

Kant gives a cue to the Marxists in his impatience to stifle those who dare to disagree with the bounds that he has set for human reason. "... The schools have no right to arrogate to themselves a more profound insight into a matter of general human concernment, than that to which the great mass of men, ever held by us in the highest estimation, can without difficulty attain." (op. cit. p. 19) In these few words one already sees that hypocritical love of the masses whereby the lust for power can cloak itself in humanitarian garb and proceed to wipe out as "enemies of the people" those who, in the name of reason, resist the decree of the independent will. Thus authority, divorced from reason, can carry out its tyrannical subjugation into society, and bloodily mould man into the form it has arbitrarily decreed, since it knows no other law than itself.

Kant further shows his contempt for reason by decrying "the ridiculous despotism of the schools, which raise a loud cry of danger to the public over the destruction of cobwebs, of which the public has never taken any notice, and the loss of which, therefore, it can never feel." (op.cit. p.20) That the public is affected by such "destruction of cobwebs" is all too evident from the ravages which the teachings of men like Kant have caused in society. It is the denial of immortality on the part of the proud intellectuals which is the cause of its denial among the people. Far from safeguarding the common sense of the people, it is men like Kant and

Marx who set out to destroy it. It is their revolt against reason, not the people's, which they wish to infuse in the people.

How does Kant establish the conclusion that the immortality of the soul cannot be proved by reason? This conclusion follows from Kant's postulates that all knowledge of the soul is conditioned by sensual experience from which reason cannot completely extract itself in its judgments, whereas the soul is conceived to be something supra-sensible and unconditioned. Thus reason, which is irrevocably fettered within the categories of time and space, is unable to judge of anything considered to be superior to these categories. Whereas Descartes concluded to the immateriality and consequent immortality of the soul because reason could exist and function separate from the material world, Kant concluded to the impossibility of establishing this because reason could draw no conclusions whose subject did not embody a sensuous element. To the immediate turning towards the spiritual in Descartes, there corresponds the immediate turning towards the sensual in Kant. In Kant's own words: "I cannot even make the assumption - - as the interests of morality require - - of God, Freedom, and Immortality, if I do not deprive speculative reason of its pretensions to transcendent insight. For to arrive at these, it must make use of principles, which, in fact, extend only to the objects of possible experience, and which cannot be applied to objects beyond this sphere without converting them into phenomena, and thus rendering the practical

extension of pure reason impossible. I must therefore abolish knowledge, to make room for belief." (op.cit. p. 18) This criticism of reason Kant considers an important legacy to posterity. "It will render an important service to the inquiring mind of youth, by leading the student to apply his powers to the cultivation of genuine science, instead of wasting them, as at present, on speculations which can never lead to any result, or on the idle attempt to invent new ideas and opinions (p.18)."

What was left of reason when Kant had finished his beneficent but devastating criticism, whose devastation, Heine foresaw, would extend far beyond Germany? It had become both more isolated from the world about it, and more independent of anyone but the knower himself. The various categories of universality and necessity do not arise from things themselves but from the mind. Kant states unequivocally that in all universal judgments, such as "Every change must have a cause," nothing must be attributed to the objects but what the thinking subject derives from itself. Thus Thales in demonstrating the properties of the isosceles triangle, saw "that it was necessary to produce these properties, as it were, by a positive a priori construction; and that, in order to arrive with certainty at a priori cognition, he must not attribute to the object any other properties than those which necessarily followed from that which he had himself, in accordance with his conception, placed in the object." (op.cit. p.10) So also must one explain

Copernicus' discovery of the sun's movement. "The latter would have remained forever undiscovered, if Copernicus had not ventured on the experiment- - contrary to the senses, but still just - - of looking for the observed movements not in the heavenly bodies, but in the spectator (note on p.14)." But whereas the a priori method of forcing nature to answer the questions we formulate prevails to a great extent in experimental science, Kant extends it to all knowledge. Thus, while both Descartes and Kant would agree to deception arising from the senses for different reasons, nevertheless Descartes, in mathematics ascribed its properties to objective reality: "As, for example, when I imagine a triangle, although there is not perhaps and never was in any place in the universe apart from my thought: one such figure, it remains true nevertheless that this figure possesses a certain determinate nature, form, or essence, which is unchangeable and eternal, and not framed by me, nor in any degree dependent upon my thought;...(the properties of a triangle) cannot be said to have been invented by me (5th Med.)." Kant, as has been seen, attributes its properties to the manner of thinking of the mind.

The mind's power to grasp the universal and necessary in nature, to perceive essences, and thereby attain to what is more known in itself, to attain greater and more complete knowledge, becomes under the criticism of Kant a kind of subjective mold which prevents man from ever knowing things in themselves. The

necessary and immutable, the possibility of the perception of which is the foundation of all intellectual certitude, becomes a purely subjective mode. The fecund hypotheses of Newton, whom Kant greatly admired, are transported by him upon the terrain of intellectual knowledge. Henceforth any hypothesis as to the value of intellectual knowledge has as much right to be considered true as any other reasoning provided it appears to produce the results desired by the knower. This is precisely the characteristic of modern thought both in the realm of speculation and the realm of practice where it justifies the quasi-cosmic acts of violence perpetrated in the name of applying the conceptions of dialectical materialism, somewhat as a scientist mixes chemicals in a test-tube.

Descartes saved from his jettisoning of previous knowledge the reality of the proposition 'I think.' Of this much reality at least, man was sure. He was a substance, and a thinking substance, and the nature of his thought proved he was immaterial. Kant was to remove even 'think' from this proposition, in so far as it could not be said to determine the nature of the 'I' which in turn remains essentially unknowable since it is presupposed in all investigations of itself. Even reflectively it could at best only be known as an appearance (phenomenon) and not as a thing in itself (noumenon).

The universal statements we make in which the predicate cannot be derived from the subject as is the case of the judgment :

"The soul is immortal," are synthetic a priori judgments. In such judgments the note of universality and necessity is derived from the mind while experience serves not as the foundation of the judgment but as the occasion for the judgment, as in the case of Thales demonstrating the nature of the angles of the isocetes triangle. Since they contain experience, such judgments, according to Kant, are not purely rational, but are empirical. But any doctrine of the soul must be purely rational, that is, without the smallest empirical element of thought, without any perception of my internal state (p. 234), without, therefore, conversio ad phantasmata, since the soul is conceived as supra-sensible and by its simple nature above any experience. Yet in all judgments of the soul, as being represented by 'I', one has recourse to experience, which invalidates the value of the judgment.

Furthermore the soul, the 'I', which is known only as "the logical qualitative unity of self-consciousness in thought (p. 240)," and is a subject in all judgments, cannot at the same time judge of itself as an object. This implies both the dissolution of the Ego and the impossibility of reflection, based on immateriality. Thus Kant says : "We can, however, lay at the foundation of this science nothing but the simple and perfectly contentless representation 'I', which cannot even be called a conception, but merely a consciousness which accompanies all conceptions. The Ego is fluid, moving

and therefore irrational. Far from being immixtum in the sense of the Greeks, it is inextricably mixed with itself from within. By this I or He, or it, who or which thinks, nothing more is represented than a transcendental subject of thought = x, which is cognized only by means of the thoughts which are its predicates, and of which, apart from these, we cannot form the least conception. Hence we are obliged to go round this representation in a perpetual circle, inasmuch as we must always employ it, in order to frame any judgment respecting it." (op. cit. p. 236)

Furthermore, to conclude that there are other thinking beings like myself is to transfer intuition into the realm of external experience, which is equally invalid. The presence of the 'I' in 'I think' is a mere logical function, which does not present to thought an object to be cognized, and cannot therefore present my Self as an object (p. 237). The 'I' is a self-subsistent being or substance is a statement unsupported by data in thought (p. 237). The Ego is simple, that is, singular, but to say it is a simple substance is a synthetical proposition, based on sensuous intuition concerning the determinability of my existence in relation to my representations in time. (ibid. p. 243). The identity of the subject of which I am conscious in all its representations does not relate to or concern the intuition of the subject by which it is given as an object. All that the latter affords is a conception of myself existing, whether as fundamentally simple and substantial I

know not. "...If there existed a possibility of proving a priori that all thinking beings are in themselves simple substances, as such, therefore, possess the inseparable attribute of personality, and are conscious of their existence apart from and connected with matter (Descartes again), ... we should thus have taken a step beyond the world of sense, and have penetrated into the sphere of noumena..." (ibid. p. 238) But this we cannot do, since the supra-sensible cannot be perceived through the sensuous. Such an inference would make an end of the whole of the Critique. (ibid. p. 239)

Thus the demonstration of Descartes is eliminated as groundlessly ambitious. The most Kant concludes concerning the nature of the soul by reason is that it is the unity in thought, by which no object is given; to which the category of substance... cannot be applied. (ibid. p. 244) To frame any conception of itself it must lay at the foundation its own pure self-consciousness -- the very thing which it wishes to explain and describe. In like manner, the subject, in which the representation of time has its basis, cannot determine, for this very reason, its own existence in time. (ibid. p. 246) The soul, therefore, can neither validly conceive of itself beyond this present life, nor even in this present life. It is suspended to that which is the most variable in man, the very variability of the intellect. Descartes based all on self-reflexion, then Kant eliminated self-reflexion. Man knows himself only as a dependent variable. As a matter of fact, is the distinction between



soul and body really fundamental ? "The difficulty (of explaining the community of the soul with the body) consists, as is well known, in the presupposed heterogeneity of the object of the internal sense (the soul) and the objects of the external senses; inasmuch as the formal condition of the intuition of the one is time, and of that of the other space also. But if we consider that both kinds of objects do not differ internally, but only in so far as the one appears externally to the other, -- consequently that what lies at the basis of phenomena, as a thing in itself, may not be heterogeneous; this difficulty disappears." Thus Kant opens the question of the possibility of the identity of soul and body, which would afford any of his followers the excuse to cease investigating the soul as separate entity, which appears to be indeed the practical result.

With his characteristic humility Kant himself drew much more optimistic conclusions from his achievement of showing the powerlessness of reason to prove the immortality of the soul, and the powerlessness of nature to exist in anything but his own mode. "After we have thus denied the power of speculative reason to make any progress in the sphere of the supersensible, it remains for us to consider whether data do not exist in practical cognition, which may enable us to determine the transcendental conception of the unconditioned, to rise beyond the limits of possible experience from a practical point of view and thus satisfy the great ends of

metaphysics." (ibid. p. 14) The Critique of Pure Reason, "which sets impassible limits to speculative reason, ...teaches us to consider this refusal of our reason to give any satisfactory answer to questions which reach beyond the limits of this our human life, as a hint to abandon fruitless speculation; and to direct, to a practical use, our knowledge of ourselves -- which, although applicable only to objects of experience, receives its principles from a higher source, and regulates its procedures as if our destiny reached far beyond the boundaries of experience and life."

(ibid. p. 244) As for Descartes, knowledge of nature becomes knowledge of self. This severity of criticism "has rendered to reason a not unimportant service, by the demonstration of the impossibility of making any dogmatical affirmation concerning an object of experience beyond the boundaries of experience, ...but the right, say rather the necessity to admit a future life, upon principles of the practical conjoined with the speculative use of reason, has lost nothing by this remission; for the merely speculative proof has never had any influence upon the common reason of men."

(ibid. p. 245) This proof "stands upon the point of a hair, so that even the schools have been able to preserve it from falling only by incessantly discussing it and spinning it like a top; and even in their eyes it has never been able to present any safe foundation for the erection of a theory."

Reason is thus "confined within her own peculiar province--

the arrangement of ends or aims, which is at the same time the arrangement of nature; and as a practical faculty, without limiting itself to the latter, it is justified in extending the former, and with it our own existence, beyond the boundaries of experience and life." (ibid. p. 246) For though reason is powerless to assure man of a future life, "his natural gifts, not merely as regards the talents and motives that may incite him to employ them -- but especially the moral law in him, stretch so far beyond all mere earthly utility and advantage, that he feels himself bound to prize the mere consciousness of probity, apart from all advantageous consequences -- even the shadowy gift of posthumous fame -- above everything; and he is conscious of an inward call to constitute himself, by his conduct in this world -- without regard to mere sublunary interests -- the citizen of a better. This mighty, irresistible proof -- accompanied by an ever-increasing knowledge of the conformability to a purpose in everything we see around us, by the conviction of the boundless immensity of creation, by the consciousness of a certain illimitableness in the possible extension of our knowledge, and by a desire commensurate therewith -- remains to humanity, even after the theoretical cognition of ourselves has failed to establish the necessity of an existence after death." (ibid. p. 246) It thus becomes the task of the Critique of Practical Reason to re-establish by practical knowledge the immortality of the soul which pure reason is unable to attain. Unfortunately those who followed

Kant in his work of methodical destruction did not follow him in his work of reconstruction.

As has been said, Kant, a devout Protestant and great admirer of the Gospel, was only too anxious to preserve religion and those two basic premises of religion, the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. However, he was determined that they were to be preserved on his own terms. In many ways his philosophy appears as a struggle to harmonize his own pietistic faith with the rationalism of his day, and mould the two into a noble way of life.

Descartes turned man's investigation of reality towards his own inner consciousness, with the idea of establishing a certitude impervious to the vagaries of the world without. Kant continued these investigations along the well-known lines by which one philosopher denies the more obvious and crude aspects of the system of his predecessor, whom he frequently even refuses to acknowledge as such, and then proceeds to distill the remainder to an even greater point of subtlety and tenuousness. Thus Kant, not content with the notion that the senses may deceive, affirmed the illusory nature of the world without. We think we know things in themselves, but we know only appearances. Universality has no basis in things but is only a mould of the mind. But now the mind itself is to be further walled up. Since it can only know appearances, things in themselves,

the soul, God, necessarily escape it. Man is reduced to a sort of intellectual dungeon into which there shines no ray of light from without. How is he to escape from this horrible predicament, how is he going to break out of this prison and re-establish contact with reality, with God and eternity? One can practically see poor human nature desperately vowing that somehow, some way, it is going to break out. One can feel the determined struggle of the will to break these bonds that the philosopher of Koenigsberg has so patiently welded around man, the will refuses to be cowed and is determined to be free. Possibly Kant felt this struggle going on within himself after he had so methodically locked himself in and thrown the key away. Possibly his will also refused to accept the narrow confines to which he had so sternly and unflinchingly reduced his reason. In any case, in the Critique of Practical Reason, we see a rope dangling down into the dungeon to which man has been confined by the Critique of Pure Reason, and the name of this rope is Liberty, the Will. It is the will, canalized in the Moral Law, which will draw man out of his dungeon and into the pure light of things in themselves, restore the immortality of the soul and bring him unerringly towards the sovereign good which is God. Duty, unfeeling, unafraid, unquestionable, will thrust man invincibly towards his goal.

The immortality of the soul is restored by Kant in his Critique of Practical Reason. Surveying the levelling of reason

which he had accomplished in the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant nevertheless recognized one factor that had not been subjugated, that could not be subjugated, and this was the moral law, the innate sense of right and wrong which men feel in spite of themselves, and which is employed in the pursuit of the good. It is Kant's examination of the moral law which leads him to affirm the immortality of the soul and the existence of God as necessary conditions of its accomplishment.

However, since the moral law and the practical reason which it controls are an aspect of pure reason, the same premises will be employed in treating it. Since any speculative knowledge of the immortality of the soul or the existence of God has been declared impossible in the previous work, the Critique of Practical Reason will not establish such knowledge, but the presence of an inflexible command, a categorical imperative, in man which necessarily implies these two truths even though they cannot actually be known. Thus knowledge of supra-sensible things is not required in order that the will may desire them. On the contrary, it is the moral law itself which, by its necessity, necessarily establishes the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. Thus the power of perceiving objective truth which is taken away from the reason is now conferred upon the will, and a will which, in its attainment of truth, is explicitly declared to be uninfluenced by any considerations of reason, which is, in a word, irrational.

Whereas the utter invalidating of reason on one hand was a work of destruction that any cosmic-minded philosopher could be proud of, now on the other hand the unhampered will, decked out in all the prerogatives of reason, is let loose to impose the same methodical annihilation upon the outer world. Yet all this Kant humbly accomplishes in view of setting beyond all question the immortality of the soul and the existence of God, in a word, of vindicating to the full the noble destiny of man !

There is in fact in man, says Kant, a law, the moral law, which commands inflexibly and without reference to any experience. It commands inflexibly, since no matter how much one may wish to dispense with it, it remains in man to rebuke him for his transgressions against it. It commands without reference to experience, since, for example, should a man wish to steal, he finds that there already exists in himself a law previous to this wish which says : "Thou shalt not steal." This law is not slavery, on the contrary it is liberty itself since it is in no way conditioned by one's reasoning or by experience, it is free from any conditions, from the notion of good itself. This liberty is the condition of the moral law, which in turn demands God and immortality as the conditions of the necessary object of a will determined by the moral law. (Picavet, French transl., p. 3)

What exactly is this liberty ? To inquire into its nature

is to commit the error of wishing to judge of supra-sensible things by means of empirical concepts. "...A propos (du concept de la liberté) il faut remarquer avec étonnement que bon nombre d'hommes se vantent de le percevoir très bien et d'en pouvoir expliquer la possibilité, en le considérant simplement au point de vue psychologique, tandis que, s'ils l'avaient d'abord examiné avec soin au point de vue transcendantal, ils auraient reconnu non seulement qu'il est indispensable comme concept problématique pour l'usage complet de la raison spéculative (cf. supra p. 99)," mais encore qu'il est absolument incompréhensible (p. 9)." One can at best describe it and show that it is not in contradiction with pure speculative reason, but rather completes it. Thus one will regard it from the point of view of principles, concepts and finally, if possible, in relation to the senses. (op. cit. p. 23)

Primarily, it is necessary to show that liberty and the moral law, which are a causality unconditioned by experience (Causalität aus Freiheit) are in keeping with the principles of pure reason, even if not comprehensible by them. The existence of the moral law itself, of course, is an unquestionable fact. This can be shown by questioning anyone who should doubt it. (ibid. p. 49) Thus, first of all, the moral law is necessary and universal, since it is not empirical. (ibid. p. 32) Secondly, it is rightly not subject to reason, since reason, in seeking to determine liberty



by reference to a good, would subject it to the empirical faculty of desire, which would again contradict its known universality. Any appeal to pleasure or pain, even as a consequence, is an attempt to determine the will pathologically and egotistically. (ibid. p. 38) Thirdly, liberty in its motivation is rightly unaffected by the laws of causality of nature since these laws, being purely phenomenal, would also militate against its unconditioned nature. The will has no other principle of determination than the universal legislative form of the moral law. (ibid. p. 49)

The possibility of such a law is conceivable by pure reason but cannot be proved to exist. Rather it imposes its existence upon us. "On peut appeler la conscience de cette loi fondamentale un fait (Factum) de la raison, parce qu'on ne saurait le tirer par le raisonnement, des données antérieures de la raison, par exemple, de la conscience de la liberté (car cette conscience ne nous est pas donnée d'abord), mais parce qu'elle s'impose à nous par elle-même comme une proposition synthétique a priori, qui n'est fondée sur aucune intuition (Anschauung), ou pure ou empirique." (ibid. p. 51) Thus the law is immediate and primary. Pure reason becomes practical by the simple representation of the law. (ibid. p. 95) In man's mind it is even primary to God, since through it the existence of God is made known. This law imposes an obligation upon the will and constrains it to an action called duty (Pflicht).

This law attains its full sanctity in the supreme being, untainted by any affections(Wunsch) against the law. The highest point finite practical reason can attain is to strive for this sanctity, in which striving consists virtue (p.55), and whose eternal nature demands immortality.

In conceiving this law, one may conceive of it as exercising causality, since the category of causality belongs to pure reason, of which the law is a practical determination. (ibid. p. 92) Kant considered it one of his achievements to have thus put causality out of the reach of Hume's criticism by making it a category of pure reason. (ibid. p.97) This causality which exists as a pure representation in reason is not the causality concerned with phenomena, but rather a cause noumenon. It can thus be applied to things which are beings of pure reason (reine Verstandeswesen) and one may speak of an object of the will, an object which does not specify the will, but which the will is determined to wish by the moral law (p. 101), which the will itself produces, that is, the will produces the wish or intention, which in turn determines the object. (ibid. p.116) The error of former philosophers has been to seek first an object for the will, whereas they should have begun by seeking a law which determines the will a priori and consequently the object in conformity with the will. By so doing they would have avoided the pit-fall of self-love present in all willing based on experience. (ibid. p.112). What is the good which

the will attains? It is not happiness, which is a form of self-love in this life. (ibid. p.124) Nor is it yet the supreme good, which cannot be known as an object. It is conformity with the law. (ibid. p.125) Thus one sees the notion of duty, conceived as unfeeling, unreasoning, set up as the axis of human life, a duty which is by definition undetermined by the good.

In effect, the law commands but we cannot know why, we must only obey. "Savoir comment une loi peut être, par elle-même et immédiatement, principe déterminant de la volonté (ce qui est cependant le caractère essentiel de toute moralité), c'est un problème insoluble pour la raison humaine et identique avec celui qui consiste à savoir comment est possible une volonté libre. Donc nous n'aurons pas à montrer a priori pourquoi la loi morale fournit en elle-même un mobile, mais ce que, en tant que mobile, elle produit, (ou pour mieux dire doit produire) dans l'esprit." (ibid. p. 129) Attraction and liking must not intervene. The fact that the law ignores and over-rides these produces the only valid motive for obeying the law, which is respect, a kind of unloving admiration, which produces a feeling of pain well in keeping with the gloomy Lutheran theology. If one could obey the law gladly, the existence of the law would be useless. (ibid. p.149) Actions can be called noble and sublime only insofar as they are performed not by a movement of the heart but by respect for duty. Achtung für Pflicht is the only true moral sentiment. (ibid. p.153) It is

contained in the Gospels. (ibid. p. 154)

It is duty which lifts man out of the sensible world, which frees him from the mechanism of nature, which constitutes man's personality. It is the law alone which links man with the intelligible, noumenal world, and therefore he should have for it the most profound veneration and respect. By it humanity becomes holy and man must always be considered as an end, not as a means. (ibid. p.156) Yet this law is nothing other than a form, a categorical imperative, which commands even before there is anything to command. (ibid. p.199) The supreme good, God, is not the object of the law but rather is the supreme determination of the law. (ibid. p.200) He did not create the world for the happiness of His creatures, but rather that they should render themselves worthy of happiness by the observance of the law. He is more honored by respect than love. (ibid. p.238)

It is also duty which gives man the practical assurance of the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. The will being thus determined demands these necessary conditions for the observance of its precept. These notions do not increase speculative knowledge but rather give it practical certitude. A third notion also arises as a necessary postulate, the notion of liberty, that is, of the freedom of the will to be directed by a law of the intelligible world regardless of the world of sense. How this liberty is possible and how this noumenal causality over against

phenomenal causality is to be represented theoretically, we do not know. (ibid. p.243) All we know is that the soul is immortal, God exists, and the will is free to obey the moral law. We know there are such objects, but what they are we do not know. (ibid. p.246) They cannot found a theory, but can serve only for the exercise of the moral law. (ibid. p. 250) Anything else is an anthropomorphic conception (ibid. p.250) By this last statement Kant may be called a predecessor of Feuerbach, who made the whole realm of supra-sensible beings mere projections of man himself. Concerning these postulates the will does not speculate, it obeys the inflexible command of the law. The moral law obliges one to hold the soul immortal and that God exists. (ibid. p. 260)

As a matter of fact, this incapacity of the reason is really a noble thing. If man could know his soul was immortal and that God existed, then he would obey the law because of an external motive, his reason, through hope, or fear, and not through the sole, stark, disinterested respect for duty. "La sagesse impénétrable par laquelle nous existons, n'est pas moins digne de vénération pour ce qu'elle nous a refusé que pour ce qu'elle nous a donné en partage." (ibid. p. 268) Any motive drawn from personal happiness is an obstacle to the influence of the moral law on the human heart. (ibid. p. 281) The moral law demands that it be obeyed by duty and not by any predilection. (ibid. p. 283) The only joy is to rid oneself of one's own feelings. (ibid. p. 289)

Two things fill Kant with an admiration ever new and ever growing : Der bestirnte Himmel über mir, und das moralische Gesetz in mir. The first destroys my importance as an animal being; the second infinitely increases my worth as an intelligence, by my personality which shows me a life independent of animality and the sensible world thanks to the law which directs me to an end beyond the conditions and limits of this life, and which stretches out infinitely. (ibid. p. 292)

Kant no doubt endeavored to exemplify in his life the conclusions of his philosophy. He refrained from any mystical flights of the reason into regions which he considered beyond its powers. He subjected himself to rigid, unemotional fulfillment of what he considered his duty. His life was as categorized as his partitions of reason, and the good people of Königsberg could set their clocks by him. He walked alone since he had a special system of breathing which conversation would have interrupted. At ten in the evening he retired in a room whose windows were hermetically closed, undressed according to a certain method, and covered himself in bed with unvarying skill. He supported his sister, but refused to see her. One of his biographers was unable to state whether Kant had ever embraced any of his friends.

The influence he exercised was tremendous. But just as Martin Luther was sorrowed and disgusted in his last days by the sad

reality that his Reformation had only served as an excuse for the majority to cast off the last vestiges of lofty ideals and restraint, so also Kant would no doubt be saddened to see that his philosophy has become an effective weapon for the destruction of the very things he thought he was trying to save. Thanks to his ground work, the existence of God and the immortality of the soul have been thrown into the discard as empty fictions of the mind, while respect for the moral law has become coercion by a will that has power. He had once written a poem in which he said :

"Was auf das Leben folgt deckt tiefe Finsterniss;

"Was uns zu tun gebührt, dass sind wir nur gewiss."

Indeed, any future life has been hidden in darkness, and the most clear-cut and unequivocal principle in the world today is that man belongs to the state body and soul in which the law of the ruler is the very law of his being. Kant, following Descartes, transplanted the question of the immortality of the soul from the sphere of experience to pure reason, and then proceeded to demolish reason. In ethics he reduced the moral law from an obligation based on known truth and known goodness to an impenetrable, unquestionable imperative. As a practical criterion of the moral law he announced the principle : "Act as though the maxim of thine action, should be erected by thy will into a universal law of nature." Modern tyrants

are doing precisely that : erecting the maxim of unchallengeable will into universal laws. Humanity is treated as an end in a way that looks like the end of humanity. The position to which the philosophy of Kant has led seems well summed up in the words of Goethe's Dr. Faustus who begins by saying : "In the beginning was the Word," and ends by saying : "In the beginning was the Deed." For Kant the moral law is not an ordered, intelligible and right determination towards the common good, it is a fact. Once a fact exists, any efforts of reason to establish the contrary become illegitimate. A failure to see this has led to the execution of many reprehensible intellectuals.

However, one is obliged to state that such an unfavorable judgment of Kant's contribution to mankind is not universally accepted. Mr. Julien Benda, in his essay on Kant (Kant, Longmans, Green, 1940), states that Kant's contribution "seems to me to assure Kant a place of honor and a place almost unparalleled in the ethical history of mankind." (op. cit. p. 26) Although the details of his philosophy are left to the experts, mankind has retained certain general ideas, among which are : "The idea that ethics is something independent of theology and has a base of origin in the practical nature of man; that idea that our ethics can only be the outcome of our will, exercised in its autonomy, that is to say, freed of any reference to its objects; the idea of the independence of duty with



regard to any system of ends based on interest, that is to say, a scorn for the ethics of utility of happiness..." (ibid. p. 25)

Mr. Benda feels that it is the providential survival of the principles of Kantian philosophy which has furnished men with their sole ideological weapon in the fight against totalitarianism. "If the thought of a philosopher lives to the extent that it arouses in the present generation a will to defend it (and Mr. Benda believes it does), with a full acceptance of the sacrifices involved in such a decision, the philosopher who sleeps under the shadows of Koenigsberg can assure himself that his thought, even though our young soldiers rarely mention his name, is more living than ever." (ibid. p. 38)

Unfortunately, Mr. Benda does not seem to notice that totalitarianism is also fighting to defend the ideas of Kant, as a random citation from Mein Kampf quoted in a recent article shows. Hitler states : "The picture of the human culture can build itself upon the entirely unconscious, because purely intuitive, realization of an internally, bloodily conditioned longing and its command." Further confirmation may be derived from the indoctrination received by the Wehrmacht. Prussian officers being trained in the school of Clausewitz and of Julius von Hartmann, are required to read the Principles of the Practical Reason of Emmanuel Kant in order to ac-

quire some sense of "morality." They learn to identify a superior's orders with the 'imperative category' of duty, so that they obey simply because it is a matter of duty.

At any event, it is certain that Kant marked the end of any scientific attempt on the part of modern philosophy to establish personal immortality, which was just what he set out to do. Descartes had endeavored by reason. Kant was to destroy Descartes' reasons, and base himself on belief. But the modern destruction of Kant's belief was even more rapid than his own destruction of reason. For if reason itself cannot be confided in, there is even less reason to confide in an irrational will. Yet Kant was not a victim, he was the executioner. It will be seen how future considerations of immortality, far from imitating Kant's blissful certitude, are precisely trying to extricate themselves from the utter scepticism to which he has reduced them.

Since there can be no appeal to any unchanging, objectively known reality, the sole criterion for truth and goodness is immediate utility. As long as it works, it's true. As long as it's useful, it's good. To what are these judgments of utility referred? Necessarily they are referred to the primary object in man's consciousness which is -- himself, the object of his beatitude. But since the notion of what is good and true when based upon immediate personal utility will vary from one individual to another,

conflict arises when it is a question of applying these notions to concrete reality. How can they be settled? Those who are consistent with the logic of their position settle them in only one way -- by the accomplished fact. As the Marxists say, we have had enough of interpreting the world, now let us transform it.

The question of the immortality of the soul has shared the fortunes of the rest of modern philosophy since Kant. Those who attempt to hold immortality in the Kantian sense, denying it in the intellect and affirming it by the will, are reduced to a kind of sentimentality scorned by modern philosophy. The remainder, with a certain consistency, instead of trying to reconcile the two, concentrate either on the impotency of the intellect or the autocracy of the will, both of which lead to the denial of immortality. While the former, such as the school of Dewey, are intent upon utilizing the various tendencies of the mind towards immortality, considered groundless but nevertheless elevating, in the materialistic structure of the good life, the latter, such as the Marxists, are intent upon using the unbridled, irrational force of the will to remake the world according to the pattern they will to be. The combined weight of their common denial of immortality is gradually crushing the life out of the few benign Kantian sentimentalists who prattle about that fairy-tale which is the immortality of the soul. In a not too distant future it seems probable that, the common enemy being eliminated, there will be a fight to the finish between the impotent intellect

of naturalistic philosophy and the autocratic will of Marxism, with the scales tipped in favor of blind force freed and strengthened by the very irrationality with which reason has rendered itself powerless. In the meantime, since the question of immortality continues to remain unsmothered, it is well to examine to what extent its increasingly weak affirmation and growing denial has contributed to the confusion of chaotic intellects and destructive wills. This may be seen by examining the proponents of immortality since Kant and those in ever-growing numbers who deny immortality in the name of the intellect or in the name of the will.

Is such an investigation really worth while ? Undoubtedly it is, since no matter how one tries to convince man that he is only for this life, either by reason or by force, nevertheless he gropes out for something that death cannot destroy. Thus while the naturalistic philosophers consider that science has long since refuted the cult of ancestors by savages, right under their very noses in London, theatres are booked ahead indefinitely for spiritualistic seances where the good people are afforded the opportunity to commune with the dead. Pictures from Russia show workers being carried to burial on tractors, joyfully, we presume, returning to the anonymity of Mother Earth, and finding their immortality in that symbol of progress, the tractor. Yet Soviet scientists work in jealously guarded secrecy to preserve the embalmed body of Lenin indefinitely from dissolving into the dust from

which it came. In a present advertisement for a fountain pen its makers proclaim that it is guaranteed "not just for years, not just for life -but forever !" A recent article related with proud optimism how a piece of chicken had been kept alive since 1912 and was still going strong (Science Digest, Jan., 1945, p. 15). In one way or another, man is intent on immortality. This in turn is indicative of something in his nature that cannot be reasoned away or crushed out, something that will ever prod him to know his true nature and his true end, although it may require in a growing number of cases the direct intervention of God Himself to cut through the intellectual confusion.