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CONTENTS

Vol. 8, No. 4 (1995)

In Memoriam

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Judith Joël Hicks 1929-1996

Member, Board of Directors and Editorial
Board, Marxist Educational Press

Scholar, activist, comrade, friend

"Instead of Leaders They Have Become Bankers of Men": Gramsci's Alternative to the U.S. Neoinstitutionalists' Theory of Trade-Union Bureaucratization

Victor G. Devinatz

Introduction

Two distinctly different theories purport to explain the process of bureaucratization often observed in the history of trade-union organizing. This article compares the theory of trade-union bureaucratization put forward by U.S. neoinstitutionalists, which is advocated or implicitly accepted by U.S. mainstream industrial-relations scholars today, with that of Antonio Gramsci. After laying out the two theories in some detail, I shall argue the weakness of the maturity/evolutionary theory in contrast to Gramsci's theory, and cite evidence concerning union bureaucratization in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) that provides empirical support for Gramsci's theory. Finally, the two theories will be analyzed in order to understand their significance for the U.S. trade-union movement's future in the 1990s.

In the context of the following discussion, *trade-union bureaucratization* will be defined as the removal of the power of rank-and-file workers to decide issues on the shop floor and the placing of that power into the hands of union leaders.

The first theory, which I shall designate the "maturity/

Nature, Society, and Thought, vol. 8, no. 4 (1995)

evolutionary" theory, is based on the writings of a number of scholars in the neoinstitutionalist tradition of industrial relations, currently the dominant framework in U.S. industrial relations. Depending largely on their observations of the growth and development of U.S. industrial unions affiliated with the CIO in the 1930s and 1940s, the neoinstitutionalist industrial-relations scholars have developed a highly deterministic, unidirectional, and linear theory that focuses on the internal processes occurring within the unions leading ultimately to bureaucratization.

The alternative theory, which I shall refer to as Gramsci's theory, is based on Antonio Gramsci's writings from 1919 to 1921, when he was an active participant and observer of the factory-council movement developing within the Turin metal industry. As opposed to the first theory, Gramsci's theory is richer and more complete because it emphasizes that union bureaucratization is the result of a multiplicity of factors both internal and external to the union and that bureaucratization arises as a result of the contradictions of capitalist society that pull the unions in conflicting directions. In addition, Gramsci argues that trade-union bureaucratization is not inevitable and that it can be eliminated and reversed once it has occurred.

Overview of the two theories

Both of these theories recognize that bureaucratization has emerged in the trade unions, and there is little dispute concerning the overt form of this pattern. The theories are at odds, however, regarding the interpretation of how bureaucratization occurs and the underlying mechanisms that drive the process of trade-union bureaucratization. Therefore, these two theories represent significantly different ways of explaining and providing an understanding for a single phenomenon.

The maturity/evolutionary theory focuses on the internal process that occurs in trade unions as they become older and increase in size, while Gramsci's theory emphasizes that bureaucratization is a result of a multiplicity of factors, which are both external and internal to the union. In addition, the maturity/evolutionary theory postulates a unidirectional movement of increasing bureaucratization inside the trade unions once the

process is underway. This process can neither be halted nor undone. On the other hand, Gramsci's theory views bureaucratization as arising from a number of contradictions in capitalist society that pull the unions in conflicting directions. This theory also takes notice of continual challenges to bureaucratization within the unions that may eventually result in a "debureaucratization" of the unions. Thus, according to this viewpoint, once trade unions have become bureaucratized, it is not inevitable that they will always remain bureaucratized.

The focus of this article is on the construction of the Gramscian alternative to the U.S. neoinstitutionalists' theory. It should be acknowledged that Gramsci's model falls squarely within a rich Marxist theoretical tradition devoted to the analysis of the relationship between trade-union leadership and organization. In addition to a number of the writings of Marx and Engels (see Lapides 1987, chapter 6), classic works of other leading Marxist theorists, such as Lenin (1961) and Luxemburg (1971), for example, have also dealt with the problematic nature of the trade-union leadership/organization relationship and how it affects the unions' achievement of both their short- and long-term goals.

Some general comments concerning trade-union bureaucratization

Any theory of trade-union bureaucratization must be placed within a historical context that makes it possible to see the process of bureaucratization not as simply a technical question that is atemporal and unchanging. Goldman states that most work on organizational bureaucracy is characterized by a "lack of historical perspective" that "freezes analysis into the present and tends to reify the status quo" (1978, 23). Beetham argues in a similar vein that the study of bureaucracy within the realms of the traditional disciplines of organizational sociology, political economy, and public administration has been limited because they examine bureaucracy "as a self-contained entity, to be understood from within, and in isolation from both history and society at large" (1987, 5).

Concerning the institution of trade unions, Hyman argues

that in order to study trade-union government and administration, the trade unions cannot be considered "as a self-contained area of analysis" or "as 'formal organizations' wrenched from their social context" but as institutions that interact with "broader structural determinants" in society (1975, 9). Therefore, trade-union bureaucratization must be examined in terms of what is occurring in the external environment at the time, such as the overall climate for trade unions and relevant labor legislation (Stratton 1989). Any changes in the external environment also must be noted and analyzed as they occur for a complete understanding of the process of trade-union bureaucratization.

It is also important to note that the term *trade-union bureaucratization* should always be treated as an analytical concept rather than as a derogatory slogan for blaming trade-union leaders for some of the inadequacies inherent in the structure of trade unionism (Hyman 1979, 54). Such a pejorative approach has often been taken to analyze the trade-union bureaucracy in action (see Kelly 1988, chapter 7).

The neoinstitutionalist industrial-relations scholars

The "neoinstitutionalists," as dubbed by Cain (1976), were U.S. industrial-relations scholars who emerged from the field of labor economics in the 1930s and were a driving force in industrial-relations research during its "golden age," which, according to Strauss and Feuille (1981), lasted from 1935 to 1958. Clark Kerr, one of the founding members of the neoinstitutionalists, rejects this label, however, and prefers to call this group of labor economists "neoclassical revisionists," in order to emphasize their training and relationship to neoclassical economics (1988, 13). Other terms that have been used to describe this group of scholars include "realistic neoclassicists," "neostructuralists," "Left Keynesians" (Kerr 1988, 14), and "post-institutionalists" (Segal 1986). Although Kerr spurns the neoinstitutionalist label because he believes that it misleads people into thinking that this group of scholars was actually "a new version of the Wisconsin school" (1988, 13), I will use it because of what I will show to be the implicit links of the "neos" to the thought and work of the "institutionalists."

Although these labor economists worked within the neoclassical economic tradition, they were still connected to the older generation of institutionalist economists of the Wisconsin school (such as John R. Commons and Selig Perlman), particularly through their use of the case-study method and their inductive research methodologies. In addition, they shared the institutionalists' interest in both labor history and real-world experience (Kerr 1988, 13) and had positive views of both collective bargaining and protective labor legislation as countervailing forces to the inherent market power of the employer. They also believed that collective bargaining promoted industrial democracy at the work site. As with the institutionalists, they advocated pluralism and hoped to broaden economic theory by integrating information from the other social-science disciplines (Kerr 1988, 13; Kaufman 1993, 85).

However, the occurrence of two economic and political events in the United States separated the neoinstitutionalists from the older generation of institutionalists. The first event was the Great Depression, which, in the eyes of the neoinstitutionalists, provided convincing evidence that the market did not work as effectively as was predicted by competitive theory. They viewed the widespread unemployment of the 1930s as being caused by problems inherent in the market economy and not by faults in the mass of unemployed workers. A second event in the 1930s that shaped their world view was the dramatic growth in union membership as well as the rise of a viable industrial unionism. With collective bargaining affecting a wide variety of U.S. industries, institutional rather than market forces became the primary determinants of wages, hours of work, and working conditions in many firms.

In addition, the neoinstitutionalists' philosophy and outlook were shaped by their participation in the activities of government agencies during World War II, most notably the War Labor Board. In order to deal with problems of collective bargaining and wage stabilization during wartime, these scholars left their academic posts for administrative and research positions in these government agencies. When these academics returned to the professoriate after the war, and had digested their real-world

experience of setting wages and resolving disputes, they arrived at the conclusion that labor markets were not as efficient, and that collective bargaining was not as destructive, as standard economic theory predicted (Kaufman 1993, 86–87).

Although the vast majority of the neoinstitutionalist industrial-relations scholars were labor economists, such as John Dunlop, Frederick Harbison, Clark Kerr, and Richard Lester, scholars from other social-science disciplines also conducted industrial-relations research that was complementary to the views expressed in this school of thought. For example, in sociology, Daniel Bell, Richard Bendix, Herbert Blumer, Robert Dubin, and Harold Wilensky conducted research consistent with the ideology of the neoinstitutional labor economists (Kaufman 1993). Besides their interest in the field of industrial relations, this group of sociologists shared the same beliefs as the neoinstitutional labor economists that there were distinct class differences in interests between the working class and the owner/managerial/professional class, although these scholars neither viewed class in Marxist terms nor subscribed to a Marxist theory of class conflict (Kaufman 1988, 159).

The maturity/evolutionary theory of trade-union bureaucratization

The works of Herberg (1943); Harbison and Coleman (1951); Lipset, Trow, and Coleman (1956); and Lester (1958) comprise the framework of the maturity/evolutionary theory of trade-union bureaucratization. Lester, who studied the development of the unions affiliated to the CIO, provides the foundation for this theory by stating that institutions appear to move through several stages of development. He argues that trade unions will experience in the early years of their development a high level of militancy and turbulence combined with both an "internal factionalism" and a "vigorous external opposition" (1958, 21). Herberg concurs with Lester by stating that in this period of unionism, the trade union is dominated by a preponderance of organizational democracy (1943, 406). At this stage of development, the trade unions are fighting for institutional survival as well as for

objectives that are viewed as radical by society. With the organization in a state of flux and transformation, membership participation is both enthusiastic and high (Lester 1958, 21). The union appears to be very idealistic and is concerned with the "democratic self-expression" and emancipation of the working class (Herberg 1943, 46). The leaders are usually seasoned agitators as opposed to experienced administrators (Lester 1958, 21).

Once the trade unions have gained acceptance and a measure of security as well as "new rights," an internal transformation takes place. Changes occur in terms of the organizational goals, the style of leadership, and internal functions as well as the distribution of power among the different levels of the trade union (Lester 1958, 21). Herberg points out that the power in the trade union passes from the membership meeting to the union's executive board and finally to paid officials during this stage. With this change in power, the union's administrative functions, which were handled on a daily basis by the executive board, also end up in the hands of the paid officials (1943, 407–8). Thus, Harbison and Coleman point out that the unions' evolution has resulted in adopting new functions (1951, 4–5). They state that the unions have become "management-policing and service rendering organizations" with the decision-making power centralized in the hands of the full-time union officials.

This transformation in the trade union can be characterized as the evolution of an "anti-organization/counter-organization" into a "respectable" organization that has become integrated into society. Such a view implicitly implies that an organizational form containing a high level of democracy and militance is only useful when an organization is fighting for survival. Once the organization has achieved institutional survival, such an organizational form has outlived its usefulness and its continuation may result in decreased efficiency and effectiveness.

This viewpoint is supported by what some theorists claim is a change in the purposes of industrial conflict. In the early years of unionism, industrial conflict is seen as a method of organizing as well as of increasing the solidarity of union members. According to Harbison and Coleman, as unions and employers develop a stable, long-term relationship, industrial conflict becomes more

constructive and less destructive. In support of their argument, they state that "strikes are becoming more peaceful":

> In other words, the modern strike is no longer a form of industrial warfare. It is an implement of collective bargaining. It is a means of using force to bring about compromise and ultimate agreement. (1951, 4)

Harbison and Coleman are saying that industrial conflict no longer serves the same purpose as when the trade unions were becoming established.

With the achievement of the union's initial goals, future objectives become more complex, making them tougher to define. The union grows larger during this stage, with a subsequent increase in both activities and responsibilities that leads to new problems concerning administration, discipline, and public relations (Lester 1958, 22). This mass of activities and administrative problems can only be handled efficiently in a bureaucratic manner (Herberg 1943, 409).

Wilensky points out that trade-union bureaucratization first occurs in the national headquarters of the union (1961). Therefore, it is at this level that the union must acquire specialists to handle the problems discussed earlier (Lester 1958, 22). Wilensky notes that prior to 1945, the most frequent way to obtain a union staff "expert" job was through active participation in the politics of local unions or the actions of radical political parties (1961, 229). After 1945, the specialists recruited were more likely to be college educated and to have had prior pertinent occupational experience. The appearance of such specialists may also lead to less emphasis on the union's original goals, because these functionaries appear to be less idealistic and more career oriented than were the people initially performing these functions for the union (Wilensky 1961, 230).

With the acquisition of specialists, there is less contact between the union officials, the union staff, and the rank-and-file workers. An established hierarchy and bureaucracy develops. Lipset, Trow, and Coleman state that this union bureaucracy and hierarchy is necessary because in order to deal efficiently with businesses, the unions must "parallel the structures of business"

(1956, 8). They also argue that this results in an increased control of "the formal means of communication" at the top of the organization. Finally, the solidification of the bureaucracy means that decision making is transferred from the local bodies to higher levels of the union (Lester 1958, 22).

This entire process of union bureaucratization outlined above has been succinctly summarized by Lester (1958, 111). He states that the "long-run trend" of union development grows out of a two-fold process of both "internal union development" and "external integration" of the organization. These "long-run trends" are accompanied by "short-term swings" that develop from the "dynamic disturbances and strains" due to such things as "organizational expansion, increased competition and technological change," as well as from "stability-restoring influences," which include agents contributing to the "long-run trends." As one can see, Lester's conceptualization postulates a static model of union development, in constant search of an equilibrium state, which in this case is a fully developed trade-union bureaucracy.

With this model, Lester views the development of union bureaucratization as inevitable (106–7). Herberg concurs with this analysis but points out that the growth of bureaucracy is not limited only to trade unions, but is inherent in every organization as it expands, stabilizes, and becomes institutionalized (1943, 413). Lipset, Trow, and Coleman also view bureaucratization as arising in any "large-scale organization" (1956, 8).

Although the scholars that can be placed within the maturity/evolutionary paradigm of trade-union bureaucratization see bureaucratization as inevitable, they imply that bureaucratization is necessary in order to have constructive union-management relations. Therefore, the maturity/evolutionary theory fits squarely into the school of functional sociology as well as "the sociology of regulation" (see Burrell and Morgan 1979, chapters 4 and 5). They view trade-union bureaucratization as primarily serving the function of regulating conflict within the existing socioeconomic order both through internal union politics and collective bargaining. Lester typifies this viewpoint:

> By guiding workers' discontent into orderly channels for its relief and by competing with other organizations for the representation of workers' varied interests, unions perform a beneficial role in a democratic society. Unions, by aiding in the reconciliation of conflicting interests, contribute to constructive social change. Collective bargaining, ideally, is a mutual exploration of differences . . . and a willingness to be convinced and to compromise temporarily. (1958, 17)

Although the maturity/evolutionary theorists explicitly view trade-union bureaucratization in a positive light because of the constructive function it serves, many of these scholars express some concern when confronted with the empirical relationship that union bureaucratization implies a reduction in union democracy. This analysis has roots in Michel's classic work (1949). Herberg points out that trade-union bureaucratization reduces democracy within the organization on two levels (1943, 410). The first is the virtual elimination of the workers' self-government inside the union, and the second is the narrowing of the members' civil rights. In the conclusion to their extensive deviant case study of the two-party system in the International Typographical Union (ITU), Lipset, Trow, and Coleman determine that the "functional requirements for democracy cannot be met most of the time in most unions" (1956, 452). They recognize that the "institutionalization of bureaucracy" is incompatible with "democratic turnover in office."

However, other scholars point out that union democracy should not be measured by this standard of turnover in office. They claim that union democracy should be assessed by the level of satisfaction that members obtain from the services that the union provides. This argument is based on the notion that "trade-union leaders must deliver the goods" through collective bargaining and that as long as the members are satisfied, it does not matter whether a bureaucracy/oligarchy develops (Hemingway 1978, 9).

Even though Herberg acknowledges that bureaucratization has led to a "whittling down of effective democracy" within the unions, he is, nevertheless, a typical representative of the above

analysis (1943, 412). He argues that this process has occurred gradually and "with the approval or at least the passive assent" of the union members. He states that the average rank-and-file member does not want to be burdened with the responsibility of democracy but rather demands "protection and service" from his union leaders.

Such an argument is representative of the philosophy of "business unionism," the ideology that is dominant in the U.S. trade-union movement. "Business union" advocates would argue that democratic control is exerted by the membership when the leaders do not deliver the required goods. According to Hoxie, an early theorist of U.S. trade unions, union leaders who fail to deliver the goods "are likely to be swept aside by a democratic uprising of the rank and file" (1923, 46).

A critique of this "business unionist/satisfaction" argument is that silence may not always imply consensus. For example, union members might be unaware of when leaders are acting against their interests or, at times, they might feel "powerless to disagree" (Hemingway 1978, 10).

It is apparent that the theorists working within the maturity/evolutionary paradigm view bureaucratization as inevitable. Furthermore, these scholars see the development of bureaucratization as being due solely to the internal processes that automatically occur with the growth and aging of any organization. Thus, it is basically a unidimensional, as well as a deterministic, approach that minimizes the influence and interaction of a number of important factors in the external environment.

Gramsci's theory of trade-union bureaucratization

A five-stage theory of trade-union bureaucratization can be constructed from the writings of Antonio Gramsci between 1919 and 1921. Gramsci's writings in this period on trade unions explore the role that trade unions play in a capitalist society as well as the potential role that they can adopt in transforming the socioeconomic system of that society.

Gramsci begins his theorizing concerning the development of trade unions by pointing out that trade unions arose as a

collective response of workers to the existence of the capitalist system. He argues that

> the craft unions . . . are . . . specific to the period of history dominated by capital. It can be argued that they are in a sense an integral part of capitalist society, and have a function that is inherent in a regime of private property. (1977e, 99)

Gramsci also points out that the organizational form adopted by the trade unions was intricately linked to capitalism. By this, he means that the trade unions do not organize the workers as a *class*, but as members of a specific occupation or trade. Because of this particular method of organization, Gramsci notes that only a section of the working class would be represented by trade unions, as opposed to the workers being organized as a *class* in its entirety.

According to Gramsci, trade unions adopted the specific form that they did, not through "inner necessity" but because of the "external influences" of the free market. He states that the unions developed "under the formidable pressure of events and compulsions dependent upon capitalist competition" (1977b, 74).

The development of the trade unions leads to the second stage of the Gramscian paradigm of trade-union bureaucratization, that is, the formal recognition of trade unions by the employers. Gramsci states that the trade unions have become effective representatives for their members in the areas of both wages and hours, thus "forcing recognition of the rights of the oppressed" by the employers (1977c, 90–91). He acknowledges that through possessing the ability to negotiate collective-bargaining agreements as well as assuming administrative responsibilities, the trade union "obliges the employer to acknowledge a certain legality in his dealings with the workers." In addition, the employer develops a "faith in the union's *solvency* and its capacity to secure respect for contracted obligations from the working masses" (1977f, 265).

Thus, according to Gramsci, this "recognition of trade unions by employers" results for two divergent reasons. The first is the

strength of the trade unions in obtaining purely *economistic* demands from the employers for the benefit of its members. The second reason is the ability of the trade unions to control or exert an internal discipline on rank-and-file members so that they abide by the contracts negotiated between the trade union and the employer. Such an analysis provides us with an insight into the duality of trade unionism; it is a mechanism that exerts control over *both* the employer and the rank-and-file members, although at different times and in different circumstances.

The recognition of trade unions by employers leads to the third stage along the Gramscian route of trade-union bureaucratization–that the major function of the trade unions is the selling of the members' labor power to the employer at the highest possible price. Gramsci maintains that the chief purpose of the trade unions is "to organize competition in the sale of the labour-commodity" (1977c, 90–91).

In another passage, Gramsci compares the trade union to a business in that both are concerned with the sale of commodities. He states:

> Objectively, the trade union is nothing other than a commercial company, of a purely capitalistic type, which aims to secure, in the interests of the proletariat, the maximum price for the commodity labour. (1978a, 76)

Because of this major function of trade unionism, according to Gramsci, the unions become imbued with capitalist ideology, most vividly expressed through the behavior of the union officials. The presence of this capitalist ideology leads to bureaucratic conservatism on the part of the trade-union officials. Gramsci argues that the predominance of the "commercial capacities" in the trade unions has led to the leaders developing "a group psychology of their own absolutely at odds with that of the workers" (1977d, 105).

It is apparent that Gramsci sees trade-union officials as viewing the trade-union movement no longer as a vehicle for social change but merely as a commercial venture. Gramsci says of trade-union officials:

> These men no longer live for the class struggle, no longer feel the same passions, the same desires, the same hopes as the masses. . . . The only contact between them and the masses is the account-ledger and the membership file . . . . [I]nstead of leaders they have become bankers of men. (1978b, 17–18)

In several other articles, Gramsci refers to the trade-union leaders as being "bankers of men" or as "experienced banker[s] who [have] good business heads" (1978a, 77; 1978c, 49).

The unions' selling of labor power leads to the fourth stage, the institutionalization of collective bargaining, according to Gramsci. He argues that at this stage trade-union officials begin to possess less knowledge specific to their own industries and more knowledge concerning the purely administrative aspects of trade unionism as a whole. Trade-union leaders are never chosen, Gramsci argues, "on the basis of industrial competence, but rather simply on the basis of juridical, bureaucratic and demagogic competence" (1977d, 105). Elaborating on this point, he argues:

> The trade-union movement, as it has expanded, has created a body of officials who are completely detached from the individual industries, and who obey purely commercial laws. A metal-workers' official can pass on indifferently to the bricklayers, the bootmakers or the joiners. He is not obliged to know the real technical conditions of the industry, just the private legislation which regulates the relations between entrepreneurs and labour force. (1978a, 77)

Another effect of the institutionalization of collective bargaining is that it leads trade-union officials to accept "industrial legality as a permanent state of affairs." Gramsci argues that "industrial legality" is defended by trade-union leaders "from the same perspective as the proprietor" (1977f, 265). Industrial legality, as defined by Gramsci, is the establishment and honoring of the contractual relationship negotiated between the trade union and the employer within the confines of

the capitalist economy. Thus, Gramsci views trade-union leaders as being concerned only with the negotiation and administration of collective-bargaining agreements; they do not see any way that this relationship, embedded in a specific historical period, can be transcended.

The fifth and final stage of the process, according to this theory, is the presence of trade-union bureaucratization, the organizational form that develops because of the contradictory nature of trade unionism in the capitalist system. Gramsci points out that the trade union "organizes itself in order to control the market." Gramsci adds, "This form consists in an office staffed by functionaries, organizational technicians, . . . specialists" (1977f, 265).

Besides the development of a hierarchy and a division of labor, Gramsci points out that as the trade-union bureaucratizes, its power centralizes and that this power, which has also been used to exert internal discipline upon the members, is removed from the members' hands. He states:

> The development of trade-union organization is characterized by . . . the union concentrat[ing] and generaliz[ing] its scope until the movement's power and discipline is focused in a central office. This office becomes divorced from the masses it has regimented. (1977f, 265)

With the development of trade-union bureaucratization, Gramsci argues that the trade union is divided into two parts,"the general assembly and the leading bureaucracy" (1978a, 76). The general assembly, which consists of the union membership, is only called upon to discuss problems that concern the contractual relationship "between the entrepreneurs and labour-force," but is not allowed to deal with "problems of production and exchange" or "technical industrial problems."

Gramsci notes that union members are aware of the development of trade-union bureaucratization, although they feel that as individuals they cannot intervene to prevent the process from occurring. He argues:

> The workers feel that "their" organization has become such an enormously complex apparatus, that it has ended

> up obeying only laws of its own, inherent in its structure and complicated functioning, but alien to the masses who have acquired a consciousness of their historical mission as a revolutionary class. . . . The words and intentions of individual men are too puny to stand up to the iron laws inherent in the bureaucratic structure of the trade-union apparatus. (Gramsci 1977e, 98)

In summary, it is apparent that Gramsci saw the process of union bureaucratization as occurring because of the major function adopted by trade unions under capitalism–the negotiation and administration of collective-bargaining agreements. According to Gramsci, bureaucratization within the trade union serves two purposes. It marshals the strength and power of the trade union through developing a hierarchy of functionaries who obtain specialized skills in order to attempt to satisfy the economistic demands of the members concerning wages, hours, working conditions, etc. through negotiations with the employer. The second purpose is related to the first. Once an agreement is obtained, it must be honored, so the trade union is required to discipline its own members. Any type of action on the part of the members that threatens this industrial legality must be terminated by the trade-union leadership in order to continue the defined relationship with the employer.

Gramsci was not an economic determinist in his analysis of trade unionism and trade-union bureaucratization. While the maturity/evolutionary theorists believe that trade-union bureaucratization is inevitable (Herberg 1943; Lipset, Trow, and Coleman 1956; Lester 1958), it is clear that Gramsci disagreed. He points out that the organizational form that the trade union adopts is also dependent upon the ability of the workers to guide and shape the union:

> The trade union is not a predetermined phenomenon. It *becomes* a determinate institution, i.e. it takes on a definite historical form to the extent that the strength and will of the workers who are its members impress a policy and propose an aim that define it. (1977f, 265)

In addition, unlike Michels (1949), Gramsci does not view the conservatism and tactics of the trade-union officials as being linked to their higher salaries and privileges, but as determined solely by their concern with the negotiation and administration of collective-bargaining agreements.

Is there a real difference between the two theories?

Critics might argue that the Gramscian theory appears to be hardly distinguishable from its neoinstitutionalist counterpart. But there are major differences between the two theories. The maturity/evolutionary theorists postulate that union bureaucratization is an inevitable process that occurs as the union ages. In addition, they view bureaucratization as both necessary and desirable for the development of constructive union-management relations. On the other hand, Gramsci views the development of union bureaucratization as being neither desirable nor inevitable but as emerging from a conscious *choice* that the union makes to institutionalize collective bargaining. Certainly, forces external to the union (such as the state and employers) might make it extremely difficult for unions to avoid the institutionalization of collective bargaining, but nevertheless it is ultimately a decision that the union makes.

Is Gramsci's theory still relevant in the 1990s?

Even though Gramsci's model was constructed in a vastly different sociohistorical era, when trade unions had more power and the institution of trade unionism appeared to be on an upward trajectory, it is still a relevant theory for the 1990s. When Gramsci constructed his theory nearly eight decades ago, the focus of trade unionism was the negotiation and administration of collective-bargaining agreements (the institutionalization of collective bargaining), as it is today. This is in spite of the fact that union densities and union power in the vast majority of capitalist nations, "including the historic social democracies," have been decreasing since about 1980 (Tilly 1995, 18). The 1990s have not offered a substantially different scenario; "organized labor is in retreat" throughout virtually the entire world (Tilly 1995, 21).

Empirical evidence concerning CIO union bureaucratization

Although much work needs to be done on examining the development of bureaucratization in individual unions, and in tracing the causal connection between the institutionalization of collective bargaining and the development of bureaucratization, there is evidence (presented later in this section) that at least one CIO union refused to institutionalize collective bargaining and did not become bureaucratized. Such evidence provides implicit support for the Gramscian model, while refuting a major contention of the maturity/evolutionary paradigm that the development of trade-union bureaucratization is an inevitable phenomenon that occurs as the union ages and matures.

Although the CIO, with its industrial-union organization, emerged as a radical alternative to the craft-union orientation of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the vast majority of the CIO unions had nonetheless become bureaucratized by the late 1940s (Moody 1988, 28–35). Moody's discussion of the historical process leading to the development of bureaucratization within the CIO unions is antithetical to the approach outlined in the maturity/evolutionary paradigm, although it is quite consistent with the schema presented in the Gramscian model. However, the presence of bureaucratization does not imply that there were not left-wing CIO leaders (many of whom were affiliated with or sympathetic to the U.S. Communist Party) who viewed the unions as agencies of social change and who adopted a combative posture with respect to both employers and the state in the immediate post–World War II period. And while the purging of the Communist-led unions from the CIO during 1949–1950 was due primarily to political reasons rather than as a direct result of the institutionalization of collective bargaining, this purge nevertheless contributed to the further entrenchment of union bureaucratization within the CIO by eliminating unions that might have threatened to "debureaucratize" the CIO in the future (Moody 1988, 33–35).

While the majority of the CIO unions had become bureaucratized by the early years of the immediate post–World War II era, there is evidence that at least one CIO union, the Communist-led

Farm Equipment Workers Union (FE), did not institutionalize collective bargaining and thus did not view "industrial legality as a permanent state of affairs." Instead of focusing its trade unionism around the negotiation and administration of collective-bargaining agreements, the FE constructed a vibrant shop-floor unionism independent of the formal collective-bargaining structures in order to keep power in the hands of the rank-and-file workers. The results of the FE's refusal to institutionalize collective bargaining are striking in terms of the types of contractual clauses found in its collective-bargaining agreements and in the nature of the shop-floor unionism practiced when compared to that of its rival in the agricultural implement industry, the United Auto Workers (UAW) (Devinatz 1996).

By the late 1940s, in contrast, under the leadership of Walter Reuther, the UAW had institutionalized collective bargaining and many UAW leaders in the Reuther caucus anticipated that the union would become both an accepted and essential element of the corporate structure in the automobile industry (Devinatz 1996). The stage may have been set for the victorious Reuther faction institutionalizing collective bargaining when the faction was able to get the UAW to adopt "strictly proportional representation" for both UAW convention delegates and executive-board members. This representation plan was but one of the weapons that the Reuther caucus used to weaken the union's Communist-led left wing, its major opponent at the time (Lembcke 1994).

This comparison between the UAW and the FE is legitimate because both unions represented approximately equal numbers of workers in the International Harvester Corporation in the late 1940s and early 1950s. For example, in the FE's contracts with Harvester in this period, the grievance procedure permitted authorized strikes over unresolved grievances after the grievance procedure had been thoroughly utilized. However, the UAW's contracts with Harvester did not contain such provisions. In addition, after the enactment of the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, the UAW signed a contractual provision with Harvester stating that the union would take responsibility for ending wildcat strikes, while

the FE refused to sign such an agreement with Harvester (Devinatz 1996).

Even though the FE's contract permitted the union to authorize strikes *after* the grievance procedure had been utilized, the FE often held shop-floor actions and/or wildcat strikes instead of filing grievances in order to resolve workplace problems. This resulted in the FE holding a significantly higher number of work stoppages than did the UAW in the Harvester plants. During the seven-year period from 1 October 1945 through 31 October 1952, the FE staged 971 work stoppages compared with 185 for the UAW. In each of these years, the FE stoppages exceeded the UAW stoppages by at least a two-to-one margin. And from 1 October 1946 to 1 October 1947, the FE's margin over its rival was greater than ten to one (Devinatz 1996).

Although the evidence is sparse, there is the possibility that the FE was not the only CIO union that refused to institutionalize collective bargaining in the post–World War II years. For example, although the Communist-led United Electrical Workers (UE) was no longer affiliated to the CIO by 1950, there is evidence that the UE's shop-floor unionism at Westinghouse in the 1950s was consistent with the strategy of the union refusing to institutionalize collective bargaining (McColloch 1992). Future research needs to be done to determine if, in fact, the UE did adopt such a strategy.

From theory to practice: What is the significance for the 1990s?

What significance do these two theories of trade-union bureaucratization have for the situation facing the U.S. trade-union movement in the 1990s? While the situation for labor might be marginally better in the 1990s than it was in the 1980s, the minimal federal protection of labor is continually being eroded on a number of fronts. For example, discussion of modifying Section 8(a)2 of the National Labor Relations Act, which would legally permit the return of company unions (Moberly 1994), has become a potential reality with the U.S. House of Representatives passing the "Teamwork for Employees and Managers Act of 1995" on 27 September 1995.

What kind of insight can the maturity/evolutionary theory of trade-union bureaucratization provide in order to revitalize the trade-union movement in this period? This theory cannot provide any answers to this question because of its belief that trade-union bureaucratization is both a determined and unidirectional phenomenon; as the trade union grows and ages and takes on more and more functions, bureaucratization is an inevitable outcome.

What about Gramsci's theory of trade-union bureaucratization? Does it provide any solutions for the problem? In fact, it does. The key stage in Gramsci's theory that leads to trade-union bureaucratization is the fourth stage, the institutionalization of collective bargaining, at which point union officials accept "industrial legality as a permanent state of affairs." It is precisely at this entry point that Gramsci's theory can provide solutions to the situation in which the U.S. trade-union movement finds itself today.

The acceptance of industrial legality, i.e., the establishment and honoring of the contractual relationship negotiated between the trade union and the employer within the confines of the capitalist economy, is a major factor that has contributed to the dismal state in which labor finds itself in the 1990s. By honoring this industrial legality, the trade-union movement has eliminated some very powerful tools from its arsenal of weapons. Since collective bargaining is but one method that capital uses in its relationship with labor (other mechanisms being the development of certain kinds of investment strategies, including bankruptcy proceedings, the introduction of new technology, the periodic reorganization of the labor process, etc.), it only makes sense for labor to transcend "industrial legality as a permanent state of affairs" and to use a wide variety of tactics in combination with formal collective-bargaining structures in order to balance the power relationship with capital.

This transcending of the institutionalization of collective bargaining will have an additional positive impact on unions. It will eventually lead to a "debureaucratization" of the unions with the focus of unionism returning to the shop floor, and power returning to the hands of the rank-and-file workers, rather than being centered around the participation of union officials in the

collective-bargaining process. And while Gramsci possesses a more rigid conception of the separation between the trade-union leadership and the rank-and-file membership than probably exists in most situations, "debureaucratization" provides a strong possibility (although not an ironclad guarantee) that this gap could be significantly narrowed. With a return to a vibrant shop-floor unionism, rank-and-file participation in union affairs will increase, ultimately leading to the rebirth of a spirit in the U.S. trade-union movement that has not been seen in decades.

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The Revolutionary Aesthetics of Frederick Engels

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Generally maligned as the inventor of "dialectical materialism" (read: vulgarized Marxism) and praised as the "first Marxist," Frederick Engels has so far not received the judicious and all-sided appreciation that both he and Marx tried to give to thinkers and events in their lifetime. It would be a fitting tribute to Engels's achievement on this occasion to heed his advice in *Anti-Dühring*: to refuse the metaphysical mode of "absolutely irreconcilable antitheses" and pursue its opposite by comprehending "things and their representations in their essential connection, concatenation, motion, origin and ending" (1987a, 22–23). I hasten to assert that I am not at all endorsing here a metaphysical materialism, an ontology of matter, in which a teleological design or ineluctable law of motion, a paradigmatic metanarrative of development, is used to explain every phenomenon.[1] Nor can one countenance the still-influential caricature of Marxism as crude economic determinism and its corollary one-dimensional correspondence schemas–monumental relics of Cold War anticommunist propaganda.[2] I would insist rather that Engels subscribed to a materialism of relations (*Verhältnisse*) and complex mediations (*Vermittlung*) defining the *problematique* of scientific inquiry.

References to motion, diachronic shifts, and metamorphosis predominate in Engels's thought. In *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, Engels overturned

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Hegelian idealism by rejecting Hegel's reduction of reality to images of the absolute concept. Engels reconceptualized dialectics as "the science of the general laws of motion, both of the external world and of human thinking–two sets of laws which are identical in substance, but differ in their expression in so far as the human mind can apply them consciously, while in nature and also up to now for the most part in human history, these laws assert themselves unconsciously, in the form of external necessity, in the midst of an endless series of apparent accidents" (1990a, 383). In comprehending the world as a "complex of *processes*," Engels pointed out that apparently fixed things as well as their mental reflections "go through uninterrupted change of coming into being and passing away, in which, for all apparent accidentality and despite all temporary retrogression, a progressive development asserts itself in the end" (1990a, 384). Accident and contingency manifest the working of necessity and lawfulness, retrogression becomes part of progression–such paradoxes are summed up later in three axioms: the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa, the interpenetration of opposites, and the negation of the negation (1987b, 356; see Bhaskar 1993, 150–52).

In *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels valorized motion as "the mode of existence, the inherent attribute of matter," which "comprehends all changes and processes occurring in the universe, from mere change of place right up to thinking" (1987b, 362). Traditionally conceived as the science of the sensible, aesthetics in the Engelsian framework then becomes a science of the forms of apprehended motion–human actions described through the syntagmatic (temporal) and paradigmatic (spatial) axes of all sign-systems. Space and time are universal forms of the existence of matter (Krapivin 1985); within space/time coordinates, Engels writes, "the qualitative alteration, the change of form, is the basic condition for all physical work" (1985b, 389). Forms of sensible motion constitute the substance of the aesthetic as a specific region of class-conditioned ideology cognized here as misrecognition of reality, a social imaginary inscribed in ideological apparatuses of legitimization such as the family, literature/art as institutional media, the theater, and so on.

Contrary to the received consensus, I want to argue here that Engels's aesthetics is a revolutionary project of superseding the bourgeois (Kantian) fragmentation of life into the spheres of instrumental reason, morality, and taste by locating the space of the aesthetic in history, specifically in sensuous praxis. This praxis involves the inherently contradictory nature of the aesthetic as a historically limited category. W. F. Haug has insightfully demonstrated this contradiction between the sense of autonomous freedom (ascribed to pleasure induced by art) and the heteronomous, ideological function of art as a means of reproducing domination and legitimizing it (1987). This contradiction is inflected in Engels's thought as that between accident and necessity, the singular and the typical, in literary form as well as in the evolution of institutions like the family and gender differentiation.

To sublate the contradiction, Engels affirms the shifting, motion-filled space of the aesthetic whose border (where interior [sense of community] and exterior [alienation in market relations] meet) can be shifted in a transformative, radical direction. Art can thus become a means of the "self-socialization of the individual" (Haug 1987, 141), art's cognitive-pedagogical contribution to socialist revolution. In effect, the fatal division of labor in class society (of which aesthetics is a symptom) is what Engels seeks to overcome. A rehearsal of Engels's central ideas is necessary to understand how aesthetics can be "used" and superseded.

In 1859 Engels ascribed to Marx the "materialistic conception of history," in which a dialectical mode of thinking analyzes the complexity of class struggles coinciding with the mutations in the structures of production and exchange generated by the contradiction between productive forces and social relations. In the critique of the mystifications of bourgeois political economy, Marx revealed "the secret of capitalist production through surplus value." For Engels, the production of knowledge of historical change is both a scientific grasp of the "laws of motion" in society and an act of political intervention. The historical materialist organon interprets the world as an integral part of a project of changing it, hence theory invariably performs a

revolutionary function. The human mind is conditioned by life (social being) and reflects the reality of the world not simplistically but through refracting mediations. This does not imply that Engels has abolished *tout court* the power of human agency–the intervention of consciousness–invested in culture, technology, and the concrete self-activity of productive forces, in particular the associated producers of use values. Contrary to the objection made by Georg Lukács, in *History and Class Consciousness* (1971) and elsewhere, that Engels's positivistic "laws of motion" had erased subjectivity, one can assert that the "subject" is now conceived as a relational or articulating principle of historical totality. The linkage of thinking and being inheres in transformative critique: the revolutionary restructuring of society grasped simultaneously as knowledge and as social action. Subject and object begin to coalesce in conscious organized practice. The more humans come to comprehend and control the immediate and remote consequences of their actions, the more will they "not only feel but also know their oneness with nature, and the more impossible will become the senseless and unnatural idea of a contrast between mind and matter, man and nature, soul and body" (1987c, 461).

What I want to emphasize here is that Engels's thinking was always informed by a revolutionary agenda, a desire for realizing the collective emancipation of humanity. His genius was essentially strategic. His praxis-driven intelligence oriented all his speculations on epistemology, history, political economy, and scientific research. Even when he was invoking the three great discoveries in natural science as justification for the general laws of motion–how superficial accidents are really governed by inner hidden laws–his utopian vision drew its liberating energy from the principle that categories of thought are fluid, open to unpredictable occurrences, and susceptible to the irruption of the new. Paradoxically, in Engels's analysis, the necessity of historical advance toward humankind's emancipation goes through tragic episodes, through aleatory detours where all protagonists encounter antinomies, unexpected turns, ironic reversals–the cunning "specter" of the negative. History is not "a process without a subject" (to quote Althusser's famous phrase)

but, from Engels's standpoint, a process in which diverse incommensurable subjects whose individual wills, even as they are cancelled/preserved in the conjunctural event, are in the end seen to be governed by an emancipatory impulse and motive, what Agnes Heller calls "*for itself* species objectification" (1972, 51).

What is unique about Engels's preoccupation with forms of historical motion? While Marx is credited with establishing the principles of historical-materialist critique that later on were refined and elaborated by Lukács, Caudwell, Raphael, Hauser, della Volpe, Morawski, Haug, and others into the schema of a materialist aesthetics, I believe that Engels's contribution is pregnant with more radical innovative consequences. A review of Marx's reflections on art may be useful at this juncture.

In *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, Terry Eagleton locates the fundamental axiom of Marx's aesthetics in the humanization of the senses, of sense-perception (both sensuous consciousness and need) as the "basis of all science." The goal of revolution against class society via the "supersession of private property" is the "complete emancipation of all the human senses"; when the senses become human and become "theoreticians in their immediate praxis," freedom is realized (Adams 1991). The recovery of the body's powers and capacities enables the socialized individual to experience the rationality of pleasure. When nature and the products of labor are no longer exploited for mere utility and the accumulation of expropriated surplus value for its own sake, the sensuous practice incarnated in the enjoyment of work and the use values of the objects shaped by human labor will finally confirm the advent of freedom from capitalist alienation and reification. This key insight comes from Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*:

> Only through the objectively unfolded richness of man's essential being is the richness of subjective *human* sensibility (a musical ear, an eye for beauty of form–in short, *senses* capable of human gratification, senses affirming themselves as essential powers of *man*) either cultivated or brought into being. . . . The *forming* of the five senses is a

> labor of the entire history of the world down to the present. (1975a, 301–2)

The humanization of nature involves the "objectification" (via practice) of human powers both theoretical and practical. When life-activity becomes the object of will and consciousness, then aesthetic reflection becomes possible:

> An animal forms objects only in accordance with the standard and the need of the species to which it belongs, whilst man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere the inherent standard to the object. Man therefore also forms objects in accordance with the laws of beauty. (1975a, 277; Arvon 1973)

For Marx, literature equals a "universal-creative, self-creative activity by which man transforms and creates his world and himself" (Prawer 1978, 405). What distinguishes humans from animals is not reason but imagination, the power that makes human life-activity the object and desire of consciousness (Lifshitz 1973). Conforming to the ideals of Greek art mediated by German classical philosophy, Marx's aesthetics is humanist and universalizing in affirming the will to enrich and gratify species-needs. Engels, on the other hand, shifts the focus to the formation of the sensibility and the sensorium in the transaction between the body and nature in work, productive labor, practice in general.[3] In other words, the physiognomy of beauty unfolds in the manifold shapes of sociohistorical motion.

Although this might be a fine point of discrimination to stress, I would nevertheless like to highlight this distinctive quality in Engels's aesthetics: his perspective foregrounds the laboring collective body, not merely the senses and consciousness accompanying it, as central to the pleasure found in sensuous-cognitive practice. I consider Engels's essay, "The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man" crucial in any effort to "naturalize" the idealistic predilection in the academic discipline of aesthetics to invoke a certain "aura" or magic in art, a sacralizing tendency that both Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin, among others, have tried hard to exorcise. Not

only is labor the "prime basic condition" of social existence, but it also created humans. Poetic rhythm itself was born from manual labor, literally hands at work (Caudwell 1937; Thomson 1947). Engels argues this foundational premise by tracing the causal network that shaped the "modern" hand:

> Thus the hand is not only the organ of labor, *it is also the product of labor*. Only by labor, by adaptation to ever new operations, through the inheritance of muscles, ligaments and, over longer periods of time, bones that had undergone special development and the ever-renewed employment of this inherited finesse in new, more and more complicated operations, have given the human hand the high degree of perfection required to conjure into being the pictures of a Raphael, the statues of a Thorwaldsen, the music of a Paganini. . . . And the sense of touch, which the ape hardly possesses in its crudest initial form, has been developed only side by side with the development of the human hand itself, through the medium of labor. (1987c, 453–56)

In their collaborative work, *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels already underscored the division of labor, in particular between material and spiritual, as the logic behind nonlinear historical development. They suggest in fact that this division originates from sexuality: "The division of labour . . . was originally nothing but the division of labor in the sexual act," one based on "the natural division of labor in the family" (1976a, 44–46). The disintegration of communal labor with the ascendancy of private property engenders the contradiction between the three moments in the production process: productive forces, social relations, consciousness. This contradiction in turn intensifies in the fetishistic world of capitalist commodity exchange. While Marx also concentrated on the labor process in the *Grundrisse*, *Capital*, and elsewhere, it was Engels who specified how changing modes of production made work more complex. This involved a movement of opposing trends that engendered common problems and enabled collectivities to set for themselves and achieve "higher and higher aims." With the

emergence of trade and industry, the pursuits of art, science, and then law and politics arose together with "the fantastic mirror image of human things in the human mind: religion." Civilization appeared then as a product of the mind, not the working hands. Due to the division of labor (especially between mental and manual [Sohn-Rethel 1978]) accompanying class antagonisms, "men became accustomed to explaining their actions from their thoughts instead of from their needs." The world was turned upside down, "standing on its head," as it were. Realistic representation (one-to-one correspondence) was thenceforth impossible. The labor process then became the "political unconscious" of all art and culture, repressed and sublimated, expressing itself through the themes of conflict between form and content, synchronic and diachronic axes of change, essence (concept) and phenomena (immediacy).[4]

Like religion, aesthetics is one of the fruits of the alienating division of labor. From the time when Alexander Baumgarten in the eighteenth century privileged sensory apprehension of phenomenal beauty, the subjective sense activity or feeling, to Immanuel Kant's categorizing of aesthetics as the inquiry into the conditions of sensuous perception, the subjective or consumption aspect of art has displaced any concern for the social occasions and contexts of cultural production (Williams 1983, 31–32). As antithesis to the instrumental or utilitarian, the aesthetic becomes a means of evading the relentless capitalist transvaluation of art works into commodities. Raymond Williams says of modernist aesthetics:

> In its concentration on receptive states, on psychological responses of an abstractly differentiated kind, it represents the division of labour in consumption corresponding to the abstraction of art as the division of labour in production. (1977, 154)

Engels's master-narrative of the multiplication of forms of labor informs his ideas on art and literature in general. It demarcates the specificity of the aesthetic as an expression of class division. In capitalism, aesthetics functions as an ersatz religion geared to compensate for the loss of totality or meaningful unity

in life, a loss more precisely dramatized in the split between exchange value and use value and the consequent reification of lived experience (translated of late into postmodern "simulacra," after Baudrillard). This sense of a totality that predates private property, classes, and the division of labor is later on identified with the typical in art, the interdependence of image and essence. In this context, the typical may be read as symptomatic of the lack of identity between appearance and concept, the difficulty of synthesizing the object seen and the seeing subject. In struggling to render what is typical, art as ideological form serves as a means of allegorizing the play of energies and forces that configure the historical milieu of class struggles (Balibar and Macherey 1992).

Engels's often-cited "letters on historical materialism" all endeavor to rectify the positivist and mechanical-materialist use of the base/superstructure formula in orthodox Marxist interpretation. Stipulating the historical approach as "a guide to study, not a lever for construction after the manner of the Hegelian," Engels pointed out that "the conditions of existence of the different formations of society must be examined individually before the attempt is made to deduce from them the political, civil-law, aesthetic, philosophic, religious, etc. views corresponding to them" (1959a, 396–97). Empirical investigation precedes theoretical critique of hypotheses, thus precluding simple reflectionism. In his letter to Paul Ernst (5 June 1890), Engels accordingly stressed the heuristic or analytic efficacy of the materialist method.

This epistemological stance explains Engels's view that one cannot judge Ibsen's plays as flawed by petty-bourgeois backwardness on the ground that the petty-bourgeois class by definition is reactionary. Historically contextualized, the fact is that the Norwegian petty bourgeoisie, together with the peasantry, when compared to their German counterparts, embodies a progressive telos. Hence whatever the weaknesses of Ibsen's dramas, Engels observes, "they undoubtedly reflect the world of the petty and the middle bourgeoisie, but a world totally different from the German world, a world where men are still possessed of character and initiative and the capacity for independent action" (1973, 89). Engels adds that in the aftermath of the Napoleonic

reaction, Norway's constitution was "far more democratic" than any in Europe at that time. The desideratum of historical specificity serves here to accentuate the tension between base and superstructure, to prevent the superimposition of a static blueprint on events or processes that exemplify the rich and inexhaustible potential of matter in motion. The efficacy of class analysis and political judgment therefore depends on historical specification of concrete (in the sense of multiple determinations) relations of forces, their convergence and divergence, in determinate times and places.[5]

Engels's version of historicism, to be sure, needs neither apology nor alibi. What has appeared suspect for many is Engels's affirmation of the "material mode of existence" as the *primum agens* which, nonetheless, "does not preclude the ideological spheres from reacting upon it in their turn" (1959a, 396). The most often-quoted passage used to illustrate Engels's alleged doctrine of "economic determinism" is one in which ironically he takes great pains to emphasize interaction, mutual influence, reciprocal dynamics, even though economic conditions are considered "ultimately decisive." In a letter to Joseph Bloch, Engels reiterates that "the *ultimately* determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life"; the economic level or movement is not then the only determining one, even though it is the "basis" since "the various elements of the superstructure . . . also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*" (1959b, 398). This is not a revision but a clarification of Marx's succinct formulation of the main thesis of historical materialism found in the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1987). I think Engels's nuanced conception of the interaction of relatively autonomous spheres (political, economic, ideological) is rendered in the following passage in which the ratio of agency and structure, consciousness and nature, becomes emblematic of the synthesizing power of the imagination:

> History is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of

> which each in turn has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant–the historical event. This may again itself be viewed as the product of a power which works as a whole *unconsciously* and without volition. For what each individual wills is obstructed by everyone else, and what emerges is something that no one willed. Thus history has proceeded hitherto in the manner of a natural process and is essentially subject to the same laws of motion. But from the fact that the wills of individuals–each of whom desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic, circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general)–do not attain what they want, but are merged into an aggregate mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that they are equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to the resultant and is to this extent included in it. (1959b, 399)

From what is now a characteristic Engelsian point of view, history may be conceived as an art form ascertaining pattern in the changes of velocity and direction of social motion. Historical movement transpiring "in the manner of a natural process"–this way of signifying it may evoke the objections of many commentators (for example, Colleti 1973, Schmidt 1971, McClellan 1977, Carver 1981) that it is reductive. The protagonists of the "historical event" become properly valued to the extent that multiple individual energies merge to constitute the whole. Sebastiano Timpanaro rightly points out that Engels's accenting of the objective social and natural conditions surrounding history has caused others to accuse him of fatalism, of Darwinism, and of being an enemy of humanism and "freedom of the spirit" (1975, 74). But like his singular valorization of the concept of labor as a practical-cognitive activity, Engels's ecological activism is neither a simplistic "realism" nor a nostalgic pantheism. Rather, it is a subtle and sophisticated empiricism premised on a recognition of the physical nature of the subject, the

imbrication of human agency in natural history, and the collective drive for happiness over and beyond the principle of freedom as "the recognition of necessity" (Timpanaro 1975, 128–29).[6]

It is within this horizon of matter in motion, the dialectic of attraction and repulsion, of chance and necessity, charted in *Dialectics of Nature*, that we can fully understand the lesson of Engels's literary criticism and his astute commentaries on writers and artists.

In his letter to Ferdinand Lassalle on *Franz von Sickingen*, Engels praised the drama's idea content, while criticizing the long monologues and the lack of differentiation of individual characters. The characters are "representatives of certain classes and tendencies, and hence of certain ideas of their time, and derive their motives not from the petty appetites of the individual but from the very historical current by which they are borne along" (1983, 442). What is decisive is how, Engels continues, "these motives should emerge more of themselves, in a live, active, as it were, spontaneous manner, more through the development of the action." Not what the characters do but how they do it differentiates them. Succinctly put, Lassalle's failure is not a matter of technique or form; everything hinges on an accurate, all-sided grasp of the historical situation. In concentrating on the aristocratic figures, Engels maintains, Lassalle ignored the "non-official, the plebeian and peasant elements, with their concomitant theoretical representation" (444). This, however, can be valid only insofar as the dramatist aims for a tragic effect; for precisely the failure of the nobility to conclude an alliance with the peasantry doomed their "national revolution" inasmuch as that alliance itself was impossible. Hence the action of Lassalle's tragedy organically lies in what Engels calls "the tragic clash between the historically necessary postulate and the impossibility of its execution in practice" (445), a denouement not formally rendered satisfactorily because of Lassalle's lack of historical comprehension. The form and effect of art, however, cannot be reduced to a problem of *Gehaltästhetik*, the correct ideological or cognitive judgment. Stefan Morawski has concluded that Marx and Engels downgraded form, style, and

originality to an "instrumental" level (1973, 38–39), just because they did not elaborate specifically on those topics. On the contrary, Engels in fact argued for the relative autonomy of form, as shown by his remarks on Carl Hubner's painting of *The Silesian Weavers* (see Rose 1984, 104–6).

I need not belabor Marx and Engels's extended stylistic analysis of Eugène Sue's *Mystères de Paris* in *The Holy Family* (1975b, 57, 163–65, 168–76; Winders 1994) nor Engels's numerous observations on language and rhetoric in the German *Volksbücher*, chivalric love poetry, Goethe, Heine, Carlyle, Cobbett, Weerth, and others. What I want to discuss is the way Engels combined realism and activism, mimesis and commitment, via a discourse on the typical and the metacommentary on Morgan's ethnography.

In Engels's letters to Minna Kautsky (1995) and Margaret Harkness (Marx and Engels 1976b, 89–92), the question of artistic technique or style (Is realism to be privileged as more "correct" than any other?) is, in my judgment, subordinate to a conception of art as both cognitive (critical) and ethical (transformative) in effect, both inducing pleasure of a specific kind. While Engels upholds the quasi-Hegelian view of individuality (the singular fused with the typical) in character, he contends that the typical–the purposeful or partisan tendency–"should spring from the situation and action as such, without it being expressly alluded to," the historical resolution being implied or inferrable from the description of the social conflicts (1995, 357). This notion of organic form, however, subtends a rhetorical purpose: by inducing audience/reader empathy, the work succeeds in exploding bourgeois optimism (i.e., any view claiming that the social order is immutable and transcendent). In this light, Engels considered the classic artists (Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Dante, Cervantes, Schiller) and some modern Russian and Norwegian writers as highly partisan. But their partisanship was not overtly polemical; it was embodied in the whole design or structuring of the artwork, with the didactic impulse immanent in the unfolding of the mimesis itself in concrete discursive activity (compare Lukács 1970, 76–79). Engels

tried to incorporate both realistic and pragmatic imperatives in elucidating the integrity of art.

Now this objective partisanship (Eagleton 1976, 1989) is precisely what is lacking in Harkness's novel because it is, for Engels, "not quite realistic enough." Despite its truth of detail, it lacks "the truthful reproduction of typical characters under typical circumstances." Engels calls attention to the representativeness of the circumstances that surround the characters' actions. The novelist's limited understanding of English history accounts for her depicting the proletariat as "a passive mass." Again, Engels searches for the seemingly organic disclosure of motives from the way characters reflect/signify the singular and distinctive tendencies of their historical situation (both in their presence and absence). This requires the submission of the artist's intellect or passion to the demands of her material, this material possessing the same complex typicality as that fashioned by Balzac in *La Comédie Humaine*. And that is not because Balzac had a superior or more comprehensive abstract knowledge of French society; rather, his materials forced him, despite his reactionary political ideology (in the pejorative sense), to exercise his faculties of satire and irony "when he sets in motion the very men and women with whom he sympathises most deeply–the nobles" (1976, 89–92). The typical then measures the disparity between subjective intention and objective achievement, between relative and absolute aspects of truth (for an analogous case, see Lenin's essays on Tolstoy [1975]).[7]

Realism for Engels, then, is a matter of rendering forms of social motion that convey the trajectories of lines of accidence and necessity.[8] Engels insists that Balzac's scientific aptitude, not his humanistic commitment to affirm human integrity (as Lukács proposed), redeemed the limitations of his politics. It enabled the novelist to penetrate the ideological screen of law, hegemonic business norms, inheritance procedures, etc., in the society of his time and reveal how "everything is upside down." This mode of representation generated irony and satire through the displacing of inversions (Laing 1978). Contrary to Peter Demetz's untenable gloss on Engels's approach as "theological" and messianic (1967), I would argue that the typical is a

symptomatic performance of the positive and negative effects of the division of labor, in particular the alienation of labor power in property relationships. Life in class society is no longer transparent but opaque, highly mediated, enigmatic and extremely duplicitous. Realist artists like Shakespeare, Balzac, Cervantes, and others do not achieve a theoretical apprehension of the unity of relative and absolute dimensions of truth, a passive reflection of the dialectic between appearance and reality–terms echoing classical philosophical arguments. Rather, they dramatize the play of social forces in motion, their attraction and repulsion, their complex interconnections and linkages. This play is encapsulated in Engels's statement that "as all action is *mediated* by thought, it appears to him [the thinker] to be ultimately *based* upon thought" (1976b: 65). In a sense, Engels's demystification of bourgeois thought, especially its tendency to hypostatize life in motion, events, and processes–an effect of the division of labor–becomes one necessary criterion in judging aesthetic value (for the resonance of Engels's ideas in the tradition, see Lang and Williams 1972; Craig 1975).

Before examining in the last section of this essay how Engels's aesthetics finds an instructive figural expression in *The Origin of the Family, Private Proverty and the State*, I would like to rehearse Engels's central insights into the dynamics of ideology. I have already suggested that the primacy of labor and its ramifications as critical transformative practice lies at the heart of Engels's conception of cultural-ideological practice. It is completely false to ascribe to Engels a monolithic belief in evolutionism that negates the "subjective moment," the creative force of thought materialized in production, industry, scientific experimentation, and so on. While the later works–*Anti-Dühring* and *Dialectics of Nature*, in particular–assign to nature "the same dialectic laws of motion" found in history (given the fact that motion as the "inherent attribute" of matter comprehends all changes and processes in the universe, including the activity of thinking), Engels qualifies the "historicism" of Hegelianizing "Western Marxists" by reminding us of the limits of human knowledge: "each mental image of the world's system is and remains in actual fact limited, objectively by the historical

conditions and subjectively by the physical and mental constitution of its originator" (quoted in McLellan 1977, 84). It is not Engels but his detractors who have forgotten that we still live in what Marx calls "prehistory," in which social organization and quotidian life itself, distorted by exploitation and mystified by commodity fetishism, have not as yet been fashioned consciously and rationally by humans. Only when we have socialized the means of production and abolished class contradictions and the antithesis between manual and intellectual labor (including the sexual division of labor), shall we witness "humanity's leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom."

What stands out above all in Engels's reflections on the base/superstructure orthodoxy is the decisive factor of the division of labor that has invariably conditioned us to think of effects as causes, of appearances as truths, and ideas as fixed and absolute. In a letter to Conrad Schmidt (27 October 1890), Engels elaborated on the dependence of ideology on the split in the production process:

> As soon as trade in products becomes independent of production proper, it follows a movement of its own, which, while it is governed as a whole by production, still in particular respects and within this general dependence follows laws of its own contained in the nature of this new factor; this movement has phases of its own and in turn reacts on the movement of production. (Marx and Engels 1972, 643)

Engels illustrates the relative autonomy of various spheres (commodity trade, the money market, transport and communications, etc.) and observes that the assignment of functions generates sectoral or particularistic interests to the point where the state comes into being; relatively independent interests then react on the condition and course of production. Hence political power determines the economic movement that has established it and endowed it with a life of its own. Class struggle is then reflected in inverted form in the "fight for political principles."

Engels then traces the multifarious interaction between state

power and economic development, in particular the character of law in the modern state that seeks to eliminate contradictions "arising from the direct translation of economic relations into legal principles": "the jurist imagines he is operating with *a priori* propositions, whereas they are really only economic reflexes, so everything is upside down" (645–46). Religious ideology serves as a pedagogical test case: not only is it caused by "low economic development" but also "by the false conceptions of nature." This judgment applies to philosophy, which, while belonging to a "definite sphere in the division of labor," also operates on presuppositions handed down in history, so that the economic force can only act within the limits set by the given philosophic material, "for it is the political, legal and moral reflexes which exercise the greatest direct influence upon philosophy." Engels urges a dialectical approach to complexify the notion of the division of labor as a law-governed and fructifying interaction of unequal but reciprocal forces.[9]

Although Engels bewails his inadvertent neglect of the "form" in which the mode of production impacts on the autonomous domains of law, religion, and culture in general, nevertheless the "internally coherent expression" of those activities testifies to the fragmentation of life functions in class society. The fetishism of form evinced in aesthetics as a specialized discipline or field of investigation becomes the prime aspect of ideology in a capitalist system. Ideology construed as the belief in the supremacy of thought, in the transcendental and demiurgic force of reason, is one demonstration of the effects of the division of labor. In the famous letter to Franz Mehring, 14 July 1893, Engels targets the illusion of stability arising from the seeming independence of various social functions:

> And since the bourgeois illusion of the eternity and finality of capitalist production has been added to this, even the 'overcoming' of the mercantilists by the physiocrats and Adam Smith is regarded as a sheer victory of thought; not as the reflection in thought of changed economic facts but as the finally achieved correct understanding of actual conditions subsisting always and everywhere. (Marx and Engels 1976b, 66)

A year before he died, Engels recapitulated the axioms of historical materialism already posited in *The German Ideology* and *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: the determining basis of history is "the manner and method by which men in a given society produce their means of subsistence and exchange the product among themselves (in so far as division of labor exists)" (1959c, 410). While it rephrases Marx's propositions on method in his preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, what is new is that Engels takes into account the techniques of production and transport, the geographical environment, the state, the level of technique, and race as economic factors. He underscores the reciprocal interdetermination that subtends the base/superstructure dynamics: political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary and artistic developments (conditioned by production/exchange relations and the division of labor) react and interact on each other "on the basis of economic necessity, which *ultimately* always asserts itself" (411). The leitmotif of novelty and contingency reverberates here because of the prehistoric fact that humans do not exercise complete control over the "economic" in a world governed by warring interests:

> Men make their history themselves, only they do so in a given environment, which conditions it, and on the basis of actual relations already existing, among which the economic relations, however much they may be influenced by the other, the political and ideological relations, are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the keynote which runs through them and alone leads to understanding. . . .
>
> Men make their history themselves, but not as yet with a collective will according to a collective plan, or even in a definite, delimited given society. Their aspirations clash, and for that very reason all such societies are governed by *necessity*, the complement and form of appearance of which is *accident*. The necessity which here asserts itself athwart all accident is again ultimately economic necessity. (411)

What is rather provocative here is the way the superstructure (ideology, cultural practice in general) becomes the space of

accidents and zigzag turns, of vectors running parallel but never really coinciding with the economic axis–a space of original creation, a borderland where something new, unprecedented, and revolutionary (the "terrible beauty" that W. B. Yeats once celebrated) can spring forth. This is then the distinctive field of the aesthetic as a symptomatic border marking chance and necessity, the typical always dissolving into incommensurable fragments and the totality always evaporating into a carnival of floating signifiers that nonetheless betray intelligible configuration.[10]

This domain of the aesthetic is concretized in Engels's cognitive and geopolitical mapping of the class struggle circa 1844–45, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, where realism can be seen to function allegorically. In a masterly cultural hermeneutic, Steven Marcus has shown how Engels's exposition of the urban physiognomy (buildings, layout of streets, demographics) of Manchester dramatizes the typical, that is, the convergence of what is accidental and what is planned, making the synchronic texture of geography symbolic of the diachronic unfolding of intentions, of subject-positions and social agency (1974). This reading of the aesthetic (the missing community) in the text of political economy (where private interest predominates) is actually an attempt to discern the inscription of what Raymond Williams calls "the structure of feeling." This is a heuristic concept meant to capture human agency that usually escapes the formulaic base/superstructure paradigm. In using the term, Williams writes, we are signifying "a social experience which is still *in process*, often indeed not yet recognized as social but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating, but which in analysis (though rarely otherwise) has its emergent, connecting and dominant characteristics, indeed its specific hierarchies" (1977, 132).

In somewhat schematic fashion, I delineate the "structure of feeling" in the following remarks on Engels's *Origin of the Family*. In this transposition of Engels's critical practice, first instanced in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1975), we can apprehend the aesthetic (in the meaning I posited earlier) as not only the space of the typical where we encounter

the convergence of chance and necessity, the coalescence of knowledge and power, hegemony and resistance. It also offers the opportunity for grasping the possibility of freedom and happiness of individuals-in-community submerged, embedded, yet preserved, in the alienating and reified forms of the monogamous patriarchal family, private property, and the bourgeois state. This dialectical process is enacted by historical specification and performed in the strategic analysis of lines of conflicting forces (residual, dominant, emergent as alternative or oppositional) in *Origin*.

In the narrative plot Engels elaborates in *Origin of the Family* to account for the emergence of class division and alienation, the dialectic of freedom and necessity is sublated into that of nature and culture. Drawing on Marx's notes on the anthropological discoveries of Lewis Henry Morgan, Engels tracks the development of the monogamous family from the dissolution and sublation of earlier forms–the consanguine, the punaluan, the pairing, and finally the monogamous bourgeois family. What is significant here is not so much the way this organism perpetuated itself, but rather how the erotic (read: sensuous practice) has been circumscribed by the development of the forces of production.[11] Where before brothers and sisters engaged in sexual intercourse, the advance to the pairing family required a prohibition of sex between children of the same mother: the incest taboo. Occurring in relatively permanent settlements of communistic assemblages, the rise of the matriarchal gens (what Bachofen calls "mother right") from group marriage indulged by "vagrant savages" forms part of what Engels calls "the continual narrowing of the circle–originally embracing the whole tribe–within which marital community between the two sexes prevailed" (1990, 157). With the domestication of animals and the growth of a surplus comes "the overthrow of mother right" and "the *world-historic defeat of the female sex*" (165). In the patriarchal family, "the woman was degraded, enthralled, became the slave of the man's lust, a mere instrument for breeding children" (165). Here we find a figure for the genesis of the aesthetic as the recovery of "mother right" in women's liberation from male domination. It transpires via the negative: the

monogamous, patriarchal family. Paraphrasing Johann Bachofen's interpretation of Aeschylus's *Oresteia* as symbolic of the ambiguous progressive/regressive transition from male-supremacist class society, Engels anticipates the overthrow of the state (father-right). Maynard Solomon perceives in Engels's account a prophecy of the "revolutionary restoration . . . of primal mother-child harmony," the pre-oedipal "matriarchal brotherhood" equivalent to "the Marxist Utopia" (1973, 470–71).

Engels confronts the question of reproduction (social and physical) with a commentary on the patriarchal family, the space of "the very antagonisms and contradictions in which society . . . moves" (1990b, 175), replete with allusions to Greek literature (*Odyssey*, the theater of tragedy). Uneven development and relative autonomy of the ideological, political, and economic levels are illustrated by the spectacle of slavery coexisting with monogamy–for the woman only. Euripedes' drama, for instance, exhibits the subordination of the woman, the chief female domestic servant, to the husband. This family unit of civilized society is founded not on natural conditions as before (in the time of primitive matricentric communism) but on the economic, "the victory of private property over original, naturally developed, common ownership" (173)

Finally, Engels sums up his historical survey of family forms in a passage that epitomizes the laws of motion enunciated in *Dialectics of Nature*:

> "The first division of labour is that between man and woman for child breeding." . . . The first class antithesis which appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamian marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male. Monogamy was a great historical advance, but at the same time it inaugurated, along with slavery and private wealth, that epoch, surviving to this day, in which every advance is likewise a relative regression, in which the well-being and development of some are attained through the misery and repression of others. It is the cellular form of civilised society, in which

> we can already study the nature of the antitheses and contradictions which develop fully in the latter. (173–74)

The historiography of Engels's analysis of the genealogy of the state from the evolution of family forms provides the clearest example of how the typical, the unity of opposites, that underlies his notion of the aesthetic is textualized. Each genre of the family exhibits typicality in conflating both the spatiotemporal moment of its existence and the duration/continuum of its metamorphosis from past to future. The apprehension of the logic of uneven social development, the discovery that what was deemed contingent or arbitrary before was really an intended part of the whole design, constitutes the aesthetic pleasure of recognition.

In the final chapter, "Barbarism and Civilisation," Engels rehearses the vicissitudes of the division of labor: from the pastoral stage to the division between handicraft and agriculture, arriving finally at the stage of early civilization and production for exchange symbolized by the role of the merchant. The emergence of the state, the sign of civilization, in which "production and products fall victim to chance" subsumed within the immanent unfolding of necessity:

> In nature, where chance, too, seems to reign, we have long since demonstrated in each particular field the inherent necessity and regularity that asserts itself in this chance. . . . The more a social activity, a series of social processes, becomes too powerful for conscious human control, grows beyond human reach, the more it seems to have been left to pure chance, the more do its peculiar and innate laws assert themselves in this chance, as if by natural necessity. Such laws also control the fortuities of the production and exchange of commodities. (273)

Engels's narrative registers the intersecting movements of phenomenal chance and totalizing necessity in history, an art form of typification that transcends mere inventory of sensations (naturalism) or unmediated, pragmatic didacticism. Engels's materialist theory of imagination thus supersedes the conventional bourgeois critique of taste, sensibility, or feeling. It should finally be conceived as a dialectic (*Aufhebung* as simultaneous

cancelling and conserving on a higher plane) of the forms of labor (labor of writing, practice of sign-production) in its historicity.[12] It attempts to resolve the effects of the social division of labor by reconciling the limits of class-bound ideology with the power of a utopian vision of communism (free and full development of all based on the community of goods; see Engels's "Principles of Communism" [1976]).[13] This resolution may be discerned in the constellation of synchronic and diachronic movements comprising the style of narration found in *Origin*. The dialectical unity of ideology and utopia, for Engels, may be grasped in the monogamous family of civilization which articulates the internally conflicted route of progress by regress: "Since the exploitation of one class by another is the basis of civilisation, its whole development moves in a continuous contradiction" (1990, 275). Engels's narrative technique in *Origin* captures the contour and texture of such contradictory process, an imaginative strategy that demarcates the field of the aesthetic as, in W. F. Haug's apt phrase, a unity of opposites: domination and anarchy, morality and immorality, the aesthetic as "anti-appearance of private property" (1987, 141).

In *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels maintains that "all knowing is sensuous measurement" (1987b, 516). Such knowledge connects end and beginning in *Origin of the Family*: the end of a classless society where the division of labor is abolished with the beginning in "mother-right" and the communal gens. In essence, *Origin* stages a semiotics of reconciling the necessary trajectory of the history of the species with the ordeals and sufferings of individuals caught in the storm of passions and desires. This figural mode of integrating base and superstructure affords us a key to unlocking the puzzle of asymmetry between the "eternal charm" of Greek art and its backward social foundation addressed by Marx in the *Grundrisse*. The asymmetry springs from the cleavage between material and intellectual production, the disparity in the forms of movement of needs and social capacities for objectification (Raphael 1933; Vasquez 1973). The practice of artistic production is, for Engels, ultimately an exercise of intelligence and active participation in radical global transformation, an exercise of apprehending the multiple forms

of motion that sensuous practice assumes and one that embraces both the forgetting of history in alienated work and its remembering via the rigor of living with and through contradictions. In its hermeneutic of multiple forms of motion (both hegemonic and subversive) lies the revolutionary potential of Engels's ideas on art and literature.

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NOTES

1. The criticism of Engels's "dialectic of nature" as a "pantheistic-hylozoic conception of a 'nature-Subject'" has been succinctly restated by Alfred Schmidt (1971). In *History and Class Consciousness*, Georg Lukács pointed out that "the crucial determinants of dialectics—the interaction of subject and object, the unity of theory and practice, the historical changes in the reality underlying the categories as the root cause of changes in thought, etc.—are absent from our knowledge of nature" (1971, 24).

2. One example is Marck's article attributing to Marx the inadequacy of "romantic semi-anarchistic Rousseauanism," among other negative qualities (1950).

3. Althusser generalizes practice for analytic deployment thus:

> By practice in general I shall mean any process of transformation of a determinate given raw material into a determinate product, a transformation effected by a determinate human labour, using determinate means [of 'production']. (1969, 166)

4. Terell Carver points out certain moments (for example, the article "On Authority," dated 1872) in which Engels seemingly valorizes the independent power of nature over humans, as in the passage:

> If man, by dint of his knowledge and inventive genius, has subdued the forces of nature, the latter avenge themselves upon him by subjecting him, in so far as he employs them, to a veritable despotism independent of all social organization. (quoted in Carver 1981, 61)

5. Antonio Gramsci's speculation on hegemonic struggles betrays its provenance in Engels's master trope of necessity immanent in contingency (see the section on "Problems of Marxism" in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*), as demonstrated for example in Gramsci's notion of "catharsis" as "the passage from the purely economic (or egoistic-passional) to the ethico-political moment" (1971, 366).

6. Engels adopts Hegel's idea of freedom as the appreciation of necessity and elaborates on the aporia or antinomy implied by it in this passage from *Anti-Dühring*:

> Freedom of the will therefore means nothing but the capacity to make decisions with knowledge of the subject. Therefore the *freer* a man's judgment is in relation to a definite question, with so much the greater is the *necessity* with which the content of this judgment will be determined; while the uncertainty, founded on ignorance, which seems to make an arbitrary choice among many different and conflicting possible decisions, shows precisely by this that it is not free, that it is controlled by the very object it should itself control. Freedom therefore consists in the control over ourselves and over external nature, a control founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development. (1987a, 105–6)

7. The most erudite attempt to account for both idiogenetic and allogenetic forces in the development of art is Morawski 1974, an ambitious project to construct an "integrated Marxist approach."

8. Compare Brecht's definition of realist art as one which, among others, emphasizes "the dynamics of development," "laying bare society's causal network," and so on (1964).

9. The Italian Marxist Galvano della Volpe uses as a touchstone the perception by Engels that

> the "median axis" of the cultural-historical curve of a given ideological or superstructural sphere (e.g. that of art) is all the more "nearly parallel" to the axis of the historical curve of economic and material development "the longer the [historical] period considered and the wider the [ideological] field dealt with." (1960, 182–83)

10. This way of theorizing realism approximates Ernst Bloch's notion of realist art as one that "strives to exploit the real fissures in surface interrelations and [tries to] discover the new in their crevices" (1977, 22).

11. For Engels's adumbration of the pleasure principle, one can point to his poignant celebration of Georg Weerth's poetry radiating "natural robust sensuality and carnel lust" (1990c, 111).

12. I recommend highly Ted Benton's perceptive appraisal of Engels's contribution to the history of science, in particular his observation: "Historicity in nature is, in other words, the emergence, in temporal succession, of new levels of complexity in forms of motion" (1979, 124).

13. The problematic of the connection between ideology and utopia may be explored here. According to Fredric Jameson, all class consciousness expressed in art is "Utopian insofar as it expresses the unity of a collectivity" and all collectivities are "figures for the ultimate concrete collective life of an achieved Utopia or classless society" (1981, 291). Such an image of utopia, however, takes the individualism of atomized bourgeois society as the fundamental situation that needs to be negated, when in fact it is only a symptom of the

reification of social relations under a regime of commodity exchange and its alienating division of labor.

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“Air Raid over Harlem”: Langston Hughes’s Left Nationalist Poetics, 1927–1936

Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua

I know we got to keep
ORDER OVER HARLEM
Where the black millions sleep
Shepherds over Harlem
Their armed watch keep
Lest Harlem stirs in its sleep
And maybe remembers
And remembering forgets
To be peaceful and quiet
And has sudden fits
Of raising a black fist
out of the dark
And that black fist
Becomes a red spark

(Hughes 1994, 186)[1]

This stanza comes from “Air Raid over Harlem,” perhaps Langston Hughes’s most potent political poem. “Air Raid” represents Hughes’s poetic response to the 19 March 1935 Harlem rebellion. Partially in response to rumors that police had murdered Lino Riveria, a Puerto Rican youth, and partly in response to long-standing grievances derived from structural oppression, thousands of Harlemites rampaged through the streets smashing 626 windows and destroying two million dollars worth of white-owned commercial property. Three African Americans were

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killed; fifty-seven people, including seven police, were injured; and seventy-five people, mainly African Americans, were arrested. The 1935 Harlem conflagration foreshadowed the rebellions of the 1960s; it signaled a transformation of "racial disturbances" from massive conflicts between African American and European American private citizens to Black revolts against property and police, the most apparent symbols of racial oppression. Ironically, the 1935 rebellion marked the end of the Harlem Renaissance, whose origin is usually traced to Claude McKay's call to arms, "If We Must Die," during the Red Summer of 1919.

Hughes was in Mexico City when the disturbance occurred. According to Arnold Rampersad, "Hughes could not stay away from the American fire forever, nor could he fan it from a safe distance" (1986b, 304–5). Returning to the United States in early June, Hughes published "Air Raid over Harlem" in the February 1936 *New Theatre*. The insurrection heralded a new tactic in Black politics. The rebellion provided Hughes with the basis to reconceptualize the orthodox Marxist understanding of the relationship between race and class. The traditional Marxist view has been characterized by J. M. Blaut as "Euro-Marxism." According to Blaut, "Euro-Marxists consider the European (white) proletariat as the historical agent and relegate people of color to the periphery" (1994, 351-53). This perspective subsumes resistance to racial oppression under class struggle, either by reducing race to class, or by treating race as an epiphenomenon. Hughes reflected his new recognition that African Americans could become catalysts for revolutionary change in "Air Raid" (Greenberg 1992, 407–8; Lewis 1982, 306–7; 1994, xv-xliii; Naison 1983, 140–45; San Juan 1989, 58–59; Shapiro 1988, 262–72; Solomos 1988, 85–87). [2]

Race or class as distinct themes constitute a significant portion of Hughes's political poetry. Responding to the tendency to conflate his radical verse, Rampersad astutely calls for differentiating Hughes's Marxist poetry from his anticolonial verse. Though it is unclear how Rampersad conceptualizes "Marxist" or "anticolonial," his logic suggests that he views *Marxist* as class analysis and equates *anticolonial* with a race-centered perspective. Despite the lacunae in this suggestion, it is an

important insight. However, at a moment in United States history when we are simultaneously witnessing increasing stratification of African Americans into antagonistic classes and the continuation of race in shaping African American life chances, perhaps we may benefit more from an investigation of how Hughes treated the intersection of race and class. From approximately 1927 to 1936 Hughes transcended the race/class dichotomy and explicitly examined the dynamic intertwining of race and class, or what I shall term the *racialclass* problematic (Rampersad 1987, 308–9).

The objective of this study is to uncover the *authorial* and *aesthetic ideology* embedded in the radical poetry published by Hughes during this period. I explicate his authorial and aesthetic ideologies by delineating the relationship between *mode, form,* and *content* in his political verse. I have derived my understanding of the terms *authorial ideology, aesthetic ideology, mode, form,* and *content* from Emmanuel Ngara, an African Marxist literary critic. For Ngara, authorial ideology refers to an author's social vision, and aesthetic ideology refers to his or her use of mode and form. Mode, according to Ngara, refers to a poem's external structure, specifically a particular type of poetry, such as blues. Form is a more complicated concept, which Ngara defines as "that dimension of a poem that includes the mode, the linguistic structure, imagery, symbolism, tone, rhythmic patterns and sound devices." Ngara describes content as the dynamic interaction between historical, social, and ideological factors, on the one hand, and subject matter, theme, and ideas on the other (1990, 11–15).

Before examining Hughes's poetic explorations of race and class themes between 1927 and 1936, I shall contextualize Hughes's authorial and aesthetic ideology during this period in relationship to the authorial and aesthetic ideologies articulated in his poetry during other periods between 1920 and 1942.

A periodization of Hughes's political poetry, 1920 to 1942

Hughes published from 1920 to 1967. During these forty-seven years, he was a primary participant in three social-cultural movements: *the Harlem Renaissance* (1919–1935), *the*

proletarian literary phase (1930–1935), and *the Popular Front* (1935–1939). Unfortunately, he died on the eve of a fourth, *the Black arts movement* (1966–1973). Raymond Williams has noted the correspondence between specific literary forms and the societies or historical periods in which they were created or practiced (1985, 182-83). Any periodization of Hughes's poetry must therefore account for how his poetry was transformed by participation in the Harlem Renaissance, the proletarian literary phase, and the Popular Front arts movements. As a partisan of these movements, Hughes produced poetry that generally conformed to the politics of these literary-political movements. That is, his authorial ideology changed as he adjusted to new social conditions and associated with new arts movements. Further, his aesthetic ideology changed to correspond to his new dominant authorial ideology. I divide Hughes's political poetry into four periods corresponding to distinct authorial and aesthetic ideologies between 1920 and 1942: (1) racialism/Afrocentrism, 1920–1926; (2) left nationalism, 1927–1931; (3) Marxism, 1932–1936; and (4) populism, 1937–1942. Because Hughes's poetic development was nonlinear, it involved recycling of previous modes and forms as well as creation of new ones; therefore he sometimes wrote poems that either presaged a future period or recalled a past one. Consequently, the four authorial and aesthetic periods may be thought of as lanes on a highway separated by broken lines that permit passing, rather than solid lines that indicate no-passing zones (Williams 1985, 182–83). [3]

Hughes's first authorial ideology was *nationalism*, or more correctly *racialism*. The African American notion of racialism was embedded in the activities of the race men/women at the turn of the twentieth century. Race men and women were defenders of the race; they were imbued with a racial or a protonational consciousness. As a protopolitical ideology, African American racialism condemned racial oppression and emphasized Black unity as well as the contributions and accomplishments of Black people. His first aesthetic ideology was *cultural nationalism* or *Afrocentrism.* The best Afrocentric texts go beyond content to develop forms derived from the cultural traditions of African people. Hughes was a pioneer of

Afrocentric poetry. His writings in this voice emulated the speech idioms of the new urban Black working class. His encounter with the Black working class and the *racialclass* nexus provided him with the material to develop authentic Afrocentric poetic modes, musico-poetry. Musico-poetry consists of poetic structures that recall musical forms unique to the African American experience, such as the blues, jazz, spirituals, and blues-ballads. Musico-poetry affirmed Hughes's connection to his racial heritage: his grounding with the common folk and alienation from the "Talented Tenth." Hughes began his experiments in these modes in the early 1920s and returned to them in the early 1940s (Hansell 1978; Jones 1991, 17–37; Martin, 1978; Martin-Ogunsola 1986; Smith 1989; S. Williams 1979).[4]

"The Negro Speaks of Rivers," published in 1920, is perhaps the premier example of his initial authorial and aesthetic ideologies of racialism and Afrocentrism.

> I've known rivers:
> I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins.
>
> My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
>
> I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
> I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
> I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
> I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset.
>
> I've known rivers:
> Ancient, dusky rivers.
>
> My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
>
> (Hughes 1994, 23)

This poem uses rivers as a metaphor for the antiquity of African people. Hughes employs the names of ancient rivers to imply the African origin of humanity and to assert the continuity of African people throughout the stream of history. "Rivers" is saturated with African American spiritualism. The connection

between water and life contained in the river metaphor articulates a core Afrocentric principle by reconnecting African Americans to their African heritage. The repetition and elaboration of the phrase "I've known rivers" create a blues feel, although the poem lacks the structural components of a fully developed blues poem.

According to Theodore Hudson, "the sung blues have a strict structural poetic pattern: one long line repeated and a third line to rhyme with the first two. Sometimes the second line in repetition is slightly changed and sometimes, but very seldom, it is omitted" (1973, 28). Hughes modified this formula in his blues poetry. By dividing each line into two lines, Hughes converted the conventional three-line blues song pattern into a six-stanza blues poem. Elaborating on the technical aspects of Hughes's musical poetry, Hudson explains how Hughes simulated the music by "bluing" words, using italics and punctuation for emphasis, or by recreating pure sound words.[5]

Hughes creatively reconstructed the experiences of the African American proletariat in his blues poetry. He distilled racial consciousness in his musical poetry, because during this era the musical form was not universal, but particularly Black–so, therefore, was the poetic form. In the social environment of the United States during the twenties, class exploitation appeared dim when compared with the intense glare of racial repression. Consequently, Hughes's *blues poetry* embodied his Afrocentric aesthetic ideology and his racialist authorial ideology.

Immediately before and during the early phase of the Depression, Hughes merged Afrocentric subject matter, though not its poetic forms, with a Marxist-influenced social vision. Poems written in Hughes's *left nationalist* political voice exposed capitalist exploitation, opposed worldwide white supremacy, challenged middle-class African American leadership, and advocated militant resistance. The left nationalist aesthetic characterized his poetry from 1927 to 1932. Most of these poems were written in free verse. The work experiences of Black laborers were often the subject matter of these militant poems. This motif eased Hughes's transition to interracial, multinational, proletarian themes.

At the height of the Depression, 1932–1936, Hughes developed his third political poetic voice, *proletarianism*. His proletarian poems amplified interracial working-class solidarity while muting intraracial unity. These poems articulated revolutionary consciousness and advocated socialism. Like his left nationalist poems, his proletarian works were realist, often depicting the wretchedness of working-class life and advocating resistance. Hughes often used imagery brilliantly in his proletarian poetry to evoke visceral and intellectual reactions to capitalist exploitation.[6]

The difference between Hughes's left nationalist and proletarian poetry is demonstrated in the difference between "Always the Same" and "Black Seed." Both poems examine pan-African themes, but the latter eschews interracial proletarian unity while the former articulates the need for interracial and international proletarian unity. "Always the Same," published in 1932, is a free-verse poem that examines colonialism and racial oppression. Focusing on the international exploitation of Black labor, Hughes wrote:

> It is the same everywhere for me:
> On the docks at Sierra Leone,
> In the cotton fields of Alabama,
> In the diamond mines of Kimberley,
> On the coffee hills of Haiti,
> The banana lands of Central America,
> The streets of Harlem,
> And the cities of Morocco and Tripoli.
>
> Black:
> Exploited, beaten and robbed,
> Shot and killed.
> Blood running into
>
> (Hughes 1994, 165)

In the first stanza, Hughes identifies colonies throughout the African diaspora and the specific cash crop farmed or the worksite. He begins the second stanza with the term "Black." Here "Black" refers to "race," and more importantly it also symbolizes the treatment accorded African people worldwide, but he

locates the commonalities of blackness in a similar experience of exploitation and brutality, rather than in "race."

> Dollars
> Pounds
> Francs
> Pesetas
> Lire
>
> For the wealth of the exploiters–
> Blood that never comes back to me again.
> Better that my blood
> Runs into the deep channels of Revolution,
> Runs into the strong hands of Revolution,
> Stains all flags red,
> Drives me away from

The last line of the second stanza, "Blood running into," leads directly to the third stanza's list of international currency that Hughes uses as a synonym for the surplus value extracted from Black workers. The fourth stanza is the critical stanza because it is the site where "Black" is transformed into "red." Hughes uses bloodshed as a symbol of capitalist exploitation and racial oppression and as the undercurrent moving African people toward socialism.

> And all the black lands everywhere.
> The force that kills,
> The power that robs,
> And the greed that does not care.
>
> Better that my blood makes one with the blood
> Of all the struggling workers in the world–
> Till every land is free of
>
> Dollar Robbers
> Pound Robbers
> Franc Robbers
> Peseta Robbers
> Lire Robbers
> Life Robbers–

> Until the Red Armies of the International Proletariat
> Their faces, black, white, olive, yellow, brown,
> Unite to raise the blood-red flag that
> never will come down!

Blood is the poem's central metaphor, because the metamorphosis of "Blacks" into "Reds" is its main theme. The "Dollar Robbers" become "Life Robbers" because of the violence used to facilitate the exploitation of Black labor. Though the poet's initial theme is the universal oppression of African-descended people, he quickly shifts to advocating international proletarian unity. Here worker solidarity constitutes the basis for interracial unity and world freedom. Hughes, it must be remembered, moved leftward because he was convinced that socialist revolution offered the best possibility for ending racial oppression.

When the international socialist movement shifted its strategy from class struggle to the united front, Hughes produced poetry that reflected the new approach. The dominant authorial ideology expressed in Hughes's verse between 1936 and 1942 was *populist realism*. During and immediately after the Popular Front, he produced poetry that accurately described social conditions, criticized economic and social inequalities, and called upon the people to liberate themselves. Adapting his poetry to populist politics, Hughes experimented with a new vernacular form, blues-ballad poetry. To create the blues-ballad vernacular Hughes blended an organic African American musical form (the blues) with a traditional European musical form (ballads). Hughes's blues-ballads incorporated the blues repetition into the structure, stanza, and rhyme of the ballad. The ballad, like the blues, is a communal art form that also embodies the dreams of the folk. This new form, due to its familiar structure, racially ambiguous characters, and universal themes, made Hughes's poetry more accessible to European American audiences.[7]

The blues-ballad was ideal for the populist politics he articulated between 1936 and 1942. Thus, the "Ballad of Roosevelt," is a superb example of populist authorial and aesthetic ideology. This poem is a satire of the New Deal. It begins with a son questioning his father's apathy. The faithful father

explains that he is "waiting on Roosevelt," but as conditions worsen his attitude begins to change:

> I can't git a job
> And I can't git no grub.
> Backbone and navels
> Doin' the belly-rub–
> A-waitin' on Roosevelt,
> Roosevelt, Roosevelt.
>
> And a lot o' other folks
> What's hungry and cold
> Done stopped believin'
> What they been told
> By Roosevelt,
> Roosevelt, Roosevelt–
>
> (Hughes 1994, 179)

The blues humor remained but not the blues mood; the father is no longer "laughing to keep from crying." Implicit in the father's awakening consciousness is the possibility that he may move from criticism to opposition.

Although his poetic philosophy evolved and changed over the years, all of his political voices, except the proletarian mode, recurred throughout his career. Afrocentric and populist realism appeared among his earliest poems and were his most persistent authorial and aesthetic ideologies, but he achieved his most potent discussions of the racialclass nexus in his left nationalist voice.

The formation of Hughes's radical authorial and aesthetic ideology

In "My Adventures as a Social Poet," Hughes explains the factors that pushed him to write socially conscious poetry:

> Unfortunately, having been born poor–and also colored–in Missouri, I was stuck in the mud from the beginning. Try as I might to float off into the clouds, poverty and Jim Crow would grab me by the heels, and right back on earth I would land. (Berry 1978, 135)

The most important issue here is the order in which he identified the factors spurring him toward becoming an artist-activist: class and race.

As Hughes moved farther leftward, dissonance began to shatter the harmony between his authorial and aesthetic ideologies. Thus, he wrote his first explicitly left political poetry in free verse, rather than in the musical poetic modes. Blues poetry embodied his Afrocentric aesthetic ideology and his nationalistic authorial ideology. Even as Hughes was consolidating his race-centered authorial and aesthetic ideologies, however, class intertwined with race was emerging as a prominent subtheme. His radicalism, an undercurrent in "Negro," crested in poems such as "Rising Waters." Describing the social structure of the United States, Hughes wrote:

> To you
> Who are the
> Foam on the sea
> And not the sea–
> What of the jagged rocks,
> And the waves themselves,
> And the force of the mounting waters?
> You are
> But foam on the sea,
> You rich ones–
> Not the sea.
>
> (Hughes 1994, 48)

Merging images of sea and foam, Hughes presents a picture that accurately reflects racial oppression in America. He equates the wealthy with "foam on the sea." Foam, like the rich, is white, ethereal, an aberration. The sea represents the masses. The sea is dark, deep, and constant. As one descends, the sea darkens; so do U.S. society and humanity. "Rising Waters" is an allegory of racial capitalism's dual labor market. The lines "What of the jagged rocks/And the waves themselves/And the force of the mounting waters?" suggest that opposition to the "foam on the sea" may be rising. "Rocks" may be a metaphor for structural impediments upon which the foam may be dashed. "Mounting

waters" is a metaphor for insurgent masses. Through the poem's imagery Hughes alludes to the greatest contradiction in U.S. society–the contradiction between the African American working class and the European American capitalist class.

Fine Clothes to the Jew contains a sharper protest theme than most of Hughes's previous poetry. Between 1927 and 1931 he explicitly attacked capitalism in his left nationalist voice. Most of his left nationalist poems were written in free verse. Black workers were the subject of many of these militant poems. In verses such as "Madam and Her Madam," "Share-Croppers," "Porter," and "Elevator Boy" Hughes chronicled the on-the-job experiences of the African American working class. Adopting the persona of an African American common laborer, in "Porter" he wrote:

> I must say
> Yes, sir,
> To you all the time.
> Yes, sir!
> Yes, sir!
> All my days
> Climbing up a great big mountain
> Of yes, sirs!
>
> Rich old white man
> Owns the world.
> Gimme yo' shoes
> To shine.
>
> Yes, sir!
>
> (Hughes 1994, 116)

One can envision a cartoonist's depiction of this scene in which "Yes, sir" appear as the only words spoken by the protagonist while his true thoughts and feelings are represented in a bubble that contains caustic lines such as "All my days/Climbing up a great big mountain/Of yes, sirs" and "Rich old white man/Owns the world./Gimme yo' shoes/To shine." In this brief poetic portrait Hughes captures the essence of racial oppression. He expresses the resentment and anger of his Black proletarian

protagonist, and in so doing reveals the porter's ability to maintain his dignity in the midst of constant indignities. The porter's understanding that he is not his work, and his refusal to become the wealthy white man's conception of him is expressed in the dialectic between thought and speech, and between desire and action. Hughes's porter not only rejects the oppressor's effort to impose an identity upon him, but he counters by developing his own view of the "Rich old white man." The porter's sarcasm barely masks his bitterness, but the lack of action suggests resignation, rather than resistance. "Porter" depicts a "hidden transcript" and its contradictions. The resentment characterized Black workers' typical response to these situations. Nevertheless, as Hughes became more radical, the resignation shown in poems like "Porter" was replaced by militant resistance in poems such as "Air Raid over Harlem." As a spokesperson for the Black proletariat, Hughes was well situated for his journey to the left.

Black and Red: Left nationalist verse, 1927–1931

First published in the *Crisis* in 1928, "Johannesburg Mines" signaled Hughes's foray into left nationalism. Brimming with irony, the poet wrote:

> In the Johannesburg mines
> There are 240,000
> Native Africans working.
> What kind of poem
> Would you
> Make of that?
> 240,000 natives
> Working in the
> Johannesburg mines.
>
> (Hughes 1994, 43)

Here Hughes implicitly challenges the "poets who write mostly about love, roses and moonlight, sunsets and snow" to "come forward and speak upon the subject of the Revolution" (Berry 1978, 3, 135).

By 1930 several factors conjoined to accelerate and deepen

Hughes's revolutionary poetic eruptions. Among the personal factors pushing Hughes leftward were his patron's efforts to censor his militant musings and his southern speaking tour. Louise Thompson, a close friend, was a significant factor pulling him to the left. Thompson, a former social worker and teacher, national secretary of the International Workers Order, was considered the leading Black woman in the U.S. Communist movement. The Depression and the Scottsboro case were the major social factors pushing Hughes toward the left. The Depression devastated the U.S. economy, reversed the economic and social progress of the newly urbanized African Americans, and finished off the Harlem Renaissance. The Scottsboro case accented racial injustice. Consequently, poverty and racial oppression, as Hughes would state in 1947, were the main engines propelling him toward Marxism (Bart 1979, 55; Haywood 1978, 383).

James O. Young, a literary historian, explains how African American writers responded to these new conditions. Hughes, like many prominent European American and African American artists, made a radical shift at this juncture. According to Young, protest in the poetry written during the Renaissance, was "almost exclusively racial and generally mild"; in contrast, poems written during the Depression were generally "bitter and strident." Concurring with Young, cultural historian Daniel Aaron finds that Black writing during the 1920s reflects "self-discovery and self-expression" while that of the 1930s exhibits "social discovery and social expression" (Aaron 1961, 173–74; Young 1973, 168).

After the response of petty-bourgeois Black critics to the "Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," *Fire*, and *Fine Clothes to the Jew*, Hughes was prepared to move further left. Hughes's move left can be glimpsed in the differences in tone between the poems "Porter" and "Pride," and especially in the transformation of "Pride" in the late 1930s. In "Porter" the protagonist's occupation identifies his racialclass, whereas "Pride" reflects a general racial experience.

> Let all who will
> Eat quietly the bread of shame.
> I cannot,
> Without complaining loud and long,

Tasting its bitterness in my throat,
And feeling to my very soul
It's wrong.
For honest work you proffer me poor pay.
For honest dreams
Your spit is in my face,
And so my fist is clenched–
Too weak I know–

But longing to be strong
To strike your face.

(Hughes 1994, 630)

The line "For honest work/You proffer me poor pay" implies that the protagonist in "Pride" is also a worker. In "Porter" Hughes used the refrain "Yes, sir!" to establish a sarcastic tone, but he creates a mood of militancy in "Pride" through his use of declarative statements. For example, the lines "Let all who will/Eat quietly the bread of shame./I cannot/Without/ complaining loud and long/Tasting its bitterness in my throat/And feeling to my very soul/It's wrong" seethe with anger. Nevertheless, as in "Porter," the protagonist in "Pride" opts not to act. However, the poem's development implies that Hughes considered nonviolence a tactic, rather than an ideological principle. His changing of the last two lines to read "And so my fist is clenched/Today–/To strike your face." in *A New Song*, his volume of radical verse confirms this interpretation of Hughes's perspective on self-defense. In 1930 he apparently rejected Black-initiated violence, but after the Harlem rebellion of 1935 Hughes incorporated representations of violent Black self-help into his poetic imagination. "Air Raid over Harlem" was his initial expression of his "new song"; his reworking of the last two lines of "Pride" was another. Finally, for his posthumously published 1967 collection *The Panther and the Lash*, Hughes changed the poem's name from "Pride" to "Militant."[8]

As previously mentioned, "Black Seed," like "Always the Same," discusses pan-African themes, but where "Always the Same" focuses on exploitation, "Black Seed" examines the theme of alienation. Whereas "Always the Same" directly

engages the diasporan experience, "Black Seed" alludes to it. Using the metaphor of plants, Hughes wrote:

> World-wide dusk
> Of dear dark faces
> Driven before an alien wind,
> Scattered like seed
> From far off places
> Growing in soil
> That's strange and thin,
> Hybrid plants
> In another's garden,
> Flowers
> In a land
> That's not your own,
> Cut by the shears
> Of the white-faced gardeners–
>
> Tell them to leave you alone!
>
> (Hughes 1994, 130)

"Hybrid plants" may be a metaphor for the mulatto theme, a central concern of Hughes. The preceding phase, "Growing in soil/That's strange and thin," summons the image of the tragic mulatto. Alienation, double consciousness, and despair are suggested by the poem's imagery. Despite this dismal portrait, Hughes saw the "hybrid plants" as "flowers." In "Black Seed," unlike in "Porter" or "Pride," the narrator addresses a Black audience. This may partially explain why the protagonists in "Porter" and "Pride" accepted accommodation, but adopted defiance in "Black Seed" (Hubbard 1992; Hughes 1994, 130).

In "Air Raid over Harlem," Hughes achieves his greatest poetic expression of left nationalism. He constructs a narrative that rips away the myth of hegemony to reveal force as the essence of racial oppression. The poem opens with a Harlemite questioning a director about a film project. The film's plot examines an urban uprising. Inspired by the 1935 Harlem rebellion, Hughes wrote an atypical left nationalist poem in 1936. In Hughes's narrative the rebellion occurs the day after Italy invaded Ethiopia. Early in the poem the narrator states, "The

Ethiopian war broke out last night: /BOMBS OVER HARLEM." This implies a relationship between Italy's aggression in Ethiopia and a genocidal war against African Americans. Hughes suggests that Harlem, like Ethiopia, is occupied by "foreign troops."

> Cops on every corner
> Most of em white
> COPS IN HARLEM
> Guns and billy-clubs
> Double duty in Harlem
> Walking in pairs
> Under every light
> their faces
> WHITE
> In Harlem
> And mixed in with em
> A black cop or two
> For the sake of the vote in Harlem
> GUGSA A TRAITOR TOO
>
> (Hughes 1994, 185–88)

The narrator, in what Clifford Gertz calls "thick description," exposes the inherent brutality of racial oppression. The lines, "COPS IN HARLEM/Guns and billy-clubs/Double duty in Harlem/Walking in pairs," captures the violence lurking just beneath the surface in situations of (internal) colonial occupation. Hughes explores this theme further:

> I know we got to keep
> **ORDER OVER HARLEM**
> Where the black millions sleep
> Shepherds over Harlem
> Their armed watch keep
> Lest Harlem stirs in its sleep
> And maybe remembers
> And remembering forgets
> To be peaceful and quiet
> And has sudden fits
> Of raising a black fist
> out of the dark

And that black fist
Becomes a red spark

By inverting the biblical meaning of shepherd, Hughes brilliantly subverts the propaganda that the police are protectors. In this scenario an upsurge in repression snaps Black people out of their unconsciousness. The lines "And maybe remembers/And remembering forgets/To be peaceful and quiet" address the potency of memory. In Hughes's vision repression and historical consciousness combine to ignite the uprising. Pushing the specter of revolt even further, Hughes speculates that a Black rebellion could *spark* the socialist revolution. Describing the awakening process, the narrator states:

Bullets through Harlem
And someday
A sleeping giant waking
To snatch bombs from the sky
And push the sun up with a loud cry
Of to hell with the cops on the corners at night
Armed to the teeth under the light
Lest Harlem see red
And suddenly sit on the edge of its bed
and shake the whole world with a new dream

After this stanza, the viewpoint expressed in the poem suddenly shifts. The last stanza contradicts the poem's previous tenor. Initially, Hughes saw massive repression uniting the African American community into a "black fist" which became "a red spark." Retreating from the notion of African Americans as a *catalytic force*, Hughes concludes the poem with these lines:

Black and white workers united as one
In a city where
There'll never be
Air raids over Harlem.

In "Air Raid over Harlem" Hughes pushed the racialclass dialectic along a path also trod by W. E. B. Du Bois and C. L. R. James. Du Bois in *Black Reconstruction*, also published in 1936, and James in *Black Jacobins*, published two years later,

articulated theories of African self-emancipation, or Black self-activity. According to Du Bois, the actions of African American slaves hastened the Civil War and transformed the conflict from "a war to preserve the union into a war to free the slaves." Ironically, Italy's invasion of Ethiopia also forced James to change his perspective dramatically. James's theory of Black self-emancipation argued that the Black Freedom movement was autonomous from the socialist movement, but had a catalytic and symbiotic relationship to it. Simultaneously these three giants of the Black world asserted the *centrality* of African people in the making of world and United States history (Du Bois 1964, 57; James 1963, 283; 1992, 182–89).

However, it is not surprising that Hughes balked at the implications of "Air Raid over Harlem," since it is an anomaly, a left nationalist poem written during Hughes's proletarian phase. Left nationalist realism served as a transition to interracial proletarian themes. In the main, from 1932 to 1942 Hughes's poetry amplified interracial worker solidarity and depicted proletarian realism. After the severe difficulties that arose in League of American Writers in 1942 (which dissolved shortly thereafer), Hughes's nationalist tendencies resurfaced upon his return to Harlem and in his Afrocentric voice wrote *Shakespeare in Harlem*. His return to an Afrocentric aesthetic ideology allowed him to develop the musical poetic mode further, but this aesthetic advance was mitigated by a regression in his authorial ideology.

Langston Hughes: African American proletarian organic intellectual

Antonio Gramsci, Marxist originator of the theory of hegemony, posited that every class generates a stratum of intellectuals who give it cohesion and make it conscious of its condition and class capacities. Hughes did this for the African American proletariat. Hughes was, in Gramscian terminology, an organic intellectual (Gramsci 1953, 5–23). From the middle 1920s through the middle 1930s, especially, Hughes articulated the experiences, dreams, and perspectives of the African American proletariat. The relationship between racial oppression and class exploitation is central to much of the poetry he wrote during this

period. Initially, in *Fine Clothes to the Jew*, *race* shrouded Hughes's treatment of *class.* However, between 1927 and 1931 (with occasional poems in 1925 and 1936) Hughes consistently wrote poems that presented racialclass experiences. These works were clearly as much about class as they were about race.

During his brief but incisive left nationalist period, Hughes wrote his most astute political poetry. Hughes's understanding of the dynamic interaction between race and class is revealed through his choice of themes, structures, idioms, and imagery. Exploitation, discrimination, resistance, and revolution are the central themes in his left nationalist poetry. Hughes achieved his most developed exploration of the interconnections of race and class in this voice. Influenced by the Harlem revolt of 1935, Hughes wrote his most audacious poem, "Air Raid over Harlem." "Air Raid" rearticulates the fundamental Marxist understanding of the relationship between race and class; here Hughes presents radical Black self-activity as the solution to racial oppression and the catalyst to social revolution.

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NOTES

1. This paper is a revision of a section of a longer study of Hughes's political verse (Cha-Jua 1995). For works that present or assess Hughes's radical poetry, see Abraham 1991; Barksdale 1992, 169–253, and 1977; Berry 1978 and 1992; DeSantis 1993; Hernton 1993; Jemie 1976; Miller 1989; Rampersad 1986; Simama 1978; Singh 1987; Wagner 1973.

2. For examples and critiques of orthodox class reductionist approaches to race, see Chang 1985; Szymanski 1985.

3. Raymond Williams defines an arts movement as a specific cultural formation in which a community of artists organizes to pursue common artistic and/or political objectives (1982, 62–63). On the Harlem Renaissance, see Anderson 1982; Huggins 1971; Lewis 1994; Moses 1987 and 1981; Vincent 1973; Wintz 1988. On the proletarian literary phase and/or the Popular Front, see Aaron 1961; Homberger 1979, 221–44; Naison 1983; Schwartz 1980; Wald 1994; Young, 1973. On the Black Arts movement, see Neal and Jones 1968; Jones [Baraka] 1984, 202–313, and 1972; Schwartz 1989.

4. Dellita Martin-Ogunsola (1978 and 1986) and William Hansell (1978) emphasize Hughes's use of musico-poetry to invoke race, but they ignore how

he often simultaneously addressed the interface of race and class.

5. For discussion of Hughes's use of the blues form, see Martin 1978; Rampersad 1986, 156; Waldron 1971.

6. For an analysis of the proletarian theme in the African context, see Onoge 1986.

7. For an examination of populist literature, see Vaughan 1986.

8. According to Berry 1992, 342 n. 115) and Rampersad (Hughes 1994, 630), Hughes also changed the last few lines of this poem into its more militant form for *The Panther and the Lash.*

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REPLACES AD PAGE.

Frederick Engels: Scholar and Revolutionary

Georges Labica

Presented at the International Conference on the Centennial of the Death of Frederick Engels, Havana, Cuba, 19–21 September 1995.

Engels, the scholar and the revolutionary, belongs to both the lineage of German classical philosophy and that of the French Enlightenment–not to look further back–and stands at the dawn of a tradition soon to include thinkers such as, to mention only a few, Croce, Labriola, Sorel, Jaurès, Gramsci, Lukács, Ernst Bloch, Lucien Goldmann, Henri Lefèbvre, and Sartre–hands-on philosophers who took the risk of putting their knowledge at the service of the social and political struggles of their time.

The commemoration of the centenary, which is neither a funerary rite nor–in spite of today's latest fashion–a mourners' gathering, should, on the contrary, provide us with the opportunity both to outline and assess the activity and the role played by Engels himself and to measure the effects of his influence (whether direct or indirect) on the destiny of theory–that is to say, to restate his exemplariness and his relevance for a critical

Nature, Society, and Thought, vol. 8, no. 4 (1995)

thought freely inspired by Marxism. Various perspectives can be suggested.

The cofounding of Marxism

It would be by no means paradoxical or provocative to insist that Engels was as eligible as Marx to lend his own name to the theory they both pioneered. Let us not forget that Engels was Marx's lifelong collaborator, adviser, friend, and his financial and moral support, as well as his executor–something to which their contemporaries all bore witness. For instance, Marx's third daughter, Eleanor Aveling Marx, wrote, "The lives and the works of these two men are so intricately entwined that dissociating them is impossible." Paul Lafargue, one of Marx's sons-in-law, noted that in spite of their differences they formed "as it were, one life. . . . They held each other in the highest esteem."

It is also Engels to whom we owe the name "Marxism" for a doctrine that probably neither could nor would want to name itself (1888). The same sense of extreme modesty led Engels to write the following in a letter to Johann Philipp Becker on 15 October 1884: "I have spent a lifetime doing what I was fitted for, namely playing second fiddle, and indeed I believe I acquitted myself reasonably well. And I was happy to have so splendid a first fiddle as Marx." Engels often was the first of the two friends to break new ground, as with the return to Feuerbach (*The Holy Family*), the first critique of political economy (the "*Umrisse*" or "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy"), the first critique of religion (correspondence with the Bauer brothers), the discovery and the analysis of the working class ("The Condition of the Working Class in England"), the acknowledgment of French, English, and German socialist thought ("*Fortschritte*"), the critique of German idealism ("Anti-Schelling"), the knowledge of capitalism's inner mechanisms ("Letters on Capital"), the apprenticeship of exact sciences ("Letters on the Natural Sciences"), the concern–in the steps of Fourier–for the condition of women or the Irish struggle against British oppression ("What a predicament it is for one people to have subjected another one").

Was Engels not–as is often noted–the initiator of "historical materialism"? The famous *Manifesto* owes to him its first

versions ("Catechism and Principles"), and the 1848 events in Germany had their "coverage," as we would call it today, in his "Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany." Marx constantly renewed his homage to early works such as the "*Umrisse*" and the "Condition of the Working Class in England" among others, doing so explicitly when he wrote to Engels, "You know that 1) everything comes to me quite late. . . . 2) I always walk in your footsteps" (4 July 1864). Engels, whose loyal friendship led him to allow it to be believed that he was the father of Marx's illegitimate son, wrote most of the articles signed by Marx for the *New-York Tribune*. He also provided the main primary sources for *Capital* and is largely responsible for volumes two and three, published after Marx's death. Marx himself wrote to him in August 1867, after the first release of *Capital*, "It is entirely thanks to you that I could eventually make it. Without your commitment, I would not have been able to do the huge amounts of work which these three volumes required."

The theoretical contribution

In the "division of labor"–as they themselves called it–that went on between Marx and Engels during the preparation of the major works, while the former devoted himself to the "critique of political economy" and therefore the sole writing of book 1 of *Capital*, the latter approached the most diverse fields of inquiry: philosophy and in particular dialectics and materialism (*Anti-Dühring*), physics and the history of sciences (*Dialectics of Nature*), but also anthropology and the theory of the state (*The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*), and the analysis of religion ("*Urchristentum*"), among other things. We must not forget his exceptional competence in military matters, soon to earn him the nickname of "General" among those who knew him well. After 1883 Engels not only devoted himself to finalizing the major manuscripts, including *Capital*, but he also reissued and above all updated his own earlier works as well as those of Marx, thus carrying out the criticisms and self-criticisms that, according to him, conjunctural shifts had made necessary.

With the Second International, Engels became an adviser of the working-class movement, promoting and popularizing the

doctrine while also serializing in the social-democratic press his *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* along with Marx's famous "Theses on Feuerbach," which had remained unpublished until then. He corrected various misunderstandings or misreadings (letters to Bloch, Schmidt, Borgius, and others), kept track of national situations ("The Peasant Question," "The Housing Question," Italian, Spanish, or Russian correspondence). He was instrumental in setting up groups of leaders everywhere (Kautsky, Labriola, Plekhanov, Lafargue), drawing on his uncommon knowledge of languages (mastering about a dozen, including German, French, Italian, Spanish, Scandinavian languages, Russian, Polish, Romanian, and Turkish) and understanding about twenty. Until his death, he worked indefatigably at explaining, commenting, and intervening in all the current debates, whether theoretical or political, always trying to identify the strategies required by new historical phases.

The controversial reception of Engels

The part played by Engels has been the object of many controversies. "Engelsianism" (according to his critics) refers to perversions that Engels, above all, is alleged to have inflicted upon Marxism as well on as Marx himself. Engels is charged with having had a bad influence on Marx: he led Marx to communism and materialism, to which Engels had rallied earlier, dragging the doctor of philosophy toward economics. Lenin recalled how at the end of the last century V. Tchernov made the first attempts at opposing Marx and Engels, the latter being accused of professing "a naively dogmatic materialism" and "the grossest materialist dogmatism." From then on, Engels was not spared a single reproach and was made guilty of scientistic, metaphysical, economistic, or mechanistic leanings when not being held responsible for the "fabrication" of Marxism altogether. For this last reason, Rubel felt suspicious of him and decided to revisit volumes two and three of *Capital*. Lucio Colletti denounced Engels's backward Hegelianism and his crude Darwinism. Michel Henry judged him "appallingly trite" and denied him a place in his important book on Marx.

From the emergence a few decades ago of the question of the so-called "early Marx," to Stalinism and the crisis of Marxism, Engels has been the convenient scapegoat of all the ill- or well-intentioned critics who do not wish to hold Marx responsible for flies in the ointment that could be conveniently blamed on his collaborator. Now this or that surly and blindly apologetic defense can do nothing but confirm suspicions about Engelsian deviance. The history of Marxism, of its conflicts as well as of its self-conflictedness, of the issues with which it is ridden as well as those of which it has been constitutive, is here in question. For this reason–and bearing in mind that it is with Engels *(Anti-Dühring* and *Ludwig Feuerbach* having had the widest circulation) rather than Marx that Marxism came to be known and popularized–it is necessary to account for, on the one hand, various theoretical effects as considerable as that of "Marxist philosophy," its recognition (with Lenin, a reader of Engels) as well as its institutionalization in the "diamat" of Stalin, or even the sharp distinction made between the scientific and the utopian, and on the other hand, the receptions of Engels's works within the various national contexts of the working-class and Communist movements.

This does not simply mean that we are doing justice to a master whose personal qualities would still deserve pointing out (his generosity, courtesy, nobility of character, ability to listen, love of life–and of German beer, Bordeaux wine, or champagne–his sense of humor, and unflinching commitment to the cause of the exploited). We find in this indefatigable worker the finest example of a revolutionary activity that never shrank away from self-questioning in the face of observed actual struggles, that is to say, a revolutionary activity that is open, critical, and, in a word, alive. Seen in this light, Engels turns out to be the surest antidote against stale thinking and dogmatism. And it is urgent that we draw some inspiration from him. Running the risk of sounding grandiloquent, I borrow the lines with which Franz Mehring concluded his article in *Neue Zeit*, ten years after the death of Engels: "Every anniversary of the birth or the death of Marx and Engels brings them closer to us. They seem alive among us; we can discern the mettle of their voices every time that on the agonizing

world of misery knowing only oppressors and oppressed breaks the dawn of another revolutionary time."

Le Pecq, France

Translated by Thierry Labica

Socialist Program of the Communist Party of Brazil

Adopted by the Eighth Conference of the Communist Party of Brazil, August 1995.

Brazil finds itself in a deep crisis of a structural nature. Political and economic projects of the ruling classes have failed. The country faces serious problems. Millions of Brazilians face famine, chronic unemployment, lack of decent aid and living facilities. National sovereignty is being degraded by a policy of submission and the sale of public property to the monopolies and international bankers.

Brazil needs, first of all, a new National Project, expressing the interests of the majority of the nation, oriented toward the construction of a new society, of freedom, progress, and social justice.

The Communist Party of Brazil (CPofB), which defends scientific socialism, presents to the workers and the people a Program with radical changes, possible to implement with success, capable of providing the well-being of the population and the progressive development of the nation.

Indicating this path, the CPofB reaffirms its unyielding conviction in the superiority of the socialist system over decadent capitalism. Even though temporarily defeated in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, socialism lives and continues to be the hope of those exploited and oppressed, of those who seek liberty and social progress. It has been shown that wherever socialism is eliminated, the terrible evils of the old society return

Nature, Society, and Thought, vol. 8, no. 4 (1995)

with capitalism: unemployment, hunger, social injustices, drugs, general insecurity. At the same time reactionary and fascist politicians, together with speculators, embezzlers of public money, those who are only interested in profits of all kinds, return to the scene.

Socialism is the radiant future of all people. Its triumph is unavoidable through struggles of the working class and of the popular masses under the leadership of the Communist Party.

I. The world crisis of capitalism

1. The structural crisis that encompasses Brazil, even with its own characteristics, is not just a local phenomenon. It is a part of the world crisis of capitalism-imperialism, parasitic and in decomposition. Based on monopolization, this system has led–as predicted in the Marxist classics–to a gigantic concentration of production and income in the hands of a few monopolists who dominate and exploit the whole world. This concentration takes a more precise format with the appearance of the oligopolies with multinational features. A few oligopolies control all branches of fundamental industries in different regions of the globe. And through this control, the economy of numerous countries is brought to submission. This concentration also manifests itself in financial capital, in the reinforcement of the international financial oligarchy that promotes exploitation and submission, economic and political, in a large number of nations.

2. The decomposition of capitalism is clearly expressed in the increase of parasitism, one of the outstanding traits in the world crisis of capitalism. Large resources are no longer employed in productive enterprises, but in financial speculations. Large sums are deflected to the stock market or merely lucrative transactions. Money makes money without going through the production process, without creating riches or material goods destined for the use of continually growing populations. This parasitism results in the removal of great masses from labor that is socially useful. The bourgeoisie is no longer a part of productive activity. The management of enterprises is exercised by executives, people hired at high salaries, which shows that society can do without capitalists heading the administration of the economy. The rich

bourgeoisie lead parasitic lives; they are profiteers, that is, people who live off the profits of great fortunes attained by the violent exploitation of workers and the people. They contribute nothing to progress and the well-being of society.

3. The capitalist system reveals real elements of stagnation, a factor that accelerates the crisis. One of these elements consists in the fact that capitalism can no longer involve society as a whole in the production process. The number of people marginalized, lacking jobs, increases constantly. The stagnation also is reflected in the fact that capitalism is always late, more and more, in relation to the immense possibilities that the advances of science and technology open to the progress of humanity. Its intrinsic contradictions hold back the broad utilization of these possibilities. With the levels reached in the scientific and technological realm at present, all of the world's population could benefit with a calm and happy life.

4. Capitalism, however, is still growing in spite of parasitism and decomposition. It tries new patterns of growth based on the emergence of microelectronics, biotechnology, and the disclosure of the structure of the nucleus of the atom that allows the development of new and modern technological inventions for application in various domains. But this progress in the technological field is limited to a few countries, the most highly developed, that utilize it to impose their dominance worldwide. It is the monopoly of a small group. So-called advanced technology, one of the main instruments to obtain extraordinary profits, aims at the assurance of the supremacy of a small number of imperialist countries over the whole world.

5. The crisis of the capitalist-imperialist system, caused by the contradictions within it, is deepening continuously. It reveals itself in a prolonged recession, in great social dislocations, in persistent inflation, in structural unemployment, in widespread hunger and misery, in the abyss that separates the rich countries from the great majority of the nations, in the degradation of capitalist society.

6. Capitalism is an obsolete regime, historically surpassed. It is in no condition to resolve the great problems it has created. As long as it lasts, the decomposition of the regime will continue,

and the degeneration of all aspects of human society will be accentuated.

II. The working class, exploited and oppressed all over the world

7. The result of the structural crisis of capitalism is that the working class becomes more and more exploited and oppressed. While the bourgeoisie accumulates immense financial resources, the working class, which produces the riches, is undergoing great difficulties. In contrast to the great enrichment of the capitalists, the impoverishment of the proletariat, relative and absolute, increases quickly. This is the result of the fierce exploitation, today more than ever, of the workers, with the continual growth of the surplus value taken from the producers. Supported by the new industrial revolution, the bourgeoisie radically modifies the production methods, which allows them to take maximum advantage of the labor force. With a reduced number of skilled workers, subjected to a flexible system of labor management and organization, they obtain greater and better production, and thereby fabulous profits. The advance of technology, which should facilitate the life and working conditions of the proletariat, is used by the bourgeoisie to intensify the exploitation of the working class.

8. The social crisis deepens, affecting workers all over the world. Capitalism forcibly creates a relative superpopulation, growing continuously, people who cannot find jobs and live as outcasts, without means of satisfying their bare necessities. The number of the unemployed is extremely high. There are hundreds of millions of workers without any possibility of entering productive activity. The market for informal work grows incessantly. Millions only obtain temporary jobs. The process of subcontracting production aggravates the situation and makes existence increasingly precarious. This enormous marginalized mass subsists in an environment of misery and indigence. A large number cannot find permanent shelter, living in the streets. The physical and moral degradation of this abandoned laboring population increases constantly.

9. Along with unemployment and poverty, the working class

has its social and political rights violated by the bourgeois state. Even though productivity has been growing continually, working hours remain high. Wages, except for some skilled workers, do not follow the increase in the cost of living. Strikes are repressed by force or the mass dismissal of those on strike. In politics, the workers are discriminated against and alienated with an intense anticommunist and national fascist campaign. The revolutionary proletarian parties are persecuted and face many obstacles in developing their social-political and ideological activity.

10. The class struggle of the proletariat will go on, even though restrained by the anticommunist offensive of the bourgeoisie. It involves not only those who work, but also the unemployed and marginalized. The proletariat has no other alternative: they either fight for their emancipation or bury themselves in the growing degradation generated by capitalism in decomposition.

III. Socialism: Historic successor of capitalism

11. The glorious future of all people is linked to the replacement of the capitalist system by scientific socialism. It is a requirement of historical development, an unavoidable consequence of class struggle. Humanity has gone through several stages in its evolution–early communal society, slavery, feudalism, and capitalism, which still survives in its last stage. From the capitalist system we will move to a new socioeconomic form, socialism leading the way to communism. In 1917, the first great socialist revolution took place in Russia, an experience that lasted four decades* and showed, in spite of certain errors and misunderstandings in establishing the new life, that socialism is realizable and has many advantages over capitalism.

12. Scientific socialism is characterized by the abolition of the system of private ownership of the means of production and the establishment of social ownership of these means of production. It harmonizes the relationship of production with the social character of the productive forces. It does away with the basic contradiction found in capitalism (socialization of production and private appropriation of the goods produced) that determines its existence. Socialism relies on free labor and the broad

development of techniques to ensure rhythms of growth and productivity capable of giving impulse to continuous progress of society and guarantee the constant growth of material and spiritual well-being of the workers and the people. It is a system destined to do away with the exploitation of one person by another.

13. Socialism is the result of the revolution that ends capitalist domination. It creates a new kind of state, representing class interests different from those that were present before. The industrial proletariat, in alliance with the rural workers and the poor masses of the population, constitute the main elements for the construction of socialism. The socialist state is based upon institutions of democratic character, with the broadest participation of the workers. It guarantees freedom for the people and develops culture. It assures respect for laws and the rights of citizens. It defends the revolutionary gains against attempts at retrogression by bourgeois counterrevolution.

The primary objective of socialism is communism. Gradually, socialism will be transformed into a communist society in which the state, having been eliminated, will no longer exist, and where the prevailing motto will be: "From each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her need."

14. Socialism is inspired by the scientific theories of Marx and Engels, developed by Lenin and other proletarian revolutionaries. The theory lights up the way of practice that opens a clearing for the advance of civilization. It gives strength of conviction to the realization of the great ideas of deep transformation in society; it gives impulse to the activity of men and women to achieve the highest stages of human progress.

IV. Brazil in a structural crisis

15. Brazil is at a historical crossroads in its socioeconomic and political development. To overcome the obstacles that make progress difficult is an indisputable need.

a. Secular delay

16. In 1822, Brazil gained its independence, ridding itself of the Portuguese colonizer, several decades after the French and American revolutions that opened the way to capitalism, which

was then flourishing. This independence did not alter substantially the existing socioeconomic regime. Slavery prevailed until 1888. The embryo of capitalism appeared blended in with slavery. Until almost the middle of the twentieth century, Brazil was essentially an agricultural country, the monopoly of land being predominant. It exported primary products and imported the goods it needed. This system delayed the country's progress and made it dependent upon industrialized nations.

17. With independence, Brazil adopted monarchy as its political regime, typically an elite system, lacking democracy, serving the large landowners. When the Republic was installed in 1889, the form of government became presidential, also elitist. The armed forces, decisive in the coming of the Republic, became over a long period somewhat like the tutors of the nation. The working class, still incipient, and the rural workers without land had no rights. The mainstay of the economy was centralized around the coffee plantations, and, in part, cacao.

18. In 1930, a new phase began. An armed movement, mainly military, overthrew the old Republic. Carrying the liberal flag, this movement represented the interests of the bourgeoisie, which had grown in the previous decade, and also reflected the interimperialist contradictions in relation to the exploitation of the country. The new leaders, with Getulio Vargas as head, proposed to democratize the political regime, establish means for social struggle by the workers, do away with the exclusive command of power in the hands of the great landowners from São Paulo and Minas Gerais. They encouraged industrialization, maintaining intact, nevertheless, the latifundia system and the country's condition as an exporter of raw materials. During the following decades, the political regime suffered long periods of arbitrary suppression of democratic freedoms.

b. Industrialization

19. The industrialization process in Brazil gained impulse in the 1940s. The basic factor was the establishing of the steel industry with CSN (National Steel Company) followed by the exploration for petroleum and the state monopoly. Later, large hydroelectric plants were built. The production, transmission,

and distribution of electrical energy, a strategic part of economic development, progressed quickly when Eletrobras (National Electric Company) was created. The steel industry grew, new modern plants appeared like SIMINAS (Minas Gerais Steel Company), COSIPA (São Paulo Steel Company) and others, producing different steel products. Basic strategic industries were established, producing railway materials, chemical and petrochemical products, mineral products, and arms. The building of airplanes was begun and the naval industry was enlarged. Other branches were expanded.

20. From the late 1950s on, the opening to foreign investments was intensified. Multinational enterprises were established in fundamental sectors: automobiles, electro-electronics, petrochemical, pharmaceutical, mining, machines and equipment, artificial and synthetic fibers, computers, communication. Multinational enterprises were also established in the chemical industry and in the distribution of petroleum subproducts. The foreign companies took advantage of tax exemptions and were granted state subsidies, particularly in the purchase of materials intended for production, as well as in the supply of electricity by state companies at reduced prices that greatly affected the profits of these companies.

21. In spite of immense difficulties, Brazil was able to create a minimal diversified industrial base for its economic development. This base reflected many contradictions that left it extremely vulnerable. It was built with state and private capital and capital of foreign origin. The main element was state capital (collective property under the control of the bourgeoisie), given the feebleness of private sources and the opposition to foreign capital during a long period. Later, both foreign and private capital started using the state economy, causing great damage.

22. Along with this process of economic development, a program of foreign loans was unfolded, stimulated by international bankers with broad support from the ruling classes, especially during the period of military dictatorship. The country was heavily indebted, particularly from the state companies. With the oppressive increase of foreign interest rates extended generically to all loans already granted, the foreign debt rose to

an extremely high level. The interest payments weighed heavily upon the national economy, making its ultimate growth impossible. The debt became one of the main elements in the country's structural crisis.

23. The minimal industrial base, built with great sacrifice, is threatened with destruction. There is a lack of finances for productive investments. The interest payments on the international loans make the accumulation of internal funds for such investments impossible. State companies are being privatized against the nation's interests. They are placed in the hands of foreign groups, directly or indirectly. A large part of the national industry is being ruined, disappearing under the pressure of the imperialist international new order, or companies try to adapt, in inferior conditions, to the impositions of the world financial oligarchy.

c. Dependent capitalism

24. The capitalist development adopted by Brazil is basically dependent and deformed. It relies on a retrograde structure that has as a basis monopoly of the land and subordination to the interests of monopoly capital, especially to that of the United States. A considerable part of the ruling class accepts the foreign exploitation, becoming a lesser partner of the imperialists, to the detriment of national progress and sovereignty. The advance of capitalism in the rural areas directs the agricultural production to the international market, controlled by foreign monopolists. This is related, to a certain extent, to the accumulation of money to pay interest on the foreign debt. The country's financial system is subject to the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the foreign banks. A large portion of the surplus value produced here is transferred to the outside, as profits of the multinationals and payment of interest or as subsidies and exchange advantages given to foreign enterprises and exporters. This situation prevents internal accumulation and makes productive investment difficult. The country permanently needs foreign capital, always more burdensome and demanding, that it cannot do without. Interference in the economic and financial fields brings forth impositions on the political order that undermine national

sovereignty. Therefore Brazil's economic and political dependence on the magnates of international finance is accentuated.

25. The dependent capitalist development is even more aggravated in the present phase of the globalization of the economy. The concentration of capital and great production in the hands of a few millionaires who dominate and set the rules for the markets and financial investments increases the dependency of weak or partially developed countries. Seeking complete world dominance, the oligarchies try to eliminate national barriers and impose economic systems harmful to nations that are trying to progress in an independent manner. Neoliberalism is an expression of this general politics that, in Brazil, leads to the privatization of productive state companies, to the lack of protection for the internal market that is subjected to an unequal competition with foreign monopolies, to the destruction of important branches of Brazilian industries. The country is forced to prioritize a form of retrograde production complementing the economy of the rich nations.

d. The dominant classes surpassed

26. The deformed and delayed development of the national economy, its subordination to foreign monopolists, and as a consequence, the deepening economic, political, and social crisis are the unavoidable result of the direction and command of the conservative classes. The great landowners, the monopolist groups of the bourgeoisie, bankers, and financial speculators, those who dominate the means of mass communication–all of them, together, are directly responsible for the serious situation of the country. They turn gradually away from the nation and join the foreign oppressors and exploiters. The institutions that represent them become obsolete and of no service to the normal guidance of the political life. Power is privileged, restricting the democratic activities of progressive tendencies. The modernization that they advertise presupposes the maintenance of the dependent system on the basis of which its domination was built.

27. Such classes cannot change the dependent and deformed capitalist situation. Under the direction of the bourgeoisie and its partners, Brazil will not find it possible to build its own economy

and to achieve the political, social, and cultural progress characteristic of a truly independent country.

e. A new way

28. In the historical crossroad that Brazil finds itself, only scientific socialism based on the working class–workers of town and country, the progressive sectors of society–will be able to open a new way to independence, freedom, progress, culture, and well-being for the people, and a promising future for our country.

29. Accepting the existence of this objective need for the country, the CPofB presents to the nation an implementable Program of a socialist character, paired with reality and national hopes.

V. Socialist Program for Brazil

30. In presenting the Socialist Program, the Communist Party of Brazil bases itself on the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism and the historical experience of our country and our people as well as the world revolutionary movement. It has a new understanding of the problems involving the radical transformation of society, learning from the successes and failures in the struggle to the build socialism in the former USSR and other countries.

General considerations

31. The CPofB's Program must take into account the country's peculiarities, its historical formation, its retarded development, its traditions in people's struggles, its recent industrial proletariat–an underdeveloped country subjected to imperialism in which national and democratic factors have been the motivating and energizing elements of the progressive movements. The Program must also consider the economic development stage and the correlation between strategic forces on a world plane. Although in its main lines scientific socialism is identical in all countries, for it to become concrete in each place demands thinking about local and national particularities. These particularities

impart their own features to the advanced regime that replaces capitalism. A single model of socialism is antiscientific.

32. The construction of socialism, with communism as a goal, is a complex process that involves various phases. In Brazil, the transition from capitalism to communism, comprising a whole historical period, will possibly have three fundamental phases: a preliminary transition from capitalism to socialism, a full socialization and the integral construction of socialism, and a gradual passage to communism. These phases are linked together, have no rigid limits, are of rather long duration, and may have intermediate stages. The first phase is indispensable to reach the economic premises that favor the total implantation of socialism in a Brazil that is still little developed.

33. The preliminary transitional phase from capitalism to socialism will gradually bring forth indispensable transformations. In this first phase there will be no general confiscation, total socialization, or generalized expropriation. Radical measures linked to the initial demands of construction of socialism will be partial. In each and every circumstance, private property acquired honestly by one's own effort will be respected.

34. The Communist Party of Brazil, conscious vanguard of the working class, true representative of the interests of the hard-working people and the nation, constitutes the directing force in the struggle for the implantation and construction of socialism. Its leadership is fundamental in the conduct of the state and in the process of shaping a socialist social conscience. Supported by revolutionary theory, it is the bearer and the interpreter of the project for the progressive transformation of society. The Party, however, is not superimposed on the state and the organizations created by the people; it does not arbitrarily or mechanically impose its decisions, or replace the classes and social forces in power that gave origin to it. It directs the political system as a constituent of this system, utilizing both in government and social activity the method of persuasion to make its opinions viable.

35. The present Program does not deal with the general construction of socialism, but with the problems related to the first phase of the transition from capitalism to socialism. It draws the

path for the struggle to reach power in the present situation, a basic presupposition for the implementation of the Program.

Power, the essential question

36. The CPofB considers as fundamental the establishment in Brazil of a republic of workers and the broad masses of the people, bringing together the country's population, integrating the various regions of the North, Northeast, Central-west, Southeast, and South. The basic principle of the republic is to value labor and intellectual work, together with human solidarity and the common effort to construct a socialist life.

37. The essential question in achieving this objective is the acquisition of political power by the proletariat and its allies–the rural workers, urban popular masses, the middle class, and the progressive intelligentsia, under firm and consistent leadership. Without political power being in the hands of the social forces with interests different from the groups that support the present capitalist order, it is impossible to bring about the necessary changes.

38. The republic of workers and broad masses of people is a state of democratic, but not liberal, character, a true state in the sense that it will be ruled by laws established by elective organs and will maintain socialist legality. The basis of the state organization will be popular assemblies, elected freely, with broad participation of the workers from town and country. The supreme body of state power is a national assembly composed of popular leaders elected throughout the country. The central government will be instituted by the national assembly. The executive and the legislative bodies will work harmoniously in the elaboration and carrying out of state activities. General norms for the decentralization of the administration will be adopted. The judiciary, consisting of courts and judges elected by the people, will assure quick and free justice. Local power will follow the general direction of the central power organization. The armed forces, under the direction of the central power, will be a stable military body with high professional qualifications. Civil defense popular committees will be the broadest and most numerous base.

39. The political regime guarantees broad freedom of meeting, association, speech, public demonstration, religion, coming and going, and profession. The right to strike is guaranteed to workers when defending their rights. All differences and disputes regarding the direction of government [will be resolved in a manner that will] safeguard the collective interest of society and the basic objectives of the transformation movement; the diversity of organizations and democratic and progressive political parties [will be protected], as long as they respect socialist legality. Citizenship rights are guaranteed to all Brazilians and foreigners living in the country. All discrimination based on race, nationality, religion, and especially that directed against Negroes, will be combatted and abolished. Women will be guaranteed equality of gender. Indians can rely on special protection, defense and demarcation of their land and aid for their ethnic development. The state will ensure that popular, cultural, and scientific societies have the necessary material conditions in order to function.

40. In order to make possible a better distribution of wealth and to improve the social status of the working class and of the proletariat in general, the enhancement of the social gains of the workers and the gradual reduction of the working day will have great importance in the Socialist Program. The unions, having a class orientation, will play an important role in defending the demands of the proletariat as a productive force and in the organization of the masses in improving production and their active participation in the building of socialism.

The building of the economy

41. In the first transitional period, along with a collective economy and public ownership, there will be room for the development of capitalism, especially in the form of state capitalism, having as its objective the acceleration of the growth of the productive forces and consolidation of the new regime.

42. The socialist economy will be centralized and planned in order to prevent the dispersion and anarchy of production. But the planning will only affect the fundamental sectors. Mechanisms for the operation of the market will be maintained,

operating particularly in the area of distribution of goods and services and oriented toward the needs of society and not as a regulator of production. The state will control the market activities.

43. There will be different kinds of remuneration for work, the criterion being the quantity and quality of the goods and services produced. Technological or scientific contributions destined to promote better and quicker development of the productive forces or improvement of social services will have a special reward.

44. In order to control the financial system, the banks will be nationalized, as will docks and the essential means of transportation.

45. The strategic resources of the soil and subsoil, the telecommunications system, postal services and telegraphy, and the utilization and launching of space vehicles will be controlled solely by the state.

46. The socialist economy will initially be composed of strategic enterprises which will become the collective property of all the people: the fundamental plants that generate electric energy; the monopolistic enterprises that presently prevent a free development of the country; other enterprises and services of public interest. Included in the socialist economy will be the nationalized banking system, the ports and means of essential transportation, and the National Agrarian Fund.

47. The economic system under state direction will combine the individual administration of the enterprises with the collective control of the workers. It will give incentives in the field of general organization to the autonomy of enterprises in regard to the introduction of technical improvements that lead to higher productivity and reduction of costs, and also to the expansion of the activities of the enterprises.

48. The state capitalist economy will include the concessions given to private entrepreneurs, national or foreign, to expand the industries and services necessary for the country's progress; a system of associating state enterprises with single producers; the association of state capital with private capital in constructing and activating fundamental businesses; and other aspects of the

economy, all under state control. Priority will be given to the enterprises that utilize processes for the advancement of scientific and technological development.

49. Private property will be free to function in small and medium-sized industries; industries and companies providing services that contribute to national development; private commerce in restricted sectors; rural property embraced by the agrarian reform.

50. Cooperative property will have a double character: socialist, mainly bringing together rural owners of small and medium-sized properties; and private, grouping capitalist producers, artisans, and independent professionals.

51. The socialist economy of the entire people is the main basis for development. It should continuously increase its specific weight in the economic area. It will regulate and direct the process of growth and improved utilization of productive resources and consumer goods.

Agrarian development and rural organization

52. The agrarian map of Brazil shows a great predominance of monopoly in land and latifundia, on the basis of which rural capitalism was developed. The rural economy includes plantations (coffee, cacao, sugarcane, etc.); livestock (beef cattle, hogs, etc.); poultry (chickens, turkey, etc.); raw materials for fuels (alcohol and engine fuels); oil-containing plants; fruit trees; and a broad range of other agricultural products. The exploitation of the soil is carried out mostly by the agrarian bourgeoisie and the great landowners.

53. Also present are large industrial enterprises, which are associated with agricultural production to form productive economic units. This is the case of the sugar industry and the production of alcohol as a fuel; poultry factories; the production of cellulose; fruit juices and alcoholic beverages, etc.

54. The CPofB establishes its general orientation in this area on the basis of the reality of Brazilian rural areas and the goal of building socialism. It considers that the nationalization of the land–the basic means of production–is indispensable for the construction of a new society. However, in this first transitional

phase from capitalism to socialism, the CPofB adopts an intermediate and transitory position. There will be no nationalization of the land. We will go through an antilatifundia land reform that will basically consist of the following:

> –A limit to the size of rural properties will be set for different regions of the country. This will allow the exploitation of the land by medium and large capitalists.
> –Property in excess of these limits and unoccupied land deemed to be of social interest will make up the National Agrarian Fund, to be used by the state to fulfill the needs for the broad development of the rural areas.
> –Supported by the Agrarian Fund, the state will guarantee access to land to all those who want to live and work on it. The state will give protection and aid to small and medium agricultural producers.

55. Rural production will be subordinated to the general development plan for the national economy in regard to both domestic and export markets.

56. The formation of cartels or monopolies will not be permitted.

57. Enterprises and productive sectors of rural areas that fraudulently impede delivery of supplies to the population and subvert and disorganize the national economy will be expropriated and integrated into the public sector.

58. Only the state, supported by the Agrarian Fund, will be able to lease out land. Leasing serves the purpose of increasing production on a large scale by capitalist investors. Owners who do not wish to cultivate the soil should sell the property.

59. The small and medium producers who furnish raw materials to the agrarian industries will receive, beyond the value of the product delivered, a proportional part of the industry's profits.

60. The hired hands in the agricultural area, who constitute the main labor force, will be organized into cooperatives that provide services. They can count on the full support of the state to negotiate working conditions and salaries with the capitalist producers. Where these cooperatives exist, the hiring of independent rural workers will not be allowed.

61. The state will encourage the creation of cooperatives made up of small and medium farmers that will be integrated into the rural socialist economy. These cooperatives will have the aid and support of the state.

62. The state will organize the socialist economy in the rural areas, creating enterprises that make possible production on a large scale, using modern methods and specialized techniques of high productivity.

63. Experimental centers for agriculture and establishments that supply selected seeds and seedlings will be created.

64. Schools and courses to train skilled workers and teach modern techniques will be established throughout the agrarian territory.

Urbanism and the housing question

65. Socialism will aim at a gradual solution of the serious problems, including housing, that deform life in the large cities in a crisis that affects the proletariat and the middle class in general. Millions of people, especially those in the largest cities, do not have decent housing and many are without safe shelter.

66. The existing deformities in the large cities have originated in capitalism. In general, cities were built to meet the needs of the capitalists with no account being taken of the aspirations of those who live in them. Interested only in the increasing the value of urban land, the capitalists promoted a disorganized form of building with [negative] affects on urban aesthetics and damage to a healthy environment indispensable for the population. They monopolized the urban plots of land, resulting in steadily increasing rent.

67. The situation in the large urban centers has been aggravated by the large influx of population from various regions of the country with [particularly] poor living conditions. The determinant factor for the rural exodus is the lack of economic activities in a good portion of the national territory.

68. The CPofB defends the principle that every worker has the right to decent housing in a healthy environment at a low cost. With this objective, and in relation to the present situation, it proposes:

–nationalization of the urban land so that it cannot be the object of capitalist speculation–it is up to society to utilize it according to the needs of the population and urban development;

–public ownership of buildings belonging to the great proprietors or capitalist consortiums in order to meet the need of the people for housing and public services;

–guaranteed property rights for the owners of small and medium-sized homes and cooperative property rights for apartment dwellers;

–appropriate planning of urban expansion and modernization in which the social interest will prevail over private interest.

69. In order to avoid a population influx into the big cities, it is necessary to improve the territorial distribution of the population through extensive agrarian reform that will induce people to remain in the countryside and maintain a balanced economic development in different regions of the nation.

Social well-being and protection of the environment

70. The CPofB's Program points to social accomplishments and protection of the environment as prime elements for the construction of socialism, whose objective is the continual improvement in the level of the spiritual and material conditions of life of the working population. These tasks, therefore, must be linked step by step with the economic and political construction.

71. The state will guarantee dignified living conditions to all citizens. Social security, consisting of health, social welfare, and social assistance, will be based on principles of universality, integrity, and equity. The state will devote special attention and protection to childhood and motherhood, to the salubriousness and quality of the environment, and to hygiene and job safety.

72. The complex of social construction and environmental protection encompass:

–housing construction for the people of town and country;

–creation of parks and sites for public recreation;

–construction of stadiums, gymnasiums, and athletic fields;
–organization of nurseries and schools for children;
–inauguration of community services such as restaurants, laundries, and other services of collective interest;
–the defense of the environment and maintenance of ecosystems to avoid pollution of the air, rivers, lakes, and the ocean;
–prohibition of destruction of forests and marshes;
–protection from nuclear radiation.

73. The participation of large masses, in an independent way, in these tasks contributes to forging the socialist community spirit that plays an important role in the transformation of individualistic mentality and the affirmation of collective effort.

74. Minimum rates for rents and use of community services will be established.

75. Permission will be given for the construction of houses as individual or group property.

76. With the purpose of decentralizing the public administration to facilitate a greater initiative from workers and popular masses, organs will be created to supervise social construction and environmental protection. The majority of the participants would be elected by the people.

Cultural development

77. The transition to socialism demands broad development of various cultural activities destined to raise the level of people's knowledge, give impulse to socialist construction, and aid in the formation of a progressive social conscience. Differing from the culture of the bourgeois period, which serves only a minority, the new culture, fighting obscurantism and retrograde ideas, will be oriented toward reaching the majority of the population.

78. The cultural level will be raised by eliminating illiteracy and extending lay education of high quality, ensuring a universal technoscientific knowledge to all. The universities will be reformed in order to have a democratic and progressive content; freedom of teaching and research will be guaranteed.

79. Development of all categories of the arts–graphic, plastic, literary, musical, choreographic, theatrical, cinematic–and popular crafts will be stimulated and receive support. As an instrument for artistic progress, freedom of expression and creation will be guaranteed.

80. To extend the availability of cultural life among the people and to preserve historical traditions, especially in the realm of people's struggles, libraries, museums, theaters, exhibition halls, and research institutes will be built.

81. To prevent the mass diffusion of decadent and reactionary ideas and concepts and to ensure access of the workers and the people to the means of broad social communication, the television channels and radio stations will be converted to state property or transferred to social or cultural organizations, centers of scientific studies and research, or the universities.

Science and technology

82. The change from capitalism to socialism demands special attention to the development of science and technology. Both joined together constitute essential elements for the construction of a modern society. The technoscientific activity should be extended to all areas that need more profound knowledge in order to advance. Science and technology, especially, should give impulse to economic construction, which, in turn, will rely on them in order to advance.

83. The state will invest enough resources for the formation on a large scale of highly qualified technical-scientific personnel. It will create solid bases for education and research. It will also offer adequate sites for the experimentation and testing of high technology.

84. Institutes and centers for specialized research, such as biotechnology and space, will be created in different regions of the country.

85. While foreign technological acquisitions will not be ignored, it will be indispensable to create our own technology connected to the country's characteristics and contributing to its independent development.

86. Importance will be attached to the study of philosophy,

dialectics, historical materialism, and the sciences in general, notably social science, with the aim of promoting and preserving the great achievements of Marxism. Theory will serve practice, and practice will be considered as a source of scientific knowledge.

87. The dissemination of different opinions of a technical or scientific nature will be guaranteed; this will also be the case for materialism and idealism.

88. We shall stimulate the formation of groups theoretically capable of generalizing the experiences of the revolutionary movement and class struggle, based on the uninterrupted progress of social theory.

89. Socialist theory based on dialectical materialism will be widely propagated in order to plant roots for an advanced culture among the masses and to consolidate the scientific socialist system. A continual struggle against the individualistic and selfish bourgeois ideology is fundamental to the cultural forging of the new human being and to a decisive victory of the ideals of the revolutionary proletariat.

Internationalism and national sovereignty

90. Communists defend proletarian internationalism. They support the struggle of all people for their national and social emancipation. They are in solidarity with the socialist countries and peoples that firmly uphold the great banner of social progress, of the construction of a new society, more humane, just, cultured, and civilized. The battle against capitalism is a strategic task for all workers and oppressed peoples. As long as imperialism exists there will be war, fascism, social injustices, and the fierce exploitation of people by other people. Only socialism will free humanity from centuries of oppression, humiliation, and suffering.

91. The Program of the Communist Party of Brazil puts in evidence an unending struggle in defense of the sovereignty and independence of our country, a struggle against not only our external enemies, more and more aggressive, but also against our internal enemies–a large part of the bourgeoisie and their accomplices allied with the foreign monopolists. This struggle

constitutes one of the great tasks of the present time. The struggle for socialism cannot be separated from the firm and decisive struggle for a free country, sovereign and independent. In sum, proletarian internationalism is at present the defense of the national sovereignty of all countries.

The road to socialism

92. The Socialist Program of the Communist Party of Brazil is a banner in the struggl for the radical transformation of Brazilian society, which is now in a permanent crisis, a valid program to eliminate the country's dependence on foreign monopolists and to end the domination of reactionary forces over the nation, the efficient way to end social injustices, to end hunger and poverty that are growing quickly as polar opposites to the easy enrichment of a minority of privileged and corrupt people.

93. But the triumph of socialism is a road of arduous conflict with the retrograde classes that dominate the country. They are strong forces that will not easily give up the positions they hold. The state machine is in their hands. They will use lies and promises never fulfilled, the monopolized media, despotic means; they will appeal to fascism and not hesitate to join the foreign interventionists to try to prevent or smother the progressive movement. All who want a free and sovereign country and continuous advances in the political, economic, social, and cultural areas will have to face the enemy forces decisively and persistently.

94. The path to socialism goes through many battles at different levels with the broad participation of the people. It cannot be restricted to revolutionary propaganda. It is absolutely necessary to participate in daily political events. Communists will be present defending socialist ideas to clarify and educate workers and the popular masses in small or large battles that involve the people, be it for political motives or for economic or social demands.

95. The revolutionary proletariat, guardians of society's ideas for renewal, must fight for its hegemony in the political course, strengthening its party, the CPofB, establishing alliances and developing politically. It must be able to attract, in each phase of

the great battle it commands, political allies still wavering and temporary. Well-conducted political alliances will aid in the defeat of the reaction and facilitate the grouping of forces with strategic projections.

96. Establishing concrete objectives at a higher level has special importance in mass mobilization, trying to isolate or neutralize the enemies. In this sense, the defense of sovereignty and national independence, the demand for broad and profound democratization of the country, and the discontent with the increasingly severe social problems acquire a primordial meaning. These are objectives related to the question of power, aiming to remove Brazil from its backwardness and poverty, guarantee freedom for the people, and affirm the national identity. This fight presents not just a tactical aspect. It will last for a long period and will only end with the final victory of the progressive forces. The dominating classes have no alternative. They will insist until the end on an antinational policy of submission, and persist in the antidemocratic and antisocial road.

97. Participation in the electoral process and in Parliament has equal importance. Even though Parliament, as it exists presently, is a bourgeois institution, elitist and conservative, it is, however, a tribune for political struggle that allows, to a certain degree, the democratic and progressive groups to denounce mismanagement by the regime, to demand rights for the people, to defend national sovereignty and the growth of democracy. The election campaigns, even though vitiated and unequal due to the strength of the economic power and the privileges of the large parties, make possible, in some way, the enlightenment of the voters and contribute to the strengthening of the political organizations that represent the basic interests of the nation.

98. The format of the struggle, varied and having multiple aspects, should correspond to the situation as it presents itself at the level of acceptance and understanding of the great masses. It would be a mistake to use artificial, restrictive methods of struggle that numb the mass movements and isolate the vanguard.

99. All procedures, political and organizational, related to the path to socialism, have as an objective the consolidation of forces and gain in prestige and influence among the people. The

struggle for socialism is the work of the masses, the workers in general under the leadership of the Communist Party. It requires, at present, the creation of a solid national front, democratic and popular, uniting parties, democratic politically prominent persons, mass organizations, defenders of national sovereignty–a group that wants to defeat the reactionary classes and to bring forth the transformations that Brazil needs.

100. The front-line task to reach socialism is the building of a strong Communist Party, linked to the masses, especially the working class. In order to accomplish its historical mission, the CPofB needs to multiply its militant force, increase its political influence in all areas, deepen its theoretical knowledge, learn from the positive and negative experience of socialism in the former USSR and other countries. The Party must place itself at the same level as the Socialist Program it presents to the workers and the people.

101. Scientific socialism is not a distant, inaccessible perspective. It is an exigency of historical development. Its victorious realization depends upon proper leadership from the Communists of Brazil and of the whole world. It results from the tenacious and conscientious struggle of the masses, eager for freedom and social justice.

The English-language text of the Program (which was edited minimally for comprehensibility) was provided to the Marxist Forum by the Communist Party of Brazil.

NOTE ADDED BY THE MARXIST FORUM

*"Four decades" (paragraph 11) reflects the view of the CPofB that the reversal of socialism in the USSR began in 1957 under Khrushchev. In comments accompanying the Socialist Program of the CPofB, the Party's president, João Amazonas, states, "The victory of the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union in 1957 was the first and decisive great shock that helped us start to question this deformed and unilateral understanding of the theory and construction of socialism itself."

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Book Reviews

Challenging Racism and Sexism: Alternatives to Genetic Explanations. Edited by Ethel Tobach and Betty Rosoff. New York: The Feminist Press, 1994. 350 pages, cloth $35.00; paper $14.95.

Race and gender do collide, as one contributor to this book asserts, and when they do, their victims suffer in logarithmic increments. White feminists of middle and upper classes, ignoring economic difference, have assumed incorrectly that their struggles for voice and for equality in the workplace are also the primary focus of Black women. Black women must often forego the struggle for voice in order to combat the poverty of their families, poverty that is a product of a class difference firmly grounded in racism. Black women work against stereotypes of Blacks as lazy and inferior in intelligence as well as of women as emotional and sexual. Selections in this volume address many of these concerns in full and careful detail. What this fine book does best, however, is to debunk the biological determinism that underlies all assumptions about race and gender hierarchies.

Biological determinism is the idea that "all human behavior and even society itself is fixed and controlled by the genes" (66). We have heard the argument before: women's hormones make them emotional, men's hormones make them logical; dark skin correlates with laziness, white skin with a work ethic. Each of these assumptions makes a giant leap from biology to behavior, a leap that ignores the methods of good science.

The reader of this book will find it useful to recall the basic principles that constitute good scientific research. The first is that the goal of research is to discover, not create, the universal laws

of nature that may exist. Another is that the scientific method can test theories in order to *dis*prove them, but that proof cannot be assumed from any one test. Proof can be assumed–not even assured–only when an experiment can *replicate* the same result every time the controlled conditions are repeated. The atom must release energy every time it is smashed.

Control of *variables* is a third principle. An independent variable is the focus of the research, what the scientist wants to observe. The dependent variable is the factor that will change as the independent variable changes. For instance, if one raises the temperature of an atom's environment, will it produce more or less energy when smashed than when it was cooler? To justify drawing conclusions from the experiment, a scientist must control all the other variables that could possibly affect the outcome, such as the altitude or pressure under which the experiment takes place.

Scientists must also consider the nature of the *sample*, which is to be the representative of a larger population, and consider all possible variables in that sample. One can choose to bombard only hydrogen atoms, not sodium or chlorine. Samples must also have large enough numbers to be generalizable to a wider population. Discovery, replication, variables, sample.

Where all of this gets murky is in research on human subjects. Rarely is it possible to control all variables. Response to a drug will be affected by age, sex, weight, nutrition, and health of the subjects. Even if they match perfectly, other factors may affect outcome–a late dose, what the subject ate, whether she or he drank a full glass of water, and perhaps the elusive attitudinal effects deriving from a mind/body connection we understand hardly at all.

Part I of this book explores the play of racism and sexism in science. In the pivotal essay, "Can We Draw Conclusions about Human Societal Behavior from Population Genetics?" Val Woodward applies the principles of good science to studies that propose a genetic basis for race and gender inferiorities. He reminds us that the gene, a piece of DNA, can do only three things: replicate itself, regulate itself, and transcribe its information onto another molecule, RNA, which is then "translated (by

enzymes) into amino acid sequences of proteins." These are important, he says, because "all biological work is done by proteins." It is, however, "impossible to trace the primary information of genes beyond the amino acid sequence of proteins" (41). The number of characteristics, such as eye color, traceable to a gene is limited. Eye color is a phenotype, a visible expression of a genotype, which is a characteristic determined by a pair of genes. Mendelian genetics depends on contrasting phenotypes (brown/blue) that suggest the presence of contrasting genes in a pair. One does not "see" the genes, only the phenotype.

With a simple phenotype like eye color, drawing conclusions seems justifiable. With other phenotypes, the translation from amino acid sequences to expression is harder to follow. Height, Woodward says, is subject to "continuous variation." We have no evidence that amino acid strings give specific instructions to the spine or to the long bones in the legs. If we cannot identify a genotypic pair for height, how can we possibly determine the presence of a genotype for qualities like shyness, intelligence, violence, laziness, or criminality? These latter conclusions are only some of the ones to which biological determinists have jumped in their zeal to explain sociocultural conditions.

Woodward cautions us to be wary of the metaphoric use of gene theory, the image of genes "programming" the human organism. While such a metaphor is intriguing, we must remember that a human mind does the programming, so we can ask that mind to trace the cause/effect sequence. We cannot ask the "mind" that installed information into the gene to reveal its program. We are learning some things about structure, but function is still a mystery.

Gisela Kaplan and Lesley J. Rogers, in "Race and Gender Fallacies: The Paucity of Biological Determinist Explanations of Difference," continue Woodward's unmasking of biological determinism by exposing how unobjective science can be and how it is influenced by the preconceptions of its workers. An example is P. Broca's hypothesis in 1873 that brain size predicts intelligence, a conclusion he reached because European men, whom he assumed to be the most intelligent, have larger heads than Africans and women. One problem here is that even when

two aspects seem to occur together, that correlation or coincidence does not imply causation. Another problem is that when Broca realized that Eskimos have larger cranial capacities than Europeans, he did not discard his theory. He adjusted it to say that it applies only to the low end of the scale, not the upper end: a small head, then, would still predict low intelligence. Not good science.

Such practices are not limited to the nineteenth century. In 1975 E. O. Wilson claimed as a "sociobiologist" that characteristics of the Western male in capitalism–aggression, territoriality, and intelligence–are produced by genes and therefore make patriarchy and violence "natural" (76). Human beings, hungering to know, eagerly greet new theories that "make the complexities disappear" (86). When one group needs to see itself as superior to another, racism and sexism are readily at hand to inform such theories.

The central essay in Part II, which focuses on philosophical/historical bases for racism and sexism, is Garland E. Allen's "The Genetic Fix: The Social Origins of Genetic Determinism." Allen examines the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century that contributed to Nazi crimes against Jews and others. He cites the rapid growth of capitalism that drew many people to cities where close quarters, underemployment, and wage/price fluctuations created a climate of instability that led to increased crime. Those in power sought to retain power by limiting immigration and unionization. Their philosophy moved from laissez-faire to "managed capitalism" (corporate welfare?). Eugenics, a movement for better breeding in humans, was "the counterpart in biology of rational control and planning in industry" (177). The Eugenics Record Office was funded largely by the Harrimans, the Carnegie Institution, and John D. Rockefeller. J. H. Kellogg supported the Race Betterment Society and a textile millionaire named Draper backed the Pioneer Fund. Allen concludes that in an unstable time "the elites . . . were searching for ways to manage and control the system without fundamentally changing it" (179).

The Pioneer Fund continues to fund sociobiology, contributing to the work of Thomas Bouchard and J. P. Rushton.

Bouchard, searching for a biological cause of homosexuality, studied identical twins separated at birth and raised independently. He concluded that homosexuality is heritable in males but not in females, and his work received great public attention. His entire sample, however, consisted of only six pairs of twins, two male and four female. In one pair of male twins both were gay, and in the second pair of males one was gay. No pattern showed in the females. His proof, then, rested on only *four* individuals; one could say that 75 percent of the male population was gay. Not only can he not account for sociocultural variables encountered by the separated twins, but such a minuscule sample cannot be extrapolated to the larger population. Asserting heritability for males but not for females is akin to saying that brain size only matters at the small end of the scale. Not good science.

The Pioneer Fund has also supported Rushton's recent work, which claims that "Asians show the most evolutionary advancement," with whites and Blacks following (165). According to Allen, psychologist Rushton used "largely outdated" concepts originating in insect research to derive his conclusions. (He also resurrected the brain-size argument.) Allen reiterates the class basis of biological determinism, comparing the socioeconomic instability of today to that of the heyday of eugenics. One can hear the calls for "family values" that reinforce a separatist and hierarchical social order.

In Part III various writers explore some specific effects of genetic/biological determinism on race and gender collisions. Essays take the perspective of Asians, Native American women, Black Puerto Rican women, Israeli Jewish women, and Palestinians. This book has prepared us well in the realms of science and sociopolitics to see clearly the fallacy and injustice of genetic determinism.

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Author and Title Index to Volume 8

ABSTRACTS

***Victor G. Devinatz,* "'Instead of Leaders They Have Become Bankers of Men': Gramsci's Alternative to the U.S. Neoinstitutionalists' Theory of Trade-Union Bureaucratization"**–This article compares and contrasts the U.S. neoinstitutionalists' theory of trade-union bureaucratization, accepted by most U.S. mainstream industrial-relations scholars, with the theory of Antonio Gramsci. Neoinstitutionalist industrial-relations scholars have constructed a highly deterministic, unidirectional, and linear theory emphasizing the importance of the processes internal to the unions that lead to bureaucratization. As an alternative, Gramsci's theory stresses that trade-union bureaucratization is the result of a multiplicity of factors both internal and external to the union and that bureaucratization arises as a result of the contradictions of capitalist society that pull the unions in conflicting directions. Empirical evidence supporting Gramsci's theory is presented, and the implications of the two theories as guides for future trade-union activity are discussed.

***E. San Juan Jr.,* "The Revolutionary Aesthetics of Frederick Engels"**–According to Engels's theory of historical motion, the aesthetic field is contextualized in the material density of social relations. Art and literature then acquire their peculiar identities and produce their singular effects when their complex mediations with institutions and political forces–artistic conventions, state apparatuses, multivariable structures of the family, etc.–are plotted with historical specificity. Aesthetics manifests the contradiction between necessity and chance in class society in the dialectic between form and content, between theme and artistic devices, between the potential of the human "species-being" and its historically determinate limits. Engels follows this dialectic in his *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. This text itself is a figural rendering of the dynamics of ideological conflict in art works conceived as historically

determined practices which, within that concrete framework of historicism, also express utopian possibilities.

***Sundiata K. Cha-Jua,* "'Air-Raid over Harlem': Langston Hughes's Left Nationalist Poetics, 1927–1936"**–The 19 March 1935 revolt in Harlem against the most apparent symbols of racial oppression, the police and property, foreshadowed the rebellions of the 1960s. "Air Raid" is Hughes's poetic response. Immediately before and during the Depression, Hughes merged Afrocentric content (though not its poetic forms) with a Marxist-derived social vision. Primarily between 1927 and 1936, Hughes examined the dynamic interwining of race and class, or the *racialclass* problematic, in his poetry. Hughes's left nationalist poetry exposed capitalist exploitation, opposed worldwide white supremacy, challenged middle-class Black leadership, and advocated militant resistance to discrimination and exploitation. Just as the Harlem insurrection heralded a new tactic in Black politics, "Air Raid" announced Hughes's new conception of African Americans as initiators of the socialist revolution. This new insight represented a profound departure from the orthodox Marxist presentation of the relationship between race and class.

***Georges Labica,* "Frederick Engels: Scholar and Revolutionary"**–In this contribution to the International Conference on the Centennial of the Death of Frederick Engels held in Havana in September 1995, a well-known French philosopher discusses the contributions of Engels to Marxist theory and the working-class movement. He points out that Engels led Marx to communism and materialism, then modestly insisted that he always merely played second fiddle. The many contributions of Engels often come under attack by those who do not dare to challenge Marx. Labica finds in this indefatigable worker the finest example of a revolutionary activist who never shrank away from self-questioning in the face of the actual struggles–that is to say, a revolutionary who was open, critical, and in a word, alive.

"Socialist Program of the Communist Party of Brazil"–In August 1995, the convention of the CP of Brazil adopted a program dealing with global and domestic problems, notably the problems of industrialization under conditions of dependent

development. The program attempts to outline a strategy for socialism in the course of confronting problems of sovereignty and the economy; urban and agrarian development; protection of the environment; and development of science, technology, and culture. The full text of the program is presented here.

ABREGES

***Victor G. Devinatz*, ««De dirigeants ils sont devenus banquiers d'hommes». L'alternative proposée par Gramsci à la théorie des néoinstitutionalistes américains de la bureaucratisation syndicale»** – Cet article compare et oppose la théorie des néoinstitutionalistes américains de la bureaucratisation syndicale, acceptée par la plupart des académiciens américains dans le domaine des rapports industriels, avec la théorie d'Antonio Gramsci. Les académiciens néoinstitutionalistes des rapports industriels construisirent une théorie fort déterministe, unidirectionnelle et linéaire qui souligne l'importance des processus internes aux syndicats qui mènent à la bureaucratisation. La théorie alternative de Gramsci insiste sur le fait que la bureaucratisation syndicale résulte d'une multiplicité de facteurs à la fois internes et externes au syndicat, et qu'elle apparaît comme résultat des contradictions de la société capitaliste qui poussent les syndicats dans des directions contradictoires. L'auteur présente l'évidence empirique qui soutient la théorie de Gramsci, et discute des implications des deux théories pour l'orientation des activités du mouvement syndical à venir.

***E. San Juan Jr.*, «L'esthétique révolutionnaire de Frederick Engels»** – Selon la théorie du mouvement historique de Engels, le domaine esthétique trouve son contexte dans la densité matérielle des rapports sociaux. Alors, l'art et la littérature acquièrent leurs identités spécifiques et produisent leurs effets singuliers quand leurs interventions complexes avec des institutions et des forces politiques – conventions artistiques, appareils d'état, structures multivariables de la famille, etc. – se trament avec une spécificité historique. L'esthétique montre la contradiction entre la nécessité et le hasard dans une société de classes,

dans la dialectique entre la forme et le fond, entre le thème et les procédés artistiques, entre les potentialités de l'humanité et ses limites déterminées historiquement. Engels suit cette dialectique dans son *Origine de la famille, de la propriété privée, et de l'état*. Ce texte lui-même est une représentation des dynamiques du conflit idéologique dans les oeuvres d'art conçues comme pratiques déterminées historiquement qui expriment, dans ce cadre concret de l'historicisme, des possibilités utopiques.

***Sundiata K. Cha-Jua,* ««Attaque aérienne sur Harlem» : la poésie nationaliste de gauche de Langston Hughes, 1927-1936»** – La révolte du 19 mars 1935 à Harlem contre les symboles les plus évidents de l'oppression raciale, la police et la propriété, préfigura les rébellions des années soixante. «Attaque aérienne» est la réponse poétique de Hughes. Juste avant et pendant la dépression des années trente, Hughes unifia le fond afrocentrique (mais pas ses formes poétiques) avec une vision sociale dérivée du marxisme. Principalement entre 1927 et 1936, Hughes examinait dans sa poésie l'entrelacement dynamique de la race et la classe, ou la problématique race-classe. La poésie nationaliste de gauche de Hughes explicita l'exploitation capitaliste, s'opposa à la suprématie blanche mondiale, défia la direction de la classe moyenne noire, et prôna la résistance militante à la discrimination et à l'exploitation. Tout comme l'insurrection à Harlem annonçait une nouvelle tactique dans la politique des Noirs, «Attaque aérienne» annonça la nouvelle conception de Hughes: les Afro-Américains comme initiateurs de la révolution socialiste. Cette nouvelle vision représentait un profond changement par rapport à la présentation orthodoxe marxiste des rapports entre la race et la classe.

***Georges Labica,* «Frederick Engels : érudit et révolutionnaire»** – Dans cette intervention à la Conférence internationale à l'occasion du centenaire de la mort de Frederick Engels tenue à La Havane en septembre 1995, un philosophe français connu discute les contributions d'Engels à la théorie marxiste et au mouvement ouvrier. Il démontre comment Engels mena Marx au communisme et au matérialisme, tout en affirmant avec modestie qu'il n'a jamais joué qu'un rôle secondaire. Les nombreuses

contributions de Frederick Engels sont souvent soumises à la critique de ceux qui n'osent pas contester Marx. Labica trouve que cet ouvrier infatigable offre le meilleur exemple d'un activiste révolutionnaire qui n'hésita jamais à se remettre en question face aux luttes réelles – c'est-à-dire, un révolutionnaire qui était ouvert, critique, et en un mot, vivant.

«Programme socialiste du Parti communiste Brésilien» – En août 1995, la convention du PC Brésilien adopta un programme qui traite des problèmes globaux et intérieurs, notamment les problèmes de l'industrialisation dans les conditions du développement dans une situation de dépendance. Ce programme essaie d'exposer une stratégie pour le socialisme tout en confrontant les problèmes de souveraineté et d'économie, de développement urbain et agraire, de protection de l'environnement, et de développement de la science, de la technologie et de la culture. Le texte entier du programme est présenté ici.