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# NST

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**a Journal of Dialectical and Historical Materialism**

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**NST**

**University of Minnesota  
116 Church Street S.E.  
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Nature, Society, and Thought

# NST

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a Journal of Dialectical and Historical Materialism

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# The Origins of Jack Lindsay's Contributions to British Marxist Thought

Joel R. Brouwer

Few writers can lay claim to a volume of literary and critical production equaling that of Jack Lindsay. As a young Australian in London in the 1920s he edited the *London Aphrodite*, a literary magazine, and founded the Fanfrolico Press, "publishing his own translations of the classics, his first study of William Blake, and *Dionysos: Nietzsche Contra Nietzsche*, as well as works by many other hands, in limited editions" (Paananen 1988, 525). He was also by this time a published poet. In the 1930s he began writing fiction, and would publish over forty novels in his lifetime. His novels were steady sellers in England, but considerably more popular in the Soviet Union, where they sold over a million copies under the pen name Richard Preston.

Lindsay came to Marxism in the midthirties and joined the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) at the end of that decade. In the early 1940s he served in the British Army, writing scripts for the army theater and overseeing both military and civilian theatrical productions. In the late 1940s he turned his attention back to editing and producing periodicals, while continuing to write novels, drama, poetry, and political and critical essays. He also continued his activity in the CPGB, advocating a close relationship with the Soviet Union and working with various writers' groups and coalitions for peace.

The 1950s through the 1980s saw the addition of biography and autobiography to Lindsay's body of literary production. He

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also began in earnest to do history and Marxist cultural critique. In 1978 he published his second study of William Blake, fifty years after his first, showing Blake's place in the British radical tradition (Paananen 1988, 527). In 1981, at the age of 81, he published *The Crisis in Marxism*, an important analysis of continental Marxist thought, especially in relation to the understanding of art as a form of cultural production. By his death in 1990, Lindsay had written, edited, or translated more than one hundred seventy volumes.

The vastness of Lindsay's literary output is certainly one daunting factor to students and scholars interested in examining his work. Its diversity is another. While Lindsay may defy classification by genre, an overview of his production shows him returning to a handful of basic concepts, whether in fiction, drama, or essay form. Though he sharpened and clarified those concepts over the years, they began forming in the work of the young, pre-Marxist romantic who wrote about Blake in the 1920s and came to clearer expression as he deepened his understanding of Marx, eventually adopting a Marxist stance.

Lindsay's Marxist writing, informed by his romantic roots, emphasizes elements in Marxism largely overlooked by British Marxists in the earlier years of Lindsay's work, but which have more recently been reclaimed in British Marxist thought. These points of emphasis, developed throughout his long and prolific career, constitute Jack Lindsay's neglected contribution to British Marxist thought, and are the subject of this essay.

### ***Early views***

Jack Lindsay's earliest views on the nature of art were strongly influenced by his father Norman, an Australian painter and novelist. Norman's ideas were both Nietzschean and neo-classical. The perspective is somewhat evident in *Visions*, a magazine Jack and his father produced in the early 1920s in Australia. According to Paul Gillen,

in its appeal of "Life" as a basic value, in its casting of art and music and poetry as the most exalted human activities, and in the attitudes to politics, society and history which grew out of, or alongside, these assumptions, the *Vision*



outlook had many points of contact with other tendencies of the period. (1984, 20)

Though this aestheticism is not typically associated with Marxism, Lindsay's work of years later was to be informed by these early ideas.

Lindsay's devotion to art, music, and poetry were in part responsible for his journey to London in 1926, where he and a friend set up the Fanfrolico Press. Its purpose was to issue beautifully produced, limited editions of translations and neglected classics. In 1927 he also started a literary magazine, the *London Aphrodite*, through which can be traced the development of his thought. To the Nietzschean and neoclassical aesthetic of his father, Jack added ideas drawn from various sources, most notably Hegel and Blake. Laurence Coupe, commenting on Lindsay's thinking as shown in his opening *Aphrodite* essay, "The Modern Consciousness," says:

Hegel introduced the dialectic not as a logical device but as an explanation of man's nature and future. . . . From Hegel Lindsay gained a fundamental insight: that we may posit an initial human harmony with nature. But with man's ascendancy we find the emergence of conflict—between mind and matter, between self and other, master and slave, humanity and nature itself. It is out of this conflict that humanity gains a greater consciousness, such that a future re-union with nature will be at a higher level, involving a new order of freedom. (1984, 49)

Hegel gave Lindsay a system and Blake gave him a vision. Lindsay published his *William Blake* in 1927, where "Blake is viewed entirely positively" (Coupe 1984, 50). The first issue of the *Aphrodite*, containing the essay "The Modern Consciousness," appeared the next year. Blake's romantic vision flavors Lindsay's thinking in 1928 as much as Hegel's dialectic system does. As evidence, Coupe offers the "opening insight" of *Dionysos: Nietzsche Contra Nietzsche*, which Lindsay also wrote in 1928: "The purpose of thought is not to solve the riddle of

the universe, but to create it—is [an idea] that Lindsay could have derived from the English romantic poet just as easily as from the German thinker” (50). In fact, Lindsay’s “Blakean” statement also echoes Marx’s Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach: “The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it” (Marx 1959, 245).

The evidence from Lindsay’s own writing in the 1920s shows that his primary concerns were artistic and philosophical. Laurence Coupe explains how Lindsay put these concerns into a dialectical framework, while keeping the focus on art:

Form and energy, infinity and sensual enjoyment: the conflict is there, but the resolution is embodied chiefly in the imaginative act. For here Lindsay is concerned with art and in particular with the artistic movement we know as romanticism. (51)

Coupe summarizes Lindsay’s thought from that period, recognizing as well what is lacking, when he says “Romanticism, history and the dialectic are all represented in the *Aphrodite*, but it is clear that Lindsay is still seeking the key to all three, which he is to find in Marx” (1984, 51).

#### ***Effects of early views on Lindsay’s Marxist thought***

From Blake to Marx is not as great a leap as Lindsay’s British contemporaries in the 1930s may have believed. Lindsay’s aestheticism, derived in large part from Blake, was only one aspect of a fuller understanding. The correspondences between a Blakean and a Marxist world view were to become clearer to Lindsay throughout the 1930s. These correspondences are strikingly described by Minna Doskow, who observes that

both Blake and Marx propose a humanistic alternative to the mechanistic world view which placed man as a single perceiving subject within a world of dead and mechanically operating objects, cut off from his world and his fellow man in this way, and seen as an object himself by his fellow man so that his relationships to his world and other men become objectified and reduced to mechanistic

operations. They propose a human definition of man and his world, for both believe that the world has no meaning isolated from man, and it is only man's work upon the world which gives it shape, substance, and meaning. (1982, 225)

Lindsay became particularly concerned with "man's work upon the world," especially in artistic endeavors. Having come to an aesthetic perspective through his thinking about art in the 1920s, Lindsay did not abandon it when he finally accepted Marxism as the vision which held the most promise for the future of humanity. ("I have never wavered in my conviction that Marxism does lay the basis for a world of unity [of equality, brotherhood, justice]" [Lindsay 1982, 761].)

The young Lindsay's conflation of romanticism and Marxism was unusual in his time, but not unique, as noted by Raymond Williams:

In many Englishmen writing as Marxists I have noticed this. A tradition basically proceeding from the Romantics . . . has been supplemented by certain phrases from Marx, while continuing to operate in the older terms. Much of the 'Marxist' writing of the 'thirties was in fact the old Romantic protest that there was no place in contemporary society for the artist and the intellectual, with the new subsidiary clause that the workers were about to end the old system and establish Socialism, which would then provide such a place. (1983, 271)

Williams's comment may describe Lindsay, Christopher Caudwell, and a handful of others. By contrast, however, there was also a robust strain of Marxist thought which dismissed or condemned concepts important to Lindsay. He was particularly concerned that other Marxist thinkers had paid insufficient or misguided attention to aesthetics, as evidenced by this line from a 1944 essay he wrote for the journal *Dialectics*: "But still the gibe that [the] Marxist has merely missed the aesthetic fact has its sting" (quoted in Lindsay 1981, 121). Consequently, Lindsay devoted much of his energy to the task of reclaiming the aesthetic perspective within Marxist thought, thereby working to

reclaim for Marxism something of itself which his contemporaries failed to recognize properly. Lindsay's earlier concerns are echoed in the 1970s by Paul Breines:

Marxism had vital roots in what is often called the Romantic revolt against modernity. But in the course of its development, anxious to keep abreast of the capitalist times and its scientific spirit, Marxism forsook those roots. (1977, 473–74)

Recognizing these types of pressures, Lindsay made it a life-long project to work for balance in the Marxist perspective, primarily by articulating his aesthetic theory.

### *Culture as productive activity*

Probably Lindsay's foremost contribution to the legitimizing of artistic endeavor within a Marxist framework is his work on the idea that culture is productive activity, with the production of cultural artifacts existing in dialectical relationship with other productive phases of life. He first set out these views in a discussion paper presented to "an evening conference in 1945 organised by the cultural committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain" (1981, 122).

Lindsay reports that his discussion paper first referred to "a number of texts from Marx and Engels, and the tendency of many Marxists to see culture as a mere 'reflection of economic mechanism and the sum total of social relations'" (1981, 122). A logical consequence of such a perspective would be that "Marxist art" would be crudely crafted for narrowly propagandistic purposes.

In opposition to this marginalizing of cultural activity, Lindsay went on in his paper to demonstrate the dialectical relationship between cultural activity, itself productive, and the productive activity of everyday life. His thesis, one of his key contributions to Marxist thought, is that cultural activity grows out of the energy produced in productive activity, such as hunting, and in turn produces energy which is channelled back into further productive activity. Using the cultural activity of prehistoric people as the prototypical example of this dialectical

relationship, he explains in the 1945 document that

culture emerges in the group when the productive activity, with its cooperative basis, develops a certain quantity of superabundant social energy. Then the new unity, the new quality, which we know as culture, appears. . . . [The early peoples'] superabundant social energy, based on productive cooperative activity, is transformed into the form of ritual, that is dance and song and painting. This is no mere reflection of labour-process, but a *transformation of productive activity*. It is productive activity on a new level, where it becomes a satisfaction in itself. And yet by the dialectical law the new activity, culture, is continually transformed back into economic activity. For the organisation of personal and social energy on the new level increases enormously human powers: the individual achieves enormously enhanced powers of energisation, powers that he could never possibly have achieved if all his outlets of energy can be conceived as having remained on the economic level pure and simple. These new energies return back into everyday life, giving increased consciousness for his daily task, his economic task. (1981, 123)

Certainly Lindsay was not the only, or even the first, British Marxist to contest the narrow, propagandistic view of art. Christopher Caudwell, in *Studies in a Dying Culture*, noted the interplay of artistic production and individual development when he wrote:

The value of art to society is that by it an emotional adaptation is possible. Man's instincts are pressed in art against the altered mode of reality, and by a specific organisation of the emotions thus generated, there is a new attitude, an *adaptation*. (1971, 53–54)

Lindsay's observations in the discussion paper echo Caudwell's argument that art acts as a formative agent in its influence on the development of individuals, but Lindsay goes beyond Caudwell by demonstrating that the influence of art on

the development of individuals is the first step in a dialectical relationship between art and productive activity that is transformative of society. Art and artistic activity are not only essential elements of human experience, but also of social progress.

Even though his theoretical basis comes from conjecture about primitive society, Lindsay sees a dialectical connection between art and production in modern life as well. In *After the 'Thirties: The Novel in Britain, and its Future*, Lindsay makes this connection:

Yet art in a class-society still needs to be renewed by forms and impulses from the levels of common life, the levels of the producers, the craftsmen and the land-workers. And here we see how, despite all the divisions and abstractions, there is a continuing link between artistic activity and the sphere of production—not only the labour-process, but the whole life and activity of the working-people. Indeed, the fundamental structures and imageries of art, at all past phases of class-society, have been inherited from tribal days and maintained alive at the folk-levels of culture. (1956, 152)

In a later chapter from *After the 'Thirties* entitled “The Origin of Art,” Lindsay offers this definition of art, showing how he sees art as an essential part of human experience: “Art consists of forms or images generated out of the productive sphere, which men develop in rhythmical fantasy and which deepen their grasp on reality” (145). By this definition, art is not only “a transformation of productive activity,” but it transforms further productive activity by “deepening our grasp on reality.”

Clearly, Lindsay here creates a theoretical basis for a conviction that he held even before he became a Marxist. Here is the devotion to “art, music and poetry” that Paul Gillen saw in Lindsay’s *Vision* magazine work, seen now from a Marxist perspective through the Hegelian concept of dialectical processes of change. Here Lindsay’s thinking is aligned with Christopher Caudwell’s brilliant but uneven attempts to save a place for art within the Marxist framework. In his efforts to explain more systematically and completely than Caudwell the “link between

artistic activity and the sphere of production” (1956, 132), Lindsay anticipates Raymond Williams’s insight that “culture [is] constitutive social process” (1983, 19).

Lindsay’s articulation of these ideas put him at odds with many British Marxist thinkers of the 1940s. The discussion document presented in 1945 at the Communist Party evening conference met with little favor. Commenting on the paper’s reception, Lindsay writes, “I may mention that with one exception everyone present at the conference condemned my views. The exception was Edward Thompson” (1981, 126).

### ***Base and superstructure***

As Raymond Williams has so aptly noted, the terms “structure” (or “base”) and “superstructure” are richly evocative when viewed as metaphor or analogy. When applied in a rigidly literal manner, though, the concept of a determining base and a determined superstructure does little to account for the subtleties of artistic production or culture (1983, 282). Yet a rigid, literal interpretation of the categories was in evidence amongst prominent Marxists in the 1940s, as Joseph Stalin’s definition of the terms demonstrates:

The base is the economic structure of society at a given stage of its development. The superstructure consists of the political, legal, religious, artistic, and philosophical views of society and the political, legal, and other institutions corresponding to them. . . . If the base changes or is eliminated, then following this its superstructure changes or is eliminated; if a new base arises, then following this a superstructure arises corresponding to it. (1951, 9)

Lindsay took exception to the view that culture, as part of the superstructure, was something superficial or extraneous. In doing so, he added his voice to a controversy that was particularly pronounced in the 1940s and 1950s in Great Britain. The controversy is clearly seen in Maurice Cornforth’s “corrective” attack on the ideas of Christopher Caudwell, whose “worst mistakes are hailed as original contributions to Marxism. That is why it is absolutely necessary to expose those mistakes” (1950/1951, 33–34). Cornforth’s attack gave rise to a series of responses that

*The Modern Quarterly* labeled “The Caudwell Discussion,” but which E. P. Thompson would refer to in later years as “The Caudwell Controversy.” Thompson notes that “the argument was initiated . . . on the grounds of whether Caudwell was or was not a proper and orthodox Marxist, according to an orthodoxy increasingly petrified by Stalinist doctrine” (1977, 233). This emphasis on orthodoxy was the same pressure that effectively suppressed Lindsay’s discussion paper.

The orthodox Stalinist reading of the metaphor of “base and superstructure” seemed to Lindsay excessively rigid in its relegation of cultural activity to the realm of the superstructure, and as such entirely under the influence of the economic structures of the base. Lindsay’s explanation, in his discussion document, of the relationship of base and superstructure prefigures Raymond Williams’s explanation of the concept (1983, 75–82) by noting the dialectically inseparable nature of economic and cultural forms of production, with base and superstructure exerting influence upon each other:

It is clear then that as soon as social energy reaches the dialectical point where it is transformed into the new quality, Culture, it has done something that cannot be undone. Something that is essential to all further social and personal development. Culture or the superstructure is not something just added as a kind of extra, a luxury to the substructure, the direct productive levels. It is something on which the substructure entirely depends, just as it depends in turn on the substructure: the two make up a dialectical unity. And man can no more get on with his productive task without an ideology, without a release and satisfaction on cultural levels, than he can develop airy structures of the mind without the sustaining productive levels. *For humanity, culture is just as essential as production.* Every advance in production is in dialectical unity with an advance in culture. (1981, 124)

Lindsay might have expected that Marxist listeners in 1945 would not take kindly to this seeming confusion of the neat



categories of “base” and “superstructure.” Interestingly, although these ideas are also implied in *After the 'Thirties* (1956), Lindsay did not further develop them until he resurrected the discussion document for inclusion in *The Crisis in Marxism* in 1981.

### ***Romantic echoes in Lindsay's Marxism***

Commenting on the work of Alick West and Christopher Caudwell, Raymond Williams observes that

as we look at the English attempt at a Marxist theory of culture, what we see is an interaction between Romanticism and Marx, between the idea of culture which is the major English tradition and Marx's brilliant reevaluation of it. (1983, 279–80)

Although Williams does not mention Lindsay in his critique, he might well have.

Hegel's influence on Lindsay is evident in *The Crisis in Marxism*, but so is that of Blake and other romantics. This is particularly well noted by Robert Mackie and Neil Morpeth, who write:

Romanticism simultaneously looks to the past and the future, hearkening both to the loss of a previous organic unity and announcing, sometimes in millenarian terms, the forthcoming commonweal of humanity. It is possible to see these conflicting directions not only in Blake and William Morris, but in Lindsay himself. Moreover, it is where romanticism is critical of worldly aspirations, material possessions—the “cash-nexus”—that we find the connection between the Dionysian Lindsay and the Marxist. (1984, 93)

In Lindsay's view, the dialectical progress of history is taking us somewhere: “Obviously communism cannot be reached at a stride, but it must always be kept in mind or as a goal. . . . The solutions in all matters can be found only by people working together, aware of the claims and needs of the individuals composing the group, and striving always towards the ideal of a world without compulsions” (1981, 155).

In anticipating “a world without compulsions,” Lindsay certainly sounds like a romantic, or a dreamer. But the Romantic influence was not limited to his vision of the future. It also played a large part in his thinking about art. Lawrence Coupe asserts that “Romanticism—Blake’s and Coleridge’s in particular—is central to any understanding of [Lindsay’s] career” (1984, 46).

In the 1920s, the pre-Marxist Lindsay had incorporated the mystical thought of William Blake into his aesthetic vision. As he moved toward Marx in the 1930s, Lindsay retained elements of the Blakean perspective, placing the mystical vision into a context that for a time sounded like existential philosophy. But, as the following quotation from his 1976 essay “Towards a Marxist Aesthetic” demonstrates, both Blakean mysticism and existentialism were way-stations on the road to Lindsay’s ultimate aesthetic perspective. Though he uses dates loosely in the essay, which is an account of his intellectual journey, this section seems to be describing the state of his thought in the early 1930s, showing the influence of Hegel and just prior to his discovery of Marx:

I concentrated on the idea of the existential experience. Not as a sort of spontaneous absolute as with Proust (whom I had not yet read) or with Joyce and his epiphanies, but as the crisis-moment which, dialectically realized in its fullness, implicated everything else in the universe. Of course the writer could not follow out the infinite implications; but by the depth of his penetration into the moment he created an image which in this way reflected the totality. What Blake meant when he said that One thought filled Immensity. At every given moment the individual and his world were in a state of transition, making the passage between the death of the old and the birth of the new; and so, to define any moment as a whole was to penetrate into the structure of change in all moments. The moment which was defined was unique, never having happened before and never going to happen again, and yet it held the dialectical secret of every other moment. Somehow the work of art expressed the purely

transitory, the unique moment, and yet made this moment reflect the essential nature of all other moments. (1976b, 426–27)

### ***The ripeness of certain historical moments***

The emphasis on the uniqueness of the moment Lindsay places into a dialectical, historical process. Not surprisingly, his historical novels offer some of the best examples of his exploration of this idea. In them, he illustrated the theory that he was later to articulate in the abstract: that history is replete with instances of critical moments, moments of ripeness, when change happens because people, events, and ideas converge to incite the change. These moments of ripeness, often revolutionary, are history's growth-surts in the direction of Lindsay's ideal communal society.

Lindsay's fascination with the notion of "ripe" historical moments is reflected in the temporal and physical settings of his novels. The "Prelude to Christianity" trilogy (*Rome for Sale*, *Caesar is Dead*, *Last Days With Cleopatra*) along with *Brief Light*, a fictionalized biography of Catullus, chronicle the lives of key politicians and noblemen at a time of great ferment in Rome. *The Barriers are Down* is a novel set at the collapse of the Roman Empire, circa 450. His *1649: A Novel of A Year* and *Men of '48* tell stories set in tumultuous times in English history.

His contemporary novels were advertised as having the same theme. A book jacket on the postwar series of novels "Of the British Way" states that the series deals "with fundamental conflicts at moments of crisis and explains the way in which such conflicts appear in individuals who are at most only partly aware of the pattern of events in which they are caught up" (quoted in Croft 1984, 35).

This interplay between individuals and historical moments is also noted by Paul Gillen. Commenting on the pre-Marxist Roman novels, Gillen says, "Historical figures, ideas and movements tended to be interpreted in relation to the stage of development from which they emerge. The time is ripe for some, but not for others" (1984, 26).

At least one critic sees this insight as Lindsay's crowning achievement. According to Andy Croft,

it was this struggle to imaginatively enter into the past, to represent it realistically, to realise “fundamental social conflicts in moments of crisis” as they affect the lives of ordinary people and their families, that has been Lindsay’s most important contribution to the development of British Marxism. Knowing nothing of the writings of Antonio Gramsci (at this time rotting in a fascist prison), Lindsay developed in the middle and the late ’thirties the beginnings of a creative and challenging Marxist theory of culture. (1984, 35)

Marxists like Maurice Cornforth were unprepared to deal with Lindsay’s theories of culture. The evolution of Marxist thought since the 1950s has prepared the way for a reevaluation of Lindsay’s writings.

### ***The individual and art***

Though the individuals in Lindsay’s novels may be “only partly aware of the pattern of events in which they are caught up,” it is important to notice that they are individuals—“ordinary people and their families,” in Croft’s words. Both the novels from Lindsay’s pre-Marxist days and the ones that postdate his entry into the Communist Party in 1941 show a concern with the individual that is not necessarily characteristic of all Marxist literature. This concern in fiction is also a concern of Lindsay’s in aesthetic theory, and serves in this essay as a final example of Lindsay’s pre-Marxist thought affecting his Marxist thought. Lindsay’s perspective on the artist, as individual, resonates strongly with notions traceable to his pre-Marxist days.

The place to turn to discover Lindsay’s perspective is to his 1974 essay “The Role of the Individual in Art,” printed in *Decay and Renewal*. The first point to note is that the individual artist is shaped by his environment and his time:

The originality of individuality of the artist emerges indeed out of the total situation, his total response to it—a response which will be aesthetic and personal, but which will include, directly or in various degrees of refraction, elements from all the most significant aspects of the

situation, the entangled movement, of which he is willynilly a part. (1976a, 373)

This statement is not surprising, considering the themes of Lindsay's novels. It also forms the basis on which Lindsay rejects the "mystical notion of individuality, of the individual's role, as existing on a realm of pure freedom" (1976a, 374). For Lindsay there is no such thing as pure freedom, and he calls such claims on the part of modern artists "bourgeois egotism" (375).

On the other hand, Lindsay also rejects the notion of the artist's "complete determination by external and random events" (377). He sees examples of this deterministic attitude in, among others, Marshal McLuhan with his notion that the medium is the message.

To steer a course between these two extremes, Lindsay borrows a concept from Walter Benjamin, "that of the *Jetztzeit*, the Presence of the Now, 'a *nunc stans*, in which time stands still, where past and future converge not harmoniously, but explosively, in the present moment'" (1976a, 385). The artists who stand at the moment of *Jetztzeit* are not

tamely and imitatively seeking to build on existent bases or methods, [but] letting both past and future rush in to give those bases or methods a quite new dynamic. The inrush of the past means that we employ the criteria of the great classic achievements with their sense of totality; but we cannot apply them externally or mechanically. For what is happening is a violent clash between the criteria and the realization of the existential moment, with all its deep and pervasive self-alienations. And this clash in turn brings the impact of the future, the struggle against all the processes of alienation and the direction in which that struggle is moving. There is both continuity and rupture with the past; and the momentum imparted to the situation ensures that the closed walls or limits of the lived-moment as it is defined by the modernist are swept away. We are facing and moving in a new direction, with a new sense of union and participation, which involves the future, though without any utopian positivism. (1976a, 386)

One element of this statement is a critique of any dogma,

bourgeois or Marxist, which insists that the artist apply the “bases and attitudes” of the dogma “externally or mechanically.” As such, the statement is a defense of individual autonomy, and the necessity for the artist to create “rupture with the past.” But notice also the rejection of modernism, with its “closed walls or limits of the lived-moment.” When modernists ignore history by claiming that only the existential moment is significant, they also forfeit the only opportunity to move forward, through the “violent clash between the criteria [of the past] and the realization of the existential moment.”

It is no accident that this whole line of reasoning is replete with echoes of the pre-Marxist Lindsay, especially the sense of “moments of ripeness” and the Hegelian sense of dialectical progress into the future.

It is also evident that Lindsay stresses the impact of the historical moment upon the individual. He continues:

The concrete here-and-now poses the question of freedom and unfreedom as it rises up at that particular moment, that particular place, that particular nodal point of history. Not freedom in a limited political objective [which Lindsay identifies as one Marxist fallacy], not freedom as a utopian goal in the future [another Marxist fallacy]—though the limited objective and the limitless dream may well be present in varying degrees. Rather it is a question of the extent to which the individual realizes his place in the living and moving whole of the moment, and to which he is able thereby to achieve an integrated wholeness in himself and in his relations to the outer totality. This realized wholeness of the self is freedom, here and now; it is born out of struggle, it is not a harmony in any static sense; rather it is the moment of precarious balance which has unbalance before it and after it, and which somehow includes these two unbalances inside itself, as the present including both past and future in its dynamic transition. (1976a, 386–87)

This formulation creates a basis for rejecting the self-absorption of Proust, the “movement toward a faceless blur of sensations,

thoughts, emotions" (399) of Joyce, and the ahistoricalness of Woolf—all false notions of individualism. Instead of those false notions, Lindsay offers this as a not-quite final, but nevertheless definitive observation on the idea of the creative individual:

There are thus two lines along which the question of the individual role can be approached. We can see the individual as driven ever more back on himself, losing his sense of the dynamic social whole to which he belongs, or we can see the individual as struggling to grasp more fully and vitally the social whole and to take it into himself, not in order that his personality may be obliterated by the tumult and complexity of the scene or by the imposition of generalized ideas and sloganized directives, but in order that he may reveal the social essence inside each individual existence without impairing the sharp particularity. (1976a, 405)

It is obvious which line Lindsay wants us to follow. It is an argument born of conviction, an appealing antidote to the dead-end thinking of modernism. Lindsay earnestly tries to explain the paradox of maintaining individual vision while recognizing and accepting one's place in history, and in doing so, shows himself to be a persuasive advocate of a Marxist perspective on the question.

### ***Conclusion***

Though Lindsay never wavered in his espousal of Marxism once he accepted its vision in the late 1930s, he brought a fresh, vital perspective to its interpretation. Critics may differ about what his major contributions to Marxist thought were, but should recognize the fact that he made many. Some of those contributions have not been examined in this essay, two major ones being first his career-long exploration of the concept of alienation, and second his prefiguring of Raymond Williams's dialectical construct for explaining history: the concepts of the dominant, the residual, and the emergent. The scope of this essay is not broad enough to consider these two contributions from Jack Lindsay, though their importance is undeniable.

Lindsay's contributions are enriching and provocative. Consistent with his own theory, Jack Lindsay would have to say that in one sense they were his contributions, in another sense not. For his theories—on the nature of the dialectical linkage between base and superstructure, that culture is a productive activity, that there are periods of revolutionary ripeness in history, and that the existential moments of ripeness in the individual's experience are dialectically linked with both past and future—all found their genesis, to a greater or lesser extent, in the formative ideas of Lindsay's pre-Marxist years. Ironically, Jack Lindsay's contributions point the way toward liberating succeeding Marxists from the trap of labeling such synthesis as "impure." By using the Marxist vision to provide a framework for his previous thought, he enriched Marxist thought as well.

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# Reproduction for Money: Marxist Feminism and Surrogate Motherhood

Marvin Glass

*[Capitalism] has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies  
of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine  
sentimentalism, in the icy water of egoistic calculation.*

*It has resolved personal worth into exchange value.*

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels  
*Manifesto of the Communist Party*

## ***Introduction***

Although Marxist feminists are often falsely accused of embracing a kind of fatalistic technological determinism, they do assuredly place considerable sociological emphasis on the nature and ownership of the forces of production within any society.

Part of the current global technological revolution is of particular interest to women, viz., the new technology of reproduction involving, for example, *in vitro* fertilization, embryo transfer, and sex preselection. The main focus in this paper, however, is on a species of human reproduction which need not rely on any technology. Known today as *surrogate motherhood*, it is a practice at least as old as the Old Testament.

Now Sar'ai, Abram's wife, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar; and Sar'ai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from

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bearing children; go in to my maid; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.” (Genesis 16.1–2 RSV)

Hagar’s experience may have been a foreshadowing of the treatment that awaits late twentieth-century surrogates: she was probably beaten by Sarai when she complained about having her baby seized immediately after birth and, after fleeing Abram’s household, she was ordered by an angel of the Lord to “return to your mistress, and submit to her.”

It was media attention to the Baby M affair in the United States which stirred up considerable public and academic debate on the morality of surrogate motherhood. In that case, Mary Beth Whitehead was paid by a well-to-do couple where the wife, though not infertile, would have risked her health through pregnancy. (Some people envisage surrogates soon being employed only to incubate an embryo conceived through *in vitro* fertilization and issuing from the sperm and egg of two nonsurrogates.) Whitehead agreed to be artificially inseminated with the husband’s sperm, gestate the child, and surrender it after birth. After the baby was born, however, she changed her mind and claimed the right to renege on the agreement and keep the child. Legal rights and responsibilities, if any, of parties to such contracts vary throughout the world.<sup>1</sup>

Although there is some controversy about the most appropriate label for this practice, we are more interested in evaluating than labeling.<sup>2</sup> Here it is wise to be guided, though not bound, by answers to some general questions. One such question that figures prominently in some modern feminist moral thinking is this: would state support for a commercial practice be good for most women? If the answer is no, many people (including this author) insist that, although it is possible (but extremely unlikely) that there are other morally relevant considerations that trump women’s welfare, the burden of proof clearly rests on those who would defend legalization of the particular practice.<sup>3</sup> Some readers will be surprised to learn that this approach is very similar to that of Karl Marx. Marx, probably inspired by the profeminist ideas of the early nineteenth-century utopian socialist Charles Fourier,<sup>4</sup> said (roughly) that progress in a society was to be measured by changes in the status of women.<sup>5</sup>

### *Models of surrogate motherhood*

Two radically different current approaches to the issue of surrogate motherhood are the *free-market* and *prostitution* models. The former derives from classical liberalism, and the latter has been advanced by various nonliberal sectors of the women's movement. The free-market model argues that commercial surrogacy is morally acceptable because there are couples who wish to employ the services of a surrogate and there are women who are willing to serve for pay as this kind of mother. These conditions satisfy classical liberal criteria for free economic choice by all contracting parties, and so the state ought to enforce such economic agreements. Of course, the state referred to here is the capitalist state. Among other things, it manages the common interests of the dominant economic class in a system of ownership relations perpetuated primarily (but not exclusively) by way of surplus-value extraction from wage laborers. Seen in this light, the contract made by surrogate mothers, i.e., poor and uneducated women, turns out to be considerably less free than the free-market model suggests. It is at least as unfree as any contract made between capitalists and wage laborers, the latter coming to the marketplace with only their labor power to sell.<sup>6</sup> And because the possibility of trade unions here seems quite remote, women who became contract mothers would likely have few if any options for promotion, overtime, paid holidays, or maternity leave.

The preceding remarks are common coin among Marxist and socialist feminists in their rejection of the assumptions of the free-market model of surrogacy. Nor are they challenged by Christine Overall in her discussion of these issues. Overall is, however, iconoclastic in her rejection of a common assumption of both models. She observes that both the free-market and prostitution paradigms, while differing on the issue of how freely (if at all) it is chosen, assume that surrogate motherhood "appears to be, or to be like, a job" (1987, 122). She rejects this assumption, contending that it "essentially misrepresents the power relations that are defined by the practice." The problem "is not merely that surrogate motherhood may not freely be chosen by those women

who take it up” (125). There are also major pitfalls in embracing the type of conceptual framework that “presents surrogate motherhood as even a possible freely chosen alternative for women [and thus implies] that it makes *sense* to say that a woman is making a free choice to be a surrogate” (126, emphasis added).

Now it seems that only philosophers worry whether or not it makes *sense* to say something. Is it not bad enough that most women who are surrogate mothers today have extremely little choice about doing this kind of work? What grave moral danger awaits those who are committed to the possibility that some contrary-to-fact world exists where options such as surrogate motherhood are freely chosen? But before examining the reasons for Overall’s concern, let us scrutinize her arguments for the alleged conceptual impossibility of an uncoerced career choice in surrogacy. Here she writes that “it is implausible to suppose that fond parents would want it for their daughters. We are unlikely to set up training courses for surrogate mothers. Schools holding ‘career days’ for their future graduates will surely not invite surrogate mothers to address the class on the advantages of their ‘vocation.’ And surrogate motherhood does not seem to be the sort of thing one would put on one’s *curriculum vitae*” (126).

But none of these observations as to what is likely now or in the foreseeable future prove that it does not even make sense to conceptualize women freely choosing surrogacy as a vocation. Imagine a world in which there is, finally, gender equality. Further imagine that because of some ecological catastrophe the majority of women become infertile, and that the human race’s desire for species continuity is so great that it elevates surrogate motherhood to one of the most honored and best paid jobs. Is it not possible that in this world—unlike that of Margaret Atwood’s *Handmaid’s Tale*—some women would freely choose this profession. And would it not be, under those historical conditions, a good job? It still might not be the best imaginable job, far from it, but Overall is surely saying more than that there are now and always will be *some* deficiencies in the vocation of paid surrogacy.

Overall seems to conflate three related questions: (1) whether surrogate motherhood can be freely chosen as a job, (2) whether it is a good job, and (3) whether it is a job at all. Noting, as she does, that it is at “the extreme end of the spectrum of alienated labour” (126), that it “defines the individual woman out of existence . . . negates her as a person, and leaves only what has been described as a ‘womb for rent’” (127) may answer in the negative the first and second questions about paid surrogacy, but it still leaves open the possibility that the woman’s activity constitutes a job. Indeed, generalizing Overall’s observations about commercial surrogacy, we see that in fact many jobs in this society are not good, or, as she calls them, “real” jobs. Nevertheless, those who, for example, clean university offices do have *jobs*, however alienating the work may be and however appropriate it may be to describe these workers as “hands for rent.” And although cleaners are forced into the marketplace where, like the relation between the commissioning couple and the potential surrogate, it is “not a transaction between equals” and individual personalities are negated, this need not be the case in all possible worlds, for either cleaners or surrogate mothers.

Overall raises the esoteric issue of the impossibility of surrogacy becoming a “real” job because she claims to see a grave moral danger if policy options on surrogacy are formulated by those who think that they can even conceive of surrogacy being freely chosen by women. They may, she speculates, embrace commercial options like those recommended by the Ontario Law Reform Commission’s *Report on Artificial Reproduction and Related Matters* (1985). The Commission, she insists, “implicitly accepts the nonfeminist, free-market model of surrogate motherhood” (129). But there is *no* chance that Andrea Dworkin (1983, chap. 5) and Gena Corea (1985), two of the many feminists who defend the prostitution model of surrogacy, will line up in support of legalized surrogate motherhood. On the contrary, like Overall, they publicly identify with recommendations such as those found in *The Warnock Report*: “that legislation render criminal the creation or operation of agencies, both profit-making and nonprofit, for the recruitment of surrogates or the making of surrogacy arrangements, and render

criminally liable the actions of professionals who knowingly participate in a surrogacy arrangement” (1985, 46). Thus, the mere conceptual possibility that some women might freely choose surrogacy as a job, indeed the kind of good job that could make its way into a woman’s *curriculum vitae* need lure no feminist who holds the prostitution model to part company with Overall’s opposition to paid surrogate motherhood.

Finally, it is worth noting that many of Overall’s observations on work conditions for contract motherhood were anticipated by Karl Marx (and others). Overall writes:

Surrogate motherhood is “at the extreme end of the spectrum of alienated labour,” for the surrogate mother must contract out of all of the “so-called ‘normal,’ love, pride, satisfaction, and attachment in, for, and to the product of her labour.” In surrogate motherhood the woman gives up the use of her body, the product of her reproductive labour, and that reproductive labour itself to persons who pay to make them their own. In so doing she surrenders her individuality, for becoming a surrogate mother involves receiving a fee not for labour that is a unique expression of one’s personal abilities and talents, but only for the exercise of one reproductive capacities. As one applicant for surrogate motherhood expressed it; “I’m only an incubator.” (126)

Marx’s analysis of capitalist ownership relations—as found in the “Estranged Labour” section of the *1844 Manuscripts* and elsewhere—would have led him to predict that paid surrogacy would be “forced labour. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need, it is merely the means to satisfy needs external to it” (1975, 274). He would also have noted that it is only “as a [reproductive] worker that [s]he can maintain [her]self as a *physical subject*, and that it is only as a physical subject that [s]he is a [reproductive] worker (1975, 273). Moreover, “so is the [reproductive] worker’s activity not spontaneous activity. It belongs to another; it is the loss of self (1975, 274). Finally, his pithiest, albeit most chauvinistic, description: “begetting as emasculating” (1975, 275).



*Progressive(?) defenses of paid surrogacy*

The feudal base from which capitalism arose was gender as well as class oppressive. It turns out, therefore, not to be a coincidence that today the supply-side of the surrogacy contract is populated by poor and uneducated *women*. (Men might, and some do, donate or even sell sperm. But that is quick, painless, and safe: no man ever died because of complications arising from masturbating into a jar.) It is also not a coincidence that in a sexist society contemplating these issues the previously mentioned Ontario Law Reform Commission's *Report*—which recommended legalization of commercial surrogacy—was produced by five male lawyers. Thus capitalism leads to the phenomenon of human reproduction being transformed into what the Communist Manifesto called the bond of “callous ‘cash payment’” (1986, 487), and sexism within capitalism means that it is primarily women who bear the burden of corporate control of these activities.

So, is there anything to be said from a Marxist-feminist point of view in favor of commercial surrogacy? Consider this pseudoleft tirade:

Opposition to surrogate motherhood by feminists is really just a group of middle-class women ruling out yet another option for the poor in the name of a laudable but distant goal. Poor women who contemplate paid surrogacy are doubtless the victims of an unfair social and economic order, but it is counterproductive to deny them this economic option. Given the choice between poverty and exploitation, many prefer exploitation. Condemning paid surrogate motherhood is tantamount to accepting the following principle: because poor, uneducated women unjustly lack other opportunities to earn large amounts of money, they should also be denied this opportunity. Seen in this light, it would be unjust deprivation to deny them the option to engage in contract pregnancy. By all means, let us do everything we can to eliminate the economic compulsion that leads women to choose this kind of job. But until then, do not deny them this option to raise their standard of living.<sup>7</sup>

This argument is deficient in at least two respects. First,

surrogate motherhood is not a well-paid job. Thus far, the average fee given to such women is approximately \$10,000–\$12,000 (U.S.) out of a total cost of approximately \$25,000 to the commissioning couple. This wage, for a nine-month job, works out to approximately \$1.50 an hour. And if some of the corporations leading the way to legalize surrogate motherhood have their way, the fee will be considerably lower than that. Gena Corea reports that John Stehura, president of the Bionetics Foundation, informed her that he was moving into the international arena in surrogate motherhood.

“We’re bringing in girls from the Orient,” he said. From Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia.” (He was also exploring the possibility of initiating some pregnancies in those countries and bringing just the babies into the United States, he said.) According to the first plan, the woman would be paid nothing for her services. The couple adopting the child would provide the surrogate’s travel and living expenses. Though such women receive no pay, Stehura said, they benefit from the arrangement because they get to live. “Often they’re looking for a survival situation—something to do to pay for the rent or food,” he said. They come from underdeveloped countries “where food is a serious issue.” These countries do not have an industrial base, but they have a human base, he said. “They know how to take care of children.” Since that’s missing here, he added, “obviously it’s a perfect match” (1986, 342).

No women have actually been brought into the United States as of this writing, although Stehura said he was negotiating details after having advertised for “girls” in newspapers in the Orient.

Secondly, we are obliged to take a long-run view of this phenomenon and ask whether state support of commercial surrogacy, of jobs which treat women solely or primarily as incubators, is likely to contribute to perpetuating the very conditions that compel women to seek income in this way. Surely it will. As Debra Satz notes: “Under present conditions, pregnancy contracts entrench a traditional division of labor—men at work,

women in the home—based on gender . . . [and] tend to reinforce the view of women as ‘baby machines’” (1992, 127).<sup>8</sup>

In spite of these consequences, some will argue that, for a small minority of poor women whose realistic life-options are limited and unappealing, a “career” in surrogacy might be in *their* short- and long-term interests. Furthermore, illegality here rules out parenthood for gays and infertile lesbians who are unable to adopt or find friends willing to serve as surrogates. Is it not wrong to deprive such groups of these opportunities? It is not wrong if our goal is to support the legalization of only those practices and the use of only those new reproductive technologies which improve the overall condition of women in the long run. After all, a few women might, all things considered, be better off if we legalized polygamy; but no feminists and few nonfeminists seriously advocate a return to this practice.

Let us consider a more plausible feminist defense of contract motherhood. Here it might be argued that opposing the legalization of surrogate motherhood violates one of the fundamental principles of feminism, namely, that each woman has the right to control her own body. Both in the United States and more recently in Canada, Supreme Court decisions have, in the context of abortion, provided legal vindication of this moral principle. And, although we are here considering the issue of commercial surrogacy, it might be claimed that consistency dictates that we apply the principle to all similar cases. Should not feminists, therefore, argue for a woman’s legal right to be a paid surrogate even though they might not personally choose this as a vocation and even though they might counsel poor women against exercising this choice?

What this objection proves is not that we must support the legalization of paid surrogacy, but rather that we ought to reject the principle which generated the prosurrogacy conclusion. The more one thinks about it, the more that slogans like *freedom to choose*, *prochoice*, and *the right to control one’s body* sound like liberal individualist principles, and therefore severely limited in their use: appropriate perhaps for political placards and banners, but deficient as a moral justification in controversial issues. For example, let us return to the abortion debate. Many liberal (and

other) feminists, when asked to defend the view that abortion is morally permissible, invariably respond that a woman should have the right to control her own body. But this begs the question against “prolifers” and therefore proves nothing at all. Those who believe that the fetus is a human person from the moment of conception—a false but not absurd proposition—probably also believe that almost all cases of abortion are instances of murder, and therefore they are not going to agree that a woman should always have a right to control her body. To convince rational prolife to abandon their views on abortion, one has to show that the fetus is not a human person, and that the status of potential human person is insufficient to accord it the right to life. Then and only then will they agree that a woman has the right to an abortion, i.e., a right *under these circumstances* to control her body. Being *thus* “prochoice” on the issue of abortion also allows one to claim, with complete consistency, that the state should not support those women who wish to use their bodies to become paid surrogate mothers. The difference? Unlike having an abortion, exercising this body liberty harms women’s struggle for equality. This rationale, by the way, was more or less the one given by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, a feminist lobby group representing millions of Canadian women, in its opposition to the legalization of commercial surrogacy.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, let us examine a feminist argument in favor of the legalization of commercial surrogacy that builds upon the prostitution model of surrogacy. Recall that, according to this analysis, paid surrogacy exploits a woman’s reproductive abilities in a way analogous to prostitution’s exploitation of her sexuality. Even Christine Overall, whose objections to the model have already been noted, argues that “insofar as they profit from the sale of women’s reproductive services, the lawyers and doctors and others who recruit the surrogate and match her with a commissioning couple are also very much like pimps” (1987, 119). Thus, someone who accepts the prostitution model of paid surrogacy might, unlike Andrea Dworkin and other radical feminists, argue for legalization of profit-making surrogacy agencies along these lines.

Argument: However much we deplore the fact that poor women are forced to become surrogate mothers to escape a life of abject poverty, we must support their right to engage in this activity. After all, we have learned that societies that refuse to legalize prostitution only make the very people we are trying to help, namely, the prostitutes, more vulnerable to rip-offs and violence from pimps, johns, and the police. Although we long for the day when no woman is forced to be a prostitute, we accept the fact that prostitution will continue to exist for some time, and thus argue for maximum legal protection for prostitutes. Analogously, there is a demand, indeed an increasing demand, for the services of contract mothers. Let us recognize this and frame surrogacy statutes so as to give these women maximum protection under the law. (See Rassaby 1984, 104.)

Response: Prostitution involves, or need involve, only two people, and delivery of services occurs in a relatively short time. These are two reasons why it does not disappear even if the state fails to honor contracts for sexual services or even if it criminalizes such activities. Paid surrogacy, on the other hand, almost always involves the surrogate, the commissioning party or parties, the surrogacy agency, and some medical professional. The latter is likely to be present because, given the large amount of money involved, most couples will insist on some medical scrutiny of their "investment" before and after conception. Moreover, usually at least nine months pass between initiation of the transaction and delivery of goods. If the state fails to enforce surrogacy contracts, how many couples are going invest emotion and money when there is a risk that the surrogate will change her mind about giving up the baby? Demand would plummet. Of course, it would decline even more under conditions of illegality, in part because few medical professionals would risk the prospect of jail and loss of license for a slice of the commercial surrogate pie.

### ***The status of children***

Marx and Engels may have been more prophetic than they realized when, in the Communist Manifesto, they asserted that:

the bourgeois claptrap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of Modern Industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour. (1976, 502)

In the infamous Baby M case, the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that the legal contract for surrogacy was irrelevant in deciding the issue, and characterized the exchange as *baby bartering*, arguing that there are in any civilized society some things that money cannot buy. As Michael Bayles observes, “Probably the most controversial aspect of surrogate motherhood is the payment of a fee to the uterine mother. . . . The child appears to be bought and sold like a piece of property, but this amounts to slavery; infants are no more the property of their parents than are slaves morally property” (1984, 25). Bayles, however, remains unconvinced by this kind of reasoning:

What is being bought and sold is not the child but the surrogate’s services or the rights and responsibilities which constitute the parental role. Since the bundle of parental rights does not include those of property, the child is not being treated as property. The child still has any rights vis-a-vis the parents that other children have, for example, the right not to be abused. Thus the child is no more a slave (who lacks such rights) than other children are. (1984, 25)

A number of problems arise here. Although Bayles says that it is the surrogate’s services *or* parental rights and responsibilities that are being purchased, he must have meant to say that it is *both* that are bought. For if the money covers only the surrogate’s services and not parental rights and responsibilities, why is it that the surrogacy contract is fulfilled only if the commissioning party or parties get to keep the child after it is born? Secondly, Bayles’s assertion that “the bundle of parental rights does

not include those of property” is poorly argued for. Although he is right in saying that children conceived through the “stork market” are not slaves, this concession certainly does not commit one to accepting his conclusion that these children are not property or being treated like property. Slavery is one, but only one, form of property. That the purchasing party lacks the legal right to abuse the child proves only that the child is not a slave.<sup>10</sup> But pet owners lack the legal right to abuse their dogs and cats, and yet these animals *are* the property of their owners.

Here it is useful to go into some detail in answering the question “What is property?” Roughly speaking, property is control over a person or thing plus state sanction and/or social custom through laws and/or mores. Control, unlike pregnancy, admits of degrees, and absolute control plus state or social sanction is but one kind of property. In the age of monopoly capitalism, we certainly cannot think of all property the way that John Locke thought of the acorns that a man picked—subject to whatever uses he wanted with the provisos that he not waste them or use them to harm others. As Andrew Kernohan notes: “It is the complicated requirements of modern capitalism itself which lead to the fragmentation of the original conception of full capitalist ownership” (1987, 155). And here we need not look at phenomena like the joint stock company to make this point: owners of any house in the suburbs may get a letter informing them that the house and land they *own* is soon to be expropriated (with due compensation, of course).

While acknowledging that the commissioning couple does not have complete control over the child of the surrogate mother, let us examine the rights they do have to see if the child qualifies as some sort of property. This child has no legal right to vote, to privacy, to freedom of association, assembly, speech, dress, sexuality, or religion. What or when the child eats or drinks, when it sleeps, how it sits, walks, holds its face, where it goes, who its friends are, what it reads or sees or hears—over none of these has it any established legal right or freedom from control by its parents.<sup>11</sup> That this control may on occasion be exercised in a benign fashion is irrelevant to rebutting the charge that the

surrogacy payment is in part for property rights over the child. No doubt it will here be objected that these are rights over the child that all natural parents possess. Indeed they do, and we ought to do something about this, but that is the subject of another paper. Nevertheless, it is clear to me that we ought not to increase the number of adults with proprietary rights over children, especially when these rights are sold on the market.

Since surrogate motherhood is usually linked in the public's mind with the new reproductive technology, I conclude with some general comments about *in vitro* fertilization, embryo transfer, sex preselection, etc. Great Britain and Australia have already established national panels to set policy in this area, and Gena Corea's proposal for a new federal regulatory agency on the model of the the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency seems timely. Although such agencies are notoriously poor at regulating industry effectively, some systematic review of new reproductive technology will mark a considerable improvement over the situation existing today. And if such bodies are established, it is essential that they not be controlled by the (mostly male) scientific and medical profession, whose priorities and concerns are often quite different from those of women and the society affected by these important decisions. And they certainly should not be controlled by multinational corporations. We have them to thank for, among other things, the Dalkon shield IUD, inserted into millions of women to give them control over conception. It did that, but it also contributed to massive infections, infertility, and even death for untold numbers of these women. If regulatory bodies are established, those who make the decisions should include infertile people and especially representatives of the women's health movement, which has done so much to monitor the effects of medi-business decisions on women. Of course, from a Marxist-feminist point of view, nationalizing the drug companies, for-profit medical centers, and private hospitals would make women's reproductive life even safer still. Even one of the fathers of modern liberalism, John Stuart Mill, recognized (at least in the abstract) that "the great error of reformers and



philanthropists [is] to nibble at the consequences of unjust power, instead of redressing the injustice itself" (1965, 193).

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#### NOTES

1. The New Jersey Supreme Court claimed that the contract amounted to "baby selling," ruled it invalid, and declared Mary Beth Whitehead to be the child's legal mother. Nevertheless, it awarded primary custody of the child to the commissioning couple, allowing Whitehead only regular visitation rights (Alpern 1992, 317). Although it is illegal in most U.S. states, there is no federal legislation relating to paid surrogacy. Likewise, the Canadian criminal code makes no mention of it, and only Quebec (section 541 of the revised *Civil Code*) provides that all agreements for procreation and gestation services are null and void. In Australia surrogacy contracts are not enforceable. In 1991, the Supreme Court in France declared paid surrogacy illegal. West Germany banned it in 1989, and Great Britain allows only the noncommercial variety (Williams 1993).

2. Suggestions about the most appropriate label for this practice include Debra Satz's *contract pregnancy* (1992, 107) and Gena Corea's *breeder woman* (1986, 213). Satz goes so far as to claim that "[t]he so-called surrogate mother is not a surrogate: she is the biological and/or gestational mother" (107). However, there does seem to be a sense in which the so-called surrogate does *substitute* for a woman who is able but unwilling to conceive and gestate a child. In a soccer match, a substitute player does not lose his surrogate status once he starts playing.

3. The state can respond to any commercial activity in at least three ways: by enforcing contracts made within that economic sphere; by refusing to enforce such contracts; or by criminalizing the activity. I support the third option but I will not defend that position here (except to respond to the claim that analogies between commercial surrogacy and prostitution rule out supporting criminalization of the former).

4. "The extension of the privileges of women is the fundamental cause of all social progress" (Fourier 1966–1968, 1:133; quoted by Beecher 1986, 304).

5. Marx wrote:

great progress was demonstrated at the last congress of the American "Labor Union" [National Labor Union], inter alia, by the fact that it treated the women with full parity; by contrast, the English, and to an even greater extent the gallant French, are displaying a marked narrowness of spirit in this respect. Everyone who knows anything of history also knows that great social revolutions are impossible without the fem-

inine ferment. Social progress may be measured precisely by the social position of the fair sex (the plain ones included). (Marx 1988, 184–85)

Marx's ability to raise this question did not, as has been well documented, guarantee that he was always able to answer it correctly in either his personal or political life.

6. Just how free are wage laborers in capitalist society? For a discussion of this question, see Cohen 1987.

7. This defense is based on an imaginative reconstruction of two authors' remarks. See Bayles 1984, 25–26 and Rassaby 1984, 103.

8. Richard Arneson says Satz's prediction "seems alarmist. In the United States, women's participation in the labor force has steadily increased for half a century. The notion of separate spheres for women and men is an ideology tailored to a world that, fortunately, no longer exists" (1992, 163). Yes, but the notion of partially separate spheres is an ideology custom-made for today, and it manifests itself both in the significant difference between average wage rates for each gender as well as in the fact that full-time working women who are married still do seventy percent of all housework. And legalizing paid surrogacy would contribute to reinforcing this (only slightly less) pernicious notion.

9. I say more or less because the former president of N.A.C. says both that the promotion of women's equality figured in N.A.C.'s antisurrogacy conclusions and that, although the principle of free choice for women leads to a real conflict between policies that permit abortion but prohibit commercial surrogacy, allegiance to the principle of a woman's right to control her body allows one to escape the charge of inconsistency. I do not see how. See Rebick 1993, 87–88.

10. Most parents do have the legal right to abuse their children. Sweden is the only country that has outlawed spanking.

11. See John McMurtry 1981.

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# **The Sparks That Dazzle Rather Than Illuminate: A New Look at Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach"**

**Ernie Thomson**

## ***Introduction***

Karl Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach" (1975a) were found by Frederick Engels in the 1880s in an old notebook used by Marx in 1844 and 1845 and were first published in slightly edited form as an appendix to Engels's own 1888 book on Feuerbach. Engels wrote at the time that the "Theses" appeared to him to be

notes hurriedly scribbled down for later elaboration, absolutely not intended for publication, but invaluable as the first document in which is deposited the brilliant germ of the new world outlook. (1975a, 520)

Although there was apparently no real evidence indicating just when Marx wrote the "Theses," when they were republished in 1924 in Russian and German in the *Marx-Engels Archives*, the Soviet editors suggested March of 1845 as the likely date of their composition. (They might have chosen this date because it closely followed Marx's move from Paris to Brussels in February 1845). But although, as Lobkowitz has pointed out, this date seems to have been nothing more than an educated guess, most subsequent Marx scholars have either taken it for a fact or at least not found any reason to question it (1967, 411). Despite the brevity and the ambiguity of the "Theses" and the uncertainty of the date of their composition, these notes have been the subject

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of a great deal of commentary, much of it confused and/or contradictory.

Proponents of the continuity view of Marx's writings generally have argued (or more often assumed) that the "Theses" were written in the spring of 1845 after Marx's move to Brussels, that the general points made by Marx in the "Theses" are compatible with both his early and later works, and thus that the "Theses" are useful (along with other texts) in elaborating Marx's position on various philosophical issues. Istvan Meszaros, for example, points out that "almost every single point that Marx made in his [Theses] in the first months [sic] of 1845 can be found in [Marx's 1844 manuscripts] even though without explicit critical references to Feuerbach himself" (1970, 235). David McLellan maintains that the "Theses" are "a very brief sketch of the ideas that [Marx] and Engels elaborated a few months later in *The German Ideology*" (1973, 140). Meanwhile, Nathan Rotenstreich (1965) bases his entire discussion of Marx's "philosophy" on analyses of the "Theses," supplemented by material from both Marx's earlier and later writings.

Proponents of the discontinuity view, on the other hand, usually have regarded the "Theses" as the first clear indication of Marx's break with his Feuerbachian past and, more or less following Engels's first impression, as the preliminary formulation of his materialist conception of history (e.g., Hook 1936). Louis Althusser's comment on the "Theses" is an interesting variation on this theme:

The "Theses on Feuerbach," which are only a few sentences long, mark out the earlier limit of [the epistemological break], the point at which the new theoretical consciousness is already beginning to show through in the erstwhile consciousness and the erstwhile language, that is, as necessarily ambiguous and unbalanced concepts.

The *Works of the Break* raise delicate problems of interpretation, precisely as a function of their place in the theoretic formation of Marx's thought. Those brief sparks, the "Theses on Feuerbach," light up every philosopher who comes near them, but as is well known, a spark

dazzles rather than illuminates: nothing is more difficult to locate in the darkness of the night than the point of light which breaks it. One day we will have to show that these eleven deceptively transparent theses are really riddles. (1970, 33–36)

Althusser's somewhat enigmatic comment seems to me not inconsistent with a view advanced by J. Barbalet (1983) in a discussion that is among the most perceptive in the literature on this subject.

Barbalet begins by agreeing with Meszaros's that the "Theses . . . draw together and summarize points made against Feuerbach" in Marx's 1843–44 works, although these "points made against Feuerbach" are never directed at Feuerbach himself. But, Barbalet continues, this criticism of Feuerbach is really a criticism "only in so far as it attempts to make Feuerbachism [sic] consistent with itself." (39).

Barbalet shows that in the "Theses" Marx directs three criticisms toward Feuerbach's philosophy. First, Marx maintains that "materialism up to and including Feuerbach has ignored the practical side of man." Second, Marx argues that Feuerbach's understanding of the "social nature of man" is deficient. Third, Marx combines these two points in a third which confronts Feuerbach's materialism with "the consequences of realizing that social life is itself practical." (39).

In his subsequent discussion of these points Barbalet locates the origins of most of the specific arguments in the "Theses" in Marx's 1843–44 works, and also shows that each of these points is at least implied in Feuerbach's philosophy itself. Thus what Marx is really doing in the "Theses," according to Barbalet, is merely acknowledging and correcting some inconsistencies in Feuerbach's application of his own philosophical premises and thus Marx is criticizing "Feuerbach's actual formulations from the point of view of Feuerbachian premises." Thus Barbalet concludes that Marx develops

a consistent Feuerbachism in a way that Feuerbach [himself] fails to do. . . . Marx attempts to complete the task Feuerbach began. This certainly constitutes a critique

of Feuerbach, but the content of the critique is decidedly Feuerbachian. (1983, 47)

Finally, Barbalet was the first to point out that the main points of Marx's new materialist conception of history (as set out in *The German Ideology*) are *completely absent* in the "Theses" (38–39): Marx's final break with Feuerbach's philosophy came only after the "Theses" were written. So to Barbalet as to Althusser the "Theses" stand apart from both Marx's 1844 Feuerbachian writings and his works subsequent to his discovery of the materialist conception of history. This is what gives them a riddle-like quality.

Elsewhere I have argued that in his 1844 writings Marx was trying to construct the "other side" of Feuerbach's theory of the alienation of human consciousness in religion/theology—the side that deals with the alienation of human activity in labor (1991a; 1991b). Marx was using the premises and conceptual framework of Feuerbach's philosophy to try to complete Feuerbach's humanist problematic.

In essence Barbalet's discussion of the "Theses" parallels that argument, that is, Barbalet shows that in the "Theses" Marx is still using Feuerbachian premises to attempt to construct the "other side" of Feuerbach's philosophical humanism, the side that has to do with human activity in relation to material objects. The only element that is actually new in the "Theses" is that Marx now seems to be working toward distancing himself from Feuerbach—but not from Feuerbach's philosophy. Thus in the "Theses," Marx acknowledges Feuerbach's one-sided emphasis on consciousness and religion and then criticizes Feuerbach for not extending his analysis to the "other side" of the humanistic problematic. But the whole criticism of Feuerbach is based on Feuerbach's own philosophical premises: the criticism is directed at the shortcomings of Feuerbach's *application* of his philosophy, not at the philosophy itself.

It is significant that Barbalet claims that in the "Theses" Marx is really trying "to strengthen the Feuerbachian programme" rather than abandoning it, and it is also significant that Barbalet offers no real explanation of why Marx would have suddenly found it necessary to distance himself from Feuerbach even



while trying to "strengthen the Feuerbachian programme" (47).

The works of Althusser and Barbalet are a real advance over other accounts of the part played by the "Theses" in Marx's intellectual development. But their accounts leave several questions unanswered. First, if the "Theses" do indeed draw together and summarize points from Marx's 1843–44 writings while at the same time representing Marx's first real critique of Feuerbach, the question arises of why he found it necessary to distance himself from Feuerbach even while using Feuerbachian premises to shore up the Feuerbachian framework that he still apparently found valid. Closely related is the question of why the "Theses" were written at all: what happened at the time that provoked such a response from Marx? Second, if the "Theses" are still fundamentally Feuerbachian (as Barbalet argues), it remains to be explained why Marx went on to abandon the framework altogether shortly after writing the "Theses" (as both Althusser and Barbalet maintain). Finally, the question of when the "Theses" were written still remains unanswered. The purpose of this paper will be to propose a set of answers to these questions.

In order to understand the circumstances in which Marx wrote the "Theses," it is necessary first to understand the relationship between Marx's work and Feuerbach's work in 1843–45 and between Marx and Moses Hess in 1843–44, the part played by Engels's entry onto the scene as Marx's new collaborator in the fall of 1844, and especially the part played by a book published in late 1844 by one of the Young Hegelians, who wrote under the pseudonym of Max Stirner, and the reaction to this book by the Young Hegelians in early 1845.

### ***Marx and Feuerbach***

Feuerbach's rise to influence among the German Young Hegelians began in an 1839 article that marked his public break with Hegel's philosophy, "Towards a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy." Two years later, his epochal work *The Essence of Christianity* was published and Feuerbach quickly gained both a

reputation and a following among the German intelligentsia. The *Essence* was followed in early 1843 by an article, "Preliminary Theses on the Reform of Philosophy," and a second edition of the *Essence* with a new enlarged preface explaining his "transformative method," and later in 1843 by his "Principles of the Philosophy of the Future." The latter three writings, as much as the *Essence*, were instrumental in converting a number of young radicals, including Moses Hess, Frederick Engels, and Karl Marx, to Feuerbach's point of view by 1844.

The strongest influence on Marx's works from 1839–40 through early 1843 was his friend and teacher at Bonn, Bruno Bauer, and Feuerbach's ideas apparently exerted only a peripheral influence on Marx at this time. David McLellan suggests that Bauer inspired the topic for Marx's doctoral dissertation on Epicurus and Democritus, and that from the available evidence it appears that Marx and Bauer shared a similar attitude toward Hegel's philosophy in 1840–42 (1969, 71–75). It was probably also from Bruno Bauer that Marx acquired the idea to write a critique of Hegel's political philosophy, since at first this critique was intended by Marx to be part of a book coauthored with Bauer (see Marx 1975b, 385).

But in February 1843, Feuerbach's "Theses" and the second edition of the *Essence* with a new preface were published, and Marx's relation to Feuerbach's philosophy soon began to change. A few months later, during his stay in Kreuznach from about May to October 1843, Marx drafted his long-intended "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," which, as Avineri and others have pointed out, was written in "Feuerbachian language" and based "exclusively on [Feuerbach's] transformative method" (Avineri 1968, 10–12). David McLellan agrees: "Every page of the critique of Hegel's political philosophy showed the influence of Feuerbach's method" (1969, 68).

Before leaving Kreuznach in October 1843, Marx wrote an article reviewing two essays on the "Jewish question" recently published by Bauer, and here for the first time Marx begins to make explicit his expanding differences with Bauer. The most obvious influences in this article are Marx's own just-written

Feuerbachian critique of Hegel's political philosophy (the 1843 "Critique") and Feuerbach's discussion of the doctrine of the creation in the *Essence* (chap. 11) which, as Wartofsky points out, is "strikingly similar in characterization, in language, and in metaphor" to Marx's "On the Jewish Question" (1977, 319). Rotenstreich has also noted the origin of Marx's critique in Feuerbach's discussion (1965, 31).

After his move to Paris in October 1843, Marx wrote a new introduction for his "Critique" of Hegel, which he still intended to publish. Here Marx, arguing that in Germany "the criticism of religion is in the main complete," advocates the critique of "modern politico-social reality itself" (1975c, 175–79). The basis of this work was to be Feuerbach's philosophy: "The only *practically* possible liberation of Germany is liberation that proceeds from the standpoint of the theory which proclaims man to be the highest being for man" (187, emphasis in original). It is in this article that Marx publicly endorsed the entire program for the "new philosophy" outlined in Feuerbach's "Theses" (see Barbalet 1983, 36).

By the end of 1843 Marx was an ardent Feuerbachian working hard to expand Feuerbach's "new philosophy" into critiques of the Hegelian political philosophy and to general political conditions in Germany. But even while he was using Feuerbach's method and many of Feuerbach's themes, Marx remained committed to Bruno Bauer's problematic, the critique of the state and politics in Germany, now further reinforced by his struggle against censorship while editing political journals. Marx's purpose at this time remained the same as earlier, "to make as many breaches as possible in the Christian state and to smuggle in as much as we can of what is rational" (Marx 1975g, 400).

In the months following his move to Paris in late 1843, Marx turned his attention to political economy, which was already at the center of attention there. By the spring of 1844, as McLellan maintains, he had read and excerpted the main political economists and had also read many French, English, and German socialist writers (1969, 106). As he copied out excerpts from these works in his notebooks, he often added comments and summaries of major points. Most of these are short and

fragmentary, but in his comment on James Mill, written just a few months before his “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,” there are two digressions that are longer and more systematic, and contain the first (incomplete) formulation of Marx’s 1844 theory of alienation.

By this time Marx had read “Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy,” in which Engels (in October–November 1843 and not yet associated with Marx) argued that political economy was “Christian economics”: “That our economics is essentially Christian I could have proved from every proposition, from every category” (1975b, 439). Engels also suggested that Feuerbach’s transformative method could be applied to economics where “everything . . . stands on its head” (427). But it was Marx who now began to systematically link the whole structure of Feuerbach’s theory of religious alienation to a critique of political economy.

During the summer of 1844, while his wife and baby were away on a family visit to Germany, Marx took the opportunity to pull together the material from his voluminous readings in political economy, his new adaptation of Feuerbach’s theory of alienation, and the socialist and communist ideas that he had encountered in Paris. The result was a rough draft of a critique of political economy. Although the draft was never finished, and large parts of it were missing by the time it was published in the 1930s, the “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844” has come to be considered one of Marx’s most important works.

The surviving sections of Marx’s “Manuscripts” contain three more or less integrated Feuerbachian critiques. First, there is a critique of political economy that continues Marx’s “Comments on Mill.” In the “Manuscripts,” Marx enlarges the “empirical” base of his study (the excerpts and summaries) by combining elements from several works on political economy by different authors, and reworks the conceptual structure of the theory of alienation used in the interpretation of this material. The second critique (a “friendly” critique) is aimed at the socialist and communist authors and agitators encountered by Marx during his half-year in Paris (Bakunin, Proudhon, etc.). Marx’s key aim here is to use his new alienation framework, supplemented by

ideas from Feuerbach's "new philosophy," to both expose and correct the "mistakes committed by the piecemeal reformers" (Marx 1975e, 241). The third critique is a Feuerbachian interpretation and critique of Hegel's dialectic.

At the end of August 1844, just as Marx broke off work on the "Manuscripts," Engels stopped over in Paris on his way back to Germany and met Marx in a cafe. After engaging in a long discussion in which, according to Engels, "our complete agreement in all theoretical fields became obvious," the two men ended up spending the next ten days together (see McLellan 1973, 131).

During this time they decided to publish a pamphlet against Bruno Bauer and his followers who, in a journal that they were publishing in Berlin, had been heavily criticizing Feuerbach and his followers (see Marx 1975d, 356). Engels wrote his brief contribution to the pamphlet in September and then departed for Germany. Marx worked on his part until late November, by which time the pamphlet had grown into a rather large book, which was published in February 1845 under the title *The Holy Family*, subtitled "Critique of Critical Criticism: Against Bruno Bauer and Company." As Marx and Engels announce in the foreword, it is written on behalf of "real humanism" (Marx and Engels 1975, 7), a slogan identified at the time with Feuerbach's philosophy.

To summarize, Marx's first use of basic ideas from Feuerbach's philosophy apparently resulted from a practical problem—Marx needed a methodological device to organize and give direction to his critique of Hegel's political philosophy. He found the device in Feuerbach's transformative method. It was this use of Feuerbach's philosophy that characterized Marx's 1843 writings. Throughout 1843, Marx's writings also indicate that despite his use of Feuerbach's method, his overall goal remained the same as it had been earlier, to attack the political status quo.

By the end of 1843, Marx's attachment to Feuerbach's philosophy had grown closer, and Marx now publicly endorsed Feuerbach's whole program for the reform of philosophy. But as

Marx intensified his study of political economy in early 1844, he quickly realized that what he was reading could be reinterpreted in terms of Feuerbach's theory of alienation: Marx's earliest notebooks from this period show that he was already trying to fit these two fields together. This problematic quickly and completely replaced his interest in political criticism and culminated in his own new theory of alienation (and his various other critical discussions) in the "Manuscripts." It was just at this time that Marx met and joined forces with Engels, and the two wrote their (expanded) pamphlet defending Feuerbach against some of his most prominent critics.

So by November 1844 Marx had worked out a broad critical social theory framework based on Feuerbach's philosophy, one that exceeded by far even Feuerbach's own attempt at the reform of philosophy, and had acquired a talented and committed ally in Frederick Engels.

### ***Marx and Moses Hess***

In disentangling the circumstances in which Marx composed the "Theses," it is as important to understand Marx's relationship to Moses Hess in 1843–45 as it is to understand his relationship to Feuerbach's work, and Marx's relationship to Hess has been even less understood than that of Marx to Feuerbach. First, several scholars have claimed that Hess had a direct and decisive influence on Marx's 1843 review "On the Jewish Question," and also an important influence on Marx's other 1843–44 writings (e.g., McLellan 1969, 1973; Avineri 1985).

McLellan claims that the similarities between Hess's "On the Essence of Money" and Marx's "On the Jewish Question" are "remarkable and can only be accounted for on the supposition that Marx copied heavily from Hess's essay presuming it would not be published" (1969, 154–55). According to McLellan, Hess had submitted his article, written "at the end of 1843 or the beginning of 1844," to the journal now edited by Marx and Arnold Ruge. But because of financial problems the journal ceased publication after the first issue, and Hess's article could not be published. McLellan argues that "Marx must have read at

least most of Hess's article before writing his own ["On the Jewish Question"], all the more so because Ruge was ill at the time and so all the editorial responsibility fell on Marx" (154). McLellan goes on to argue that this issue is of some importance because Hess's article and not Marx's represents "the first attempt to employ Feuerbach's ideas on religious alienation to the field of economic and social life" (155). After pointing out a number of parallels between Marx's discussions in his "On the Jewish Question" and Hess's "Money" McLellan concludes that the:

parallels between the two texts are more than enough to justify the statement that Marx copied Hess's ideas at this stage . . . it is from Hess that he borrows all his leading themes at this turning point in his development when he begins to make the economic sphere the object of his immediate attention. . . . Thus at the beginning of 1844 it was Hess who was setting the pace. (158)

Avineri makes a similar claim in his book on Hess. After pointing out that Hess's "Money" was "his most explicit critique of modern society," Avineri goes on to claim that "anyone familiar with Marx's essay 'On the Jewish Question' . . . will immediately recognize the profound impact Hess's writings had on Marx's own intellectual development" (1985, 115). Avineri goes on to discuss a number of points from Hess's article and comments: "It is obvious that Marx adopted many of Hess's ideas on the relationship between religion and economic life . . . especially in 'On the Jewish Question'" (123). Avineri concludes that "of all his colleagues it was Hess that influenced Marx more than anybody else" (133).

Although both McLellan and Avineri acknowledge that Hess's ideas at the time were themselves heavily influenced by Feuerbach, the point of their claim that Hess was "leading the way" and that it was Hess who influenced Marx more than anybody else is to cast serious doubt on the extent of Feuerbach's direct influence on Marx at the time. There is, however, a very serious problem with the McLellan/Avineri version of the relationship between Hess and Marx.

The problem is, as both McLellan (1969, 154) and Avineri (1985, 115) point out (correctly: cf. Silberner 1966, 664), that Hess's "Money" was written in very late 1843 or early 1844, while Hess was in Paris. But as McLellan himself points out in his later book on Marx—in which he repeats the point that Marx's "On the Jewish Question" took material "almost verbatim" from Hess's "Money" (1971, 86)—when Marx arrived in Paris from Kreuznach in October 1843, he brought with him *already written* the essay "On the Jewish Question" (79–80).

Obviously, if Marx's "On the Jewish Question" was written (in Kreuznach) several months before Hess's "Money" was written (in Paris), it would not have been possible for Marx to have copied anything from Hess's article. Since the similarities are indeed as striking as Avineri and McLellan claim, it seems obvious that either Hess took many of his ideas from Marx or, more likely, that the ideas had been previously worked out together during their collaboration earlier in 1843. Either way, the idea that Hess's theoretical influence on Marx was decisive at the time is not at all consistent with the evidence.

The other misunderstanding regarding Marx and Hess has to do with an article, "The Recent Philosophers," that Hess wrote and published in early 1845 in response to Max Stirner's book *The Ego and His Own*. While the influence of Hess on Marx in 1843–44 has been exaggerated, Hess's article on Stirner (which I will discuss at length below) has been almost completely ignored. Virtually the only modern scholar to notice Hess's article at all has been Lobkowitz (1969) and even he quickly dismisses it as being much too confused for any meaningful analysis. Hess's article turns out, however, to be a crucial piece of evidence for understanding Marx's "Theses."

### ***Enter Max Stirner***

At just about the same time Marx was finishing his sections of *The Holy Family* in November in Paris (Engels and Hess had departed for Germany in September) Max Stirner's book *The Ego and His Own* was published in Germany. Stirner's book was first and foremost a massive attack on Feuerbach's philosophy and the whole range of social theory associated with Feuerbach's



humanism. As Hook (1936) put it, the book landed among the Young Hegelians "like a bombshell."

Stirner's ideas were the center of attention among the young German political radicals for several months in late 1844 and early 1845. During this time Bruno Bauer used some of Stirner's criticisms to mount a new attack on Feuerbach and his followers (Marx, Hess, and Engels) while one of Bauer's associates (Szeliga) was busy defending Bauer's "Critical Criticism" against Stirner's attacks; Hess (now agitating for socialism in Germany with Engels) wrote a reply to Stirner ("The Recent Philosophers," as already mentioned) on behalf of the communist movement (Hess 1983); Feuerbach also published an article in 1845 defending himself against Stirner (Feuerbach 1978). Marx started on a response to Stirner in December 1844 but never finished it. Later in 1845, Stirner published a reply to his critics, conceding not a single point to their criticisms (Stirner 1978).

Stirner's book posed an especially acute problem for Marx. As I have already indicated, in late 1843 Marx publicly endorsed Feuerbach's whole program for the reform of philosophy and then spent a large part of 1844 constructing the "other side" of Feuerbach's alienation problematic. He had joined forces with Engels to further develop and promote the Feuerbachian philosophy and to write a book defending Feuerbach's philosophy against its most prominent critics. Now Stirner's critique came along and suddenly threatened to discredit, if not outright destroy, the whole enterprise. Even Marx's newfound collaborator, Engels, appeared ready to desert Feuerbach's apparently sinking ship.

In November 1844 Engels wrote a letter to Marx about Stirner's book. In this letter Engels compares Stirner to the British utilitarian Jeremy Bentham, arguing that Stirner "takes for his principle Bentham's egoism, except that in one respect it is carried through more logically and in the other less so" (1975c, 11).

According to Engels, Stirner is more logical than Bentham in that as an atheist he follows materialism in denying Bentham's empiricist dualism, in which God is allowed "to remain remote

and nebulous above him.” But Stirner is also less logical in that he attempts to “avoid the reconstruction effected by Bentham of a society reduced to atoms, but cannot do so.” It is just this contradiction that makes Stirner’s book important, according to Engels: Stirner’s “self-aware” egoism stands on the brink of communism, needing only a push—the final realization that the individual egoist can only meet his needs in a communist society—to “immediately change into communism.”

Engels goes on to argue that there is much of value in Stirner’s egoism: “it is certainly true that we must first make a cause our own, egoistic cause, before we can do anything to further it” and thus that “we are communists out of egoism, and it is out of egoism that we wish to be *human beings*, not mere individuals” (12). In this sense, he continues, “Stirner is right in rejecting Feuerbach’s ‘man.’” In order to avoid positing “man” as an abstraction deduced from God “we [communists] must take our departure from empiricism and materialism” and make “the flesh-and-blood individual . . . the true basis . . . for our ‘man.’” It follows that “egoism, not of course Stirner’s intellectual egoism *alone*, but also the *egoism of the heart*—is the point of departure for our love of humanity” (12).

Engels’s first response to Stirner’s book in this letter has been described as “modified rapture” (Paterson 1971, 103), and as an “astonishingly positive evaluation” (Lobkowitz 1967, 391). But Engels’s response was not nearly as positive as these terms make it out to be. Later in the same letter Engels returns to the subject of Stirner’s book and writes, “Clearly Stirner is the most talented, independent and hard-working of the [Young Hegelians], but for all that he tumbles out of idealistic into materialistic abstraction and ends up in limbo.”

In December 1844, there are two pieces of evidence based on letters between Marx and Engels that, by themselves, would seem to contribute little to explaining what happened at this time. But they will prove to be important. The first is that Marx replied to Engels’s November letter, and expressed what must have been vehement disagreement with Engels’s first assessment of Stirner’s book (this letter has not been preserved). The second is that Marx was working on a review of Stirner’s book in late

December, a review that must have been well along, since in a letter Marx promised it to a publisher "next week" (Marx 1975f, 16; as I already pointed out, this review was apparently never finished and has also not been preserved).

In mid-January 1845, Engels wrote again to Marx, and here Engels virtually apologizes for his earlier comments on Stirner's book and now expresses his (and also Hess's) agreement with Marx's view of Stirner (which would have been discussed in Marx's December letter):

As regards Stirner, I entirely agree with you. When I wrote to you, I was still too much under the immediate impression made upon me by the book. Since I laid it aside and had time to think it over, I feel the same as you. Hess, who is still here and whom I spoke to in Bonn a fortnight ago, has, after several changes of mind, come to the same conclusion as yourself. He read me an article, which he is shortly to publish, about the book; in it he says the same as you, although he hadn't read your letter. (1975d, 16)

The article to which Engels refers, "The Recent Philosophers," was published a few months later (Hess 1983).

In the letters discussed here, there are several clues that suggest some answers about the circumstances in which Marx wrote the "Theses." First, there is the fact that Marx was writing a review of Stirner's book in December 1844. Second, in Engels's January letter to Marx, Engels mentions that their colleague Hess has written an article against Stirner and has read this article to Engels. Then Engels says that Hess's article "says the same" about Stirner as Marx's December letter, though Hess had not read Marx's letter.

All of this raises the possibility that Marx's December review of Stirner's book might have been connected in some way with Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach," which very well could have been written in December 1844. What I am suggesting, more explicitly, is that the "Theses" were *part of* the review of Stirner's book that Marx worked on in December 1844, since Marx would have had to clarify, for himself at least, where he stood with

respect to Feuerbach and his whole philosophy before he could convincingly respond to Stirner's critique of this philosophy. Thus, in a critique of Stirner, Marx would have had to define his own position with respect to both Stirner and Feuerbach.

This solution would immediately clear up the problems left behind by Althusser's and Barbalet's perceptive analyses of the "Theses." In order to criticize Stirner, Marx would have employed his own expanded version of the Feuerbachian framework, which implies a criticism of Feuerbach himself for not carrying his project far enough. Thus the "Theses" would criticize Feuerbach from the point of view of his own premises as Barbalet points out and, since Marx's comments only make sense in the context of the Stirner-Feuerbach controversy, they would appear to be riddle-like apart from that context, which explains why Althusser sees the "Theses" as riddles. I might also point out in support of this solution that there is no evidence that the "Theses" were written at any other particular time or in any other particular context. But there is actually a way to test this solution further.

If, as is likely, Marx's December letter to Engels expressed the same view of Stirner as the review of Stirner that Marx was writing in December and if the "Theses" were also written in December 1844 and were the foundation of the other half of that review and if Hess's article says the same about Stirner as Marx's December letter, then it would also seem likely that Hess's position regarding Feuerbach would have been similar to Marx's, especially in light of their earlier collaboration. In other words, Hess's article would have criticized Feuerbach for not extending his analysis of alienation to include political economy, the criticism would have been based on Feuerbach's own philosophical premises, and Stirner would have been criticized from the point of view of an expanded Feuerbachian alienation theory similar to Marx's.

### *Hess's "Recent Philosophers"*

In the opening section of "The Recent Philosophers" Hess lays out the context for his critique of Stirner (and also in passing

of Bauer and Feuerbach). According to Hess:

Since the rise of Christianity men have worked to resolve the difference between the Father and the Son, the Divine and Human—in a word, between the “Species-Man” and the “bodily” man. But as little has come of this effort as has come to Protestantism in its annulment of the visible Church—for the invisible Church (Heaven) and the invisible Priest (Christ) endure—and so a new clergy is permitted to rise. The recent philosophers will gain just as little by casting off this invisible Church and establishing the “Absolute Spirit,” “Self-Consciousness,” and “Species-Being” in the place of Heaven. All of these attempts to *theoretically* resolve the difference between the particular man and the human species must miscarry . . . as long as the division of man is not *practically* overcome. But this separation of man will only be practically resolved through Socialism—that is, if men unite in community life and activity and surrender private gain. (1983, 360)

Hess goes on to argue that the source of all “illusions which have occupied our heads” is the separation of human from human “in actual life, i.e., in social life,” and that as long as this separation remains “the individual man will remain divided in his ‘consciousness’”—socially isolated individuals will continue to long for and imagine a better life (360).

The contradiction between people’s actual life of isolation and their consciousness of what they could be, which Hess refers to as the “rupture between theory and praxis,” cannot be resolved through “mere theoretical knowledge alone”—nor by “philosophical comprehension” or “religious feeling.” It is only through a “social union with our neighboring men” that humans can become completely humanized (360–61). According to Hess:

With the rise of Christianity the Church was created to overcome the dichotomy between Godliness and worldliness, theory and praxis, to heal and to sanctify the world,

to fill the chasm between the individual and the species, to reconcile the enmity between men. (361)

But the Church merely succeeded in creating other divisions among humans: between “clergy and laity,” and their feudal counterparts “medieval lordship and bondage.” And even with the Reformation, the separation between theory and praxis remained, in the “contradictions between Heaven and Earth, this world and the other, spirit and body” (361).

The modern religion, according to Hess, is philosophy, and the modern Church, the “actualized form of philosophy,” is the State—not, he quickly adds, the backward German state, but the “free” State “as it really exists in France, England, and North America, but which exists only as an *Ideal* for us Germans” (362). Thus in the modern State humans have achieved the Christian “duality in unity”—it is the “new Heaven” where “beautiful spirits of the Christian Heaven wander about on Earth; they are—the ‘free citizens’” (362).

But alongside the modern State is the egoism of civil society, and with this the “opposition between individual and species” has been sharpened and “brought . . . for the first time into its perfection!” The idea here is that in modern society the State represents the “species,” the universal being (interests) of its citizens, while in civil society, which is sanctioned by the new State, the war of all against all (the isolation of individuals and the clash of individual interests) is actually heightened. Rather than reaching the real culmination of the Christian attempt at healing the divisions among humans, the modern State and corresponding civil society pose an even sharper opposition between individual and species than ever before, and this new contradiction is leading toward revolution:

But now the stronger the more intensely and more universally this present contradiction exists between individual and species, and indeed the more men are violently seized by this contradiction, then all the more rapidly will history take its course, and all the greater will be the longing for a better reality, a reality which is no longer sought in another world, but must be sought in present social life. Attempts to reform our society will repeat until they suit

our inner consciousness, that consciousness that is derived from our lives. We now live in this reforming or revolutionary time. (362–63)

Hess goes on to point out that while the modern free State itself does not yet exist in Germany, recent philosophers have “brought it forth in all respects” theoretically, and thus State and civil society are matters of debate among philosophers. This debate is the basic context of Hess’s discussion of the Feuerbach-Stirner controversy.

Before turning to his critique of Stirner, which is the main topic of his article, Hess briefly criticizes Feuerbach’s last contribution to the Young Hegelian movement, his 1843 “Principles of the Philosophy of the Future.” Here Hess maintains that what still appears to the Germans as the future is nothing more than present reality in England, France, and North America—it is the “modern state confronted with its supplementary civil society” that really lies in the background of Feuerbach’s discussion in his “Philosophy of the Future” (363). But because Feuerbach holds only as a future ideal what is already reality in some other countries, he uncritically overlooks the contradiction that is already very apparent (the contradiction of State and civil society) and as a result he “appeals at one time to a narrow-minded egoism, at another time . . . he anticipates the social man, the species man, the ‘essence of man,’ and takes it that these essences are self-consciously present in the individual.” (363). But the result of Feuerbach’s failure to recognize this contradiction—the notion that “the generic-human can only exist in a society in which all men self-seekingly cultivate and posit themselves”—is really a “philosophical fraud” (363).

At the end of this section, Hess sums up his view of the context of German philosophy by arguing (following Stirner) that Feuerbach’s philosophical humanism is flawed by “theoretical egoism” or “Heavenly Egoism” (“man” is egoistic in Stirner’s sense) and it is this aspect of Feuerbach’s philosophy and his resulting failure to criticize real social relations (like the contradiction between social humans and antisocial civil society) that has led to Stirner’s “practical egoism”:

As soon as it is revealed to the Monk that there is nothing

to his Heavenly Egoism . . . he will become an animal directly and collapse completely into Earthy Egoism, and thenceforth instead of striving for his alienated theoretical essence, for God and Heavenly Beautitude, he will strive for his alienated practical essence, money and happiness. Even so the Philosopher, for as soon as it develops that there is nothing to the "Spirit" and it turns out that his "imaginary essence" was quite unnecessary, he falls directly into a practical egoism, and casts aside transcendental Humanity along with all real humanity as well. (364)

The whole point of Hess's discussion up to here is that humans cannot be "humanized by mere theoretical knowledge alone" while still "in actual life loveless, worldly, miserable, impious, torn and sundered Egoists and inhuman men" (360–61). Stirner, after discovering precisely this point, then erroneously concludes that humans *cannot be humanized at all*, and this is the source of his practical egoism. What the whole movement of philosophy has not realized is that humans *can* be humanized through changing real social relations, through socialism (363).

In section 2 of his article, while implicitly accepting the validity of Stirner's new inversion of the subject/object relation, Hess argues that Stirner's egoism itself still has everything upside down, and is just another inverted philosophy. Finding a contradiction between Feuerbach's humanistic conception of consciousness (species being and man as the subject) and the crass individualistic reality of relations in civil society (where the egoist is the subject), Stirner quite logically (i.e., logically in terms of the context of philosophy already discussed here) sets out to resolve the contradiction by theorizing a subject in the realm of consciousness consistent with the subject in the realm of practice (i.e., civil society). In other words, finding in Feuerbach's philosophy a humanized consciousness alongside an alienated reality, Stirner theorizes an alienated consciousness consistent with the alienated reality rather than searching for a humanized reality to supplement a humanized consciousness:

[It is not] the mutual alienation of men but rather the theoretical expression of this alienation: religion and



philosophy; not the war of all against all which emerges from the isolation and estrangement of men in life, but the bad consciousness which accompanies it; not the crime from above and the crime from beneath, not, in short, the rabble and its tyrants which egoism has brought forth in the world, but—says Stirner—the consciousness of sin which came with it bears all the guilt! (365)

Hess goes on to maintain that “to love, to create, to work, to produce, is directly pleasurable” and that all of these are ends in themselves rather than mere means of gaining egoistic pleasure, and that, “if I work, act in order to gain something, I am thence not freely acting, and not only have no joy and love in the work, but in fact nothing is gained for me” (367). Thus Stirner’s self-conscious egoist is doubly alienated: in both his/her real relations with other humans and in his/her consciousness of those relations.

Further, what Stirner takes to be philosophical progress is really a regression:

The egotistical life is the self-divisive and self-consuming life of the animal world . . . just as the natural animal world finds its highest expression in the beast of prey, so the social animal world finds its high point in the conscious beast of prey. (367)

Within the “free competition of our modern mercenary world,” the egoistic beast of prey seeks gold just as the animal beast of prey seeks blood, the “thirst for wealth in the mercenary world is the blood lust of the beast of prey,” the “arbitrary exercise of power is now universal human right,” and the continuing “war of all against all is sanctioned” (368–69). Rather than representing a higher stage for humanity, Stirner’s egoism, which is the consciousness consistent with this mercenary animal world itself, “rationally expressed is the categorical imperative—become animals!” (370).

In the third and final section of his article, Hess does endorse one aspect of Stirner’s individualism, his view that “the living individual should step into the place of the spiritualized man.” But he goes on to add, “not that self-estranging, isolated,

heartless, spiritless, soulless, dead body given by the Egoist.” Genuine human qualities are developed only through a “social upbringing” and can only be manifested and cultivated in “social life.” To the extent that these qualities are not cultivated in social life they are “not actual but merely [a] possibility,” and this is true both collectively and individually. So long as the social nature of humans is not realized both in consciousness and in actual life, men can only be objects (“in-themselves”) rather than true subjects (“for-themselves” and “for-one-another”). In turning away from the merely abstract “[being] in-and-for-itself” of philosophy (the Absolute, Man) Stirner is correct. But instead of turning to the social nature of humans, he turns to the “other being” of nature, to the animal world (370–71).

Hess concludes by opposing Stirner’s notion of the egoist to the socialist conception of what it means to be fully humanized. Stirner’s own view is that “in order to transcend and annul the contradiction between the human ‘Idea’ and inhuman reality, we should not seek to develop and perfect men, but rather ‘turn away’ from ourselves and return to ‘the beast.’” The socialists propose, on the other hand, that “we should become real species-being, and thereby [propose] a society in which everyone can cultivate, exercise, and perfect their human qualities” (373; Hess here cites Marx’s “On the Jewish Question”).

### **Conclusion**

The discussion here of “The Recent Philosophers” shows that the three main points of Marx’s “Theses” (“real practice” as a missing dimension in Feuerbach’s work, the social nature of humans, and the revolutionary implications of a correct understanding of practice and the social nature of humans) are also the three main points of Hess’s critique of Feuerbach, and also constitute the general context for Hess’s critique of Stirner. Thus Hess argues that it is Feuerbach’s own failure to enter into a critique of social relations (civil society) that leaves the door open for Stirner’s inversion of the humanist framework, which can best be understood as an attempt to formulate a theory of consciousness consistent with real social relations—that is, an alienated consciousness to match the alienated social relations of civil society.

Likewise, it is Feuerbach's failure to theorize the social nature of humans in this realm of practice that allows Stirner to claim that the existing antisocial practice (the war of all against all in civil society) is really the form of practice appropriate to human nature. Feuerbach's criticism of religious alienation, while valid, still ends up leaving untouched the real social relations which are the ultimate source of all alienation. Thus to Feuerbach it appears that it is only consciousness, and not concrete social relations, that needs to be changed in order for alienation to be overcome.

Finally, Feuerbach's failure to come to terms with these issues leaves him without a real solution to the problem of the isolation of humans which lies at the heart of alienation; the difference between particular humans (individuals) and the species (the community) cannot be resolved theoretically (in consciousness) until it is first resolved in practice, that is, through socialism, and this requires a real social revolution, not just a change of consciousness.

Thus Hess's "Recent Philosophers" does say much the same about Feuerbach as Marx's "Theses," and, while much longer and more systematic, says it in much the same way. If Marx's December letter to Engels says the same about Stirner as Hess's article, it seems very reasonable to conclude that Marx's December letter and his "Theses on Feuerbach" were written at about the same time and were connected in the same way that Hess's discussions of the two were connected.

If this view is correct, if the "Theses" were part of Marx's first response in December 1844 to Stirner's book, most of the troubling questions about the "Theses" that have persisted since their publication are easily cleared up. First, the origins in Marx's 1844 writings of most of the points made in the "Theses" (Meszaros's argument) makes sense—Marx, like Hess, would have been defending revolutionary socialism with a Feuerbachian alienation theory.

Second, the fact that none of the basic ideas of Marx's "materialist conception of history" appear in the "Theses" (as Barbalet points out) also makes sense—Marx had not yet broken with Feuerbach's approach and was still trying to make it self-consistent in light of Stirner's criticism.

Third, the strange fact that Marx was trying to distance himself from Feuerbach even while trying to shore up the general Feuerbachian approach makes sense—it was Feuerbach’s failure to extend his work to real social relations that left the door open to Stirner’s attack. Ironically, Marx himself had already accomplished just the task that was lacking, *but in works that remained unpublished, and thus unknown at the time*.

Fourth, the fact that neither Marx’s December review of Stirner’s book nor the “Theses” were further developed for publication makes sense—Hess’s article made essentially the same arguments and thus rendered a public response by Marx both unnecessary and redundant.

Finally, the riddle-like quality of the “Theses” (pointed out by Althusser) and the fact that the “Theses” lend themselves to such a variety of interpretations makes sense—just as Hess’s article “The Recent Philosophers” appeared to Lobkowitz much too confused for any meaningful analysis (and for the same reason), Marx’s “Theses” are quite ambiguous outside the context in which they were written, the Stirner-Feuerbach controversy.

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**REPLACES AD PAGE.**

# Althusser and the “Theoretical Antihumanism” of Marx

Marta Harnecker

Many prestigious intellectuals throughout the world have criticized Louis Althusser for attempting to exile the human being from Marxism. He has been accused of reducing the human being to a simple puppet of structures, denying the role he or she takes in history. Is not his provocative thesis about “Marx’s theoretical antihumanism” (1970, 229) the best proof of this?<sup>1</sup>

## *Ideological context for Althusser’s thesis*

To understand what the French philosopher wanted to say with these words, let us use his own method to analyze his thought; first let us examine the ideological context from which the thesis emerges. It came about at a time of open debate, following the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in February 1956, and it dealt with the problems of socialism and the criticism of the cult of personality.

This congress took place at a time of socialist euphoria. Not only had the “red tide” expanded throughout the world, but the USSR, notwithstanding the immense material damage suffered by the war, had become the world’s second economic and military world power. Furthermore, according to the declarations of the CPSU, the stage of developed socialism had been attained, and we were entering the stage of the construction of

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communism. The state was no longer a class state, but that of an entire people. The Soviet Union proclaimed the slogan "Everything for man, and respect for the legality and dignity of the person." The working-class parties celebrated the conquests of socialist humanism. Marxist intellectuals sought the theoretical guarantees for these themes in *Capital*, and even more in the works of the young Marx. Human alienation came to be a central theme. The problems of humanity were discussed and the matter of class struggle was forgotten. The philosophers in the socialist countries sought answers in the great contemporary Christian thinkers: Maritain, Mounier, Teilhard de Chardin.

Althusser wrote his polemical article "Marxism and Humanism" eight years after the beginning of the "thaw" initiated by the Twentieth Congress, when the euphoria had begun to decline and the failure of official de-Stalinization began to cause profound malaise within intellectual circles. It became apparent that the indictments made by Khrushchev and those in power intended "the prologue," as Isaac Deutscher says, "also to be the epigone of de-Stalinization" (1976, 117). After all, the process had been initiated by Stalin's own collaborators, a radical settling of accounts might reach them. "After showing the enormous skeleton hidden in the closet they again shut the door" (118). Rather than being the prelude to clarification of many matters relating to the problems of constructing socialism, the indictments did nothing to break the collective amnesia of the Soviet people, given the decades of counterfeit history. The facts were denounced, but the causes were not investigated.

The analytical vacuum of the past was to be filled with reflections on *social humanism*. At that time Erich Fromm called on various intellectuals to take on the work that subsequently appeared in the United States on this topic. Althusser rejected a request to participate because the content of the topic was "contrary to the general line of the project." He argued that the debate, couched in those terms, did not allow existing dogmatism to be overcome, but was limited to incursions in what he disparagingly called "bogus 'Marxist' philosophizing on man" (1976a, 149).



Why would he attack with so much spite those who were honestly involved in restructuring the "humanist" character of socialism after the horrors and errors of the Stalinist period? Why present such a provoking thesis in that context?

The reason is simple. Althusser notes how strong the reflections on humanism have been in the Marxist intellectual media and sees clearly that this path leads to a theoretical impasse that will prevent going beyond the recognition of the errors of the Stalinist period to understand what caused these errors. What is really at play is the possibility of resolving the problems of socialism. Althusser is convinced that they will not be resolved if the intellectuals dedicate themselves to reflections on humankind; they can only be analyzed and resolved by studying the material conditions that brought them about. These conditions have to do with production relations in the socialist countries: the lack of correlation between juridical property and real appropriation and between Stalinization and the degree of socialization of the forces of production, the problem of the division of labor that is not foreign to the ideological apparatus of the state, the relationship between a single party and the state and the consequences.

According to Althusser, the concept of "personality cult" is foreign to Marxist theory and even though it may denounce practices as "abuses," "errors," and in certain cases "crimes," it explains nothing about these conditions and their causes. The most dangerous thing is that this concept pretends to explain what in reality it does not explain and, therefore it cannot but divert the investigations of those who wish to clarify the facts (1976c, 80). The acerbity of his critiques and the provocative character of his thesis are explained by his belief that the stick had become so curved toward the side of humanism that it was necessary to curve it back in the opposite sense, toward "antihumanism," so that it would recover its straight position.

This attitude is not exceptional. In all theoretical debates the tendency is to exaggerate one's own thesis to differentiate it from the contrasting thesis. We know that this concept was not foreign to Marx and Engels. It was exactly this emphasis on

material production, against the idealism that dominated the ideological field of the time, that motivated an economic and evolutionist reading of Marxism.

The impact on Althusser of what was occurring theoretically and politically among Marxist intellectuals at that time was so great, and he viewed the theoretical vacuum as so vast, that he abandoned his initial project of a grand thesis on the relation between philosophy and politics in the nineteenth century—a survey that seemed to him necessary for understand Marx’s thought—and he began to write about topics that allowed him to bring back to Marxism its critical and transforming character.

***What Althusser’s thesis does not deny***

Before taking incursions into Althusser’s knotty thesis it is important to state, against often-heard accusations, that his thesis on “Marx’s theoretical antihumanism” does not, in the first place, deny that the objective of the theoretical effort and the political struggle of Marx and of Marxists is a full realization of human potential. Althusser, interpreting Marx, clarifies at the beginning of his article “Marxism and Humanism” that “the objective of the revolutionary struggle has always been the end of exploitation and hence the liberation of man” (1970, 221).

In the second place, he does not deny that there may exist humanist concepts in the world that play a positive role in the class struggle and serve as motivation for the people in their struggle for liberation.

Althusser does not deny, for example, the historical merit of humanist ideologies that fed the struggle against feudalism and against the church, but maintains that one should not forget that these ideologies are inseparable from an ascending bourgeois class and express its aspirations. This is done by translating the demands of a mercantile and capitalist economy sanctioned by the bourgeois mercantile laws to a new language, replacing the old Roman laws. “Man as subject, free man, subject to his thoughts is, above all, a man free to possess, to sell and to buy, a subject with rights” (1976a, 176).

How do we then explain the critiques made of Althusser on

the matter of humanism? I believe their origin may lie, in part, in the excessively radical expressions used by Althusser to separate his reflections from those of humanist philosophers of his time. But I believe the fundamental reason is a superficial and incomplete reading of his works, which are for the most part quite coherent. It is my belief that Althusser has been misunderstood both during the snobbish pro-Althusserian epoch as well as in the anti-Althusserian period that followed.

It is interesting to note that those who accuse Althusser of antihumanism symptomatically forget the word *theoretical*, which, in his thesis, modifies the term *humanism*, and without which it is impossible to understand what Althusser is talking about. He does not speak of outright antihumanism but of *theoretical* antihumanism.

What his thesis proposes is that "the category of man plays no theoretical role in the work of Marx" (1976a, 173). But what does Althusser mean when he says that this category does not have a theoretical role? For Althusser a category plays a theoretical role when it forms part of a whole in solidarity with other categories and cannot be suppressed without altering the function of this whole. In this sense, what is meant by the qualified term "theoretical humanism" is the position that holds man to be the center of the world in the philosophical sense of the term, that is to say as an originating and ending essence of the world (1976a, 176).

Now, the thesis of *theoretical antihumanism* in the works of Marx cannot be separated from his other thesis, affirming that Marx has produced a profound theoretical revolution and inaugurated a new science: the science of history, to be considered as such because there exists a delimited type of historical determinism that Marx expresses under the notion of "*determination in the ultimate instance.*" The magnitude of this scientific discovery cannot be understood if one does not accept the existence of an *epistemological break* or *rupture* between the thinking of the young Marx, which represents his ideological prehistory, and the thinking of the mature Marx, founder of the science of history, in which the human being disappears as the subject of the historical process.

Let us analyze briefly these theses beginning with the epistemological rupture.

***The epistemological rupture: The human being disappears as theoretical concept***

According to Althusser, Marx was not able to arrive at his scientific theory without a radical critique of the philosophy of the human being that had served him as a foundation in his younger years.

In his first works two stages can be seen. The first is dominated by a liberal rationalist humanism closer to Kant and Fichte than Hegel (when he combats press censorship, feudal laws, Prussian despotism). In his works of that time, Marx holds that human beings are called upon to be free, freedom is only attained through reason, and reason takes form in the state. That is why he argues for freedom of the press and considers critical journalism as the very essence of politics. At that time he is convinced that reasons well presented can bring about change in society.

In a second stage, Marx, like all the neo-Hegelians of his time, was disillusioned with a state that remained deaf to reason, and he became enthusiastic about the humanism of Feuerbach, which allows the concept of nonreason to be understood as alienation; in this alienation is human history (1970, 225).

Althusser notes, as is generally recognized, that in the *German Ideology* in 1845 Marx broke with this humanistic problematic about generic human essence and alienation. Furthermore, this break with all theory that bases history and politics on the essence of human beings marks in a radical manner the evolution of his thinking.

Later he expanded on this by saying that “*something* irreversible really *does start* in 1845,” but that it is a matter of a “continuing break,” beginning “a long period of work.” The new science of history evidently did not emerge “ready-made, from Marx’s head” in 1845. At that moment it “has not yet got rid of all its past—of all the ideological and philosophical prehistory out of which it has emerged” (1976b, 66-67). Nobody should be surprised that in those years Marx used ideological notions or

philosophical categories which he would later discard.

This theoretical rupture—which is only possible because Marx is able to advance toward positions of class not seen before, toward proletarian class positions—is reflected in three inseparable aspects: first, in the formation of a theory of history and politics based on radically new concepts: “the mode of production, social formation, infrastructure, superstructure, ideologies, classes, class struggle, etc.” (1976d, 153).<sup>2</sup> Second, in a radical critique of the theoretical pretensions of all philosophical humanism; and third, in the definition of humanism as an ideology (Althusser 1970, 227).

“The theoretical antihumanism of Marx goes beyond a simple settling of accounts with Feuerbach: it also questions the existing philosophies of society and history, and the tradition of classical philosophy, and therefore all bourgeois ideology” (Althusser 1976a, 177-78). Althusser holds that the category of man appears neither in the central texts of Marxist philosophy, nor in Marx’s theory of social formation and history.

What is under discussion is not humanism in general, but the *theoretical* intent of a humanistic conception that attempts to explain society and history by taking human essence, the free human subject, the subject of moral and political action as the starting point. Althusser holds that Marx was only able to found his science of history and write *Capital* because he broke with the theoretical intentions of all humanism. Althusser states:

In *Capital* Marx shows that what determines in the last instance the social formation and allows us to know it is not the phantasm of human essence or nature; it is not man, nor even “men,” but a relation, the relation of production, that forms the base, the infrastructure. (1976a, 179)

The social relations of production cannot be considered only as human relations, relations among people. They are relations between agents of production, that is, between those who have a determined function in the production of material goods. The relation between them depends on the form in which they relate

to the means of production—whether they are owners of the means of production or direct producers. This relation between people passes, therefore, through a relation with objects, the means of production. One of the greatest theoretical mystifications that can occur is to think that social relations are only human relations, when things also intervene, the means of production extracted from the material world.

Marx considers human beings as “carriers” of a function in the process of production. Their performance is determined by the relations of production.

### *Determination in the last instance*

Some commentators have seen an internal contradiction between the Marxist concept of historical process as a process of development subject to laws—that is to say, a determined type of determinism—and the importance that Marxism attributes to class struggle, that is, human action in history. If it were a matter of the same economic determinism that rules the processes of nature, the contradiction would be flagrant, but this is not the case. To understand the specificity of the determinism that rules the historical process, Marx uses the term “determinism in the last instance.”

Althusser believes that this expression, notwithstanding its innocuous aspect “transforms from top to bottom the preceding conceptions dominating society and history.” To explain how he conceives of this determinism, Marx considers society under the metaphor of a building. That is, he adopts the form of a spatial device, assigning certain places in that space to the different realities” (Althusser 1976a, 151).

The base of the building or infrastructure is constituted by an economic structure or a set of relations of production. Over this the juridical-political and ideological superstructure is erected, and it is determined in the last instance by the infrastructure. If there is a last instance, there must be other determining instances. That is why Althusser considers this device to play a double role: on the one hand, it radically differentiates Marx from any mechanistic position, and on the other, it “introduces in the determination an array of different instances, which supposes

that society is a differentiated whole, complex and articulated, such that the last instance [economic] fixes the real limits of all the others [juridical-political and ideological], their relative autonomy and the performance of the base itself, as well as the efficiency of this action" (1976a, 153).

To affirm that the infrastructure is the determining structure in the last instance is the equivalent of differentiating from all the idealistic philosophies of history and to adopt a materialistic position. Indicating that it is *only* a determination in *the last instance*, however, amounts to differentiating from all mechanistic determinism and adopting a dialectical position.

Althusser points out that Marxist dialectics have nothing to do with Hegelian dialectics, given that Marx "places dialectics before the real conditions of action, protects it from speculative madness, prescribes to it the obligation of being materialistic, that is, to recognize that its own forms come prescribed by the materiality of their conditions" (1976a, 154).

But Marx only limits himself to indicating where one must begin to reflect about the causality of the science of history itself; his work contains theoretical development dealing with this new type of determinism. I believe that to delve deeper into it one would need to study the character of the laws as tendencies that rule the world of capitalist production and the role that the class struggle plays in the tendencies that counteract these laws. Let us remember its formulations about the declining rate of profit.

For a long time, intellectuals as well as political leaders forgot the specificity of Marxist determinacy and fell upon an evolutionist interpretation of historical events, closer to the mechanistic causality of the natural sciences than to the new type of causality discovered by Marx. Thence derives the evolutionist interpretation of the crisis in the capitalist world that announced the final hecatomb. We cannot deny that there are classic Marxist texts that lend themselves to this interpretation; one of them is Lenin's presentation of imperialism as the *final* phase of capitalism (1964, 22: 187–304).

Thus we see the importance of those thinkers who insisted that the structural crisis of capitalism does not necessarily lead to

revolution, but may lead to two ways out: a reformist response in the restructuring of the system, or a revolutionary response that seeks to destroy the old system and inaugurate a new one.

***Marxism: Where human beings disappear as subjects of history***

Let us examine now the thesis that Althusser presents on history as process without a subject.

Marx holds in the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: “Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past” (1979, 103). It is nothing other than this which Althusser wants to express in his controversial thesis about “process without subject.”

For Althusser, given that individual human beings act *in* and *under* the determinations of the *forms of historical existence* of social relations of production and reproduction, they cannot be considered “‘free and constituent’ subjects *in the philosophical sense* of the terms” (Marx 1979, 103). And given this they cannot be considered, philosophically speaking, the *Subject* of history. Men are subjects *in* history and not *of* history, which is to say they are not the exclusive devices of history. History does not depend in their exclusive will, but they act in history and depending on their action it may take one specific direction.

According to Lenin, no conflict exists between historic need and the importance of the individual. Nor does the idea of historical need undermine the role of the individual in history, because history is made up precisely of actions by individuals who are indubitably personalities. “The real question that arises in appraising the social activity of an individual is: what conditions ensure the success of his actions, what guarantee is there that these actions will not remain an isolated act lost in a welter of contrary acts (Lenin 1960, 159).

Marxism does not exclude combat; on the contrary, it helps to find the place where combat is most effective in the transformation of the world. “But this place,” according to Althusser, “is



not a point and is not something fixed, it is a system articulated by positions ruled by the determination in the last instance" (1976a, 160).

Althusser holds that bourgeois philosophy has taken over the notion of *subject* with precise ideological ends, to transform it into its primary philosophical category; to formulate the question of the subject of knowledge, of the subject of ethics, and of the subject of history. Marx, on the contrary, does not conceive of real history as something susceptible to reduction to *one* Origin, *one* Essence, or *one* Cause that would be its *identifiable* and *responsible* Subject able, therefore, to account for everything that happens in history.

When proposing the radical thesis of "process without a Subject," Althusser attempts to trace a "'demarcation line' (Lenin) between dialectical-materialist positions and bourgeois or petty-bourgeois idealist positions" (1976e, 98). "History therefore," Althusser states, "does not have a Subject, in the philosophical sense of the term, but a *motor*: that very class struggle" (99). It is not the individual or humankind in general that makes history, but rather the masses, that is to say the social forces committed in the class struggle.

When the true sense of Marxist theory, with respect to history and the role that it plays in the class struggle, is not understood, two mistakes may be made with serious consequences for the revolutionary movement: economism or spontaneism, which predicates the submission of laws to economic development and to voluntarism and which ignores the minimal objective conditions necessary to initiate a victorious revolutionary action.

### ***Theoretical versus practical humanism***

In the end, Althusser cannot deny, as some of his critics pretend, that a preoccupation with human beings has been at the center of the work of Marx, before and after the break. What he indicates is that in the works of young Marx this preoccupation entailed an effort to conceive human problems by using humanistic categories; in his mature works these categories disappear

and new categories, very different from the previous ones, take their place.

What Althusser questions is the *theoretical* value of the concept, not the reality indicated by it, nor, therefore, the need for the existence of humanistic *ideologies*, given that these may have an important practical ideological function.

For him it is clear that the historical nonreason and inhumanity that weigh heavily on the past of the USSR—the terror, the repression, the dogmatism (evident in the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU)—are what explains the avalanche of reflections on humanism in the socialist countries and between Marxist intellectuals of that time (Althusser 1970, 237).

Althusser does not deny the importance of the indictments contained in these discourses, he attributes to them a *practical* importance. They put the finger on the wound, but *do not heal it*.

The term *humanism* serves to indicate a set of realities, a set of errors committed in the socialist countries, but, we insist, *we are not given the means* to recognize them. They allow us to recognize the errors, but not their causes, and, therefore, prevent us from rectifying them. There is no historical therapy for the errors committed if we stop at the symptoms of the illness and do not proceed to the causes.

In order to resolve the problems presented in the absence of a practical humanism in the socialist countries, it is not enough to speak of humanity, it is necessary to seek what determines this dehumanizing effect in a social system whose final objective, the one presented by Marx, was the full development of individuals respecting their differences—that is to say, their individuality.

It goes without saying that all collectivism that annuls individuality—that is to say the features that differentiate each member of society—is a *flagrant deformation of Marxism*. Suffice it to remember that Marx criticized bourgeois law for artificially pretending to bring human equality rather than recognizing human differences; he therefore held that a truly just distribution had to take into account differentiated needs. Hence his maxim: “From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.”

Althusser criticizes the *resort to humanistic ideology* not because he is unfamiliar with the importance of the underlying preoccupations of humanism, but rather because this resort to ideology rather than to theory leaves us without the theoretical resources for a genuine solution to our problems.

"It would be a mistake," he states, "to elaborate a theory of individuality that ignores the effects of the social structure upon the individual." Thus he rejects the reductive argument that all that has occurred in the USSR, and in the socialist countries in general, is due to the cult of personality.

It is necessary to compose a theory "about the forms of existence of individuality, starting with the existing structures of the existing means of production: it is the only way to deal with all that concerns the *effects* on individuality pertinent to the existing structures. It is necessary to invert the question and the majority of the problems that make sense will find solutions when they are understood as a function of social structures. The historical therapeutics of these structural effects upon the individual will be announced then in terms of a transformation or creation of the structures needed to resolve the problems: structures of economic, political, cultural, and individual existence, etc." In the end it makes clear that this method can only touch upon questions that pertain to its own sphere and not others. "For the questions that remain to be solved it will be necessary to seek for answers in *psychoanalysis* and with respect to that which will some day be built: a theory for ideological practices, such as art, religion, etc." (Althusser 1968).

Thirty-two years have passed since the appearance of those initial works by the French philosopher that elicited so many criticisms. And what has happened to the theoretical production of Marxist intellectuals? What is the theoretical instrument we count on today to analyze the crisis and fall of socialism? What rigorous analysis exists at this time for the actual form that the capitalist means of production have taken? Where are the projects that offer an alternative to neoliberalism in the first and third worlds? What can we do so that "democratic" socialism (nothing other than the current version of "socialism with a

human face” of the seventies) may become a concrete alternative project and not mere generalities—noble as they may be—such as the respect for human rights.

To conclude, I should like to make a proposal: that Cuba convoke an agenda of the principal themes to elaborate that will bring the science of history, as founded by Marx, up-to-date, and thus ideologically prepare our people to struggle for a better world, where people do not prey on one another but are sisters and brothers.

*Center for the Recovery and Dissemination of the  
Historical Memory of the Latin-American Popular Movement  
Havana, Cuba*

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#### NOTES

1. The principal works of Althusser on this theme are: first, “Marxism and Humanism,” an article that appears in June 1964 in *Cahiers de l’ISEA*, published subsequently in the compilation of articles that make up the book *For Marx* (1970); second, essays written between May 1965 and June 1967 in response to the polemic begun in France in the French Communist Party journal *La nouvelle critique* that are collected in the book *Polémica sobre marxismo y humanismo* (Harnecker 1968); and third, essays published in Spanish as *Para una crítica de la práctica teórica (respuesta a John Lewis)* and in English as *Essays in self-criticism* (London: New Left Books, 1976). The final book mentioned contains the following works: his June 1972 “Reply to John Lewis” (1976b); his May 1973 “Remark on the Category: ‘Process without a Subject or Goal(s)’” (1976e); his May 1972 “Note on ‘The Critique of the Personality Cult’” (1976c); “On the Evolution of the Young Marx” (1976d), an article written in July 1970 and originally published in French as *Eléments d’Autocritique* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1974). Another work on the topic is his June 1975 “Soutenance d’Amiens” (1976a).

2. Althusser corrects here his first writings holding that philosophical revolution dominates scientific “rupture.” Thus, when settling accounts with his previous philosophy in 1845, Marx “finally abandoned his bourgeois liberal and petty-bourgeois revolutionary positions to adopt . . . new revolutionary-proletarian class positions in theory.” Because of this, “he was able to lay down the foundations of the scientific theory of history as history of the class struggle” (1976b, 69–70).

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### **Program of the Japanese Communist Party**

**Adopted on July 27, 1961  
Amended on July 23, 1994**

#### **1**

The Japanese Communist Party, inheriting the progressive and revolutionary traditions of the nation, was founded on July 15, 1922 as a party with scientific socialism as its theoretical basis in the midst of an upsurge in the struggle of the Japanese people and the liberation struggles of the world's people, which included the Russian October Socialist Revolution.

At that time Japan was already one of the world's major monopoly capitalist countries, but its rural areas were still under the rule of a semi-feudal landlord system, based on which the absolute Tenno (Emperor) system, as the mainstay of the Japan's reactionary ruling forces, exercised despotic power through the military and the police, depriving the people of their rights and freedom and moving along the road of aggression and war against the Asian countries.

On the basis of these specific conditions in the regime, the party pursued a policy of working, in the first instance, for a democratic revolution aimed at achieving a peaceful and

*Nature, Soci-*

*ety, and Thought, vol. 7, no. 3 (1994)*

democratic Japan, which could then be developed into a socialist revolution and the building of a socialist Japan. Defying frequent severe ordeals which were inflicted on it, the party adhered to the correct policy of working to achieve a democratic revolution first and fought against the despotic rule of the Tenno system, which had deprived the Japanese people of all their rights, and for overthrowing the Tenno system to win people's sovereignty, freedom and human rights.

The party waged a struggle to abolish the semi-feudal landlord system and free the land for the peasants.

The party took up the struggle to radically improve the living conditions of the working class suffering from exploitation by monopoly capitalism, and for the rights and a better life for all working people, the intellectuals, the women and the youth.

The party worked to develop and disseminate progressive and revolutionary culture.

The party fought against the interventionist wars of Japanese imperialism against the Russian and Chinese revolutions, and opposed the war of aggression against China, a forerunner of World War II, in defense of peace in Asia and elsewhere in the world.

The party took up the cause for the liberation of Korea and Taiwan, which were at the time colonies of Japanese imperialism, and worked for the complete independence of the colonial and semi-colonial nations in Asia.

As a result of the imperialist war and the brutality of Tennoist power, the people were forced to suffer great hardships with many people losing their lives and the country being devastated. The war of aggression caused the death of more than 20 million people in the countries of Asia.

Under the brutal repression of Tennoist power, there were very great difficulties and setbacks for the party activity, but many JCP members fought dauntlessly, in spite of persecution and imprisonment, in defense of the party's banner, and fought various betrayals. In this struggle, not a few party members were deprived of their lives as a result of the oppression.

When all the other parties joined the current of promoting reaction, aggression and war, it is of everlasting significance in

the cause for democratic change in Japan that the Japanese Communist Party did not yield and continued to struggle by hoisting the banner for peace and democracy.

Japanese imperialism was defeated and the Japanese government accepted the Potsdam Declaration. This declaration of the anti-fascist Allied Powers had the basic content of aiming to end militarism and to establish democracy, and showed that the only way out for the Japanese nation was to realize a peaceful and democratic Japan. This proved that the policy the party had advocated so dauntlessly was fundamentally correct. In addition, the outcome of World War II as a whole makes clear how groundless are such attacks that hold the Japanese Communist Party responsible for the war on the grounds that it could not prevent the war of aggression.

## 2

The defeat of the aggressive bloc, Japan, Germany and Italy, and the victory of the anti-fascist Allied Powers and the world's democratic forces in World War II radically changed the internal and external conditions for the liberation of the Japanese people and opened the way for the people to rise up from the agony they had suffered under the Tenno regime.

Openly resuming its activities after the war, the Japanese Communist Party demanded a thorough implementation of the Potsdam Declaration with complete democratic transformation, and struggled in the van of the democratic forces for abolition of the Tenno system, the liquidation of militarism and the reconstruction of the country in the people's interests. Based on this position the party published the "Draft Constitution of People's Republic."

That the core of the Allied Forces which occupied our country was the United States of America, which, armed with atomic bombs, was aiming at world domination with plans for war against the Soviet Union, was the first step to lead the Japanese people's destiny to the unprecedented situation of subordination to a foreign imperialist power. From pressure by world democratic forces and the Japanese people, a series of "democratization" measures were introduced, but the United States kept them

within limits necessary for their domination over Japan and tried to abort the democratic revolution. In such circumstances Japan's existing Constitution was adopted, containing provisions on peace and democracy based on people's sovereignty while at the same time including clauses on Tenno and other reactionary provisions. Although the Tenno system lost its absolute character, it was retained as a kind of bourgeois monarchy and has been used by U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital as a tool of their political and ideological domination and the revival of militarism.

Aiming to achieve its ambition of world domination, U.S. imperialism violated the Potsdam Declaration, brought Japan virtually under its exclusive control, implemented a policy of reviving Japanese monopoly capital as its junior ally, while consolidating Japan as a military base, and suppressed the liberation struggles of the Japanese people. As the agrarian reform basically liquidated the semi-feudal land ownership and landlord system as far as farmland is concerned, now Japanese monopoly capital became the core of the reactionary forces. In order to thwart the democratic revolution and to maintain its rule, Japanese monopoly capital betrayed the nation's interests and faithfully swung into line with U.S. imperialism.

The Japanese Communist Party opposed the occupation rule of the United States and the policy of national betrayal, reaction and plunder by Japanese monopoly capital, and demanded the immediate signing of an overall peace treaty and worked for the formation of a united front standing for national independence, democracy, peace and a better life.

Faced with the changing situation in Asia and the world, which included the victorious Chinese revolution, U.S. imperialism resorted to new means to achieve its ends. In 1951 the San Francisco Peace Treaty was concluded, without the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was signed at the same time. While recognizing Japan's independence in such a form as to help suppress the Japanese people's struggle for national independence, the aim of these treaties was actually to free themselves from their obligations under the Potsdam Declaration, to consolidate Japan as a vital U.S.

stronghold for its world domination, to bring Japan's ruling forces into further active cooperation with U.S. imperialism, and to revive and strengthen Japanese militarism.

The San Francisco system, legalized by the two treaties, was a framework of Japan's subservient alliance with the United States, and at the same time a system established jointly by U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital for war preparations and the plunder of the people, a system for oppressing the Japanese nation. Although overall U.S. imperialist occupation rule has been replaced by semi-occupation and the Japanese government's sovereign power is more than it was before, with Japan at least formally being a sovereign state, national sovereignty has been greatly impaired and genuine independence has not yet been restored.

The provision in the San Francisco Peace Treaty for renunciation of the Chishima (Kurile) Islands was an unjust measure contrary to the principle of territorial non-expansion which was a promise made by the Allied Powers during World War II.

The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was revised in 1960, with new clauses added on Japan-U.S. combined operations and economic cooperation, by which the military alliance's characteristic of subservience to the United States, which could involve Japan in a U.S. war, was fully developed and the actual degree of Japan's sovereignty and independence being infringed was rather increased.

### 3

Fundamentally, Japan today is controlled by U.S. imperialism and its subordinate ally, Japanese monopoly capital. Although Japan is a highly developed capitalist country, it is virtually a dependent country, with an important part of its land, military matters and other affairs of state being controlled by U.S. imperialism.

A great number of U.S. military bases exist in Japan with Okinawa being made the biggest U.S. military base in Asia. U.S. imperialism at its will infringes on Japan's territorial waters and air space and has even brought nuclear weapons into Japan, the country whose people have suffered three times from nuclear

weapons in Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Bikini Atoll.

Japan's Self-Defense Forces, which are virtually under the control and command of the U.S. armed forces, are a tool for maintaining Japanese monopoly capitalist rule. At the same time they have been assigned a role in U.S. world strategy, with a scheme to send them abroad and then to increase the scale.

U.S. imperialism still maintains its dominant power over Japan's military and diplomatic affairs. Time and again in the United Nations and at other international political arenas, Japanese government representatives play the role of spokespersons for the U.S. government.

Japanese monopoly capitalism, which is the center of Japan's reactionary regime, has been reorganized and strengthened under the new conditions of U.S. rule; while it has the characteristics of state-monopoly capitalism subordinate to the United States, it has now become the world's second biggest economic power which is mainly based on the exploitation and plunder of the Japanese working class and working people. Economic subordination to and dependence on the United States, coupled with the marked backwardness of agriculture compared to industry and the contradictions between the widespread small- and medium-sized enterprises and the big enterprises, is making the contradictions in Japanese monopoly capitalism more complex and sharper. This has made the livelihood of the workers, farmers, working citizens and other sections of the people, the overwhelming majority of the population, more and more difficult and insecure.

The workers are distressed by the backward forms of exploitation inherited from the prewar period and new postwar types of exploitation existing in parallel, the resultant poor working conditions, including the system of low wages, long working hours and intense work with frequent labor accidents, and insecure employment plus unemployment. As for the farmers, policies of imposing the import of U.S. agricultural products in the name of the "liberalization of trade" and of cutting family-based farms are pressurizing them, depriving them of the conditions for managing their farms. Especially the Japanese government's acceptance of the 1993 GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) "agreement" on the liberalization of rice imports has driven

Japan's farmers and its agriculture into a more serious position. This "agreement" tramples on the principle of respecting the economic sovereignty of member countries, which is a basic element of GATT. This has exposed the nature of U.S. economic hegemonism. The livelihood of working citizens is always faced with difficulties arising from heavy taxation and pressure from the big enterprises. The small- and medium-sized enterprises are dominated and plundered by the big enterprises and are forced to be subcontractors, or go bankrupt. The existence of vast numbers of poor people has also become a constant phenomenon.

By contrast, a small number of the big enterprises are constantly and avariciously accumulating wealth on an ever-increasing scale, and growing into giants and multinational companies. Their development policies which give priority to profit have caused the nationwide destruction of the natural and living environment. To maximize their profits, the big enterprises use the state machinery to exploit wider sections of the people, strengthen their corrupt ties with reactionary politicians and the top bureaucrats, and spread corruption, bribery and rot, thus hastening the decay of Japanese monopoly capitalism. Their rule is growing more and more incompatible with the nation's interests.

To expand the export of commodities and capital, Japanese monopoly capital is binding our country to U.S. world strategy and taking the road of reviving and consolidating militarism and imperialism. Japanese monopoly capital, based on its colossal capital accumulation, now occupies a powerful international position in the export of both manufactured goods and capital. In the world imperialist camp, it is playing an active and aggressive role in all military, diplomatic and economic fields as a junior ally of U.S. imperialism. At the same time the advance of Japanese monopoly capital in the world market, by using the power of its international competitiveness based on low wages, has created serious trade friction between Japan and the United States and other capitalist countries, which is one of the important focal points of world capitalist contradiction.

U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital have legalized the *fait accompli* of rearmament in violation of the peace and

democratic provisions of Japan's Constitution, and are reinforcing the Self-Defense Forces and strengthening the setup for sending the SDF abroad and for Japan-U.S. combined operations, which integrates the SDF into U.S. military strategy. They are conspiring to revise the Constitution to achieve their aims on this, thus strengthening political reaction and the revival of militarism. The forcible introduction of the single-seat constituency system in 1994, which aims to enable reactionary parties to monopolize the overwhelming majority of Diet seats by two major parties competing for a majority, marked a significant step in the direction of reviving militarism and political reaction. The single-seat constituency system is an undemocratic system and is behind the times, which runs counter to the main trend in the world. It is now an important task for Japanese democracy to abolish it at the earliest possible time.

On the whole the commercial mass media in Japan are playing the role as the key supporter of reactionary rule. They expressed a certain reflection on their war cooperation during World War II, but coupled with retaining their attitude of absolute admiration for the Tenno, this was not attended with any substantial self-examination of their role in misleading the public opinion. Even after the war, they have made it a principle to carry reports taking sides with reactionary forces at critical moments of politics, including the conclusion and revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and the introduction of the single-seat constituency system.

But the reactionary rule by U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital embodies many irreconcilable contradictions. In the last 50 years the Japanese people's movements and organizations, exercising their democratic rights, have advanced through their historical struggle against the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and others. The reactionary ruling circles, with the anti-communist propaganda as their greatest means, even by making use of the Soviet Union's demise and other events, are trying to split, undermine and emasculate the people's movement. But the contradictions between reactionary rule and the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people will inevitably intensify.



4

With the advent of the 20th century, world capitalism entered the stage of monopoly capitalism and imperialism. In almost a century that has followed, the undertaking for world peace, national self-determination and social progress has certainly made advances, in spite of many turbulences and twists and turns.

The socialist revolution which took place in Russia during World War I contributed to world progress in the period of Lenin's leadership, with achievements showing the real value of scientific socialism, in spite of the historical limitations of having to start from backward social and economic conditions coupled with many trials and errors. In particular this was shown by the fact that the new government declared its support for, and put into practice, the principles of national self-determination, peace, equal rights between men and women, an eight-hour working day, paid holidays and a social security system, which encouraged the world's working masses and the oppressed peoples, and greatly influenced the capitalist countries. Its significance in human history will not be lost even after the accumulated mistakes by Stalin and the subsequent Soviet leaders and resultant collapse of the Soviet Union.

The victory of the Soviet Union over Hitlerite German aggression in World War II, with the loss of some 20 million people's lives, was a great contribution to the overall victory of the anti-fascist Allied Powers. The historic significance of this fact, in spite of the many serious mistakes made by the Soviet leadership in its domestic and international policy, which have come to light later on, needs to be justly appraised.

After World War II, a number of countries in Europe and Asia took steps on the road toward socialism, and the colonial system headed for collapse worldwide. This was a new heavy blow to imperialist world rule. These changes immediately after World War II were followed by advances in a number of countries in the struggle against imperialist domination and aggression, which included the Vietnamese people's victory over U.S. imperialist aggression, and all this made a great contribution to social progress.

In the imperialist camp, moves were made to form military blocs centered on the United States in response to the changing situation. U.S. imperialism has violated the sovereignty of many countries, including developed capitalist countries, by means of military blocs, and the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie in those countries have sought the support of U.S. imperialism and sacrificed the sovereignty of their country to maintain their rule and for other purposes. The uneven development of capitalism has sharpened the contradictions in the imperialist camp, but the international forces of imperialism and reaction continue to mobilize through military and political alliances under U.S. imperialism to suppress movements for peace, national independence and social progress, and for maintaining their domination over the world's people. The policy of military blocs is inseparable from the U.S. economic hegemonism of establishing its economic hegemony and protecting its interests.

To effectively carry out its policy of aggression, U.S. imperialism employed cunning tactics by which it sometimes adopted a policy of "rapprochement" and "cooperation" with the Soviet Union and China on the one hand, and on the other concentrated on attacking countries which were not very big and were taking the path of national liberation and socialism. A typical example of this was the Nixon administration which pursued its war of aggression against Vietnam, and at the same time paid visits to the Soviet Union and China and expressed "friendly relations" with them. From early on the Japanese Communist Party saw through these maneuvers and characterized them as a policy of trying to defeat enemies one by one, and struggled to break them.

Even today imperialism's aggressive nature remains unchanged. Following the collapse of Soviet hegemonism, U.S. imperialism, as the world's only superpower, continues to maintain powerful armed forces which include nuclear forces, to carry out its hegemonist "world police" strategy for maintaining imperialist "order" by interfering in disputes all over the world. In Asia and the Pacific region, there have been marked U.S. moves, treating Japan as its junior ally, to establish and expand its dominant influence by a combination of a policy of military intervention and economic hegemonism, as seen in such maneuvers as

setting up the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). U.S. imperialism continues to be the main bulwark of aggression and reaction in the world.

After the end of World War II, would-be socialist countries came into existence in many parts of the world. In the Soviet Union, the first country to take steps on the road toward socialism, however, the Stalin leadership, following Lenin's death, discarded the principles of scientific socialism and took the wrong path internationally of hegemonism, and internally adopted policies of bureaucratism and despotism. These mistakes were inherited by subsequent leaderships, and sometimes became even worse. Hegemonism originally meant imperialism's foreign policy of hegemony and aggression. Therefore for a country which called itself socialist to carry out such a policy meant degenerating into social imperialism. Hegemonist mistakes were also made by some of the other would-be socialist countries. The negative realities born of these deviations conflicted with historical developments, and saddened concerned people throughout the world. It was especially serious that the hegemonism of the Soviet Union and others was manifest in interfering in the parties of other countries and furthermore in military invasions of other countries, which included the 1968 aggression against Czechoslovakia and the 1979 aggression against Afghanistan. These actions of interference and aggression were factors in creating international tension and harmed the ideas of scientific socialism which inherently has nothing to do with external intervention and aggression, and created difficulties and obstacles in the struggle and solidarity for national independence, peace and social progress. In this situation, the revolutionary movement in capitalist countries was in need of principled efforts more than ever for the movement's independent development. Defending the independence of revolutionary and democratic movements in every country and the principled position of scientific socialism, the Japanese Communist Party has resolutely struggled against hegemonist interference by any powers in the Japanese movement. Internationally, as regards U.S. imperialist aggression and past interference by the Soviet Union and others, the party has described hegemonism as an enormous evil obstructing develop-

ments in world history, and made consistent efforts to quickly overcome it.

The collapse of the regime in the Soviet Union and its followers in the Eastern European countries does not mean that scientific socialism has failed, but means the bankruptcy of hegemonism, bureaucratism and despotism, which deviated from scientific socialism. At the outset of the revolution these countries had socialism as their goal, but resulting from the leadership's wrong course, they collapsed before reaching a substantive socialist society. Taking a broad view, the demise of the historic evil of Soviet hegemonism has opened up new possibilities for a sound development of the world revolutionary movement.

The demise of the Soviet Union and other countries does not signify the superiority of capitalism. The contradiction within capitalism that it cannot control the gigantically grown productive forces of its own is sharply manifest on an unprecedented scale, both in today's Japan and the rest of the world, by worsening conditions for wide sections of the people, by recurring recession, increasing unemployment and environmental destruction. The danger of nuclear war continues to threaten the human race and the earth. The policies and actions of the U.S.-led imperialist camp for world domination are incurring struggles in wider areas of the world for political and economic independence as the pressing task of the people of respective countries, and are thus destabilizing the foundations of imperialist domination. The movement of the non-aligned countries against the strengthening of military blocs and against old and new forms of colonialism is playing an important part in world politics. In some developed capitalist countries, subservience to Soviet hegemonism caused considerable political and moral decline in some parts of the people's movements, and the negative effects from this are serious. In spite of this, various movements for a better life, rights, and peace and democracy are developing, including working class struggles.

It is important for the anti-imperialist forces and those seeking peace and progress to overcome the negative effects of the hegemonism of the Soviet Union and others, to demand peace

against nuclear weapons, national self-determination, democracy and social progress, and to achieve solidarity and the correct way ahead internationally and in respective countries. Developments in world history are accompanied by many vicissitudes, zigzags, and reverses which are sometimes just temporary, or which spread over a long period. But taking the broad view, it is inevitable that history develops in the direction of overcoming imperialism and capitalism and advancing to socialism.

Enormous nuclear arsenals which were amassed during the arms race of the past 40 years still exist and amount to some tens of thousands of bombs, and represent a very serious continuous menace to the human race. It is the duty of communists before anything else to persistently fight to eradicate this menace. To end the menace of nuclear war, there is no alternative but to eliminate nuclear weapons. Perpetuation of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) system, which the United States and others want, means institutionalizing nuclear weapons monopoly for the existing nuclear weapons possessing powers, and aims to impose on the world the hegemonism of U.S. imperialism armed with nuclear weapons. To establish world peace, it is just such a scheme by the forces clinging to nuclear weapons that must be defeated.

Today the call by the World Conference against A and H Bombs of "No more Hiroshimas, No more Nagasakis!" is being spread in various parts of the world. Even in the United States, the biggest nuclear weapons possessing power, a majority of the voters in its capital Washington, D.C., supported a 1993 voter initiative to amend the U.S. Constitution, which included the elimination of nuclear weapons. If the government of a country which calls itself a "civilized country" continues to permanently cling to nuclear weapons, the contradiction between it and the people will inevitably deepen. If all the forces which agree with the goal of non-nuclear weapons unite on a wide basis, irrespective of thought, political creed and religious belief, it is really possible to isolate the forces clinging to nuclear weapons and to establish a non-nuclear weapons government for realizing the aim of eliminating nuclear weapons. Only by strengthening the non-nuclear weapons movement and public opinion and by isolating

the forces clinging to nuclear weapons, is it possible to open the road to the conclusion of an international agreement for a total ban on nuclear weapons. In the situation following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the argument is being made by some sections of the peace movements in the world that the enemy of peace has gone; but this is fundamentally wrong, because it fails to recognize world realities, and leads to denying the role of the people's movement in the struggle for peace.

For world peace, it is also of decisive importance that the right of nations to self-determination is thoroughly respected and not to allow this to be violated in any way.

In today's world situation, Japan has become the most important foothold in Asia for U.S. imperialist policies of aggression and reaction. The United States attaches importance to the establishment of a hegemonist system in Asia and the Pacific region. The aggressive Japan-U.S. military alliance not only hampers the independent and peaceful development of Japan but also threatens peace in Asia and the rest of the world. Major advances in the struggles of the Japanese people, the only A-bomb victim nation, against nuclear weapons and for peace, and for their own liberation in their country, will be an important contribution to peace and social progress in Asia and the rest of the world. It is also certain that advances by the revolutionary movement in Japan, a developed capitalist country, will be extremely significant for the process of social progress in world history. To promote the Japanese people's liberation struggle and win a victory is both the responsibility of the party and the working class to the Japanese people and their international duty.

## 5

From all these facts taken as a whole the future prospect is that the revolution which Japan now faces is a new democratic revolution, a democratic revolution of the people against the rule of U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital.

To accomplish such a revolution means overthrowing the anti-national, anti-popular rule of the forces centered on U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital. It also means achieving

genuine independence and the democratic transformation of politics, the economy and society. Only in this way can the hardships the people now face be settled and the fundamental interests of the vast majority of people be defended. Only by such a revolution can we, with certainty, open the road to socialism, the historic mission of the working class.

The immediate central tasks of the party are to fight against the policy of war, national oppression, the revival of militarism and imperialism, political reaction, and exploitation and plunder by U.S. imperialism and Japanese reactionary forces led by Japanese monopoly capital, and to develop the demands and struggle of all people for national independence, democracy, peace, neutrality and a better life. In the course of these struggles, we must build a powerful and broad united front of the people against the rule of U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital, that is, a National Democratic United Front on which to establish a government of the people, embodying the democratic power of the people to build an independent, democratic, peaceful, non-aligned and neutral Japan with better living conditions for the people.

The key points of the party's immediate action program are as follows.

The party fights for abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and all other treaties and agreements which undermine national sovereignty, and for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Japan and the complete removal of U.S. military bases. The party demands and fights for a policy to ensure a peaceful and neutral Japan, which will abrogate Japan's military alliance with the United States and take part in no military alliances but establish friendly relations with all countries. The party fights for the genuine independence of Japan, including abrogation of the articles of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which undermine Japan's sovereignty. The party makes peaceful diplomatic efforts to get the reversion of Habomai, Shikotan and all the Chishima Islands to Japan.

The party calls for the prevention of nuclear war and the elimination of nuclear weapons, an urgent and vitally important task

for humankind, and struggles to achieve the conclusion of an international agreement for a total ban on nuclear weapons and their elimination, in solidarity with other peoples. The party demands state compensation for the Hibakusha, victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The party strives for general disarmament, the dissolution of all military blocs and the removal of foreign military bases, and for the establishment of a genuine collective security system and peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems.

The party defends the right of nations to self-determination, that every people independently decides the course and destiny of their own country, and opposes any violation of this right by imperialism and hegemonism.

The party opposes the neo-colonialist international economic order and aims to establish economic sovereignty for all countries and an international economic order based on equality and justice.

The party opposes the irresponsible profit-first operations of multinational enterprises and others which destroy the environment and natural resources on a global scale, and strives for them to be internationally controlled and for the earth's environment to be preserved.

In the spirit of "Workers and Oppressed Peoples of All Lands, Unite!" the party supports struggles for human progress, in solidarity with the working class and all other peoples in the world who are struggling for independence, peace, democracy and social progress.

The party opposes any attempt to change Japan's Constitution for the worse, and demands and fights for complete implementation of the Constitution's peace and democratic provisions. The party opposes all reactionary attempts to deprive the Japanese people of their democratic rights and demands abolition of the single-seat constituency system. The party opposes any detrimental revision of the parliamentary system, the local government system, the education system and the judicial system and demands their democratic reform based on the spirit of sovereignty being vested in the people. The party opposes the revival



and strengthening of militarism, including the reinforcement and nuclearization of the Self-Defense Forces and sending them abroad, and demands their dissolution. The party fights to overcome Tennoist-militarist ideology and prevent its revival. The party demands that reactionary gangster groups and militarist organizations, and political terrorism be eliminated. The party fights for extension of the people's democratic rights, and demands the abolition of repressive laws and regulations and repressive machinery, such as the Anti-Subversive Activities Law and the Public Security Investigation Agency, which violate the people's rights, and opposes legislation for militarism and for suppressing human rights.

The party defends the freedom of religion and strives for complete application of the principle of the separation of religion and politics.

The party strives to eliminate all the semi-feudal remnants in all aspects of Japanese society. On the so-called Buraku question, it continues to strive for the integration of the people.

The party opposes the exploitation and plunder of the workers, farmers and other working citizens by Japanese and U.S. ruling circles, and strives to abolish the low-wage system, to ensure work for the unemployed and semi-unemployed and to radically improve the living conditions of all the people.

The party demands that all workers should have the right to organize, to strike and to engage in collective bargaining, and works to establish freedom and democracy in the workshop. The party opposes capitalist rationalization, dismissals, low wages and the intensification of labor and demands wage increases and equal pay for equal work. The party works for legislation to guarantee the life and rights of the workers, including a minimum wage system, drastic cuts of working hours and controls on inhumane intensified labor.

The party opposes the agricultural policies, including the liberalization of rice imports and the forced reduction of rice cultivation, as being submissive to the United States and in the interests of monopoly capital, which sacrifice the independent development of Japanese agriculture and farm management and endanger the food supply. The party struggles for democratic

agricultural policies that would make agriculture a key sector of national production and guarantee the development of Japanese agriculture and farm management. The party stands for defending the life and rights of farmers, for cutting the monopoly prices of agricultural materials and equipment, for reducing heavy taxes, for affordable prices for agricultural products and more agricultural funds to guarantee reproduction, and works for the democratic development of agricultural cooperatives. It demands better wages, working conditions and secure jobs for agricultural and rural workers. It fights for the preservation of forest resources and the independent development of forestry, for democratization of the management of State- and publicly-owned forests and fields and for the defense of farming, life and the rights of farmers in mountain areas plus those of forestry workers.

The party demands agricultural land reclamation and improvements at State expense, the freeing of arable land in forests and fields owned by the State, public or big mountain and forest owners to be made available to farmers, and the return to farmers of the land expropriated by the U.S. forces and the Self-Defense Forces. It opposes the buying-out of land and the jacking-up of land prices by monopoly capital, to ensure that land is available for the people's life such as for housing, and promotes the transferring of unused land owned by monopoly capital to the State and local governments.

To improve the living and fishing conditions for Japanese fishers, the party opposes maritime exercises by U.S. forces and the Self-Defense Forces and the restrictions on fishing areas imposed by them, and demands the end of oppression and plunder by monopoly capital and effective use of the 200-nautical-mile fishing zone. It struggles for securing funds and equipment and strives for democratic development of fishing cooperatives. It demands more jobs, safety measures and better wages for fishing workers.

The party strives to improve the business and living conditions of such working citizens as self-employed producers and traders, and professional people.

The party demands that the life and rights of the Ainu people,

who can be called an ethnic minority in Japan, be guaranteed and that their culture be defended.

The party fights for protection of the life of intellectuals and for ending any circumstances in which freedom for research and cultural activity is restricted and suppressed.

The party opposes all inequalities imposed on the work and social life of women and fights for the extension of their democratic rights, equality between men and women and the raising of women's social status, and for the guarantee of the care and protection of motherhood by the State.

The party works for the freedom of the democratic organizations and activities of the youth and students, both male and female, for an extensive improvement of the facilities and conditions for their study, sports, cultural activities and recreation, and for them to have higher positions in work and social life, and especially for achieving the right to vote at 18.

The party demands complete implementation of the Children's Charter and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the establishment of social facilities for children's health and welfare and measures for such ends.

The party works for the full extension of a social security system and its establishment that will allay anxiety and hardship caused by social poverty, unemployment, sickness, mental and physical disabilities and old age among workers, farmers, fishers, working citizens and other sections of the people, to enable them to enjoy a healthy and cultural life. Especially, to ensure old people's life, the party works for improving and extending the pension, medical care, welfare and primary care systems.

The party supports the demands of small- and medium-sized enterprisers who oppose the plunder and rule of Japanese monopoly capital and the oppression of U.S. imperialism.

The party opposes environmental destruction and pollution caused by the activities of monopoly capital, military bases and others, and defends nature and the environment.

The party opposes the use of nuclear energy for military purposes, and demands a fundamental change in nuclear energy development policy and establishment of democratic control over nuclear energy, based on strict observance of the Three

Principles—*independence, democracy and openness, with priority for safety.*

The party works for the elimination of calamities and accidents and strives to change the politics of giving priority to the military and monopoly capital in disregard of human life, which is a source of calamities and accidents. Especially, to prevent accidents in mass transportation means, particularly aircraft, in which many human lives can be lost at one time, strict controls are called for on neglect of safety in pursuit of profits by respective companies.

The party inherits and popularizes the valuable national tradition of Japanese culture, and struggles for the democratic development and improvement of education, science, technology, the arts and sports, and for the freedom of thought and expression.

The party opposes financial and economic policies which give priority to the interests of U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital, and fights for the independent peaceful development of Japan's economy. It seeks to abolish the trade restrictions imposed by U.S. imperialism, opposes Japanese monopoly capital expanding overseas in an imperialist way, and promotes equal and mutually beneficial trade relations with all countries. It struggles to end the domination and privileged position of U.S. capital over Japan's economy. It demands the enactment of a Taxpayers Charter, democratic reform of the taxation system to one which abolishes the privileged treatment for the big companies and reduces the taxes imposed on the working people, and drastic curtailment of military expenditure and appropriation of the savings from it for people's welfare. It demands democratic control over monopoly capital including financial institutions, based on the position of defending the people's interests.

## 6

In the course of working to achieve these demands, and fighting for national independence, democracy, peace, neutrality and a better life, the Japanese Communist Party will help to establish, expand and strengthen trade unions, farmers' unions and other mass organizations among all strata and sections of the people,

and as fighting against reactionary parties and groups, it will work to consolidate cooperation and unity between democratic parties, groups and people, and build up a National Democratic United Front. The National Democratic United Front will work to unite around itself workers, farmers, fishers, working citizens, intellectuals, women, youth, students and small- and medium-sized enterprisers and all those who love peace and their homeland and defend democracy.

The party regards all democratic parties and groups, and non-partisan working people as class brothers, and sincerely calls on them to unite and makes every effort to achieve this aim. This calls for us to fight every wrong tendency that would oppose or destroy such unity. If cooperation and unity between the democratic forces and a wide range of people on the basis of immediate pressing tasks is rejected or obstructed by reason of differences in world outlook and views about history, this will seriously damage the fundamental interests of the cause of liberating our homeland and the people.

In this struggle for unity of the people on a broad basis, the party must be closely united with the mass of the people and exercise its role as a dynamic force in the forefront of the struggle. In particular, it must inspire the working class with the ideology of scientific socialism and the spirit of international solidarity for anti-nuclear peace and the defense of national sovereignty, convince them of the democratic revolution and the cause of socialism in Japan, and strengthen their class militancy and political leadership. Simultaneously, it must spread influence of the party among farmers, fishers and working citizens, and establish class cooperation between the workers, farmers, fishers and working citizens. A condition of decisive importance for the development of the National Democratic United Front is the expansion and consolidation of the Japanese Communist Party, the strengthening of its political capacity, and building the party into a powerful mass vanguard party. It is important throughout the whole process of this undertaking to fight against repression, subversion and divisive maneuvers, and against anticommunism and other ideological attacks by the Japanese and U.S. ruling circles.

It is important for the forces of the National Democratic United Front to actively win seats in the Diet and to develop struggle closely linked with mass struggles outside the Diet. If the forces of the National Democratic United Front can win a stable majority, the Diet will be converted from an institution of reactionary rule into one serving the people, thus providing further favorable conditions for the revolution.

The party strives to gather the majority of the people into the National Democratic United Front, and on this basis to form a government. In the process of the formation of such a government the party will pay adequate attention to and make necessary efforts on the question of a government that can help to overthrow the rule of U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital. In certain circumstances, the party will endeavor to establish a united front government even with limited aims, on which all democratic forces can reach temporary agreement.

To establish a government based on the National Democratic United Front is a battle to be fought against all obstacles that the Japanese and U.S. ruling circles will try to place in the way. The basis for strengthening this government into a revolutionary government, a revolutionary power, is the broad unity of the democratic forces and the advance of mass struggles toward the goals and tasks of the coming democratic revolution. If a powerful National Democratic United Front against U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital can be developed, and the antinational and antipopular ruling forces can be defeated, then the government based on such a united front will become a revolutionary government, which will end the rule centered on Japanese monopoly capital, and sever Japan's subservient relationship with U.S. imperialism, restore Japan's national sovereignty and put power firmly into the people's hands.

Such power, which by its very nature means a democratic coalition of the people based on the workers, farmers and working citizens, will achieve the tasks of national independence and democracy, in solidarity with the forces of peace and progress throughout the world, and will prevent the revival of political and economic rule of monopoly capital; it will abolish the monarchy, radically transform the reactionary state machine to build a demo-

cratic republic, and establish a people's democratic state system with the Diet as the supreme state organ both in name and reality.

The building of an independent, democratic and peaceful Japan will fundamentally change the course of history of the Japanese people. They will be liberated from the rule, oppression and plunder of U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital, and become for the first time the masters of their own country. The gains on freedom and democracy won by the Japanese people will be carried forward historically, enriched and developed in three respects: Civil-political freedom, freedom of existence and freedom of the nation. The sovereignty and prestige of the nation will be restored, and Japan will cease to be a hotbed for wars of aggression, and will become one of the solid cornerstones for peace in Asia and the world.

The democratic revolution in this country which is at the stage of monopoly capitalism will objectively provide the groundwork for transition to socialist transformation. In keeping with the demands of the situation and the people, and based on support by the majority of the people, the party will strive to develop this revolution into a socialist transformation aiming at total abolition of the capitalist system.

## 7

By the building of socialism, freedom and the well-being of the Japanese people will be extensively developed. The aim of socialism is to liberate the people from all forms of exploitation under the capitalist system and to finally end poverty. For this, it is necessary to establish working-class power with the task of building socialism, to socialize the means of production by transferring its key parts from the hands of big business into the hands of society, and to institute socialist planning of the economy for the effective use of productive forces without waste to ensure abundance and prosperity for the people's life and the Japanese economy. In promoting this, consistent importance must be given to respecting the private initiatives of the farmers, fishers and small- and medium-sized traders and producers, to flexible and

effective economic management by a combination of a planned economy and a market economy and other relevant means, to bringing socialist democracy into full bloom, and to making a positive contribution to world peace by defending the right to national self-determination and working for the elimination of nuclear weapons. These must be firmly maintained. A so-called "controlled economy," which regulates and makes uniform the consumer life of the people, has nothing in common with what is projected as economic life in a socialist Japan.

The party will maintain the united front policy for cooperating with all parties, groups and people who support the approach toward building socialism. With regard to working farmers, working citizens in cities and small- and medium-sized enterprisers, the party will respect their interests and endeavor to guide them with their consent to a socialist society.

Socialist society is the first stage of communist society. At this stage, all exploitation of man by man will be eliminated, and the division of society into classes will be ended. In this socialist Japan, the principle "From each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her work" will become a reality, and material prosperity, spiritual blossoming and democracy for the broad range of people will be ensured at a level higher than ever before.

In the higher stage of communist society, with very great developments of productive forces and the creation of new substance to social life, society will reach the stage of "From each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her need." Organized and systematic violence and in general all violence against people will be abolished. In this way a communist society will come into being, which, in principle, does not need coercion and in which state power itself will become superfluous, a society of truly equal and free relations between people.

Thus, humankind will establish conditions that really guarantee existence and a life worthy of human beings, and will take steps into a new stage of development in human history.

Striving to build such a society, the Japanese Communist Party persists with its present struggle against the rule of U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital until victory is won



for the people's revolution for genuine independence and democracy.

English text as provided by the International Department of the Japanese Communist Party.

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## Book Reviews

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*(Un)Belonging? Geschlecht, Klasse, Rasse und Ethnizität in der britischen Gegenwartsliteratur: Joan Rileys Romane* [(Un)Belonging? Sex, Class, Race, and Ethnicity in Contemporary British Literature: Joan Riley's Novels]. By Jana Gohrisch. Frankfurt on Main: Peter Lang, 1994. 250 pages, DM 74.

Jana Gohrisch's case study of Joan Riley's novels is important in more than one way. First of all, it is not only the first and only extensive discussion of this Afro-Caribbean British woman novelist, but it is also a rare work on the British literature of ethnic minorities. This academic neglect of a by-now-considerable body of literature—including its marginalization, if not absence, in university courses—mirrors the wider social and cultural marginalization of ethnic minorities. The extended silence suggests an implicit ratification of the exclusion of minority cultures in the academy—a complicity by neglect on the part of the very cultural tradition in which such a neglect is least justifiable, but perhaps most likely.

Gohrisch explicitly makes a point of the political implication of her work when she stresses that she wants to contribute to the dismantling of the still-dominant Western myth of literature/culture as homogeneous, white, male, middle-class, and heterosexual. In contrast, this book makes the reader aware of intercultural collision, institutionalized racism, class tension, and changes in women's role in the family and economy.

Gohrisch starts out with an analysis of the sociocultural context within which Riley's novels were written, drawing particularly on feminist and cultural theory. Her central thesis is that

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notions of gender, class, race, and ethnicity represent essential components in the construction and constitution of historical subjects and are, therefore, also relevant for both the production and reception of literature. In other words, Gohrisch demonstrates that the individual's social identity is shaped by his or her experience of class, gender, and race. Such an approach is particularly relevant in the light of much feminist criticism that stresses the priority of one of these categories in women's experience. While many (West) German feminist critics, such as Ilona Bubeck, consider the experience of gender roles as the essential element of the individual's social experience or the (former) GDR feminists Brunhild de la Motte and Birgit Gabriel highlight women's class background, Gohrisch's approach is largely indebted to left-wing Anglo-American feminist theory (Judith Newton, Deborah Rosenfelt, Sarah Mills, and many others) that tries to work out the interrelationship between gender and class experience as a constituent moment of the production and reception of cultural texts.

Moreover, Gohrisch understands the categories *race*, *ethnicity*, and *gender* as essentially sociohistorical and cultural constructs. To be sure, an (unproven) assertion—such as patriarchy, a relatively independent form of social exploitation affecting all social spheres, classes, races, and ethnic groups and already existing before the development of class society (19)—contradicts her point and almost collapses her argument. It is certainly important to insist on the cultural construction of these categories—even though she, again, merely asserts this point—in order to avoid any form of biological predetermination and thus an unchangeable status quo. It is also methodologically crucial to insist on the interrelationship of these four categories in order to be able to work out the complexity of the construction of historical subjects. Yet, while Gohrisch does not offer an easy or narrow hierarchization of these categories, one is still tempted to ask whether they are of equal relevance for an individual's social experience. Gohrisch simply avoids the question in the same way as she does not commit herself to a definition of *class* when she uses the concept rather unsatisfactorily as “referring generally to social relations” (20).

According to her cultural-materialist perspective, Gohrisch

places Riley's work within the wider sociohistorical and cultural context of the literary tradition of ethnic minorities in Britain. Such an approach is especially necessary, since minority cultures are still quite unknown and information about them not very easily accessible. The reader learns about the wide variety of cultural production, such as folklore, reggae music, political theater and drama, the large body of fiction and poetry, as well as its influence on British culture. The fact that there are also a number of publishing houses, such as Dangaroo Press, Hansib Publications, Akira Press, and others, supports her thesis that ethnic-minority culture has become well established and that there is a considerable interest in it among both British and Caribbean readers. Hence, her demand to see postwar Britain as essentially multicultural is very convincing.

This detailed documentation further illustrates, on the one hand, the coherence within the cultural production of these minorities and, thus, also possibilities of cooperation, such as the Radical Alliance of Poets and Artists or the Sistren Theatre Collective. Gohrisch argues that on the basis of the common experience of poverty, unemployment, crime, or homelessness a variety of Afro-Caribbean artists of very different political commitment united in order to give a voice not only to the problems of ethnic minorities in Britain, but even more, to provide their members with a sense of cultural identity and of a history of their own (46). As in the case of the English-based Caribbean Creole, Gohrisch shows how Afro-Caribbean writers employ this language in order to convey "the consciousness of a collective tradition" in terms of common history and experiences, and a tradition of myths, values, and symbols.

On the other hand, Gohrisch points out the considerable differences within this seemingly homogeneous tradition because of the different class and gender background of writers and artists. While, for example, white feminist writers focus primarily on middle-class women and their rebellion against economic exploitation, family violence, and social discrimination, or minority male writers on middle-class men and their cultural alienation, most Afro-Caribbean woman writers—including Joan Riley—direct their attention towards impoverished or suffering working-

class women. Put differently, the specific nature of the experience of these Caribbean women, as Gohrisch's discussion of Riley's novels later illustrates, has produced a very powerful body of literature that relates gender and ethnic discrimination in Britain from a working-class perspective that is rarely to be found in male minority or feminist literature.

Starting out from her thesis that the individual's social identity is shaped by the contradictory interplay of class, gender, race, and ethnic background, Gohrisch's discussion explores how the heroines of Riley's novels reflect this process. She demonstrates how in *The Unbelonging*, for example, Riley portrays a heroine in whom sexual harassment by her father has produced a sense of inferiority just as disastrous for her further development as her experience as a Black woman at an English university. At the same time, Riley stresses—according to Gohrisch—that the sexual brutality of Black men is, more often than not, the result of their own slum life, so that the struggle against sexual and race discrimination must be closely related with the struggle against the economic conditions of the slums. Riley does not seem to offer an easy answer as to how this struggle is to be waged. In Gohrisch's view, the open questions of the novels rather mobilize the readers to think about them themselves and act accordingly.

Gohrisch's detailed and very sensitive analysis convincingly refutes evaluations of Afro-Caribbean women's fiction as artistically conventional and, by implication, of little interest because it allegedly provides at best a sociologically "accurate" transcript of reality. It is true that Riley employs a conventional critical-realistic narrative method in contrast to postmodernist narrative strategies. Gohrisch does not reject *per se* this style of writing as outdated, because, in her view, the essential social relations and contradictions of bourgeois society—which provided the historical basis for the development of this method—still exist. In contrast to the postmodern abandonment of the ideal of bourgeois-liberal society and the free subject, Riley adopts this ideal of bourgeois emancipation as the criterion for her artistic evaluation, for she speaks for women who never benefited from even this limited ideal. In other words, before these women can begin to question

this ideal, they first have to be put into a position of realizing it.

Moreover, Gohrisch is surely right when she argues that a critical-realistic mode of narration does not preclude formal experiment and artistic innovation, but, rather, invites it. As, for example, in *The Unbelonging*, Gohrisch demonstrates how, on the one hand, the conventions of the *roman à clef* provide Riley with a useful narrative form in order to discuss the contradictory search of a young Afro-Caribbean woman for an identity after her emigration to Britain. This way, Riley was able to trace the influence of the social and ethnic background in shaping her protagonist and, at the same time, criticize the various forms of discrimination against Afro-Caribbeans as well as showing possibilities of resistance against this discrimination.

On the other hand, Gohrisch also demonstrates Riley's creative adaptations of this conventional form. According to her, Riley has, for example, replaced the omniscient, uncontradictory nineteenth-century narrator with a personal, first-person narrator. By revealing the protagonist's emotional and intellectual development, Riley avoids the narrative distance to her heroine, which, in turn, allows the reader a more intimate identification with her. At the same time, she is not forced to present a ready answer. Rather, the evaluation of the heroine's painful development is handed over to the reader who, as Gohrisch suggests, is asked to become active.

Although Gohrisch is very appreciative of Riley's novels, she also recognizes contradictions. For example, she demonstrates Riley's reluctance, in *Romance*, to come to terms with the race relationships. This reluctance results—according to Gohrisch—from Riley's view that only after the consolidation of a "Black community" should one consider the relationship between whites and Blacks. Gohrisch is right when she argues that the idea necessarily ignores the race problem. Hence, the white characters in Riley's novels—if they appear at all—are flat stereotypes, and the happy end, as in *Romance* where the heroine's mulatto child signals the beginning of a new life, uncritically dissolves the race problem into irrelevance.

Finally, the study is also remarkable in another way. Gohrisch illustrates how modern critical theory can be employed in a meaningful way to make sense of modern capitalism without creating a metadiscourse that can only be understood by a handful of scholars. It is to be hoped that an English translation of the book will make Gohrisch's study accessible to a wide audience.

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*The Politics of Cruelty: An Essay on the Literature of Political Imprisonment.* By Kate Millett. New York: Norton, 1994. 336 pages, cloth \$23.00; paper \$13.00.

A "profoundly disturbing subject." Indeed. "Nothing in the world frightens as much as torture, nothing so outrages, cries out as hard to be cried out against." The author's empathy and indignation well up from personal experience, from her books *Sexual Politics* and *The Basement*, both of which examine "power and domination, oppression and abnegation" (11). She recalls the crystallizing moment when in Paris she encountered a photograph of a crucified Cambodian boy that projected his "infinite suffering," "changed my life in an instant," and "brought me to write this book" (145-47). And this photo connected her to another, seen when age eleven, of Nazi concentration camp victims (148-49), and another of a martyred female saint (150-53).

This deep personal revulsion against cruelty and her sympathy for the victims charge this book with extraordinary intensity. But the book also gains energy from Millett's knowledge. During the seven years of the book's preparation, she read widely, not only accounts by surviving victims, but histories of individual countries, and general histories, such as Nigel Rodley's *The Treatment*



of *Political Prisoners under International Law* and Edward Peters's *Torture*. She understands the origin of torture in state terrorism and its global extent.

The book was attacked severely by Michael Scammell, knowledgeable founder and first editor of PEN's *Index on Censorship*. He complains that only two chapters deal with the massive genocides committed by Stalin and Hitler, only half a chapter each on the major terror nations China and Iran, while six chapters are devoted to Western colonialism and an entire chapter on Northern Ireland. He finds the entire section on Bataille and the erotics of torture largely irrelevant. And he condemns "other serious methodological problems"—for example, that Millett fails to distinguish between memoirs/documents and fiction, treating all sources as "literally factual"; that she is sometimes inaccurate; that she treats past conditions as though in the present; that her tone is "shrill"; that she is unoriginal; that she "obfuscates" the evil by her "tendentious political schema;" and that she is "ultimately insincere" for being more interested in her own responses than in the "appalling subject matter." Instead of "narcissism," he calls for "discipline, self-restraint and humility" in the discussion of torture (*New Republic*, 16 May 1994, 33–38).

But of course one book can offer only an introduction to the evil. My bibliography of more than three thousand entries fails to expose it all, so widespread is the terror. She reminds us of her omission of "East Timor, the Philippines, Iraq, or scores of other" terror states, but she does cover the terror in over a dozen countries. Beginning with Stalin's Gulag, she moves to the Nazi Holocaust, the French in Algeria, the British in Northern Ireland, South Africa, India (Aurobindo Ghose, 1908), Kenya (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1977), China (Nien Cheng, 1960s), Argentina (Alicia Partnoy and the "Little [torture] School"), Brazil (*Nunca Mais*), Guatemala (the village of Tzalala slaughtered), El Salvador (massacres), and chapters on photography, on the film *Closet Land* about the torture of a female prisoner, and on the torture of children.

It is undisciplined, unproportioned. But her purpose was not to write an academic history, and if her method sometimes seems

like “a free-floating undifferentiated cry of pain,” as another reviewer writes, Millett does achieve her aim of showing cruelty to be “one of the true faces of the twentieth century” (Melissa Benn, *New Statesman and Society* [August 5, 1994] 38, another negative review). Her epigraph from the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Torture (1975) appropriately, perfectly, establishes Millett’s legal, moral, and spiritual case against torture: “Torture means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted by or at the instigation of a public official,” to obtain information or a confession, to punish, or to intimidate. Kate Millett feels that pain and suffering, and struggles to communicate something of it to readers. And, I think, successfully.

Although Melissa Benn prefers more “organized insight into organized evil” and more “detachment,” I think Millett’s method is the right one to motivate readers to struggle against torture, for it foregrounds witnesses, “the literature of witness,” what the French call, she reminds us, *témoignage*. (The “testimonio” in Latin America, where it is a major genre, as John Beverly argues in *Against Literature*.) Millett employs both memoir and fiction. For example, Primo Levi’s story of his *Survival in Auschwitz* and various accounts from Claude Lanzmann’s documentary film *Shoah* explain the Nazi extermination system. French repression against the Algerian uprising is conveyed through the autobiography of Henri Alleg, tortured by French soldiers. Bobby Sands’s torture by British wardens comes from a collection of stories by IRA prisoners. *Kaffir Boy* recounts Mark Mathabane’s experiences under apartheid. In fiction, Solzhenitsyn’s *The First Circle* exposes the Gulag and Sipho Sepamla’s novel, *A Ride on the Whirlwind*, adds to Mathabane’s revelations about South Africa.

Millett wrote to me, “The prisoners go on screaming, the torture continues.” Yet she believes that, “if we know these things, there is some hope that they can be changed; if we care, there is the possibility of action against this evil,” which, “with fortitude and determination” we can “dismantle and abolish” (11-12).

We can gather some hope from the demise of Stalin’s Gulag

and Hitler's extermination camps, from the decline of torture states in Latin America, the ending of apartheid in South Africa, and other liberations. But we must do more than hope or pray. According to Edward Peters, one country in three practices torture. And the change from state terror to democracy does not necessarily change the underlying structures which produced torture. In Argentina, after more than eight thousand people were abducted, tortured, and murdered, amnesty laws stopped prosecutions of the torturers; in Uruguay a popular referendum supported an amnesty for the military torturers; after more than a decade of torture in Egypt, the one trial of security forces on torture charges resulted in acquittal; Turkey's Anti-Terror Law makes it virtually impossible to prosecute torturers; in India torture remains routine; and on and on.

I especially urge four kinds of actions. We should commit more money and time to organizations like Amnesty International and International and U.S. PEN to free political prisoners. Such organizations must be made more effective. We should extend immigration laws for victims of torture and free them from the political bias that has admitted tens of thousands of Cubans and excluded thousands of victims of U.S. client states. We should increase rehabilitation centers for torture victims and their families, like the one established in Copenhagen by Dr. Inge Genefke. And since healing depends upon national accountability, truth, and justice, we should support in every way the exposure of the torturers by name--the policemen and soldiers who beat and burned and raped and murdered people, and the officers and leaders who commanded them, and then went home to their wives and children. The Nazi war crimes trials attempted to do this. Dr. Mengele is known to the world. But the savage torturers in Greece, Chili, El Salvador, the Soviet Union, South Africa, Turkey, Peru remain unexposed and unpunished.

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*Days of Anger, Days of Hope: A Memoir of the League of American Writers, 1937–1942.* By Franklin Folsom. University Press of Colorado, 1994. 376 pages, cloth \$27.50

“Got a job which is a wow, a lulu and a pip!” So begins Franklin Folsom’s fascinating account of his five years as executive secretary to the League of American Writers.

Folsom interacted daily with some of the most famous and influential figures in twentieth-century literature. Page after page is filled with always interesting, sometimes unusual and amusing, anecdotes concerning writers ranging from John Steinbeck and John Dos Passos to John Howard Lawson, Dashiell Hammett, and Lillian Hellman. We are treated to delightful tidbits such as Alexander Tractenberg’s observation that William Z. Foster had fifty two chapters in his books because he wrote one chapter a week, “a habit he got from his long experience as a railroad worker. Trains run on schedules.”

But despite the many delicious recollections involving the quirks, inconsistencies, and brave generosity of writers in the turbulent days leading up to World War II, this is not a volume trading in literary gossip. This is a memoir at once personal and political, and its sole purpose is to tell the story of the League in strong, solid prose.

We read of the thousands of writers who were targets of lengthy FBI investigations—and of J. Edgar Hoover’s secret plans for the detention of writers in special concentration camps. There are gripping accounts of the League’s assistance in the bold rescue of hundreds of European authors from certain death at the hands of the Nazis. The League was also instrumental in its support and advocacy of working-class issues and in its dedication to progressive policies through constant pressure on the Roosevelt administration. It also was a staunch defender of the federal arts projects under constant attack by right wingers in Congress. Some twelve million people a year attended WPA dramatic performances alone, which sometimes brought classical and politically charged theater to enthusiastic rural audiences.

Through the Freedom of Information Act, Franklin Folsom was able to obtain copies of his FBI files, which makes for occasionally hilarious reading as he comments on some of the ludicrous inaccuracies and distorted information reported by field agents assigned to watch him. But beyond blundering and lazy agents, these records are chilling in the revelation that our own government kept innocent people under surveillance for extended periods of time, loyal citizens whose only crime was the written word and a commitment to the belief that the world ought to become a better place for everyone.

This is not, however, only a list of noble and selfless struggles. Folsom is unflinching in his frank and honest evaluations of the inner workings of the League. He is not afraid to admit that mistakes were made, and that the League suffered reversals, setbacks, and betrayals, some at the hands of people who had once been high-profile League defenders or active in advancing its goals. He clarifies its relationship with the Communist Party (CPUSA) when Earl Browder was its general secretary, and gives us an insider's view of how events such as the United Front, the Hitler-Stalin pact and the U.S. entry into the war affected League unity.

Finally, although it is outside of the official scope of his memoir, Folsom provides us with a glimpse into the aftermath of the war when domestic reactionaries unleashed the House Un-American Committee (HUAC). These politically motivated persecutions targeted League and ex-League members, destroying lives and careers and driving many into exile or underground. The right wing understood only too well the power writers have to shape public perceptions and sympathies, and moved to silence them with a grim fury. In the light of recent events, it is not difficult to draw certain parallels between these postwar struggles and our own time as the Republican Party and the religious right wing once again conduct a full-scale assault on freedom of speech and artistic expression.

Anyone who thinks that writers are solely creatures of self-interest need only read how over seven hundred poets, novelists, journalists, and screenwriters joined together to raise one powerful voice against fascism, both at home and abroad. Academic

and popular histories of the era have generally neglected the League, or, if they mention it at all, obscure its importance and downplay its influence on the direction of American social thought. But it did have an impact. Never before or since has so much literary genius been in the service of social action.

This is valuable and recommended reading for anyone who wants an insider's understanding of the hopes, conflicts, successes, and failures of quite possibly the most significant literary organization in American history. It was a brave time for writers and many rose to the challenge. We owe Franklin Folsom a debt of gratitude, not only for writing this memoir but for showing us that writers can make a difference.

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## ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

**Joel R. Brouwer, “The Origins of Jack Lindsay’s Contributions to British Marxist Thought”**—A number of themes characterize Jack Lindsay’s varied and vast literary output, themes which both anticipated the work of subsequent British Marxist thinkers, and assisted in reclaiming for Marxism an aesthetic perspective. Lindsay began forming these ideas as a youthful proponent of romanticism, but they reached maturity as components of his Marxist thought. One such idea is the concept that cultural production is dialectically linked to the productive activity of everyday life. Together, they are transformative of society. This is closely connected to Lindsay’s assertion that “base” and “superstructure” are dialectically linked, rather than determining and determined. A third concept is that certain historical moments are ripe for the ferment of change. Often revolutionary, these moments are history’s growth-surts on the way to an ideal society. Finally, Lindsay asserts that the individual artist also experiences these moments of ripeness, but not, as in the modernist’s view, as existential experiences. Rather, they are dialectically linked to past and future.

**Ernie Thomson, “The Sparks That Dazzle Rather Than Illuminate: A New Look at Marx’s ‘Theses on Feuerbach’”**—Since their publication in 1888, Marx’s “Theses on Feuerbach” have been the subject of much analysis by Marxist scholars. Beginning with Althusser’s view that the notes are “deceptively transparent riddles” and drawing on all evidence now available, this paper proposes answers to some vexing questions about the meaning of the “Theses” and their relationship to both Marx’s earlier and later writings. The central thesis is that these notes cannot be understood apart from the context of the controversy in Germany in the early 1840’s involving two Young Hegelian philosophers, Max Stirner and Ludwig Feuerbach.

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**Marvin Glass, “Reproduction for Money: Marxist Feminism and Surrogate Motherhood”**—Following the Baby M case, much ink has been spilled over the issue of surrogate motherhood. The idea of legalizing commercial surrogacy has been condemned in most feminist circles, with a prostitution model counterposed to the free-market approach. The author examines in some detail the views of Christine Overall and attempts to allay her feminist concerns about the prostitution model (though later raising his own). He then argues that much of her critique of free-market surrogacy was anticipated by Marx. It is sometimes said that there is a major political inconsistency within feminism. In the abortion debate “prochoice” feminists insist on women’s right to control their bodies. But some commentators have noted that when the issue of commercial surrogacy arises, the same people deny poor women the choice of contract pregnancy, deny that they have a right to use their bodies in this way. The author suggests that the inconsistency is removed when liberal principles are replaced by Marxist-feminist ones. Finally, the author responds to those who claim that commercial surrogacy does not involve the commodification of children.

**Marta Harnecker, “Althusser and the ‘Theoretical Antihumanism’ of Marx”**—Althusser advanced his thesis about Marx’s “theoretical antihumanism” in the ideological context of the discussions following the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He emphasized material conditions as a counter to the prevailing idealism among Marxist intellectuals of the time, because he believed that only in this way could the problems of socialism be solved. Althusser also argues that Marx inaugurated a new science of history, involving the concept of “determination in the last instance,” and this can only be understood in the light of the theoretical rupture in Marx’s thinking starting in 1845. The author calls for ideological work to make “democratic” socialism a concrete alternative project for the future.



## ABREGES D'ARTICLES

**Joel R. Brouwer, «Les Origines des contributions de Jack Lindsay quant à la pensée marxiste britannique»**—Plusieurs thèmes caractérisent la production littéraire étendue et variée de Jack Lindsay thèmes qui ont à la fois anticipés les oeuvres des penseurs marxistes britanniques subséquents et qui ont permis d'apporter une perspective esthétique au marxisme. Ces idées germèrent chez Lindsay alors qu'il était un jeune adepte du romantisme, mais elles mûrirent en tant que composantes de ses pensées marxistes. L'une d'elles est le concept soutenant que la production culturelle se lie dans une façon dialectique à l'activité productive de la vie quotidienne. Ensemble, toutes deux pourraient transformer la société. Un troisième concept affirme que certains événements historiques sont propices au ferment du changement. Souvent révolutionnaires, ces moments sont des accélérateurs de l'histoire en route vers une société idéale. Enfin, Lindsay constate que l'artiste individuel éprouve également ces moments de maturité, mais non pas, comme le pensent les modernistes, comme expériences existentielles. En fait, elles sont plutôt liées dialectiquement au passé et au futur.

**Ernie Thomson, «Les Etincelles qui éblouissent plutôt qu'elles n'illuminent: regarder de nouveau les «Thèses sur Feuerbach» de Marx»**—Depuis leur publication en 1888, les «Thèses sur Feuerbach» de Marx ont été sujettes à plusieurs analyses faites par les érudits marxistes. Commenant par le point de vue d'Althusser stipulant que les notes sont des «énigmes d'une transparence trompeuse» et tirant profit de toutes les preuves disponibles à l'heure actuelle, cet écrit propose des réponses à quelques questions troublantes sur la signification des «Thèses» et leurs rapports avec les premiers et derniers écrits de Marx. La thèse centrale est que ces notes ne peuvent être comprises sans considérer le contexte polémique de l'Allemagne en du début des années 1840 qui impliquait la confrontation entre deux jeunes philosophes hegelien: Max Stirner et Ludwig Feuerbach.

**Marvin Glass, «La Reproduction payée: le féminisme marxiste et la maternité de substitution»**—Suite au cas de

Bébé M, le sujet de la maternité de substitution a fait couler beaucoup d'encre. La plupart des cercles féministes ont condamné l'idée de la légalisation de la maternité de substitution commerciale, la comparant à un modèle de prostitution qui est à l'opposé de l'approche du libre marché. L'auteur examine en détail les vues de Christine Overall et tente d'apaiser ses préoccupations féministes liées au modèle de prostitution (bien que plus tard il énonce son propre modèle). Ensuite, il affirme que la majeure partie de la critique sur le libre marché des mères porteuses, émise par Christine Overall, a été anticipée par Marx. Souvent, on a dit qu'il y a une inconsistance politique majeure inhérente au féminisme. Dans le débat sur l'avortement, les féministes favorables au choix, insistent sur le droit des femmes à disposer de leur corps comme elles l'entendent. Toutefois, quelques commentateurs soulignent que lorsque la question du commerce des mères porteuses fait surface, les mêmes personnes ne tolèrent pas que des femmes pauvres fassent le choix de signer un contrat de mère porteuse; donc elles ne leur accordent pas le droit de disposer de leurs corps de cette manière. L'auteur suggère que cette inconsistance devient inexistante quand les principes libéraux sont remplacés par les principes marxistes féministes. Enfin, l'auteur répond à ceux qui affirment que le commerce des mères porteuses n'implique pas les enfants comme des marchandises.

**Marta Harnecker, «Althusser et «l'antihumanisme théorique» de Marx»**—Althusser avança sa thèse sur «l'antihumanisme théorique» de Marx dans le contexte idéologique des discussions subséquentes au vingtième congrès du parti communiste de l'Union Soviétique. Il mit l'accent sur les conditions matérielles pour s'opposer à l'idéalisme dominant parmi les intellectuels marxistes de l'époque, car il croyait que c'est par cette voie que les problèmes du socialisme se résoudreont. Althusser constate aussi que Marx inaugura une nouvelle science de l'histoire, qui impliquait le concept du «déterminisme du dernier cas», et cela ne peut se comprendre qu'à la lumière de la rupture théorique dans la pensée de Marx à partir de 1845. L'auteur demande que le travail idéologique soit fait pour faire du socialisme démocratique un projet concret alternatif d'avenir.