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Introduction

The object of this study may be stated quite simply. We do not seek to offer here a complete exposition or refutation of the teachings of Karl Marx and the Communists. This has been done quite capably on numerous occasions. The basic errors underlying Communist doctrine have been exposed frequently in Papal pronouncements and other writings, both ecclesiastical and secular.

Our interest here is centered upon one central idea - dialectics. We wish to investigate its origin, nature and applications by Marx. The subject of this study was suggested and outlined by the director, Dr. Egbert Munzer, who stated that it was his experience that many people, educated as well as uneducated, employed the term, dialectics, frequently in regard to Hegel and Marx but were quite hazy as to its exact meaning and implications. He felt that an exposition of dialectics would aid in understanding the Marxist doctrine and the present-day aims and tactics of the Communist Party.

We begin, therefore, with a study of Hegelian dialectics, acknowledged as the source of Marx's dialectics, following which we offer an analysis of

Marxist dialectics. The remainder of our study is concerned with the application of dialectics by Marx to history and all reality, with particular attention being given to the Marxist doctrine of the class struggle.

Heartfelt gratitude goes to the Dominican Province of St. Albert the Great for the opportunity to pursue advanced studies at Laval University. Thanks are due also to the Very Reverend George H. Levesque, O.P., Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, and the professorial staff for their encouragement and cooperation during the past three years and to my sisters and their friends who kindly offered their services as typists for the gathering of material and the typing of the manuscripts. Finally thanks are due, in a very special way, to the director of the dissertation, Dr. Egbert Munzer, whose untimely death deprived the faculty members and students of a highly talented collaborator, counsellor, professor and friend. As one who received the benefit of his guidance, the author is keenly aware of the profound

wisdom, mingled with deep faith and charity, which characterized Doctor Munzer. To him, in great measure, may be ascribed the inspiration for whatever may be of value in this study. The deficiencies are exclusively ours. May his zeal for the truth, and devotion to his faith serve as a perpetual memorial to his memory among those who were privileged to know him.

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CHAPTER I

Section I - General Notion of Dialectics

Dialectics is as old as the history of thought itself. We first meet with the name among the early Greeks for whom dialectics signified the art of disputation, a process of statement and counterstatement. To the assertions made by one speaker would be posed the opposite point of view. From the interaction of ideas there would result a new idea, a synthesis which could then serve as the basis for a new opposition. The synthesis always marked an advance in thought, an improvement over the content of the original assertions. For the Greeks, then, dialectics was a method employed as a means of progressing in knowledge.

Hegel, who was a man of profound erudition, was well acquainted with the field of Greek thought and we find him frequently praising Greek thinkers for the contributions which they made to universal philosophy. Although Hegel acknowledges the contributions to dialectics made by the earlier Greeks, especially Socrates, still it is Plato that he considers to be the inventor of dialectics.

Dialectic.... is no novelty in philosophy. Plato is termed the inventor of Dialectic, and his right to the name rests on the fact that the Platonic philosophy first gave the free scientific, and thus at the same time the objective, form to Dialectic. In his more strictly scientific dialogues Plato employs the Dialectical method to show the finitude of all the rigid demarcations of thought made by the understanding. Thus in the Parmenides he deduces the many from the one, and shows nevertheless that the many cannot but define itself as the one. In this lofty style did Plato treat the Dialectic.(1)

Considered in a general way, then, dialectics according to the Hegelian view is an unfolding or revelation of the contradictions hidden in every being which is productive of development and progress.

For Hegel, everything is spirit. Spirit is all of reality, and philosophy is only the manifestations of Absolute Spirit in various stages of progress. It is dialectics, the inner drive so to speak, which accounts for the development, the movement of Spirit through various phases in its march to absolute self-realization inasmuch as the conflict of opposites in every being gives rise to a dialectical process which is always productive of a richer content.

(1) Hegel, G., Logic, (tr. by W. Wallace,) Oxford, 1874, p.127.

Leaving the detailed study of the dialectical process for future consideration in this paper, we now turn our attention to the doctrine of two men commonly considered to have influenced Hegel.

Section 2. - Predecessors of Hegel
Heraclitus and Nicholas of Cusa

Our selection of Heraclitus and Nicholas of Cusa is not intended to present them as exclusively influencing Hegel. Indeed, all preceding philosophy was not without its effect upon his doctrine, either negatively or positively, as is the case with any great philosopher. Scholars have pointed out traces of the thought of Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte, and Schelling which are found in the Hegelian synthesis. Hegel sought to construct a universal philosophy and considered all previous thinking as a prelude to, and preparation for, his own system. In so thinking he was but following out his own logical doctrines inasmuch as one of the features of dialectical movement is that nothing is ever lost. Each of the higher categories of his logic contains the lower. Hegel himself calls to our attention the fact that the same phenomenon may be observed in the history of philosophy.

The stages in the evolution of the idea.... seem to follow each other by accident, and to present merely a number of different and unconnected principles, which the several systems of philosophy carry out in their own way. But it is not so. For these thousands of years the same Architect has directed the work: and that Architect is the one living Mind of which the nature is thought and self-consciousness. Becoming conscious of what it is in one period, it employs this knowledge as the basis of a new period, and an advance in its course of progress. The differences of systems which the history of philosophy presents are therefore not irreconcilable with unity. We may either say, that it is one philosophy at different degrees of completion: or that the particular principle, which is the groundwork of each system, is but a branch of one and the same universe of thought. In philosophy the latest birth of time is the result of all the systems that have preceded it, and must include their principles; and so, if, on other grounds it deserves the title of philosophy, will be the fullest, most comprehensive, and most adequate system of all. (1)

It follows from this that all philosophies are true. All that is lacking to them is completeness. Each system supplements the systems that preceded it. The teaching of Heraclitus does not contradict that of Parmenides but includes and transcends it inasmuch as its category of becoming includes and transcends the category of being of the latter. (2) The fullest, most comprehensive and most adequate system of all

(1) Hegel, op. cit., p.18

(2) Stace, W.T., The Philosophy of Hegel, p. 132

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(2) Stace, W.T., The Philosophy of Hegel, p. 132

referred to in the text is, of course, that of Hegel.

Heraclitus, therefore, has been included and transcended in the philosophy. We must concede to him, nevertheless, an important place in Hegel's system for the latter makes direct reference to him as one who asserted the identity of being and not-being and the eternal flow of all things. As we shall see these doctrines are fundamental in Hegelian thought.

Nicholas of Cusa contributed greatly to the most comprehensive, fullest and most adequate system of all when, influenced by the mystical expression given to Thomistic thought by Master Eckhart, he developed a body of doctrine in which he stated that by intellectual intuition the coincidentia oppositorum is perceived. It is this latter point that links him with Hegel and makes him of interest for our study.

As will be evident, the doctrines of these two men form the foundation upon which Hegel will erect his dialectical structure inasmuch as it is from the coincidence of opposites and the resulting eternal

flux that the Absolute Idea of Hegel derives its auto-dynamic character.

- Heraclitus -

We recognize that it is a matter of dispute among scholars as to the exact interpretation of Heraclitus' doctrines of being and not-being, and becoming. It is not relevant to our purpose here, however, to discuss the various solutions offered for this difficult problem. We are attempting to acquire an understanding of the doctrine of Hegel and must, consequently, endeavor to view the doctrines of Heraclitus from the point of view of Hegel himself. Of the fragments of the philosophy of Heraclitus that have come down to us we will cite, therefore, only some of those which we consider to have had interest for Hegel; that is, those which manifest the contradictory and dynamic aspect of all things.

24: Fire is want and satiety.

33: God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, surfeit and hunger; but he takes various shapes, just as the fire, when it is mingled with spices is named according to the savour of each

41, 42: You cannot step into the same river twice; for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you

- 43: Homer was wrong in saying: "Would that strife might perish from among gods and men!" He did not see that he was praying for the destruction of the universe: for, if his prayers were heard, all things would pass away
- 44: War is the father of all and the king of all, and some he has made gods and some men, some bond and some free
- 57: Good and evil are one
- 59: Couples are things whole and not whole, what is drawn together and what is drawn asunder, the harmonious and the discordant. The one is made up of all things, and all things issue from the one.
- 62: We must know that war is common to all and strife is justice, and that all things come into being and pass away through strife
- 69: The Way Up and the Way Down is one and the same
- 70: In the circumference of a circle the beginning and end are common
- 78: And it is the same thing in us that is alive and dead, awake and asleep, young and old; the former are shifted and become the latter, and the latter in turn are shifted and become the former
- 81: We step and we do not step into the same rivers; we are and we are not
- 104: It is not good for men to get all they wish to get. It is sickness that makes health pleasant; evil, good; hunger, plenty; weariness, rest. (1)

(1) Fragments nos. 24-104, passim, quoted by Burnet, J., Early Greek Philosophy, pp. 135-140

In the light of this doctrine Hegel asserts that Heraclitus identified being and not-being and held that becoming is the fundamental category of all that there is. All things are combinations of opposites, contradictions which are productive of development.

When Heraclitus says 'All is flowing'...., he enunciates Becoming as the fundamental category of all that there is, whereas the Eleatics...saw the only truth in Being, a rigid point of Being where there is no process. Glancing at the principle of the Eleatics, Heraclitus then goes on to say: Being no more is than not-Being...: a statement expressing the negative nature of abstract Being and its identity with not-Being, as it is made explicit in Becoming: both abstractions being alike untenable. (1)

This same line of thought is discernible in the writings of W. T. Stace, a modern interpreter of Hegel. In his discussion of the place of Heraclitus in Greek philosophy he employs none of the distinctions found among other scholars of Greek philosophy in their treatment of Heraclitus. (2) On the contrary, speaking very categorically he asserts:

(1) Hegel, op. cit., p.144

(2) Burnet, op. cit.; Hack, R., God in Greek Philosophy, Princeton University Press, 1931; Ueberweg, F., History of Philosophy, N.Y., 1872, Vol. I

The Eleatics had taught that only Being is, and Becoming is not at all. All change, all Becoming is mere illusion. For Heraclitus, on the contrary, only Becoming is, and Being, permanence, identity, these are nothing but illusion...Being is not-being. Being has not-being in it...Not only is Being, for Heraclitus, identical with not-being, but everything in the universe has its own opposite. (1)

The Hegelian school, and later the Marxists, stressing one aspect of the doctrine of Heraclitus, point to his philosophy as one of the sources of their own teaching on the identity of being and not-being, and the notion of becoming. There is nothing stable or permanent. All is change. Everything is and is not. Whether this point of view is entirely justified or not does not concern us here - such is the fact.

Because of his nebulous and paradoxical style, Heraclitus gained the name of the "Obscure". To one who has tried to make a study of the philosophy of Hegel, this title of Heraclitus would well qualify the great Greek thinker to be considered as a worthy predecessor of the German master of dialectics.

(1) Stace, W.T., A Critical History of Greek Philosophy, pp. 72-80

- Nicholas of Cusa -

We have singled out Nicholas of Cusa for consideration in our study because of the full development which the theory of coincidentia oppositorum (coincidence, unity of opposites) receives in his thought. It is this idea which is the point of departure of the Logic of Hegel and the same idea, in economic dress, will be a powerful instrument in the hands of Marx.

As developed by Cusa, coincidentia oppositorum is realized in God. The fundamental tenet of the doctrine of Cusa is that God alone is the maximum, the maximum in all orders, the maximum of all univocal and analogous notions. (1) For example, God is the maximum in unity, being, truth; the maximum of humanity and animality inasmuch as He is the realization of all possibility, the actuality of all potentiality. It is

(1) "Deus est absoluta maximitas atque unitas, absoluta differentia atque distantia praeveniens atque uniens, uti sunt contradictoris, quorum non est medium." Nicolai de Cusa, De Docta Ignorantia, Leipzig, II, 4, p.73. "Maximum autem hoc dico, quo nihil maius esse potest...Maximum itaque absolutum unum est, quod est omnia; in quo omnia, quia maximum." Ibid., I, 2

not, however, as though God had received anything from the created order, but from all eternity God is the actual fulfillment of all possibility.

God, as the maximum, as the actualization of all possibility, is, according to Cusa, the complicatio of all things; a complication, not in multiplicity but in absolute unity. (1) Thus in the maximum, unity is being, goodness is truth, man is God. God, as the maximum of all things, the maximum in complete absolute unity, is the coincidentia oppositorum. In the creature potency is not act, body is not spirit; in the maximum potency is act, body is spirit, since the diversity and plurality found in creature is superseded by the coincidentia oppositorum, which transcends the principle of contradiction ruling the order of creatures, the order of magis et minus, more and less.

All the comparisons between God and creatures are comparisons of the maximum to the more and less. Thus God is absolute unity; creatures are unity in plurality, i.e., more and less unity. God is absolute

(1) "Manifestum est Deum esse omnium complicationem." Ibid., I, 22 "Deus ergo est omnia complicans in hoc, quod omnia in eo." Ibid., II, 3

identity, creatures are identity in diversity, i.e., more and less identity. In each and every respect, in all notions, God alone is the maximum, creatures are always more and less.

Although there is only one essence or ratio for all reality, there is diversity between God and the creatures; God is this ratio in the absolute or subsistent state, while creatures have this ratio received in a subject. Because there is only one ratio for the whole of reality, there are really two modes of divine existence: God as the subsistent ratio, and God or the ratio as in a subject. Now just as God - as the subsistent ratio - is the complication of all things, so too is God - as the ratio received in a subject - the explication of all things. For God as explication is the ratio received in difference, in plurality, in the order of more or less. In other words, God in man is man, God in the universe is the universe, God in the moon is the moon. (1) Thus the whole of reality is either the maximum as complication,

(1) "Quidditas solis absoluta non est aliud a quidditate absoluta lunae - quoniam est ipse Deus...qui est entitas et quidditas absolute omnium." Ibid., II, 4

i.e., the ratio subsisting in the absolute state; or it is the maximum as explication, i.e., the ratio as existing in a subject, or the ratio in the order of more or less.

In the order of knowledge, only the maximum possesses absolute truth, any other knowledge being only a more and less, an approximation to truth since it is not a knowledge of things as they really are, i.e., as they are in the maximum, but only as they are in the order of more and less. Man's knowledge of creatures is, therefore, only more and less true. Likewise, man's present knowledge of God suffers from the same defect inasmuch as his knowledge of God is derived through the medium of creatures as images of God and no image of God - being always more and less - is of perfect equality with God. Strictly speaking, therefore, man's knowledge is really ignorance for man knows neither creatures nor God as they really are in their perfection, i.e., as they are in the maximum.

Although man's knowledge is an ignorance, it can be a learned ignorance, a Docta Ignorantia, for man can know that he does not know. Similarly, man is able to

approach more and more to the truth. He is able to acquire more and more knowledge of the maximum.

For Cusa, the coincidentia oppositorum attains its realization only in God. In Hegel, it is realized in speculative reason, although in an imperfect manner as we shall see. In a wide sense, however, the speculations of both men attain the same conclusion, the same idea, inasmuch as in Hegel's system coincidentia oppositorum achieves its maximal perfection only at the point where Absolute Spirit reaches the highest stage of development, which stage gives us the most perfect metaphysical definition of God.

Section 3 - Hegel Exposes Dialectics Negatively

According to Hegel, the secret of all knowledge is a complete acknowledgment of dialectics. Previous philosophies were deficient either because they completely restrained the activity of dialectics, or because they allowed it only limited play. In his Logic - the chief source for our analysis of Hegelian dialectics - Hegel discusses the imperfections found in previous philosophies. A brief examination of their limitations will serve to manifest more clearly the

position of dialectics in the system of Hegel.

By way of preface, we must indicate certain distinctions which are basic in Hegelian terminology. If not clearly understood, the terms employed by Hegel are productive of the greatest confusion.

When he speaks of understanding (verstand), Hegel means an attitude of mind which seeks precision, clearness, which regards opposites as mutually exclusive, whose canons of procedure are the laws of identity, contradiction and excluded middle, laws which belong to formal logic. The product of understanding is finite, abstract knowledge; finite because it is limited; abstract because it severs the term of thought from the relations connecting it with other things. It is knowledge which is one-sided, a half truth which is cognizant of identity and difference only when they are taken separately.

When he speaks of reason (vernunft), on the other hand, he is speaking of an attitude of mind which rises above a static, lifeless, fixed mode of thinking and attains the principle of identity of opposites which reveals the object in its completeness.

Reason, in its highest stage, that of speculative reason, is productive of infinite concrete knowledge; infinite, because without limits; concrete, because the focus of converging relations. Bearing these simple distinctions in mind, let us consider Hegel's view of the philosophical systems which proceeded his own.

- Greek Philosophy -

Considered as a whole, Greek philosophy was held in high regard by Hegel. Consequently, it is often asserted that the fundamental principles of Greek philosophy are fundamental principles of Hegel. (1) The latter considered Greek thought to be characterized by idealism, which is the only possible true philosophy. Greek philosophy, particularly that of Aristotle and Plato, contained in germ that which was brought into flower in the system of Hegel. Among the Greeks, thought was developing but philosophy was experiencing difficulty in its endeavors to shake itself free from dualism which is a big obstacle to free thought. The death of Aristotle marked the end of the

(1) See, for example, Stace, W.T., The Philosophy of Hegel, pp. 3-31

period of development in thought and the coming of the new era witnessed a retrogression.

- Metaphysic of the Past -

The philosophy of the period extending from the death of Aristotle up until the time of Kant is called by Hegel the 'Metaphysic of the Past', which we shall designate by metaphysics. The period as a whole was for Hegel, as for Kant, dominated by the Wolffian-Leibnitz metaphysics. This philosophy never advanced beyond the stage of understanding. It failed to see that the objects of thought contained hidden contradictions. It lacked the comprehensive view which grasps the categories of thought as alive with movement, as fluid, breaking up and flowing into one another, as being flows into nothing and vice versa.(1)

The thinking of the old metaphysical system was finite. Its whole mode of action was regulated by categories, the limits of which it believed to be permanently fixed and not subject to any further negation....a question in these metaphysical systems was: Is the world finite or infinite? The very terms of the question assume that the finite is a permanent contradictory to the infinite: and one can easily see that, when they are so opposed, the infinite, which of course ought to be the whole, only appears as a single side of it and suffers restriction from the finite...In the same way it was asked,

(1) Ibid., pp 53-57

whether the soul was simple or complex. Simplesness was in other words taken to be an ultimate characteristic, giving the expression to the whole truth. Far from being so, simplesness is the expression of a half truth, as one-sided and abstract as existence:- a term of thought, which, as we shall hereafter see, is itself untrue and hence unable to lay hold of the truth. If the soul be viewed as merely and abstractly simple, it is characterized in an inadequate and finite way. (1)

Thinking of this kind imprisoned thought within fixed, narrow bounds. It takes things as given and seeks to arrange, combine and classify them. Having done this it is quite content to look upon its products as finished masterpieces in the gallery of thought. Thus metaphysics, by maintaining its inflexible mode of thinking gives rise to endless absurdities, especially in its language which creates a chaotic, bewildering and jumbled world of tautological expressions.

The maxim of Identity reads: Everything is identical with itself, $A=A$: and negatively, A cannot be at the same time A and not-A. This maxim, instead of being a true law of thought is nothing but the law of abstract understanding. The form of the maxim is virtually self-contradictory: for a proposition always promises a distinction between subject and predicate; while the present one does not fulfill what its form requires. But it is particularly set aside by the following so-called Laws of thought, which

(1) Hegel, op.cit., pp.52-53

makes laws out of the very counterpart of this law. It is asserted that the maxim of Identity, though it cannot be proved, regulates the consciousness of every one, and that experience shows it to be accepted as soon as its terms are apprehended by consciousness. To this pretended experience of the school may be opposed the universal experience that no mind thinks, or forms conceptions, or speaks, in accordance with this law, and that no existence of any kind whatever conforms to it. The language which such a pretended law demands (A planet is a planet; Magnetism is magnetism; Mind is mind) is, as it deserves to be, called silliness. This is certainly matter of general experience. The logic which seriously propounds such laws has long ago cost the school in which they alone are valid, the loss of its credit with sound common sense as well as with reason. (1)

Instead of speaking of the maxim of the Excluded Middle (which is the maxim of abstract understanding), we should rather say: Everything is opposite. Neither in heaven nor in earth, neither in the world of mind nor of nature, is there anywhere such an abstract, 'Either-or' as the understanding maintains. All that there ever is, is concrete, with difference and opposition in itself. Contradiction, above all things, is what moves the world: and it is really ridiculous to say that contradiction is unthinkable. (2)

In view of texts such as these it would appear that the adherents of metaphysic have the right to accuse Hegel of denying the fundamental laws of all

(1) Ibid., p. 184

(2) Ibid., p. 192



thought, the laws of identity, contradiction and excluded middle. Such an accusation, however, would immediately be drowned out by the shouts of protest coming from Hegel and his followers. Paradoxical as it may seem to their accusers, the Hegelians not only do not admit to any such denial of primary principles but they insist upon the retention of those principles in the thought process. In other words, Hegel does not denounce Metaphysics because it employs these laws, or because it parades about on the stage of understanding. The vice of metaphysics is that it regards the product of understanding as absolute, as having the character of an ultimate, as the only truth, as the whole truth. Hegel not only recognizes the usefulness of the understanding but considers it indispensable in both practice and theory. He is ever ready to admit the truth which metaphysics possesses in the precisions made by the incisive operations of the understanding but he ridicules its attempts to insist that distinctions and oppositions are real and that identity in opposition is unreal.

Perhaps some kind of an illustration might help to clarify this point of Hegelian doctrine. For

example, when metaphysics states, A is not not-A, there is no protest from Hegel. When metaphysics states, A=A, he is still in agreement. Now comes the crux of the matter. Because metaphysics stops here, resting content in this knowledge as the finished, completed process, as the whole truth, Hegel denounces it as productive of monsters in thought inasmuch as metaphysics places an obstacle in the path of the progress of thought to the realm of reason where alone it attains its full development in the supreme speculative principle, A is not-A. (1)

(1) McTaggart sums up what might be termed the common opinion regarding Hegel in this matter when he says, "In fact, so far is the dialectic from denying the law of contradiction, that it is especially based on it. The contradictions are the cause of the dialectic process. But they can only be this if they are received as marks of error. We are obliged to say that we find the truth of Being and no-Being in Becoming, and in Becoming only, because, if we endeavor to take them in their independence, and not as synthesised, we find an unreconciled contradiction." Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic, pp. 11-12.

"Hegel was not afraid of contradictions; he saw in them the very life of speculative thought and philosophic truth. Over and over again he challenged the famous principle of identity and contradiction. This principle is not untrue; but it is merely formal and abstract, and therefore, a shallow principle. What we find in reality is always an identity of opposites." Cassirer, E., The Myth of the State, p.250
(Continued on bottom of Page 22)

Summing up briefly, we can say that metaphysics, operating on the plane of understanding, lives in a dream world of half-truths and one-sided views. It is a realm where incomplete thought dwells as clear, sharp, precise and distinct - incomplete, because held in check by the narrow, rigid limits of this mode of thinking. The action of the understanding is useful and necessary in the development of thought but it is only the starting point, being in no way conclusive or final.

(1) - (Continued from bottom of Page 21)
Plekhanov, in contrasting dialectics and formal logic, speaks of the former as the "logic of contradiction" whose superiority he illustrates by the classical example of a moving body which is and is not at the same time at a given point. Dialectics and Logic, in Fundamental Problems of Marxism, pp. 111-112.

A few pages later, having asserted that the fundamental laws of formal logic are inapplicable to motion except within certain limits, he states, "The inference...is that dialectic does not suppress formal logic, but merely deprives the laws of formal logic of the absolute value which the metaphysicians have ascribed to them." pp. 117-118

In general, when Kant finds a place in Hegel's thought he is subject to sharp criticism. His one redeeming feature in the eyes of Hegel is that Kantian thought threw some light on the inadequacy of the philosophising which characterized the period of metaphysics. For this reason, Hegel occasionally pays tribute to Kant as one who rescued thought from the abyss of oblivion by loosening the bonds holding it captive in metaphysics.

Kant was the first to signalise the distinction between Reason and Understanding. The object of the former, as he applied the term, was the infinite and unconditioned, of the latter was the finite and conditioned. Kant did valuable service when he established the finite character of the cognitions of the understanding founded merely upon experience, and stamped their contents with the name of appearance or phenomenon....In the same way Kant restored the Idea to its proper dignity: vindicating it for Reason as distinct from the inadequate categories of the understanding or from the merely sensible conceptions, which usually appropriate to themselves the name of ideas. (1)

Kant in his critical philosophy aimed at a synthesis which would combine the necessary and universal judgments of Leibnitz-Wolffian metaphysics with the

(1) Ibid., p.78

quantitative increase of knowledge characteristic of Empiricism and which would at the same time avoid the dogmatism of the former and the scepticism of the latter. This desire was fulfilled in his synthetic a priori propositions and judgments - necessary and universal because a priori, productive of new knowledge because synthetic. Distinguishing three cognitive faculties, sensibility, understanding and reason he passes from experience to pure reason; experience furnishes the matter of sensibility to which are applied the a priori forms of time and space and the result is an empirical intuition which in turn becomes the matter of the understanding to which are applied the a priori forms of the twelve categories which are as the form of our judgments; the understanding in turn furnishes the matter for the faculty of reason which by means of ideas reduces all our knowledge to unity. All metaphysics, moreover, can be subsumed under three ideas - the psychological (Ego), cosmological (Cosmos) and theological (Theos). It is the second of these ideas which concerns us here because it is the only one of the three which leads reason into the famous antinomies of pure reason which link Kant

closely to Hegel. (1)

According to Kant, when one applies reason to what he calls the objective synthesis of phenomena, there arises a "perfectly natural antithetic...into which reason of itself unavoidably falls." (2)

Antithetic is "the self-contradiction of seemingly dogmatical cognitions (thesis cum antithesi), in none of which we can discover any decided superiority." (3) Kant arranges the antimonies in the following manner. (4)

| Thesis | Antithesis |
|--|--|
| The world had a beginning in time, and is also limited in space | The world has no beginning, and no limits in space, but is, in relation both to time and space, infinite |
| Every composite substance in the world consists of simple parts; and there exists nothing that is not either in itself simple, or composed of simple parts | No composite thing in the world consists of simple parts; and there does not exist in the world any simple substance |

(1) Brehier, E., Histoire de la Philosophie, Tome II, 2, pp. 538-39

(2) Kant, E., Critique of Pure Reason, Transcendental Dialectic, Bk. II, Ch. II, (Everyman Edition) p.250

(3) Ibid., p.257

(4) Ibid., pp 260-281

Thesis

Antithesis

Causality according to the laws of nature, is not the only causality operating to originate the phenomena of the world. A causality of freedom is also necessary to account fully for these phenomena

There is no such thing as freedom, but everything in the world happens solely according to the laws of nature

There exists either in, or in connection with the world - either as a part of it, or as the cause of it - an absolutely necessary being

An absolutely necessary being does not exist, either in the world, or out of it - as its cause

Having exposed the antinomies, Kant asserts that they are "so many attempts to solve four natural and unavoidable problems of reason" and their number cannot be more or less than four. (1) Kant proposes a solution (2) which steers a safe course between a scepticism which would despair of a solution and a philosophy which would admit contradiction is the very substance of all thought and reality. It was this latter possibility which was taken up by Hegel (3) who always

(1) Ibid., p. 287

(2) For Kant's solution and for a detailed exposition of Kant's philosophy see Boutroux, E., La Philosophie de Kant, esp. pp 195-227. See also Gardeil, H.D., O.P. Les Etapes de la Philosophie Idealiste, pp.110-113. For a critical appraisal of the antinomies see Garrigou-LaGrange, R., God, His Existence and His Nature, 2 vols.

(3) Boutroux, op. cit., pp. 194; 209-210.

considered the enumeration of the antinomies as a great achievement in Kant's philosophical thought although Kant himself failed to recognize the full import of his discovery. The philosophical world had to mark time until the writings of Hegel disclosed the complete significance of the Kantian analysis.

The principles of the metaphysical philosophy gave rise to the belief that, when cognition lapsed into contradictions, it was a mere accidental aberration, due to some subjective mistake in argument and inference. According to Kant, however, thought has a natural tendency to issue in contradictions or antinomies, whenever it seeks to apprehend the infinite... this important discovery gets rid of the rigid dogmatism of the metaphysic of understanding, and suggests the Dialectical movement of thought. But...Kant...never got beyond the negative result that the thing-in-itself is unknowable, and never penetrated to the discovery of what the antinomies really and positively mean. That true and positive meaning of the antinomies is this: that every actual thing involves a coexistence of contrary elements. Consequently, to know, or, in other words, to comprehend an object is equivalent to being conscious of it as a unified group of contrary determinations. The old metaphysic, as we have seen, when it studied the objects of which it sought a metaphysical knowledge, went to work by applying categories abstractly and to the exclusion of their contraries. Kant, on the other hand, tried to prove that the statements, issuing through this method, could be met by other statements of contrary import with equal warrant and necessity. (1) (*Italics Ours*)

(1) Ibid., p.84

In spite of the relative freedom it achieved in the system of Kant, thought still suffered serious limitations and checks because Kant lacked the necessary courage and foresight to allow thought to proceed to its complete development. He was imprisoned within the confines of purely subjective speculations and little remained for him to do but hopelessly wring his hands in despair of ever attaining complete truth, of ever knowing the thing-in-itself.

Hegel completely rejects Kant's position that we cannot know the thing-in-itself, being supremely confident that knowledge of the absolute is quite possible. This follows logically from the absolute autonomy or creative activity of reason or thought which pervades Hegel's entire system.(1) In every realm thought is supreme. It is not passive but active, determining not determined. In Hegel's eyes Kant was a subjective idealist whereas he himself was an objective idealist; Kant knew only creations of his own mind, his categories were purely subjective in contrast to the objective categories of Hegel. Hegel's absolute idealism overcame the transcendental idealism.

(1) Gardeil, op. cit., pp. 129; 140-142

of Kant for "if, in fact, all determinations of things are produced by thought, by definition, one cannot admit any unknowable, there cannot be anything which would not be known, consequently, the thing-in-itself is non-existent." (1)

Kant, therefore, cannot be wholly approved but his efforts were not unfruitful.

The Critical philosophy had one great negative merit. It has produced a general conviction that the categories of understanding are finite in their range, and that any knowledge which goes on within their pale falls short of the truth. But Kant had only a sight of half of the truth. He explained the finite nature of the categories, to mean that they were subjective only, valid only for our thought, from which the thing-in-itself was divided by an impassable gulf. Now, it is not because they are subjective, that the categories are finite: they are finite by their very nature, and it is on their own selves that it is requisite to exhibit their finitude. (2)

(1) Ibid., pp. 132-133. "Kant admits...the idea of a formation of the object by thought, but he did not go the limit in his boldness, since he still recognized the external condition of experience, and behind phenomena a reality, indeterminable but nevertheless existent. With Hegel the final restraint is shattered and we are in absolute idealism. When one rises to the level of speculative philosophy, being appears, in its true and profound reality, as a determination of thought and it would be vain to imagine, beyond this latter, a transcendent noumenal world." Ibid., pp. 142-43

On Hegel's idealism confer Gregoire, F., Aux Sources de la Pensée de Marx, Hegel-Feuerbach, Bibliothèque Philosophique de Louvain, 1947, pp. 67-71

(2) Hegel, op. cit., p. 101.

Viewed in relation to dialectics, Kantian philosophy exhibits two defects. First, failure to penetrate the true meaning of the antinomies, which is one of the reasons why only four are enumerated by Kant. In reality, however, the antinomies are apparent in every domain of activity and thought.

The antinomies appear in all objects of every kind, in all conceptions, in all notions and ideas. To be aware of this and to know objects in this property of theirs, makes a vital part in a philosophical theory. For the quality thus indicated is what we describe as the Dialectical element in logic. (1) (*Italics Ours*)

Secondly, suffering from a lack of foresightedness, the Kantian philosophy manifested the same shortcoming that characterized the metaphysical philosophy insofar as it too stopped short of the complete truth. Hegel pays Kant tribute for revealing the finite character of the categories of the understanding and then points out that he did not go far enough in his thinking.

..The mistake came when he stopped at the purely negative point of view, and limited the unconditionality of Reason to an abstract self-sameness without any shade of distinction. It degrades reason to a finite and conditioned thing, to identify it with a mere stepping beyond the finite and conditioned range of understanding. The real infinite, far

(1) Ibid., p. 84

from being a mere transcendence of the finite, always involves the absorption of the finite into its own fuller nature. (1)

When Hegel makes his entrance upon the philosophical stage he is confronted with a malformed, stunted, undeveloped dialectic. Through the medium of the coincidentia oppositorum and Hegel's genius, dialectics throws off its restraining shackles, reveals the inexorable force of its dynamic and provides the intrinsic vital force by whose impulsion the Absolute Idea marches forward to its full development in the realm of free and untrammelled thought.

Section 4 - Hegel Views Dialectics Positively

The center of Hegel's philosophical system is his conception of the Absolute Idea or Spirit as the whole of reality. The Spirit develops itself by a triple rhythm of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. This is the rhythm of the dialectic whose fundamental principle is that the same reality can be situated on diverse spiritual levels. Basing his philosophy on this flexibility of a spiritual reality, Hegel conceived the triadic structure of dialectics as a movement

(1) Ibid., p. 78

of reality which (a) is posed in itself - thesis; (b) develops outside itself in its manifestations - antithesis; (c) to finally turn back within itself and be near itself as a being manifested - synthesis. Thus all philosophy forms one great triad; Being, Nature, Spirit. Being is the Absolute Idea in itself as pure reason, as apart from the world, the system of the categories - thesis; Nature is the Idea in its otherness, as gone out of itself, as the opposite of the Idea - antithesis; Spirit is the Idea when it returns into itself from the otherness opposing it - synthesis. (1)

This same triplicity of structure is manifest in the division of Logic which, according to Hegel, has three sides: the abstract side, that of understanding; the dialectical side, that of negative reason; the speculative side, that of the positive reason. This last division is not peculiar to the Logic, however, but is common to all the triads which appear in various undulating multiples throughout the entire system. Thesis is the product of the understanding; antithesis, of the negative reason; and synthesis, of positive or speculative reason.

(1) Brehier, E., Histoire de la Philosophie, Tome II, 3, pp. 746-47

Putting the same thing in another way, let us consider the first triad of the Logic. Hegel starts with the abstract concept of being as thesis. This is mere being, devoid of all determination, utterly empty. Being thus conceived, immediately passes into its opposite - nothing - for utter emptiness is nothing - antithesis. Being and nothing thus stand opposed to one another; their contradiction is resolved in becoming, in conversion which contains their identity and their differences, coincidentia oppositorum - synthesis.

Here we must point out a very important aspect of the movement of the dialectic - the twofold function which characterizes the third member of the triad, the synthesis. The bifarious operation of the synthesis, the work of the speculative reason, is expressed by the single German word aufheben which possesses many fine, different shades of meaning. Indeed, one translator of Hegel's works has noted over twenty different translations of this word among various English authors.(1) In this connection, it is interesting to note that Hegel considers the word as indicative of the superior-

(1) Harris, W.T., Outlines of Hegel's Logic, in Hegel Selections, J.Lowenberg, Ed.,

ity of the German language which is, consequently, perfectly adaptable to the transcendence of his own particular speculative philosophy which enjoys a marked superiority over other systems of thought.

We should note the double meaning of the German word, aufheben (to put by, or put aside). We mean by it (1) to clear away, or annul: thus, we say, a law, or a regulation is put aside: (2) to keep, or preserve: in which sense we use it when we say: something is well put aside. This double usage of language, which gives to the same word a positive and negative meaning, is not an accident, and gives no ground for reproaching language as a cause of confusion. We should rather recognize in it the speculative spirit of our language rising above the mere 'Either-or' of the understanding. (1)

Translating aufheben as sublate, and keeping the double meaning of the word in mind, we can say that being and nothing are sublated by becoming. Their difference is annulled and they are merged in the unity of becoming. At the same time, however, their difference is preserved, for becoming is an identity of differences. "The fact that it is an identity of differences means that the differences are merged. The fact that it is an identity of differences means that they are preserved." (2)

(1) Hegel, op. cit., p. 155

(2) Stace, W.T., Philosophy of Hegel, p. 106

This duplicity of operation on the part of the synthesis, or speculative reason, is the main-spring of the dialectical movement as conceived in Hegelian thought. Take away either of the functions and the process comes to an abrupt halt. If the differences are not annulled, an obstacle is put in the way of unity and there is no merger of differences. If there is no merging of differences there is no synthesis; without synthesis the dialectical movement breaks down because each synthesis yields in its turn to the dynamic of the dialectic and becomes the thesis of a new triad which results in a higher category in synthesis. This synthesis undergoes the same transformation and so on throughout the entire system.

If the differences are not preserved, there is a violation of one of the cardinal principles of the dialectical process - nothing is ever lost. This means that in the movement of Absolute Spirit towards complete self-realization, each of the higher categories contain the lower categories which have preceded it. This absorptive action on the part of each of the categories is

what Hegel has in mind when he says that each of his categories is concrete.

As the dialectic proceeds, nothing is ever lost. Each step in the process takes up into itself what went before and is in turn taken up by the step that follows. The final category of the Logic contains and preserves within itself all previous categories whatever. They are all merged in it, gathered up into its unity, their differences and contradictions resolved. They are all fused into one. Yet they retain their existence in this unity, as the factors of its being. It is for this reason alone that it is concrete. Were all previous categories not contained within it, it would be merely an abstraction, just as Plato's Ideas are, for the same reason, abstract universals. The Idea of colour excludes, wipes out, the specific Ideas of white, green, red and the differences between them. It is a simple unity, not a unity of differences. It does not contain the lower Ideas and is therefore abstract. The higher categories of Hegel contain the lower, and are therefore concrete.(1)

As we proceed further in our study of dialectics we become more aware of Hegel's insistence upon its intrinsic connection with thought. Previous philosophy completely missed the fact "that dialectics is the very nature of thought, and that, as understanding, thought

(1) Ibid., p. 107 - "It is important to note that this last operation, far from being abstractive, is on the contrary a transition to the more concrete. The Hegelian dialectic progresses toward the more concrete, towards that which philosophy calls the "concrete universal," that is, towards notions not only more general, but also richer in comprehension." Gardeil, op. cit., p. 139

must inevitably fall into contradictions and negation of itself."(1) Dialectics is not, as some have considered it, some sort of logical instrument to be employed at will in speculation or only a mode of procedure which possesses a certain utility in argumentation. Dialectics is independent of any will, an objective fact which is present in thought and things. The failure to recognize its all-pervading influence is the mortal sin of all thinking.

In its true and proper character, Dialectic is the very nature and essence of the categories (formulated by the understanding) of things, and of the finite as a whole...Dialectic...is an indwelling tendency outwards and beyond; by which the one-sidedness and limitation of the formulae of understanding is seen in its true light, and shown to be the negation of these formulae. Things are finite, just because they involve their own dissolution. Thus understood, Dialectic is discovered to be the life and soul of scientific progress, the dynamic which alone gives an immanent connexion and necessity to the subject-matter of science; and, in a word, is seen to constitute the real and true, as opposed to the external, exaltation above the finite. It is of the highest importance to apprehend and understand rightly the nature of Dialectic. Wherever there is movement, wherever there is life, wherever anything is carried into effect in the actual world, there Dialectic is at work. It is also the soul of all knowledge which is truly scientific...When we look more closely, we find that the limitations of the finite do not merely come from without; that its own nature is the cause of its abrogation, and that by its own means it passes into its counterpart (2)

(1) Hegel, op. cit., pp. 125-126
(2) Ibid., p. 15

Philosophies which fail to acknowledge and appreciate the action of dialectics are guilty of intellectual blindness. They can only result in empty abstractions which can neither prove nor explain anything because such philosophies are completely divorced from reality, from that which is most evident to all unbiased observers. For the recognition of dialectics is not the unique possession of those who style themselves philosophers, but it is a most evident phenomenon of common experience.

Everything that surrounds us may be viewed as an instance of Dialectic. We are aware that everything finite, instead of being inflexible and ultimate, is rather changeable and transient; and this is exactly what we mean by that Dialectic of the finite, by which the finite as implicitly other than what it is, is forced to surrender its own immediate or natural being, and to turn suddenly into its opposite....All things, we say, that is, the finite world as such, meet their doom; and in saying so, we have a perception that Dialectic is the universal and irresistible power, before which nothing can stay, however secure and stable it may deem itself. (1)

Summing up, we may note a certain evolution of philosophical systems as conceived by Hegel, an evolution which, starting from the end of the period of Greek thought, manifests a dialectical movement and the

(1) Ibid., p. 128

triadic structure characteristic of Hegel's speculative philosophy.

Recall that previously it was seen that the Hegelian analysis of the dialectical movement by means of triads reveals that the thesis, or first term is the work of the understanding; antithesis, or the second term, is the work of negative reason; and synthesis, or third term, is the work of speculative or positive reason. Thus thought develops by a process of affirmation, negation and negation of the negation.

The metaphysical philosophy sought to classify, distinguish, and define the objects of thought; in so doing it fulfilled a valuable function inasmuch as "philosophy can never get along without understanding ...its foremost requirement is that every thought shall be apprehended precisely, and no acquiescence in vague and indefinite notions permitted." (1) This school, never progressing beyond the stage of the understanding, thus stands in relation to philosophy as the thesis of a triad to its synthesis - abstract, limited, one-sided.

(1) Ibid., p. 125

According to Hegel, the mode of thinking characteristic of the metaphysical school dominated philosophy and the realm of speculative thought until the philosophising of Kant exposed the finite nature of this mode of thinking, a finitude resulting from the rigid demarcations of the shallow thinking of the understanding. With Kant's famous discovery of the antinomies of reason philosophy advanced a step further, to the dialectical stage, or the stage of negative reason. In the opinion of Hegel, the analysis of Kant, going beyond the narrow view of the earlier metaphysics, revealed that all of reality is in the process of movement. Things do not exist in a frozen, ossified, immovable state but manifest a ceaseless pulsation and reciprocation.

In modern times it was more than any other Kant who resuscitated the name of Dialectic, and restored it to its post of honor. He did it... by working out the Antinomies of reason. The real object of these Antinomies consists not in the mere subjective action, the oscillation between one set of grounds and another, but in showing that every abstract form of the understanding, taken precisely as it is given, naturally veers round into its, opposite. (1)

(1) Ibid., p. 127

As we have seen previously, Kant failed to realize the full import of his discoveries. He was unaware of the logical results of the antinomies. Thus philosophy, in the hands of Kant was unable to make further progress because he stopped at the purely negative point of view due to the deficiencies inherent in his purely subjective view of all phenomena.

Philosophy, in truncated form, had to await the coming of a comprehensive thinker who would be able to give the world an expression of philosophy in its totality. That man was Hegel. It was he who effected the synthesis, the transition from the dialectical to the speculative stage. In the hands of Hegel philosophy and dialectics received the master's touch and finally came to full flower.

The dialectical method was the masterpiece of the Hegelian logical art and yet, if it would be thoroughly logical and consistent, it was the Frankenstein monster which would destroy the philosophical system of Hegel himself inasmuch as dialectic "is the universal and irresistible power, before which nothing can stay,

however secure and stable it may deem itself." (1)
Whether or not Hegel foresaw this possibility, and
whether or not it would have distressed him, is a
matter for discussion among the sages. What we are
more certain of is that it most surely would have
been a great blow to the creator of the supreme
idealist-dialectical system had he been able to
foresee that, less than two decades after his
death, his dialectical method would be torn loose
from its noble union with spirit and shamefully
wed to matter in the system of Marx and Engels.

(1) Ibid., p. 128

CHAPTER II

Marxist Dialectics

Section 1 - Marx and Hegel

As we turn our attention from the teachings of Hegel to those of Engels and Marx, we are assured by the proponents of the doctrines of the latter that we are leaving behind the obscurity and nebulosity, so characteristic of Hegelian thought, and entering a realm where obfuscation and abstruseness yield to clarity and pellucidity. That the thought of Hegel is enigmatical and hazy is a fact of almost universal acceptance to which even some of the most ardent champions of his system will subscribe. Whether this is ultimately due to the system itself, or to certain essential defects in those who have grappled with the system, is a question which will always find thinkers on opposing ideas.

We are inclined to agree with Hegel when he says that the condemnation which a great man lays upon the world is to force it to explain him. We think it not an exaggeration to say that, up to this stage in the progress of civilization, the world has failed in its task in regard to Hegel himself. Consequently, it may come as a source of comfort to some - though not

all - admirers of Hegel to be informed by the communists that this task has been brilliantly fulfilled by Marx, Engels, Stalin and Lenin.

According to the communists, it is in the writings of these four men that one can find all that is really valuable in Hegelian thought. The genius of these cornerstones of the communist ideology is revealed in their writings which give us a palpable explanation of what Hegel was unconsciously trying to achieve and yet, never attained. Their evaluation of the worth of Hegel is a melange of praise and blame; eulogistic when speaking of his method, they are censorious when discussing his idealism.

- Hegel Extolled -

In the preface to the second edition of his monumental work, Capital, Marx takes occasion to defend the name of Hegel by "openly avowing himself "the pupil of that mighty thinker" who, in regard to the dialectics, "was the first to present its general form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner." (1) This

(1) Marx, K., Capital, p. 25

declaration of Marx's esteem for Hegel is not without significance for the fact must not be overlooked that this is not the enthusiastic outpourings of a young, naive Left Hegelian caught up in his first fervor, but the considered statement of a mature, revolutionary Marx in whom the doctrines of dialectical materialism had reached the summit of their development.

Marx considered Hegel to be more than just another philosopher because of Hegel's dialectical method which, after undergoing a reconditioning at the hands of Marx and Engels, was to serve as the inner drive of the new world outlook. Indeed, "Hegel's dialectic is the basic form of all dialectic." (1) Lenin informs us that Marx regarded Hegelian dialectics as the greatest achievement of classical Germany philosophy. Its richness was in sharp contrast to, and laid emphasis upon, the meager, one-sided development of other formulations of the principle of development and evolution which distorted and mutilated the actual course of the expansion of nature and society.(2)

(1) Marx, K., Letters to Dr. Kugelmann, p. 63

(2) Lenin, V., Teachings of Karl Marx, p. 13

It is in the writings which appear under the name of Engels, however, that one finds the most detailed and complete exposition of Marxist dialectics and its relation to Hegel. These writings mirror the thought of both Marx and Engels inasmuch as the two men worked in the closest possible collaboration. Not only did they read one another's manuscripts but Marx himself wrote some of the sections of books which appear under Engels' name. When together, they spent long hours in an exchange of ideas gathered from much study and observation. During the last thirteen years of Marx's life they saw one another almost daily, frequently becoming so absorbed in their discussion that they spent whole nights smoking and drinking as they compared notes. When apart, there was a steady stream of correspondence between them which treated the general and particular aspects of the common cause uniting them as well as the latest happenings in the scientific and political worlds.

In the philosophy of Hegel, Marx and Engels found their starting point. "Hegel was not simply put aside. On the contrary, one started out from his revolutionary side...the dialectical method." (1) With this invin-

(1) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 43

cible, destructive weapon Marx and Engels set out to change the world, not by reform but by revolution. In the mad whirl of their activities and its accompanying tension, the spirit of Hegel was ever present, hovering like a shadow in the background. They never forgot that it was Hegel who forged the weapon and they paid him tribute as a man who possessed "a wealth of thought that is astounding even today...a creative genius...of encyclopedic erudition...he showed us the way out of the labyrinth of 'systems' to real positive knowledge of the world." (1)

Marx and Engels lived at the end of a tempestuous period in the world of philosophic thought. They could look back over the philosophical ruins of two hundred years during which system after system was overthrown and philosophers were toppled from their ivory towers wherein they dwelt in blissful complacency. In contrast to the other crumbling systems of thought, falling under the baleful onslaughts of philosophic iconoclasts, Hegel's philosophy displayed, for Marx and Engels, an impregnability which was indicative of the

(1) Ibid., pp. 14-15

superiority of the dialectical method. In spite of the attacks made upon it from all sides, the Hegelian system "had never been overcome. Not one of the opponents of the great dialectician had been able to make a breach in its proud structure; it fell into oblivion, because the Hegelian school had not the slightest notion of what to do with it." (1) Of course this defect was fully remedied when the method was taken over by Marx and Engels as they knew just what they wanted to do with it. Brushing aside the cobwebs, they placed it on the throne again, there to be united with materialism whose sovereign rights were reasserted by Ludwig Feuerbach.

Reading through the writings of communism we learn that it was Marx who placed socialism on a scientific basis. This outstanding achievement of the nineteenth century was the result of two great discoveries made, by Marx - the materialist conception of history and the famous surplus value. This latter discovery revealed to an unsuspecting world the inner secret, the very core of capitalist production, a fact which up until the time

(1) Engels, F., Karl Marx's Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy in Engels, op. cit., p. 77

of Marx had completely eluded political economists.(1)

It is the first of these discoveries which relates Hegel to Marx insofar as dialectics reveals the transitory character of each successive period in the evolution of human society from lower to higher stages. All the different historical periods prove to be only the various steps taken by civilization in the march of progress. This historical, evolutionary aspect of Hegelian thought held tremendous appeal for Marx and Engels.

What distinguished Hegel's mode of thought from that of all other philosophers was the enormous historical sense upon which it was based...(he) did not parade ignorance but was one of the finest intellects of all time. He was the first who attempted to show an evolution, an inner coherence in history; and while today much in his Philosophy of History may seem peculiar to us, yet the grandeur of his fundamental outlook is admirable even today...Everywhere...this magnificent conception of history penetrates and everywhere this material is treated historically...This epoch-making conception of history was the direct theoretical prerequisite for the new materialistic contemplation...Marx was, and is, the only one who could undertake the task of extracting from the Hegelian logic the kernel which comprised Hegel's real discoveries in this sphere, and to construct

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

the dialectical method, divested of its idealistic trappings, in the simple shape in which it becomes the only true form of development of thought. (1) (*Italics ours*)

The preceding few pages are sufficient, we believe, to show that Marx and Engels were not ungenerous in their praise of Hegel. We have taken the time to point out this fact because it is frequently overlooked by many writers who are more impressed by the denouncements of Hegel made by communist writers from the beginning.

- Hegel Denounced -

Almost every time that Hegel is mentioned in communist literature reference is made to the fact that Hegel, unfortunately suffered a defect which eternally impeded his complete inclusion in the system of Marx. Hegel was an idealist. This sums up in a sentence the source of all the errors which he made in his philosophy. It is the errors resulting from this idealism which are the subject of constant attack on the part of the Marxist philosophers. As an idealist, Hegel was.

(1) Engels, F., Karl Marx's Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy in Appendix, Ludwig Feuerbach, pp. 77-78

inevitably doomed, as, apart from his systematic dialectical method, he could have no place in a philosophy which decided to "relentlessly sacrifice every idealist fancy which could not be brought into harmony with the facts conceived in their own and not in a fantastic fashion!" (1)

Hegel had asserted that in order to understand his system one had to learn to walk upon one's head. Marx and Engels found it not difficult to believe Hegel's statement because the entire Hegelian system was on its head. As Marx notes, "With him (Hegel) it (dialectics) is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell." (2) Engels tells us that when he and Marx adapted the dialectical method to their system "the dialectic of the concept...became merely the conscious reflex of the dialectical notion of the real world and dialectic of Hegel was placed upon its head; or rather, turned off its head, on which it was standing before, and placed upon its feet again." (3)

(1) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 43

(2) Marx, K., Capital, loc. cit.

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

For this reason Engels could say that "Marx and I were pretty well the only people to rescue conscious dialectics from German idealist philosophy and apply it in the materialist conception of nature and history." (1) Lenin, in quoting this statement of Engels, inserts a parenthetical clause which is revelatory of the contempt, among communist thinkers, for any form of idealism. With the parenthesis, the text cited by Lenin reads as follows: "Marx and I were the only ones to rescue conscious dialectics (from the swamp of idealism, including Hegelianism)." (2)

Hegel, with his pre-existing categories, considering the dialectics of the real world as the mere reflection was all mixed up because "In reality it is the reverse: the dialectics of the brain is only the reflection of the forms of motion of the real world, both of nature and of history." (3) The transition from Hegel's reversal of things to the true reality does not appear to have presented much difficulty as "...ultimately, the Hegelian system represents merely

(1) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, p. 15

(2) Lenin, V., loc. cit.

(3) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 153

a materialism idealistically turned upside down in method and content." (1)

Again and again in the writings of the Marxists one meets with the same complaint against Hegel. The relative positions of Hegelian and Marxist dialectics are clear in the famous passage of Marx which has become classic. It sums up all we have said.

My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of "the Idea", he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of "the Idea". With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought. (2)

Marxist dialectics differs to such a degree from Hegelian dialectics that it is a blunder to even think of identifying them. (3) Where Hegel was an idealist, Marx is, at the other pole, a materialist. Let us now consider the materialism of the system of Marx.

(1) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 24

(2) Marx, K., Capital, loc. cit.

(3) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, p. 136

Section 2 - Marx and Materialism

- Materialism in Fetters -

Just as their dialectical method was different from that of Hegel, so too the materialism of Marx and Engels was something distinctively their own. Engels tells us that it was Ludwig Feuerbach's Essence of Christianity which dispelled the fog of idealism and placed in clear light the fundamental fact that nature exists independently of all philosophy and all theorizing. Feuerbach's book shattered the Hegelian illusion of the primacy of spirit over matter and re-asserted the supremacy of matter over spirit. (1)

In the Holy Family Marx is quite lavish in his praise of Feuerbach although, like so many others, Feuerbach will not completely escape the stinging lash of Marx's criticism. Feuerbach finds favor with Marx because "he gave the death blow to the old opposition between materialism and spiritualism." (2)

Who unveiled the mystery of the system? Who annihilated the dialectic of concepts, the war of the gods known only to the philosophers? Who put...man in place of the old lumber, even of the 'infinite consciousness of self'? Feuerbach, and Feuerbach alone (3)

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

(2) Marx, K., La Sainte Famille, in Oeuvres Philosophiques Tome II, p. 167

(3) Ibid., p. 164

Feuerbach was the first to complete and criticize Hegel from a Hegelian point of view; he resolved the metaphysical absolute spirit into "the real man based on nature". (1)

Feuerbach...in many respects forms an intermediate link between Hegelian philosophy and our conception (2)

Feuerbach's materialism, however, was conservative and theoretical whereas that of Marx and Engels was revolutionary and practical and above all, dialectical. Consequently, they resisted with all their vigor, any attempts to foist upon, or identify with, their system either the materialism of Feuerbach or the classical French materialism of the eighteenth century. Theirs was an advanced materialism, free from the defects of all previous types. The motives which inspired their disdain for a complete identification of their materialism with that of Feuerbach will be seen in the next chapter when we consider the notion of alienation. Here we wish to consider particularly their grievances against the classical French materialism.

Engels sums up very succinctly the basis for rejecting this latter materialism when he says, "the

(1) Ibid., p. 250

(2) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 7. (Foreword)

French materialism of the eighteenth century was... exclusively mechanical," but he absolves the materialists of that age of complete blame in view of the fact that their deficiencies were not due entirely to themselves but to the conditions of their age since "at that time physics, chemistry, and biology were still in their infancy and were very far from being able to offer the basis for a general outlook on nature." (1) What Engels and Marx do denounce is the failure of subsequent materialists to progress, to appreciate the advances made in science giving support to the materialistic doctrines; that is, they are not reproached for being materialists but only for not being progressive materialists. (2)

The defect of the mechanical school is that it seeks to explain all phenomena by mechanical motion of qualitatively identical and unchanging units (atoms, electrons). For the mechanists, "all qualitative differences between things are due to the difference in their simple mechanical motion (transplacement in space). Hence quality does not exist in actual reality

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, pp. 321-322.
Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 26 ff.

(2) Lenin, V., Oeuvres, Completes, Tome XIII, Paris, 1928, p. 204 ss.

but depends entirely upon our subjective perceptions."(1)

In spite of professing materialism, thinkers of this school, as is evident from the passage quoted above, find themselves holding an idealist opinion, i.e., that quality depends upon our subjective perceptions - entirely. Such a position is in diametrical opposition to the teachings of Marx's dialectical materialism which insists upon the absolute objectivity of qualitative differences.

This materialism which denies the reality of higher forms of motion and reduces everything to gross and simple mechanical motion, to transplacement, proves to be absolutely helpless before idealism...Mechanical materialism, therefore paves the way for idealism of the most subjective kind. (2)

Engels, while admitting the universality of mechanical motion, points out that the denial of other forms of motion brings up difficulties and leaves certain problems unexplained.

It explains all change from change of place, all qualitative differences from quantitative...in

(1) Adoratsky, V., Dialectical Materialism, p. 48

(2) Ibid., p. 50

physics, however, and still more in chemistry, there are many qualitative changes to be taken into account whose dependence on quantitative change is by no means proven...All motion includes mechanical motion, change of place of the largest or smallest portions of matter, and the first task of science, but only the first, is to obtain knowledge of this motion. But this mechanical motion does not exhaust motion as a whole. Motion is not merely change of place, in fields higher than mechanics it is also change of quality. (1)

Marx and Engels in their days, and all that have followed after them, are united in fighting the mechanist conception because it disregards the gigantic strides made in science which reveal that "nature works dialectically and not metaphysically." (2) In these last words is revealed the absolute incompatibility of eighteenth century materialism and the materialism of Marx and Engels inasmuch as the former possessed an "essentially metaphysical character". (3) This characteristic, as we saw in our treatment of Hegel, is obnoxious from the dialectical point of view. Operating according to fixed categories, the metaphysical mode of thinking is narrow, fixed, abstract. Like Hegel,

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, pp. 320-321

(2) Engels, F., Socialism, Utopian & Scientific, p. 21

(3) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, N.Y., 1940, p. 313

the Marxists admit the validity of this mode of thought within certain limits. (1) We might say that it performs the first, but only the first, task of the mind seeking a knowledge of phenomena, that is, to make certain precisions, abstractions, distinctions, to separate and analyze. It is absolutely essential, however, that it be constantly aware of the restrictions from which it suffers, never losing sight of the fact that to view things in this manner, is, as it were, to examine them out of context, in their abstract mode which does not fully reflect their actual mode of existence within "an endless tangle of relations and reactions, permutations and combinations, in which nothing remains what, where and as it was, but everything moves, changes, comes into being and passes away." (2) Because metaphysical thinking is bound up with eighteenth-century materialism, the following assertion may be applied to both of them although Engels was probably, or even particularly, thinking of the metaphysical mode of thought when he said, "In the contemplation of individual things, it forgets the connection between them; in

(1) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, N.Y., 1939, pp. 27-28

(2) Engels, F., Socialism, Utopian & Scientific, p. 19

the contemplation of their existence, it forgets their beginning and end of that existence; of their repose, it forgets their motion. It cannot see the wood for the trees." (1)

There remains one other stain on the escutcheon of Mechanical Materialism, a blemish which is revelatory of its idealist tendencies and its utter inability to offer a rational explanation of the universe, an explanation drawn from the universe itself.

Moreover, mechanical materialism cannot resist the idealistic belief in a creator, in some force external to the world, for the reason that mechanical materialism cannot explain what it is that sets in motion the gigantic mechanism that the world appears to him to be. The world machine of mechanical materialism requires some external impulse, the universal clock requires somebody to wind it up. There is no way out of this dilemma except to acknowledge the existence of God. (2)

The eighteenth century version of materialism was doomed when it failed to keep pace with the advances of science. Staggering under the blows of each new discovery which revealed the widening breach in its walls, it finally fell in complete ruins as a result of the death blow delivered by the Darwinian theory which completed the new conception of nature.

(1) Ibid., p. 20

(2) Adoratsky, V., op. cit., p. 50

The new conception of nature was complete with its main features; all rigidity was dissolved, all fixity dissipated, all particularity that had been regarded as eternal became transient, and the whole of nature shown as moving in eternal flux and cyclical course...we have once again returned to the point of view of the great founders of Greek philosophy, the view that the whole of nature, from the smallest element to the greatest, from grains of sand to suns, from protista to men, has its existence in eternal coming into being and passing away, in ceaseless flux, in unresting motion and change, only with the essential difference that what for the Greeks was a brilliant intuition, is in our case the result of strictly scientific research in accordance with experience, and hence it also emerges in a much more definite and clear form. (1)

- Materialism Liberated -

Marx and Engels, in working out their doctrines of dialectical materialism, were confident that they had overcome the limitations of Hegelian idealism and metaphysical French materialism. In support of their position it was only natural that they should invoke the sacred testimony of the idols of the age - the natural sciences. (2)

Engels, in particular, was indefatigable in

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, pp. 13-14

(2) For the relationship between the dialectical analysis of nature and Marx's Social Philosophy see McFadden, G.J., The Philosophy of Communism, pp. 24 ff: 227 ff: and works cited there. See also Hook, Sidney, From Hegel to Marx, pp. 75 ff.: also his article in the Marxist Quarterly, April - June 1937, pp. 253-293

pointing out that the findings of science are unanimous in upholding the truth that matter is the only reality, the basis of all things. Mind is only something secondary, derivative. Before the appearance of mind or spirit in any stage of development in the universe there was matter and only matter, inert, lifeless matter. After untold aeons life appeared in matter. When, how, is not known. "With regard to the origin of life, therefore, up to the present, science is only able to say with certainty that it must have been the result of a chemical action." (1). When, in the course of evolution, organic matter reached a sufficiently advanced stage of development, man appeared and with man, thought, mind. Nowhere is there any evidence to show that mind ever existed or is able to exist without matter. "Mind is merely the highest product of matter ...and our consciousness and thinking, however supra-sensuous they may seem are the products of a material organ, the brain." (2)

Thus the dialectical materialist approaches the universe free from any preconceived theories which he tries to impose upon it. He draws his theories from

(1) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, p. 82

(2) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, p. 25

the phenomena which he observes there. Engels, rejecting the idealistic content of Hegel's philosophy says, "We comprehended the concepts in our heads once more materialistically - as images of real things instead of regarding the real things as images of this or that stage of development of the absolute concept."(1)

The superiority of dialectical materialism over the mechanical version is immediately apparent from the fact that the former, transcending the defects of the latter, grasped

The great basic thought that the world is not to be comprehended as a complex of ready made things, but a complex of processes, in which the things apparently stable no less than their mind-images in our heads, the concepts, go through an uninterrupted change of coming into being and passing away, in which, in spite of all seeming accidents and of all temporary retrogression, a progressive development asserts itself in the end. (2)

The complete universality of the material nature of the universe is the basis for viewing the world as a complex of processes. Matter is never without motion. Indeed, "Motion is the existence mode of matter..there-

(1) Ibid., p. 44

(2) Ibid.,

fore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself." (1) Matter is, consequently, always in the process of transformation, always changing. These changes are not always apparent to the eye but inevitably they must yield to the instruments of science. The paper on which we are writing is constantly undergoing change. Similarly, the chair on which we are sitting is at all times subject to the movement of the atoms and chemical properties which constitute it and these are always changing. When a key is struck on the typewriter it sends off vibrations which enter into combination with other vibrations. With every breath new changes come about in the human organism. Civilization, manners, morals, plants, animals, everything, from the protons and electrons of the atom to the constellations whirling through space at terrific speeds, is in the process of transformation. Engels was thinking of such examples when he observed that "When we reflect on Nature, or the history of mankind, or our own intellectual activity, the first picture presented to us is of an endless maze of relations and interactions." (2)

(1) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, p. 68

(2) Ibid., p. 26

This dialectical process which is continually taking place in the objective world has its counterpart in the dialectical process of thinking in the mind. The former is termed objective, and the latter subjective dialectics. The latter is the reflection, image, copy, photograph of the former. These are all terms used by the communists to describe the concept and, as we saw a few paragraphs above, Engels equates concept and mind-image.

The Marxists take great pains to make known their insistence upon the fact that "there is a world existing outside ourselves which is perfectly knowable not differing in principle from phenomena." (1) Man can know the world and know it in its entirety. There is no room in the Marxist philosophy for the Kantian or any other species of the unknowable thing-in-itself.

There is absolutely no difference between the phenomena and the thing-in-itself and there can be none. The difference is only between what is already known and what is not yet known. (2)

Every mysterious, subtle and insidious difference

(1) Lenine, V., Oeuvres Completes, Tome XIII, pp. 92;139;207;284; 402; Stalin, J., Dialectical and Historical Materialism, Little Lenin Library, Vol. 25, pp. 15 ff.

(2) Lenine, V., Oeuvres Completes, Tome XIII, p. 77

between the appearance and the thing-in-itself is an absolute philosophic fallacy. In fact each one of us has observed innumerable times the simple and palpable transformation of the "thing-in-itself" into the "thing-for-us". This transformation is cognition. (1)

Knowledge, for the Marxists, differs from what is ordinarily termed philosophical knowledge in that with them it is essentially practical. There are no worshippers at the shrine of speculative knowledge in the Marxist scheme of things. This is understandable in view of the fact that Marx was not interested in interpreting the world as other philosophers had done, but in changing it. (2) Because Marx eliminated any need for God in explaining the world, his doctrine places supreme importance upon action, human action. The idealist can sit idly by and wait for a just God to improve conditions, or, in defect of that, can accept his present condition as a state of affairs fully in accord with the fantastic idea of some sort of 'divine plan'. Not so with the Marxists. It was a

(1) Ibid., p. 93

(2) "The philosophers have interpreted the world in various ways; the point however is to change it." Marx, K., First Thesis on Feuerbach. The theses form an appendix in Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, pp. 82-84 "Feuerbach...only interprets the existing sensuous world ...while in reality for the practical materialists, i.e., for the communist, it is a question of revolutionizing the existing world, of practically attacking and changing existing things." Marx-Engels, German Ideology, p.34 cf. pp. 27ff.

defect of the earlier materialism that it adopted this same idealist attitude, this passive spirit, a spirit against which Marx spoke so strongly in his famous Theses on Feuerbach.

The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism - that of Feuerbach included - is that the object, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of object or contemplation, but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively. (I Thesis on Feuerbach)

The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. In practice man must prove the truth, i.e., the reality and power, the "this-sidedness" of his thinking. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is purely a scholastic question. (II Thesis on Feuerbach)

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringings and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed precisely by men and that the educator must himself be educated. (III Thesis on Feuerbach)

The relating of knowledge to practice is one of the cardinal tenets of Marxist teaching. All of Marx's doctrines are orientated toward action, action destined to bring about the goal of the classless society. The communists of the present day are convinced of the full

truth of the Marxist theory of revolution because it has been proven in practice in Russia. It has worked and that is the test of the truth. "For a materialist, the "success" of human practice proves the correspondence of our representations to the objective nature of the things we perceive." (1)

Engels also points out that practice as the criterion of truth is the definite reply to every form of agnosticism. Speaking of Hume and Kant in particular, and in general of all thinkers who question either cognition of the world or an exhaustive cognition of it, he says,

The most telling refutation of this as of all other philosophical fancies is practice, viz., experiment and industry. If we are able to prove the correctness of our conception of a natural process by making it ourselves, bringing it into being out of its conditions and using it for our own purposes into the bargain, then there is an end of the Kantian incomprehensible "thing-in-itself". (2)

(1) Lenine, V., Oeuvres Completes, T. XIII, p. 112
(2) Engels, F., Ludwig Feuerbach, pp. 22-23

Section 3 - Laws of Dialectics

Up to this point we have been observing the operations of the laws of dialectics. To conclude this part of our study we will examine the laws of dialectics themselves and explain them briefly.

Engels says that the laws of dialectics, drawn from the history of nature and human society, may be reduced to three: 1) the law of the identity (unity, or interpenetration) of opposites; 2) The law of the negation of the negation; 3) The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa. He credits Hegel with having developed the laws as mere laws of thought. Hegel tried to impose the operation of these laws upon nature instead of drawing them from nature, thus giving rise to a mystification which immediately disappears when the procedure is reversed.(1)

- Identity, Unity or Interpenetration of Opposites -

According to Marxism, if we look objectively at the world about us we cannot fail to see that contradictions permeate everything. In all things and phenom-

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 26

ena we are constantly meeting with contradictions. Unbiased observation reveals that all development, all progress is the result of these inherent contradictions.

Throughout the universe, development proceeds not as the result of any external cause (God), not because of any "purpose" inherent in events, but because of the inherent contradictions that are contained in all things and in all phenomena. "Contradiction is the root of all motion and of all life," Hegel wrote. "It is only because of a thing contains a contradiction within itself, that it moves and acquires impulse and activity. That is the process of all motion and all development." (1)

Everywhere we turn we are confronted with numerous examples of the unity of opposites. Attraction and repulsion are properties of every organic body; the atom is made up of positive charges of electricity (protons) and negative charges of electricity (electrons); the act of procreation is an act of opposites, man and woman; in the same person we find gentleness and cruelty, vice virtue, love and hate. In society, there is the constant struggle of classes. In one world, nations in opposition to one another.

If contradictions are so evident in the world,

(1) Adoratsky, V., op. cit., p. 26

what is to be said of those people who seem to be reluctant in admitting the fact of contradictions. How do people miss that which the communists consider most obvious? Engels gives the answer.

So long as we consider things static and lifeless each one by itself, alongside of and after each other, it is true that we do not run up against any contradictions. We find certain qualities which are partly common to, partly diverse from and even contradictory to each other, but which in this case are distributed among different objects and therefore contain no contradiction. Within the limits of this sphere of thought we can get along on the basis of the usual metaphysical mode of thought.(1)

For the Marxists, as was pointed out before, this mode of thinking is illusory because things do not exist in a frozen, ossified manner, isolated one from the other, static, rigid. Everything is matter and the eternal concomitant of matter is motion.

The position is quite different as soon as we consider things in their motion, their change, their life, their reciprocal influence on one another... Motion itself is a contradiction: even simple mechanical change of place can only come about through a body at one and the same moment of time being both in one place and in another place, being in one and the same place and also not in it. And the continuous assertion and simultaneous solution of this contradiction is precisely what motion is...if simple mechanical change of place

(1) Engels, F., Anti-Duhring, p. 132

contains a contradiction, this is even more true of the higher forms of motion of matter, and especially of organic life and its development... life consists precisely in just this - that a living thing is at each moment itself and yet something else. Life is therefore also a contradiction which is present in things and processes themselves, and which constantly asserts and solves itself; and as soon as the contradiction ceases, life too comes to an end, and death steps in. (1)

To sum up, therefore, we are told that the world is teeming with contradictions, conflicts, struggles, antagonisms - strife eternal within matter which is productive of endless autonomous motion. As idealists and metaphysicians place a ring around their thought and shut out the world, so the communists place a ring around matter and shut out God.

- Law of the Negation of the Negation -

The second law of dialectics declares that the motion which results from the struggle of opposites is not motion in a circle, infinitely repeated over and over in the same way, but development in a spiral manner, a progressive movement which is accountable for the quantitative increases which appear in nature. This

(1) Ibid., p. 132-33

transformation of contradictions into each other is Hegel's triad - thesis, antithesis, synthesis -, operating, not in the dramatic dreamworld of idealistic fancy but in the real objective world.

Having treated of the negation of the negation in the earlier part of our study, there is little need here to do more than indicate, by means of examples, how the Marxist once more stand Hegel on his feet.

In showing how the second law operates in nature, Engels uses the example of a grain of barley which falls upon suitable soil. Under the reactions set up by the sun, soil and moisture the seed germinates, ceases to exist as such, giving rise to the plant which is the negation of the seed. The plant reaching full development, produces grains of barley. These ripening, the stalk dies and we have the negation of the negation whose product is once again a grain of barley but quantitatively increased ten, twenty or thirty fold. (1) In proof of this law's universality Engels then goes on to cite numerous examples which manifest that the negation of the negation is an "extremely comprehensive

(1) Ibid., p. 149

and important law of development of Nature, history and thought; a law which...holds good in the animal and plant kingdom, in geology, in mathematics, in history, and in philosophy." (1) He concludes with a note of warning that the negation of the negation is not something to be accomplished at will but according to the general and particular nature of the process itself which is under consideration.

I must not only negate, but also in turn sublate the negation. I must therefore so construct the first negation that the second remains or becomes possible. In what way? This depends on the particular nature of each individual case. If I grind a grain of barley or crush an insect, it is true I have carried out the first part of the action, but I have made the second part impossible. Each class of things therefore has its appropriate form of being negated in such a way that it gives rise to a development, and it is just the same with each class of conceptions and ideas. (2)

- Transformation of Quantity into Quality and Vice Versa -

Having explained the autodynamic character of matter by the first law and the quantitative aspect of development by the second law, the Marxists invoke the third law to account for the qualitative phase of devel-

(1) Ibid., 149-155

(2) Ibid., p. 155

opment and progress. (1) This law states that quantitative changes ultimately result in qualitative changes which bring new realities into being. The resulting change is always a sudden, abrupt change, a "leap" from one state or quality to another. Let us consider the classical example of such a leap. Within certain limits, it is possible to increase or decrease the temperature of water without any qualitative change resulting. At a definite point, however, the quantitative increase or decrease of a single degree will result in a sudden "leap" whereby the water (a liquid), on the one hand becomes steam (a gas), and on the other hand becomes ice (a solid).

Conversely, the emergence of a new quality is productive of new quantitative relations.

The high quality of class consciousness, discipline, organization and firmness of principle of the Communist Party, which at first represented the numerically small, but actually most advanced section of the proletariat, subsequently resulted in the Bolshevik's Party's being able to assume the leadership of the movement of millions and to obtain a following of tens of millions. Thus, in the course of time, quality was transformed into quantity. (2)

(1) "This law is essential for an understanding of the rise of new qualities." Guest, D., A Textbook of Dialectical Materialism, p. 45

(2) Adoratsky, V., op. cit., p. 51

We wish to note only two things in regard to this third law of dialectics. First, it is universal. Engels informs us of this fact when, treating of the law, he says, "We are concerned here in the first place with non-living bodies; the same law holds for living bodies." (1) Thus the whole of nature is ruled by this law which is a further confirmation of the evolutionary character of Marxist theory. The law accounts for the emergence of all new forms - up to and including man - from uncreatable and indestructible matter. "The physical realm existed before the psychical, for the latter is the highest product of the most highly developed forms of organic matter." (2)

The second thing to be noted is that all emerging forms are the result of a "leap". "In spite of all intermediate steps, the transition from one form of motion to another always remains a leap, a decisive change." (3) Here Engels is clearly placing a line of demarcation between the dialectical evolution of Marx and himself and other theories of evolution which are based on gradual change only. Marxists fully admit the possi-

(1) Engels, F., Dialectics of Nature, p. 28

(2) Lenin, V., Oeuvres Completes, T. XIII, p. 194

(3) Engels, F., Anti-Durhing, p. 75

bility of gradual change preceding the rise of a new form, but they insist that the ultimate step "always remains a leap."

* * * * *

For a statement of the relationship of Hegelian to Marxist dialectic and by way of a summary of what we have seen, we may invoke the words of Plekhanov.

...our dialectic is based upon the materialist conception of nature. If the materialist conception of nature were to crumble into ruins, our dialectic would crumble with it. Conversely, without dialectic, the materialist theory of cognition is incomplete, one-sided; nay more, it is impossible.

In Hegel's system, dialectic coincides with metaphysics. For us, dialectic is buttressed upon the doctrine of nature.

In Hegel's system, the demiurge (creator) of reality (to use Marx's phrase) is the absolute idea. For us, the absolute idea is only an abstraction from the motion by which all the combinations and all the states of matter are produced.

According to Hegel, thought progresses thanks to the discovery and the solution of contradictions contained in concepts. According to our materialist doctrine, the contradictions contained in concepts are only the reflection, the translation into the language of thought, on contradictions which exist in phenomena owing to the contradictory nature of their common foundation, namely movement.

According to Hegel, the march of things is determined by the march of ideas; according to us, the march of ideas is explained by the march of things, the march of thoughts by the march of life.

Materialism sets dialectic on its feet and thus strips from it the veil of mystification in which it was wrapped by Hegel. Furthermore, in doing so, it displays the revolutionary character of dialectic.(1)

(1) Plekhanov, op. cit., pp. 118-119