested against this identification and limitation of philosophy to religion; his book emphasized that dogmas can not be turned into philosophical concepts without changing the content of faith. Hegel had said that in studying the Christian religion historical reality and the Biblical and evangelical accounts could be neglected in favor of the religion's symbolic content. Strauss replied

that these accounts constituted the essential part of the Christian religion, and saw in the Gospels not philosophical symbols but myths which had their origin in the messianic prophecies and expressed the deepest aspirations of Jewish life.

Strauss picked up the notion of an impersonal God whose existence merges with the history of mankind, a notion implicit in the Hegelian philosophy, especially in Hegel's conception of the absolute spirit and his Christology. Strauss denied the historicity of Jesus and maintained that Christ, to whom he assigns only a symbolic value, constituted not the totality but only an essential element of the divine revelation, and that only all humanity, in the course of its development, gives a complete image of God.

Strauss' book dealt the whole Hegelian philosophy a hard blow. By establishing that the essence of religion differed from that of philosophy, he destroyed the harmony Hegel had set up between the two, as well as the Hegelian identification of historical evolution and rational development, showing that along with rational and logical truth there exists a historical reality that does not necessarily coincide with them and is not reducible to them. By denying any first principle outside of man, and by denying absolute value to the Christian religion, he took from Hegelianism its still metaphysical and transcendental character and rejected its conservative side.

Strauss undermined Hegel's laboriously constructed edifice and opened the way to a general attack on Hegelianism by the Hegelian Left. Their fundamental problem was to overcome the contradiction between the dialectical development that justified revolutionary action, and Hegel's conservative system. To do this they had to extend to the

future the movement of the idea that determines the movement of reality, whereas Hegel had limited that movement to the past and stopped short at the present.

Emboldened by Strauss' critique, the Young Hegelians progressively extended this criticism from the religious field to the political and social field in order to establish an effective harmony between the real and the rational in the name of reason. They were steeped in the Hegelian doctrine and did not doubt the complete competence of the spirit to control the course of the world. They felt that to ferret out and denounce the irrational elements lurking in concrete reality, in economic, political and social organization, would be all that was needed to eliminate them and thereby endow the development of the real with rationality. By opposing Hegel's dialectics, which implied constant transformation of the world, to his conservative system, they derived a doctrine of action adapted to the needs of the German bourgeoisie. Because of the weakness of that bourgeoisie, the doctrine was limited at first to the spiritual domain, but it still was a remarkable transformation into a revolutionary doctrine of Hegel's justification of the political conservatism of the Restoration.

Cieszkowski, in his *Prolegomena to Historiosophy*,[1] argued the need of using philosophy to alter the world. In opposition to Hegel, who had limited dialectics to the explanation of the present and interdicted philosophers from speculating about the future, Cieszkowski held that philosophy, instead of only deducing the present from the past, should serve to conclude from the present to the future and thereby determine the rational course of the world. Historical evolution, he said, which had hitherto been unconscious, should become the work of rational activity.[2] The Hegelian philosophy, which stops at the

present and has no influence on men's destiny, must be replaced by a new philosophy, a philosophy of action that will enable men to determine the future.

This was a doctrine of action that profoundly modified the Hegelian philosophy in the direction of Fichte's system, subordinating the evolution of reality to the rational will and making the determination of the future the essential task of philosophy. It was to find its principal theoretician in Bruno Bauer, a friend of Karl Marx.

**B. Bauer.** Bauer was originally a theologian, like D. F. Strauss, and an orthodox Hegelian until he embarked on his critique of the Gospels, although from a point of view opposite to that of Strauss.[3] For him the essence of the Christian religion was not its substance, that is its dogmatic or philosophical content, but the fact that it constituted a new stage in the development of universal consciousness. The Christian community had not hypostatized messianic dogmatism in Christ, but had expressed its own thoughts and aspirations in the Gospels. Bauer studied the Gospels in their relation to the general culture of their age, and showed them to be, like the philosophical doctrines of the time, Epicureanism, Stoicism, scepticism, the product of the "unhappy" or "contrite" consciousness, of the oppressed spirit which, in the spiritual and moral wretchedness born of the decadence of the ancient world, turned inward to safeguard its freedom. This Gospel criticism led Bauer to a philosophy of action, the critical philosophy that was to be the fighting weapon of the Young Hegelians.[4]

In the general evolution of the world, he said, what counts is consciousness, that is spirit that has attained knowledge of itself, and not substance, which is a form that consciousness takes in the course of its development, and which, like Fichte's non-Ego, is but the instrument the

spirit uses to reveal and elevate itself.[5] The universal consciousness makes its infinite progress, as does the Ego in Fichte, by ceaselessly destroying what it creates. For as soon as it has taken a definite form in a substance, that form becomes a limit and obstacle to it. Each of the philosophical, religious, political, or social forms that the universal consciousness takes on in the course of its historical evolution is justified only for a time. By perpetuating itself it becomes irrational and stands in the way of the development of consciousness, and must therefore be replaced by a new and higher form of consciousness. Here is the task of criticism, the essential instrument of progress, which by analyzing dogmas and institutions eliminates the irrational elements from reality and thus determines the unending development of the universal consciousness.[6] In Bauer's eyes, the effect of this criticism should have an inherent tendency to liberate the spirit from the grip of the Christian religion, which after having transformed the ancient world by giving paramount value to the human personality had become an obstacle to the progress of consciousness because of its attachment to dogmas, i.e., to a definite form, to a determinate substance of the spirit.

This critical philosophy went even further than Cieszkowski in modifying Hegel's doctrine to adapt it to liberalism's fight against conservative institutions. By postulating the infinite dialectical development of universal consciousness and denying finality to any substance, any definite form of reality, Bauer refuted Hegel's conservative system. Moreover, by ceaselessly contrasting consciousness and substance, Bauer severed the indissoluble union Hegel had set up between the idea and concrete reality; that union was now reduced to the transient and ever-changing expression of the spirit, as in Fichte; the critical philosophy revived the Fichtean antagonism between what is

and what should be that Hegel had so bitterly attacked.

In that it detached the idea from reality and reduced it to consciousness, this philosophy marked a return to idealism and subjectivism. The dialectical movement was now transferred into the realm of the spirit, instead of being incorporated into reality, as in Hegel. It no longer stemmed from the very nature of things, from Being considered as spirit, but from the thinking subject, the Ego. Antithesis, which had had a positive value in Hegel, because it expressed an aspect of reality, now tended to become pure negation, an end in itself; dialectics turned into a mere game of the mind.

This doctrine, which affirmed the spirit's power to modify reality at will and reduced political activity to a simple critique of institutions and dogmas, was avidly taken up by the Young Hegelians, eager for action but helpless in fact. This critique was soon to be put to the test in the struggle of the Hegelian Left against the pietistic and reactionary Friedrich Wilhelm IV, who condemned the Hegelianism his father had fostered, and fought liberalism in all its forms.

The Young Hegelians, intoxicated by the destructive game of the critical philosophy, had declared war on Christianity and now went into action against absolutism; but they were not supported by the German bourgeoisie and their movement soon collapsed. Their failure led to conflict among them. Some, with Bruno Bauer, turned inward upon themselves towards individualism and egocentrism, a natural tendency with elements isolated from their class. They carried the critical philosophy to a sterile extreme and played idly at theoretical abolition of the existing state of affairs.

Their isolation from the bourgeoisie and from the people made them incapable of tying up idea and theory to

political social action, or of giving a concrete solution to their essential problem, the problem of liberty. The conclusion they drew from their own helplessness was that an irreconcilable opposition existed between the masses and the spirit. They condemned the people, who had only indifference for the critical philosophy, as incapable of liberty and unable to further it; they tended to divorce the development of universal consciousness from the evolution of humanity and to confuse it with individual consciousness, reduced to the Ego.

One member of the group, Stirner, drew the extreme consequences of this tendency and rejected any limitation of the autonomy of the individual—by religion, society or the state. He recognized only one reality, the Ego, and only one principle, the cult of the Ego. He made absolute egoism the only motive of human activity, and ended up in nihilism and anarchism.

### *Social Radicalism*

Meanwhile, another section of the Hegelian Left, with Ludwig Feuerbach, Moses Hess, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels was going exactly in the opposite direction, striving to unite thought more closely to reality, to tie theory to action. They turned from the conservative bourgeoisie to the revolutionary class, the proletariat, and went from liberalism to communism.

The new orientation of their thinking and action was based on French socialism and communism. Those doctrines did not see in the capitalist system the conditions for its elimination through intensification of its own contradictions. Since they could not get the solutions of the social and economic problems that engaged them out of the existing social facts, they felt compelled to transfer those problems to an ideological plane and solve them

there, by resorting to utopias to show the way the transformation of society should go.

Their solution to the problem of man's integration into society went beyond the bourgeois ideology, which preserves private property as the basis of society; these socialists and communists postulated the need for adopting a collective mode of distribution to match the collective mode of production. They remained ideologists and utopians for they failed to see how society can produce economic and social changes in itself. They merely contrasted existing reality and the ideal, the present representing disorder, egoism, injustice, and the future order, altruism and justice. Their idea of the future world, they believed, must come to pass because of its moral superiority. Their deep faith in the worth and power of reason made them feel it their central task to convince men of the excellence of their schemes. The critical parts of their theories, which were close to reality, contrasted with their constructive plans of economic and social rejuvenation, which were utopian works of the imagination. The appeal to reason was their chief means of action; the critical parts of their work showed social antagonisms, but the constructive parts did not follow up with an analysis of these antagonisms, or show how they lead to social change.

Since the Good has the same universality as the True in the realm of reason, they address themselves to man in general, translate the thought of class opposition into the opposition of moral ideas and replace the notion of class conflict by the notion of an antagonism between good and evil, between justice and injustice. Class conflicts consequently take on the character of moral conflicts; moral differences rather than social antagonisms are what divide humanity. The social question therefore becomes a question of education; the early socialists and communists do not present their reform projects to the proletariat, but

to the people in general, and especially to the enlightened bourgeoisie, to whose feelings of humanity and justice they appeal. However, the sharper the antagonisms of the social order become, the more decidedly these theorists undertake the defense of the special interests of the rising proletariat, and the more they abandon utopianism.

In such socialist doctrinaires as Victor Considerant, Louis Blanc, Vidal, and Proudhon, who were hostile to both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, this utopianism is especially pronounced. They criticized the capitalist social order for the devastating effects of its competitiveness, but desired to preserve its essential feature, private property. They rejected class action as a means of emancipation and relied almost exclusively on what Marx would have called utopian methods to bring about their social reforms.

When the communist theorists spoke for a larger and stronger proletariat already in possession of a clear class consciousness and desirous of radical social change rather than mere reform, utopianism, in the Marxist sense, receded. In Pecqueur, who wanted to make property collective, and Cabet, who came to the notion of complete communism, utopianism is still well-marked, but it almost disappears in Auguste Blanqui, who rejected all class cooperation and appealed to the revolutionary action of the proletariat to remake society.

The first figures of the Hegelian left who broke with the liberal bourgeois ideology and went over to communism, Ludwig Feuerbach and Moses Hess, were essentially under the influence of the reformist socialists. The economic and social backwardness of Germany produced in these men a dilution of the French socialist theories, corresponding to the enfeeblement of French rationalism, which had turned into a "philosophy of enlightenment."

**Ludwig Feuerbach.** The signs of this condition are par-

ticularly striking in Feuerbach, who spoke from the background of a socially undifferentiated society. Out of a parallel criticism of the Christian religion and the Hegelian philosophy, he derived a social theory that stimulated the orientation toward communism not only of Moses Hess, but also of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. As early as 1838, in a critique of Hegel's philosophy,[7] Feuerbach asserted that the idea, far from engendering reality, is engendered by it. In his principal work, the *Essence of Christianity,*[8] he applied this principle to the Christian religion, and showed that religion is a product of man, and especially of primitive man who, in his terror in the face of the dangers that constantly menace him, calls on a supernatural power, a higher being to whom he ascribes the power of miraculous intervention in his behalf. Man creates this superior being, God, in his own image by banishing, or alienating, to God the highest qualities of the human species. Religion is thus the scene of a reversal or inversion of the true relations between subject and object, between man and God. The actual subject, man, becomes the attribute of the being he has created, God; God, who is actually the attribute of man, becomes the creative element, the subject.

Feuerbach's radical critique of religion completely transformed the sense and the nature of religious alienation, which no longer appeared, as it had in both Hegel and Bruno Bauer, as a creative act by which God, in the form of absolute idea or universal consciousness, creates the world by externalizing his substance, which he then progressively takes back into himself; instead, alienation now appeared as an act that divests man of his essence and true nature and makes him a stranger to himself.

This analysis of religion led Feuerbach to a general critique of idealist philosophy, Hegelianism in particular, which he reproached with making man and nature crea-

tions of the spirit, by similarly inverting subject and attribute. In his *Provisional Theses on the Reform of Philosophy* (1843)[9] he showed how the Hegelian philosophy, like theology, transposed the essence of man and nature into the idea, which is promoted like God to the post of the subject who creates the world. But by reducing all reality to the idea, Hegel did not succeed really in synthesizing thought and being, which he pretended to merge in the concrete idea. The synthesis was an illusion, for the development of the real remained internal to the spirit, whose creative activity created only abstractions. Extending the criticism, Feuerbach showed that Bruno Bauer had only aggravated Hegelian idealism by divesting the idea of all substance and reducing it to consciousness.

To effect a union of thought and being, mind and matter, man and nature, Feuerbach said, the starting point must be not the idea but concrete sensible reality, nature and man; spirit must find its place in matter, not matter in spirit; and man, with his thought but also with his senses and his needs, must be the organic expression of that synthesis.

As against Hegel's objective idealism and Bauer's subjective idealism, Feuerbach supported a materialist conception of the world, where the essential element is no longer the development of the idea or of consciousness, but concrete man taking his place in nature and society.

The critical philosophy had indicated the contradiction between Hegel's conservative system and his revolutionary dialetic; now Feuerbach's criticism aimed at discrediting the whole Hegelian ideology. Feuerbach rejected, along with religion, all belief in the supernatural and all metaphysics; he replaced the Hegelian idealism by a materialistic positivism that reduced everything to sensual man and concrete nature.

Thus he arrived at a humanism on which he founded

the social doctrine whose main outlines are given in the *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future* (1843).[10] The fundamental problem, as he saw it, was to liberate man from religion, which deprives him of his true nature by leading him to exile, externalize or alienate in God his essential qualities, which are the qualities of the collective being that constitutes the human species. By so doing man not only impoverishes his nature, but becomes an egotistical individual isolated from the collective life, the only place in which he can find his realization. To restore to man his true being, which is a collective being, and to enable him to lead a life in conformity with his true nature, the religious illusion must be dispelled and the Beyond reinserted into the present world, and the qualities alienated in God restored to humanity. Freed from egotism and individualism, man can then enter freely into the collective life of society and replace love of God by love of humanity, which will be his highest law.

The importance of Feuerbach was that for the first time in Germany he gave a solution (an ideological one, it is true) of the fundamental problem of the integration of man into his natural and social milieu, and thereby made a preliminary transition from Hegelianism to socialism. The fundamental element of his philosophy, the critique of religious alienation, with its consequences in egotism and individualism, as an obstacle to collective life was, in transposed form, a critique of the alienation of the worker's labor power into the commodities produced under capitalism, a critique of the individualism and egotism resulting from the mode of distribution that rests on the profit motive; it was an attempt to surmont egotism and reach the collective life by getting man to share in the life of the species.

The weakness of the doctrine was that it lay in the

absolute, outside of historical development, and remained vague and absolute. Even though he put concrete and sensuous reality first, and strove for the integration of man into nature and society, Feuerbach hardly went beyond abstract humanity; he overcame Hegelianism more in the field of philosophy than in the field of economic and social reality. His central thesis, the alienation of the human essence in religion, was not presented or explained as a sociological fact, but as a sort of metaphysical act of man as such. In addition, Feuerbach assimilated society, of which he had only vague notions, to an imaginary being, the human species, which was the essence of humanity and, like Hegel's world spirit, a metaphysical entity above men.

Since he thought of man and society from an absolute point of view, Feuerbach rejected not only Hegel's idealism but also his historical and dialectical conception of process. This made him situate human activity outside of historical evolution and social and economic development, and return to the mechanical materialism of the 18th century, and deal with the action of the environment on man but not the action of man on the environment. Thus he made man a semi-passive being under the influence of an idealized nature, and made society a vague collective solidarity engulfing the concrete clashing forces, which he reduced to an ill-defined antagonism between altruism and egotism. The character and aim of human evolution thus became moral in essence, and his sentimental and contemplative philosophy ended in a vague ethics, a shapeless religion of universal happiness and love.

**Moses Hess.** Moses Hess started from the basic principles of this theory, but went further, and gave it a more decidedly socialistic character. He investigated men and society more concretely and tied men's liberation to their

economic and social emancipation rather than to religious enfranchisement. In his *European Triarchy* (1841)[11] he asserted the impotence of liberalism to solve the essential problem, which in his eyes was the social problem. He set his age the task of human emancipation, and held it could not be performed by religious or social reforms, which could only be steps in that direction, but by a social revolution, a radical change in society.[12] He rejected the speculative philosophy with which the Hegelian Left was still encumbered; the revolution would not be the work of mere criticism of reality, which is impotent, but of action.[13]

The communistic conception he reached in his critique of society was still very vague; but like all utopians he postulated the enactment of communism without being able to point out how it could be brought about by the development of the capitalist system.

Hess gave his communistic conceptions in four articles written in 1843 and 1844: "Philosophy of Action," "Socialism and Communism," "Liberty in its Unity and Totality," and above all "The Essence of Money,"[14] in which he made a synthesis of Feuerbach's philosophy and communism by applying the idea of alienation to a critique of capitalism. The phenomenon of alienation that Feuerbach had studied in the field of religion, and denounced as the source of all the evils of humanity, actually was social in nature, Hess said, and was produced by the capitalist system.

In this regime, which is based on private property and the profit motive, the great law is competition, which sets individual against individual and dissolves society by producing egotism and making it general. Because of competition and egotism the capitalist system is the scene of an exploitation of man by man; the weak are compelled to

create wealth that does not belong to them, in which they alienate their own substance, their labor-power, and by which they are enslaved. For in this society wealth takes the form of money, which is the real god of present society, the god in whom man worships his own essence to which he has become a stranger. To do away with this alienation, which debases and enslaves man, private property and competition must be done away with and the capitalist system replaced by a communist one that alone can do away with egotism, establish human relations among men, and base society on altruism and love.

Hess' theory expressed a nascent socialism that had not discerned the origins and causes of the social defects it denounced, and did not conceive of the proletariat as capable of eliminating them. His system, like the first utopian systems, reduced the antagonisms arising out of the system of private property to an antagonism between the egotistic and altruistic tendencies of mankind. By placing economic and social problems on a moral plane, it made the struggle against egotism as such the essential element of the social struggle, and thereby deprived both capitalism and communism of their specific characters. Egotism became the specific quality, the quasi-metaphysical attribute of bourgeois society; and communism, transformed into an expression of the altruistic tendencies of mankind, became a general and indeterminate value with no special connection with the proletariat.

Action thus became something moral, tending away from social activity toward propaganda and education, and remained essentially ideological, as with Bruno Bauer and Feuerbach.

Hess' doctrine was thus a sort of middle term between communism and anarchistic individualism. He advocated equality and freedom at once to assure the autonomy of

consciousness, and postulated free activity as the goal of human life; but instead of supporting human life on individualism and egoism, as Bauer and Stirner did, he made communism its framework.

Despite its faults and inadequacies from a Marxist point of view, this theory formed a connecting link between the philosophy of Feuerbach and French socialism, which were Hess' two sources of inspiration; he opened the way to Karl Marx, who started from similar data to arrive at a new solution of the problem of action and the social problem.

*Chapter V*

# KARL MARX

Like the other Young Hegelians, Karl Marx was steeped in the philosophy of Hegel, which, from his first year at the University of Berlin, led him through absolute idealism to a more realistic way of thinking. Three basic notions remained with him:

1) The necessary union of thought and being, which put him on guard, from the very beginning, against abstraction, dogmatism and utopianism, against the isolation of ideas from reality;

2) The dialectical development of history, which results from the contradictions inherent in every living reality;

3) The notion that the efficient cause and final goal of this dialectical development is the ever greater rationalization of reality.

## *From Liberalism to Communism*

Marx believed at first, with all the Young Hegelians, that in order to determine the course of history its irrational elements must be eliminated by criticism. In contradistinction to the Young Hegelians, however, and true in this respect to Hegel's fundamental conception, he denied any absolute power of the spirit to transform the world at will. In his dissertation (1841) he already showed the emptiness of this claim in a note on Plutarch with respect to the proof of the existence of God;[1] here Marx takes up Kant's criticism of the ontological argument which infers concrete existence from a pure representation of the mind, from the idea of a being.[2] In this he hit

the weak point of the critical philosophy which, like every idealistic philosophy, rests on the notion of formal possibility, granting the existence of a being or a thing when that existence does not contravene formal logic. With Hegel, Marx opposed that purely formal possibility by actual possibility, limiting possibility by conditions of existence which are not merely logical but actual. In this Hegelian way he tried to link the development of thought to the development of concrete reality.[3]

Rational truth then must lie in the facts themselves; and from that point on he found himself led to go beyond Hegel as well, and more and more to tend to deny to philosophy any intrinsic value beyond reality. He showed, in the same dissertation, that philosophy, by setting itself up against the world by means of criticism, of necessity turns into will, into practical activity; that implies its entry into the world and therewith its disappearance as an abstract principle contrasted to the world.[4]

That was the fundamental concept that determined his attitude in his fight against the other Young Hegelians, first on behalf of liberalism and later on behalf of communism. He served his political apprenticeship on the important liberal paper, the *Rheinische Zeitung*, first on the editorial staff, then as Editor-in-Chief. This work acquainted him with political, economic and social questions in a way and to an extent unknown to the other Young Hegelians, and he soon abandoned purely philosophical and religious problems. He was still full of the Hegelian ideology, which caused him to think of the state as the regulatory force in society, but he set out to reform that state by a critique of political and legal institutions.

In the course of a long and stubborn struggle, which brought him into immediate contact with political, economic and social reality, he realized more and more clearly

that facts are stronger than ideas, and do not change merely because ideas would have them do so; he would have to revise the Hegelian doctrine and adapt the idea to reality, not reality to the idea. On this point Marx broke with Bruno Bauer and the liberal Young Hegelians. Marx went on instead to win principles of action from reality itself by establishing a closer connection and interdependence between ideas and facts.

The suppression of the *Rheinische Zeitung* and the intensification of the censorship gave a particular acuteness to the two problems Marx had faced in his work as Editor-in-Chief of the paper: the problem of the state and the social problem. The triumphant reaction, which suppressed all freedom, made it obvious that philosophical and political criticism by itself was powerless to change existing institutions, and that the state did not have the rational and moral nature Hegel had ascribed to it. The essential question, it turned out, was not religious or political but social in nature and could not be solved on the purely juridical level, as Marx had tried to do in the *Rheinische Zeitung*. He realized now that actually these questions did not depend on a mere interpretation or application of the law but were essentially linked to conflicts of interest between different social classes.

He thus came to revise his notion of the state, and study its relations with society, and criticize Hegel's *Philosophy of Law*, the book from which he, along with most of the Young Hegelians, had hitherto, taken the bulk of his juridical, political and social conceptions.

### *Critique of the Philosophy of Law*

His guide in this work was Feuerbach, but Marx went further on, making Feuerbach's mechanical materialism and his contemplative theory dynamic and revolutionary.

By reducing law to logic Hegel, instead of developing the philosophy of law out of political and social reality, made it emanate from the absolute idea and objective morality, which determine *a priori* the organization of family, society and state.[5] Hegel described how the idea, after sinking to incomplete forms of existence in the family and society, rises from them to fulfill its essence in the state, the end-point of objective morality.

This conception, Marx points out, is a result of inverting the relationships that really exist between society and the state. Actually it is not the state that determines social organization, but the social organization that determines the form of the state. To obtain an exact notion of the nature and role of the state, society must be made the subject and the state the attribute, in an analogous way to what Feuerbach had done in the field of religion.[6]

To justify the primacy of the state, Hegel had made it the representative of the general interest, as opposed to society, the sphere of particular interests. Actually, says Marx, the determining role of society compared to the state is shown in the fact that in the present system, where the fundamental reality, the substance of existing society is private property, the essential task of the state is to defend the interests and rights of property.

Hegel's system is in itself a proof of this truth. For all his giving theoretical primacy to the general interest, in fact it is particular interest that predominates with him. Private property, which he makes the basis of personality, is in his system the essence not merely of society but of the state as well. What he glorifies under the name of morality is really only the religion or dogma of private property.[7]

Hegel's system expresses the opposition, the contradiction between the ideal state, which in theory represents the general interest and collective life, and the real state,

which expresses society, in which man pursues his private interests and lives an individual particular life that sets him against other men. Compared to the real, political state, the ideal state has only a theoretical and illusory existence, and therefore appears to man as something external and foreign to him. On the political and social plane man undergoes an alienation, just as in religion he is alienated from his essence conceived as God. In the ideal state, as in God, man lives a collective life in accordance with his true nature, but in an illusory, purely imaginary way. To give this collective life a real existence man must abolish not only religion but also the present social organization, of which religion is but the ideological expression.[8]

This social organization leads man, through his quest for profit and particular interest, to live an egotistical life and to misplace his true essence, which lies in a collective life, in a theoretical and illusory state; it will be done away with by the establishment of a rational state founded on collective life, in which the opposition between society and state will be eliminated, the particular interest and the general interest will be one, and collective life, the true essence of man, will be effectively realized.[9]

Marx's view of man as a social being, of state and society as expressions and products of concrete human activity, took him well beyond Hegel, who had limited this activity essentially to spiritual activity, viewing man, society and the state metaphysically, in their relations with the absolute idea and divesting them of their real substance to make them products of abstraction.[10] Marx brought this problem back to the political and social level and like Hess sought the reasons for this alienation in the organization of society. In place of the vague notion of the species he used the concept of society, and studied man as

a social being, not through an analysis of his religious and moral tendencies, but by a critical study of society and the state. He reasoned in this way that to regain its essence humanity must abolish not only religion but also and above all the political state in which that essence was alienated. Following Hess' example, he denounced the superficiality of liberal democracy as a purely formal democracy incapable of wiping out that alienation; it must be replaced by true democracy, social democracy.

In this critique of the *Philosophy of Law* Marx rejected liberalism and raised the problem of alienation in the political and social sphere, but still had nothing more than a vague theoretical solution for the social question, in the form of what he called true democracy. The reforms he proposed—abolition of the monarchy, universal suffrage —hardly went beyond the bounds of liberal democracy; his conception of the state was an indefinite one, not clearly distinguished from the notion of society. While he rejected the existing political form of the state, he did not condemn it in itself, as being the instrument of the domination of the ruling class; he still considered the state, in the old Hegelian way, as a rational organism with the duty of realizing the true essence of humanity.

None the less, once Marx had conceived of true democracy, in which the opposition between particular and general interests no longer exists, as the content of the ideal state, his critique of the existing society, based on private property and conceived as the negation of the collective life, was to lead him to adopt the communist doctrine as the solution of the social problem and to see in communism the embodiment of humanism.

### *The Franco-German Annals*

Marx went from social democracy to communism in two articles in the *Deutsch-französichen Jahrbücher* that

he and Ruge started in Paris in 1844, "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law" and "On the Jewish Question."[11]

Despite the difference in their content, these articles are closely related. Both present reasons for the transformation of bourgeois society into a communist one: the first by the intensification of the class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie, the second by the need for making society collective, in order to suppress both the dualism between the real state and the ideal state and the alienation of man's social essence in the state.

In the "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law" Marx maintains that religious criticism must become social criticism, and that the latter of necessity leads to communism. Feuerbach's critique of religion had revealed to man his true nature, his essence, which he hypostatizes in God. But to give him back his essence and enable him to lead a life in conformity with his true nature, Marx holds that it is not enough to unmask the religious illusion, as Feuerbach had done. The organization of real life, the social organization that produces that illusion, must be changed. Religion is but the theoretical expression and spiritual reflection of society. If it constitutes a topsy-turvy world in which reality becomes illusion and illusion reality, if human nature finds in it only an illusory existence, an imaginary realization, the reason is that society itself is a world upside down and human nature has no true reality in it.[12] To dispel the religious illusion and its promises of an unreal happiness, which make it "the opium of the people," we must criticize the society of which religion is the emanation, and which gives man only an imaginary satisfaction of his real needs.

After destroying the illusion of the Beyond, we must unmask the alienation of human nature in this world below, in society and the state, turning the critique of re-

ligion and theology into a critique of law and politics.[13] In France and England this critique takes place on the level of concrete economic and social reality; in Germany it can be made only by a critique of its philosophy, in particular by a critique of Hegel's philosophy of law. This is due to Germany's retarded development, which makes its history an anachronism; yet despite economic, political and social backwardness, Germany has risen to a par with the most advanced nations by dint of its philosophy, which anticipates the future; criticizing her philosophy is tantamount to criticizing modern society.[14]

This critique, it is true, sets tasks that only practical activity, political and social action can perform. Although criticism can not replace material force, it becomes a real force when it spreads to the masses, takes on from them a radical character and brings them to abolish a social state that makes man a vile, enslaved creature.[15] It then constitutes an essential element of the social revolution, whose fulfillment requires both a radical critique of existing society and a social mass that puts this critique into effect.

In Germany, which combines all social defects, both old and new, the revolution will not be partial and in stages, as in France. It will be a total revolution carried out by the proletariat, which in freeing itself will free all of society.[16]

After Marx had stated in this article the need for a social revolution, he set forth the nature and role of this revolution in his article on "The Jewish Question." Criticizing Bruno Bauer, who had made the emancipation of the Jews conditional on their religious emancipation, Marx related the issue to the broader question of human emancipation, and showed that the latter is not political or religious in nature, but social.[17] In a renewed study of the alienation of the human essence, more thoroughgoing than

the analysis he had made in the "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law," he pointed out that religious emancipation will not by itself do away with that alienation, as is proved by the existence of states in which religion no longer plays a political role and where that alienation still exists.[18] Really, Jewish emancipation is linked to human emancipation, which can be brought about only by the radical transformation of society.

In the existing regime, which is based on competition, egotism and individualism, an opposition arises between society and the state. With respect to society the state forms an ideal sphere, incarnating in a purely illusory fashion the human essence, *viz.*, the collective life.[19] As a result man lives a double life: in society, a private life as an egotistical individual, and this is his real life; in the state, a life in accord with his true nature, but that life is quite imaginary. To do away with this dualism and the alienation of human nature in the state, the state must be incorporated into society by making the latter collective.[20]

In these two articles Marx still kept his criticism within the framework and formulas of Feuerbach's philosophy; but the deliberate orientation of his thought toward communism and his resolute representation of the revolutionary proletariat led him beyond Hegel, Feuerbach and Hess toward his own solution of the essential problem of the integration of man into his social milieu.

Hegel's solution of the problem had shown egotistic individualism overcome in the state by the subordination of particular interests to the general interest. Since he left the capitalist social organization standing, his conception of the state was necessarily utopian, and the contradiction was done away with on the level of the contradiction itself. Feuerbach had taken up this problem from the religious point of view and on the plane of an undifferen-

tiated humanity, and had reduced the overcoming of the contradiction to the restoration to man of his essence, alienated and hypostatized in God. Moses Hess had held that the suppression of the alienation, on which he too made the solution of the contradiction depend, should come about by abolishing private property and introducing communism. But since he kept the notion of an undifferentiated humanity, he too like Feuerbach shifted the social problem to the moral plane and like him solved it in terms of altruism and universal love.

Marx put the problem of alienation on the political and social level, with the class differentiations that ensue under capitalism. The suppression of alienation, he said, and with it of the opposition between society and state and between the individualistic and the collective modes of life, can come only from a radical change in society. He no longer made the dialectic of ideas the motive force in history, but the clash of classes; he believed therefore that the change would be the deed of a social revolution, arising out of the conflict of classes and carried out by the proletariat.

In this way the moral conflict between egotism and altruism, to which Feuerbach and Hess had reduced economic and social contradictions and for which they had prescribed universal love as the remedy, was transformed by Marx into a social conflict, and communism became a doctrine of action, not on the plane of theory and abstraction, but on the political and social plane.

Marx still assigned as the aim of communism the restoration of the human essence and collective life to humanity, but he fitted social development into the framework of dialectics and made the proletariat the antithetical element on whom the burden of progress fell. Progress must result, as dialectics would have it, from the opposition

of contradictory elements, from the exasperation of the conflict of classes.

In these articles Marx's conception of communism did not yet rest on an objective critique of reality. The proletariat was not analyzed as such, and had the value more or less of an idea-force in the service of progress. Finally, the prominent role he still gave to the idea and to criticism as preformations of the real lend the two articles a certain dogmatic quality.

Nevertheless, by putting philosophy more and more into history, he came to draw the reasons for the evolution of reality from the reality itself; and he had only to state these reasons in a more precise way to come to deny philosophy any determining role in historical process, and to unite communism and historical and dialectical materialism in a single conception.

### *Political Economy and Philosophy*

What guided Marx in this development was his desire to pass from theory to action. It is no accident that this development took place in Paris in 1844, where he found four elements that led him to develop his still vague and abstract conception of communism: an economic development far more advanced than Germany's, in which he saw internal contradictions of the capitalist system; a large industrial proletariat, with a clear class consciousness; the existence of a great social revolution, the revolution of 1789, completed and supplemented by the revolution of 1830; and a large number of socialist and communist theories especially noteworthy for their criticisms of the capitalist economic and social order.

Under the influence of these theories, especially that of Blanqui, who rejected all class cooperation and appealed in his theory and in his action to the proletarian revolu-

tion to bring communism into being, and under the further influence of his own direct participation in the struggles of the workers, Marx developed as representative of the revolutionary proletariat from the still ideological communism shown in his articles in the *Franco-German Annals* to a communism based on his incipient conception of historical and dialectical materialism. He now appraised Hegelian dialectics and Feuerbach's notion of alienation from an economic and social conception of historical development and communism, not merely from a philosophical and political point of view.

This development was furthered by two articles by Friedrich Engels and Moses Hess, the first of which appeared in the *Franco-German Annals,* while the other had been scheduled to appear there. In his article, "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy,"[21] Engels argued that the capitalist system does not have the absolute and eternal value that liberal economists give it, and that the economic categories corresponding to this system: price, competition, profit, etc., have only historical, i.e., relative value.[22] He criticized the capitalist system based on private property and made the point that by its separation of capital and labor it has the effect of depriving the majority of producers of the fruit of their activity, and thus of reducing them to servitude and poverty. The unbalance that competition creates between production and consumption causes the crises that entail the elimination of the weaker elements and the increasing ruin of the middle classes, along with a constantly increasing concentration of wealth; and finally only proletarians and great capitalists are left, face to face.[23] This growing social antagonism, this constant aggravation of the conflict of classes must lead to a radical change of existing society by a social revolution that will abolish private property and competition,

set up a communist system and make social organization human.

Engels' study of the origin of communism was more on the economic and social level than on the philosophical and political plane, and portrayed it as a necessary product of the development of capitalist society. This lent definition to Marx's still theoretical and abstract conception.

Marx's solution of the problem of eliminating the alienation of human nature that takes place in capitalist society was further influenced by the article "On the Essence of Money" that Moses Hess submitted for publication in the *Franco-German Annals.*[24] Hess, unlike Marx, did not confine his analysis of the phenomenon of alienation to an exteriorization of the human essence in the state but went on to show the universal and essential presence of this phenomenon in modern social life. This suggested to Marx the link between Feuerbach's philosophy, the French socialist theories and the critique of political economy that Engels had just made.

Marx adopted this central notion of alienation, but Hegel's conception of the dialectical development of history and Engels' critique of political economy enabled him to reject Hess' sentimental utopian solution. With this step Marx came to a new conception of historical development and communism.

This decisive turning-point in his thought is marked by his manuscript *Political Economy and Philosophy* (1844),[25] in which he finds that economic and social organization, i.e., political economy, provides the key to all philosophical, economic, political and social problems. Hegel, he says, did to be sure show in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* that man is the product of his own work, and that the evolutionary process of society that history expresses is the

product of human activity, by means of man's alienation or externalization of his substance and essence into the objects he creates. The object appears alien to him at first; then he repossesses it, considering it as the expression and product of his essence.

But in Hegel—and this is his chief defect—the subject of historical evolution is no longer concrete man but spirit; human activity is not conceived of as material activity but as spiritual activity, as the development of consciousness and knowledge, and is limited to knowledge, in which the subject that knows and the object that is known merge.[26]

Hegel goes on to hold that since in knowledge the subject hypostatizes itself in the object, externalizing its own substance there, there is no actual alienation and no actual repossession of human nature; consciousness discovers itself undiminished in what it has hypostatized out of itself, and is necessarily led to assume that it is all there is to reality. It is less disturbed by the fact of its seeming alienation in the object than by the object itself which, as such, constitutes its negation. In repossessing its alienated essence, consciousness is less concerned with doing away with the alienation (which does not really exist) than in eliminating the object. That explains Hegel's effort to reduce the object and concrete reality to spirit by showing that the object actually emerges with consciousness, being but a manifestation or externalization of it.[27]

This reduction of concrete reality to the idea makes an illusion out of Hegel's synthesis of spirit and the real. The idea remains empty, and isolated from the world; nothing comes to enrich it, its evolution is only in seeming, and at the end of its development it finds itself only what it potentially was. Concrete reality, reduced to a hypostasis of spirit, becomes mere appearance.[28]

For the synthesis of mind and matter to be effective,

Marx continues, for a true union of idea and reality, the latter must retain its own concrete nature and not be reduced to spirit; real man, not the spirit, must be the true subject of human activity. If human activity is no longer conceived of as activity of the spirit divorced from real life, but as the concrete practical activity of man, who puts into the objects he creates his substance, what is essential in him, and thus enters integrally into the external world: in that case the problem of the union of thought and being, of object and subject finds its solution.[29]

The subject of human activity, instead of being spirit as such, is the subjectivity of human powers. The action of these powers has an objective character by means of its concrete effect, and hence there is set up between thought and reality, between subject and object, between man and the outer world, neither an absolute identity nor an absolute opposition, but a constant interpenetration and interdependence.

Man is a natural being in his origin, a product of the nature that is his environment. His activity at first is instinctive, like that of an animal that seeks to satisfy its needs by appropriating objects that exist outside of him and independently of him. But man is not simply a natural being; he is a human natural being, endowed that is with reason. Instead of accepting nature as it comes to him, as an animal does, he tries to adapt himself to nature and at the same time to adapt nature to himself in order to satisfy his needs.[30]

It is this twofold adaptation, this constant action and and reaction of the environment on man and of man on his environment that determines the nature of human activity, which Marx models as it were on Hegel's notion of spiritual activity. Like knowledge in Hegel, concrete

human activity, or work, is an externalization or alienation of the subject's essence into the object it creates; but this alienation, instead of being confined to the realm of the spirit, like knowledge, results in the production of concrete things, outside of man and alien to him.

Man must now recover the essence thus alienated, if he is not to exhaust himself by this constant waste of his substance. This repossession, unlike Hegel's scheme, must aim at suppressing not the object as such but the alienation, i.e., the fact that the product of man's work becomes alien to him.[31]

This, says Marx, is a practical, not a theoretical problem, one that is raised by the very conditions of social and economic life under the capitalist system. In this social order based on private property, competition and profit, work is not determined by man's free will and the intent of the community; it does not express the collective life; instead, it is ruled by the laws of capitalist production and marked by the phenomenon of alienation, of which the alienation observed in religion is but the spiritual reflection. Competition and the quest for profit make the propertyless worker, the proletarian, compelled to sell his labor, externalize and alienate his powers and essence in the objects he makes but cannot buy; he puts his substance into them and grows feebler the more he produces. As he weakens, the goods that he produces, and that confront him in the form of money, strengthen the capital that enslaves him and subjects him to the same laws that govern the production of merchandise, lowering him thus to the level of a tool of production, a machine.[32]

This system sets up the dominion of matter over man and changes personal relations among men into objective relations of the production and exchange of commodities. Its objectification of the social relations that result from

the domination of money leads to the exploitation of man by man and to the triumph of egotism. It was defended by the classical economists, who regarded the mode of production that subordinated man to matter and enslaved him to the objects he produced, as something natural and necessary. Marx reproaches the classical economist with making calculations that disregard the human element. With Feuerbach he holds that it is in society that man must realize his essence.[33]

This implies the abolition of the capitalist system, which constitutes the very negation of human nature, because of its alienation of labor; it implies the inauguration in its place of a new system that will allow humanity to realize its essence. This abolition can not be the effect of a necessary, purely mechanical evolution of society, but must result from the action of men's wills, for men unlike animals consciously alter the conditions of their lives.

Attempts have been made to repair capitalist society by partial reforms in the organization of labor and the conditions of wage workers, but these reforms are ineffectual, for they preserve alienated labor, the source of all these defects.[34] The elimination of alienated labor must be complete; it will be carried out by the total negation of the existing order and its replacement by a new order, the communist system.[35]

This system, by doing away with the alienated labor that makes man a stranger to the products of his labor, will enable man to find himself once more in those products, and to realize that the world is his creation.[36] This complete integration of man into his natural and social environment, brought about by a collective mode of production and distribution of wealth, will entail the disappearance of the opposition between individual and society, between man and nature, that arises out of the system of

alienated labor. Thus there will come about the reconciliation of the rational and the real, of spirit and matter.

In this essay, Marx uses Feuerbach's conceptions and terminology to free himself finally from Hegelianism. Under the guidance of Hess' socialist interpretation of Feuerbach's doctrine, and of Engels' critique of political economy, he sharpens and tightens his conception of communism. He goes beyond Hess and Feuerbach by situating the synthesis of thought and being, of man and the external world, in action conceived of as concrete practical activity or work. He sets the ideal of humanism into the frame of economic and social reality, and looks to economic evolution for the causes of social change.

Despite its seeming objectivity, this work is still deeply tinged with idealism. As in Hegel and Feuerbach, it is the rational conception of true human destiny that makes Marx, somewhat in the manner of the utopians, fix the essential features of the new society he contrasts with present society. The final goal of human emancipation is the realization of humanism by the abolition of the present social and economic system, which is regarded as irrational and immoral. This transformation is guided by criticism, which remains for Marx an essential element of progress. Criticism, acting as practical energy, rules the course of history by contrasting to the present reality, which, he says, is irrational because it is contrary to human destiny, a reality in conformity with man's true nature.

But Marx's criticism, unlike that of Bruno Bauer, which constituted an end in itself, remained attached to reality. It is not dictated by the mere desire and will of men; it can only determine the evolution of the world if the world already shows the conditions for, and contains the elements of, its own transformation. Marx thus undertakes

to analyze the economic and social conditions and the reasons that necessitate the transformation of society into a rational society. He strives to show how the capitalist system, by the alienated work it gives rise to, contains the seeds of its own decay and replacement by a communist system.

### *The Holy Family*

Marx clarifies this conception in the *Holy Family* (1844), the first work he wrote in collaboration with Engels. This marks the end of his Young Hegelian period. He attacks the humanist problem, the problem of man's complete emancipation, from a new standpoint, and holds, even more than he had in the *Economic-philosophical Manuscript,* that this emancipation can not be merely a spiritual one, more or less limited to human consciousness, as Hegel, Bruno Bauer, Feuerbach and Moses Hess had thought. Marx says that it must be a concrete practical emancipation, essentially economic and social in scope.

In this phase of Marx's development the chief influences on him are 18th century materialism and French socialism. He makes an intensive study of their views and doctrines and derives from them the notion the environment has a decisive influence on human evolution.[37] He relegates to the background the problems of humanism and alienation, the semi-idealistic central themes of the *Economic-philosophical Manuscript,* and raises the problem of communism on the economic and social plane, arriving at a new conception of history, whose evolution he sees as essentially determined by the transformation of the mode of production and of social relationships. In a critique of Bruno Bauer's speculative idealism, which was a sort of parody of Hegelian idealism, Marx dismantles the machinery of the speculative philosophy, and shows by analy-

sis of the relations that speculation sets up between the concept and concrete reality how that philosophy distorts the facts.[38]

If, like the speculative philosophers, says Marx, we reduce real fruit—apples, pears, grapes—to the concept of fruit, and hold that this concept, existing apart from them, constitutes their essence, we make this concept the substance of the real fruits, and make the real fruits mere modes of existence of the concept. From now on what is essential in the apple or pear is not its real being but the concept or abstract idea we have substituted for it.

Once philosophical speculation has in this way reduced the actual fruit to the concept of fruit, it has to return from this concept of abstract substance to the actual fruit in order to seem to have a concrete content. But if it is easy to obtain the concept, fruit, from the various particular fruits, it is impossible to get from the concept to the real fruits without giving up the abstraction. This is what the speculative philosophy seems, but only seems, to do. If the fruits, this doctrine holds, which really exist only as substance, appear in different forms, which is contrary to the unity of the substance or concept of fruit, the reason is that fruit, considered as substance, is not a dead concept but a living reality, of which the varieties of fruit are but different expressions, different stages of the concept, fruit, which constitutes the totality of fruits.

In other words, philosophical speculation first reduces objects to a concept and then recreates them as expressions of this concept, performing the miracle of eliciting concrete objects from an unreal and abstract term. They only seem to be concrete objects, of course; their essential quality is not their natural quality, and their only function is to represent the concept, of which they are modes.

To this idealism, which puts an imaginary world in the place of the real world, Marx opposes a new world view, which brings economic and social reality to the foreground and explains the origin and development of ideas by means of it. Marx compares every thesis of Bruno Bauer with the corresponding contradictory thesis of dialectical and historical materialism and contends that Bauer's erroneous conception of history and his mistaken judgments, particularly with respect to Proudhon and French socialism, stem from his speculative idealism.

Bauer had accused Proudhon of being a utopian who started from an absolute idea, the idea of justice, and in the name of that idea condemned existing society. Proudhon is far from being a utopian, Marx answered; he derives his whole system from a critique of private property, the basic principle of the present social order. Proudhon held that private property is the source of all social evils, and he stated the social problem concretely by considering it as a practical problem, not an intellectual one: for society does not change by mere reasoning power.

Proudhon's weakness was that he did not press his criticism of private property to its conclusion, and considered the categories of economics—value, wages, price, profit—to be eternal, instead of showing, as Friedrich Engels had done, that they were only different forms of private property. Since Proudhon did not lay the blame for the evils of society on the nature of private property, but on certain of its characteristics, he did not look for a solution of the social problem outside of private property. He undertook to abolish a state of affairs that compels man to sell his labor, and makes alienated labor of it; but he maintained the need for preserving some form of private property, and hence his suppression of the alienation presupposed that very alienation. He advocated not

the total suppression of private property, which engenders alienation, but wanted to create possession, a watered-down form of private property.

This reformist position explains why Proudhon did not show political and social development as determined by the opposition between riches and poverty, between bourgeoisie and proletariat. He did not aim at a radical change in society. All he saw in the poverty created by the system of private property was wretchedness; he did not see in it the element of change destined to transform that system. Actually, says Marx, riches and poverty are two aspects of the same reality: riches are the positive side of private property and tend to maintain it; poverty is the negative side and tends to do away with it. In creating the class of proletarians, private property unwittingly destroys itself; for the mission of the proletariat is to carry out the sentence private property has passed on itself by producing poverty.[39]

It is from the same point of view that Marx refutes Bauer's criticism of 18th-century materialism, in which Bauer saw nothing more than an aspect of rationalism, which he dogmatically condemned as the expression of the "masses," said to be always opposed to the spirit, instead of trying to understand the historical origin and historical necessity of these doctrines.

Marx's refutation linked up the development of socialism with that of materialism. He pointed out that the materialism of the 18th Century showed two tendencies. One was a mechanist trend stemming from Descartes' physics, which considered matter as the only substance and ended up in a mechanist conception of the world. The other was a social trend stemming from Locke, who affirmed that the same laws ruled nature and man, and that sensations and ideas had a material origin and were the result of experience and habit; Locke thus emphasized

the importance of education and of the environment in human evolution. On the basis of these notions, the first socialist and communist doctrinaires drew the inference that if it is true that man is formed by the external world, and depends on his environment, then that world must be changed and that environment organized, in order to harmonize them, i.e., to adapt them to the development of man's highest qualities.[40]

Having thus disposed of Bauer's speculative idealism, Marx went on in the name of his new conception of history to break with Feuerbach and Hess, who had made it possible for him to go from idealism to materialism and from liberalism to communism, but who, being unable to explain historical evolution, ended up with utopian notions.

### *The Theses on Feuerbach*

The purpose of the *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845)[41] was to give the reasons for this second break. The *Holy Family* had set out, in a rather disconnected form to be sure, the result of the development of Marx's thought during his stay in Paris, a particularly fruitful period for him. His task was now to clear up, put in order and group his new ideas. This he did in clear and striking terms in his eleven theses on Feuerbach, in which by a parallel critique of idealism and mechanical materialism he established the general outlines of historical and dialectical materialism. The basic idea of this double critique is the notion of action, which Marx understands in the sense of practical activity, work. The chief defects of idealism and mechanical materialism stem from their ignoring the nature and revolutionary role of action, so that neither of these theories is able to explain the evolution of the world and both come down to utopian conceptions.

Unlike idealism, which reduces concrete reality to the

idea, mechanical materialism is careful to distinguish the sense-object from thought, but it considers the external world only as an object of perception, not as an object of action, and takes a contemplative and merely passive attitude toward it, failing to realize that the development of the world is the product of human activity, which makes man at one with the environment he transforms.

Idealism has the opposite weakness. It stresses the paramount role of human activity, which it takes as the essential reality. However, since it does away with concrete reality as such by reducing it to mind, it limits man's activity to spiritual activity, and thus makes human life, robbed of its concrete element, an illusion (First Thesis).

The unity of thought and concrete reality, of man and the external world, can only be realized by granting the external world its own reality while still regarding the environment in its concrete reality as the product of man's concrete practical activity. That is what historical and dialectical materialism does; on the basis of this notion of action as practical activity, it alone is able to explain man's integration into the world and the course of history.

Like any materialism, this comes up against the fundamental idealist objection that it can not be proved that the ideas we have of things correspond to real objects distinct from ourselves. Idealism denies the objective reality of the external world and asserts the impossibility of man's attaining concrete reality and objective truth. To this Marx replies that man knows the world only as object of his experience, and that therefore the question of the reality of the objective world is not a theoretical question, as the idealists assert, but a practical one. It is not abstract thought by itself that can prove the reality and truth of knowledge. That can only be done by practical activity, by showing the effectiveness of knowledge. To look for a transcendental existence outside of the knowledge that

comes from practical activity is to look for something that does not exist, or at least has no reality for us (Second Thesis).

The practical activity that is the basis of the certitude we have of the reality of the external world is also the factor, the revolutionary instrument, that enables man to change the world. It is Feuerbach's disregard of the nature and role of action that leads him to pose the religious problem and the social problem on the ideological level and explains his inability to solve them. Feuerbach blames religion and idealism for failing to take into consideration the concrete sensuous nature of man; he argues that man must always stay in contact with concrete reality, which alone makes him aware of his true nature. But since, in keeping with mechanical materialism, he sees this contact with the external world in the form of perception or contemplation, and not in the form of practical activity, he deprives it of all efficacy (Fifth Thesis).

Hence the inadequacy of Feuerbach's critique of religion and society. His analysis of religion assimilates the religious being to human being, the essence of religion to human nature; but he does not see the social reality of human nature, and conceives it abstractly, in itself, outside of society and history; he reduces humanity to the vague concept of a species, i.e., a totality of undifferentiated individuals bound together by natural ties, whereas humanity is actually constituted by the ensemble of social relationships (Sixth Thesis).

Because Feuerbach has an abstract conception of the individual and of society, he sets the problem of religious alienation and of the dualization of the world on an abstract level too, and gives a psychological explanation of this dualism instead of looking for its social causes. Since he fails to see that the religious illusion is but the deep rift in existing society, ideologically transposed, he thinks that

all that is necessary to dispel that illusion is to show its human basis; whereas actually it is the social contradictions from which it arises that must be destroyed; that can only be the work of revolutionary activity (Fourth Thesis).

Having placed the religious problem on the psychological level, Feuerbach resorts essentially to education to dispel the religious illusion and transform society. He thus divides society into two classes: the educators, charged with reforming men, and the mass of ignorant men, the passive crowd they have to educate. This reactionary notion, which justifies the existence of a dominant class, neglects the fact that the educator himself must be educated by his environment, and that the environment is constantly transformed by human activity (Third Thesis).

The religious phenomenon is really a social phenomenon, and the abstract individual to which Feuerbach reduces man is himself the product of a particular form of society (Seventh Thesis).

To solve the religious problem, or any of the problems man faces, we have to take a social viewpoint and analyze the social relations that arise between men, and their real conditions of life. Then we understand the ideologies that express those conditions and relations on the spiritual plane; and then the mysteries of religion clear up (Eighth Thesis).

It is because he considers man's relations with the external world in the form of perception and not in the form of practical activity that Feuerbach, and with him mechanical materialism, do not get beyond the notion of man as an isolated individual, and can therefore give no explanation of man's place in the world and its action on him (Ninth Thesis).

This individualistic conception of man, the mechanical materialist conception, is typical of bourgeois society,

whose reflection this materialism is. Historical and dialectical materialism goes beyond this individualistic point of view; it reflects a new type of society in which man's true nature is realized. This new materialism shows how man humanizes nature by adapting it to his needs, and makes society human (Tenth Thesis).

Thereby this materialism rises not only above mechanical materialism but above all philosophy in general. For philosophy, being concerned essentially with understanding the world, holds that it is thought that is the primordial link between man and concrete reality; it reduces the world to the various attitudes that consciousness or thought may take toward the world, and gives various interpretations of it. Historical and dialectical materialism rejects this contemplative point of view and gives the first place to action, which alone permits man's effective entry into the external world; the new materialism holds that practical activity, and not abstract thought, is the true bond between man and concrete reality; therefore man's activity should not be a merely spiritual activity limited to knowledge: it should essentially aim at linking knowledge to action in order to transform the world. "Philosophers have thus far only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the task is to *change* it" (Eleventh Thesis).

In these theses Marx clarified and solidified the basic elements of his new conception of materialism, by means of which he arrived at a new conception of communism as well, a communism based not on an ideal vision of the future society but on analysis of the historical and dialectical development of economic and social organization. Marx studied concrete man, not as seen in his relations with a metaphysical idea, as in Hegel and Bruno Bauer, or with a vague concept of humanity, as in Feuerbach and Hess, but in his economic and social relations; the entire point of Marx's ideas was the notion of action, as practical

concrete activity, as work, which is thus the bond between man and the external world and the means of changing that world. Marx combined with this idea of work the idea of eliminating the alienated work which is typical of capitalism; thus he united historical and dialectical materialism with communism in a single conception, and rejected idealism and mechanical materialism, as well as utopian socialism, regarding all of them as incapable of explaining either man's integration into the world or the course of history.

Once action was regarded as essential reality, and not reduced to spiritual action, not put on the level of the opposition between the ideal and the real, but taken as practical activity, which unites subject and object and effectively integrates man into the world, and aims at changing the world: after doing this, Marx now had to study the causes and manner of that change. This he did in the second large work he wrote with Engels, the *German Ideology.*[42]

### *The German Ideology*

Marx saw the essential causes and goals of human activity in the organization and production of material life; thus he arrived at a materialist conception of history. The ideological historians considered as secondary, when they did not entirely neglect, the study of material life, in particular the study of the system of production that constitutes the real basis of history. By divorcing history from its social and economic base, they reduced it to a series of political or religious ideas, which they took as the efficient causes of historical evolution, whereas in reality they are but the forms taken in men's consciousness by the real motives of their actions.[43]

To get a correct conception of history we must take the opposite road, and start not from an imaginary humanity

made up of abstractions but from men in their economic and social activity, and study the evolution of the forces of production, which determines the evolution of society.[44] It follows that criticism should be directed essentially at material reality and not at spiritual reality, and that the latter can be made over only by a deep-reaching modification of material reality, of the economic and social organization that gives rise to spiritual reality.[45]

Once Marx has stated the basic principle of his materialistic conception of history, he traces the large outlines of humanity's economic and social evolution. Unlike animals, who undergo the influence of the environment without modifying it, man continually changes his environment to adapt it to his needs. Man's environment is not made up solely of his natural milieu, as with animals, but also, and above all, of his social milieu.[66]

Thus each generation is formed by the mode of production that the previous generation has handed down to it. It modifies this mode of production in accordance with its needs before transmitting it to the next generation.[47] There is a constant action and reaction of the natural and social environment on man and of man on his environment, each one determining the other and being determined by it, or as Marx puts it, "the milieu makes the man as much as man makes the milieu."[48]

The history of humanity is made up of this progressive adaptation of the milieu to man. Each stage of history is marked by a new stage of the forces of production and of the social relations they give rise to. To determinate forces of production there correspond definite social relations and a determinate social organization required to operate those forces and adapted to them; and any important change in the forces of production entails a modification of social relations.

Historical evolution takes place dialectically by means

of the opposition, the contradiction between the forces of production and social organization; for the two do not evolve in the same rhythm. The productive forces develop unceasingly, while the social organization tends to stabilize its adaptation to old forces of production and to impede the new productive relations that are taking form. In that case it must be removed and replaced by another social organization and other social relations, adapted to the new forces of production. It is this adaptation of social organization to new forces of production that constitutes a revolution.[49] The Revolution of 1789 was nothing other than the destruction of feudal society and its replacement by bourgeois society, which is adapted to the capitalist mode of production.

The parallel dialectical development of forces of production and social relations is not uniform. It varies in different countries and branches of activity, and there is no automatic and mechanical transition from one stage to another, so that obsolete modes of production can survive for a while, as windmills persist alongside of steam-driven mills. The conflict between forces of production and social relations is generally a social conflict, expressed in class struggles, but it can also take on a political or religious form, which distorts men's evaluation of it.

To each stage of the evolution of productive forces there corresponds a new form of the division of labor, and industry, trade and agriculture separate out as specialized branches of human activity. To each new stage of the division of labor there corresponds a different form of property.[50] The principal forms of the division of labor and of property which have succeeded each other in the course of history, and marked the great historical stages, are:

a) Collective tribal property, corresponding to a low

stage of production limited to hunting, fishing and herding.[51]

b) Communal property, which is the source of private property, still subordinate however to collective property. Here there appears the basic division of labor between agriculture and industry, and the separation between city and country. The formation of the city concentrates the working population and the tools of production, and leads to the separation of capital and labor.[52]

c) Feudal property, based on the organization of agricultural production and the exploitation of serfs who are attached to the soil. Here industry becomes artisanal and corporative; capital is limited to the possession of house, tools and clientele (constant capital), and the division of labor is not advanced.[53]

d) The next stage of the division of labor is marked by the extension of trade, with a resultant separation between the production and the circulation of wealth, between industry and commerce, and the rise of a special merchant class. The separation of city and country now takes the form of a separation between personal property (capital) and real (landed) property.[54] The concentration of capital and of the working population makes possible the creation of manufactures. The parallel development of banking increases the volume of movable capital and favors the formation of large-scale industry, in which new motive powers are used, machinery is adopted, and the division of labor is increased by way of specialization.[55]

The development of large-scale industry and trade causes an increasing concentration of capital and an increasing disjunction between production and property, between capital and labor, and hence an ever-wider opposition between bourgeoisie and proletariat.[56] The separation of capital and labor deprives the mass of workers,

the proletarians, of the possession of the means of production and compels them to sell their labor power and alienate it in the wares that they produce and that enslave them, by taking the form of money, capital. In this system of alienated labor, which marks capitalism, the producer, severed from the fruit of his work, has no value except in so far as he makes himself a commodity by selling his power to work; it is only as a market value that he takes part in social life.

Personal relations between men are turned into relations between objects, into exchanges of commodities; social relations are treated as things; the bonds of solidarity among men are broken; and collective life becomes illusory, being embodied in a state that purports to represent the general interest, but is in reality, Marx holds, only the political organ of class rule that the bourgeoisie needs to guarantee private property and protect its class interests.[57] This is seen in law and legislation which in fact, despite their pretensions at representing the general interest, always defend the interest of the ruling class and evolve along with it.

The specious neutralization of divergent class interests in the state explains the transformation there of social conflicts into political conflicts, in the form of clashes between aristocracy and democracy, between monarchy and republic—conflicts which are the illusory forms of social or class conflicts. This clash of private interests in a political form within the state has to be settled by the state itself, which is held to represent the general interest, as being above particular interests, and thereby appears to individuals, not as the expression of their own power, but as a foreign power standing over them.[58]

To justify the capitalist system, in Marx's view, the bourgeoisie not only uses the state, which in theory em-

bodies the general interest but actually defends the particular interests of the bourgeoisie, but it also uses political economy, which holds this system to be the result of the very nature of things, necessary and thereby rational. Marx criticizes this as apologetics based on hypostatization of social relations into relations among commodities; this hypostasis corresponds to a determinate historical form of production. Once the apparent objectivity of social relations is exposed and their true nature seen, they appear as alienated labor, as the mere negation of humanity.

The abolition of this inhuman system, he goes on, can take place only dialectically, by the negation of the existing order and its assumption into a new order, the negation and the assumption being two aspects of a single historical process. Such a transformation of society requires not only a certain degree of material and spiritual development, but also a class that is organized and aware of the goal to be reached.[59] This class is the proletariat, whose historical role is not merely to free itself from its chains, as other oppressed classes before it have done, but to liberate all humanity. It has no specific class interest to defend at the expense of any other class. By freeing itself from its specific conditions of existence, under alienated labor, it will liberate all society.[60]

The proletarian revolution will be the last form of the class struggle, which stemmed from the division of labor and antagonistic interests, and formed the motive factor of historical evolution. This struggle opposed free men and slaves in the ancient world, and nobles and serfs in the middle ages. In the modern world the struggle sets the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. The clash becomes sharper as the gulf widens between capital and labor, between the bourgeois class that owns the machinery of

production and the proletariat that carries all the burdens of the capitalist system without profiting by its advantages, and is thereby led to do away with it.

To accomplish its revolutionary action, Marx holds that the proletariat must get free of the false conceptions by means of which the bourgeoisie covers its particular interests under the mask of the general interest; it must learn class consciousness, whose expression is communism. Like the capitalist system, which has hitherto been the framework of history, in which all the activities of individuals enter into a definite degree of development of the forces of production, communism is universal; like capitalism, it goes beyond the limits of nations and states.[61]

Former revolutions aimed at altering the mode of the division of labor, but the proletarian revolution will be a radical one, for it will change the very mode of work, by doing away with private property and the division of society into classes. The abolition of alienated labor and the transformation of hypostatized social relations into personal and human relations will allow man to direct production rationally instead of being enslaved by it. By harmonious integration of man into his environment and by the flowering of collective life, communism will reestablish human personality in its dignity and its liberty.[62]

Historical and dialectical materialism does not limit its explanation of history to man's economic, political and social activity, but extends that explanation to all of spiritual activity as well. Marx refers the evolution of history essentially to the development of economic production and the consequent transformations of social relations; at the same time he brings out the determining influence of economic and social development on the formation and development of all the manifestations of spiritual life—religion, philosophy, morality, art.

In doing so he rejects, from the very outset, the ideological conception that considers these things in themselves and attributes absolute value to them. According to his critique of ideology, if ideas and religious and philosophical conceptions have been ascribed an existence independent of the material conditions of men's lives, and if they have been credited with a decisive role in historical development, the source of the error is the division between manual and intellectual labor that the constant development of the forces of production evokes. This division has given rise to a class of thinkers whose social function it is to create abstractions which they hold to be real and efficacious apart from the conditions of men's concrete material existence. Their consciousness develops apart from practical activity and is fancied to represent a reality beyond that activity; it becomes pure theory, religion or philosophy.[63] Thus, for the judge, whose function it is to apply a code of laws, legislation is the decisive element in social reality.

Ideologues divorce ideas from the individuals who conceive them and the empirical circumstances out of which they arise, and attribute an absolute creativeness to the spirit, independently of real life and practical activity. They channel the movement of history into the movement of ideas, putting an imaginary history in place of real history.[64]

Thus the ideologues came to believe that the world can be altered at will by means of ideas; hence their uniform helplessness in their attempts at reforming society. They all strove to replace the impersonal and objective relations that social relations turn into under capitalism by personal relations that preserve human autonomy; but they got nowhere, of course, because they remained on the spiritual and moral level and did not in fact abolish the system of

private property out of which the reification or hypostatization of social relations arises.[65]

Actually, the formation of ideas and consciousness is intimately bound up with men's material activity. Consciousness is the expression of real life, and its development is inseparable from the development of real life. "It is men who produce their conceptions and ideas; but real, active men as they are formed by a definite development of their productive forces and the consequent social relations. Consciousness can never be anything but conscious being, and men's being is the actual process of their lives."[66]

Although Marx links spiritual development to economic and social development, which alone can explain its nature and causes, he does not profess to establish a strict subordination of spirtual reality to material reality, or to set up a rigorous parallelism between them. The ensemble of a society's religious, philosophical, political and moral views does not develop in the same way as its economic and social organization, neither in its rhythm nor in its modes. While the transformation of the forces of production is necessarily accompanied by a parallel transformation of social organization, the process of change is much slower in the realm of ideas, whose ties to the mode of production are less close and direct. If we can observe even on the econmic plane the copresence of different forces of production at a given moment (the windmill alongside the steam mill), we can note still more the persistence of conceptions corresponding to a previous way of life, and their coexistence with other conceptions corresponding to new ways of life.

Marx, while denying to ideas or spiritual conceptions the leading role in historical evolution, still considered them as a very important social reality, which as such in-

fluence the course of history. By opposing it or furthering it they can at least modify its rhythms and modes, if not its general trend. Marx's rejection of ideology as the determining factor in historical evolution does not mean a return to mechanical materialism, which would make man the passive instrument of the forces of production, the object of a fatalistic determinism. On the contrary Marx stressed the increasing importance of man's rational action on his environment, which he modifies more and more deeply in order to master it and adapt it to his needs.

Such are the general outlines of the materialistic and dialectical conception of history and of communism, which from this time on were to dominate all of Marx's thought and action.

### *The Poverty of Philosophy and the Communist Manifesto*

Instead of regarding the proletariat, more or less abstractly, as an object for philosophical thought, Marx thought of it from now on concretely as a revolutionary class, no longer the object but the subject of thought and action, whose function it is to change the world. He proceeded from his critique of the two principal forms of bourgeois thought, idealism and mechanical materialism, to combat reformist socialism in all its forms, as the opponent of the class consciousness of the proletariat and its revolutionary action. In particular, his *Poverty of Philosophy* (1847), an answer to Proudhon's *Philosophy of Poverty,* broke unequivocally with the most famous representative of this sort of socialism, Proudhon.

Marx argued that Proudhon's errors stemmed from his reformist position, which prevented him from understanding the actual development of economic and social phenomena. Proudhon had tried to give a dialectical solution to the economic and social contradictions he had ob-

served. As a defender of the middle classes, however, he tended toward compromises, and saw the solution of these contradictions not in their aggravation but in agreement. This deformation of dialectic annulled all real development and led in effect to a standstill. He could not understand the process of history; instead he left the economic and social plane, as all utopians do, for the ideological level, and in a very Hegelian way made eternal reason the decisive element in history.

The critique of Proudhon marked the final break between reformist socialism and revolutionary communism. The next step in Marx's thinking was the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). Up to that time his conception of the proletariat as object of philosophy had been half-conceptual; it now became the conception of the concrete proletariat, the revolutionary rising class, as the bearer and subject of a new thought and a new action, with the mission of radically making over society and men's living conditions.

The revolution of 1848 led Marx to a still sharper formulation of the revolutionary role of the proletariat. There the bourgeoisie, turned conservative, showed in deeds its incapacity to complete its own revolution in the countries which were still semi-feudal, and reformist socialism showed its incapacity even to participate in a social revolution. On the basis of this political and social experience, Marx undertook his radical criticism of bourgeois society, first in his *Critique of Political Economy* (1859) and then in *Capital* (1867).

### *Summary*

The first stage of bourgeois thought was the spiritual liberation movement of the Renaissance and Reformation, whose watchwords were freedom, movement and progress.

Rationalism, adding the idea of rational progress to the notion of freedom, constituted a new stage in the adaptation of the general world view to the development of the capitalist system. It took different forms in England, France and Germany because of the uneven pace of capitalist development. Owing to the contradiction, maintained by Marxists to be inherent in capitalism, between an individual mode of appropriation and consumption and a mode of production that is increasingly collective in nature, rationalism could not overcome the dualism that opposes spirit to matter, man to nature; it could not solve the vital problem of giving man his proper place in the outer world, a problem raised by the very development of capitalism with its increased intensity of production.

The first two efforts to solve this problem by means of an organic world view, those made by Rousseau and Kant, end in Rousseau with an illusory integration of man into an imaginary nature and an imaginary society, and in Kant with a purely formal totality.

The attempt at integration was next taken up by the German idealist philosophy, but it too accomplished its integration, in a utopian and illusory way. It tried to do so by means of reducing all of reality to an organic unity. It considered spiritual and material reality as two formally different but essentially similar explanations of the life that animates all of being; then it proceeded to reduce this life to spiritual life, and make the mind not only the means of knowledge but also the creative principle of all things.

This philosophy was influenced by Kant, who held that the mind enters into reality by imposing its own forms on it; but it went beyond this merely formal unity, which still left a deep-reaching dualism between mind and matter. It eliminated the thing-in-itself, which gave con-

crete reality an existence independent of the thinking subject. It reduced all reality to a changeable expression of the spirit. In this way spirit became both subject and object; concrete reality merged with knowledge and its development was expressed in terms of the movement of ideas.

The finished expression of this idealist philosophy is found in Hegel, who inserted the development of nature and history into the framework of knowledge. Three essential principles should be noted in idealism:

a) The notion of the mutual interdependence and interaction of mind and matter, of man and the external world, which led to the abandonment of the metaphysical world view that regarded ideas, facts and things in themselves, and not in their mutual interrelations.

b) The notion that the essential reality is living reality, which can only be understood when it is considered in its alteration, its transformation, its becoming.

c) The thought that the basic principle of the world considered in its development is not identity, which leaves reality fixed in changelessness and death, but contradiction, which causes the constant transformation of beings and things, and thereby creates life. Actually, the dominant role in the change that every living reality includes within itself is played by the negative element, by the opposition and contradiction that constitute the principle of all change and all progress.

French utopian socialism opposed this idealistic philosophy and bourgeois thought in general. It set about integrating man into the world on quite a different level. It proposed to overcome the opposition in capitalism between the way in which wealth is produced and the way it is distributed, by collectivizing the mode of distribution. It did away with the individualistic atomistic view of

human nature which is characteristic of bourgeois society, and arrived at the conception that collective life and collective activity are the only way to integrate man fully into his natural and social environment. But this socialism, the expression of a proletariat just being born, could not derive the causes and the mode of the change in society out of society itself. It remained utopian, bringing up economic and social problems on a rational and moral plane, divorcing the present from the future, and contrasting existing society with the ideal it should realize.

At first Marx's thought, saturated with Hegel's doctrine, developed within the framework of the Hegelian Left. Along with the Young Hegelians he strove to adapt Hegelianism to liberalism by rejecting the conservative system and keeping only the dialectical method. He believed that eliminating the irrational elements from reality by means of criticism would suffice to give history a rational course.

The failure of this attempt brought him face to face with the problem of the relations between state and society, which he solved in the spirit of Feuerbach, whose doctrine dominated Marx in this period when, along with a part of the Hegelian Left, he was turning from liberalism to communism. Feuerbach had extended his criticism of religion to the idealist philosophy, and argued that the latter inverts subject and attribute in much the same way that religion makes man the creation of God: the idealist philosophy makes man and concrete reality attributes of the idea, which is raised to the level of the subject.

To obtain a correct conception of the relations between idea and existence, says Feuerbach, this inversion must be eliminated. Actuality, not the idea, must be our starting-point. Spirit must be integrated into matter, not matter into spirit, and man, with his needs and perceptions, must

be taken as the organic expression of this synthesis. In a return to the mechanical materialism of the 18th century, however, which subordinated man to the influence of the outer world, Feuerbach made man the product of an idealized nature, more or less in the manner of Rousseau, and ended up with a comtemplative and sentimental doctrine that left human life and activity outside of the social environment and history.

Feuerbach's critique of religion led to his theory of society. Religion, he maintained, deprives man of his real nature and attributes it to God. If man is to recover his real essence, he must put back into himself what he has alienated to God. The collective being, the species, constitutes man's essence; but, when it is transferred to God it becomes only a transcendental illusion. Once man's alienated essence is restored to him, the collective being will be genuine human actuality; man, freeing himself of egotism and individualism, will make the love of humanity the law of his life.

This was still an extremely vague collectivism. Hess gave it a more definite social character by construing the alienation of human nature, which Feuerbach had pointed out in the religious domain, as a product of the capitalist order of society, which compels the worker to put his labor power into the product of his labor, to alienate it in commodities that do not belong to him but are set up against him in the form of capital and enslave him. Hess' solution, like Feuerbach's, transposed the problem to the ethical level, in the form of a struggle against egotism and for the love of humanity.

Karl Marx considered the problem of alienation and its abolition as basic, and went back to Feuerbach in order to criticize not only Hegel's idealism but also his view of the state, which Marx viewed as apologetics for the aliena-

tion of the human essence in the field of politics. However, since Marx actually intended to transform bourgeois society in fact, he retained Hegel's notion of the dialectical development of history and rejected the sentimentalities of Feuerbach and Hess, which he regarded as incapable of solving the problem of changing society.

Mechanical materialism, Marx holds, does not give enough weight to the influence of man on his environment. It treats of man apart from his economic and social activity, and ends up in a contemplative and deterministic world view that cannot explain either man's actual integration into his milieu nor his action on the environment to change it.

Compared to mechanical materialism, idealism, especially Hegelian idealism, has the advantage of stressing the predominant role of human activity in the historical process. However, since idealism resolves concrete reality into the idea and restricts man's activity to spiritual activity, it actually gives real existence only to spirit, while the concrete reality loses its substance and becomes a mere appearance. The identity that idealism professes to establish between reality and the idea, and between object and subject, as well as the union between thought and being, between man and the external world, are therefore realized, according to Marx, only in an illusory way. For this unity to become a fact, for integration of the idea into concrete reality and of man into the milieu actually to take place, both speculative idealism and mechanical materialism must be overcome and the world must retain its own reality, without either being reduced to an idea or treated mechanically. It must be taken organically, in the process of its transformation by human action.

What accomplishes the true integration of man into his environment, Marx holds, is human activity, taken not as

purely spiritual but as concrete and practical, as work. Work plays the role of middle term between thought and concrete reality that Hegel had assigned to the idea. By means of work, by means of economic and social activity, the deep unity, the dynamic and living unity of mind and matter, of man and the outer world, is realized, and man is progressively integrated into the world in the course of a constant action and reaction of the milieu on man and man on the milieu.

Marx finds the essential causes and goals of human activity in the production of the material conditions of life, in the satisfaction of man's elementary needs and hence in the organization of production. That is why his world view is essentially materialistic. Unlike mechanical materialism, this materialism considers the world in its historical process. Since the satisfaction of men's elementary needs (food, clothing, shelter) forms the basic element of their lives and their activity, the movement of history and the development of mankind are essentially determined not by the development of ideas in themselves, but by the transformation of the conditions of material life, by the development of productive forces and productive relationships. A proper understanding of history is furnished, therefore, by the study, not of politics and religious theories, but of the development of economic and social activity.

The course of history is thus determined by the transformation of the mode of production. Marx finds the causes of this transformation in economic and social contradictions; this gives his historical materialism a dialectical character. The study of history had convinced him that the mode of production governs social organization as well as economic organization. To definite productive forces there correspond social relationships and a social

organization that are adapted to those forces; any significant change in the forces of production necessarily entails a change in these relationships and hence a transformation of society. This transformation, he holds, takes place dialectically by means of the contradiction between the productive forces and the productive relationships. For at a certain point the productive forces, ceaselessly developing because of the constant growth of needs, come up against the organization of society, which corresponds to earlier productive forces but now forms an obstacle and hindrance to their further development. This opposition and contradiction between the new productive forces and the social organization gives rise to a revolution that results in the formation of a new social organization adapted to these forces. This contradiction is reflected in the political and social plane in the form of class conflicts, which are the motive force in the process of history.

The materialistic and dialectical conception of history, which is advanced to explain economic and social development, is applied to spiritual development as well. Marx criticized the idealistic view that lends absolute worth and value to ideas and gives them the deciding role in history. This view, he said, rests on the division of labor, which separates intellectual labor from material activity and gives it a semblance of autonomy and independence, considering ideas in themselves apart from the men who think them. Marx rejected this conception as idealistic and metaphysical, and considered the ideas dialectically, in their relation with the concrete human economic and social activity that, he held, alone enables us to understand and explain them. He denied absolute worth and absolute value to ideas. For him knowledge is tied to experience, which is the only proof of the reality and effectiveness of thought. Knowledge develops along with the

transformation of men's real way of living. Thus by and large spiritual development is determined by material development. We observe the way in which changes of the material basis of society, in its economic and social substructure, lead to transformations of the entire structure of the society's political, legal, philosophical and religious views.

Marx asserted the connection between the material and the spiritual development of society, without however maintaining that a strict parallelism or absolute subordination existed. For the spiritual development does not have the same rhythm as economic and social development, and hence different and even contrary views can and do exist at a given epoch. Moreover, philosophical, religious, political and social ideas are a very important social reality, and as such can affect the course of history, at least in its rhythm if not in its general trend.

Applied to the study of the capitalist society of Marx's time, this general historical method started from the French socialist doctrines and argued that in order to overcome the contradiction inherent in the capitalist social order and integrate man into his social milieu, the modes of production and of distribution of wealth must be brought into accord by making both of them collective. Utopian socialism assumed this concordance as a moral postulate without being able to prove its historical necessity. Instead, it set up an ideal reality, a vision of the future world in contrast to actual society. Marx, however, using his method of materialist and dialectical materialism, sees in society itself the means to make a radical transformation of it from a capitalist to a communist organization. Going back to Engels' critique of political economy, he maintains that the abolition of capitalism will be evoked by its own nature and its own contradictions,

which will aggravate crises and class conflicts and lead to social revolution. This revolution, he concludes, will replace capitalist society by a communist society; it will abolish alienated labor, assimilate the mode of consumption and appropriation to the collective mode of production, and make possible man's complete and harmonious integration into the world.

# NOTES

*Preface*—no notes

*Chapter I*—no notes

*Chapter II*

[1] This semi-theological conception of evolution arose out of the difficulty of establishing causal relationships in biology, history and the social sciences. Goethe for instance saw in the *Urpflanze*, the original plant, a metaphysical prototype which determines *a priori* the variety and succession of plant forms. In the physical sciences, such notions had all but disappeared.

[2] Cf. *Briefe von und an Hegel, I*, in *Werke*, Vol. XIX (Leipzig, 1887), p. 194, letter to Niethammer, Oct. 28, 1808: "Every day I am more and more convinced that theoretical work has more effect in the world than practical work; once the realm of our ideas is revolutionized, actuality must follow along."

*Chapter III*

[1] Cf. J. Wahl, *Le malheur de la conscience dans la philosophie de Hegel* (Paris, 1929), pp. 7, 82 f., 107 f.

[2] Cf. Roque, *Hegel. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, p. 17 (a manuscript of Hegel, year 1789, p. 252): "Philosophy can not be either empirical nor metaphysical; it should consider spirit in its immanent and necessary development. . . . Empirical consideration stops at phenomenal knowledge without arriving at the concept, metaphysical consideration deals exclusively with the concept without taking its phenomenal aspect into consideration and thus reduces it to an abstraction. What constitutes the essence of spirit is its activity, that is to say the fact of realizing itself in the phenomenal world."

[3] Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts, Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. VII (Stuttgart, 1938), *"Vorrede,"* p. 35: "It is as foolish to imagine that any philosophy should go outside of its present world as that an individual should overleap his age, leap beyond Rhodes. If its theory does actually go further, and build a world for itself *as it should be*, this world will exist, but only in its belief,—a weak element in which anything at all may be imagined."

Hegel, *System der Philosophie, I. Teil, Die Logik, Sämtl. Werke*, Vol. VIII (Stuttgart, 1940), *"Einleitung,"* p. 49: "But the separation of actuality from the idea is especially dear to the understanding, that takes the dreams of its abstractions for something truthful, and is vain over the *Ought*, which it likes to prescribe in the political field too, as if the

world had waited for it in order to learn how it *should* be, but is not. . . ."

[4] Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts, op. cit.*, pp. 32, 35: ". . . since philosophy means *giving grounds for what is reasonable,* it is therefore a *comprehension* of what is *present* and *actual,* not the setting up of a *beyond,* the Lord knows where. . . .

"The task of philosophy is to conceive *what is,* for *what is,* is reason. . . .

"To recognize reason as the rose in the cross of the present, and to be glad of it on that account, this reasonable insight is *reconciliation* with reality. . . ."

[5] Hegel, *Die Logik, op. cit.*, pp. 117 f.: "Empiricism contains this great principle, that what is true must be in reality and exist for perception. This principle is contrary to the *Ought,* with which reflection puffs itself up and glories, against actuality and the present, in a *Beyond* which is to have its place and existence only in the subjective understanding."

[6] *Phil. des Rechts, op. cit.*, p. 33: "What is rational is real; and what is real is rational."

[7] Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes, Sämtl. Werke,* Vol. II (Stuttgart, 1927), p. 44: "Philosophy however does not consider *unessential* definition, but definition in so far as it is essential; it is not the abstract or the unreal that is its element and content, but the real, self-postulating and living in itself, the existent in its concept."

[8] *Phil. des Rechts, op. cit.*, pp. 33 f.: "The task is to know what is substantial and immanent in temporal and transitory appearance. For what is reasonable (a synonym for the idea), as it enters at the same time in its reality into outer existence, appears in an infinite wealth of forms, appearances and shapes. . . . The infinitely manifold relations that arise in this externality by the appearance of essence in it, this infinite material and its ordering, is not the object of philosophy."

[9] Hegel, *Wissenchaft der Logik, II. Teil, Sämtl. Werke,* Vol. V (Stuttgart, 1936), p. 26: "Instead, logic shows the rise of the *idea* to the stage from which it becomes the creator of nature."

[10] Meyerson, *De l'explication dans les sciences,* Vol. I (Paris, 1921), p. 115: "Because of the invincible conviction of the essential rationality of the real, we conceive and irresistibly must conceive that every relation of succession shows and at the same time hides a relation of logical dependence."

Hegel, *System der Philosophie, II. Teil, Naturphilosophie, Sämtl. Werke,* Vol. IX (Stuttgart, 1942), p. 52: "Philosophy is timeless comprehension of time too and of all things, in their *eternal* definition."

Hegel, *Philosophie der Geschichte, Sämtl. Werke,* Vol. XI (Stuttgart, 1939), *"Einleitung,"* p. 45: ". . . the spirit knows itself: it is the judgment on its own nature, . . . In this abstract sense it can be said of world

history that it is the explication of the spirit as it works out for itself the knowledge of what it is in itself; and as the bud bears within itself the whole nature of the tree, the taste and form of the fruit, so the first traces of spirit contain *virtualiter* all of history."

[11] Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik, I. Teil, Sämtl. Werke,* Vol. IV (Stuttgart, 1936), p. 549: "But *thinking* reason sharpens, so to speak, the dulled distinctness of the different, the mere multiplicity of representation, into *essential* difference, into *opposition.* For the first time multiplicities are driven to the sharp point of contradiction, into sturdy and vital opposition, and there gain negativity, which is the inner pulsation of self-movement and vitality."

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 546: "It is one of the basic prejudices of previous logic and the ordinary way of thinking that contradiction is not as essential and immanent a determination as identity is; but if it were a question of precedence, and both determinations were to be fixed as separate, contradiction would have to be taken as the deeper and more essential. For compared to it Identity is only the determination of simple immediacy, of dead being; while contradiction is the root of all movement and vitality; a thing moves and has drive and activity only in so far as it has a contradiction in it."

[13] *Ibid.,* "Einleitung," p. 51: "The one *requisite for scientific progress,* that one quite *simple* insight to be concerned with, is the knowledge of the logical proposition that the negative is equally positive; or that what contradicts itself does not resolve into zero, the abstract nothing, but essentially only into the negation of its *particular* content; or that such a negation is not all negation, but *the negation of the determinate thing* that it dissolves, and so is determinate negation; thus that in the result essentially that is conserved from which it arose:—which is strictly speaking a tautology, for otherwise it would be something immediate, not a result. Since what results, the negation, is *determinate* negation, it has a *content.* It is a new concept, but the higher, richer concept than the preceding one; for it became richer by the negation of the preceding concept, by what was contrasted to it; it contains it, but also more than it, and is the unity of it and its opposite.—It is in this way that the general system of concepts must be built—and complete itself in unceasing, pure motion taking nothing from outside."

[14] This conception of the positive role of negation had already been expressed by the figure of Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust.*

[15] *Phän. des Geistes, op. cit.,* pp. 44 f.

[16] *Ibid.,* pp. 153-158.

[17] Hegel, *System der Philosophie, II. Teil, Naturphilosophie, Sämtl. Werke,* Vol. IX (Stuttgart, 1940), p. 50: "Nature is spirit become a stranger to itself. . . ."

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 54: "Nature therefore shows no freedom in its existence, but *necessity* and *chance*."

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 44; and cf. Meyerson, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 44.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 58 f.: "Nature is to be regarded as a *system of stages*, each proceeding necessarily from the other and constituting the next truth of the stage from which it proceeds; but not in the sense that one is *naturally* produced by the other, but in the inner idea that constitutes the basis of Nature. . . . It was a clumsy notion of the old natural philosophy, and of the new as well, to consider the completion of a natural form and its passage into a higher one as an external real production, which however to make it *clearer* is put back into the *darkness* of the past. What is characteristic of nature is the externality of letting differences dissever and appear as indifferent existences; the dialectical concept that leads the *stages* onward is their inwardness."

[21] *Phil. der Geschichte, op. cit.*, p. 34: "The one notion philosophy supplies is the simple notion of reason, that reason rules the world, and that therefore things happened reasonably in world history."

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 45, quoted above, note 10.

[23] Hegel, *System der Philosophie, III. Teil, Die Philosophie des Geistes, Sämtl. Wcrke,* Vol. X (Stuttgart, 1942), p. 430: "It is true that the general spirit of an age is expressed in general in the character of the outstanding individuals of a period, and even their peculiarities are the more remote and opaque media in which the spirit of the age still plays in weaker hues,—it is true that even the details of a small occurrence, of a saying, often express not only a subjective particularity but show a time, a people, an education in striking clarity and brevity . . . on the other hand the mass of the other details is superfluous, and their accurate collection only interferes with and obscures the objects worthy of history; the essential nature of the spirit and its age always lies in the great events."

[24] *Phil. der Geschichte,* op. cit., p. 36: "It resulted first from the consideration of world history itself that things happened rationally in it, that it was the rational, necessary course of the world spirit, the spirit whose nature is always one and the same, but which sets forth this nature of its in the world's existence. This, as has been said, must be the task of history. But we have to take history as it is: we have to proceed historically, empirically. . . ."

[25] Cf. *Phil des Geistes, op. cit.*, p. 427.

[26] Cf. Kurt Breysig, *Vom geschichtlichen Werden,* Vol. II (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1926), p. 365.

[27] *Phil. des Geistes, op. cit.*, p. 429: "The substantial goal in the existence of a people is to be a state and maintain itself as such; a people which has not erected its state (a *nation,* as such) has no history, strictly

speaking. . . . What happens to a people and within it, has its essential significance in relation to the state."

*Chapter IV*

[1] August von Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena zur Historiosophie* (Berlin, 1838).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[3] Bruno Bauer, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte des Johannes* (Bremen, 1840) and, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker*, Vol. I/II (Leipzig, 1841), Vol. II (Braunschweig, 1842).

[4] Bruno Bauer, *Die Posaune des jüngsten Gerichts über Hegel den Atheisten und Antichristen, Ein Ultimatum* (Leipzig, 1841).

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 82 ff.

[7] Ludwig Feuerbach, *"Zur Kritik der hegelschen Philosophie,"* in *Hallische Jahrbücher*, August-September, 1838; and in *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. II (Leipzig, 1846).

[8] Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christentums* (1841), *Sämtl. Werke*, Vol. VII (Leipzig, 1849).

[9] Feuerbach, *Vorläufige Thesen zur Reform der Philosophie* (1842), *Sämtl. Werke*, Vol. II.

[10] Feuerbach, *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft* (1843), *Sämtl. Werke*, Vol. II.

[11] Moses Hess, *Die europäische Triarchie*, (Leipzig, 1841).

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 58, 82, 90, 151, 161.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[14] The first three articles appeared in the *Einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz, I. Teil* (Zürich and Winterthur, 1843), the fourth in the *Rheinischen Jahrbücher zur gesellschaftlichen Reform*, Vo.l I, 1845.

*Chapter V*

[1] Citations of Marx and Engels refer to *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA), *Erste Abteilung.*

[2] MEGA, Vol. I,[1] p.80

[3] MEGA, I,[1] pp. 22 ff.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 64 ff.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 414 ff., 418.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 405 ff.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 522 ff., 528.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 492-501.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 538-544.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 423 ff.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 576-621.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 607.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 607 ff.
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 608-613.
[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 614 ff.
[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 617-621.
[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 578-580.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 581-588.
[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 590-598.
[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 599, 605 ff.
[21] MEGA, Vol. II, pp. 379-404.
[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 391-396.
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 401-404.
[24] Theodor Zlocisti, *Moses Hess, Sozialistische Aufsätze (1841-1847), "Ueber das Geldwesen,"* (Berlin, 1921), pp. 158-187.
[25] *Oekonomisch-Philosophische Manuskript,* MEGA, Vol. III, pp. 33-172.
[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 154-157.
[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 162-164.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 168-172.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 159-161.
[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 157.
[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 82-94, 39-43.
[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 88 ff.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 111.
[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 134 ff.
[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 111-117.
[37] *Die Heilige Familie,* MEGA, Vol. III, pp. 300-312.
[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 227-231.
[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 193-225.
[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 300-310.
[41] MEGA, Vol. V, pp. 533-535.
[42] MEGA, Vol. V, pp. 3-528.
[43] *Ibid.*, pp. 27-29.
[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 17-19.
[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 45 ff.
[46] *Ibid.*, pp. 10 ff.
[47] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[48] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[49] *Ibid.*, pp. 61-63.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[51] *Ibid.*, pp. 11 ff.
[52] *Ibid.*, pp. 12 ff.
[53] *Ibid.* pp. 13-41.
[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 41 ff.

[55] *Ibid.*, pp. 44 ff.
[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 47-50.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 52.
[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 23 ff., 27 ff.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 36.
[60] *Ibid.*, pp. 57-60.
[61] *Ibid*, pp. 24 ff.
[62] *Ibid.*, pp. 64 ff.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[64] *Ibid.*, p. 165.
[65] *Ibid*, pp. 37 ff., 165 ff.
[66] *Ibid.*, pp. 15 ff.

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