

WHAT IS CONFORMIST MARXISM?*

by Russell Jacoby

I

"So much worse for the facts." With these words of Fichte, Lukacs closed the first draft of "What is Orthodox Marxism?" To the skeptical, and perhaps to the sympathetic, the words are outrageous. Marxism is not contradicted by the facts. The facts are duplicit or, at best, mute. To quantify, classify, categorize facts is to capitulate to them. "Truly orthodox dialectical Marxists paid little attention to the so-called facts."¹

The obverse is plainer and more convincing: the facts confirm Marxism. The large events, as well as the small, prove the truth of the theory. The Russian and Chinese Revolutions, imperialism, the development of the working class, and so on, all demonstrate the continuous validity of Marxism. Marxism is compelling precisely because it is accurate, and finally, because it is successful: it works. The strength of the working class, as well as the victory of several revolutions, leave little doubt. Success is the proof.

Success: this is the rub. How does one evaluate success? The Seventeenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party (1934) announced that the party has "triumphed" everywhere. Stalin declared that socialism was now "the sole commanding force." For this reason the official account dubbed this meeting "The Congress of Victors."² Several decades later, in 1956, Khrushchev indicated how the victors fared: "Of the 139 members and candidates of the party's Central Committee who were elected at the Seventeenth Congress, 98 persons, i.e., 70 percent, were arrested and shot. . . . The same fate met. . . the majority of the delegates to the Seventeenth Party Congress. Of 1,966 delegates. . . 1,108 were arrested on charges of revolutionary crimes, i.e., decidedly more than a majority. . . ."³

The banal truth: today's success is tomorrow's failure. Everybody wants a winner. Nobody likes a loser. That nothing succeeds like success is true not only for bourgeois society, but its critique, Marxism. Marxists too want to win or, at least, side with the winners.

Orthodox Marxism has chased after success; and this hunt has paralyzed its critical nerve, past and present. Prior to World War I, the German Social Democrats exercised hegemony by virtue of their strength and electoral victories. After their moral and political collapse in World War I, the Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks assumed this role. With the undoing of the Russian Revolution — dated anywhere from Kronstadt (1921) to the invasion of Czechoslovakia (1968) — the Chinese Revolution and Maoism step in. Since

*This is part of a book to be published next year by Cambridge University Press.

1. Georg Lukacs, "What is Orthodox Marxism?" and "Tactics and Ethics," in *Political Writings 1919-1929* (London, 1972), pp. 27, 26.

2. *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course*, ed. by the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) in 1938 (Calcutta, 1968), pp. 297-298.

3. "Khrushchev's Secret Report to the Twentieth Congress," in Bertram D. Wolfe, *Khrushchev and Stalin's Ghost* (New York, 1957), p. 124.

each worked, each promised to deliver the magic formula for success. The final argument flung by the Leninists at the non-Leninists is that Lenin succeeded. The non-Leninists were not only wrong, they failed.

The lure of success and the sweet smell of victory fuel orthodox Marxism. Marxism-Leninism or Marx-Lenin-Mao-Tsung-Thought exudes the nonsense of how to succeed. This is the source of their perpetual attraction as doctrines; unlike anarchism, syndicalism, council communism, or what not, they have proved themselves. They offer victorious revolutions to be emulated. Everything else pales before the fact of victory. The adherents of orthodox Marxism extol and promote the victorious revolutions and parties as the route to success — until their shortcomings or failure become too obvious; then another is adopted.

The *ex post facto* element damns this Marxism to apologetics. Marxism degenerates into public relations for revolutionary movements; it turns critical only at last resort. It may suffice for philosophy to attain wisdom at dusk, but Marxism must commence its flight earlier. To condemn the failures after the verdict is too late.

The issues are complex. The future events of history are beyond anyone's grasp. History provides no refunds, guarantees or insurance policies. The misappraisal of a successful revolution, or the revolution-in-the making, the premature celebration, the mistake, the retraction, and so on, form the very marrow of the human experience in history. For this reason the charge that a mistake has been made, or belatedly corrected, is itself compromised; it assumes a position outside of history, where there are no choices, failures, mistakes or successes. The charge implies that it is better not to choose, and it retreats to the tired wisdom that history is bunk and vanity; or it hides behind academic knowledge too cautious to think and judge.

If this is true, it is also insufficient. This rejoinder slips into the *c'est la vie* attitude that excuses indifferently all theories and commitments. It is no sin to be wrong, but it is no virtue to be consistently wrong; and this is the question which orthodox Marxism provokes.⁴ History is assembled out of a series of discrete mechanisms; if one proves defective, another is always available. This approach is immunized against criticism by continually shifting its object: last year it was Maoism, this year the prison movement, next year the working class.

A minor example: Charles Bettelheim, a respected French Marxist, resigned from the Franco-China Friendship Association (May 1977), signifying his break with post-Maoist China.⁵ For many years he enthusiastically praised the Cultural Revolution and Maoism. Now he believes that the campaign against the "Gang of Four" commenced a "great leap backward."

The ease and facility with which the advances of the Cultural Revolution and

4. See the "balance sheet" that Fernando Claudin draws of the record of the Comintern (pp. 36ff) as well as his important chapter, "The Crisis of Theory" (pp. 46ff) in *The Communist Movement from Comintern to Cominform* (Harmondsworth, England, 1975). See my review in *The Insurgent Sociologist*, VIII (Winter 1979), pp. 96ff.

5. Charles Bettelheim, "Letter of Resignation" and "The Great Leap Backward," *Monthly Review*, 30:1 (July-August 1978). Cf. the responses, especially by Arthur MacEwan, "Comments on China Since Mao," *Monthly Review*, 31:1 (May 1979), pp. 44-48.

Maoism are being undone suggest to Bettelheim that the seeds for the reversal were planted earlier. Something must have been amiss with the Cultural Revolution itself which allowed it to be so rapidly set aside. And indeed Bettelheim tells us "when we look back and analyze what has happened since 1965-66, we can say that this change in the relation of forces was already apparent in the first months of 1967 . . ." He goes on to identify some features of this change: introduction of coercion, displacement of mass participation, rise of sectarianism, and so on.⁶

This may be fine and good, but why do we learn this only now? The answer is obvious; while Bettelheim states the changes were "already apparent" in 1967, they were not apparent to him (and many others) for another 10 years. The reasons that he now adduces for the 'great leap backward' were presented as successfully overcome in his 1973 book, *Cultural Revolution and Industrial Organization in China*. He wrote then that "through discussions and struggles involving millions of workers and vast sections of the population, a new road was opened up in the struggle for socialism . . . It constitutes a decisive and permanent achievement, as decisive and permanent as any scientific or social experience which discovers new processes or new objective laws."

Nor was this the first time that Bettelheim identified permanent scientific advances that turned out to be neither permanent, scientific or advances. His analysis of the transition from capitalism to socialism, as well as the Russian Revolution, were both wanting. In the mid-1960s Bettelheim defended Stalin's ideas on the law of value in a socialist society against "Che" Guevara.⁸ The rejoinder by "Che" decried Bettelheim's mechanical and undialectical approach.⁹ Several years later (1969) Bettelheim debated the same issue with Paul Sweezy.¹⁰

In 1974 Bettelheim admitted that his writings in the period 1962-1967 on the transition from capitalism to socialism were "not satisfactory." The problem was that until 1956 he had taken the Soviet Union as a "model" for revolution. However the problem persisted for another ten years. Only the "lessons" of the Chinese Cultural Revolution "induced" him to "modify very seriously the terms of my analysis."¹¹ Hence Bettelheim began a major re-evaluation of the Russian Revolution, *Class Struggle in the USSR* (1974). Two additional problems emerge here. His serious modification of the evaluation of Russia is

6. C. Bettelheim, "The Great Leap Backward," pp. 38, 98.

7. C. Bettelheim, *Cultural Revolution and Industrial Organization in China* (New York, 1974), pp. 9-10. The book "relies heavily on material I gathered during my stay in China in August and September 1971" (p. 7).

8. "Formes et méthodes de la planification socialiste et niveau de développement des forces productives" (1964) in C. Bettelheim, *La transition vers l'économie socialiste* (Paris, 1968), pp. 129-152.

9. Ernesto "Che" Guevara, "La planificación socialista, su significado" (1964), in *El socialismo y el hombre nuevo* (Mexico City, 1977), pp. 386-395. A brief summary of Che's criticism of Bettelheim can be found in Michael Lowy, *The Marxism of Che Guevara* (New York, 1973).

10. Charles Bettelheim, "On the Transition between Capitalism and Socialism" with a reply by Paul Sweezy, *Monthly Review*, 20:10 (March 1969), pp. 1-19. This text and others are in Bettelheim and Sweezy, *On the Transition to Socialism* (New York, 1971).

11. C. Bettelheim, *Class Struggles in the USSR. First Period: 1917-1923* (New York, 1976), p. 10.

not very serious.¹² Bettelheim repeats the (past?) quaiasi-official Chinese position on the Russian Revolution. And now that the Cultural Revolution has proved to be imperfect, he may have to re-evaluate it. Consequently his re-evaluation of the Russian Revolution may have to be re-evaluated, and so on.¹³

Is this gloating? To stand utterly outside the fray is hardly virtuous: it purchases purity by selling off critical intelligence and commitment. And to enter into the fray inevitably yields mistakes, including major ones. "There are no innocents in politics."¹⁴ Yet neither is everyone equally guilty. Distinctions can be, and must be made. Political intellectuals who are perpetually on the hunt for successful revolutions, betray their ethos: success.

The issue is not the failings of an individual, but a style and procedure that eviscerates Marxism. Success is peddled, till it fails, and then is peddled again in a new form. At any single instant, the success appears more than convincing; the facts are on its side, while the critics command only theories and harping objections. The Russian, Chinese, and Cuban revolutions silence critics by their very existence and success. Debray's 1967 *Revolution in the Revolution* enthusiastically prescribed the Cuban model of revolution for all of South America. Ten years later the situation is sobering, the successes nonexistent. Gerard Chailland titles his recent analysis "Guerilla Inflation: The Foco Theory as a Theory for Failure."¹⁵ Debray himself hardly disagrees; he calls his pamphlet "a book of the moment."¹⁶

Some of this can, and has been, characterized as "Third Worldism," the pursuit and promotion of Third World revolutions by intellectuals of North America and Western Europe. Yet the style has worked as effectively and perniciously within the industrial nations. The black movement, urban guerillas, prison movement, and the working class itself have all been the objects of instant mythologizing.

Not the least of the ills of orthodox Marxism is its wake of demoralization and cynicism. Hopes perpetually raised and dashed, take their toll. If its more public figures can switch objects without losing a beat, others have graver difficulties. Who can transfer their loyalties without doubt from the Soviet Union to China to North Korea to Albania? or from the student movement to the black movement to the third world to the working class? The committed leach away. The old anti-communist 'god that failed' becomes the weary 'gods that failed.'

For many Marxists an old routine has been refurbished to account for perpetual mistakes: self-criticism. Louis Althusser developed this into a fine art, and an effective marketing strategy. As an art it neatly absolves the past mistakes, makes way for new ones, and infers that the critics are spiteful and

12. For a fine analysis see Ralph Miliband, "Bettelheim and Soviet Experience," *New Left Review*, 91 (May-June, 1975), pp. 57-66. Cf. Carmen J. Sirianni's review in *Socialist Review*, 36 (November-December 1977), pp. 143-160.

13. For another Bettelheim debate, where he demonstrates his mastery of the Althusserian lingo, see "Preface to the French Edition by Charles Bettelheim" in Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange* (New York, 1972), pp. 343-356.

14. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Humanism and Terror* (Boston, 1969), p. xxiii.

15. Gérard Chailland, *Revolution in the Third World* (New York, 1978), pp. 39ff.

16. See his self-critical comments in *A Critique of Arms*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1977), p. 225.

malicious for harping on the past. Who wants to criticize those who criticize themselves? As a commercial strategy it is marketed by the engineers of the planned obsolescence of thought; each theoretical innovation is fabricated out of defective parts, and is designed to break down or be recalled. The intellectual and book buyer turns into a perpetual customer insofar as he or she is compelled to buy the latest work which replaces the preceding one.

Althusser invented not only theoretical practice but pioneered in its malpractice. First he argued that Marx definitely broke with Hegel. Several years after this argument he confessed: "I must admit that I have given a much too abrupt idea of this thesis. . . ." ¹⁷ It also turned out that in his notion of Marx's "epistemological break," "I. . . made two mistakes"; it was not epistemological nor a break. He also erred in *Reading Capital* calling philosophy "a theory of theoretical practice." ¹⁸ This mistake was not simply "terminological ambiguity but one of an error in the conception itself." ¹⁹ He also mistakenly concluded that "philosophy is a science." Later he discovered that "philosophy is not [a] science." ²⁰ He also forgot about class struggle in *For Marx* and *Reading Capital*. "This is certainly the biggest mistake I made. . . ." ²¹

The list, if honest, is hardly enviable; nor is it exhaustive. ²² Moreover what Reich said of Freud — even where he was wrong, he was right — can be said, in the inverse of Althusser: even where he is right, he is wrong.

Althusser represents a Marxism that is forever wrong, or right too late. To explain his multiple miscalculations he reaches for an alibi beyond reproach: history. The irony is missed: Althusser and his followers have dedicated themselves to slaying the dangerous dragon of historicism. Historicism threatens the autonomy, rigor, objectivity, and finally the success of Marxism. For Althusser, historicism is a Hegelian corruption of the science of Marxism. ²³

Yet Althusser justifies all his mistakes by the fact that they were committed at a particular time and place, as if there could be some doubt about this. In Althusser's jargon the "conjuncture" ("the exact balance of forces. . . at any given moment" ²⁴) is the universal excuse for errors. The fetish of indicating the

17. Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy* (New York, 1971), p. 93.

18. L. Althusser, *Essays in Self-Criticism* (London, 1976), p. 71.

19. L. Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading Capital* (New York, 1970), p. 8.

20. L. Althusser, *Essays*, p. 68.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

22. While defenders of the faith maintain that "North American resistance to the work of Althusser and his colleagues is ideological" (Terry Eagleton in *Clio*, VII [1978], p. 323), many cogent critiques of Althusser have appeared, including English ones. Top of the pile is E.P. Thompson's wild and extraordinary *The Poverty of Theory* (London, 1978); this reached me during the final stages of writing this manuscript, and consequently too late to be fully considered or utilized here. A fine discussion can be found in the review by Brian Singer of Rancière's *La Leçon d'Althusser*, *Telos*, 25 (Fall 1975), pp. 224ff. Other criticisms include: Raymond Aron, *D'une Sainte Famille à l'autre* (Paris, 1969); Pierre Vilar, "Marxist History, A History in the Making: Towards a Dialogue with Althusser," *New Left Review*, 80 (1973), pp. 65ff; Norman Geras, "Althusser's Marxism," *New Left Review*, 71 (1972), pp. 57ff; Alex Callinicos, *Althusser's Marxism* (London, 1976); and the review by Tom Good in *Telos*, 30 (Winter 1976), pp. 226ff; Miriam Glucksmann, *Structuralist Analysis in Contemporary Social Thought* (London, 1974).

23. See the chapter "Marxism is not a Historicism" in *Reading Capital*, pp. 119-144.

24. From the glossary of *For Marx*, with "corrections and interpolations" by Althusser, p. 250.

exact time when they wrote, rewrote and corrected their manuscripts characterizes all the Althusserians. This furnishes the gloss of precision while anticipating a revision of the theory when the "conjuncture" changes. Nicos Poulantzas closes his *Fascism and Dictatorship* melodramatically: "Given the aim of this book, I prefer to give this conclusion a date (Paris, July, 1970)." ²⁵

"To understand these essays," Althusser tells us in the introduction to *For Marx*, "and to pass judgement on them, it is essential to realize that they were conceived, written and published. . . in a particular ideological and theoretical conjuncture. . . ." ²⁶ Or he suggests that the "exceptional situation" in which his essay on Lacan was written explains why it has to "either be corrected, or expanded." ²⁷ The evil is not in the appeal to history; rather history becomes the insurance policy for the perpetual theoretical malpractice suits. The theory or theorist is never wrong nor ever reconceived; the guilt resides in the historical process — the conjuncture. In this way orthodox Marxism immunizes itself; if it is always wrong or too late, the fault lies elsewhere.

Althusser's response to one of his critics, John Lewis, indicates his achievement. He chastizes Lewis for ignoring the historical situation in which *For Marx* was written, and then goes on to award himself a badge for courage and perspicuity. "Mr. Lewis never talks about this political history. . . . In *For Marx*, — that is, in 1965 — I was already writing about Stalin." ²⁸ Some 30 years after the Moscow trials or 10 short years after Premier Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin shocked the world, Althusser was "already" criticizing Stalin. Althusser dreams he heads the theoretical parade, while tidying up years after the procession has passed him by.

If the category of success needs re-scrutiny, so must failure. Neither success nor failure can be accepted as a blank fact. Success or its absence is only one factor in the evaluation of a politics. We do not condemn the collaborators with Nazism because they picked the losing side; nor do we condemn the Spanish loyalists and republicans because they lost. The history of the opposition to orthodox Marxism — council communism, 'left' communism, dissident currents and so on — is a history of failure: let there be no doubt. Yet it is none the less valuable. Failure proves nothing, except who lost.

This is often forgotten. No one likes losers. The history of revolution is usually presented as a string of victories, blemished by some setbacks and defeats. Rarely does one find Marx's own honesty. He wrote following the revolutions of 1848: "With the exception of a few short chapters, every important part of the annals of the revolution from 1848 to 1849 carries the heading: Defeat of the revolution!" ²⁹ Or he wrote some 15 years later,

25. Nicos Poulantzas, *Fascism and Dictatorship* (London, 1974), p. 359. For a good critical appraisal see Anson G. Rabinbach, "Poulantzas and the Problem of Fascism," *New German Critique*, 8 (1976), pp. 157-170. Cf. Martin Plaut, "The Problem of Positivism in the Work of Nicos Poulantzas," *Telos*, 36 (Summer 1978), pp. 159-167 and Salvador Giner, Juan Salcedo, "The Ideological Practice of Nicos Poulantzas," *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, XVII (1976), pp. 344-365.

26. *For Marx*, p. 9. Cf. "Note to the English Edition," *Reading Capital*, p. 8.

27. L. Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy*, p. 189.

28. *Essays*, p. 36.

29. K. Marx, *Class Struggles in France 1848-1850* (New York, 1964), p. 33.

summarizing the intervening period, "If, then, there had been no solidarity of action between the British and the continental working classes, there was, at all events, a solidarity of defeat."³⁰

Outside Marxism the same issues have surfaced, although not in the same form. In historical and sociological studies, controversy has flourished for years about the autonomy and resistance of various social formations: American blacks, working class, Jews, and so on. Evaluations differ as to their degree of independence and resistance within the oppressive environments of slavery, concentration camps, and bourgeois society. Interpretations tend to fall into two types. One stresses autonomy and relative success at resistance; another stresses the converse, the power and ability of the establishment to repress or incorporate an opposition.

The issues are emotionally, and finally politically charged; and this is the point. A politics governs and fuels this debate; a left tends to elevate the advances and autonomy of the underlying class, or group, and the right extols the power (or genius) of the establishment. To be sure, the politics is often implicit, but for this reason it is so much the more potent; it is never questioned and congeals into a dogma: the left always and everywhere finds advances of the subaltern groups.

As a dogma it might be better than most; and it does seem to rest on a self-evident proposition: victims in history resist. They are also subjects of history. Yet it also draws upon the myth of success, an upbeat vision of past and future conflicts. An examination of the strength of the establishment is dismissed as reactionary. Analysis of social relations which induced identification and not independence and resistance is precluded. It is the task of a left to always find victories and successes of the oppressed? Not only does this tacit logic turn mythological but it ill serves its subject by minimizing the density and complexity of the oppressive social relations. That the oppressed were terrorized by terror conveys no insult; that they sold out so as to eat and live suggest no dishonor. The urge to people the desert of history is public relations for the moguls who have wasted it.

The configuration of these debates testifies to the same pressures at work inside Marxism: the inclination to present the struggle as upward and successful. This has been the tendency of Marxism in all its terrains. To be sure, for the recent historical and sociological studies, as well as for Marxism, the provocations have never been lacking. To argue that there was little resistance to slavery, as Stanley Elkins did,³¹ or to Nazi extermination, as Bruno Bettelheim and Hannah Arendt did,³² or to bourgeois power, as working class studies did,³³ was received as an insult; and the insult was doubled when it was

30. K. Marx, "Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association" (1864) in Marx, *First International and After* (New York, 1974), p. 78.

31. Stanley M. Elkins, *Slavery*, 3rd edition (Chicago, 1976). First edition: 1959.

32. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (New York, 1965); Bruno Bettelheim, *The Informed Heart* (New York, 1971). First edition: 1960. It is hardly accidental that these books are themselves theoretically related. Elkins' book leans heavily on the essay that was later incorporated into *The Informed Heart*, Bettelheim's "Individualism and Mass Behavior in Extreme Situations" (1943).

33. See the survey of the literature on the "integration" of the working class in John H.

further argued there was not only little resistance, but complicity and cooperation.

These works of Elkins, Bettelheim and Arendt, marked one swing of the pendulum. In the more recent years, historical studies have moved in the opposite direction, and stressed the forms of resistance by slaves,³⁴ Jews³⁵ and the working classes.³⁶ If more just, this perspective begins to shade into a mythic vision of resistance and progress. At this point it raises more question than it answers. The image of success and victories vies with the actual defeats and setbacks. If, for instance, the working classes were progressing in their culture, struggles and class consciousness, their defeat or relative passivity becomes not more but less understandable. If the structure and success of domination is omitted in the name of the dominated, the veil of history darkens. "A 'history from above' — of the machinery of class domination — is thus no less essential than a 'history from below,' indeed without it the latter in the end becomes one-sided (if the better side)."³⁷

For those who imagine that dialectics requires matching mathematical opposites, no problem exists. On one hand there is domination, on the other resistance. Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man* was regularly derided as undialectical. Marcuse forgot that society was two dimensional; domination always incites resistance. This is the Official Marxist Interpretation of Everything or, the power of positive thinking for Marxists. Any suggestion of the victory of the state or bourgeois culture is countered by stressing the victory of the working classes and its culture. Each negative statement is answered by a positive. The total, however, is zero.

This mathematical interpretation of history issues into a picture of forces of liberation battling the forces of domination. If this is adequate for actual

Goldthorpe, D. Lockwood, F. Bechhofer, J. Platt, *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 1-29.

34. For an outsider, it is necessary to be intrepid to wade into the vast and passionate debate on slavery. Elkins (and Frank Tannenbaum) has been attacked for years; this is partly due to the utilization or misutilization of Elkins by the Moynihan Report; see Lee Rainwater, William L. Yancey, *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967). Inasmuch as blacks or the black family were seen as passive victims, the rejoinders emphasized the elements of resistance and autonomous culture. See *The Debate Over Slavery: Stanley Elkins and his Critics*, ed. Ann J. Lane (Urbana, Ill., 1971). Herbert G. Gutman's *Black Family in Slavery and Freedom 1750-1925* (New York, 1977) takes as its point of departure the Moynihan Report, and is an effective reply, arguing on behalf of a distinct black culture; on these grounds, Gutman criticizes Eugene D. Genovese's *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York, 1975) for slighting a slave culture (pp. 303ff). Whether Genovese represents or is made to represent an opposite position remains a question. Two thoughtful and contrasting discussions of Gutman's book are by George Rawick and Evelyn Brooks Barnett in "A Symposium on Herbert Gutman's *The Black Family*" in *Radical History Review*, 4: 2-3 (Spring-Summer 1977), pp. 76-101ff. See also George P. Rawick, *From Sundown to Sunup* (Westport, Conn., 1973) for an important discussion of the issues, esp. pp. 101ff. One final note here: Elkins is far from dead and finished; his "The Two Arguments on Slavery" (1975), included in the 3rd edition of *Slavery*, is to the point.

35. See Reuben Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe* (New York, 1974). Cf. Jacob Robinson, *And the Crooked Shall Be Made Straight: The Eichmann Trial, the Jewish Catastrophe and Hannah Arendt's Narrative* (New York, 1965) and Terrence des Preis, *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps* (New York, 1970).

36. The fundamental work, which has inspired many other and lesser ones, is E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*.

37. Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London, 1974), p. 11.

warfare, it fails as a model for the existence and persistence of capitalism. Capitalism does not simply rely on perpetual military subjugation. For this reason, too, any blank juxtaposition of 'history from above' and 'history from below' threatens to conclude in two volume works with few transitions. The crucial question is the relationship between these two histories.

The official proletarian culture of the Third International and, most recently, China, only portrayed smiling working and powerful peasants. Frowns, sickness, betrayals, defeats were eschewed. Andrei Zhdanov, proponent of Socialist Realism, explained why optimism and heroism were the guiding slogans. "Our [Soviet] literature is impregnated with enthusiasm and the spirit of heroic deeds. . . . It is optimistic because it is the literature of the rising class of the proletariat. . . ." ³⁸ This is the logic of orthodox Marxism, and the hidden logic of much of the recent historical studies. The urge to stress the victories of the oppressed is deep seated and humanistic; it ill serves its subject when the objective defeats and surrenders — political and psychological — are whitewashed, and go unrecognized and uncomprehended.

Yet let there be no misunderstanding: the vision of unresisting victims by the social worker or the philanthropist is no better. This is a static view of history or the administrative dream of the world. Yet the application of the 'dialectical' scheme which decays into a behavioral psychology must also be avoided: stimulus provokes a response, or repression yields rebellion. Both visions corrode into myths.

II

By retreating from the political plane, the theoretical outline of orthodox Marxism is visible; a commitment to science pervades this outline. An esteem for science is hardly unique to Marxism; it infuses modern society. Science guarantees success. Marxism inherited this proposition from bourgeois society, and hammered it into a deadly weapon. For Marxists it became the revolver to shoot dissidents and opponents. The primal and final charge that orthodox Marxism invokes is that their opponents have violated the canons of science; they are pre-scientific, non-scientific, literary, romantic, utopian, historicist, humanist, aesthetic.

Marx also considered his work scientific, and contrasted it to utopian and other brands of socialism. "There is no royal road to science," Marx cautioned his French readers of *Capital*.³⁹ Yet Marx employed the term science sparingly, and criticized its excessive usage. More importantly, for Marx science meant "Wissenschaft," a term which resounds with Hegel. That the English and French "science" is more limited than the German "Wissenschaft"

38. Andrei Zhdanov, *Problems of Soviet Literature: Reports and Speeches at the First Soviet Writers' Congress, 1934* (New York, n.d.), p. 20. Another proponent stated that socialist realism "not only criticizes, it affirms." Cited in and see Kenneth E. Harper, *Controversy in Soviet Literary Criticism on the Doctrine of Socialist Realism* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1950), p. 59. Cf. Eduard J. Brown, *The Proletarian Episode in Russian Literature 1928-1932* (New York, 1953) and Hermann Ermolaev, *Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934: The Genesis of Socialist Realism* (Berkeley, 1963).

39. K. Marx, "Preface to the French Edition," *Capital*, p. 104.

is a point regularly made in cultural and intellectual studies.⁴⁰ For the history of Marxism however it merits more attention than a footnote, since it involves the entire question of Hegel's impact on Marxism.

If Marx deemed his own work scientific, he distrusted a religion of science.⁴¹ On more than one occasion he dissociated himself from the term scientific socialism. Marx charged Proudhon with fetishizing science. "No school of thought has thrown around the word 'science' more haphazardly than that of Proudhon . . ." ⁴² For Proudhon science "reduces itself to a slender proportion of a scientific formula; he is the man in search of formulas."⁴³ Years later, responding to Bakunin's accusation that "scientific socialism" ("Wissenschaftlicher Sozialismus") was elitist, Marx clarified: "'Scientific socialism' was only used in opposition to utopian socialism, which wants to attach the people to new delusions, instead of limiting its science to the knowledge of the social movement made by the people itself."⁴⁴

That science here meant knowledge of the "social movement made by the people itself" ("Erkenntnis der vom Volk selbst gemachten sozialen Bewegung")⁴⁵ suggests the divergence between the Hegelian "Wissenschaft" and the French and English "science." This can be overstated; but the terms illuminate, and ultimately sustain, two conflicting Marxist approaches to history and society. The distinction between "Wissenschaft" and science only gains currency outside the natural and exact sciences; this already structures the problem. For the issue was how to transfer the methods of the natural sciences to the social, political and philosophical terrain. By virtue of the palpable advances of the natural sciences, this was a compelling project. In duplicating the methods of the natural sciences the hope was to duplicate its achievements.

This project inspired a myriad of thinkers from Auguste Comte to Emile Durkheim, Karl Popper and contemporary sociologists, and forms the nub and hub of positivist (non-Hegelian) science. The history of these efforts is neither simple nor monotonous; and it is cluttered with reservations and qualifications.⁴⁶ Each thinker has selected and prized only some of the features

40. One example: Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: A Reinterpretation* (Garden City, N.Y., 1966), pp. 157-158. The transition from a Hegelian notion of science to a positivist one is developed in Herbert Schnädelbach, *Erfahrung, Begründung und Reflexion. Versuch über Positivismus* (Frankfurt, 1971), pp. 185ff. See also the classic work of Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences* (Evanston, 1970).

41. See Paul Thomas, "Marx and Science," *Political Studies*, 24 (1976), pp. 1-23.

42. K. Marx, *Capital*, p. 161. Marx employs the term "science," not "Wissenschaft," here. K. Marx, *Capital*, in Marx-Engels *Werke*, Vol. 23 (Berlin, 1963), p. 83.

43. K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York, 1963), p. 126. The term in the original French text is again science. K. Marx, *Misère de la philosophie* (Paris, 1964), p. 433.

44. K. Marx, "Conspectus of Bakunin's *Statism and Anarchy*," in *First International and After*, p. 337.

45. K. Marx, "Konspekt," Marx-Engels *Werke*, Vol. 18 (Berlin, 1969), pp. 635-636.

46. The term "positivism" poses many problems; there is little agreement on its definition. Some would restrict positivism to Comte and his direct followers. See W.M. Simon, *European Positivism in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1963), p. 3. Yet the Vienna Circle, with few or no links to Comte, adopted the term logical positivism. See A.J. Ayer, "Introduction" to *Logical Positivism* (New York, 1959), and, in the same volume, "Positivism and Realism" by Moritz

of the natural sciences: quantification, natural laws, objectivity, clarity, and so on. Comte is illustrative; he originally considered sociology a "special kind of physics." By name and substance Comte patterned social physics on the natural sciences. He retarded "all phenomenon as subjected to invariable natural laws. Our business is . . . to pursue an accurate discovery of these laws with a view to reducing them to the smallest possible number The best illustration of this is in the case of the doctrine of gravitation."⁴⁷

In one fashion or another positivist "science" imitated and adopted the procedures of the natural sciences. It rang through, for example, the program of the Vienna Circle; the "scientific world conception," the program stated, was "empiricist and positivist," and applied "logical analysis." These features called forth others; a scientific world conception necessitated the "search for a neutral system of formulae, for a symbolism freed from the slag of historical languages. . . . Neatness and clarity are striven for, and dark distances and unfathomable depths rejected."⁴⁸

"The slag of historical languages" is the heap which separates the positivist science from the Hegelian "Wissenschaft." For a Hegelian tradition, the slag of history is as valuable as the nuggets. History is not footnoted or dumped, but infuses the theory. Here Hegelian and positivist science separate. The natural world, and its sciences, know history only externally; it does not determine its structure or method. The difference between the study of the moon and the French Revolution is history. Human sciences inspired by the study of the moon or the atom suppress or belittle the historical dimension.

Schlick. Cf. Gustav Bergmann, *The Metaphysics of Logical Positivism* (Madison, 1967), pp. 1-16. Others, such as Popper, who might be situated within the history of positivism, reject the term; see his "Reason or Revolution?" in T.W. Adorno, et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology* (London, 1976). Yet what Popper himself presents as the substance of his agreement with the Vienna Circle suffices to include him within the currents of positivism. "I still feel very much at one with the Vienna Circle;" and he mentions in particular the distinction Carnap drew between "the way mathematicians and scientists proceed" and the "depressing ways of the philosophers." K. Popper, *Unended Quest* (La Salle, Ill., 1976), p. 89. This seems to confirm Albrecht Wellmer: "Popper's criterion features the tendency proper to the positivist theory of science: that is, the intention to make scientific empiricism the unique, consciously applied law of scientific research." A. Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society* (New York, 1971), p. 19. For a more sympathetic account of Popper, see Gerald Radnitzky, *Contemporary Schools of Metascience* (Chicago, 1973), esp. pp. 331ff. In general I will follow Leszek Kolakowski's definition: "Positivism is a collection of prohibitions concerning human knowledge, intended to confine the name of 'knowledge' (or 'science') to those operations that are observable in the evolution of the modern sciences of nature." *The Alienation of Reason: A History of Positivist Thought* (Garden City, 1969), p. 9. Compare this with: "One of the tenets of positivism is *methodological monism*, or the idea of the unity of scientific method. . . . A second tenet is the view that the exact natural sciences, in particular mathematical physics, set a methodological ideal or standard which measures the degree of development and perfection of all other sciences, including the humanities." Georg Henrik von Wright, *Explanations and Understanding* (Ithaca, 1971), p. 4. Cf. the definition and discussion in D.G. Charlton, *Positivist Thought in France during the Second Empire 1852-1870* (London, 1959), pp. 5ff.

47. *August Comte and Positivism*, ed. Gertrud Lenzer (New York, 1975), pp. 65, 75. On Comte see Otwin Massing, *Fortschritt und Gegenrevolution. Die Gesellschaftslehre Comtes in ihrer sozialen Funktion* (Stuttgart, 1966), and Oskar Negt, *Strukturbeziehungen zwischen den Gesellschaftslehren Comtes und Hegels* (Frankfurt, 1964).

48. "The Scientific Conception of the World: The Vienna Circle" (1929) in Otto Neurath, *Empiricism and Sociology* (Dordrecht, Holland, 1973), pp. 309, 306.

History does not mean here a chronicle of events, but the story of humanity as actor and victim. As Hegel's greatest student wrote, "Men make their own history," and added the crucial qualification: "but they do not make it just as they please."⁴⁹ Positivist science tends to eliminate history as so much slag or intellectual baggage. To be sure, the natural world and the natural sciences are hardly impervious to history. The problems and approaches are themselves a product of history; but finally the structure of the moon or the atom is not historical. "Human history," wrote Marx citing Vico, "differs from natural history in that we have made the former, and not the latter."⁵⁰

The Hegelian "Wissenschaft" is not wider or larger than the positivist science; rather it is impregnated with history. The natural reality and natural sciences do not know the fundamental historical categories: consciousness and self-consciousness, subjectivity and objectivity, appearance and essence. In direct opposition Neurath wrote for the Vienna Circle: "In science there are no 'depths,' there is surface everywhere." Or: "A scientific description can contain only the *structure*...of objects, not their 'essence'... Subjectively experienced qualities — redness, pleasure — are as such only experiences, not knowledge."⁵¹

Yet Hegelian thought must not be confused with mysticism or irrationality; it does not promote the cult of depths and essences. Positive and empirical sciences are not false, but limited.⁵² "To such questions as, when Caesar was born, or how many feet there were in a stadium, etc., a neat answer should be given, just as it is surely true that the square of the hypotenuse equals the squares of the other two sides of a right-angled triangle. But the nature of such so-called truths is different from the nature of philosophical truths."⁵³ The logic and approach of the empirical sciences and common sense is not so much true or untrue, but correct or incorrect; it does not attain truth. The judgement "the rose 'is red' or 'is not red'" can only be "correct" within the "limited circle of perception."⁵⁴

For Hegel the ideal of the positive sciences — mathematics — is vulnerable to the same criticism: it is limited. As a single mode of cognition it is "external and indifferent." "Our knowledge would be a very awkward predicament if such objects as freedom, law, morality, or even God himself, because they cannot be measured and calculated, or expressed in a mathematical formula, were to be reckoned beyond the reach of exact knowledge..."⁵⁵

49. K. Marx, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York, 1963), p. 15.

50. K. Marx, *Capital*, p. 493.

51. "The Scientific Conception...The Vienna Circle," pp. 306, 309-310.

52. The Hegel literature is out of hand. Some works I have found helpful are: Hans Radermacher, "Hegel und der Positivismus," in *Aktualität und Folgen der Philosophie Hegels*, ed. O. Negt (Frankfurt, 1970); Theodor Litt, *Hegel* (Heidelberg, 1953); José M. Ripaldo, *The Divided Nation: The Roots of a Bourgeois Thinker: G. W. Hegel* (Assen, The Netherlands, 1977); Otto Pöggler, *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geist* (Freiburg, 1973); Andries Sarlemign, *Hegel's Dialectic* (Dordrecht, 1975); Wolfgang Bonsiepen, *Der Segriff der Negativität in dem Jenaer Schriften Hegels* (Bonn, 1977).

53. *Hegel: Texts and Commentary*, ed. W. Kaufmann (Garden City, 1966), p. 60.

54. *Logic of Hegel*, trans. W. Wallace (London, 1963), p. 304. This is the first part of the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

As object and method, Hegel's 'Wissenschaft' is saturated with history; this finally constitutes his protest against the positive and empirical sciences. They are historically blind, and treat truth as formal and static. "Truth is not a minted coin which can be given and pocketed ready-made."⁵⁶ History is a means and ends. "The harmoniousness of childhood is a gift from the hand of nature; the second harmony must spring from the labor and culture of the spirit"⁵⁷ — from the historical process.

These teachings of Hegel were neither well-received nor preserved. The story of the impact of Hegelian thought takes volumes. It is germane here in regard to a single issue: the critique of positivist science which does not collapse into irrationality or existentialism is unthinkable without Hegelian thought. For this reason the reception of Hegel by Marxists is fundamental. As the following chapter seeks to demonstrate, this reception preceded and defined the texture of the subsequent Marxism.

In the major philosophical traditions, Hegel remains an outsider. For instance, Anglo-American courses in the history of philosophy typically end with Kant, and recommence in the 20th century with the troubling Hegel — as well as Marx, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer — is regularly omitted, or palmed off to the literature departments or to teachers not-yet-hired or about-to-be-fired. Karl Popper's evaluation, if not representative, at least suggests the deep and general mistrust. In *The Open Society*, a book, he tells us, grounded in a "rational attitude" of "openness of criticism,"⁵⁸ Popper credits the following judgement of Hegel as truthful and "excellent." "Hegel... was a flat-headed, insipid, nauseating, illiterate, charlatan, who reached the pinnacle of audacity in scribbling together and dishing up the crassest mystifying nonsense. This nonsense has been noisily proclaimed as immortal wisdom by mercenary followers and readily accepted as such by all fools."⁵⁹

If Hegel fared better in the Marxist traditions, generally he attracted little interest. He was easily situated, interpreted and forgotten with the aid of some phrases by Marx or especially some texts by Engels. Hegel was honored as the originator of idealistic dialectics, and with juggling these could be rendered materialistic and scientific. Ultimately they were codified by Stalin into a set of laws.⁶⁰ What Lenin scribbled down during the enforced leisure of World War I when he began to study Hegel remained a stray statement. "It is impossible to understand *Capital* without understanding the whole of Hegel's *Logic*. Consequently, no Marxists have understood Marx."⁶¹

Yet the role, or lack of a role, of Hegel should not be exaggerated for the fate of subsequent Marxism. Neither the presence or absence, accurate or

56. *Hegel: Texts and Commentary*, p. 58.

57. *Logic of Hegel*, p. 55.

58. K. Popper, *Unended Quest*, p. 91.

59. K. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. 2 (New York, 1967), pp. 32-33. The quotation is from Schopenhauer.

60. Joseph Stalin, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (New York, 1940).

61. V.I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Hegel's Book *The Science of Logic*," in *Collected Works*, Vol. 38 (Moscow, 1963), p. 180.

inaccurate interpretation of a single thinker can be held accountable for the vagaries of political and social movements. In this sense the relation of Hegel to subsequent Marxism (or Darwin to social Darwinism) is not cause and effect. The founders succumb to the imperatives of their followers. Yet that Hegel has been consistently misread or unread suggests something about the fabric of orthodox Marxism: Hegel proved a threat to the dominant idea of science. Consequently orthodox Marxism has sought either to reduce Hegel to a positivist notion of science or purge him from Marxism.

This has remained a current project of orthodox Marxism. In recent years Althusser assumed this task; he is a short course on what is orthodox Marxism. His work has been marked by two closely related elements, a phobia of Hegel and a passion for science. "We have the right . . . and the duty, politically, to use and defend — by fighting for the *word* — the philosophical category of 'science' To use and defend the word 'science' . . . is a necessity, in order to resist the bourgeois subjective idealists and the petty bourgeois Marxists. . . ." ⁶² The main weapon of the petty bourgeois hoards is history, or historicism in Althusser's lexicon. History and historicism compromise the rigor of science. Marxism is no more historical than language," which as Stalin showed escaped [history]."⁶³

Next to history, the main danger to science is Hegel; Althusser has met this danger through exorcism. He has argued that the "young Marx *was never strictly speaking a Hegelian*" except in 1844 when he broke with Hegel. ⁶⁴ Althusser learned that this was not, strictly speaking, true, except in 1965 when he stated it. Later he discovered Hegel everywhere, and recast his thesis so as to save it: Marx was engaged in a life-long flight from Hegel, attaining safety only in death. With Althusser anything short of rigor mortis lacks rigor. The living Marx was tainted with Hegel. "The famous Preface of 1857 is still profoundly Hegelian evolutionist."⁶⁵ Althusser's geiger counter picks up Hegelian rays even in *Capital*; its one percent Hegel is still unhealthy, as well as "flagrant and extremely harmful."⁶⁶ Only Marx's notes on Wagner, written the year his death, are "*totally and definitely exempt* from any trace of Hegelian influence."⁶⁷

That generations of Marxists have been seduced by a popular idea of science cannot simply be traced to intellectual confusion; it is rooted, rather, in the ambivalent relationship of Marxism and bourgeois society. If Marx was capitalism's greatest critic, he was also its greatest admirer. Marx's own position can be presented theoretically with some precision; but more — or less — theoretically it has presented individual Marxists of specific societies with endless difficulties. Capitalism was denounced for its exploitation, its brutality,

62. L. Althusser, *Essays in Self-Criticism*, p. 116.

63. See generally "Marxism is not a Historicism" in Althusser and Balibar, *Reading Capital*, pp. 119-144.

64. L. Althusser, "Introduction" (1965) of *For Marx*, p. 35.

65. L. Althusser, "Preface to *Capital*" (1969) in *Lenin and Philosophy*, p. 93.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 103. "A Hegelian-evolutionist conception . . . disappears 99 percent in *Capital* and completely in Marx's later texts."

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 95, 94, Emphasis in original.

pollution, hypocrisy — and the list goes on. Yet it was welcomed, even celebrated, insofar as it represented a giant step out of a pre-bourgeois order. Socialism could only be established on the foundation and wealth that capitalism produced. Capitalism was not only indispensable, it was desirable.

The message for individual Marxists was more complex, especially those located in societies where the work of capitalism was uncompleted; and this included all Marxists, with the possible exception of the English. In all other societies capitalism remained a progressive force; and the working class should abet capitalism until the material foundations for socialism had been created. The lesson was difficult and unpalatable. In January 1849 Marx advised the German democrats and workers. "We are certainly the last people to desire the rule of the bourgeoisie." Yet "it is better to suffer in modern bourgeois society, which by its industry creates the material means for the foundation of a new society that will liberate you all, than to revert to a bygone form of society which . . . thrusts the entire nation back into medieval barbarism."⁶⁸

This says it exactly, and perhaps too exactly. For this provoked responses from an "ultra-left" impatient with its evolutionary logic. While these objections are generally ignored or slighted in the official histories,⁶⁹ they touch a raw nerve of Marxism. In the aftermath of the 1848, when these objections were raised, Marx advocated incremental social transformation. Protests emerged from various quarters, and finally split the Communist League, to which Marx and Engels belonged.⁷⁰ Andreas Gottschalk asked Marx sarcastically: "Why should we make a revolution? Why should we, men of the proletariat, spill our blood? Should we really escape the hell of the Middle Ages by precipitating ourselves into the purgatory of decrepit capitalist rule . . . ? You are not serious about the liberation of the oppressed."⁷¹

68. K. Marx, "Montesquieu LV1," *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (January 21, 1849) in Marx-Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8 (New York, 1977), p. 266.

69. For a critique of Soviet accounts, see Boris Nicolaevsky, "Towards a History of the Communist League 1847-1852," *IRSH* 1 (1956), pp. 234-253).

70. Marx's actions and politics in regard to the Cologne working class movement and the Communist League have been subject to much controversy. Party of the dispute concerns the authenticity of a deposition made by Peter Röser, president of the Cologne Association of Workers. He reported, "Both Marx and Schapper want communism. This does not alter the fact that they are opponents or even enemies as soon as it comes to the methods. . . . The supporters of Schapper and Willich want communism introduced at the present stage of development, if necessary by force of arms. . . . To Marx, communism is possible only as a result of an advance in education and general development; in one of his letters he addressed to us he distinguished four phases through which it will be necessary to pass before it is achieved." Cited in and see B. Nicolaevsky and Otto Maenchen-Helfen, *Karl Marx* (Middlesex, England, 1976), p. 416. The full text of Röser and a further discussion can be found in Werner Blumenberg, "Zur Geschichte des Bundes der Kommunisten. Die Aussagen des Peter Gerhardt Röser," *IRSH*, 9 (1964), pp. 81-122. Cf. Fritz Brügel, "Zur Geschichte des Kölner Arbeitervereins," *Die Gesellschaft*, 7 (1930), pp. 112-116. That this was Marx's position, if not his words, is confirmed by the minutes of the meeting of the League in 1850. In an oft-cited passage, Marx stated against Willich and Schapper: "While we say to the worker: you must pass through 15, 20, 50 years of civil war in order to change the relations, in order to make yourself capable of power, you say instead: We must *immediately* come to power or, we can stay asleep." "Sitzung der Zentralbehörde vom 15. September 1850," Marx-Engels *Werke*, Vol. 8, p. 598. Cf. Nicolaevsky and Maenchen-Helfen, *Karl Marx*, p. 231. On Willich, see Loyd D. Easton, *Hegel's First American Followers* (Athens, Ohio, 1966), pp. 167ff.

71. Cited in Hans Stein, *Der Kölner Arbeiterverein (1848-1849)* (Cologne, 1921), p. 97. On Gottschalk see Ernst Czobel, "Zur Geschichte des Kommunistenbundes," *Grünberg Archiv*, 2

The charge was not fair; yet it located a tension in Marxism which regularly degenerated into a simple affirmation: where capitalism was uncompleted, Marxists were required to finish its work. The evil of retrograde social development was met by blessing capitalist development, which would finally issue into a new social order. This evolutionary logic was more than logic; it brought in its train attitudes and beliefs which corroded the theoretical and psychological impulse to subvert capitalism.

The evaluation of colonialism by Marx displayed these same features. Brutal robbery and exploitation marked colonialism; yet insofar as the material foundations of capitalism were established, colonialism progressed willy-nilly towards socialism. This in brief constituted Marx's appraisal of the English colonization of India. "The devastating effects of English industry, when contemplated with regard to India. . . are palpable and confounding." But England has a "double mission" in India, destroying the old society "and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia." "Modern industry. . . will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labor, upon which rest the Indian castes, those decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power."⁷²

From the *Communist Manifesto* to *Capital*, the same dialectical vision informed Marx's analysis of modern industry. Marx never doubted that the drive for profits constantly impelled the bourgeoisie to revolutionize the instruments of production. "Modern industry never views or treats the existing form of production process as the definitive one. Its technical basis is therefore revolutionary, whereas all earlier modes of production were essentially conservative." Yet the social relations in which the "technical basis of production" was enmeshed constituted the devastating "negative side."⁷³

If the terms are clear enough, the substance is not. That it has taken countless scholars to determine exactly what Marx was saying only suggests the difficulty of Marxists faced with political options and choices. The history of Marxism is the history of the loss of the dialectical critique of bourgeois society. The irresistible temptation was to cast the dialectical movements of society into a one-way and upward path. Progress in capitalism was read as progress towards socialism. The texts of Marx could always be interpreted in this light. Marxists were confident that their "science" was grounded in the actual movements of society; this distinguished Marxism from other (and utopian) socialism, which fled into the past or rural enclaves. For the Marxists, however, the critique of capitalism was corroded by the endorsement of its achievements.

Every chapter in the history of Marxism has been rent by this dialectic — or inconsistency: the denunciation of capitalism vied with its affirmation. The beginnings of Russian Marxism conform to this pattern. Appealing to

(1925), pp. 324ff; David McLellan, *Karl Marx* (New York, 1977), pp. 195ff; Edmund Silberner, *Moses Hess. Geschichte seines Lebens* (Leiden, 1966), pp. 283ff; P.H. Noyes, *Organization and Revolution Working Class Associations in the German Revolutions of 1848-1849* (Princeton, 1966), pp. 118 and passim. The "we" in the quotation is misleading: Gottschalk was a doctor.

72. K. Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India" (1853) in *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization*, ed. S. Avineri (Garden City, N.Y., 1969), pp. 132-139.

73. K. Marx, *Capital*, pp. 617-618.

economic or cultural grounds, the Populists argued that Russia would or should escape the disaster and evil of capitalism's development. The Marxists retorted that capitalism was, and should, develop in Russia; this laid the foundation for a proletariat, and finally a socialist revolution. For these reasons capitalism could be evaluated as progressive. Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1900) pursued this in detail.

Inasmuch as the Russian Marxists strained to demonstrate the factual and positive impact of capitalism, they were tempted to minimize its destructiveness. If "more" capitalism was preferable to "less," was the critique of capitalism itself vitiated? Lenin addressed directly this question: "Recognition of the progressiveness of this role [of capitalism] is quite compatible. . . with the full recognition of the negative and dark sides of capitalism. . . ." ⁷⁴

Yet in practice for many Russian Marxists this recognition proved difficult to maintain; they extolled capitalism so enthusiastically they forgot about socialism — or tired with it. They no longer grasped how or where socialism differed from capitalism; this set the stage for a return to religion. The "legal Marxists" were especially prey to these options. Serge Bulgakov exulted, as a Marxist, that "every new factory, every new industrial enterprise carries us forward. . .," and he ended as a priest decrying the "mechanical necessity" of Marxism. ⁷⁵ Struve, a legal Marxist, closed his major study with these words: "Let us confess our cultural backwardness and let us learn from capitalism," and ended as a liberal. ⁷⁶

The same ambiguity corroded the Marxist opposition to colonialism. The Second International condemned colonialism as a violent appendage of capitalism. Yet to some Marxists insofar as colonialism propelled the colonized along the path of industrialization, it served a necessary and positive function. As one exponent of a "positive" colonial policy put it: "The primitive peoples will reach civilization only by bearing this cross [of capitalism]. It is therefore our duty not to hinder the development of capitalism, an indispensable chain in the history of humanity; we can even favor its appearance. . . ." ⁷⁷

74. V. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia in Collected Works*, Vol. 3 (Moscow, 1964), p. 596.

75. Bulgakov as cited in Arthur P. Mendel, *Dilemmas of Progress in Tsarist Russia: Legal Marxism and Legal Populism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), p. 139.

76. Struve as cited in Shmuel Galai, *The Liberation Movement in Russia 1900-1905* (Cambridge, 1973), p. 85. Cf. Richard Kindersley, *The First Russian Revisionists: A Study of Legal Marxism in Russia* (Oxford, 1962); Richard Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Left 1870-1905* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970) and his Introduction to P. von Struve, "La Théorie Marxienne de l'évolution sociale," *Etudes de Marxologie*, 6 (1962), pp. 105ff; Bastiann Wielenga, *Lenin's Weg zur Revolution. Eine Konfrontation mit Sergej Bulgakov und Petre Struve im Interesse eine theologischen Besinnung* (Munich, 1971); Solomon M. Schwarz, "Populism and Early Russian Marxism on Ways of Economic Development of Russia," in *Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought*, ed. E. J. Simmons (Cambridge, Mass., 1955); Andrzej Walicki, *The Controversy over Capitalism* (London, 1969).

77. The text is included in *Marxism and Asia*, ed. Hélène Carrère d'Encausse and S. R. Schram (London, 1969), p. 126. Cf. *La deuxième internationale et l'orient*, ed. Georges Haupt and M. Reberieux (Paris, 1967), esp. pp. 79-94. For a summary of the debate on colonialism at Stuttgart (1907) see Julius Braunthal, *History of the International*, Vol. 1, 1864-1914 (New York, 1967), pp. 318-319. For a good discussion of the issues see Horace B. Davis, *Nationalism and Socialism* (New

The evaluation of technology by Marxists succumbed to the same pressures; a dialectical critique was sloughed off. Marxists did not doubt that technology belonged to the greatest achievement of capitalism, distinguishing it from all previous societies. The suffering or misfortune that technology yielded was due to the social context, not the apparatus itself. Such logic stuffed technology into familiar categories of means and ends; technology was as best and worst a neutral endeavor. The evil resided only in the ends to which it was used.

This approach infused orthodox Marxism; nor could it be accused of distorting Marx. Marx was always a sharp critic of utopian, feudal and romantic socialism; each was oblivious or antagonistic towards the technological advances of capitalist industrialization. Little seemed more certain than that Marxists accepted and even accelerated these advances. Nevertheless, a yawning gap between the general principles and the particulars vitiated a critical appropriation of a technological world. Technology everywhere was welcomed as facilitating socialism, and for that reason, was exempted from critical inspection.

Marx can hardly be accused of blindness towards the destructiveness of the labor process. On occasion, however, he had suggested that the divisions of labor within the factory were "planned and regulated" while those in the larger society were unregulated and anarchistic.⁷⁸ The notion was attractive and popular because it inferred that the factory and technology were the progressive elements of capitalism. Irrationality was confined to the market place and found its boundary at the factory gate. Furthermore the notion accorded with common sense which could confirm the confusion and lawlessness of the market but was mute before the apparent rationality and efficiency of production itself. Yet such perspectives capitulated to the mystique of technology; it reduced revolution to sacking the bosses while protecting as sacrosanct the technological base.⁷⁹

Lenin's evaluation of technology, and Taylorism in particular, participated in this logic. The weakness of capitalist technology and Taylorism lay in its confinement to the factory. "Capital organizes and rationalizes labor within the factory. . . . In social production as a whole, however, chaos continues to reign and grow."⁸⁰ Lenin recognized that the Taylor system, "like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements." The lesson was clear:

York, 1973), esp. pp. 90ff. Davis attacks Abraham Ascher's "Imperialists within German Social Democracy prior to 1914," *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 20 (1961), pp. 397-422. Cf. Max Victor, "Die Stellung der deutschen Sozialdemokratie zu den Fragen der auswärtigen Politik (1869-1914)," *AfSz*, 60 (1928), esp. pp. 165ff.

78. *Capital*, pp. 476-478.

79. Recently attempts have been made to retrieve Marx's critique of technology and the division of labor. See Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital* (New York, 1974), and my review, which elaborates some of the remarks in these pages; in *Telos*, 29 (Fall 1976), pp. 199-207. See also David F. Noble, *America by Design: Science, Technology and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism* (New York, 1977). Herbert Marcuse has made a celebrated interpretation of technology as specific to capitalism; see William Leiss, "Technological Rationality: Marcuse and his Critics" in W. Leiss, *the Domination of Nature* (New York, 1972).

80. V. Lenin, "The Taylor System— Man's Enslavement by the Machine," in *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 153.

"The Soviet Republic must at all costs adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field. The possibility of building socialism depends exactly upon our success in combining the Soviet power and the Soviet organization of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism. We must organize in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our own ends."⁸¹ Stalin later defined Leninism as a combination of "Russian revolutionary sweep with American efficiency."⁸²

The uncritical enthusiasm for technology was not grounded simply in the textual complexities of Marx, nor was the plan to adopt and accelerate capitalist industrialization based simply on a misreading of Marx. Such an argument ascribes to the texts too much importance. Rather the social-economic imperatives of backwardness suppressed the dialectical critique of technology. This resounds through Lenin. The work of capitalism was palpably incompleting; and if this was obvious to the Russians, Marxists in Italy, France and Germany were no less convinced.⁸³

If today large regions within the industrial advanced countries are "underdeveloped," evidently a century ago this was more striking. Of course, what constituted "under"developed or "over"developed is the essence of the matter.⁸⁴ Marx studied England because he was convinced other West European countries would replicate its history. "The country that is more developed industrially only shows to the less developed the image of its future." Germany, in comparison, suffered "not only from the development of capitalist production, but also from the incompleteness of that development."⁸⁵

The "incompleteness" of economic development, as fact or conviction, encouraged the acceptance of evolutionary theories. For the first generation of Marxists after Marx, capitalism proved its ability not only to limp along, but develop and expand. The last part of the century witnessed not only the perfecting of new industrial technology — cheap steel, electric power — but a

81. V. Lenin, "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," *Selected Works in Three Volumes*, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1970), p. 663. See Ulysses Santamaria and Alain Manville, "Lenin and the Problem of the Transition," *Telos*, 27 (Spring 1976), pp. 79-96; Rainer Traub, "Lenin and Taylor," *Telos*, 37 (Fall 1978), pp. 82-92; F.J. Fleron and L.J. Fleron, "Administrative Theory as Repressive Political Theory: The Communist Experience," *Telos*, 12 (Summer 1972), pp. 63-92; F.J. Fleron, ed., *Technology and Communist Culture* (New York, 1977).

82. J. Stalin, "The Foundations of Leninism," in *The Essential Stalin*, ed. B. Franklin (Garden City, N.Y., 1972), p. 186. According to Robert Tucker, Bukharin originated this formulation: R. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary 1879-1929* (New York, 1973), p. 318.

83. For the wider impact of Taylorism, see Charles S. Maier, "Between Taylorism and Technocracy: European Ideologies and the Vision of Industrial Productivity," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5 (1970), pp. 27-62. Cf. Paul Devinat, *Scientific Management in Europe* (Geneva, 1927).

84. Some years ago Andre G. Frank sparked a debate re-examining the terms and realities of development and underdevelopment; see especially "The Development of Underdevelopment" and "Sociology of Development" in his *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution* (New York, 1969). Later contributions include Immanuel Wallerstein, ed., *World Inequality* (Montreal, 1975); Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange* (New York, 1972); Samir Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale*, 2 vols. (New York, 1974).

85. Marx, *Capital*, p. 91.

transformation of the character of consumption: sewing machines, cheap clocks, bicycles, electric lighting.⁸⁶ That these were not equally distributed is not to the point: they never were in the past; they suggested, however, that capitalism had hardly ceased to progress. The evolutionary progress of capitalism called forth and ratified the evolutionary and scientific doctrines of Marxists.

The critique of bourgeois society — Marxism — progressively lost its bite; the distance between Marxism and bourgeois society narrowed. Marxists and their opponents shared the belief in science, progress and success. Revolution was not simply adjourned; rather the Marxist embraced the scientific and industrial rationality as his own. Marxists saw themselves as perfecting and accelerating the advances of capitalism.

The phenomenon of Marxists extolling and finally succumbing to capitalism did not go completely unnoticed. If the participants were blind, those on the outside or margins of Marxism were not. It is hardly fortuitous that *the* historian and sociologist of capitalist rationality, Max Weber, recognized the spirit of capitalism in the lair of the Marxists. He visited a party congress of the German Social Democrats in 1906 and concluded: "These gentlemen no longer frighten anyone."⁸⁷ The following year he debated conservative sociologists on the threat of a Social-Democratic electoral victory in several German cities. "I see no danger for bourgeois society in surrendering our cities. . . to the SPD," Weber stated. He noted that "no revolutionary enthusiasm was expressed at the recent SPD congress;" and he anticipated that a victorious SPD would follow a "mercantile policy," encouraging the growth of capital.⁸⁸

The profound complicity of orthodox Marxism in bourgeois industrialization is exposed by an absence: in the Marxist tradition a searching critique of the 'secondary' characteristics of capitalism is lacking. Secondary refers to those features that stand once removed from the primary economic organization of wages, working conditions, imperialism, and the like. It refers to a series of relations, such as urbanism, mass media, psychological life, leisure and so on. These are not necessarily second in importance, but second insofar as they cannot exist apart from the basic political-economic organization of society.

In recent decades these areas increasingly drew the attention of Marxists, but in the past Marxists ignored them. The few analyses offered have been pedestrian and predictable. The secondary features have been disposed of by concepts taken from the basic dictionary of Marxism: superstructure,

86. For a survey see David S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 242ff.

87. Cited in and see Wolfgang Mommsen, *Max Weber und die deutsche Politik 1890-1920*, 2nd edition (Tübingen, 1974), p. 114. Cf. W. Mommsen, *Max Weber. Gesellschaft, Politik und Geschichte* (Frankfurt, 1974), pp. 150ff.

88. *Schriften des Vereins für Sozialpolitik*, vol. 125. *Verhandlungen der Generalversammlung in Magdeburg*, 1907 (Leipzig, 1908), pp. 298-300. Cf. Dieger Lindenlaub, *Richtungskämpfe im Verein für Sozialpolitik*, Part II (Wiesbaden, 1967), pp. 282ff.

relations of production, accumulation, and so on. If none of these concepts has been wrong, none has grasped the specificity of the phenomenon.

The usual explanation for the banality of Marxism here refers to the ills of 'vulgar' Marxism. Vulgar Marxism is vulgar in its economic reductionism; beyond an economic base, everything lacks substance and reality. As an explanation for the lameness of Marxism this does not suffice. Not only vulgar Marxism, but its vulgar critique needs to be surmounted.

The vulgar critique of vulgar Marxism glosses over the complicity between the Marxists and the secondary features of capitalism. This was the reason for blindness. They did not perceive these features as fundamentally changing; hence there was no reason for scrutiny. The Marxist would inherit the cities and the mass newspapers, only the signs and headlines would be changed. Rockefeller Plaza would become Leninplatz. The basic rapport with industrial life paralyzed the critique.

This can be stated in the obverse more emphatically: the most compelling and illuminating analyses of the secondary processes derive from a conservative, sometimes reactionary, tradition. This runs from Nietzsche and Spengler to contemporary — and surely lesser — critics such as Ellul and Illich. This is hardly a coherent tradition, and it is radically flawed in more than one respect. Yet the analyses that are proffered are unmatched — and unassimilated — by Marxists.

To cite a single example: Spengler's analysis of the daily press from 1919 found no counterpart in the Marxists: "English-American politics have created *through the press* a force-field of worldwide intellectual and financial tensions in which every individual unconsciously takes up the place allotted to him, so that he must think, will, and act as a ruling personality somewhere or other in the distance thinks fit. . . . Man does not speak to man; the press, and its associate, the electrical news service, keep the waking consciousness of whole peoples and continents under a deafening drum-fire of these, catchwords, standpoints, scenes, feelings, day by day and year by year. . . . The scattered sheets of the Age of Enlightenment transformed themselves into the Press — a term of most significant anonymity. . . . Today we live so cowed under the bombardment of this intellectual artillery that hardly anyone can attain to the inward detachment that is required for a clear view of the monstrous drama. . . . The liberal bourgeois mind is *proud* of the abolition of censorship, the last restraint, while the dictator of the press — Northcliffe! — keeps the slave gang of his readers under the whip of his leading articles, telegrams and pictures. *Democracy has by its newspapers completely expelled the book from the mental life of the people.* . . . The people read the *one* paper, "its" paper, which forces itself through the front doors by millions daily, spellbinds the intellect from morning to night, drives the book into oblivion by its more engaging layout, and if one or another specimen of a book does emerge into visibility, forestalls and eliminates its possible effects by 'reviewing' it. . . . What the Press wills is true. Its commanders evoke, transform, interchange truths. Three weeks of press work, and the truth is acknowledged by everybody. . . . The reader neither knows, nor is allowed to

know, the purpose for which he is used. . . . A more appalling caricature of freedom of thought cannot be imagined. Formerly a man did not dare to think freely. Now he dares, but cannot."⁸⁹

This assault on capitalism can also be found in Nietzsche's analysis of morality and bad conscience or, more recently, Illich's discussion of the medicalization of society.⁹⁰ These conservative critics penetrate and grasp phenomena that the Marxists revere and pass over. The sources of their insight are at hand; unlike the Marxists, they find capitalist rationality and progress grating. This allows and encourages insights barred to the Marxists less hostile to the beat of capitalism. The Marxists hear the squeaks and groans, where the mechanisms needs oil and new bearings; to these critics the hum itself is offensive.

To many of the conservatives, Marxism itself appeared as simply another industrialization scheme. Conventional liberalism and wisdom feared Marxism as a threat to capitalist industrialization. These critics feared the opposite: Marxism accelerated industrialization. Spengler considered Marxism a version of the English industrial revolution: it concentrated on business, profits and classes. Marx was an "exclusively English thinker," adopting the terms, ethics and categories of the industrial revolution. "He took his principles from the very thing he was fighting." Marx intended to *extend* capitalism to the working class, turning each worker into a merchant who sells his labor at the highest prices. In the light of the history of Marxism and trade unions, Spengler's judgment cannot be rejected as simply perverse: "Marxism is the capitalism of the working class."⁹¹

It is not coincidental that the few Marxists who swam against the tide of capitalist rationality did not sever all links to conservatism, romanticism or utopianism; they remained attached to a non-capitalist logic. This includes William Morris in the 19th century, Ernst Bloch, André Breton, and the Frankfurt School of the 20th century. Their intellectual sources enabled them to see through the mirror of the economy; they were alerted not simply to the falling rate of profit, but the falling rate of intelligence and beauty.⁹² Their resistance to socialism as a souped-up version of capitalism draws these figures together.

The unorthodox Marxists retrieved the substance of Marx: socialism promised more than a rise in wages or an expansion of cities. A rise in wages, Marx wrote in *Capital*, "only means in fact that the length and weight of the golden chain the wage-laborer has already forged for himself allows it to be

89. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, one volume edition (London, 1959), volume 2, pp. 460-463.

90. Ivan Illich, *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health* (London, 1975).

91. O. Spengler, "Prussianism and Socialism," in *Selected Essays*, ed. D.O. White (Chicago, 1967), pp. 95, 99, 100. This position contrasting Prussian to English socialism was not unique to Spengler; it reached back to Fichte and forward to Sombart; see Werner Sombart, *Deutscher Sozialismus* (Berlin, 1934), which juxtaposes German to proletarian socialism; the latter is the theory of Marx and industrialization (pp. 87ff). Cf. Ernst Stutz, *Oswald Spengler as politischer Denker* (Bern, 1958), which locates Spengler within a 20th-century "conservative revolution." For predecessors see Hans J. Schoeps, *Vorläufer Spengler* (Leiden, 1955). Cf. Anton M. Kotanek, *Oswald Spengler in seiner Zeit* (Munich, 1968).

92. See my "A Falling Rate of Intelligence?" *Telos*, 27 (Spring 1976), pp. 141-146.

loosened somewhat."⁹³ Neither the elevation nor the equalization of wages was the goal of Marx's socialism; Marx, early and late, denounced "barracks communism [*Kasernenkommunismus*]." ⁹⁴ Liberation is more than electing the bosses, trading subjugation for self-subjugation. "Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers on the chain not in order that man shall continue to bear that chain without fantasy or consolation but so that he shall throw off the chain and pluck the living flower."⁹⁵

The idioms diverge, but not the basic thinking of the unorthodox Marxists. Morris cautioned again and again not to confuse "the machinery of socialism" with socialism; to substitute "a business-like administration in the interests of the public" for a laissez-faire and coercive regime would be a great gain, but not the goal.⁹⁶ Socialism is not utilitarianism; it is leisure. "The leisure which Socialism above all things aims at obtaining for the worker is also the very thing that breeds desire; for beauty, for knowledge, for more abundant life, in short."⁹⁷

Bloch salvaged the utopian and romantic note in Marxism.⁹⁸ The "naked economic orientation" paralyzed orthodox Marxism.⁹⁹ If the economy had been analytically subverted by the Marxists, lacking was the "soul" and "belief" to replace it.¹⁰⁰ For Bloch the path from utopia to science — the title of the popular Engels pamphlet — skipped too much; it eliminated not simply the utopian vision, but its driving force. What Bloch called the "warm current" of Marxism must be retrieved, lest it be suffocated by the "cold current" of technocratic Marxism. Breton, like Bloch, refused to sever links to supra-economic logic and terrains; he refused the either-or of orthodoxy: either electrification or imagination. "In the realm of facts, as we see it, no

93. *Capital*, p. 769.

94. "We have tried on the one hand to refrain from all system-making and all barrack-room communism," in "Circular of the First Congress of the Communist League to the League Members, June 1847," in Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 598. While this was not authored by Marx or Engels, it was probably written under Engels' supervision, and referred to his "Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith," in *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 96-103. See also Marx's denunciation of "barracks-communism," in "Ein Komplott gegen die IAA," in Marx-Engels *Werke*, Vol. 18, p. 425.

95. Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction," in *Early Writings*, ed. Q. Hoare (New York, 1975), p. 244.

96. William Morris, "Communism," in Morris, *Prose, Verse, Lectures and Essays*, ed. G.D.H. Cole (London, 1948), pp. 660-661.

97. "The Worker's Share of Art," in Morris, *Selected Writings and Designs*, ed. A. Briggs (Hammondsworth, 1962), p. 143. E.P. Thompson in his 1976 Postscript to *William Morris* (London, 1977) puts the issue well: "The romantic tradition is not to be defined only in terms of its traditional, conservative, 'regressive,' 'escapist' and 'utopian' characteristics — and hence to be seen as a continual undertow threatening to draw Morris back to 'subjectivism' and 'idealism'" (p. 779). Cf. Michael Levin, "Marx and Romanticism," *Political Studies*, 22 (1974), pp. 400-413.

98. Cited in David Gross, "Marxism and Utopia: Ernst Bloch," in *Towards a New Marxism*, ed. B. Grahl and P. Piccone (St. Louis, 1973), p. 86. Cf. Maynard Solomon, "Marx and Bloch," *Telos*, 13 (Fall 1972), pp. 68-85; Oskar Negt, "Ernst Bloch — The German Philosopher of the October Revolution," *New German Critique*, 4 (Winter 1975), pp. 3-16; Jürgen Habermas, "Ernst Bloch — A Marxist Romantic," *Salmagundi*, 10-11 (Fall-Winter 1969-70), pp. 311-324; Douglas Kellner, Harry O'Hara, "Utopia and Marxism in Ernst Bloch," *New German Critique*, 9 (Fall 1976), pp. 11-34; Helmut Reinicke, *Materiel und Revolution. Eine materialistische-erkenntnistheoretische Untersuchung zur Philosophie Ernst Bloch* (Kronberg Taunus, 1974), pp. 181ff.

99. E. Bloch, *Durch die Wüste* (Frankfurt, 1964), p. 35. First edition: 1923.

100. E. Bloch, *Geist der Utopie* (Frankfurt, 1973), p. 305. First edition: 1918.

ambiguity is possible: all of us seek to shift power from the hands of the bourgeoisie to those of the proletariat. Meanwhile, it is nonetheless necessary that the experiments of inner life continue."¹⁰¹

In the cant of orthodox Marxism these figures are all charged with the same infractions, violating the code of science. The code adumbrated various subsections, itemizing romantic, pessimistic, subjective and utopian violations. For one guardian *History and Class Consciousness* was "the first major irruption of the romantic anti-scientific tradition of bourgeois thought into Marxist theory."¹⁰² The charge against the Frankfurt School runs: "In the place of revolutionary science enters bourgeois cultural pessimism."¹⁰³ Adorno and Horkheimer are accused of "spiritualism" and Marcuse of "petty bourgeois anarchism," a crime that is extended "to all those who have taken him seriously."¹⁰⁴ Wilhelm Reich and his followers did not escape the police raid. "Your starting point is consumption, ours is production; therefore you are not Marxists."¹⁰⁵ The surrealists were indicted for blocking capitalist development. "It is necessary to affirm plainly that the movement that one could call technological [*machiniste*] is destined to develop in the world in an irresistible fashion. . . . Communists should be one of the principal factors in its development."¹⁰⁶

Against the dirty words — romanticism, subjectivism, aestheticism, utopianism — the clean ones are invoked: science, objectivity, rigor, structure. Here the final, almost psychological contours of orthodox Marxism come into view. Adorno's characterization of positivism as "the puritanism of knowledge" is valid for orthodox Marxism.¹⁰⁷ The goal is rigorous self-control and self-discipline. The asceticism of orthodox Marxism despises unregulated insight as the threat. The sexual code is internalized as conceptual commandments: suggestions of utopia and romanticism are tabooed as too

101. André Breton, "Legitimate Defense" (1926) in Breton, *What Is Surrealism?* ed. F. Rosemont (New York, 1978), pp. 39-40. "I really fail to see — some narrow-minded revolutionaries notwithstanding — why we should refrain from supporting the Revolution, provided we view the problems of love, dreams, madness, art and religion from the same angles they do." Second Manifesto of Surrealism in Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism* (Ann Arbor, 1972), p. 140. See generally Maurice Nadeau, *The History of Surrealism* (New York, 1965). Cf. Herbert Gershman, *The Surrealist Revolution in France* (Ann Arbor, 1968), pp. 80ff; J.H. Mathews, *Towards the Poetics of Surrealism* (Syracuse, 1976), pp. 122ff. The conventional interpretation of the contradiction between surrealism and Marxism can be found in Robert S. Short, "The Politics of Surrealism 1920-1936" in *Left-Wing Intellectuals between the Wars 1919-1939*, ed. W. Laquer, G.L. Mosse (New York, 1966), pp. 3-26.

102. Gareth S. Jones, "The Marxism of the Early Lukacs," *New Left Review*, 70 (November-December 1971), p. 44. Cf. Alvin W. Gouldner, "The Two Marxisms," in his *For Sociology* (New York, 1973), pp. 425ff.

103. *Die Frankfurter Schule im Lichte des Marxismus*, ed. J. Henrich von Heiseler (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 51.

104. Lucio Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin* (New York, 1972), pp. 111-140; p. 233.

105. Cited by Reich in his "What Is Class Consciousness?" in *Sex-Pol: Essays 1929-1934*, ed. L. Baxandall (New York, 1972), p. 350. For other criticisms by the Communists, see "Geschichte der deutschen Sex-Pol-Bewegung," *Zeitschrift für politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie*, 2 (1935), pp. 64-70. See also Constantin Sinelnikov, "Early 'Marxist' Critiques of Reich," *Telos*, 13 (Fall 1972), pp. 131-137.

106. Pierre Naville, *La Révolution et les intellectuels* (Paris, 1927), p. 36.

107. T.W. Adorno et al., *The Positivism Dispute in German Sociology* (London, 1976), pp. 55-56.

suggestive. Scientific Marxism dreams not of a life without anxiety but of master plans and interoffice memos. Structural Marxism not only examines but is in love with structures: it fears the unstructured.

Asceticism is the conceptual center of gravity of orthodox Marxism. Concepts are multiplied so as to stamp out dissolute thought and thinkers. The object is to become an object; hence the hatred for the subjective. That the dissenters have been regularly derided as infantile from Engels through Lenin implies the psycho-sexual core: authority is threatened.¹⁰⁸ One critic is offended that no where in *History and Class Consciousness* is Marxism recognized as a "real and responsible science."¹⁰⁹ The gun of science is unsheathed whenever thought thinks too much. Another critic growls that unless we "move on from the discovery of the horrors of capitalism to an attempt to understand it scientifically," we will be plagued by "another 40 years of paralyzed virtuosity of the Frankfurt School."¹¹⁰ The threat of paralyzed virtuosity is met by preventive arrests and five-year plans. "Their first concern," wrote Max Horkheimer about orthodox Marxism, "when they think about freedom is the new penal system, not its abolition."¹¹¹

Not only Ben Franklin but orthodox Marxism as well are infused with the spirit of puritanism. The mental apparatus subordinates the mess of material desire to permanent-press concepts. Orthodox Marxism ironically confirms what Mary Douglas called the "purity rule": an increase in "disboweling and etherizing forms of expression" correspond to a tightening net of social domination.¹¹² The dirty words of Marxism — humanism itself — recall the corporal and carnal reality that gives the lie to pristine theories of meta-structures. As a cohort of Althusser put it: "I shall not be satisfied until I either situate it [the word man] . . . in the necessity of the theoretical system . . . or *eliminate* it as a foreign body."¹¹³

The conformity of orthodox Marxism is a servant of the cold passion for science and authority. Althusser tells us that ideology belongs to the future as well as the past. He means: keep your uniforms. The logic of "so much the worse for the facts" challenged the regulations that have domesticated Marxism. Nevertheless the choices are not between facts and fantasy, conceptual rigor and free association, science and poetry or optimism and pessimism. These are the bad choices that perpetuated Marxism as a caricature. The pieces do not fit neatly together, but neither does society. This suggests at least one guide for a critical Marxism: do not lose the pieces.

108. The charge of infantilism can be found in Engels' rebukes to the "Jungen," the opponents of the German Social Democracy orthodoxy; see Engels, "Antwort an die Redaktion der Sächsischen Arbeiter-Zeitung" (1890) in *Marx-Engels Werke*, Vol. 22, pp. 68-70. See Dirk H. Müller, *Idealismus und Revolution. Zur Opposition der Jungen gegen den Sozialdemokratischen Parteivorstand* (Berlin, 1975), pp. 122ff. and Hans M. Bock, *Geschichte des 'linken Radikalismus' in Deutschland* (Frankfurt, 1976), pp. 24ff.

109. G.S. Jones, "The Marxism of the Early Lukacs," p. 45.

110. Göran Therborn, "The Frankfurt School," *New Left Review*, 63 (September-October, 1970), pp. 65-96.

111. Max Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State" (1940) in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, ed. A. Arato and E. Gebhardt (New York, 1978), p. 114, and in *Telos*, 15 (Spring 1973).

112. Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols* (New York, 1973), pp. 100ff. Cf. her *Purity and Danger* (London, 1978).

113. Balibar, in *Reading Capital*, p. 207. I would have missed this revealing passage without E.P. Thompson's discussion of it in his *Poverty of Theory*, pp. 336-337.