

Outlook for the Future of Marxist Theory¹

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“All transitions are crises, and is crisis not an illness? After an illness, one hesitates to stand in front of a mirror! One feels better, but one can only see the effects of the past illness” (Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister*).

The capitalist crisis in the world economy, which has become increasingly evident in the past two and a half decades of our century — the practical refutation of Keynes' "refutation" of Marx — has caught Marxists ill-prepared, both as regards theory and as regards practice. The conventional formulas no longer work. Changes crept in imperceptibly, until all at once everything had a new face. The crisis has propelled world capitalism into a new phase. World capital has changed as a result of the rapid revolutionizing of productive forces. This process is similar to the mutation in the production of capital. Notwithstanding all the disruptions in the global balance of forces, the socialist countries are still seeking a place for themselves in the capitalist market: in this respect they still belong to the Second World. The development models of the Third World are also undergoing a crisis. "Latin America is today experiencing the most serious crisis in its modern history" (Aguilar, 1985, p. 384). The same is true of Africa. In an attempt to determine what tasks are necessary in the development — and to some extent renewal — of 'Marxism, tasks that it must 'carry out if it is to secure its own future, we shall briefly review some of the changes that have taken place and show just to what extent Marxist theory has proved prepared or unprepared for them. At the same time, we shall try to assess the outlook for Marxism in general and for the universal and specific dialectics arising from the spread of Marxism to all parts of the world, its proliferation and global dimensions. Of course, these brief sketches will be fragmentary *and* cursory.

Marxists, theoreticians included, have for too long thought of themselves in some vague way as being identical with the "founders" of Marxism. Theory and practice have developed in

¹ From: *Socialism in the World*, Belgrade, 57 (1986) 28-55.

them a feeling of consubstantiality with the natural leading position of the pioneers. The "founders" — with certain limitations portentous for the future² — were at one and the same time the leaders of the socialist workers' movement and their leading thinkers. These great men, who personify the thought and actions of an entire movement and entire epoch, are as a rule only found in the beginnings. The founders were architects on a grand scale. However, as socialism becomes a reality and truly grows into a science, it inevitably ceases to have just *one* or even only a few architects. Their places are taken by a host of contributors; a polyphony of voices is raised, which — like any polyphony — is based on counterpoint, on the contrast between voices. Every voice seeks a contrasting voice, never ceasing to stand in opposition to it. This personal union between "leadership" and "theoretical research", this latter-day dual form of Plato's philosopher-king, must be superseded twice over: by the leadership and by philosophy. Democracy and science run along discrepant lines insofar as their realms are different and insofar as science may well be at odds with man's common sense. However, this disparity is an integral part of social tensions and antagonisms in the sense that they rely on one another and are each needed by the other. Where relationships between socialists take this direction, the Marxist idea of identification with revolutionary philosopher-kings is more than pernicious. It not only leads to a lust for power on the part of numerous "cocks of the walk", whose appearance was worrying Engels at the time of Marx's death, but also bars the way to necessary progress. If this idea of identity with the founders is combined with the competitive conditions to which the careers of intellectuals are subject in the marketplace or in government, the number of popes multiplies. Each one of these popes is convinced that he is unique, yet in actual fact these antagonistic intellectuals are forced to rely on one another. Can the overall situation in scientific socialism be changed?

The crises of the modern age make the further development

² These limitations on the leading role of the "founders", their partial failure, their lack of recognition and their loneliness are often minimized out of misguided respect. These are not blots of which to be ashamed; they are rather the anticipation of the future, which is our present. We should learn to pay more attention to that Marxism which is usually passed over because it seems too "lofty", that Marxism whose criticism (as in the example of the *Gotha Programme*) is hushed up. Towards the end of his life, Engels — of course in his own interest too — not only insisted that the party press should not impose censorship "from above" but even went so far as to say that politics, by seeking to control theory, risked causing it to break away. Science and politics need one another, but science cannot live without freedom of movement (Marx). It is when politics and theory are no longer combined in one personality in the lives of the "founders" that future problems arise.

of Marxist theory and practice imperative. It goes without saying that in a mass movement — particularly one which has many currents and which is not led autocratically — change is never possible without crises and conflicts. A movement that does not learn how to effect such a change may well destroy itself or set itself back for several decades. The fate of the Spanish Communist Party and its former General Secretary Santiago Carillo, who at one time was an important promoter of Euromarxism, illustrates what can happen when the change from the "old" to the "new" Marxism is not carried out successfully.³ Of course, other parties have shown even more drastic consequences of failure to adapt, when they decline in isolation. The regeneration of large entities requires a specially-tailored policy lest the entity be destroyed in the process. In my text I have described some of the prerequisites for such a policy but have not been able to elaborate in detail the question of policy for self-change by Marxists.

I. *The Signs of Crises*

The future has never looked more uncertain. Parallel with productive forces, forces of destruction have also encompassed the entire globe; they are spreading into space and are penetrating the genetic programme of life itself. Newspaper editorials conjure up the image of time bombs remorselessly ticking away: the number of people in the world, the threatened human environment, the international credit situation in world capitalism, the gap between the world's rich and poor — each one of these questions is a time bomb, over which hovers the shadow of real bombs, which could be triggered off at any moment in the increasing rivalries of the two superpowers, intensified by the efforts of the United States to acquire military superiority

³ Carillo, who was excluded from all party functions for failing to observe the "formal rules of democratic centralism", that same democratic centralism that he himself had enforced for so long, also with expulsions, explained the conflicts as being the result of insufficient theoretical learning: "My mistake was that I placed too much store by the forty years of dictatorship within my own party, the theoretical knowledge of the members of my own party about Lenin. Instead of applying Lenin's teachings, we allowed an infantile left-wing radical and right-wing social democratic faction to emerge" (Carillo, 1985, p. 125). The reason for disunity in the party was the unchecked dialectics of the class approach and the pluralism of the social forces of socialism. Said Carillo: "We are split over the vision of the party's future. The 'Greens' from Germany and the Italian radicals influenced the group behind Iglesias; this group seeks a left wing without classes and without ideologies. It believes that the proletariat will soon disappear. We, on the contrary, believe the existence of an ideologically clearly defined communist party which is directly linked with the working class to be absolutely necessary."

over the Soviet Union.

This is an age of prophets of doom. The President of the United States has warned that the final showdown with the forces of evil is drawing nigh. But he is more the man likely to bring about doom than a mere prophet of doom. In the anti-war preparations movement, there is growing sympathy for those who rather than focusing on capital and capitalism talk instead about the existence of a huge machine, a huge system of white supremacy in the world. They reject Marxism with its distinction of the elements of a new society. "*Cogito, ergo sum*" — to use the language of graffiti. The entire science of class society crises and foundations of socialization is rejected out of hand. Bahro said that we can win the race against the apocalypse only if our age becomes an age of great faith. Indeed, the question of *how to survive* has eclipsed the *class question* concerning the use of mankind's means of production and resources for private enrichment. What is the connection between these overlapping crises? In effect, do some crises feed on others? What is it that stymies every attempt to resolve these crises? Do the combinations of all these crises form a code? Should not the strategies for tackling them first find the key to the code which enables them to resolve all the other codes? Is not the *one* being that we are entreating diverting our attention from the only realistic course of action, which is to rearrange the elements of a solidary society? Such questions are being addressed to Marxism in particular. Can anyone really believe that it will be able to find the theoretical postulates for changing the situation and actually carry through these changes without itself changing?

Let us first consider the threat of war that has suddenly grown because of the upset global military balance caused by the United States' new policy of maximum armament and Star Wars. If we examine this danger more closely, we can see that it is intimately linked with the economic crisis and attempts by the international New Right to overcome it by forming an alliance with neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism. The watchword is "military Keynesianism". The Keynesianism of the past that has largely proven to be a failure was social Keynesianism, which first exacerbated so-called stagflation (economic stagnation combined with inflation), and then itself fell victim to the effects and forces of the world economic crisis. The crisis of social Keynesianism has thus given rise to military Keynesianism. There are some other factors involved here. The threat of a world financial crisis hangs over banks like the sword of Damocles. The irrecoverable debts owing to capitalist banks, mainly from loans made to Third World

countries, might at any moment precipitate their collapse. Perhaps it is precisely this growing antagonism between the centres of capital and their periphery, the contemplation of the countries of the periphery of the idea of forming a cartel of debtor nations and stopping repayment of their debts, that increases the need for military preparedness in anticipation of action against these countries, and a desire for military superiority over the Soviet Union, lest it stand in the way of any future Granada or Nicaragua style interventions.

Crises are dominating the world scene, but they must not be allowed to distract our attention from the changes in the mode of production. The world economic crisis is speeding up these changes, and these in turn are having an effect on plans for managing the *crisis* and determining ways of coping with the situation.

II. Transition to Electronically Automated Production

A change as momentous as the switchover from hand manufacture to large-scale mechanized industry is presently taking place. An Australian commentator has spoken about a shift from "machinefacture" to "cerebrofacture" (Doug White, in the newspaper *Arena*, No. 68/1984, p. 5). However, we can make the same objection to these terms as was made to the expression 'post-industrialism': the industrial mechanized systems as such are not disappearing; they are merely being further developed. Electronic control devices and data processing systems are being added to them, so that they function as "metamaChines". When we ask ourselves if Marx's analysis of the machine in *Capital* is still relevant today, we realize that it had already been brought into question by the earlier development of electrically-powered machinery used in production and complex technical procedures (notably of a chemical or biological nature). What Marx said was: "All fully developed machinery consists of three essentially different parts, the motor mechanism, the transmitting mechanism and finally the tool or working machine" (*Capital*, Penguin Books Ltd., 1976, I, 494).

This definition dates back to the time of steam engines. The power produced by steam was transmitted through a system of axles, flywheels and pulleys to run individual machine tools.

The changeover to electric power altered the picture altogether. The transmission of energy from the power station to the machine tool is done through a power grid, and this fact raises the social integration of production to a higher degree. The transformation of electricity into mechanical power (or into other

forms of energy, such as light or air-conditioning) is now done at each individual work post. The forms and places for the transformation of electrical power are multiplying. Today a number of devices for transforming energy may be combined in a single work post or even in a single machine tool.

Marx's phrase "all fully developed machinery" is applicable to electrically powered machines only in general terms, and it is increasingly clear that additional definitions are badly needed. However, there is another aspect of industrial production that is not covered by this definition: the technical procedures which are especially (though not exclusively) used in the chemical industry and in the new branch of bioengineering. Given the level of industrial development at the time he was writing, Marx completely underestimated the importance of this type of procedure: "Among the instruments of labour, those of a mechanical kind which, taken as a whole, we may call the bones and muscles of production, offer much more decisive evidence of the character of a given social epoch of production than those which, like pipes, tubs, baskets, jars, etc., serve only to hold the materials for labour, and may be given the general denotation of the vascular system of production. The latter first begins to play an important part in the chemical industries" (*Capital, ibid.*, p. 286).

However, Marx does not examine this role seriously in his chapter on large-scale industry. He refers to the chemical industry only one more time, when he divides the raw materials of production into "principal substances" and "accessories". "An accessory may be consumed by the instruments of labour, such as coal by a steam-engine ... or it may be added to the raw material in order to produce some physical modification of it ... or again it may help to accomplish the work itself, as in the case of the materials used for heating and lighting workshops" (*Capital, ibid.*, p. 288). However, the concept of "accessory materials", which covers a wide diversity of things, reveals itself in the very next sentence to be an artificial construction, which Marx needed to provide a concrete example of the way the principal raw material reappears in the product. "The distinction between principal substance and accessory vanishes in the chemical industries proper, because there none of the raw material reappears, in its original composition, in the substance of the product" (*Capital, ibid.*, p. 288).

In his chapter on large-scale industry, Marx concentrates entirely on mechanical production, having been induced to do so, as we have pointed out, by the nature of production prevailing at that time. The *Projekt Automation and Qualifikation* (PAQ) (Automation and Personnel Training Project), which has blazed new trails in the field of automation, rightly criticizes the

view taken by Marx, but emphasizes the special nature of technical procedures in a way that gives the distinctions made by Marx new relevance. The technical procedures used, for instance, in the chemical industry, do not essentially cause a functional differentiation of raw materials into the object of labour (whose geometrical shape is changed) and the instruments of labour (whose operation effects the change) — (PAQ, 1980, AS 43, p. 119), so that the "vascular system" of production serving to hold the objects of labour are not *instruments* of labour, nor are the raw materials subjected to pressure and temperature changes within these vessels an *object of labour*. The fundamental mechanical operation in such systems is the opening and closing of valves, which perform the role of mechanical devices. Measurement and regulation of flows in these complex processes are the principal labour required.

The electronic "metamachines" that have been added to classical machinery and plant installations supplement and transform them into closed, self-regulating *systems*. Workers are excluded from the direct process of production and its regulation. The gaps that must be filled in feeding and emptying the machines or transporting materials from one machine to another are dealt with by mechanical devices. Production processes are electronically controlled and to this extent automatic, i.e. without direct human intervention. Human labour on machine tools or the installations that control such metamachines (or series of machines) involves preparation, supervision and correction of errors. It also includes installation and maintenance of the equipment. In the process of production in the strict sense of the word, this labour takes on the form of scientific control of automated processes, whose sole aim is to prevent or remove errors. In this connection there are also activities linked with the further development of processes, installations and programmes. Workers in automated production are no longer responsible for the manufacture of individual products; now they are responsible for the entire production process in a way requiring communication. The preparation of programmes and their insertion into the "metamachines" gets production under way. Now we have a new class of constructors and programmers in addition to the conventional machine builders. Communications techniques and information storage make it possible for the activities of programming and inserting data to be separated in time and space from direct production (or production operations). The concentration of work posts in one place loses its previous rationale. The usual distinction between place of abode and place of work is therefore changing. A new type of job is performed at computer terminals or with equipment for inserting data, which may be set up at home.

as is increasingly the practice.

The deployment and duties of the work force are thus structurally altered. The attitude of workers towards the production process and their mutual relationships, the position of science vis-à-vis production, of manual labour vis-a-vis intellectual work, and even of wage labour and the private sector have all changed. Since social labour has acquired a new status and from having been taken out of production in the strict sense, for production is carried out by new electronic data processing equipment and advanced electrical machinery and equipment for the generation and transmission of power as well as the transformation of energy and of machine tools or processing machines, it is possible to speak of electronically automated production. The fact that this shift is taking place under the aegis of international capital and against the background of competitive rivalries gives it the dangerous potential of causing mass unemployment and destabilization.

Under such circumstances, no past experience, no classical theory or strategy can be retained without first being reexamined. Everything should be subjected to a reassessment; a new approach should be taken in many respects, and possible courses of action have yet to be identified, explored and generalized. In times of farreaching change the rule is that those who fail to adapt to the new conditions are doomed. We are now hearing more and more that labour, the central subject of Marxism, is no longer important and is increasingly being pushed to the sidelines. Therefore, they say, Marxism is losing its relevance. This would probably be true if Marxism had not foreseen changes in the mode of production and elaborated theoretical premises and practical methods for dealing with them. The old forms of industrial labour are leaving the scene, and some are even disappearing entirely. The practical utility of wage labour is now in an unprecedented phase of change. The same is true of the profiles of manpower required. The change that has taken place for workers in automated processes has been dramatic. Many occupations are becoming obsolete, and new professions are appearing. Education is undergoing a reform. In short, the system of the social division of labour has been shaken to its very foundations and is becoming fluid. In this system the distinction that had great importance for Marx is losing its old meaning, namely, the notorious dichotomy between intellectual and physical labour. The monotonous repetition of physical effort is on the way out. Entire groups of activities are becoming intellectual. Physical attributes are being eliminated from labour. Muscular strength is losing its importance. This fact is engendering yet another change: the assignment of some types of jobs to specific sexes is losing its justification. The male identity of workers is

undergoing a crisis. The body can no longer sweat off the traditional heavy meals and beer through physical exertion. Weight watching and relations between the sexes, the amount of intellectual work in one's job, etc., all these changes are affecting people's entire life style, especially as the new mode of production has also been extended to the "leisure industry". Means of entertainment are appearing that irresistibly attract the public: computer games, video recorders, etc. And this is only the beginning. Cables (for the transmission of television broadcasts, etc.) will link all these systems into a single network.

The more changes there are, the more challenges will be faced by the theory and practice of the socialist movement and Marxism. Will the forms of trade union organization be able to adjust to the new conditions? Will these new frontiers be left to private enterprise, or will new collective areas of enterprise be created? The more we quail at the prospect of these changes as before some overwhelming threat, the more inevitable they will become. The new productive forces have great powers of persuasion for those who work with them. It would be futile to try to oppose them. And why should we? The contradictions and areas of action contingent on a given balance of forces and on the creative response to the new circumstances taken by organizations of the workers' movement are simply repeated in new form at a new level.

This change will above all provide new opportunities when the disappearance of past dichotomies is productively transformed into the disappearance of the distinction between the intellectual and the working man, abolition of traditional anti-intellectualism, marked by hostility and inferiority complexes, and disappearance of machismo, together with a transformation of patriarchal relations between the sexes.

Naturally, these new structural effects of power will also have to be analyzed. The formation and control of these effects might well become a new field for trade union and political struggle, as indicated by the controversy over personal data banks. The possibilities provided by the new technology afford as many opportunities for decentralization as for strengthening of the central authority. The worst of all would be for foreign capital to use it to disperse the workers, while centralizing control over them. The word "dispersion" has a frightening double meaning: dispersed, diverted on all sides and therefore isolated and lonely, or distracted by the pressure of the new technologies of entertainment (which, of course, are themselves ambivalent and may become transformed into decentralized media).

The transformation of the social division of labour in the advanced capitalist societies implies changes in the international division of labour. In the Third World we see a concentration of the poor, wretched proletariat, whose numbers are growing with the influx of poor peasants from the countryside, fleeing to the towns as a result of agribusiness. In these countries of cheap wage labour, parts for modern equipment are still being made by hand. "Jobs in the electronics industry of the Third World mainly comprise assembly work and testing, the classical 'repetitive labour' and 'piecework' (PAQ, 1983, *Zerreissproben im Arbeiterleben*, p. 176).

The transfer of production to these countries, one of the reasons being to avoid legislation on environmental protection, is to some extent taking on the form of partial deindustrialization, as for instance in the case of shipbuilding. These transfers are taking place in step with profound changes in world capitalism. Today the most frequent type of big capital is the multinational company.⁴ The system must be compared with a new form of colonialism, as a variant of the ancient Roman meaning of colony: a firm from one country moves into other countries and colonizes their markets. The large companies maintain such "colonies" on all continents, in all countries open to capital. The electronic processing of data and satellite communications have eliminated the problem of distance as regards flows of information, control and decision-making. At the same time, the stock market is becoming globalized. New technology is removing the former limitations imposed by time and place. The new time for the computerized world stock market is world time; it never stops operating, and the difference between night and day is erased. The deregulation policy of neo-conservatives and neo-liberals is facilitating denationalization of national economies and the penetration of outside factors into them. The more new technology there is, the more dependence!

There are also changes in the hegemonic power of world capitalism. The United States, which has moved to the right under Reagan, has opted for a conservative response to the economic crisis; cutbacks in social welfare combined with an unprecedented rise in defence spending. The government's enormous requirements for capital led to high interest rates, and high interest rates in turn attracted money from all the capitalist countries; the flow of money into the country, for its part, gave the dollar a high exchange value, notwithstanding the unbe-

⁴ The term "multinational company" is deceptive: capital and control of power as a rule are concentrated in a single country. General Motors, for instance, is a US company. Only the sources from which resources are obtained and, in the final accounting, profits are "international". In the United States the more precise term "multinational business" is used. The United Nations has introduced the term "transnational company", which is also more accurate.

lievably large foreign trade deficit. High interest rates are not the only reason for the massive inflow of capital. Arguments explaining the arms buildup as necessary for the nation's defence are very unconvincing. The real aim is military ascendancy, and militarization of space is part of the plan. Since such a buildup in armaments makes a nuclear world war more likely, the United States appears to capitalists in various parts of the world as a haven where they think their chance of survival will be much better. Hence many people are transferring part of their capital there, investing in land, buying federal bonds and shares. The situation has all the appearances of a vast economic swindle, and it is being militarily prevented from exploding. The foreign trade deficit added to the national debt, which meanwhile exceeded that of the Third World, whose debtor nations are more or less incapable of repaying their loans — all make the banking system less than secure. It is against this background that the United States, Japan and Western Europe are competing with one another in trade. Japan is living proof that concentration on developing technology in the civilian domain is technologically and commercially more profitable than the dead-end road of research for armaments purposes taken by the United States. But the United States is hoping that military superiority will reflect on economic competition. The "security" for American competitions, which is under the control of the United States, hangs over them like the sword of Damocles. The transfer of technology is being subordinated to security considerations, which means that sales of high technology will have to be restricted. In short, the Star Wars project of the United States is to bring to life not just the vision of programmed means of destruction and a plan for achieving superiority over the Soviet Union, but also a competitive struggle within the capitalist world at the level of new productive and destructive forces. The high exchange rate of the dollar is, in the last analysis, the result of the military situation. Those who are pouring their money into the United States look like deserters from the ranks of the competition. The exchange rate is actually bleeding them of their money, and they are in effect helping finance the present system. An unprecedented concentration of world capital is taking place in the United States. The capitalists of the world are turning into share-holders of US capital and creditors of the US government.

III. *A Look at Lenin's Project*

The fact that a number of countries in which communists are in power are also experiencing serious difficulties has been responsible for Marxism's waning influence at this time of capitalist world crisis. These are countries having quite different political systems, such as Poland, Rumania or Yugoslavia. At the

same time, the People's Republic of China — rising from the ashes of the Cultural Revolution -- is turning to the capitalist world market. Just as the proclamation of the Cultural Revolution in 1964 had a strong influence on the student movement, which took on world proportions, so this new development is adding its weight to other factors. But what about the Soviet Union, which is directly involved in global military rivalry with the United States?

Bloc logic does not admit the possibility of any effective response by the other side if one side decides to break the nuclear stalemate. However different the superpowers may be, they both belong to the same category. At the end of his *State and Revolution*, written in July 1917, Lenin analyzed the struggle being waged by the capitalist great powers for world ascendancy. This struggle so greatly expanded the military establishments of these countries that they became "military monsters" threatening to destroy millions of people. It was inconceivable for Lenin that one day the Soviet state, whose existence in 1917 had not yet been secured, would be forced into the similar position of being a "military monster", with the extermination of billions of people at stake. If Lenin made the question of state power and its armed forces the primary issue, it was because he was calling for an end to "state superstition". The old state machinery had to be smashed and replaced by a proletarian state. The new state was merely to be a transitional one that did not need a military apparatus, relying as it did on the armed workers, or armed people. The armed workers were supposed to exercise control over the state; under no circumstances were civil servants to earn more than workers. Lenin even went so far as to say that this state was of a completely new type — in fact a "semi-state" — and from its very inception would have to start withering away. Drawing upon Marx's teachings on the Paris Commune, Lenin called all this the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.

In the course of time Lenin's dream turned into the Stalinist nightmare. The discussion about the dictatorship of the proletariat remained ostensibly the same, but the situation had changed; new institutions had appeared and become consolidated. Lenin argued that democracy was a form of the state, i.e. a form of rule over the people. Democracy, then, as well as the state, was part of what would have to wither away in the communist future. He primarily had in mind mixed political systems such as Russian absolutism behind a constitutional façade, or the Prussian or Austrian empires, and taking as his authority one of Marx's postulates, he generalized as follows:

"To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament — such is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most

democratic republics" (*State and Revolution*, III, 3).

The forms and institutions of democracy were thus taken off the list of communist demands. And they remained virtually abolished, while an autonomous military and police apparatus of coercion over society was reestablished, with different purposes from those of the old apparatus, to be sure. The Stalinist reign of terror was an alienated form of the Soviet regeneration of the state. Whereas collectivization of pre-industrial means of production was carried out by the state (statization) — regardless of formal distinctions — and integrated into the planned economy together with the industrial sector that had previously been brought under state control, the entire system of economic socialization had to be reconstructed as a state-run system. The state had to expand in order to encompass every even slightly relevant form of coordination and control of production and distribution. State officials, it is true, were not in the least immune to the terror, which at times struck at them indiscriminately, but in general they all received considerable privileges. The entire body of high civil servants and state officials — the state and party had become one — became constituted in the "Nomenclature", a corporation of those with a "name", i.e. a document listing them as cadres for one of the posts in the hierarchy. The attack by Nazi Germany and the victorious fatherland war of defence further expanded and strengthened this establishment. The later formation of the "socialist camp" under Soviet military hegemony added another special feature to the functioning of the state and ideology of the Soviet model.

The fronts faced by Lenin during the First World War reappeared with new attributes in the "Leninist camp". In 1917, Lenin had noted how the politicians and theoreticians of the Second International had forgotten the teachings of Marx and Engels on the "problem of the state". He compared this development in Marxism with what happened in Christianity when it became a state religion. The Social democrats had forgotten about the problem of the state, "just as the Christians, after their religion had been given the status of a state religion, 'forgot' the 'naiveté' of primitive Christianity with its democratic revolutionary spirit" (*State and Revolution*, III, 2).

Fifteen years after Lenin's death lip-service was still being paid to the "dictatorship of the proletariat", but the meaning of this term had radically changed. We must not lose sight of this fact for a single moment when we consider Lenin's response to the question "who is a Marxist" in 1917:

"Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*State and Revolution*, II, 3).

The implications of this definition are as follows: 1. Statism and Marxism are incompatible. 2. The old government will give way only to a new government. 3. The new government is nothing other than government by armed workers, or the armed people. 4. Officials must be subject to the workers' control and the possibility of recall must exist. 5. Remuneration for their work must not make officials any better off than the workers.

Lenin's actual political deeds must be carefully distinguished from the theoretical form of generalized theses. The theses mark a crucial turning point in the maturing of the second, socialist, revolution of October 1917. Their strategical correctness was owed to deep insight into the situation as it was then in revolutionary Russia. In comparable situations, they may be useful for other countries. They bear the unmistakable mark of a situation in which two revolutions — one bourgeois and the other socialist — were taking place simultaneously, and in the context of the socialist revolution an industrial-proletarian-urban and a peasant revolution were also taking place at the same time, all of this in an economically undeveloped country, which until then had been under despotic rule. As generalized theses raised to the level of universal principles, they are untenable. In the first place, the concepts used are no longer applicable. The idea of "dictatorship" is of no use in circumstances where the will of the majority is imposed on a minority that had previously held power; it is more in keeping with the meaning of "democracy". Furthermore, it is untenable to state as a universal premise that parliaments as such are gatherings of babblers, even though they might be just that in certain constellations of social forces. This "truth" in Germany had particularly unfortunate consequences, when the Nazis took over and the communists were unable to do anything about it. It is quite true that at the historical juncture of 1917 in Russia, the peasants longed for the government to be overthrown and the workers were sunk in misery; such a situation is possible in other countries and in other times, but it would be wrong to regard this statement as a universal law.

The application of such theses — and corresponding organizational and political forms — to economically developed societies, particularly those with a deep-rooted tradition of liberal democracy, has led to disastrous debacles. In Germany such an attempt impeded cooperation with social democratic reformism and the forces of democratic socialism. A positive understanding of the concept of dictatorship weakened resistance to the fascist dictatorship of that time, when there was still time left to fight, and the rejection of "democracy" prevented the creation of an anti-fascist alliance of "all democrats".

Marx's interpretation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, on which Lenin based his formulas, must be revised today; their true content must be translated. This is one of the challenges

facing Marxism in the future.

IV. Mao's Formula for the Dialectics of Universality and Particularity

Lenin and Mao must be regarded as pioneers and not as founders. The times of pioneers are harsh and fraught with vicissitudes. The fact that the period of revolutionary struggle is followed by the period of careerists and intrigues tempts us to proclaim the "heroic" age as the "classical period". Every thought pioneers have is immediately put to the test in practice. Brecht looked for dialectics in the victories and setbacks experienced by these pioneers and gave it a poetic rendering in his work *Me-ti*. Brecht may be considered the architect of their dialectics. The dialectics of textbooks rapidly ended up where it belonged, in the "modern second-hand book store". But the dialectics was preserved by Brecht and some other writers. Here it received a classical treatment. The tradition of authority in Marxism caused such works as *Me-ti* to remain clandestine instructions, instead of being used by everyone for the study of dialectics or, even better, for practice of a dialectical approach and intellectual agility.

One of Mao's most fruitful contributions to Marxism was his discovery of the practical uses to which dialectics could be put. Here there was no rigid, quasi-scientific deduction. A dialectical approach should be taken to the sciences as well. Dialectics did away with morals. Brecht was able to express such a conception of dialectics as wisdom. If a simple approach to wisdom is lacking, all knowledge may be doomed. Mao mocked the perseverance with which efforts were made in Stalin's day to establish dialectics as a system in a series of scientific pronouncements having the forces of law. He said time and again that there was only one law of dialectics, the law of the unity of opposites. One must expect contradictions everywhere. There was nothing wrong with contradictions: they were life itself. Of course, this held true especially for active opposition, for struggle. However, the freedom to oppose, resolve, abolish or destroy contradictions is not a wise aim of struggle. In this sense Mao contradicted even Marx: there is no negation of the negation. This Hegelian legacy was (in a negative sense) fateful. The latter Marx would have approved of this contradiction. Stalin, who in his *On Dialectical and Historical Materialism* tacitly avoided the "negation of the negation", in a way behaved like the very incarnation of the negation of the negation. In line with his practical understanding of dialectics, it was quite normal for Mao to recognize the contradiction between the "leaders and the led",

being actively involved in one of those categories himself, and, of course, within limits, to make it a topic of public debate. His understanding of the dialectics of unity was in this sense dialectical: he knew that all unity was a unity of differences and even of opposites; he taught that policies of unity, which do not recognize contradictions, even unintentionally lead to splits. He pointed out that even though Stalin's successors criticized Stalin, they continued to use his un dialectical method.

"The Soviet Union lays stress on unity, but it does not mention contradictions, especially not contradictions between the leaders and the led" (*Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed*, 1958, p. 103).

Mao did not just talk about contradictions; he called for a political order that would leave scope for contradictions. But still he was no "liberal", which former Stalinists often became. The affirmation of contradictions stood side by side with affirmation of the right to hold a different opinion and to express that opinion. Mao knew how to fight; he was a formidable adversary. As a statesman, he did not want the state to be overly secure. His security policy always made allowance for a certain measure of risk. Naturally he was not the master of the situation nor the helmsman of the Ship of state. The blows he struck against the old statehood the latter turned to its own advantage. His response was to let loose the Cultural Revolution. One could not exactly say that he experienced a setback when the Cultural Revolution proved to be a disaster. "Things often move in the direction of their opposites." Mao's successors, who were opposed to the Cultural Revolution, probably realize that they have provoked new contradictions. The fact that they criticized Mao, that they distinguished what was right from what was wrong in his teachings, that they embalmed his body rather than his thoughts or actions. is notwithstanding all the other contradictions very much in line with Mao's own understanding of the unity of opposites, a belief which was dead against any eternal ideology.⁵

To claim that Mao was not a Marxist — as did the *Philosophisches Wörterbuch* published in the GDR (Buhr and Klaus) or the Frankfurt author W. Euchner — is an act of reckless arrogance or political sectarianism. It is true that Mao seems to have studied Marx only a little, and in a roundabout Russian way. but there is no doubt that he had made a

⁵ Robert Havemann usually referred to the organs of the party and government in the German Democratic Republic responsible for such an ideological preservation of the order "the head office for eternal truths". The undesirable dialectics of such offices for ideology is that the eternal truths of yesterday disappear without a trace after being replaced by the eternal truths of today.

detailed study of Lenin, and through Lenin of Marx and Engels insofar as Lenin quotes extensively from them, as in *State and Revolution*. In 1964 Mao said that first he had studied Confucianism for six years, learning the classic texts by rote, then for seven years he had studied liberal bourgeois knowledge and thought with the philosophical accent on "Kantian dualism", and finally that he had become a communist and embraced Marxism-Leninism. However, Mao went on to say, books were not the most important thing for him; the most important "universities" to his mind were struggle and the activity of providing leadership for the masses. Whoever had not attended this "university" was prone to "take dogmatism rather than reality as his point of departure". In the course of the Cultural Revolution this sentiment gave rise to one-sided, unscientific pronouncements, whose consequences are being felt to this day by an entire generation of Chinese scientists and scholars, albeit the results of their forced contact with peasants and participation in their work and way of life almost certainly were not all negative. However, we are interested here in something else.

Mao defined Chinese Marxism as the result of the "fusing" of a general theory with the "concrete practice of the Chinese revolution".

"Our theory consists of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, linked with the specific concrete reality of China. We must be able to think independently" (Speech to Musicians, 1956).

Mao extended this formula to all nations:

"Marxism is a general truth that may be applied universally. We are duty-bound to accept it, but this general truth must be combined with the specific practice of the revolution of each nation" (*Ibid.*).

Such a formula gives primacy to local revolutionaries. It represents progress in comparison with the speech on the universal validity of Marxism-Leninism, where no possibility is admitted for application to a concrete situation in a given country. Mao's formula above all provided for national independence vis-à-vis the demands and objections of other national or even international Marxist organizations. There was more than enough reason for such a formula to gain popularity. The Chinese revolution — like the Cuban revolution in its turn — would not have been possible according to Soviet ideas. The formula of *fusing universal Marxist premises with the concrete reality of every national revolution* can thus be taken as the first attempt to express the dialectics of universality and

particularity in Marxism. For those espousing this formula, it stands to reason that there will be as many different kinds of Marxism *as* there are countries with Marxist movements. In effect, this formula serves to forge unity among unlike organizations. Unity in diversity. Should this not also apply to Marxism? In this sense Mao's formula is better than the manner of expression that merely puts Marxism in the plural, speaking of "Marxisms".

Mao's formula of the fusion of the universal and the particular in national brands of Marxism secures the necessary minimum. At the same time, this formula bears traces of a temporary compromise: a free hand on the front of practice and peace on the front of theory. In the Chinese revolution this in practical terms meant conceding to the Soviets their ascendancy in the theoretical domain, while maintaining independence in practical affairs. This formula was, then, a product of necessity. The Chinese, in addition to the Yugoslavs, were, so to speak, the first ones to come after the Russian revolution. There had been very little other experience. The only established revolutionary legitimacy belonged to the Soviets.

Today it is possible and necessary to make a break with this formula. Such an unhistorical and inexperienced revolutionary theory belongs to the realm of ideological postulates deriving from the need to compromise. Finally, in principle nothing was more valid for Lenin than it was for Mao, the only difference being that Lenin had no example of successful socialist revolution to follow. At the historical moment of the revolution, Lenin was mainly reading Marx's evaluation of the experiences of the Paris Commune and applying them to the specific situation in Russia, its revolutionary masses and experiences. Similarly, Mao later "read" Lenin and took the example of the Russian Revolution, so that Mao's formula was just as much a "general truth with universal application" as was Lenin's.

V. *Is a New Historical Form of Marxism in the Offing?*

"It takes all people together to make up mankind, and all forces together to make up the world. These forces are often in conflict, and while they are busy trying to destroy one another, nature holds them together and regenerates them" (Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister*).

Everything is in union with other things
but at the same stands independent (Mao).

Is Marxism mature enough to take up its historical mission unchanged? For Marx and Engels, the historicity of their theories was in principle taken for granted, and that is always easier in theory than in living practice. Ideology aspires to eternity. Another thing that quite easily fits into the picture of an eternal ideology is the desire for permanence and a strong position in struggle. This need spontaneously throws itself into ideology's arms. And the embrace may well result in surprising, unintended dialectics. Atheism, for instance, may take on the aspects of a religion. Ideology promises eternal life. It provides permanence. Naturally, this permanence is illusory. As Brecht always pointed out, there is only one real solid fact, and that is everlasting change. One of the tasks facing Marxism on the threshold of the 21st century is that of learning this dialectics. The fact that it was necessary to hide behind the new metaphysics of an un-historical history of philosophy was a sign of weakness. On the opposite end of this "poor man's Hegelianism", for the right-wing social democrats it was an escape to a short-lived opportunity to reject any serious theory of capitalism and to proclaim themselves "open to all sides", whereas in fact they were excluding Marxism. If the metaphysical mode of thought suited the "embattled" type of communist policy, the flawed mode of thinking of "critical rationalism", supplemented with moral philosophy, corresponds to the social democratic policy of non-militancy (and not just an absence of class struggle).

Marxism, which under the new circumstances is regaining its dialectics, will deploy its forces in such a way as to become undogmatic and capable of change, without sacrificing fundamental goals or the science that takes a critical stance towards capitalism and its accumulated historical experience. One of the cheapest demagogical tricks is to give practice precedence over theory. It is precisely from the standpoint of scientific theory, which will not bend under external pressure or allow itself to be given short shrift, that practice, insofar it is guided by necessity, will at last become the ultimate authority. The inevitability of the antagonisms engendered by socialized labour, com-

bined with the inevitability of crises and their consequences, and the necessary defence against increasing destructiveness, were and are what gave rise to Marxism and what keep it topical, in the sense of recreating it ever anew. That is why the *teachings* of Marxism must be understood in the light of these necessary conflicts. Only in this way can they be kept from becoming purely academic and will not be prostituted. They are vitally important, but then life is more important; they are not the first nor the last word. They should be treated in the same way as thought, which Brecht, paraphrasing a precept of pragmatism, described as deriving from actions and preceding new actions. Marxism combines thought and action, but is not by any means the "fusion" of the two, as was held by the radical leftist Korsch in the 1920s.⁶ Action and thought are independent and follow their own logic, and their relationship must be recognized as being capable of contradiction. Politics and science cannot be reduced to one another. Creation of non-reductionist forms of movement for effective unity, a unity that Marxists must consciously forge, is a task for future generations, a task that perhaps will never be carried out completely.

- The internal differentiation in Marxism at a national or regional level and the proliferation of brands of Marxism in the world have a reciprocal influence on one another but do not by any means coincide. The first phases in the process of the international pluralization of Marxism were disastrous.

The first great split was caused by the shocking impotence of the First International when the First World War broke out. As regards international Marxism, or Marxism-Leninism following the first successful socialist revolution, the inability of the post-Lenin Soviet Union to come to terms with its own internal differences was marked by a number of rifts which were labeled "treason". On the model of the campaign waged against Trotsky, the Soviet Union responded to Yugoslavia's desire to follow its own road with a witch-hunt against "Titoists" in all communist parties and countries in which communists held power. China's independent stance caused the Soviet Union to break off relations and initiated an enmity that brought both sides to the brink of war. The revolutions in Vietnam and Cambodia sparked off armed conflict between these countries, whose governments both subscribed to Marxism-Leninism. At the same time, the citing of Marx and Lenin seemed to have nothing to do with hostilities, to such an extent that Mao, unlike Kim Il Sung, even after the break with the Soviet Union, proclaimed his independence only in terms of the Chinese situation and not theoretically, as a matter of principle.

⁶ Cf. my chapter entitled "Correspondence between Consciousness and Reality in Korsch (1923)", in W. F. Haug, 1984, pp. 48-59.

Will this at first unsure and conflict-ridden process eventually continue and be generally recognized as a necessary one? Will the proliferation of brands of Marxism lose its dramatic character? There is no doubt that a new logic of unity is needed. Even though some of its forms of movement can now be discerned, and even though the situation has become somewhat normalized, we can still only dimly perceive the outlines of this logic.. An analysis of some elements and indications that are today noticeable may become a starting point for further research.

Marxist polycentrism and pluralistic Marxism are not the something. The acceptance of Marxism by a growing number of countries and the ensuing *polycentrism*, referred to by Togliatti (who made his remark following the Soviet Union's abandonment of the policy of unity and its break with the People's Republic of China) is one thing, while every aggregate of authorities, forces and tendencies of scientific socialism at the national level is something else again. The word "aggregate" is used here to denote a certain degree of socialization: Ingrao, in reference to the fragmentation of the working class and policy of social movements, raised the question of "aggregate force" (Ingrao, 1982, p. 327). According to Ingrao, we can tell from the experience of recent years that development per se does not bring about a homogenization or unification of forces; it does not provide an objective mobilizing force on which the hegemony of the working class could be based (p. 329).

Many developments at first glance appear ambivalent. It is hard to tell whether it is a question of subtle differences with-- in a single entity or if the latter is actually falling apart. Is it like a fireworks display where the sparks fly out in all directions, eventually to burn up alone? Or is it like receding flood waters when at first only scattered specks of land are visible. Gradually these specks grow into islands, then land bridges are formed between the islands, and at last the new land appears in its entirety. Or to speak in non-figurative terms: in Marxism there are not just different currents or differences in levels of organization (wherever in fact there is organization); rather, Marxist elements exist at quite different levels, in heterogeneous domains of practice, such as politics, trade union activities, science, literature, art, and even in law and religion⁷, or in the wo-

⁷ It seems paradoxical to say that Marxist elements can also be found in the sphere of religion, in view of the fact that even in his early writings Marx proclaimed criticism of religion as the starting point for all criticism. However, Christian Marxists are playing an increasingly prominent role in the practical Marxism of class struggles, and not just in Latin America. They could take a cue from Kuno Füssel and tell those Marxists who — like the reactionary church authorities insist that they choose between

men's liberation and other social movements. There are theoretical fronts that intersect political fronts. At first sight this array may appear disparate, but it is not desperate. The outmoded orthodox beliefs, whose influence is on the decline, still apply to old disclosures. But what this order truly means is impossible to tell at first glance, because its implications are not a concrete fact but are contingent on a large number of activities. In short, the meaning of every aggregate will not only have to be described but will have to be given shape through efforts and conflicts.

There is something taking shape here for which a need exists. Can the above-described disparities be turned to productive ends? The rich diversity that is now in the process of formation is becoming a stumbling block and even a potential source of hostility as soon as it comes into contact with the old forms that are unilaterally imposed from above by a centralistic unity of action. Are not perhaps these forms the product of the less developed level at which they once arose? "Better to err a thousand times *with* the party than be right once *against* the party" — after all, the iron discipline and authoritarianism of the Third International could have been but an institutional form of war communism, or an expression of state-enforced late industrialization, a sign of poverty and underdevelopment, a virtue that is in fact flawed at its core and could emerge again in similar situations. Might we not soon be able to take a more detached view of all this and see it as primitive forms of early socialism? Unity is no more imperative than ability to take action. The question becomes more acute when viewed in terms of the type of unity that can be combined with increased differentiation and regional initiatives. The present-day distribution of elements of scientific socialism among so many 'capitalist countries, with all their differences and often paralyzing rivalries, might be the negative side of something positive. Perhaps it offers a more complex possibility for the forging of unity — i.e. the possibility of collective action, for development of science, the arts, life styles, and even "theory", to produce differences but not at the same time impose an either-or choice: either monolithic unity or belonging to the enemy camp.

Christianity and Marxism, that they have always conducted their "criticism of religion" as criticism of the *ideology* of religiousness. Besides, Marxism is not a matter of quotations but concerns real class struggle. If those who are scandalized by the phenomenon of Marxist theology thought a little bit about this question, they would see that it is just as paradoxical for Marxist elements to appear in the sphere of law. People's "Weltanschauung" keeps them from seeing what is crucial in Marxism: the overriding importance of socialization [*Vergesellschaftung*] and the forms of struggle to achieve it.

Is perhaps such an hypothesis only wishful thinking? Surely rivalry between a multitude of small imaginary "empires" could be ended, especially among intellectuals, without the central authority's enforcement of unity? Authority has always sought justification for itself in the need to preserve unity. It is true, though, that the divisions 'between elements of the new society are not figments of the imagination. Here the state and the market are of crucial importance. Just as in matters concerning the market it is capital that holds the key, for it wields force, so political power holds the key in government and civil service careers. Does this mean that the market and a university (or civil service) career are the essential determinants for educated Marxists, whereas participation in emancipated labour, in a solidary society with an environmentally-conscious economy, would be unthinkable? Are the Marxist scholars of the West at best merely bourgeois socialists who only pay lip service to Marxism? Is the "symposium Marxist" who represents an unfortunate combination of scholarship and involvement in public affairs a figure that spells disaster? And so on and so forth.

Of course, intellectuals are dangerous, as Brecht put it, like cigars that are cut over the soup. The business sector in particular tends to ideologize its inevitable competitiveness. Especially at a time of greater supply than demand in the criticism market it would seem that ideologization — or even politization — of competition is virtually inevitable. Even critically minded intellectuals are at one another's throats, hurling Marx's *Capital* at each other. Brecht dramatized this situation in his marvelous parable on intellectuals, *The Congress of Whitewashers*. In real life 'customers are usually driven away by such scenes. But the opposite may also happen. It is accepted bourgeois wisdom that "competition is good for business". The more debates take the form of arguments over *issues* with people, who discuss the possibility or need for certain steps to be taken, the more the participants can hope for a shared future that will be worth fighting for. And the more the theoretical arguments about the real struggles being waged in our times are directed to the dangers and truly dangerous conflicting interests, the more the forces of solidarity will be able to gain strength. The order of things that has paralyzed activity, and has been as desperate as it is disparate, can be changed. Unlike real dangers and opposing forces, differences of opinion and even antagonistic standpoints may become more productive than the views produced by forced 'consensus. Then we shall see a fabric of interventions which, because it is not ordered, because it is under no one's thumb, because it is not centralized and may well be polycentric, need not be either weaker or more vulnerable than centrally organized formations. On the contrary, this network could well release more initiatives and be less susceptible to attack from

opponents, and could provide both political parties and the trade unions with an environment that would constantly regenerate ideological and manpower resources while not being merely a rubber stamp; it should be an environment in its own right, articulating the demands which politics should further. A comprehensive political culture could arise from the improved relationship between the powers that be and realms of practice (which have the amplifying effect of a sounding board).

Of course, experience has taught us many times over that such an open structure is vulnerable to intervention by opponents. So long as they are open, objections to them concern the structure itself and can be refuted within its framework. Herein lies its strength. Things are different when interference is subversive; certainly the CIA and similar agencies, including those from countries of state socialism, are not to be fooled with. Both for external and internal reasons, an open political and intellectual culture is constantly in danger of becoming polarized over its contradictions or — which is more innocent but at the same time sadder — under the temptation of ever seeking something new, losing interest in struggle, and refusing to heed Brecht's warning that a danger usually lasts longer than escape from it. It would be counterproductive for this reason to reject an entire domain and wide out the entire logic of cultural action. Whoever does such a thing because of the lack of guarantees is guaranteed to arouse the hostility or at least suspicion of the entire realm. That is why the question of opportunities for action in an open structure of political culture cannot be dismissed. In seeking an answer we may find it easier to consider this question in the context of Marx's analysis of elements of the new within the old society.

One of Marx's fundamental premises is that the elements of a new society grow up within the old society. First there are elements of associated labour and the class solidarity of wage labourers. But it was also clear to Marx that the sciences bring forth thoroughly researched viewpoints, interests, knowledge and technologies, which will fully develop their activities following a consciously directed socialization of production. These, too, then, were elements of the new society in the bosom of the old. The same holds true for literature. As regards the existing elements of the new society, they do not bring improvements ready to be immediately applied. They are not immune to becoming involved in reactionary corporations, even in fascist corporatism. They show their viability depending on the place they hold in society. Consequently, changes in this order are of strategical importance. The building of an alternative culture must reconstruct the interrelationships of such elements. If we were to

think that the momentary state of these elements reflected their internal nature, we would be returning to a metaphysical conception of being. In some other constellation, other forces of being will appear. What is expressed as the condemnation of an era's *relieu*, called a "petty-bourgeois intelligentsia", is most of ten evidence of the lack of policy in this sphere, radical hopelessness in a dual sense. It is enough to pose the question of the relationship between political authorities and intellectual culture, as a question of political behaviour towards elements of the new society, to understand how meaningless such a question is and, on the other hand, what potency this nonsense has as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

If we follow up the idea of building a political (and within it a theoretical) culture of socialism from the bottom up, also as a medium for Marxism, we are faced with the question of what attitude to take toward political parties and their struggle for power. Again everything depends on the disposition of elements. Strategies for unity with a direct demand for control will lead to dissension. However, it is just as ridiculous and might lead to dangerous ideologization to persuade political parties to renounce the struggle for power. They would still continue fighting, perhaps under the guise of defying the government, as some of the "Greens" do. Political parties must try to achieve political power, particularly if they want to change social institutions. We should, therefore, investigate whether the logic of forming a government is coherent, or whether there are different logics of power.

Reconsideration of Gramsci could encourage further thinking on this matter that might even go beyond Gramsci's own thought (Ingrao, 1982, p. 329 ff). As we know, Gramsci extended the distinction between the base and the superstructure by identifying two more levels of the superstructure — *societa civile* and *societa politica*. This distinction is not entirely satisfactory. Gramsci's notions can be translated into the German language only at the risk of changing their meaning. However, Gramsci's basic insight remains relevant to this day. It is the idea of the need to transfer classes and class interests from the realm of the economy to the realm of politics in the broadest sense, i.e. into realms and their languages, in which in one way or another the social configuration is of prime importance, the links between realms and between them and the state (Lenin). Acknowledgement of the need for such transfer from the bottom upwards is basic to differentiation of the superstructure. Thought is dynamic, and attention should be focused on gaining insight into the practice, spheres and institutions of socialization instead of concentration on a static architectural picture of the superstructure and other outward forms. This distinction should not be presented empirically, as a number of domains physically *separate*

from one another, it is the "logic" (or groups of logics) of socialization that should be distinguished. The market, culture and state may be experimentally differentiated according to the laws governing the processes of socialization within them. It is to be expected that such "logics" never appear in pure form in real life; they become intertwined and often clash, resulting in various disruptions, etc. If we remain within the terms of reference of Gramsci's model (oversimplified), we could sum up the situation as follows: state or state-directed power is based on beliefs formed under a "state society", within a "cultural society" (or "civil society"). Conversely, wherever the forms of socialization from below dissipate into indifference, the political impulse — which the state makes into an issue of burning importance — leads to generalization and in effect affiliation with one side. The practical implications of this speculation are well known to all political activists. What attitude should the party take towards traditional national celebrations, towards a given group of writers, towards scientists? The understanding and strategy of a political party in its relations with the authorities and cultures of "civil" or "cultural" society are highly important. It is inevitable that it should be in competition with other parties, but everything depends on *how* it regards this competition. In any case, a simple and generally applicable rule will be necessary, such as the principle of the unity of opposites. Struggle and unity are not mutually exclusive, just as the fixing of limitations on the one hand and fostering of openness on the other at some points along these limits do not preclude one another. In all developed and differentiated environments it is essential for politics to be conducted simultaneously for an entire field of political work, including all differences and even certain contradictions, even competitive ones. Naturally, the struggle never ceases. A misguided desire for harmony may provoke aggressiveness just as surely as unwillingness to fight. On the other hand, some struggles may be very effectively waged by means that appear eminently peaceful, such as the "tactics of embrace". At a given level of qualitative and quantitative development of a socialist "cultural society" — whether it be socialist elements antagonistically present in capitalist society, or contradictory in another way, the cultural society of a socialist state established and controlled by the state — a qualitative transformation is possible in the ordering of its elements and in the relationship of the entire sphere towards the other areas of the social structure. This leap will affect both the nature of power and the logic of its establishment.

There is a recurring theme in the novels being published in the German Democratic Republic that has not yet won the official seal of approval from the authorities. This theme is successful socialization carried out by the workers themselves as opposed to socialization ordered by the government, which has proved

to be a failure (for instance, "The Legend of Paul and Paula"). Literature, like poetry, is the medium of the true philosophy of its age, but official philosophy has nothing to say about it. In the Soviet Union the same tendencies are even more pronounced.

Dzhingiss Aitmatov, who in his novels has given impressive examples of the above, in his work *Longer a Day than a Century* (1982) depicts the contradiction between forces that strive to achieve self-socialization and in individual cases succeed, and the state, which interferes in all activities. These literary treatments of the question of socialization give evidence of elements of a new society in the bosom of the old, state socialist society, and in any case are the expression of a mature and increasingly self-aware cultural society. Here, too, albeit in the form of literary fiction, indications are to be found of the new aggregate state of the elements of a new society.

VI. A New Type of "Organic Intellectual" and His Tasks

An important place in the spectrum of socialist positions is held by *democratic socialism*. The trouble is that this concept is not very realistic, that in social democratic debates it has provided little more than an embarrassment for the policy of the social market economy. However, if the line taken by Rosa Luxemburg is extended to the present day, the link between democracy and socialism suddenly becomes visible again and shows what has been lost by suppression of the concept of "democratic socialism". This approach is all the more important as it alone has a chance of success in the advanced capitalist countries. And there is a vacuum here as far as Marxism is concerned. Its absence or weak presence impair the positions of Marxism, however paradoxical this might sound. The place of democratic socialist Marxism stands vacant in the future which we need. All the more important, then, are the beginnings and personalities that already have an established niche in tradition. The outstanding figure in Central European tradition, from which Detlev Albers traced influences up to Gramsci, is Otto Bauer. He elaborated the premises of "integral Marxism" from the standpoint of democratic socialist Marxism. One of the tasks in the development of socialism is to make a careful evaluation of these premises and to determine what relevance they have for achieving unity among opposing formations in Marxism. Towards the end of his life, Otto Bauer addressed some demands to the Soviet Union, which at the time were not heeded but which have not lost their topicality. In those days the Soviet Union was the only country in which Marxist science could put down roots. Bauer called upon the Soviet Union to use its position to champion Marxists throughout the world and not to use

it to serve the ends of state power politics or to impose ideological uniformity, as it was doing at the time. Today there are many diverse forms of Marxist science, and questions are being asked in different terms. Just as important — if not even more important — as the attitude taken towards the Soviet Union, is the attitude of democratic socialists, who historically have a place under the sun, especially in the advanced industrial countries, towards the revolutions in the Third World. Marxists of both formations must take care not to make erroneous generalizations of occasionally popular policies that in fact have arisen from practical necessity. They should never cease defining their position in all matters important to them, but they also need points of contact, where their own positions coincide with the positions taken by the other formation, even though the latter's other views continue to be contrary. This challenge can be met if an historical and practical approach is taken to it. Its solution is preeminently of a political nature and involves the prospects of some revolutions' chances of survival, as the example of Nicaragua teaches us today.

Although today the attitude to the Soviet Union is no longer the most important consideration, it is nevertheless imperative that we continue studying not just Marx and Engels, and perhaps Rosa Luxemburg and Gramsci, but Lenin as well, and hand down the critical teachings from his works. The renewal of Marxism is feasible only if it revives tradition, if the works of the founders are read and the application of historical experience associated with them is included in this transformation. A change to open structures is especially risky. "There is much that gets lost in the dark." Unless a distinction is made between what is fashionable and what is really new, the momentum will be lost, just as many previous attempts at renewal have failed and many committed comrades have fallen by the wayside. Compared with such failures, the orthodox teachings appear right. What is to be done?

The question involves the legitimacy of a certain type of cooperation and insight into the theoretical side of socialism, a legitimacy based on identification and acknowledgement of matured social forces. First of all, the deep backlog of consensus from the political culture of earlier generations must be cleared away. The old petrified consensus, which has long since lost all real political function, survives in the form of *platitudes*. Professedly Marxist discussions about intellectuals are filled with platitudes: 1. intellectuals belong to the bourgeois *class* or are petty-bourgeois; 2. therefore, intellectuals first have to "betray" their own class, so as to join the workers' movement and scientific socialism. In this respect it is often lost from view that these two "self-evident truths" should be joined by a third: it is bourgeois intellectuals that invented scientific socialism and introduced it

to the working class "from outside". This was Kautsky's phrase, and Lenin took it over from him. The context covered by these platitudes has to be deciphered. It may well be true that this "science" came to the workers from outside, but it is not simply an appurtenance or part of the logic of the ruling class. The whole image of a "commie" is a myth. He is an individual who moves within a specific field of practice, institutionalized in a special form. Bourgeois children who study the sciences move in an environment that is characterized by bourgeois institutions but are at the same time outside its boundaries. Marx, himself a son of the bourgeoisie, who acquired competence in various sciences, adopted their methods of analysis and historical knowledge, and came upon socialism and communism in various partly utopian, partly crude, partly petty-bourgeois, partly proletarian forms as a democratic journalist "from outside". His knowledge of history, theoretical analytical tools and studies in political economy took on new meaning as Marx became steeped in socialist traditions, which to him meant criticizing them and undertaking to transform them. Marx reconstituted socialism using scientific methods, and this work transformed him as well, making him a founder of socialism.

The concept of "outsider" can be applied to both workers and intellectuals. Science was not a part of the bourgeois class but was imposed on it forcibly. Scientific socialism and the parties that espoused it for their part did not simply "belong" to the working class. Conversely, the theories of scientific socialism, its organization and institutions constituted special "environments" into which entered socialist workers, intellectuals, artists, etc.

The times of the founders of Marxism are long gone, and the model of the Marxist intellectual's "betrayal" has lost its social foothold. It has become merely a radical phrase with sinister connotations, for in the meantime there has been considerable progress made by cultural society. The educated, as a closed bourgeois class elite, no longer exist. There is an entire army of individuals engaged in intellectual or intellectualized activities, and the majority of them are in wage-labour dependence in one way or another. Again the theories of scientific and democratic socialism within these groups have not only their adherents but also most often informal collaborators, lobbyists, coordinators and agents in every possible segment of society. The fact that these activities are being pursued without guidance makes them a source of strength for socialism. This fact is true particularly of people employed in scientific research institutions. The social forces with which they have intercourse are of prime importance for the socialist plan, for instance, for the writing of history or for theory. Hence the term "symposium Marxist" is a highly reactionary derogatory word. Yet it is true that the content of "unauthorised" Marxist activities in

some seminars is highly dubious. But just as dubious is what we are served up by some officially approved "chief ideologist" who in addition controls an "apparat" which turns his mistakes into disasters. In short, there is no avoiding the possibility of something or other being dubious. What is most important is that we should admit without hedging the legitimacy of and necessity for diversified, independent and spontaneous cooperation in efforts to achieve a socialization of labour and by the same token the relationship between man and nature.

Institutions, organizations and the media of socialism must adjust to the new level of the social balance of forces, lest it should continue to change its potential strength into weakness, its potentially new forms of unity into forms of disunity. A new list of tasks must be drawn up, whose successful completion can only be tackled by a new group of people. Instead of trying to unmask individuals who are "self-styled" Marxists, we should be striving to create ways (and intensive thought should be given to the matter by as many minds as possible) in which many crossing and interwoven threads will form a flexible and therefore all the stronger fabric.

Just as after the end of the war Nazi political prisoners swore that they would never lose touch with one another, even though they took up different positions in society, so this community of differences must lead to a new unity.

These reflections will no doubt have the same fate as all such writings that have gone before it; the questions will tend to disappear as answers are found. It is our aim to learn something from this for our own approach to questions and answers, as well as for accepting answers. It is not important that questions remain open; it is important that opportunities for posing questions remain open, because the questions will undoubtedly change.

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