

CHAPTER III

Dialectics and Natural Law

It is possible to speak of natural law in different senses. We may consider the term as it is applicable to the physical sciences where it designates a process which occurs in a regular, constant manner as when men speak of the law of gravitation. The term is likewise employed to signify something which is specifically human, the idea of a moral code or the basis of a moral code. For example, to cite a classical idea, the Stoic conception of a world-state, civitas maxima, was founded on the idea that right reason is the law of nature illuminating the minds of men as to what must be done and what must be avoided in their personal actions and their relations with their fellowmen. It was a law not written on parchment, the result of any legislative action but was within each man. It was permanent, unchangeable, absolute in its principles, a universal standard of what is just and right, binding upon rulers as well as subjects. It served men as a norm or guide in the framing of their written laws, the juridical prescriptions of the various individual states and communities. Thus it was characterized, as the physical

natural law, by regularity, uniformity, constancy.

By analogy with these basic notions of the term, natural law, a third sense has evolved which has been in vogue since the late seventeenth century. This new idea of natural law is applied particularly to the social sciences and would signify the regularity, uniformity and consistency discoverable amidst the flowing stream of social phenomena. It was inspired by the desire of men to attain in philosophy and the socio-cultural spheres of knowledge that degree of certitude characteristic of the physical sciences that were entering upon their triumphal procession across the pages of history. It is this sense of the term which we consider in the first section of the present chapter wherein we expose Marx's materialist conception of history.

Marx seeks to discover, as we shall see, the laws which will explain, with a high degree of certitude, the historical process. He sees in the dialectic a basis for reducing history to a science which rests upon constant uniform laws. He proposed to discover and expose those laws and, ultimately, following upon a careful analysis of their operation, to subject them to the

conscious regulation of man just as man has subjected other natural laws to his domination. Only in this way, he thought, could man realize his essential being and occupy his position as the supreme lord of the universe and master of his own destiny. Thus Marx naturalizes, so to speak, the dialectic of Hegel. (1)

Following upon the presentation of the theory we shall offer, in a second section, an analysis of it. Finally, in a third section, we show how Marx adopted a revolutionary natural moral law which served to justify or rationalize his attacks on society and manifested the dialectical nature of moral values.

- Section I - Marx's Theory of History -

The broad sweep of the Marxist theory of history is indicated by Lenin when he characterizes the Communist Manifesto - the nucleus of which is formed by the

(1) "Marx undertook to show that a collectivist regime would grow out of the competitive regime of capitalism as the latter grew out of serfdom and feudalism, and as they in turn grew out of a social order resting on slavery. This conception of the advent of socialism is part of Marx's general theory of history. In part Marx followed the prevailing trend in the historical writing of his time. History, according to the view prevalent since the late seventeenth century, is a process of continuous, regular change in some sort of an inherently rational manner. Social institutions, like all the other phenomena of the universe, are properly to be explained as manifestations of general "natural" laws." - Coker, F.W., Recent Political Thought, p. 46

theory (1) - as a work which "with the clarity and brilliance of genius...outlines a new conception of the world." (2) In this new conception of the world Marx and Engels are absolute in their emphasis upon the non-existence of any supra-mundane being who is necessary for the ultimate explanation of it. The words of Laplace - who, in response to Napoleon's query why God did not appear in his system of the world, declared, "Sir, I have no reason to employ that hypothesis" - had become, in the opinion of Engels, ridiculous and antiquated for the new generations who were the witnesses of the tremendous strides made by natural science because the question itself had become superfluous. (3) At the same time, however, they were no less emphatic in their affirmations that there is progress, development in the world process and their vigorous assertions in this regard permit us to classify their theory among the doctrines of necessary progress. (4) This progress is the result of an evolutionary process manifesting itself both in nature and

(1) Engels, F., Communist Manifesto, Preface, p. 6

(2) Lenin, V., Karl Marx, in Marx, K., Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 21

(3) Engels, F., on Historical Materialism, pp. 9-10; Dialectics of Nature, p. 177

(4) Von Mises, L., Socialism, p. 282

in society. The dynamic force which is the source, the core and the essence of inevitable movement from the lower to the higher is, needless to say, the dialectic. Marx takes the dialectic of Hegel and gives it the force of a natural law which operates in society to effect a continuous transformation of society from lower to higher forms in an unending process.

Perhaps it would be more accurate to say, from a Marxist point of view, that Marx and Engels were led by their investigations to the conclusion that the dialectical nature of the transitions from one societal form to another revealed that the principles underlying these changes operated in the uniform, constant manner of natural law. They always insisted that they were merely impartial observers of social phenomena who, after a careful analysis of empirical data, formulated the general laws inherent in and governing social development. Their theories are the results of scientific investigations based on facts and free from any preconceived notions. (1) In fact, a great portion of the early writings of Marx and Engels are devoted in large

(1) Marx, K., Capital, Preface, p. 22-23 ff., Marx-Engels, Communist Manifesto, p. 23

measure to refuting the idealistic conceptions of philosophy and history which tainted the doctrines of their contemporaries and predecessors. (1) The superiority of their scientific method over the procedure of the idealist philosophers is stated in the following terms.

The premises from which we start out are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way. (2)

And again:

In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven... We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes of this life-process. (3)

It was on such premises as these that Marx and Engels constructed their imposing doctrinal edifice.

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- (1) The German Ideology, The Holy Family, and Marx's critical writings against Hegel are written in this vein. Cf. Oeuvres Philosophiques of Marx, 9 volumes, tr. J. Molitor, Paris, published in various editions
(2) Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p.6
(3) Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p.14

The object of their investigations is man, but man as he is in his concrete, every-day existence, that is, man as he lives and works as a member of society. In their theory they meet man as he emerges from the animal world and makes his appearance upon the stage of world history. And just when is that? When man begins to produce.

Man can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organization. (1)

Production is, therefore, the bridge from the animal to the human world of existence. It is the beginning of all history and the dominant factor in every civilization. Labor is the distinctive feature which sets man apart from the rest of creation. (2) To work, to produce is not something accidental to man but it constitutes his very essence. The social life of man flows from his economic life and activity. Consequently,

(1) Ibid., p. 7

(2) "And what do we find...as the characteristic difference between the band of monkeys and human society? Labour." Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 285. "...the animal merely uses external nature, and brings about changes in it simply by his presence; man by his changes makes it serve his ends, masters it. This is the final, essential distinction between man and other animals, and once again it is labour that brings about this distinction." Ibid., p. 291-cf. also, Ibid., Introd. pp. 17-20

Marx thought that any investigation proceeding from the sociological point of view should begin by an examination of the economic structure of society.

Now we may view the economic formation of societies as a process of natural history. (1) This process of natural history proceeds according to its own natural laws and the life of man and society is determined by the definite stage of economic development.

Marx treats the social movement as a process of natural history, governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness and intelligence, but rather, on the contrary, determining that will, consciousness and intelligence ...not the idea but the material phenomenon alone can serve as its starting point. (2)

The initial act of production strikes the first blow in man's struggle against the domination of nature, a struggle which progressively emancipates men and reaches its culmination in the absolute freedom of the communist society, a society where men will find complete fulfillment of all his needs. Man's needs form the other pole of the history of the world, needs giving rise to increased production and this in turn creating new needs.

(1) Marx, K., Capital, Preface, p. 15

(2) Ibid., p. 23

...the first premise of all human existence, and therefore of all history, (is) the premise namely that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to "make history". But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself...as soon as a need is satisfied...new needs are made. (1)

Now men's labor, by creating new needs, revealed a basic need of man - society. Man had to join in association with his fellowman in order to be able to adequately satisfy his increasing necessities. Association being impossible without some form of communication, speech came into being. Thus, from the outset of historical development men became involved in social relationships which had their origin in labor. Even in the family, Marx and Engels discern social relationships based on production; the husband-wife and parents-children relationships arise from production inasmuch as propagation itself is a form of production and indeed represents the first division of labor in history. (2) Also, does not the bourgeois man see in his wife a mere instrument of production? (3)

(1) Marx-Engels, German Ideology, pp. 16-17

(2) Ibid., p. 20

(3) Marx-Engels, Communist Manifesto, p. 27

In production men not only act on nature but also on one another. They produce only by co-operation in a certain way and mutually exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections does their action on nature, does production take place. (1)

Nowhere in the writings of Marx and Engels is the materialist conception of history stated in any great detail. At the same time, nowhere in the system is it ever missing. It pervades and permeates the whole and is like a thread running through all their works. (2)

We are going to examine in some detail the classical statement of it made by Marx. (3)

In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite state of development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society* - the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. (4)

(1) Marx, K., Wage-Labour and Capital in Selected Works Vol. I p. 264

(2) Marx., K., A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy, in Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 356

(3) For a detailed account of the theory Engels recommends two of his own books Ludwig Feuerbach and Anti-Duhring, asserting they contain the most complete statement of the theory that he knows. Letter of J. Bloch, London, September 21, 1890

(4) Marx, K., Preface to A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy, Selected Works, Vol. I p. 356

* Economic structure of society or "civil society" cf. Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p.26

Let us note the foundation of the legal and political superstructure is twofold - "the relations of productions" and the "productive forces". Taking these two as a unit we shall refer to them as the substructure. We will examine each of the elements of the substructure and then pass on to the superstructure.

Substructure

Material forces of production In Marxist literature and in the writings of non-Marxists as well it has been pointed out again and again that use of terminology has not been consistent as regards what has been here called by Marx "material forces of production". (1) Consequently, it is best to settle on a terminology of one's own which will be consistent. In the paragraph preceding we used "productive forces" as a synonym and we shall try to use it consistently in describing or speaking of the "material forces of production".

First of all, what does Marx mean when he speaks of productive forces? In general, he means everything

(1) cf. Bober, K., - Karl Marx's Interpretation of History, - Chs. I, II, for a detailed listing of numerous terms used in Marxist accounts of the theory of history.

that enters into the labor process and he reduces the elementary factors to three: 1) the personal activity of man; 2) the subject, i.e., the object of man's activity or the subject matter upon which man exercises his personal activity; 3) the instruments used in producing a change in the material upon which he works. (1)

The personal activity of man - In the process of labour, man is the most important factor because he directs, guides, regulates and influences the role played by the other two factors. "He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of the body, in order to appropriate Nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature." (2)

The subject, (subject matter or object) of man's activity - In general this includes all the products of the earth and water upon which man exercises his activity; fish, timber, ore, etc., in their virgin state before they have been subjected to the labor process. It likewise

(1) Marx, K., Capital, Vol. I p. 198

(2) Ibid., pp. 197-198

includes all raw materials, i.e., that which "has been filtered through previous labour; such is ore already extracted and ready for washing. All raw material is the subject of labour, but not every subject of labour is raw material; it can only become so after it has undergone some alteration by means of labour." (1)

Instruments - Under this term Marx includes a vast complex of things from a stick to a steam shovel, from a wheelbarrow to a freight train. In short, all those things which serve to expedite the labor process, those things which man interposes between himself and the subject of his labor, all those things which are but an extension of the hands of man and enable him to work more efficiently. Marx's concept goes further than the tools which man employs and he states that even the earth is in a sense an instrument of labor. The concept would seem to include the waters of the earth also for in a very broad sense "we may include among the instruments of labour...all such objects as are necessary for carrying on the labour process." Thus canals, roads, workshops, etc., from one point of view fall into this class.(2)

(1) Ibid., p. 199

(2) Ibid., pp. 199-201; Marx-Engels, German Ideology, pp 63-64

In summary then, the productive forces are man as the conscious factor, nature and its materials as the objects of man's activities and the instruments which man employs to effect a transformation of the materials upon which he works. These productive forces constitute one element of what we have termed the substructure. The other element as we have seen before, is the relations of production to which we now turn our consideration.

Relations of production - In the course of the productive process, as is clear, men necessarily form certain relationships to one another independently of their wills, certain bonds of union arise among them which Marx calls relations of production. In general, such relations express the relative positions of men in regard to property - particularly ownership in the means of production - and the manner in which things are produced and exchanged; in a word, the complex of relations which characterize the economic structure of society. They are expressed in the institutions and general economic categories which distinguish a particular society such as the guilds and the trade unions, the serf and the lord, the capitalist and the proletarian.

Dependent as they are upon the stage of development of productive forces, these productive relations are subject to the same natural laws of development, that is to say, men are forced to institute that form of society which is most in accord with the exigencies of the productive process. Thus the social history of man is the history of production expressed in other than economic terms. For example, common ownership of land was a relation of production quite in keeping with the nature of the crude and simple methods distinctive of early, primitive civilization. With the passing of the primitive stage it no longer corresponded to the higher state of productive forces and had to finally give way to private property which engendered a different societal structure. (1) In turn, the changes in productive forces within the framework of private property gave rise to new relations of productions which gave rise to slavery and its later abolition (2), the overthrow of feudalism and so on. In every case, for Marx, the form of society - which is the sum of relations

(1) Engels, F. Anti-Duhring, p. 151; 163-166

(2) Engels reduces both the rise and decline of slavery to purely economic causes, and ridicules the influence of any moral considerations. Cf. Ibid., p. 200

of productions - is determined by both what men produce and how they produce.

What is society, whatever its form may be? The product of men's reciprocal action. Are men free to choose this or that form of society for themselves? By no means. Assume a particular state of development in the productive forces of man and you will get a particular form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular stages of development in production, commerce and consumption and you will have a corresponding social order, a corresponding organisation of the family and of ranks and classes, in a word a corresponding civil society. Presuppose a particular civil society and you will get particular political conditions which are only the official expression of civil society. (1)

Again, let us repeat that for Marx the two elements, productive forces and relations of productions constitute the substructure of society, the first determining the nature of the second; upon this second, in turn, rests the superstructure of society which is only the reflection of the nature of the substructure.

Superstructure

In any given society we find a definite political organization, legal and moral codes, religious bodies, all resting upon and developing theories and principles

(1) Marx, K., Letter to P.V. Annenkov, Brussels, Dec.28, 1846

which are the result of study and thought. To these basic features of any society, embodied in institutions such as the state, church and other juridical and political institutions, men have usually ascribed an independent development and existence. But to this Marx asserts that all ideologies, whatever may be their nature, are to be explained by the economics of a given period. None of them have an independent existence, nor an independent history. (1) This is an illusion which has afflicted the minds of men from the beginning of time but Marx and Engels were confident that they had shattered the illusion.

Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, indeed, but with a false consciousness. The real motives impelling him remain unknown to him, otherwise it would not be an ideological process at all. Hence he imagines false or apparent motives. Because it is a process of thought he derives both its form and its content from pure thought, either his own or that of his predecessors. He works with mere thought material which he accepts without examination as the product of thought, he does not investigate further for a more remote process independent of thought; indeed its origin seems obvious to him, because as all action is produced through the medium of thought it also appears to him to be ultimately based on thought. (2)

(1) Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p. 14

(2) Engels, F., Letter to Mehring, London, July 14, 1893. "Every ideology, however, once it has arisen, develops in connection with the given concept material and develops this material further; otherwise it would cease to be ideology, that is, occupation with thoughts as with independent entities, developing independently and subject only to their own laws. That the material life conditions of the persons inside whose heads this thought

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The Marxist notion is ideology throws light upon the famous phrase that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." It is the material conditions of life that explain the ideas that men form. The significant ideas in history have always been rooted in the economics of the period, the primary reality. This is but logical if we recall the relative positions of matter and spirit in the doctrine of Marx.

... if nature, being, the material world is primary, and mind, thought is secondary, derivative; if the material world represents objective reality existing independently of the mind of men, while the mind is a reflection of this objective reality it follows that the material life of society, its being is also primary, and its spiritual life secondary, derivative, and that the material life of society is an objective reality existing independently of the will of men, while the spiritual life of society is a reflection of this objective reality, a reflection of being. (1)

History, therefore, is not to be explained from the dominant ideas of any given epoch. This would be a

(Continued) - process goes on, in the last resort determine the course of this process, remains of necessity unknown to these persons, for otherwise there would be an end to all ideology. Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p.56

(1) Stalin, J., Dialectical and Historical Materialism, p. 20

completely superficial and abstract view which would wrongly ignore the primordial element, the source of the ideas themselves. It is not because men have particular ideas that life is what it is; on the contrary because life is what it is, men have particular ideas. Their thinking flows from their being, not vice versa. Men's brains are not the place to look if one is seeking the final cause of social changes and political revolutions. (1) One must investigate the changes in the modes of production and exchange and seek the final causes "not in the philosophy but in the economics of each particular epoch." (2)

Our examination of the Marxist conception of history thus far has explained the features which distinguish any particular society at a particular stage

(1) Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p. 14. "The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material-life process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises." The doctrine of ideology relates Marx to Freud and some writers have endeavored to show the close bond which links the thought of the two men. Cf. R. Osborn, Freud and Marx A Dialectical Study, London, 1937. For an opposite point of view, See Jackson, T.A., Dialectics, The Logic of Marxism, pp 549-60

(2) Engels, F., Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, p. 26

of historical development. In other words, examine a society of some given epoch and you will find that the productive forces at a particular stage of evolution are the cause of a special set of relations of production which in turn are the determining factor of the ideological reflexes which are the dominant ideas of the period. (1) History, however, is continually in motion, a flowing stream of the activities of man in pursuit of his ends. How are the transitions from one form of society to another to be explained? Marx gives the answer when he says,

At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or - what is but a legal expression for the same thing - with the property relations within which they have been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. (2)

As an illustration the transition of society from one form to another due to the incompatibility between the productive forces and the relations of production one may consider the transition from one to another of

(1) Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p. 39

(2) Marx, K., Preface to A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy, Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 356

any of the five societal forms which, according to theory, thus far have made their appearance in history - primitive communal, slave, feudal, capitalist and socialist. The transition from feudal to capitalist society and the passage of the latter into a socialist society are the ones most often described in Marxist literature and this is easily understandable in view of the fact that these two final transitions have dominated the historical scene since the formation of the theory.

Engels sketches the transition from feudal to capitalist society when he states

Before capitalistic production, i.e., in the Middle Ages the system of petty industry obtained generally, based upon the private property of the laborers in their means of productions; in the country, the agriculture of the small peasant, freeman or serf; in the towns, the handicrafts organized in guilds. The instruments of labor - land, agricultural implements, the workshop, the tool - were the instruments of labor of single individuals, adapted for the use of one worker, and, therefore, of necessity, small, dwarfish, circumscribed. But for this very reason they belonged, as a rule, to the producer himself. To concentrate these scattered, limited means of production to enlarge them, to turn them into the powerful levers of production of the present day - this was precisely the historic role of capitalist production and of its upholder the bourgeoisie. (1)

(1) Engels, F., Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, p. 28

The picture which Engels paints is this. During the Middle Ages the productive forces were undeveloped, immature, limited, e.g., the spinning wheel, the hand loom, the hammer of the blacksmith. With the advance of technological development, more advanced methods and instruments of production came into play e.g., the spinning machine, the power loom, the steam hammer. (1) They were controlled by individuals who constructed factories, employing numerous workers to run the new machines. The products of these machines were placed on the market in competition with the products of the individual producers and the latter found themselves unable to compete with the lower prices of the manufactured products. In spite of themselves, therefore, the individual producers of the towns found that they could not stem the onrushing tide of socialized products and were forced to abandon individual production and enter upon social production in the factories of the capitalist owners. (2) The same fate was suffered by the peasants, freemen and serfs as a result of new machinery and improved methods of farming which intro-

(1) Ibid., pp. 28-29 - "The starting point of Modern Industry is the revolution in the instruments of labor"
Marx, K., Capital, Vol. I, p. 430; also, p. 405
(2) Marx, K., Capital, Vol. I, p. 337

duced large farms beginning to produce on a vast scale. The latter phenomenon lagged far behind the changes in the towns but Marx saw it as the inevitable development of capitalist society. (1)

The feudal relations of production had to bow to the demands of the new advance of the productive forces. Feudal private property had to give way to forms of petty bourgeois production which, because they impeded the freed development of the productive forces, in turn, had to yield to capitalist private property.

This mode of production (petty bourgeois production) pre-supposes parcelling of the soil, and scattering of the other means of production. As it excludes the concentration of these means of productions, so also it excludes cooperation, division of labour within each separate process of production, the control over, and the productive application of the forces of Nature by society, and the free development of the social productive powers. It is compatible only with a system of production, and a society, moving within narrow and more or less primitive bounds. To perpetuate it would be, as Pecqueur rightly says, "to decree universal mediocrity". At a certain stage of development it brings forth the material agencies for its own dissolution. From that moment new forces and new passions spring up in the bosom of society; but the old social organization fetters them and keeps them down. It must be annihilated; it is annihilated. Its annihilation, the transformation of the individualised

(1) Ibid., p. 553 ff.

and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, of the pigmy property of the many into the huge property of the few, the expropriation of the great mass of the people from the soil, from the means of subsistence, and from the means of labour, this fearful and painful expropriation of the mass of the people forms the prelude to the history of capital. (1)

With the establishment of capitalist private property the progress in technology was greatly accelerated. This acceleration resulted in a progressively greater concentration of the means of production and furnished the basis of a new antagonism which developed within the structure of capitalist society - a new contradiction between productive forces and the relations of production. Productive forces have become almost completely socialized and therefore demand corresponding relations of production, i.e., social ownership of the productive forces with a consequent equitable distribution of the products. Capitalist society, however, exhibits relations of production which are still based on private property, the appropriation by the individual capitalist of products which are socially produced. These relations of production have changed therefore, from the "forms of the development of the forces of

(1) Marx, K., Ibid., p. 835

production...into their fetters." The contradictions existing in bourgeois society are leading that society to the brink of social revolution. The bourgeois social organization must be annihilated, destroyed, overthrown. It will be annihilated by the class which represents the higher stage in the social process -- the proletariat -- and society will take over all the means of production thus restoring the equilibrium between productive forces and production relations.

With the transition from one form of society to another there is a more or less rapid transformation of the superstructure which gives rise to new political, moral, social, philosophical and cultural ideas and theories. "With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. (1)

Following upon the widespread promulgation of the theory there was a wave of attacks upon its soundness and scientific value. To answer the critics of the famous theory was the task of Engels. Moreover, an answer was

(1) Marx, K., Preface to Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy, in Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 356

imperative because even some of the orthodox followers were beginning to waver in their adherence to the teachings of Marx. Engels, therefore, undertook the task of further elaborating the thought of Marx and himself. According to the communists, his work is purely explicative, in no way retracting any of the basic assumptions. He made explicit what was always implicit in the doctrine by showing that the misunderstandings which arose were all due to the same cause -- the failure of the critics to comprehend the dialectical nature of the historical process.

From a dialectical point of view, it will be recalled, cause and effect do not stand in rigid isolation one from the other no more than good or evil, true or false. (1) There is action and reaction, interpenetrations; cause and effect are constantly changing places so that what is now a cause becomes in time an effect and vice versa. Engels reminds one of his correspondents of this fact and advises him to be on his guard against...

the fatuous notion of the ideologist that because we deny an independent historical development to

(1) Engels, F., Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, p. 21

the various ideological spheres which play a part in history we also deny them any effect upon history. The basis of this is the common undialectical conception of cause and effect as rigidly opposite poles, the total disregarding of interaction; these gentlemen often almost deliberately forget that once an historic element has been brought into the world by other elements, ultimately by economic facts, it also reacts in its turn and may react on its environment and even on its own causes. (1)

He repeated the same idea and further emphasized the reciprocal action of the various elements in a famous letter to J. Bloch.

According to the materialist conception of history the determining element in history is ultimately the production and reproduction in real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If therefore somebody twists this into the statement that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure -- political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, constitutes established by the victorious classes after a successful battle, etc. -- forms of law -- and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the combatants: political, legal, philosophical, theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma -- also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of

(1) Engels, F., Letter to Mehring, London, July 14, 1893
Letter to Conrad Schmidt; London, October 27, 1890

accidents (i.e., of things and events whose inner connection is so remote or so impossible to prove that we regard it as absent and can neglect it) the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary..... We make our own history, but in the first phase under very definite presuppositions and conditions. Among these the economic ones are finally decisive.. But the political, etc., ones, and indeed, even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one. (1)

In still another letter Engels further extends the theory to admit geography and race as economic factors and again emphasizes the influence of ideological factors by way of reaction upon the economic base.

Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic base. It is not that the economic position is the cause and alone active, while everything else only has a passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which ultimately asserts itself...So it is not, as people try here and there conveniently to imagine, that the economic position produces an automatic effect. Men make their history themselves, only in given surroundings which condition it and on the basis of actual relations already existing, among which the economic relations, however much they may be influenced by the other political and ideological ones, are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the red thread which runs through them and alone leads to understanding.(2)

(1) Engels, F., Letter to J. Bloch, London, Sept. 21, 1890

(2) Engels, F., Letter to Heinz Starkenburg, London, January 25, 1894

The qualifications, modifications or, according to the communists, explanations and elaborations of the theory made by Engels went far to bring within range of the theory a number of obviously neglected factors. At the same time, however, there was a tendency, in spite of Engels, to reduce the economic factor in importance - in fact if not in words. As one writer has noted, Engels, by admitting the exaggerations of earlier statements and recognizing the influence of ideological forces, "increased the tenability of the theory at the expense of its consistency." (1)

- Section 2 - Analysis of Marx's Theory -

In our exposition of Marx's interpretation of history we believe that we have presented it in accordance with its orthodox interpretation. In a sense, it seems to be little more than another economic, or if you will, materialistic interpretation of history and has nothing ominous about it. This may perhaps be true if one does not probe too deeply, but if one pushes the theory to its logical conclusions it reveals characteristics of the basest sort. It appears to us that the

(1) Skelton, O.D., Socialism, A Critical Analysis, p. 104

deeper meaning and content of the theory are glossed over, veiled behind a facade of socio-economic terminology. We know what Marx and Engels have said, we have their words, but what we seek to discover is this - is the theory actually as unique as its proponents claim, to what does it really reduce itself, and what are its logical consequences? This section of our study hopes to give an answer to these questions. Nor are such questions superfluous. It takes but little reflection to recognize that there is often a vast difference between what a man claims for his system and what the system logically contains. For example, Leibnitz, Spinoza, Descartes, Kant, and Rousseau may have been subjectively convinced that they were defending the rights and prerogatives of God and man but we know their doctrines had the opposite effect. Surely the arch-conservative, Hegel, would recoil in horror from the revolutionary element in his doctrines. Master Eckhardt and Nicholas of Cusa were likewise men inspired by the noblest of motives. Finally, we take Marx at his word and try to distinguish between what his theory says and what it really is.

Just as in private life one distinguishes between what a man thinks and says of himself and what he really is and does, still more in historical struggles, one must distinguish the phrases and the fancies of the parties from their real organism, their real interests, their conception of themselves from their reality. (1)

Having thus received, as it were, the official approbation of the parties concerned, let us proceed in our efforts to discover the theory behind the theory. Throughout this phase of our study we will make frequent references to Hegel's philosophy of history insofar as it will throw light upon our analysis of Marx's theory. It will be seen, moreover, that a close parallel exists between the "upside-down" and "rightside-up" applications of the famous dialectic.

Let us note once again that Marx asserts that the determining factor of all history is the economic structure of society. The contradictions between productive forces and relations of productions generate an explosive force which wipes out the former economic structure and enables society to pass to a higher stage of development. From one point of view it would seem that Marx has pushed the inquiry into the determining force in history back to its basic and ultimate

(1) Marx, K., The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, in Selected Works, Vol. II, pp. 344-45

elements. It would seem so, we say, but is it actually true? Is there not another question which might be asked? Has Marx really expressed verbally or actually exposed the fundamental struggle which is the basis of his philosophy? We think not.

First of all, is it not permissible to inquire whether the productive forces are themselves caused by something else and, if so, what the cause may be? If such a cause exists is it not more fundamental, more ultimate if we may so redundantly speak? That such a cause exists is clear from all the writings of the Marxist school. We are told again and again that nothing exists except matter. This is the primary, universal cause of everything that is, the uncaused cause in the Marxist philosophy. In reality, therefore, the productive forces are only the proximate cause of the historical process since they themselves depend upon something more fundamental. Here we may seem to be indulging in some sort of metaphysical juggling process, becoming lost in sophistries. Marx's theory is put forth as an explanation of history whereas we are drifting into the field of metaphysical speculation. While not delaying to discuss this point which will

become clearer as our analysis is unfolded we might say here that we are actually not too far afield because in fact Marx's theory is in itself an attempt at a metaphysics of history, indeed of all reality.

Marx takes as his point of departure the fact of atheism - there is no God. (1) As is the case with all who deny the existence or transcendence of God, so too in Marx's case, this denial reduces itself to a denial of the subject of divine attributes but not of the attributes themselves; that is to say, all the various isms transfer the divine attributes to something else - man himself, mind, or matter. (2) What Marx does, therefore, amounts to this. He transfers to matter all the attributes which men commonly acknowledge to be the possession of the transcendent God and which Hegel had ascribed to mind. Matter is uncreated, existing from

(1) "For Germany, the criticism of religion is essentially ended...The fundament fact of religious criticism is this: man makes religion, religion does not make man." Marx, K., Contribution a La Critique de La Philosophie du Droit du Hegel in Oeuvres Philosophique, Tome I, p.83 This article appeared in the Annales Franco-allemandes published in 1844. cf. Maritain, J., True Humanism, pp.28-30
(2) In this matter Berdyaev reflects the thought of many thinkers when he says, "I do not believe in the existence of pure atheists. Man is a religious animal and when he denies the true and living God he makes himself false Gods, images and idols and worships them." Origin of Russian Communism, p. 194

all eternity, the source of all that exists, the force that rules the world; it cannot be annihilated, the eternal being without beginning or end. (1) Everything that exists is made of matter or the product of matter. Since matter possesses all the divine attributes it is actually an impersonal God. Further, since God is matter and everything that exists is matter, the Marxist doctrine presents us with a base, vulgar, gross form of Pantheism which is the materialistic counterpart of Hegel's Idealistic Pantheism. Marx is likewise the modern version of David of Dinant of whom St. Thomas spoke in language strange for him when he characterized David as one who stupidly taught that God was primary matter. (2) Needless to say the Marxists would scoff at the idea of any such impersonal God but in spite of their protestations it is clear that matter possesses all the qualities of the divine and is lacking only one thing - the name itself.

Matter, the primordial being, is constantly in motion, moving in an eternal cycle "wherein nothing is eternal but eternally changing, eternally moving matter

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, pp. 36-37; 322

(2) Summa Theologica, I, Q-3, A. 8

and the laws according to which it moves and changes." (1) Throughout the long course of its evolution it has been moving in a spiral, upward course of development passing from lower to higher stages. Why? Because the process of evolution is dialectical and in a dialectical process, as we have noted earlier, the more advanced stage is always more perfect, richer in content than the preceding stage. "Dialectical philosophy...reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything; nothing can endure before it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and passing away of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher." (2) Those who lack the ability to think dialectically, a gift which seems to be reserved for a few chosen souls, find it impossible to escape the conviction that this progressive movement of all things reveals the presence of mind, intelligence operating within matter itself (any operation of mind outside of, or distinct from matter being rejected ab hypothesi) in a hidden, unconscious manner even before its visible operation with the appearance of man upon the earth. The dialectic, being the force which directs the course of events, the transformations of matter, in

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 24

(2) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 12

a definite direction - always upwards, in a progressive manner - takes the place, in the Marxist scheme of things, of the Divine Mind in the traditional philosophy just as it does in the philosophy of Hegel. Here Hegel and Marx are in agreement, the dynamic of mind and matter is the same force - the dialectic. Another vigorous protest should be forthcoming from Marxist quarters but again it is a case of ascribing to matter all the qualities of mind and withholding only the name. Neither the Marxists nor anyone else can explain movement in a definite direction and the order manifest in the cosmos without ultimately reducing it to something which is capable of ordering that movement, in other words to a designer. (1) A plan without a planner is

(1) Here we refer of course to the rational proofs for the existence of God. The work of R. Garrigou-Lagrange, God, His Existence and His Nature, has become the classic in the field. "Marx not only failed to escape from philosophy with his Dialectic Materialism, but he failed to escape, in the essence of the matter, from idealistic philosophy. For, if your material world has the faculty of willing the social revolution, and aspiring toward all those good things grouped by a revolutionary mind under the concept of "higher" and if it has the faculty of going after those things by a procedure that is in its essence logical, what is there left of mind that you have not surreptitiously attributed to this material world?" Marxism, Is It Science, Eastman, M., pp. 69-70 "More, in the degree to which the Marxist theoreticians of the U.S.S.R. elaborate a metaphysic, it is to a form of hylozoism that they return; their general line in philosophy demanding something resembling liberty and

absurd.

In ordinary parlance, the something which orders and plans a process or order is called mind or reason; human reason if it is a question of a particular order, Divine Reason if it is a question of the universal order. Thus the pan-materialism of Marxism reveals more and more the pantheistic characteristics of its doctrine. The indefectibility of the dialectic whereby "in spite of all seeming accidents and temporary retrogression, a progressive development always asserts itself in the end" (1) gives a somewhat hollow ring to the exultant words of Engels that "The old teleology has gone to the devil". (2) Engels fought strenuously against any teleological interpretation of nature and history but the theory does not exclude it.

a soul be attributed to matter. They dare not yet declare, like the old Ionians, that everything is full of a universally extended soul and divinity...but that certainly seems the direction in which they are going. How, indeed, could it be otherwise from the moment they make their dialectic one with matter? The metaphysical atheism which came out of the Hegelian Left is thus returning little by little to its origins, to the old hegelian pantheism." Maritain, J., op. cit., p. 55. For the same idea cf. Berdyaev, N., pp. 117 ff.: 178ff. Maritain and Berdyaev are speaking of the present day trend in the general line of Soviet philosophy but their words are equally applicable, it seems to us, in the present context. Cf. also Turgeon, C., Critique de la Conception Materialiste de l'Histoire pp. 342-343

(1) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 44

(2) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 187

It has almost become a first principle in Marxist doctrine that when matter reached a certain high stage of development man made his appearance on the earth. This is not hypothesis or theory in their conception but an established fact which admits of no doubt. (1) For the Marxists, the appearance of men has, as a concomitant, the appearance of mind. We might term man's entry into the universe the stage of development at which matter becomes incarnate, becomes fully conscious of itself just as for Hegel the Absolute Idea becomes fully conscious of itself in the mind of philosopher.

History begins with the initial act of production and the entire process of history is the march of matter in the world, the march of production which is the end and means of all human existence. For Hegel, history represents or is the march of Spirit, God, Reason in the world. Reason, i.e., Divine Wisdom governs the world, not in the sense of a transcendent providence but as a force immanent to the world process and the process of Universal History. For Marx, as for Hegel, history is a rational process which is governed

(1) Cf. Ibid., pp. 1-25; 279-296

by its own "inner, hidden laws and it is only a matter of discovering these laws." (1)

Viewing history from a broad point of view Hegel says that "Universal history...is the exhibition of Spirit in the process of working out the knowledge of that which it is potentially. And as the germ bears in itself the whole nature of the tree, and the taste and form of its fruit, so do the first traces of Spirit virtually contain the whole of that History." (2) The essence of Spirit is freedom and the historical process is the development of self-consciousness of Spirit, of freedom. This development begins among the Orientals who only knew that one was free; among the Greeks and Romans it was known that some are free but not man as such. "The German nations, under the influence of Christianity, were the first to attain the consciousness, that man, as man, is free: that it is the freedom of Spirit which constitutes its essence." (3) Here we see the broad outlines of the subject matter of Universal History. "The History of the world is

(1) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 49. This idea is constantly recurring in all the writings of Marx and Engels and is the very heart of their theory of history.
(2) Hegel, F., Philosophy of History (Sibree Translation) pp. 17-18
(3) Ibid., p. 18

none other than the progress of the consciousness of Freedom; a progress whose development according to the necessity of its nature, it is our business to investigate." (1) The division of history into stages wherein one, some or all are free also indicates the directional movement of history which is from east to west, beginning in Asia and ending in Europe. (2)

This movement of history from east to west, a fact admitted by all, is likewise apparent in the theory of historical materialism which is the history of the development of production. In the east, production was only crudely developed; passing to the history of Greece and Rome we note an expansion accompanied by a division of labor which results in the beginnings of the stratification of society into classes. Finally, production passed through intermediate stages until it attained the summit of its growth among the peoples of Europe. In each stage of development there is greater interaction between man and nature with the consequent humanization of nature and the naturalization of man. History is the exhibition of matter working out that

(1) Ibid., p. 19
(2) Ibid., p. 103

which it is potentially - and potentially it is all things - through the instrumentality of its highest creation, man.

Having determined the nature of Spirit and the goal of history, Hegel then considers the means which are necessary to attain this goal. In itself, the "principle, aim, destiny, or the nature and idea of Spirit, is something merely general and abstract... the activity of man in the widest sense...the need, instinct, inclination and passion of man." (1) Hegel does not consider liberal and benevolent aims as having much influence on the course of history. It is rather the selfish interests of men acting to satisfy their desires which are the most efficient springs of actions.(2) The individual beings must find some personal satisfaction in their action.

Nothing therefore happens, nothing is accomplished, unless the individuals concerned, seek their own satisfaction in the issue...nothing has been accomplished without interest on the part of the actors; and - if interest be called passion... we may affirm absolutely that nothing great in the World has been accomplished without passion. (3)

(1) Hegel, G., Ibid., p. 22

(2) Ibid., p. 20

(3) Ibid., p. 23

In spite of these strong affirmations of Hegel regarding the action of individuals it is by no means his contention that individuals are the molders of history. Quite to the contrary. The real actors on the stage of history are totalities, peoples, states.(1) The action of the individual is necessary but not determinative.

We find a parallelism of Hegel's teaching in the theory of Marx and Engels who fully admit the action of the individual as a necessary but insignificant factor in history. "In the history of society...the actors are all endowed with consciousness, are men acting with deliberation or passion, working towards definite goals; nothing happens without a conscious purpose, without an intended aim." (2) History, however, does not find its ultimate causes in the actions of isolated individuals, despite any greatness they may possess, but in the actions of masses, groups, aggregates, classes.

(1) Ibid., p. 14

(2) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 48.

When, therefore, it is a question of investigating the driving forces which - consciously or unconsciously, and indeed very often unconsciously - lie behind the motives of men in their historical actions and which constitutes the real ultimate driving forces of history, then it is not a question so much of the motives of single individuals, however eminent, as of those motives which set in motion great masses, whole peoples, and again whole classes of people in each people. (1)

In both theories the individual is the unwitting victim of a ruse for in acting to accomplish its own purpose it is the instrument of matter or spirit to develop their potentialities. (2) The actions flowing from individual wills coalesce and produce results neither foreseen nor desired by the individuals. The aggregates - classes, masses, peoples - suffer the same fate.

This vast congeries of volitions, interest and activities constitute the instruments and means of the World-Spirit for attaining its object;

(1) Ibid., p. 50

(2) "This may be called the cunning of reason - that it sets the passions to work for itself, while that which develops its existence through such impulsions pays the penalty, and suffers loss...The particular is for the most part of too trifling value as compared with the general; individuals are sacrificed and abandoned. The Idea pays the penalty of determinate existence and of corruptibility, not from itself, but from the passions of individuals." Hegel, Philosophy of History, p. 33 (cf. also Hegel, F., Philosophy of Right, #344 (Knox Translation.)

bringing it to consciousness, and realizing it, And this aim is none other than finding itself - coming to itself - and contemplating itself in concrete actuality. But that those manifestations of vitality on the part of individuals and peoples, in which they seek and satisfy their own purposes, are, at the same time, the means and instruments of a higher and broader purpose of which they know nothing - which they realize unconsciously - might be made a matter of question; rather has been questioned, and in every variety of form negative, decried and condemned as mere dreaming and "Philosophy". But on this point I announced my view at the very outset, and asserted our hypothesis - which, however will appear in the sequel, in the form of a legitimate inference, and our belief, that Reason governs the world, and has consequently governed its history. In relation to this independently universal and substantial existence - all else is subordinate, subservient to it and the means for its development. (1)

...in history an additional result is commonly produced by human actions beyond that which they immediately recognize and desire. They gratify their own interest; but something further is thereby accomplished, latent in the actions in question, though not present to their consciousness, and not included in their design. (2)

In the foregoing quotations of Hegel it is not difficult to perceive the origin of "ideology" in the Marxist teaching. Engels description of ideology as a process whereby man act consciously but with a false consciousness is but an echo of Hegel's own statements.

(1) Ibid., p. 25

(2) Ibid., p. 27

Hegel gives an example of a man, who, seeking revenge upon an enemy, sets fire to the enemy's house thereby gratifying his passion and accomplishing his plans. As a result of his action a number of other houses caught fire - a contingency which the arsonist had neither foreseen nor desire. (1) Stalin, outstripping Hegel, gives three examples of a similar nature to illustrate the same point. (2)

In regard to the examples offered by Hegel and Stalin and to the notion that from an individual action results may follow or do follow which are beyond the intention or foresight of the agent, may we be permitted to say that they only state something

(1) Ibid., p. 27

(2) Stalin, J., Dialectical and Historical Materialism PP. 41-42. "When gradually and gropingly, certain members of primitive communal society passed from the use of stone tools to iron tools, they, of course, did not know and did not stop to reflect what social results this innovation would lead to; they did not understand or realize that the change to metal tools meant a revolution in production, that it would in the long run lead to the slave system. They simply wanted to lighten their labour and secure an immediate and tangible advantage; their conscious activity was confined within the narrow bounds of this everyday personal interest." The other two examples merely state the same thing in different words. Further examples may be found in Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, pp. 291-96

which has generally been admitted by everyone. No one has ever seriously claimed that a man can control all the results of any particular action. If such were necessary no one could ever act. Secondly, it is clear that the events which occurred praeter intentionem do not display that necessary and logical connection which Hegel or the communists claim for them. Finally, and what is more significant, we have an inkling here of the vision which hypnotized Marx - the thought that man could control perfectly and foresee clearly from the outset all the results of his actions. Now what being possesses or can possess such a knowledge? Only the Divine Being. For Marx, matter developing in a dialectical manner possesses this knowledge and foresight and all of Marx's efforts are directed to making these qualities the possession of man as a result of man's triumph over and domination of matter.

Although the individual, as such, taken in isolation counts for but little it is nevertheless possible, according to Hegel, for him to attain in society that perfection which is lacking to him in his atomization. The will of man is mere subjective will and for his perfection and completion man must unite

himself with objective will which is the state. The march of Freedom in the world is marked by the conflict between the general and the particular, the universal and the singular, the State and the individual, objective will and subjective will. Each step in the development of Spirit affects a diminution of the existing cleavage until at the highest stage of development there is perfect union of general and particular, State and individual. Subjective will - dominated by passion, caprice, impulse, desire - overcomes its limitations, its dependence, through this union with rational, objective will. Here subjective will attains substantial life, moves in the realm of essential being; that is,

As a subjective will, occupied with limited passions, it is dependent and can gratify its desires only within the limits of this dependence. But the subjective will has also a substantial life - a reality - in which it moves in the region of essential being, and has the essential itself as the object of its existence. This essential being is the union of the subjective with the rational will: it is the moral Whole, the State, which is that form of reality in which the individual has and enjoys his freedom; but on the condition of his recognizing, believing in, and willing that which is common to the Whole. (1)

(1) Hegel, G., Philosophy of History, p. 38 - Cf. also Hegel, Philosophy of Right, #257 ff.

In his life in the State the individual attains a true moral life and real freedom in a conscious manner because he is no longer dependent or subject to anyone but himself through consciousness of his own being.

...all the worth which the human being possesses - all spiritual reality, he possesses only through the state. For his spiritual reality consists in this, that his own essence - Reason - is objectively present to him, that it possesses as objective immediate existence for him. Thus only is he fully conscious; thus only is he a partaker of morality - of a just and moral social and political life. For Truth is the Unity of the universal and subjective Will; and the Universal is to be found in the State, in its laws, its universal and rational arrangements. The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on Earth. We have in it, therefore, the object of History in a more definite shape than before; that in which Freedom obtains objectivity, and lives in the enjoyment of this objectivity. For Law is the objectivity of Spirit; volition in its true form. Only that which obeys law, is free; for it obeys itself - it is independent and so free...when the subjective will of man submits to laws - the contradiction between Liberty and Necessity vanishes. (1)

- The Proletarian State -

The bond existing between Marxist and Hegelian thought is nowhere more evident than in the existing gov-

(1) Hegel, Philosophy of History, p. 39; Dr. Delos, J.T., La Nation, Tome II, p. 79 ff. Cassirer, E., op. cit., Hegel's theory of the State is treated in pages 263-76

ernment of Russia today. The famous "dictatorship of the proletariat", intermediary stage between bourgeois society and the classless society, unites in itself two streams flowing from Hegelian thought, the dialectic and state absolutism, the deification of the supremacy of the governing body over the governed. Hegelian and Machiavellian principles of statecraft are employed ruthlessly. Truth, law, morality, in a word, everything - including individuals - are completely subordinated and sacrificed, if need be, to the maintaining of the unlimited power of the political autocracy.

What is the mission of the proletarian state in the broad perspectives of the world historical process? Its mission is to completely destroy the bourgeois form of society because the latter, having contributed to the development of mighty productive forces has now become reactionary, obsolete, and constitutes a real obstacle to the further development of these same productive forces which have themselves outgrown the societal forms of the bourgeois-capitalist era. Matter, seeking higher and higher stages of evolution, brought into being the mighty productive forces through the instrumentality of the bourgeoisie and, at the same time, in the midst of

that same bourgeoisie, planted the seeds of the destructive forces which, at a certain stage of economic evolution, would slash the fetters of capitalistic production and foster the expansion of even mightier productive forces. There is here a sort of dialectical irony, a historical matricide insofar as the proletariat, generated within the bosom of bourgeois-capitalist society, slays that which gave it birth. Further, we may note here a close relationship to Hegel's famous dictum that all that is real is rational, all that is rational is real. For Hegel, real and existing are not synonymous. Only that is real, and, therefore, rational which is significant, important, necessary as a moment of the dialectical process. The bourgeoisie, as we shall see later, has played a not insignificant role in history, has been the cause of great advances for which Marx and Engels profess great admiration. For their time, the bourgeois social and economic forms were significant, important, rational but changed conditions rendered them insignificant, unimportant, irrational, unreal and, therefore, they must perish, must be destroyed.⁽¹⁾ And Marx would add, "They shall be destroyed."

⁽¹⁾ Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 11 ff.

Now because the proletarian state is still a state it will necessarily rest on, and be governed by, some sort of authoritative body. Upon what authority does it rest? To whom does it belong to dictate the policy? These were practical questions to which Marx had answered very abstractly. The practical answer was given by Lenin who proved himself to be the most practical of men. All authority is vested in the Communist Party which represents the vanguard, the most advance section of the proletariat, not only the Russian proletariat but the international proletariat. True to all the leading principles of bourgeois political strategy Lenin organized a small group of bureaucrats, an elite, a minority which was to autonomously formulate the rules and regulations for the guidance, if we may so speak, of the activities of the overwhelming majority. As the animating force of the proletariat, the party is truly the Divine Idea on earth, endowed with divine wisdom. It represents the true aims of the proletariat, not the aims which the individuals under the influence of impulse, desire, passion or caprice may set for themselves but those which are truly rational. It follows as a logical consequence that because the party knows far better than the individuals themselves

what is best for the latter that it is foolish not to conform to the dictates of the party. Moreover, to conform is to act rationally and morally because, as Hegel pointed out, morality is essentially rational and the party alone is capable of that perspicacity which discovers among the multitude of possibilities for human action those actions which are most conducive to the furthering of the aims of the proletariat, most in accord with the progress of production leading to an abundance of material goods which provides man with the opportunity for living a truly human life.

In obeying the directives of the party the individual proletarian achieves freedom because, at least from the theoretical point of view, there is no divergence between his aims and those of the party. Ideally, at least, the individual obeys only himself because of the identity between the general and the particular interest. This is, of course, only true of the real proletarian. Those who fail to recognize and appreciate the clear vision of the party leaders necessarily feel themselves constrained. They represent a danger to proletarian unity, threaten the monolithic structure of the political organization and must be

placed in a position which will not permit them to interfere with the march of the proletariat towards the classless society.

Whether or not Marx envisaged the dictatorship of the proletariat as it exists in its present form in Russia today, as organized by Lenin and developed by Stalin, has been and is a matter of dispute as is evident from the writings of Lenin and Stalin. In particular Lenin's classic, State and Revolution, and The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky are a defense of his orthodoxy in regard to the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat against the attacks of Kautsky and others. Aside from the particular political structure which should exist during the transitional phase between capitalism and the classless society, we can say that Marx and Lenin are in accord regarding the absolute necessity of the supremacy of the general over the particular. The individual counts for but little in view of the destiny which Marx foresaw for collective, social man.

For Hegel, the absolute supremacy of the state extended even to autonomy in the sphere of morality, that is, the state was not bound by any moral laws. Each

national state is bound by its agreements only up to the point that they are in accord with its national spirit and will and it may break agreements if it judges it advantageous. It is impossible to judge actions of nations or of world-historical individuals from the viewpoint of ordinary morality. They must be judged, in the final analysis, within history itself by continued success and duration or by failure and dissolution. (1)

The Marxists have adopted this standard of values, a standard not proper to Hegel alone as is well known. The test of truth and morality in regard to the actions of the party is determined by comparing them to the needs of production and the aims of the party. Only what meets with the absolute and unqualified approval of the party program can be considered to have any binding force. Consequently, the individuals have no other obligations, no other morality, no other standards than those of the the party.

As will be seen in the next chapter, the state of the proletariat is only the necessary prelude to the

(1) Hegel, op. cit., p. 67: Cf. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, #321-340: also #347, 351

to the passage into the classless society. In the classless society there will be no need of a state for its chief function - maintenance of the interests of a ruling class - will be superfluous. The perfect communist society "will put the whole state machinery where it will then belong - in the museum of antiquities, next to the spinning wheel and the bronze ax." (1)

Alienation

The outstanding feature of the classless society is the end of "alienation". The idea of alienation haunts Marx throughout his entire life. It is a concept which he inherited from Feuerbach and Hegel. As we have seen, Spirit or the Idea, according to Hegel, alienates itself by its objectivization in nature, then returns to itself with a fuller, richer content. Feuerbach, in an attempt to surmount the Hegelian mental gymnastics, constructs a system of thought which, we are informed, will demonstrate the concrete mode of this alienation in "a new philosophy verified practically, i.e., in concreto, in application...namely, to religion." (2)

(1) Engels, F., Origin of the State, Family and Private Property, p. 158

(2) Feuerbach, L., The Essence of Christianity, (tr. from 2nd German edition by George Eliot) preface, p. viii

This new philosophy, we are told, rests on principles which "are no a priori, excogitated propositions, no products of speculation; they have arisen out of an analysis of religion...The ideas are only conclusions, consequences drawn from premises which are...objective facts." (1) Feuerbach intends to show that a scientific study of religion will reveal "its true object and substance, namely man, - anthropology. (2)

In the thought of Feuerbach, religion derives its distinctive character from the essential difference between man and the animal which is consciousness - consciousness of self as an individual and consciousness of the species as an object of thought. Man can have his essential nature, his species, as an object of thought, something of which the animal is incapable.

But what is this essential difference between man and the brute? The most simple, general, and also the most popular answer to this question is - consciousness:- but consciousness in the strict sense; for the consciousness implied in the feeling of self as an individual, in discrimination by the senses, in the perception and even judgment of outward things according to sensible signs, cannot be denied to the brutes. Consciousness in the strictest sense is present only in a being to whom his species, his essential nature, is an object of thought. (3)

(1) Ibid., p. vii

(2) Ibid., p. xi

(3) Ibid., p. 1

The second thing to note is that for Feuerbach "the object of any subject is nothing else than the subject's own nature taken objectively," (1) that is to say, the objects of man's consciousness have their foundation and source in man himself, they are the projections of man's own nature, the nature of the subject under the form and appearance of object.

Now in religion man has traditionally submitted to a transcendent God, a supreme being exterior to and independent of man. In reality, man has created this seemingly independent God by an objectivization, by the projection into an object of qualities which belong to man himself.

Religion, at least the Christian, is the relation of man to himself, or more correctly to his own nature (i.e., his subjective nature): but a relation to it viewed as a nature apart from his own. The divine being is nothing else than the human being, or, rather, the human nature purified, freed from the limits of the individual man, made objective - that is contemplated and revered as another, a distinct being. All the attributes of the divine nature are, therefore, attributes of the human nature. (2)

With Feuerbach man becomes the measure of all things. Man's knowledge is the measure of objects in-

(1) Ibid., p.12

(2) Ibid., p.14

stead of knowledge being ensured by the objects. Knowledge of self is the medium for knowledge of objects. That which is known is the self exteriorized. Thus, "consciousness of God is only self-consciousness, knowledge of God is self-knowledge." (1) The limits and extent of man's perfections are identical with the limits and extent of the divine perfections. In Marx also, the social man of Feuerbach, stripped of his religious trappings, will become the absolute measure of all things.

The development of religions down through the years is the story of man's increase in self-knowledge, man gradually recognizing that the objective is in reality only the subjective objectivized. The progress of true religion is parallel with the decline of those religions which worship a transcendent God and the rise of a real knowledge of the true nature of religion.

Man first of all sees his nature as if out of himself, before he finds it in himself. His own nature is in the first instance contemplated by him as that of another being. Religion is the childlike condition of humanity; but the child sees his nature - man - out of himself; in childhood a man is an object to himself under the form of another man. Hence the historical progress of religion consists in this: that what by an

(1) Ibid., p. 12

earlier religion was regarded as objective, is now recognised as subjective; that is, what was formerly contemplated and worshipped as God is now perceived to be something human. (1)

Marx and Engels were exultant when they read the writings of Feuerbach which shattered the illusion of a transcendent God and revealed all former religion as an alienation of man's proper nature. Feuerbach's contribution to German thought and philosophy in general was to be the emancipation proclamation of philosophy from the domination of Hegelian idealism and the restoration of the supremacy of matter over spirit. (2)

In the opinion of the founders of communism, the work of Feuerbach, although invaluable for the progress of a real understanding of the primacy of matter, was not without its defects. He never fully escaped the fetters of idealism. Having advanced to the realization that materialism is the only logical explanation of the material, sensuously perceptible world in which man dwells, Feuerbach stopped short. "He cannot overcome the customary philosophical prejudice, prejudice not against the thing but against the name materialism." (3)

(1) Ibid., p. 13

(2) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 18

(3) Ibid., p. 25

Although Feuerbach speaks constantly of the sensuous world and man he never really attains them. "His 'interpretation' of the sensuous world is confined on the one hand to mere contemplation of it, and on the other to mere feeling; he says 'man' instead of 'real, historical men'." (1) In spite of his hatred for abstractions Feuerbach actually "never contrives to escape from the realm of abstraction...into that of living reality." (2) It is this criticism of Feuerbach which forms the core of the famous Theses on Feuerbach which appear in elaborated form in the German Ideology.

In a manner quite typical of Marx, he will alternately praise and damn Feuerbach; praising him for having overthrown and conclusively criticized Hegel and religion and, with a master's touch, having established the principles of this critique and the critique of all metaphysics, (3) he will denounce him for the reasons above which are summed up by Lubec when he says, "He will reproach Feuerbach for having made religious alienation some sort of metaphysical act instead of ex-

(1) Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p. 34

(2) Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 40

(3) Marx, K., Oeuvres, Philosophiques, Tome II, p. 250

plaining it more positively as a sociological fact."(1)

Marx will replace "the cult of abstract man which formed the kernel of Feuerbach's new religion...by the science of real men and of their historical development", (2) thereby revealing the religious alienation of his "spiritual father" (3) as only a nebulous caricature of the fundamental alienation - that which is the result of the labor process. The religious alienation is only a mental process, the alienation of man in labor is a phenomenon of real, empirical life. (4)

For Marx, as is evident, man is distinguished from the rest of the universe by the fact of production, by labor. Man is distinctly unique in being a tool-making animal which enables him not only to use nature, but, to a certain degree, master it depending upon his penetration of the secrets which lie concealed in the bosom of nature. (5) Only man thinks, he alone can act for an end. Man conceives an action or process in his mind before he achieves it in practice. (6) In acting

(1) Lubac, H., S.J., Le Drame de L'Humanisme Athee, p.34

(2) Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 41

(3) Lubac, op. cit., p. 33

(4) Marx, K., Oeuvres Philosophiques, Tome Vi, pp24-25

(5) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 291

(6) Marx, K., Capital, Vol. I, p. 198

upon nature man transfers to the product of his activity something of himself, something of his essence, which is primarily social. In appropriating the product of his own hands the essence of man becomes richer, more fully developed. The capitalist appropriation of the product of social labor, however, has sharply arrested this development of the interior richness of the human essence because the fruits of man's labor remain alienated. Men, united in producing a richer, more developed human life, are enslaved by a power which becomes alien to them. They are condemned under the capitalist system of production to forge the very chains which hold them captive. (1) Because of the fundamental alienation resulting from private property, man is subsequently alienated in the religious, political and cultural spheres of his life. In other words, condemned to slavery, he constructs a dream world, an illusory realm as an escape from the sordid conditions in the midst of which he dwells. Man thus lives in a world of necessity under the domination of forces which are beyond his control. The greed and lust for power of the dominating class have reduced the laborer to a

(1) Marx, K., Morceaux Choisis, p. 127

new low; he is no longer a person, no longer lives a human existence but is only a unit in the productive process, a dehumanized, depersonalized being.

Marx and Engels, practical men always, viewing history realistically, were certain that there was but one solution to the problem created by the intolerable conditions of the proletariat - revolution. Only by overthrowing the domination of the ruling class could the labor slaves throw off their shackles. Only by attacking the source could the evils be eliminated. All history bears witness to the fact that no ruling class has ever abandoned its position voluntarily; it requires force and violence to effect changes in history. The social organization must be changed. To effect this change it is necessary for the proletariat to seize control of the means of production which determine the social organization, and thus prepare the way for the passage of mankind to the classless society.

The proletarian state is the Janus in the pantheon of world history, the twilight of pre-history and the dawn of a new era; for Marx, the beginning of real history. All history previous to the classless society is only pre-history, a prelude to and preparation for,

the golden age in which man will in truth make history.

The seizure of the means of production by society puts an end to commodity production, and therewith to the domination of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by conscious organisation on a planned basis. The struggle for individual existence comes to an end. And at this point, in a certain sense, man finally cuts himself off from the animal world, leaves the conditions of animal existence behind him and enters conditions which are really human. The conditions of existence forming man's environment, which up to now have dominated man, at this point pass under the dominion and control of man, who now for the first time becomes the real conscious master of Nature, because and insofar as he has become master of his own social organization. (1)

With the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat there is a gradual dissolution of all the former social, political and cultural theories, including, it would seem, Marx's theory of history itself because the determining factor in men's lives is no longer the economic forces but these latter are rather determined by the free will of man acting consciously and ordering all things consciously to his own ends. Men no longer "enter into relations independent of their will", being no longer determines consciousness,

(1) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, p. 309

politics are influenced by economic factors and determine them. (1) This reversal of the determining factors in history exists imperfectly in the proletarian state, but with the spread of proletarian domination throughout the world, man's mastery over nature will become increasingly more perfect. Communism, therefore, of necessity is dedicated to absolute world domination as indispensable for the full realization of a consciously-determined social organization.

The laws of his own social activity, which have hitherto confronted him as external, dominating laws of Nature, will then be applied with complete understanding, and hence will be dominated by man. Man's social organization which has hitherto stood in opposition to them as if arbitrarily decreed by nature and history, will then become the voluntary act of men themselves. The objective, external forces which have hitherto dominated history will then pass under the control of men themselves. It is only from this point that the social causes set in motion by men will have, predominantly and in constantly increasing measure, the effects willed by men. It is humanity's leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom. (2)

In the past man was alienated, in the future he lives a richer, fuller, more complete human life with the return of his human essence to himself. The

(1) Berdyaev, N., Personne Humaine et Marxisme, in Le Communisme et Les Chretiens, pp. 191-194; Berdyaev expresses this same idea frequently in his works. Cf. The Origins of Russian Communism, pp. 117; 151; 178-181. Cf. also Turgeon, op. cit., p. 198 ff. DeGreef, G., La Sociologie Economique, p. 130 ff.

(2) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, p. 309-10

suppression of private property is the emancipation of man in every sphere of his activity.

The suppression of private property as the appropriation of human life is then the positive suppression of all alienation, and thus the return of the man of religion, of the family, of the state, etc., to his human, that is, social existence. (1)

Although Marx speaks of man he by no means has the individual in mind as may be noted by his adequation of human and social existence in the foregoing citation. As an individual, men can never hope to be fully man or human. It is only in the group, in the species, that he finds his real worth. Again, these are notions which Marx inherited from his philosophical teachers, Hegel and Feuerbach.

The individual man is not free apart from the collectivity, the communist society, he attains liberty only in confounding himself with the collective being. This thought is found not only in Marx but also in Feuerbach before him for whom man was completely real only in communion, in the general being. Communism is extremely dynamic, it affirms an extraordinary activity of men, but this is not the activity of the human person, it is that of society, of the collective. The individual man is entirely passive in relation to the communist collectivity, acquiring active force only by his absorption in the womb of the generic

(1) Marx, K., Oeuvres Philosophiques, Tome Vi, p. 23

human being, an idea existing in Feuerbach and ultimately in the universal spirit of Hegel. (1)

In the social man of Marx there is a close relationship binding him to Feuerbach who asserts that "the isolated man who lives for himself alone does not possess the human essence, neither as a moral being nor as a thinking being. This is contained only in society ...Man-for-self is man in the usual sense; man with man, the unity of the I and the Thou is God." (2)

This description of Feuerbach is quite applicable to the man of the classless society, the collective man, who again is lacking only one thing, the actual name. This is noted by Maritain who quotes a passage from Marx upon which he comments. The passage quoted is this, "Communism...being an achieved naturalism...is the real end of the quarrel between man and nature and between man and man, the true end of the quarrel between existence and essence, between objective and subjective,

(1) Berdyaev, N., Personne Humaine et Marxisme, p. 193 loc. cit. Lubac says of Feuerbach, "He believes, moreover, that the human essence with its wonderful prerogatives is to be found not in the individual taken in isolation but in the community, in the collectivity" Op.Cit., pp. 27-28 - Baber, M.M., Karl Marx's Interpretation of History, p. 65: pp.88-89 - Landshut, S., and Mayer, J.P., Introduction to Marx, K., Oeuvres Philosophiques, Tome IV pp. XLIV - XLV ff. - Marx-Engels, German Ideology, pp. 74-75

(2) Feuerbach, L., Principes de la philosophie de l'Avenir 1849, pp. 61-62

between liberty and necessity, between the individual and the species. It solves the riddle of history and it knows that it solves it." Commenting upon the passage Maritain has this to say.

The 'veritable end of the quarrel between existence and essence' is aseitas, the perfection of an essence which is the very act of its existence...in the Marxian perspective the movement of history and the revolution tends to confer on the collective man and his dynamism the attributes, and particular the aseity, with which religion endows God. (1)

"It solves the riddle of history and it knows that it solves it". These words of Marx are significant because the only being for whom history is not a riddle in some sense is the Divine Being whose knowledge is completely universal, coextensive with his causality. Now this is just what Marx claims for his social man, the collectivity. Life, history, human activity is, in a sense, the realm of contingency. Marxism seeks to overcome contingency; all should be rationalized, controlled, ordered according to the decrees of human

(1) Maritain, J., op. cit. pp. 39-40, note. The text immediately preceding this note speaks of the collective man. The passage cited by Maritain may be found in Marx, K., Oeuvres Completes, Oeuvres Philosophiques, Tome VI, p. 23

reason. It would replace Divine Gubernation, which of course it denies, by a completely self-sufficient human governance of the world. Marxism seeks to penetrate the veil of mystery which surrounds every phase of existence and it believes that this is quite possible, being only a matter of time. "There are no things in things in the world which are unknowable, but only things which are still not known, but which will be disclosed and made known by the efforts of science and practice." (1)

The glowing picture which the classless society presents would seem to justify the assertion that Marxism is an optimistic philosophy of life. In spite of the idyllic state of bliss which is anticipated, however, the entire doctrine of Marx places man in the shadow of an inevitable doom which engenders an undercurrent of pessimism because it mocks the efforts of man to ever attain a complete triumph over the forces which dominate him. Marx's philosophy of history treats of man in the most general terms, not individual men, not the men of any given generation but man, in general, the totality of men from the appearance of the

(1) Stalin, J., Dialectical and Historical Materialism, p. 17

first man upon the earth. It is the species which has struggled against nature and which should eventually triumph but which never shall. The only thing that ultimately triumphs is matter, an inhuman force which rules over all.

From it (the conscious organization of production) will date a new epoch in history, in which mankind itself, and with mankind all branches of its activity, and especially natural science, will experience an advance that will put everything preceding it in the deepest shade. Nevertheless, "all that comes into being deserves to perish." Millions of years may elapse, hundreds of thousand of generations be born and die, but inexorably the time will come when the declining warmth of the sun will no longer suffice to melt the ice thrusting itself forward from the poles; when the human race, crowding more and more about the equator, will finally no longer find even there enough heat for life; when gradually even the last trace of organic life will vanish; and the earth, an extinct frozen globe like the moon, will circle in deepest darkness and in an ever narrower orbit about the equally extinct sun, and at last fall into it. Other planets will have preceded it, others will follow it; instead of the bright warm solar system with its harmonious arrangement of members, only a cold dead sphere will still pursue its lonely path through universal space. (1)

Thus, the sufferings, the sacrifices, the agonies endured by men meet with their final destiny - oblivion. No sound will break the deafening silence which fills the void of the abyss save perhaps matter's hollow laughter at the futile efforts of its creature to usurp its role and play God.

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 19-20

- Autodynamism of Matter -

By way of summary, to conclude this section, there are a few observations to be made concerning Marx's doctrine of the autodynamism of matter.

It cannot be denied that the attempt to explain the origin of all things from a dialectic within matter is a tempting hypothesis. In spite of the employment of Hegelian terminology, however, Marx really presents nothing drastically new in his theory and an examination of it reveals it to be closely related to previous theories proposed by members of various schools of dynamic philosophy. One striking feature of Marx's explanation, however, is his apparent reconciliation of the irreconcilable -- dialectics and matter. Dialectics, in its very nature, belongs to the order of ideas. It is a psychic, rational process, completely at home within the Hegelian structure but decidedly ill-fitting when super-imposed upon a pan-materialistic theory. (1) Matter in its nature is inert, lifeless,

(1) When one absorbs the physical world into spirit one can easily attribute to the whole of reality a process of development belonging to the spiritual order: when one absorbs the spirit into the physical world, one no longer has the right of attributing to the whole of re-

passive but Marx bestows upon it the same creative activity that Hegel gave to spirit. Because matter is essentially creative it follows that man, the highest product of matter, is, in his essence, a creator and producer whose highest perfection consists in practical activity which transforms matter, a theory which, as we have seen actually makes of man a puppet at the service of matter although this aspect of the theory is rigorously avoided by Marxists.

Marx was able to artificially inseminate matter with dialectic because he completely confused the logical and real orders by failing to distinguish their respective spheres. The dialectical opposition which is possible between ideas and proposition remains a

ality a process of development of the spiritual order. If spirit is no more than a derived or alienated form of reality, one cannot imagine how it can discover in itself, whether it be dialectic or not, the law of development of reality. Why, in a materialist world, would the principle of concatenation of phenomena be analogous to the principle of the connection of ideas? It appears surprising to us that the absolutely revolting union of two contradictory terms in the expression dialectical materialism...has not aroused more objections...to speak of dialectic means the march of spirit, not the movement of matter." Thierry Maulnier, Mythes Socialistes, pp. 128-129 - "When Marxists maintain that their materialism is dialectical and not mechanical they affirm a logical monstrosity namely, the union of dialectic and materialism. Hegel turns in his grave and Plato is shocked among the shades. If you are materialists, it is no good pretending to be dialecticians." Berdyaev, N., Christianity and Class War, p. 37

purely logical opposition. The idea of virtue and vice can exist simultaneously in cognition but not in a really existing subject. (1) A man is either virtuous or vicious, either a sinner with some imperfect virtues or a just man with some imperfect vices, but in either case he is formally one or the other. Water is water, it is neither ice nor steam although it is potentially either but such a potentiality does not justify the sophistic reasoning of Marxists that water is a union of opposites. Matter is potentially many things but each subsisting material reality is essentially some one definite thing in

(1) On the distinction between contrariness in things and in the mind Aristotle states, "The form which is in the mind differs from the form which is in matter. For the forms of contraries in matter are diversified and contrary, but in the mind, there is in a way one species including both contraries and this is true because the forms in matter exist for the sake of the being of those things of which they are the forms; whereas the forms in the mind exist by way of cognition. Now the being of one contrary is cancelled out by the being of the other: but the knowledge of one opposite is not cancelled out but is rather perfected by the knowledge of the other...The notion of health which is in the mind is a certain reason by which we know health and illness and it consists in a knowledge of both." Thus, the knowledge of health is not destroyed by the knowledge of illness but illness in the body destroys health of the body.

virtue of the substantial form which it possesses.

Marx's idea of the autodynamism of matter which is in a state of perpetual change flatly contradicts his claim to a scientific system because it destroys the possibility of investigations based on unchangeable essences. True science, in the strict sense of the word, is only of the universal, necessary and immutable and that is one reason why metaphysical certitude is greater than the certitude of physical science. Even the union of practice and theory, so dear to Marxist adherents, cannot give certitude but only probability because success in producing a desired effect cannot be elevated into a universal law of thought or being by reason of the essential instability of all things in flux; for example, a science of man is impossible if the nature of man is not determinate.

Marx's materialism is an attempt to explain all things in a manner directly opposed to the traditional view. It does not appeal to the highest cause but to the lowest cause - matter. Consequently, it explains the higher by the lower, the superior by the inferior, the greater by the less. The intelligible is the

product of the unintelligible, the rational proceeds from the irrational. All these absurdities are supposed to be resolved by the attribution of dialectic to matter, an attribution which is, in reality, no more than verbal in spite of Marxist protestations that contradiction is the fundamental law of nature and mind. As Aristotle sagely remarked of Heraclitus, "It is not possible for anyone ever to think that the same thing exists and does not exist. Heraclitus, according to some, is of a different opinion, but a man need not believe all that he says. This would be an affirmation which would deny itself." (1)

In spite of Marxist assertions to the contrary, the autodynamism of matter is pure dogmatism, something to be accepted on faith because their statements offer no proof of a self-derivation of motion but take it for granted. In other words, to assert that all development in matter is the result of a conflict of opposites within matter itself, within each being, is to leave unanswered the fundamental question. What causes the conflict of opposites? The mere statement that a being contains within itself opposing elements does

(1) Aristotle, I Metaphysics, Ch. IV

not account for their conflict, nor, consequently, does it justify the assertion of the Marxists that the conflict of opposites accounts for the presence of motion in matter. To explain how the opposites enter into conflict and the explanations they offer all reveal that they look upon the opposites as endowed with motion an explanation which passes from the realm of proof to that of pure hypothesis because it fails to account for the source of the motion which is present in the opposites and thus assumes as a postulate that which must be proved. Moreover, if one investigates further the Marxist claims of the autodynamism of matter which rests upon the law of opposites one finds that, "regardless of what interpretation the Marxist places upon this law, it inevitably forces him to acknowledge the existence of a Prime Mover who is transcendent to the universe." (1)

That the Marxist is forced into such a position - so repugnant to him - is evident from the fact that he offers no explanation of the source of motion. As we have noted, he does not explain the manner in which the opposites enter into conflict. If he assumes that their

(1) McFadden, op. cit., p. 180 ff

active opposition is the result of motion imprinted to them from a third source intrinsic to a reality it merely brings up a further question. What is the source of motion of this common source? To explain its motion by a source extrinsic to a given reality again merely takes us a step further and brings up the question of the source of motion in this latter source. One can go on multiplying such intermediate causes but if one continues such a mode of explanation one would be no nearer an explanation. To make the series of causes eternal in this sense would only give a series of causes eternally incomplete.

The basic objection to the autodynamism of matter is that motion is the passage from potentiality to act whether it be local motion or any other species of motion. Something begins to exist, to be that which it was not. Nothing is reduced from a state of potentiality into a state of actuality except by something which is already in act. The sufficient reason of the passage from potentiality to act cannot be proper to the being which changes, which becomes something else, for potency does not bring itself into act, being essentially passive, receiving determination and perfection from act or form.

Whatever is in motion, therefore, must be put in motion by another. The process, however, cannot go on to infinity and we must arrive ultimately at a First Mover put in motion by no other. In other words, a primary postulate of Marxism - the superfluity of a transcendent First Cause of the universe - remains unproved and unfounded.