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Truman and the 1951 War Scare

Frank Kofsky and Dominic Cerri

In 1951, President Harry S. Truman stated:

> We have three enemies to overcome, one abroad and two at home. Aggression is the first one. We are shooting that one out in Korea, as we did in Greece and Berlin [sic] and other places. Number two is inflation. That is a home product. . . . *Number three is the worst of all* (emphasis added), and that is relaxation. You can't cure the tendency to relax every time there is a lull in the hostilities. . . . That is a terrible mistake. (*New York Times*, 10 May 1951)

As one of the authors has demonstrated in a recent study, the Truman administration, during the winter and spring of 1948, concocted a wholly bogus war scare in order to bulldoze and befuddle a reluctant Republican-controlled Congress into approving the European Recovery Program (more commonly, the Marshall Plan), a 30-percent leap in military spending–in percentage terms, the greatest peacetime increase in the nation's history–and the resumption of a military draft. Even as administration representatives implied that the Soviet Union was preparing to launch an offensive against the West as the first step in World War III, however, intelligence analysts in the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department, and all three armed services were asserting just the contrary: that the Soviets, still staggering from the massive devastation they had endured in the last war, were doing everything in their power to avoid another such disaster. But Truman and his key assistants, especially

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Secretary of State George C. Marshall and Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal, skillfully misrepresented the true state of affairs–and their baseless claims were generally accepted without question by the mass media. With the administration thus enjoying both a near-monopoly on information and the authority of the presidency, Congress and the electorate alike were successfully taken in by the hoax.[1]

The Truman administration's war scare of 1948 may have been the most spectacular effort of its kind, but research makes clear that it was by no means the only one. Some years ago, for example, Fred Block called attention to an April 1950 article in *Business Week* alerting its readers not to "be surprised if the administration resorts to phony war crises to get its way in Congress on foreign policy legislation. . . . Scare talk may be drummed up over Indo-China."[2]

That *Business Week* knew whereof it spoke emerges from a memorandum of 6 April 1950–two days earlier than the publication-date of the article Block cited–that Edward Barrett, the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and an experienced professional in the field of opinion-molding, sent to Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson. Acheson had brought National Security Document 68 (NSC 68), the administration's ambitious blueprint for astronomical levels of military spending unheard of in peacetime, to Barrett with a request that he consider how best to convince the public to accept the "huge arms race" it proposed. This assignment promised to be exceedingly difficult, given that skyrocketing military expenditures would undoubtedly require "sacrifices" of the public, especially with respect to the most popular social programs. Nonetheless, Barrett was confident that what he called a "psychological 'scare campaign'" could prevail: "This might take three months or it might require no more than ten days," he wrote. "My hunch is that it will be nearer ten days."[3] Before the plotting could go further, however, the Korean War, in Dean Acheson's well-known words, "came along and saved us," rendering such charades unnecessary on this occasion. It is significant that both *Business Week* and Barrett's memorandum to Acheson drew the same connection as had existed in 1948 between the administration's

foreign and military policies on the one hand and its war-scare fabrications on the other. Such an association was anything but coincidental. Truman's foreign and military policies generally enjoyed little popular and congressional support, yet, as we will illustrate momentarily, it was just these policies that he and his administration deemed by far the most important. As a result, the tendency to descend to chicanery and deceit was ever present in the councils of the administration; the evidence does not indicate that Truman and his minions struggled vigorously before yielding to it.

These introductory remarks are immediately relevant to the situation in the spring of 1951, when the administration once more fell back on its well-worn methods of artifice in an effort to overcome congressional resistance to the stupendous military buildup it began once the Korean War furnished a suitable pretext. Before turning to the details of this war scare within the war, however, it will be helpful to outline the context in which it took place.

As we said above, there is overwhelming evidence that Truman and his key assistants–especially Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson, special representative W. Averell Harriman, and Secretary of Defense Marshall (who held that office for one year after replacing Louis Johnson in September 1950)–gave pride of place to the administration's foreign and military policies. Compared to them, everything else–including the so-called Fair Deal, a national health policy, repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, and the defense of the First Amendment–was a very distant second. Thus, although Truman in 1948 had campaigned on the basis of a "Fair Deal" for the people of the United States, in practice this "program" amounted to little more than political sloganeering–a bit of harmless rhetoric designed to appeal to those who are soothed by the word without requiring actual execution of the deed.

Hence when forced to choose, as often he was, between domestic Fair Deal policies and foreign or military policies, Truman invariably gave short shrift to the former. To understand this point fully, we need to pay careful attention to Thomas J. Christensen's demonstration that even in the years immediately

preceding the Korean War and NSC 68, Truman already was assigning the highest priority to his administration's military measures. And, moreover, when it came to lavishing money on the military, Truman was anything but "a fiscal conservative":

> In fact, he was a revolutionary in the history of American military spending. Using the most conservative formula (excluding budgetary supplements and atomic energy research), Truman's military spending constituted nearly 5 percent of GNP (Gross National Product) in these years. As a percentage of GNP this was more than four times the peacetime expenditures of the 1930s (in absolute terms it was more than twelve times larger). (1996, 44f.)

Truman's "revolutionary" approach to the Pentagon budget meant not only that military spending as a percentage of GNP was on the rise, but that he achieved this increase at the expense of social spending. That is, unlike the case in other peacetime periods during which federal expenditures increased,

> the late 1940s was a unique phase in the postwar era in that the most important increase in federal spending was in military spending. Social spending actually shrank as a percentage of GNP. In fact . . . Truman's nonmilitary domestic spending dropped to less than 8 percent of GNP, levels similar to those of the late 1920s. According to economist Michael Edelstein, the new military-centered increase in military spending was paid for by sacrifices in private, nondurable consumption. *In other words, guns were clearly being paid for by butter sacrificed* [emphasis added].[4]

Truman himself made it abundantly clear where he stood in a May 1951 speech, in which he postulated that the United States had "three enemies to overcome." Significantly, none of these "enemies" had the slightest connection with any domestic social problem, such as poverty, discrimination, the lack of adequate housing, or the need for a system of national health care; nor was any related to either the current threat to civil liberties–one his administration had helped to create[5]–or the obstacles that the

Taft-Hartley Act put in the path of organized labor. Rather, all three "enemies" pertained to the administration's foreign and military policies, and the "worst of all" of them, Truman emphasized, was the possibility of any "relaxation" in the administration's frenzied military spending. "The tendency to relax every time there is a lull in the hostilities . . . is a terrible mistake," he admonished (Lawrence 1951).

In his painstaking study of the politics of wringing out of Congress the vast sums required to put NSC 68 into effect, Benjamin Fordham establishes this same point beyond question, proving conclusively that

> the administration's commitment to its national security policy was much stronger than its commitment to the Fair Deal. Although the administration proposed these [Fair Deal] programs . . . the priority placed on getting them through Congress was not high. They were secondary considerations compared to the administration's foreign-policy goals. In contrast to [the case with the] domestic programs of the Fair Deal, there is no evidence of ambivalence in Truman's commitment to the administration's foreign-policy goals. When domestic and international priorities conflicted, foreign-policy considerations . . . took precedence. (1998, 211)

For a concrete example, witness Truman's handling of the 1950 Internal Security (McCarran) Act. This legislation required all "communist" or "communist-front" organizations and their members to register with the U.S. attorney general; authorized formation of a Subversive Activities Control Board to investigate "suspect" organizations whose officers refused to register; and provided for the arrest and detention in concentration camps of alleged "subversives" in the event of what the Act termed an "internal-security emergency." Truman claimed to be opposed to this legislation and did, in fact, veto it with a ringing message that liberals–who were pleased to take its stirring rhetoric at face value–wildly applauded. From prior meetings with top Congressional Democrats, however, Truman knew full well that Congress would vote to override his veto, which it promptly did

before recessing one day later. What is more, if Truman genuinely had wanted to prevent the bill from becoming law, all he had to have done was wait: Congress was about to adjourn for the last few weeks of the 1950 election campaign, and if he merely had refused to sign the bill within 10 days from the date of adjournment, it automatically would have perished by virtue of this "pocket veto."

Why, then, did Truman instead choose to veto the McCarran Act and return it to Congress with utmost speed? Why did he not simply refrain from acting until he had killed the bill with a pocket veto? The answer is that, as Fordham shows, Truman had reached a tacit understanding with the Republicans: he would give them an immediate opportunity to pass McCarran over his veto; they, in turn, would refrain from attaching the crippling Wherry Amendment–named for Republican Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska–to the administration's bill for a $10-billion supplemental appropriation for the military. This appropriation was the first such request that the White House sent to Congress after the outbreak of the Korean War; it would be far from the last. The administration hoped to use the $10 billion sum it contained primarily to pump more of the taxpayer's dollars into the economies of Western Europe and Japan. Wherry's amendment, however, would have banned all nonmilitary aid to any country that exported to the Soviet Union any item that could be put to military use, thus rendering the appropriation worthless for the administration's purposes. Hence the stage was set for a cozy little deal: if Truman would quietly collude with Congress in its gutting of the First Amendment via the McCarran Act, congressional Republicans would do their part by delivering the foreign-aid program he so prized without the paralyzing Wherry Amendment–an arrangement that, as we have seen, left Truman perfectly free to attempt to hoodwink the public with a rousing denunciation of that same McCarran Act whose passage he secretly abetted.[6]

Let us, now, return to the spring of 1951, when circumstances combined to impel the administration to stage that year's war-scare extravaganzas replay in miniature of its progenitor of 1948 that calls to mind Marx's aphorism, "Hegel remarks somewhere

that all the facts and personages of greate importance in world history occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce" (1979, 103). To begin with, in Korea, U.S. forces were on the offensive and steadily driving the North Korean army and Chinese "volunteer" troops back across the 38th parallel. Although this turning of the tide might have been grounds for rejoicing in some circles, its by-product so far as the administration was concerned was that "the worst of all" its "enemies," the "tendency to relax every time there is a lull in the hostilities," was starting to raise its threatening face. And not only in the United States either. In Britain–Washington's closest ally in the Korean War–for example, while

> "Peace with China" councils began to spring up all over the country . . . a serious split developed within the ranks of the ruling Labor party, as Prime Minister [Clement] Atlee was attacked by more radical Laborites for adhering too closely to the dictates of Washington and for allowing Great Britain to be "dragged into a war with China by the Americans. (Kaufman 1986, 153)

Simultaneously, Truman's standing with the public was plunging "to an all-time low." Results of a Gallup poll in March indicated that a mere 28 percent of the electorate "approved the way President Truman was doing his job"–a figure "four percentage points lower than his previous bottom in October 1946, just before the Democrats' drastic drubbing in congressional elections" (152).

Finally, it was at just this moment that the White House chose to send to Congress a bill to lower the age of eligibility for induction into the military, extend the term of service for inductees, and establish a system of universal military training for young men. These measures were unpopular with the country at large, the Republicans, and, so far as that goes, a great many Democrats as well. Not surprisingly, a coalition intent on defeating or substantially modifying the administration's proposals soon took shape–and with Truman plumbing the depths of political unpopularity, the White House was unlikely to have the prestige or authority to compel Congress to do its bidding. The

war scare of 1951 was the administration's attempt to reverse this profoundly unpromising situation. As the curtain rises on this production late in March 1951, the first member of the administration assumes his place before the footlights: we see Secretary of Defense George Marshall declaim a reprise of his war-scare speeches of 19 and 20 March 1948.

These were (for those who have yet to savor their delights at first hand) a pair of bombastic exercises that took as their point of departure a proposition their author surely knew from intelligence reports to be wholly false. "The present situation," Marshall maintained on that occasion, was "disturbingly similar" to that of 1940, when he had "watched the Nazi Government take control of one country after another until finally Poland was invaded in a direct military operation." Then, just in case anyone had missed his point, Marshall proceeded to beat it further into the ground: "never before in history"–meaning, not during the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the two World Wars, and the Great Depression–"never before in history has the world situation been more threatening to our ideals and interests than at the present time.[7]

As these tactics had achieved such gratifying results during the administration's previous production, why not press them into service again? Thus, Marshall on 27 March told a Washington press conference–his first, incidentally, since returning to office six months earlier–that he "had never dreamed that the Defense Department's plans would be encountering resistance in February and March," and was therefore "astonished at the relaxation in public and Congressional support" for the administration's military programs. Reminding his audience that "the Soviet Union's activities covered the globe," Marshall ended with the ominous declaration that "the world situation was now more serious than last November."

The choice of words was, as usual, exquisite. During November 1950, U.S. troops under the command of General Douglas MacArthur had been reeling before a Chinese assault, fleeing in panic down the Korean peninsula–perhaps, for all anyone knew, to be forced off the Asian mainland entirely. If the "world situation" were truly "now more serious" than at that dark hour, how

had things come to such a pretty pass–especially when it was the U.S. military that in March 1951 had the upper hand and was enjoying an almost unbroken string of victories? Although Marshall "would not clarify his remarks about how the world crisis had worsened," we can infer what he had in mind, not only from his undisguised dismay "at the relaxation of . . . support" for the administration's military buildup, but also from his vigorous attempt to "protect the manpower bill calling for a reduced draft age, longer service and Universal Military Training." It was his "hope," the Secretary stated "feelingly," that "the heat of debate would lead to no crippling amendments" to Truman's proposed legislation by the Republicans. When it came to pulling the administration's chestnuts from the fire, no one exerted greater effort than the Secretary of Defense (*New York Times*, 28 March 1951).

Marshall's performance on 27 March was, of course, only the opening act in this particular melodrama. The very next day, Director of Defense Mobilization Charles E. Wilson "expressed concern . . . over 'undue optimism' and its possible effect on military) production and stabilization." Assuring members of the Senate Appropriations Committee that he did "not want to be an alarmist," circumstances nonetheless compelled Wilson to "point out that the threat of communistic aggression still exists. Our problem is global and is not tied to the proximity of the United Nations forces [in Korea] to the Thirty-eighth parallel" (*New York Times*, 29 March 1951).

Alas, neither the Secretary's nor the Director's rhetoric was sufficiently inflammatory to do the job at hand, requiring Speaker of the House of Representatives Sam Rayburn to step into the breach. On 4 April, Rayburn "took the floor briefly in a period of bickering and sharp debate over the necessity of lowering the draft age and authorizing universal military training" to announce the shocking–if suspiciously convenient–news that "the Soviet Union was massing troops in Manchuria and that the beginning of World War III might be near. . . . In grave tones, he warned against complacency in the face of 'terrible danger . . . and maybe the beginning of World War III.'" The Speaker also went out of his way to foster "the impression . . . that he was

passing along information given to Congressional leaders by President Truman at a White House conference" that morning. In addition, House Democratic floor leader John W. McCormack, "who also attended the conference with President Truman," fully supported his colleague's account when asked by reporters "whether Russian troops were massing in Manchuria": "No doubt about it," was his unhesitating reply (*New York Times,* 5 April 1951).

At once, the media sought confirmation of these astonishing revelations from the Pentagon and the White House. Representatives of the former "merely recalled the March 28 statement of Secretary George C. Marshall that the world situation was more serious than it was last November." Truman, in his press conference the next day, was likewise too cagey to let the buck stop there, but he did make a point of asserting that "Mr. Rayburn is a truthful man (*New York Times,* 5 and 6 April 1951).

It was not only members of the media, however, who sought to learn the basis of Rayburn's disclosures. On 7 April, India's Minister-Counselor K. Kirpalani, acting on the instructions of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, called on Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Dean Rusk "to request information regarding Speaker Rayburn's statement concerning troops on the Manchurian border." To Kirpalani's query, Rusk could reply only that "there were reports, as yet unconfirmed, that units now in Manchuria included 'volunteers' from various parts of the USSR and from Europe, as well as former Japanese POW's.[8] This "answer," however, shed little light. Governments constantly receive unconfirmed reports on all manner of subjects–including the sighting of spaceships and the presence of extraterrestrial visitors. Since when had it become standard practice of the U.S government to have the Speaker of the House of Representatives pass on such unverified accounts–and on the floor of the House, at that–as if they were the gospel truth? And where, if not from the administration itself, would Rayburn have heard about supposed Soviet troop movements in the Far East? For all his myriad prerogatives, the Speaker is unlikely to have had an independent intelligence service of his own in that region. No matter how we approach the matter, then, the conclusion is

inescapable: in asserting that Soviet troops were "massing" in Manchuria–or was it Korea?[9]–Raybum was obviously doing the administration's dirty work, in a crude attempt to jack up the tension in the war scare of 1951.

Not only crude, mind you, but markedly unsuccessful in the bargain. Unlike its predecessor in 1948, the war scare of 1951 backfired in the face of its creators. In the wake of Rayburn's preposterous allegations, according to the *New York Times,*

> Impatience with what many Republicans and some Democrats regarded as trumped-up world crises erupted in harsh words during . . . consideration of the [administration's] draft and training bill and gave impetus to a coalition drive against adoption of universal military training. . . .
>
> Angry demands arose . . . for the facts to back warnings such as Mr. Rayburn's lest Administration spokesmen stand guilty of crying 'wolf' in an effort to obtain House approval of universal military training and lowering of the draft age. The mood of the House had become so hostile to the Administration, in fact, that sponsors of the pending military service and training bill decided to make major concessions to opponents of the measure's long-range training features as a means of averting outright rejection of those provisions. *New York Times,* 6 April 1951)

That so few Republicans were willing to swallow the administration's bait suggests that humanity is, on occasion, capable of learning from past mistakes. Indeed, it fell to the Republicans to have the best–if not necessarily the last–-word in this comic-opera affair. Nebraska's Representative Howard H. Buffet, for one, "recalled 'cloakroom rumors' during consideration of the Marshal plan for European Recovery in 1948 that war with Russia was expected within 30 days. He called such alarms 'an insult to the intelligence of the House.'" House minority leader Joseph W. Martin Jr. of Massachusetts was even more scathing, insisting that the administration "come clean with the Congress and with the American people"; he trenchantly observed that "down through the years we have heard high

officials of this Government utter time and again the direst warnings of imminent bloodshed when a particular piece of legislation they wanted was before the Congress"—a succinct summation on which it would be difficult to improve (*New York Times*, 6 April 1951).

Newspaper reports of the Soviet Union's nonwarlike intentions, both before and during this ostensible crisis, in all probability reinforced Republican skepticism about the notion that the Soviets were on the brink of beginning World War III. In March and April of 1951, the *New York Times*, in particular, repeatedly carried accounts by journalists of the first rank to the effect that the USSR had no plans whatsoever to embark upon a new world war. Just eight days before George Marshall's press conference of 27 March, for example, the *Times* published a front-page article by C. L. Sulzberger, one of its most esteemed correspondents, on a new Soviet program to collectivize agricultural production still further. Citing "experts on Soviet affairs" as the basis for his estimate, Sulzberger wrote that this program promised to "bring with it economic turmoil, reduction in planned agricultural output and a sufficient social upheaval to render unlikely a gamble by Moscow on launching a war this year or possibly next." Hence "some shrew[d] observers . . . estimate the chances for a war between the Soviet Union and the West as rather less in the near future," although "possibly rather more later on (19 March 1951).

Two days later, the *Times* ran a long and detailed examination of Soviet military policies by a no-less-respected journalist, Drew Middleton. The page-one headline of this article alone tells the tale: "Soviet Army Plans Said to Bar '51 War." Below it, Middleton pointed out that the Soviets were engaged in "a gradual build-up of strength rather than hurried preparation for a sudden swoop on Western Europe." According to sources whom Middleton believed to be "as well informed and as objective as any in Europe," a Soviet strike at Western Europe

> would entail considerable preparation of a specific type and of this there is no sign at the moment. . . . These sources say that so far as military preparations are concerned there are not at the moment any signs that the

> Soviet Army or Air Force is preparing for war this spring and very few indications that the Russian commanders expect to be called upon to fight this year.

To support this conclusion, Middleton adduced a broad array of evidence. With respect to transportation, he noted that although the Soviets were repairing bridges over the Vistula River in Poland, "the work is not being pressed, and some of the bridges, essential to a flow of supplies between the Soviet Union and Germany, remain in a sorry state." Similarly, airfield construction in the Soviet zone of Germany was "not progressing with extraordinary speed," again suggesting absence of any Soviet planning for an imminent war, and the "whole construction program seemed to be geared for completion a year or two years hence." As for the Soviet air force itself, Middleton's sources "viewed [it] as . . . very competent," but added that "it does not seem to be one planning on a huge operation this year . . . nor is there any indication that the Russians are preparing to give the East zone Germans anything resembling an air force." And so on (21 March 1951).

Perhaps the most telling treatment of Soviet intentions, however, came directly from Moscow under the byline of Harrison E. Salisbury. Making it plain that he was writing in response to "Speaker Sam Rayburn's assertion that non-Chinese troops were massing in Manchuria and that there was the gravest danger of a new war," Salisbury's 6 April article threw glass after glass of cold water on the administration's scare-mongering:

> A close check of diplomatic quarters in Moscow did not disclose any opinion on the part of seasoned and qualified observers to suggest that a new military crisis was arising in the Far East nor did there appear to be any diplomatic information here to bear out Mr. Rayburn's suggestion.

Scrutiny of the Soviet press likewise offered no support for "the extreme terms . . . employed by Mr. Rayburn." That day's "news from the Far East" contained "nothing . . . to indicate that any new or startling developments [had occurred] . . . in that quarter of the world," nor had Moscow newspapers published "anything but routine news reports from that region . . . in the

last month or so." Salisbury's closing paragraph, its scorn barely concealed between the lines, is worth quoting in full:

> For the next few weeks this will be one of the year's busiest seasons for peasants all over the Soviet Union–getting in spring planting that this year will be more extensive than ever. It is the season of the year when the maximum of Soviet manpower and womanpower is needed to insure that the biggest possible crop can be obtained. It is not exactly a convenient season as far as this country is concerned for any project that would divert its manpower from such an essential task.

Be that as it may, the administration, refusing to be deterred by such pedestrian matters as mere facts or logic, stubbornly slogged on, with Rayburn continuing in his starring role. "I know we are in terrible danger because the Russians are concentrating here and there and everywhere," the Speaker told reporters directly after meeting with Truman on 9 April. Forced to concede that "just where this is being done is a little beyond my field," he was nonetheless quick to assert that he spoke "on good authority–the best authority." "The 'best authority,"' the *Times* helpfully explained, "would, of course, be [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] General [Omar N.] Bradley, if not President Truman himself."

By this point, journalists were becoming visibly exasperated at being fed such preposterous nonsense. One asked "Mr. Rayburn . . . as he left the White House if his remarks last week on a new danger to peace might have been purposefully designed to create a crisis atmosphere"; another "reporter suggested . . . that the statement might have been tailored to get a favorable House action on the draft-universal military training bill." Rayburn, naturally, waxed indignant at having his veracity impugned: "That's a damn low estimate to put on what I said about a very serious situation," he snorted. "That statement was made in the best interest of the United States." Note, however, that for all his vehemence, Rayburn stopped well short of claiming that what he had said the previous week actually was *true* (Austin Stevens, *New York Times,* 10 April 1951).

The following day, 10 April, Director of Defense Mobilization Charles E. Wilson complemented Rayburn's rehash of his last week's lines with a similar performance of his own. Just as Wilson had said on 28 March that he did "not want to be an alarmist," he now told his listeners, in a speech broadcast on nationwide radio and television, "Please do not think that I want to frighten you!" Then, continuing the parallel with his earlier remarks, he sought to do just that. "A dictatorship 'more absolute and ruthless' than the world has ever known menaces the United States," he declared. A "dreadful shadow moves over this earth. In a short twelve years nation after nation has disappeared behind the Iron Curtain." Finally, to make the parallel complete, it emerged that, notwithstanding all the inflated language about the Soviet threat, the sources of the Director's concern were strictly domestic: "Mr. Wilson . . . urged an end to 'complacency' and a unified effort to insure the fighting ability of the United States." If only Congress would pass the administration's selective-service legislation and the public would resist the "tendency to relax every time there is a lull in the hostilities," in other words, all would be well in the administration's eyes (*New York Times*, 11 April 1951).

But as matters stood on 10 April, chances that the administration would achieve its aims did not appear great. Ironically enough, the eruption of an even bigger controversy that the administration had long sought to avoid in the end saved it from further embarrassment from its war-scare fiasco. On 11 April, news that Truman had relieved General MacArthur of his command became public. In the ensuing tumult, the war scare of 1951 immediately vanished into thin air, taking with it all signs of "massing" Soviet troops in Manchuria, Korea, or anyplace else in the region. Nothing more was heard on this score for the remaining two years and two months of the war–a fact that in and of itself should convince any doubting souls that the administration's "reports" were a fraud from start to finish.

In the short run, MacArthur's popularity, the appeal of his position that there was "no substitute for victory" over China in the Korean War, and the high cost in lives and suffering of the administration's policy of endless stalemate in Korea put

Truman and his advisers on the defensive. Yet in the long run, the administration, primarily through its shrewd orchestration of testimony from the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the subsequent MacArthur hearings in Congress, was able to turn the situation to its advantage. Indeed, as early as 25 April, an astute observer such as the *New York Times*'s James Reston could discern some of the benefits that the MacArthur contretemps was bringing the administration. Not only had the General's firing "removed Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall's complaint about public apathy," but it also had deprived Washington's "allies of one of their favorite private arguments, namely, that they could not do more in Korea because did they not like . . . MacArthur's objetives and they did not believe that President Truman could control him" (26 April 1851). Reston's analysis was prescient. By the time the MacArthur hearings concluded at the end of May, the "published testimony of military personnel in particular" had "served . . . to convince the 'weight of articulate opinion' and the liberal press" that the administration's overall approach "was correct," despite the fact that Truman's own popularity had fallen even lower since March (Foot 1985, 138–39; Kaufman 1986, 177). Taking advantage of its improved standing, the administration obtained a favorable vote on its selective-service bill in mid-June. Although Marshall's statement, released at the signing of the law on 19 June, asserted that the new legislation did "not contain all the provisions the Defense Department desired," one should take this protestation with a generous helping of salt. Among its other features, the law extended the selective-service system for four years; lengthened the term of service from 21 to 24 months; reduced the age of draft eligibility from 19 to 18½; lowered physical and mental standards for draftees; allowed the re-screening of several million men between the ages of 19 and 26 previously classified 4-F for physical or mental reasons; revoked the deferment for married men without children; and, finally, established a program of universal military training. How draconian would such a measure have to have been, one wonders, to give complete satisfaction to Marshall and the Pentagon?[10]

Even more than was the case with its 1948 precursor, the war scare of 1951 came and went with blinding rapidity. Unlike the unmitigated success of the original, however, the second, revised edition gave every sign of ending in abject failure. Where the former won Truman and his top officials virtually all they craved from Congress, the latter managed only to make the administration look more ridiculous and incompetent by the moment. Though it may have taken some time for the realization to register, the administration owed MacArthur a debt of gratitude for putting this ludicrous endeavor out of its misery. Had the administration deliberately set out to illustrate the principle of "the second time as farce," it could hardly have improved upon its performance in the war scare of 1951.

History Department
California State University, Sacramento

NOTES

1. See Kofsky 1993, especially chapters 4–6.

2. *Business Week*, 8 April 1950, 11; quoted in Block 1977, 243, n. 11; see also Block 1977, 107.

3. Memorandum by Assistant Secretary Barrett to Secretary Acheson, 6 April 1950 (*Foreign Relations of the United States* 1977, 225–26).

4. If, in addition, one looks at Truman's overall expenditures on "security" programs−including foreign aid and atomic-energy research as well as military spending per se−the results are no less revealing: "As a percentage of GNP, security programs under Truman in the late 1940s rivaled those of Ronald Reagan in the high-spending 1980s . . . [constituting] nearly 50 percent of federal spending from 1948 to 1950" (Christiansen 1996, 46).

5. On which, see, among others, Freeland 1974.

6. See Fordham 1998, 301–9, for a much fuller discussion of these events.

7. For an analysis of these two speeches, see Kofsky 1993, 138–41.

8. Memorandum of Conversation by the acting Officer in Charge of India-Nepal-Ceylon Affairs (Weil), April 7,1951 (*Foreign Relations of the United States* 1983, 316–17.

9. "The official transcript of Mr. Rayburn's remarks had him referring to the massing of troops in Korea instead of Manchuria. Members of the press advised him that they had understood him to say Manchuria. He later edited the transcript to make it read 'Korea and Manchuria'" (*New York Times*, 5 April, 3) 1951). If at first you don't succeed . . .

10. See the report "Draft-U.M.T. Bill Signed by Truman. He Nominates 5 to Supervise Military Training Program. Marshall Hails Law" in the *New York Times,* 20 June 1951.

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The Origin of the Historical Novel: A Marxist Explanation

Stephan Lieske

Recent discussions of the genesis of historical fiction at the turn of the nineteenth century interpret the new genre as a product of the rise of historicism. While critics such as Harry E. Shaw (1983) and John MacQueen (1989) see a connection between a new sense of history and the development of historical fiction, they do not offer a convincing analysis of a causal relationship.[1] The emergence of the historical novel raises the methodological problem of how to explain historically the origin of a new literary form, or, more generally, how to define the nature of concept formation.

This essay aims to illustrate the usefulness of the method that Karl Marx and Frederick Engels worked out in 1845–46 in *The German Ideology*. The model is of a dialectical relation between the social base and the ideational superstructure; a specific mode of thinking is thus generated by the base and in turn acts on that base to change it.

> The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men at this stage still appear as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. (1976, 36)

Hence, thinking is the product of social relations, of human beings active in social production, or, as Marx and Engels put it,

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thinking is "nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant social relations grasped as ideas" (1976, 59). In short, a particular structure of thinking should be explained as the social relations apprehended and then hypostatized as theories, philosophies, religions, artistic forms, and the like.[2]

I propose to explain the genesis of this new literary form–historical fiction–not as a function of the rise of historicism, as Shaw and MacQueen suggest, but parallel to it. Historicism and the historical novel are different ideational representations of a new social structure, namely, industrial capitalism. My argument is that the development of industrial capitalism and the industrial working class provided the social basis for the generation of historical thinking, which found its theoretical representation in, for example, both the Scottish philosophical historians and Hegel, and its artistic expression in the rise of the historical novel. It is my contention that historical thinking–the sense of evolution and qualitative change that sees both past and present in terms of the struggle of contending forces, and that interprets in this struggle the basis and essence of future change–is a theoretical representation of the social contradictions of industrial capitalism. It is the intellectual perception of a social structure the essence of which can be found in the new life experience of the industrial working class.

Georg Lukács offers a useful–albeit problematical–starting point for a historical explanation of the genesis of the new genre in connection with the French Revolution. He argues that "the French Revolution, the revolutionary wars and the rise and fall of Napoleon . . . for the first time made history a *mass experience*," because in the decades between 1789 and 1814 "each nation experienced more upheavals than they had previously experienced in centuries." According to him, the quick succession of these fundamental historical changes generated the sense that history is no "natural occurrence," but "an uninterrupted process of changes" that has "a direct effect upon the life of every individual" (1962, 23). There was, therefore, "the concrete possibility for men to comprehend their own existence as 'something historically conditioned, for them to see in history

something which deeply affects their daily lives and immediately concerns them" (1962, 24).

In short, Lukács explains the genesis of historical thinking as the result of the participation in the French Revolution of great masses of people who reached a conception of progress "no longer . . . as an essentially unhistorical struggle between humanist reason and feudal-absolutist unreason." Rather, the reasonableness of human progress is interpreted "out of the inner conflict of social forces in history itself" by "showing historically how modern bourgeois society arose out of the class struggles between nobility and bourgeoisie . . . whose last decisive stage was the great French Revolution" (1962, 27–28).

While Lukács is suggestive here in his attempt to explain a particular structure of thinking as the theoretical representation of the new life experience of historically concrete people, his approach remains problematical because he makes the origin of historicism political, leaving out the changes in the forces and relations of production. Great masses of people had participated before in fundamental political changes, such as the English Revolution, without generating a sense of history in terms of evolution through class struggle. To put it differently: the changes in the nature of people's participation in politics must be seen as an expression of the changes, on a European scale, in social and class structure caused by qualitative changes in the labor process and production relations. I shall now turn to a consideration of these changes.

E. P. Thompson has convincingly demonstrated that the most important social moment of the period between 1790 and 1830, the heyday of the industrial revolution in Britain, was the formation of the working class in the process of divided-labor production, which essentially changed the general character of the mass of the people (1968, 212). In the first volume of *Capital*, Marx explains the essence of divided-labor production as lying in the abstract quality of labor: "in it [the commodity] the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between

themselves, but between the products of their labour" (1996, 82–83). In commodity production, according to Marx,

> The equality of all sorts of human labour is expressed objectively by their products all being equal values; the measure of the expenditure of labour power by the duration of that expenditure, takes the form of the quantity of value of the products of labour; and finally, the mutual relations of the producers, within which the social character of their labour affirms itself, take the form of a social relation between the products. (82)

Moreover, "the specific social character of each producer's labour does not show itself except in the act of exchange," and "the labour of the individual asserts itself as a part of the labour of society" (83). Therefore, "the relations connecting the labour of one individual with that of the rest appear, not as direct social relations between individuals at work, but as what they really are, material relations between persons and social relations between things" (84).

Marx sees the new quality of industrial production in the fact that "the equalisation of the most different kinds of labour can be the result only of an abstraction from their inequalities, or of reducing them to their common denominator, viz., expenditure of human labour power or human labour in the abstract" (84). The essence of industrial production is the abstract quality of labor, i.e., an undifferentiated quantity of wage labor. Hence, the industrial worker experienced his existence as part of an organized whole in which he was the vital and generating moment, a producer of a quantifiable material exchange value. Moreover, as the relations of men now appeared fully as the social relations of objects produced by the workers, the workers' reification generated the sense of fully socialized labor in which its products appeared as independent of the workers. At the same time, however, the workers experienced themselves as active producers because of the revolutionizing changes in the process of production.

The interdependent nature of the process of industrial production generated in the worker a sense of interdependence; he

experienced his life as part of a productive force that creates and actively changes social life and therewith history. The interdependent nature of factory production, with its rational organization, produced a sense of cooperation among the workers felt as a sense of solidarity, the earliest organizational expressions of which were the trade unions. In short, industrial labor production provided the basis for the workers' experience of being part of a rapidly changing and developing collective of equals; participation in the revolutionary changes in production gave the workers a sense of change and a feeling that they were the active agents of social production, of history. This–rather than Lukács's idea of mass participation in the political process–was the essential quality of the new mass life experience of the working class. This class–men, women, and children–was drawn and pressed into rapidly growing factories toward the end of the eighteenth century, and was subjected to a greater division of labor and to a rapidly accelerating change in the process of production.

According to Thompson, the English working class had become very conscious of the new quality of its life by the beginning of the nineteenth century. It saw

> the growing distance between master and man; the transparency of the exploitation at the source of their new wealth and power; the loss of status and above all of the independence of the worker, his reduction to total dependence on the master's instruments of production; . . . the disruption of the traditional family economy; the discipline, monotony, hours and conditions of work; loss of leisure and amenities; the reduction of the man to the status of an 'instrument. (1968, 222)

Hence the fundamental nature of the changes in production and working-class life, as well as the speed of this process, produced in the workers a sense of distance to a qualitatively different past as well as of a qualitatively new industrial present.

Yet the new life experience did not only produce a sense of loss, but also, as Thompson argues, a new "collectivist self-consciousness" (1968, 436), which, in accordance with the new form of divided wage-labor production, gave rise to forms of

organized working-class solidarity and organized resistance to capitalist exploitation. Both the Luddite movement (Hobsbawm 1952, 59–60) and the early trade-union movement (Pelling 1979, 21–23) provide evidence of the beginning of working-class organization with a clear sense of the class difference between the industrial bourgeoisie and the working class, and, at the same time, began to question and challenge industrial capitalism. According to John Foster, before the turn of the century a specific working-class consciousness and confidence found its expression in "the development of a coercive occupational solidarity extending to all sections of the labour community; a solidarity that was radically new . . . and in its practical application a direct challenge to state power" (1974, 41). In short, there is evidence to argue that the working class was beginning, even in the process of its shaping, to reject the industrial capitalism that was in the making. With a sense of class confidence generated by the experience of being the producers of commodities, the working class felt–if only subconsciously–the need for a different social structure. The industrial working class was beginning to perceive that, out of its own activity as the essential motor of industrial production, effective social action toward a change of capitalism was both necessary and could be accomplished in the development from manufacturing-type to industrial production.

At the same time, the sense of fundamental historical changes and thus of a past basically different from the present generated an explosive revival of the utopian hope for a future without class divisions and exploitation, as we find it, for example, among the Babouvists in the French Revolution. Alban Dewes Winspear has convincingly demonstrated the relationship between the conceptualized forms of utopian hopes in Hesiod and the development of class society between the ninth and sixth century B.C., in which the consolidation of private property, classes, and the state finally destroyed the tribal social structure (1940, 38–45). In whatever form utopian thinking appears, its essence is the rejection of an unaccepted present situation of misery and suffering, and the recollection of a better past without classes and exploitation; this hope for a collective well-being and

the unity of the social whole is projected into the future.

Utopianism is, as Ernst Bloch has reminded us, a permanent presence in the thinking of the propertyless classes, the exploited whose situation is essentially without hope for change in the present (1959, 565). Utopianism may surface explosively in periods of fundamental change and take on concrete forms, as, for example, in Thomas Münzer's Peasant Risings in the sixteenth century, the radical sects in the English Revolution, or the utopian-communist Babouvists in the French Revolution. The movement of the Babouvists signifies the process by which the propertyless classes, drawn into the revolution in a situation of misery and in the hope to achieve the end of exploitation, became rapidly politicized when they realized that their utopian hopes would not be fulfilled. George Rudé has convincingly illustrated, for example, the process of how the *sanscullotes* absorbed political ideas and a political vocabulary in the *sociétés* and *journées* after they had realized in their struggle against the *maximum des salaires* that the revolution would not produce the end of private property (1959, 210–31). Babeuf's political demand for "direct democracy" in opposition to the Jacobins' idea of parliamentary democracy, i.e., their demand for the political power of the people, as well as the Babouvists' reconceptualization of the *l'état de raison* as a "common weal" and a "community of property" in which everybody works, in which there exists no private property and in which the fruits of labor are distributed in a just way clearly recalls primitive communist ideas, and interprets the French Revolution as the beginning of a much greater revolution (1795, 71).

Babeuf's manifesto signals that even before the bourgeoisie had finished crushing the last traces of the *ancien régime*, the class struggle between employers and wage earners moved center stage. While the bourgeois revolution, a fundamental political change, brought the working class into action because of its rebellion against the immediate situation of extreme exploitation, and while the general revolutionary upheaval provided the occasion for their being drawn into a situation full of revolutionary ideas promoted by the bourgeoisie and its near allies, the workers' disillusionment with the actual outcome of the revolution

politicized traditional utopian hopes for an end of class society. Thus, the working class was beginning to express these hopes in political terms, and in doing so demanded a future essentially different from the present. To be able to look back as well as ahead, to apprehend that one is oneself an active agent of change, gave the industrial worker a sense of process, of organic change–in short, a sense of history.

The dynamism of this perspective, when conceptualized, developed into a new concept of history at the end of the eighteenth century–appearing, for example, both in Hegel and the Scottish "philosophical historians." The latter, such as Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, William Robertson, and John Millar, conceptualized their experience of the dynamism of the industrial working class in terms of the rejection of the static rationalism of Enlightenment historiography and the evolutionary interpretation of history as a four-stage process. It is not surprising that Scottish intellectuals first began to conceptualize the new sense of history, because the degree and speed of capitalist industrialization in Scotland made the contrast to the preindustrial period particularly obvious there. According to Ronald L. Meek, the rapidity of economic advance in the textile and tobacco industries in the second half of the eighteenth century made a very sharp contrast apparent between the agricultural Highlands and industrial centers such as Glasgow, Edinburgh, or the Scottish Lowlands (1954, 98).

Even in the Highlands, moreover, the medieval clan structure was rapidly destroyed within a lifetime through the reorganization of agriculture on a capitalist basis (Kettler 1965, 16–18). Kettler has also demonstrated that, as a result of the rapid introduction of capitalist production methods in agriculture, mass unemployment as well as lower-class resistance to the destruction of their mode of subsistence generated serious social unrest and even riots (1965, 16). Kettler shows the beginning of the politicization of the skilled workers in the textile industry, who joined the political reform movement at the turn of the century and contributed immensely to its radicalization (1965, 24). The Scottish industrial middle class, constantly struggling against economic suppression by its English rival and thus pressing for

political reforms, recruited workers for the reform movement by exploiting their dissatisfaction with industrial capitalism. This helped to produce a politicized working class. Hence, the Scottish philosophers' rejection of rational history seems to me an expression of their apprehensions about the new contradictions of industrial capitalism within which the industrial working class played a major part.

John Millar, for example, conceptualizes this experience in terms of an evolutionary concept of history through class struggle. In *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, he offers an explanation of the "amazing diversity to be found in the laws of different countries, and even of the same country at different periods" (1960 [1779], 175). Millar's thesis is that there is

> in man a disposition and capacity for improving his condition, by the exertion of which, he is carried on from one degree of advancement to another; and the similarity of his wants, as well as the faculties by which those wants are supplied, has everywhere produced a remarkable uniformity in the several steps of his progression. . . . There is thus, in human society, a natural progress from ignorance to knowledge, and from rude to civilized manners, the several stages of which are usually accompanied with peculiar laws and customs. (1960, 176)

Millar subdivides the development of each nation into four main stages of social evolution, defining each on the basis of its "mode of subsistence." The stage of "savagery," hunting and gathering, was replaced by "barbarism," with its nomadic taming and rearing of cattle; the third stage is that of agriculture; the fourth that of trade. The last stage is again subdivided (not always consistently) into a commercial and an industrial stage of civilization. According to him, man's "mode of subsistence" and the institutions for its control and improvement represent the main factors of his model to explain social evolution. Yet while this is what he says he is doing, the informing pressure for such an investigation is not clear to him, namely, that the historical source of the evolutionary concept is the revolutionary change to the industrial process of production, the initiator of which is the

industrial bourgeoisie, but the carriers of which are the forces of production, i.e., the workers.

Millar employs his model in order to explain the changes that are evident in the various relationships of social power: the relations between husband and wife, father and son, master and servant, sovereign and subjects. Thus, historical evolution in terms of the genesis and development of social institutions, such as property, classes, or states, becomes a form of growth and transformation, and the ensuing changes are the result of changes in the structure of production. Or, as Millar puts it:

> By gradual such advances in rendering their situation more comfortable, the most important alterations are produced in the state and in the condition of a people: their numbers are increased; the connections of society are extended; . . . property, the great source of the distinction among individuals, is established; and the various rights of mankind, arising from their multiplied connections, are recognized and protected: the laws of a country are thereby rendered numerous; and a more complex form of government becomes necessary, for distributing justice, and for preventing the disorders that proceed from the jarring interests and passions of a large and opulent community. (1960, 176)

At the same time, Millar is careful not to be dogmatic in the application of his model of explanation when he also stresses, for example, the importance of historical personalities, such as Brama, Solon, or King Alfred, for the process of evolution and historical change: "a variety of peculiar institutions will sometimes take their origin from the casual interposition of particular persons, who happen to be placed at the head of a community, and to be possessed of singular abilities, and views of policy" (177).

The break with rationalist historiography is particularly clear in Millar's conception of private property, the historical roots of which he tries to identify and the historical structure of which he relates to the social and political superstructure. According to him, the genesis of private property is the result of man's

permanent attempt to improve the conditions of his existence. Millar applies his conception of the four stages of history to his investigation of the structural development of the various forms of property.

These stages also illustrate his attempt at a periodization of history to explain the transformation of one social structure into another. In contrast to John Locke or Francis Hutchinson, who justified the historical existence of private property on the basis of a natural condition, Millar interprets property as the product of historical development and sees in its existence the legitimation of the various class (for Millar, "rank") structures and social institutions. Millar argues that

> the invention of taming and pasturing cattle . . . gives rise to a more remarkable and permanent distinction of ranks. Some persons, by being more industrious or more fortunate than others, are led in a short time to acquire more numerous herds and flocks, and are thereby enabled to live in great affluence, to maintain a number of servants and retainers, and to increase, in proportion, their power and dignity. As the superior fortune that is thus acquired by a single person is apt to remain with posterity, it creates a train of dependence in those who have been connected with the possessor; and the influence that it occasions is gradually augmented, and transmitted from one generation to another. (1960, 204)

Hence, the distribution of property is, according to Millar, the principal circumstance that determines the nature of civil governments and the form of their political constitutions. As those persons who do not possess property derive their subsistence from those who do, the propertyless "ranks" depend economically on the property owners. Millar regards the differences of wealth possessed by individuals as the basis for the gradual introduction of a whole system of the subordination of ranks and the different degrees of power and authority that the property owners assume or are given by society (204–205).

Millar explains the existence of the various forms of property in terms of historical evolution, demonstrating how the specific

structure of property accords with the four stages of his historical model and determines the structure of the state and of social relations. As mankind learned, in the course of its development, to work more efficiently, the forms and functions of private property were extended. At the level of hunting and fishing, people can barely procure the mere necessities for life and satisfy their hunger, so that there are, according to Millar, essentially no surplus objects that particular individuals can appropriate. As "in the most rude and barbarous ages, little or no property can be acquired by particular persons," there are no "differences of rank." Millar derives here the structure of the social institutions and relations from the lack of differences of rank among the savages. Since there are no distinctions among individuals apart from "those which arise from their age and experience, from their strength, courage, and other personal qualities," and "the members of different families, being all nearly upon a level, maintain the most familiar intercourse with one another, and, when impelled by natural instincts, give way to their mutual desires without hesitation and reluctance," the savages have no sense of "the pride of family as well as the insolence of wealth." Millar finds no social mechanisms at this evolutionary stage that limit "the free intercourse of the sexes" or generate "passions of sex"–that is, no "artificial rules of decency and decorum which might lay a restraint upon their conduct" (1960, 183–84). Millar suggests here that social relations are closely connected with and a product of the particular level of historical development; he argues that the "passions of sex" in tribal societies had not yet overlaid the biological sex drive, so that this natural drive could be easily satisfied, i.e., the lack of property and social distinction had not yet produced an elaborate framework of restrictions that would hinder the full realization of the biological sex drive. The implication of Millar's argument is that sexual feelings are a product of man's cultural evolution. Millar's approach indicates the awareness that cultural structures are an expression of social, i.e., economic and political, relations.

In Millar's model, history is thus the process of cultural growth on the basis of qualitative changes. He traces the development of the differences in the ownership of property and the

relations between its successive forms. According to him, private property could only be acquired by individuals at the stage of pasturing cattle because "in their herds and flocks they frequently enjoy considerable wealth, which is distributed in various proportions, according to the industry and good fortune of different individuals" and "the authority derived from wealth, is not only greater than that which arises from personal accomplishment, but also more stable and permanent" (250).

At the stage of agriculture, the division of landed property became, in Millar's view, more sophisticated and more permanent because

> the settlement of a village in some particular place, with a view to the further improvement of agriculture, has a tendency to abolish this ancient community of goods, and to produce a separate appropriation of landed estates. When mankind have made some proficiency in the various branches of husbandry, they have no longer occasion to exercise them by the united deliberation and counsel of a whole society. They grow weary of those joint measures, . . . the different families of a village are led to cultivate different portions of land apart from one another, and thereby acquire a right to the respective produce arising from the labour that each of them has bestowed. In order to reap what they have sown, it is necessary that they should have the management of the subject upon which it is produced; so that from having a right to the crop, they appear of course entitled to the exclusive possession of the ground itself. This possession, however, from the imperfect state of early cultivation, is at first continued only from the seed-time to the harvest; and during the rest of the year, the lands of a whole village are used in common for pasturing their cattle. . . . But after a person has long cultivated the same field, his possession becomes gradually more and more complete; it is continued during the whole year without interruption. (1960, 252)

Millar has here interpreted the new stage of class division in the agricultural community as the result of the permanent landed

possessions of the various families of the community. According to him,

> every family, according as it is numerous and powerful, will be in a condition to occupy and appropriate a suitable extent of territory. For this reason the chief, from his superior wealth in cattle, and the number of his domestics, as well as from his dignity and personal abilities, can hardly fail to acquire a much larger estate, than any other member of the community. His retainers must of consequence be increased in proportion to the enlargement of his domain, and as these are either maintained in his family, or live upon his ground in the situation of tenants at will, they depend entirely upon him for subsistence. They become, therefore, necessarily subservient to his interest, and may at pleasure be obliged either to labour or to fight upon his account. (253)

The new form of the division of property also gave rise to a whole new framework of social institutions and public regulations for the securing of property. Millar illustrates this point with the example of the chief who, having acted for some time in the capacity of the commander of the village's military forces, "finds encouragement to exert his authority on other occasions, and is entrusted with various branches of public administration" (254). His administrative power as a magistrate is employed, on the one hand, to distribute landed estates among the members of the community "proportioned to their merit, and suited to their rank and circumstances," and, on the other hand, in the service of "protecting and securing the members of his tribe from hostile attacks of their neighbours," which might arise over the issue of landed interests (255). In other words, the juridical power and authority of the magistrate became a necessary prerequisite for social order in connection with the development of private property and the conflicting interests of the members of the different classes. In short, Millar's argument is based on the thesis that each form of society produces specific forms of private property according to its economic level of development, which, in turn, constitutes the basis for class differences.

Paul Bowles quite correctly stresses that Millar here simply assumes the existence of private property as a result of man's strife for the improvement of his material existence, so that a moral legitimation of property is superfluous in his conception of history (1985, 208). Moreover, as Millar sees man acting according to the conditions of his historical circumstances, he has no need to introduce historical abstractions, such as Locke's or Hutchinson's concept of natural right, in order to justify property. Certain forms of property developed before others simply because of the specificity of the mode of production; landed property, for example, could only develop at the stage of agriculture and not before because only then was land of any importance for production. Moreover, as property and the class differences only developed at a particular stage of historical evolution, the stage of pasturing cattle, they are not part of man's nature, but the product of his cultural history. Hence, if the class structure and the ownership of property are historical products, Millar's argument also implies that further changes beyond the present developmental stage are what constitutes history. To be sure, however, while Millar has formulated here a clear sense of history and he speaks of class differences, his theory of history is not yet a class theory of history in the Marxist sense. In the end he accepts the differences of classes as economically given and does not work out how the structure of the economic development of a society generates its specific structure of private property and, accordingly, of the specific class hierarchy. Yet, even though there is no indication here that property and class society could and will be abolished eventually, the potential possibility for such a change is inscribed in the nature of Millar's method of historical analysis.

Moreover, if historical evolution is generated by man's activity in the labor process, then the various historical stages are linked by an economic causal nexus. Hence Millar has conceptualized history as a functional entity or totality that has a principle of ordered, and consequently explicable, development. The inherent dynamism of social and cultural change, in Millar's conception of history, makes history an open and explicable process containing the possibility of further qualitative changes

beyond the present, even though he does not make this aspect of his theory explicit. The historian can analyze the influence of past conditions for social change up to the present, trace the pattern of the changes of the past, and derive from this analysis the pattern for further structural changes beyond the present and project them into the future. The present, like the past, thus becomes in Millar's conception of history a transitional stage in an open evolutionary process. In short, Millar's conception is based upon the idea of a pattern of qualitative historical changes generated by man's activity in the labor process as the essence of an explicable historical evolution. This conception seems to me the theoretical representation of his experience of the new contradictions of industrial capitalism and the formation of the industrial working class, which began to challenge industrial capitalism toward the end of the eighteenth century.

At the same time, however, the Scottish philosophical historians expressed their fear of the unlimited historical progress of industrial capitalism. According to P. D. Garside, they all agree "on the superiority of primitive societies in certain fields of behaviour and had serious qualifications to make about the benefits of 'modern improvement,'" even though the main theme of their work is social progress. He refers, for example, to Millar, who praises "the generosity, courage, and social flexibility of the primitive tribes," and, conversely, criticizes "the selfishness, effeteness, and increasing alienation apparent in present-day 'advanced' communities." Similarly, Adam Smith notes, according to Garside, "the selfishness which permeates, and indeed, motivates, modern 'commercial' society, so that the past seemed to him superior to the present" (1972, 151–52). Both Millar and Smith express here their reservations about the unrestricted individualism of industrial capitalism in comparison to more "primitive" (precapitalist) societies. They do not yet see that even though the industrial revolution produces a new stage of bourgeois individualism and alienation, the same alienation also produces the industrial working class, which can eventually supersede capitalism and create a new historical quality.

After the turn of the century, Hegel went a step further in his conceptualization of the dialectic of historical evolution, which

interprets human essence in the labor process itself. He went further than Millar's relatively general formulation of human social activity as creative work to a stage where labor is seen as the central category, and which explains social development beyond the present. In his discussion of "Lordship and Bondage" in *The Phenomenology of Mind,* Hegel starts from the idea of a social whole the two contradictory sides of which fight each other as master and bondsman to the point of mutual destruction and negation. He conceptualizes man's emancipation in history as the process of the self becoming conscious of itself. According to him, the individual can only achieve this self-consciousness in and through another person. Hegel represents this process of man's acquisition of self-consciousness, or, as he formulates it, of freedom, as the dialectical relationship between independence and dependence, personified as master and bondsman. This dialectic is part of his idea of the process of labor as essentially the process in which the individual produces itself. According to Hegel, work is the spiritual process of the mutual relationship and struggle of the two forms of consciousness:

> They must enter into this struggle, for they must bring their certainty of themselves, the certainty of being for themselves, to the level of objective truth, and make this a fact both in the case of the other and in their own case as well. And it is solely by risking life that freedom is obtained. (1955 [1807], 232–33)

Hegel first examines this life-and-death struggle for self-consciousness in the master, by nature better, and "the consciousness that exists *for* itself," or "pure self-consciousness." The master exists independently, is "a consciousness existing on his own account," because he does not need to work, i.e., he does not need to put himself into things and, therefore, is not chained to the objects he has produced (234). His labor is restricted to the recognition of his true nature in the labor of another, his bondsman, who–according to his inferior nature–is ready to work, i.e., to put himself into thinghood. The bondsman, however, who puts his self into objects in the labor process and in this way alienates his self from himself in the process of

reification, experiences the essence of his existence as chained to the objects he has produced, and "it is his chain, from which he could not in the struggle get away, and for that reason he proved himself to be dependent, to have his independence in the shape of thinghood" (235).

Yet the master exists, in Hegel's theory, only through the other, the bondsman; he has a consciousness "existing on its own account which is mediated with itself through an other consciousness, i.e., through an other whose very nature implies that it is bound up with an independent being or with thinghood in general" (234–35). Hence, the master exists only through the other, his self-consciousness exists only *for itself* through an other that has put itself into thinghood, which means that "the master relates himself to the bondsman mediately through independent existence, for this is precisely what keeps the bondsman in thrall." And the master does this by bringing himself into relation to and absorbing both "a thing as such, the object of his desire," and "the consciousness whose essential character is thinghood" (235). By appropriating the objects into which the bondsman has put his self, and therewith the bondsman's self, the master gains his self-consciousness *for itself*. In other words, the bondsman estranges his self when he produces things. As he has thus put his real self into objects that exist independently of and for him and can, therefore, be appropriated by the master, the bondsman experiences thinghood as a chain. For the master, however, the things into which the bondsman has estranged his self guarantee the master's power over both the things and the bondsman: "Since he [the master] is the power dominating existence, while this existence again is the power controlling the other [the bondsman], the master holds, *par consequence*, this other in subordination" (235). The master, who does not work, gets the enjoyment of the fruit of the labor of the bondsman, whereas the latter only knows desire. By working upon the things and estranging his real self as the essence of his life, the bondsman experiences "the fact of being dependent on a determinate existence" over which he can never attain mastery (1955, 236).

Hegel consequently understands the master's power and superior position as possession and the bondsman's un-freedom as his lack of possession. The freedom and independence allow the master the possession of the things and thus of the bondsman while the latter can only labor upon the things. In short, Hegel sees freedom and un-freedom, independence and dependence as the direct result of man's position in the labor process.

The freedom of the master is, however, only an illusion, for he achieves his freedom mediately through the self of the bondsman. By enjoying the fruit of the bondsman's labor, the master depends on the latter, so that his real existence is determined by the bondsman's labor. Hegel conceptualizes the bondsman as the active force in this relationship. The bondsman's labor is the basis for the sublation of the master-bondsman relationship, and, consequently, for the historical process. Moreover, as man can find his true self-consciousness only in another person, the bondsman will recognize his self in the consciousness of the master, which represents both freedom and independence: "In the master, the bondsman feels self-existence to be something external, an objective fact, . . . in fashioning the thing, self-existence comes to be felt explicitly as his own proper being, and he attains the consciousness that he himself exists in its own right and on its own account (*an und für sich*)" (1955, 239). Hence, the bondsman's self-consciousness is the consciousness of freedom, while the master recognizes his self-consciousness in the bondsman as un-freedom and dependence, or, as Hegel puts it:

> just as lordship showed its essential nature to be the reverse of what it wants to be, so, too, bondage will, when completed, pass into the opposite of what it immediately is: being a consciousness repressed within itself, it will enter into itself, and change round into real and true independence. (237)

This mutual recognition of the self in the other finally generates the sublation of the original state of existence of both sides of the dialectic in terms of the life-and-death struggle of master and bondsman. Consequently, the un-freedom of the bondsman

in his dependence on the things he has produced becomes the recognition of his independence in the other, the master, i.e., bondage becomes lordship, and vice versa. Moreover, the bondsman recognizes that the process of the alienation of the self actually constitutes the process of his true liberation, for "precisely in labour where there seemed to be merely some outsider's mind and ideas involved, the bondsman becomes aware, through this re-discovery of himself by himself, of having and being a 'mind of his own'" (239).

Hegel has perceived here the possibility of qualitative change in terms of the negation of an original state of existence, even though his sense of evolution constitutes only a reversal of the original situation. His conception of an original state of being indicates some of the limits of his conception of evolutionary history and thus of the early stage of the development of industrial capitalism–a point to which I shall return.

The decisive point is that Hegel understands the labor process itself as the essence of the realization of man's self, i.e., of historical evolution, because, as he argues, "through work and labour, however, this consciousness of the bondsman comes to itself." According to Hegel, work is "the negative relation to the object" that it forms (1955, 238). Through his labor, the bondsman not only learns the negative relation to the object he has produced, but also, even more, he triumphs over the master through this very labour and "destroys the extraneous alien negative, affirms and sets itself up as a negative in the element of permanence, and thereby becomes for itself a self-existent being" (239). Hegel sees here the essence of man and of historical evolution in the labor process, and it is in this process that man achieves his freedom.

Hegel has formulated here a dialectical conception of history based upon man's reification, and interprets man's freedom and oppression, respectively, as a social relation in the labor process. "Lordship" and "bondage" are expressions of man's alienation in the process of industrial labor, and this contradiction constitutes the essence of historical evolution and change. By interpreting the bondsman's labor as the central moment in the process of the formation of man and history, he sees in the laborer the subject

of historical progress and evolution. In short, Hegel is aware of the possibility of historical change the aim of which is the laborer's freedom through the sublation of the self in the labor process.

Hegel's dialectical concept of evolution presupposes an ideal of liberty without estrangement, but also the potential possibility that the bondsman can achieve this liberty through his own activity. As the bondsman recognizes his own dependence and unfreedom in the master and has the desire to achieve freedom at all, Hegel also presupposes that the bondsman remembers a past state of existence in which he was free and independent. To put it differently, the misery of the present situation generates in the bondsman the desire to change his present situation. In this situation he remembers a better and happier past as the hope for the end of his estrangement in the labor process. Hence, Hegel is aware that the bondsman's strife for the end of his estrangement constitutes the essence of the historical process, i.e., of the realization of the utopian hope of the exploited classes for an end of exploitation. The structure of his thinking is the ideational perception and theoretical representation of his experience of, first of all, the industrial revolution at the turn to the nineteenth century. But it also reflects the French Revolution, in which the working class was trying to realize its utopian "principle of hope."

Friedrich Behrens has convincingly argued that Hegel's historical analyses reflect the advanced economic condition in England and that Hegel was familiar with its theoretical representation in the works of Adam Smith (1952, 416). In other words, Hegel–like the Scottish philosophical historians–has not conceptualized here preindustrial social contradictions. Rather, the sharp contrast between, on the one hand, the actual precapitalist Germany and industrial capitalism in England with, on the other hand, the political revolution in France and the semifeudal conditions in Germany seem to have generated the structure of his sense of history.

Yet while he is beginning to see the worker as a future revolutionary agent who can potentially resolve the contradictions of the labor process and thus of industrial capitalism, Hegel

eternalizes estrangement in terms of his idea of the permanent dialectical reproduction of the master-bondsman relationship. His historical conceptualization also reveals the bourgeois intellectual who does not go beyond class society and the destruction of his own class. Although Hegel perceives the working class as the future revolutionary agent, he simultaneously rejects its revolutionary role in the historical process in which it was already beginning to organize and press for further change.

His fear of a working-class revolution is also expressed in his conception of history as a spiritual process and in his philosophical idealism. He sees labor in terms of its reification and estrangement as an act of spiritual creation, so that the bondsman's liberation remains a spiritual phenomenon, i.e., remains in the head, and does not materialize as historical reality.

Hegel's theoretical compromise in terms of the eternal reproduction of the master-bondsman relationship is politically expressed in his full acceptance, on the one hand, of the French Revolution as the destruction of feudal despotism, and his warning, on the other hand, against its duplication in Germany because, as Hegel argues, the French Revolution has also set the free individual against the state and thus produced the new and irreconcilable contradictions of bourgeois society (Ritter 1957, 16–17). In other words, while the French Revolution abolished feudal despotism, it also generated political conditions with hardly any restrictions on capitalist exploitation. Hegel perceives here that, freed from feudal despotism, the worker experiences the full force of capitalist exploitation and will thus be driven to the overthrow of capitalism. Hegel argues that while the French Revolution raised the problem of the political realization of man's freedom, it did not provide a lasting solution because it fully exposed the contradictions of developed capitalism. Hegel's political conclusion is that the liberation of the individual must be linked with the interests of the Prussian state in order to restrict individualism, i.e., capitalist exploitation. Hegel thus suggests a political compromise between industrial capitalism and the Prussian semifeudal state in order to curb the danger of a revolution in which the working class will abolish exploitation the way the bondsman did in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*.

Hegel sees history as evolution in which qualitative changes arise out of the contradictions of the labor process. The workers, moreover, are the historical agents of historical progress because they generate the dialectical negation of their exploitation in the present. As Hegel argues in his *Philosophy of Right*, the contradiction between master and bondsman, between capitalist and worker, constitutes historical progress because "this inner dialectic of civil society thus drives it–or at any rate drives a specific civil society–to push beyond its own limits" (1942 [1821], 151). In short, the dynamism of Hegel's dialectical sense of history reflects his troubled perception of the contradictions of industrial capitalism in which the working class was beginning to press for the realization of its utopian hope for an end of exploitation in the labor process.

Similarly, the genesis of the historical novel is an artistic representation of the sense of history as evolution through class struggle. The social transformation to industrial capitalism provided the historical basis for the development of the new genre in the same way that it generated the new kind of historicism. Avrom Fleishman has persuasively argues that "Scott's novels are grounded in a theory of history which approximates that of the speculative historians," such as John Millar, Adam Ferguson, and Adam Smith, and that his vision of history is not a static glorification of the stability of any social order, "but a dynamic picture of constant change, emphasizing growth, the development of the present from the past, and even the broad principle of progress" (1971, 47, 48).

Fleishman interprets Scott's *Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since* in terms of "the process of change at work in the traditional aristocratic man," who is represented by Edward Waverley (1971, 71). I should add, however, that Scott demonstrates here this process of change as the power struggle within the ruling class during the industrial revolution between the preindustrial *rentier* aristocracy and its enterprising and commercially oriented rivals. The former is represented by Bradwardine and Everard Waverley, i.e., the Scottish Lowland nobility and the landed aristocracy, who embody the values of the agrarian, semifeudal past. Sir Everard, for example, "had inherited from

his sires the whole train of Tory or High-Church predilections and prejudices, which had distinguished the house of Waverley since the Great Civil War" (1829b, 1:15). He is the typical mid-eighteenth century conservative who firmly believes in family tradition, who has withdrawn from politics to spend his days in "dignified indolence" (1829b, 1:15), contemplating the great deeds of his ancestors and tracing the family tree and the origin of the family's coat of arms. His support for the Stuart rising exemplifies his hope for the restoration of the preindustrial social hierarchy of the late seventeenth century. Similarly, Bradwardine still believes in feudal conventions, such as the tradition of "pulling off the king's boots after an engagement, which was the feudal service by which he held the barony of Bradwardine." He refuses his daughter her hereditary right to his estate because, as Scott makes him argue, "beyond hesitation, *procul dubio*, many females, as worthy as Rose, had been excluded, in order to make way for my own succession, and Heaven forbid that I should do aught that might contravene with the destination of my forefathers" (1829b, 1:144–5).

In contrast, Everard Waverley's younger brother Richard became a Whig, who "had married a young woman of rank, by whose family interest and private fortune he hoped to advance his career" (1829b, 1:24). He is an avaricious careerist and political opportunist, who has absolutely no sense of or interest in the antiquated past of his ancestors. Richard represents the utilitarian values of moral pragmatism, economic and commercial improvement, and rational freedom as against his brother's nostalgic romanticism, as well as the liberation from a dead past with its obsolete semifeudal values. He is–at least initially–successful because he has adopted "a political creed more consonant both to reason and his own interest than the hereditary faith of Sir Everard in High-church and in the house of Stewart" (1829b, 1:16), i.e., because he has associated with the historically progressive forces of his time. Yet the protagonist can learn little from his father, who, in spite of his defection to the Whigs, has subsequently lost his place among the Scottish aristocracy and is hounded to his death after allying himself with a cabal against Walpole's government.

Scott leaves no doubt that the Stuart rising of 1745 was, from the very beginning, doomed to failure as a historical anachronism. Indeed, Scott's choice, in spite of his personal sympathies for the Scottish preindustrial tradition, of the historically futile attempt of the rising as the background of the novel signals, in the context of the early nineteenth century, his acceptance of the course of history and the ultimate triumph of the historically progressive forces of the ruling class. Scott's notion of historical evolution here is abstracted from the personal, i.e., as historical evolution that is independent from the individual's sympathies and wishes. In short, both characters personify the historical drama of the period in the novel: the power struggle between a historically obsolete section of the ruling class that tries to preserve its "hereditary faith" (1829b, 1:16) and a section that has learned to adapt to the business mentality of the early industrial age. Yet the ultimate destruction of Everard and Richard's loss of place in the Whig ministry signal that Scott does not see these sections of the aristocracy as the future ruling class.

To be sure, Scott's sense of historical evolution does not allow for a nostalgic return to preindustrial social forms or cultures, such as the Highland clans with their virtues (for Scott) of loyalty, honor, and military skill, or the conservative Scottish aristocracy with its feudal moral code. In his introduction to *Rob Roy*, for example, Scott argues that the clans represent a historically outdated culture, "an interesting chapter, not on Highland manners alone, but on every stage of society in which the people of a primitive and half-civilized tribe are brought into close contact with a nation, in which civilization and polity has attained a complete superiority" (1829a, 1:lxxxvi-lxxxvii). Avrom Fleishman has correctly observed that the different forms of culture are for Scott differentiated according to their place in an evolutionary pattern of social history. Scott had, according to Fleishman, a very clear sense of the "growth-pattern of civilization" because he–like the Scottish philosophical historians–saw history in terms of "stages of human progress," which are "fairly uniform among various societies–e.g., the Highlanders are compared by Scott to American Indians–and their peculiar strengths and weaknesses are explained by their place in an evolutionary sequence" (1971, 41).

While Scott's concept of history emphasizes optimistically the development of the present out of the past, as the title of the novel–*Waverley, Or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*–suggests, he also insists on the preservation of the past in the present. The development of Edward Waverley can be seen as the readjustment the aristocracy must go through to become a responsible and successful ruling class in the age of industrial capitalism without neglecting the preservation of its basically good heritage. Edward's early training, because of the death of his mother and the extended residence of his father in London, is influenced less by the Whig and Hanoverian principles of his father than by the Tory and Jacobite views of his uncle and his uncle's chaplain. The protagonist's early assimilation with the chivalric romances and the legends of his heroic ancestors associate him at first with a declining, nostalgic aristocracy, living by an outdated set of chivalric values in a world that has dramatically changed. Given a quick understanding and his uncle's slack authority, the hero becomes a youth imbued with romantic lore and proficient in acquiring knowledge but deficient in applying it. This deficiency, the reader is told, "was attended with evil consequences, which long continued to influence his character, happiness, and utility" (1829b, 1:15). Edward's indolence and abstraction, his daydreams of an ideal world inhabited by figures of heroic legends, make him initially unfit for living in the rapidly changing Scottish society. He himself recognizes his deficiency, an inadequacy that the author calls an "aberration from sound judgement" (1829b, 1:23). A youth so trained is precipitated into a military career that attracts him as being romantic and promising a return to a happier past. Edward, then, with a sense of honor but no knowledge of politics, with intelligence but with unsound judgment and indolent habits, is subjected to the political pressure of the Stuart rising and chooses to fight for the Stuarts. For one who lives in dreams rather than reality, who is trained to indolence and indecision rather than to discipline and duty, the retrogression from loyalty to insurrection, from the Hanoverian king to the Pretender, from reason to hereditary faith, is probable within Scott's project of exploring the possibility of a nostalgic return to the "good old days." Edward's inaction during the first

half of the novel is in accordance with the very nature of the hero's training and daydreaming.

Yet his development constitutes the process of his cultural learning in which Edward realizes the historical anachronism of the Jacobite attempt to restore the old monarchy as well as the antiquated medievalism of his uncle and Bradwardine. The main plot of the novel–Waverley's desertion of a military career under the Hanoverians, his joining the Pretender's expedition into England, his imprisonment for treason, and his final reprieve by the victorious English army–allows Scott to show the folly of acting against history and of sentimental nostalgia for a dead past. The section of the novel having to do with the Battle of Preston and with the army's march into England marks the hero's transition from romantic indolence to realistic judgment. It is told in terms of Edward's continued disillusionment with the Stuart cause and his dream life on the one hand, and, on the other, of a continued awakening to a realization of his patriotic duty toward the Hanoverians. His attitude to Fergus MacIvor, for example, is characterized by an increasing awareness of that chief's haughty, conniving, and egocentric nature. Edward's feelings for Flora change from adoration and love to rejection because of her artifice in presenting herself. These shifts in his personal relationships are accompanied by a corresponding dissatisfaction with the petty intrigues of the chevalier's court and a disgust with himself at being committed by oath to what he now considers a foreign invasion of his country.

The change in Edward's character is revealed not only by his new understanding but also by his forcefulness and conscious actions. In contrast to his early passivity, now he personally intervenes now with the chevalier to obtain Colonel Talbot's parole; he himself resolves to resign his suit for Flora; and he, not a friend, takes immediate action after Callum Beg attempts to assassinate him. With his new judgment and resolution, Edward needs only an honorable opportunity to abandon the Stuart cause, for which he has now lost all enthusiasm. He finds in Colonel Talbot the ideal mentor under whose guidance he finally understands the historical folly of the rising and the necessity of his alliance with the Hanoverians. The death of the unregenerate

Fergus MacIvor, who refuses stubbornly to recognize the Hanoverians and is sent to the gallows by the political realist Talbot, marks the climax of the novel, for at this moment Edward realizes MacIvor's historical anachronism. Moreover, he has completed the transition from the old to the new aristocracy that is politically realistic in its acceptance of the given power structure and thus deserves to survive–as Edward does–and to become the new ruling class.

The nature of Edward's development also illustrates Scott's ultimate conservatism. On the one hand, his sense of historical evolution does not allow for a sentimental return to an antiquated past, so that he makes Edward finally accept the Hanoverians. On the other hand, Scott links Edward's political realism with the latter's deep respect for his heroic ancestral past and his wish to preserve it, even though only in ornamental form, as the pictorial image of MacIvor and Waverley over the fireplace in Tully-Veolan suggests:

> It was a large and spirited painting, representing Fergus MacIvor and Waverley in their Highland dress, the scene a wild, rocky, and mountainous pass, down which the clan were descending in the background. . . . Beside this painting hung the arms which Waverley had borne in the unfortunate civil war. The whole piece was beheld with admiration, and deeper feelings. Men must, however, eat, in spite both of sentiment and vertu. (1829b, 2:298)

And thus the aristocratic wedding party enjoys the peace restored.

While Scott expresses here his admiration of the grandeur of the past, he is realistic enough to reduce it to a piece of ornament. Scott's idea of an aristocracy that adapts its values and politics to the changes of history, moreover, signals his belief in the superiority of this class and its destiny as the ultimate ruling class. Although Scott acknowledges historical evolution, he affirms a historical status quo in terms of the Scottish class and power structure, thus rejecting in the end the possibility of a qualitatively different class structure.

The inability of Walter Scott to imagine a different historical quality—and here one can draw parallels to both Hegel and the Scottish philosophical historians—is an expression of the historical limits of the early stage of industrial capitalism in which the working class was, as yet, only beginning to take shape and to act as a historical force. The contradictions of industrial capitalism provide the historical basis for the new sense of historical evolution that is articulated both in historiography and the historical novel. Nevertheless, the early stage of the formation of the working class finds expression in Millar's reservations about the alienation of industrial capitalism, in Hegel's idea of a permanent reversal of the master-bondsman dialectic, and in Scott's idea of a culturally changing aristocracy. This concept of historical evolution does not yet recognize the social forces that will produce a qualitatively new social structure beyond industrial capitalism.

English Department
Humboldt University, Berlin

Editor's note: For the sake of consistency with the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century usage of the writers quoted extensively here, *NST*'s usual style rule mandating gender-neutral language has not been observed.

NOTES

1. Harry E. Shaw, for example, argues that "the modern historical novel arose as part of the rise of historicism, which made a sense of history part of the cultural mainstream" (1983, 23). Similarly, John MacQueen sees in the historical novel "uniquely the discovery of the Scottish enlightenment" and the expression of its "hostility to pure rationalism." According to MacQueen,

> the particular concept of historical time developed by the Scottish Enlightenment entailed the idea of movement and change, which was at least partially unpredictable, and of contrast between one era, or one population group, and another, even when the two were closely adjacent. The unpredictability . . . heightened rather than diminished the immediate sense of the present. The present, no less than the past, entered the novelist's work as a special creation of the movement of history. (1989, 7, 11)

2. For a suggestive discussion of the Marxist understanding of the process of theoretical abstraction, see Goldstein 1988, 28–36.

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The Essence of "Religion": *Homo Religiosus* in a Dialectical Material World

Richard Curtis

Introduction

For the purposes of this discussion, let us assume that Frederick Engels was essentially correct in his writings on dialectical materialism, and then explore some of the implications of this philosophy. Specifically, let us assume that the world is as Engels described it–that reality is matter in a constant state of change, which he discussed as motion. The essence of dialectics is that reality is a process; reality changes in particular ways, but we are concerned here with the fact of change in general. The essence of materialism is that reality consists of the physical world and things arising out of the physical world–things that include ourselves and our cultures and religions. Dialectical materialism should thus be understood for our purposes as the description of matter undergoing constant processes of change. This description, as we shall see, encompasses all of the phenomena human beings experience, struggle to understand, and create. We should be clear that this understanding of reality allows no room for God, for the realm of perfect forms, or for the independent power of ideas. This understanding does not rely on any form of idealism or ontological dualism: there is one reality that includes humanity and our cultural and religious creations as products of the material world.

Dialectical materialism is, in the parlance of "Religion" as traditionally understood, an atheism. This atheism is nonetheless

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full and rich in its understanding of a world without God, and has been around for a long, long time. What has not been widely discussed is the meaning of religious activity in a world in which God is not just dead, but has never lived. It is instructive to speculate on the social implications of a global society that has undergone socialist revolution and is well on its way to the communism Marx described as beginning with the end of "pre-history." In such a world, one society exists–multifaceted, beyond our current experience with a multicultural society. Yet this society has shared values held in common–values that embody socialism, for example, justice, community, and democracy.

These values are the values of the global socialist movement, such as it is in the late twentieth century. We may assume that these will be the primary values of human beings living in a nonexploitative and democratic global society. This society will have long ago let go the notion, or various notions, of God. And, integrate the poetic and scientific. Our current discussion is put forth in part to encourage dialogue among socialists today on the meaning of being human.

Losing the necessity for God, however, does not mean that humans have lost the necessity for *religious experience*, taken in its broadest sense. It is this sense of religion, the essence of religion, that is under considerations here (lower case denotes the generic sense of religion[1]). Scholars of "Religion"[2] (in the traditional sense) have a number of descriptions or definitions of religion, most of which do not concern God, but rather concern the actual behavior of human beings. These behaviors are largely social, and "Religion" has undeniably been valuable in this regard, alongside the negative social function played by "Religion" in its much-touted role of narcotic. It is not my purpose to argue that Marx's famous description of religion is incorrect (because he was correct); rather I shall argue that in addition to the narcotic function, and in particular when separated from theology in the technical sense (or idealism in the philosophical sense) as well as all forms of ontological dualism, religion can be understood and, more importantly, constructed positively to meet thoroughly human needs and desires. The

point here is that "Religion" could only become like a narcotic because religion is a meaningful and necessary human creation.

I consider first the ways in which scholars of "Religion" define their task, the ways in which "Religion" actually functions–and religion will function–in society: social, existential, and aesthetic. I next examine these forms and the implications of divorcing them from idealist philosophy and infusing them instead with materialist philosophy. The question arises of why one would even want to do this; I hold that this is not only important but inevitable as history progresses (we are just getting in on the ground floor). Finally, I take up how this new sense of religion might act and review the more important implications suggested by this analysis. I conclude that a religion is possible that is meaningful, even necessary, to a human experience of a world without economic classes.

Homo religiosus: *The aesthetic side of being human*

> All the definitions given up till now of the religious phenomenon have one thing in common: each has its own way of showing that the sacred and the religious life are the opposite of the profane and the secular life. But as soon as you start to fix limits to the notion of the sacred you come upon difficulties–difficulties both theoretical and practical. (Eliade 1970, 1)

Mircea Eliade argues that human beings are essentially "Religious": the human being is *Homo religiosus*. He claims that we humans find manifestations of the "sacred," of power beyond us, in almost every type of thing and situation. The world is a seemingly mysterious place in which "spirit" manifests itself in many forms. This "spirit" of Eliade's is difficult to define, but seems not unrelated to Hegel's "*Geist*" (which is even more difficult to define, but may be familiar to the reader). "Spirit" infuses and permeates the world, so when humans are in times of reflection, crisis, celebration, or despair, this "spirit" is apt to manifest itself–this is called a hierophany. "Religious" experience, according to Eliade, has to do with experiences of this "spirit," connections with the sacred. Everything else is profane,

to the degree that there is anything else. “What I have just said–that anything whatever can become at any given moment a hierophany–may seem to contradict all these definitions. If anything whatever may embody separate values; can the sacred-profane dichotomy have any meaning?” (12).

For Eliade, ultimately, the distinction is not, in and of itself, very meaningful. What is meaningful are the ways in which people relate to the “sacred.” Extrapolating a bit, it seems that if the distinction between sacred and profane is a thin line, and the thin line is simply what people do, then the world is, at its heart, a sacred place. To Eliade, the whole world is the realm of “spirit”; what really interests him is how, where, and when “spirit” manifests itself. People will take it from there. We ought here be sure of our terms, because Eliade was not interested in drawing distinctions between the older forms of “Religious” behavior that we know from archaeology and the more sophisticated forms we see around us in grand buildings or on television. “Religious” behavior is for Eliade all a matter of relating to “spirit,” and all ways are equally valid. “This dialectic of the sacred belongs to all religions, not only to the supposedly ‘primitive’ forms. It is expressed as much in the worship of stones and trees, as in the theology of Indian avatars, or the supreme mystery of the Incarnation” (30). For our purposes Eliade was describing an aesthetic appreciation of the world and its mysteries, an appreciation that includes our sense of wonder and of exploration, as well as of beauty.

“Everything unusual, unique, new, perfect or monstrous at once becomes imbued with magico-religious powers and an object of veneration or fear according to the circumstances (for the sacred usually produces this double reaction)” (13). I find no mystery in human beings attributing a power beyond their understanding to phenomena beyond their understanding. This is the substance of Feuerbach’s critique of Christianity–that we project what we do not understand into the sky. And even here Eliade informs us: “Even before any religious values have been set upon the sky it reveals its transcendence. The sky ‘symbolizes’ transcendence, power, and changelessness simply by being there” (39). We must understand that in the term “sky,” Eliade

includes all of the "Heaven" talk of the "Religions" we find around us at the end of the twentieth century. And even more, Eliade's choice of the word "changelessness" is important because it was Eliade's sense that the constant in the universe is "spirit." Humans seem to desire some degree of consistency in their world, and "spirit" has often been the rock that grounds "Religious" people. Ironically, people usually claim that things different from ordinary experience point to the changeless "spirit."

Eliade is mistaken (I argue) in suggesting that there actually exists a "spirit" in any sense of the word that could manifest itself in a hierophany. This does not answer the question of why people describe some of their experiences as hierophanies. How are we to understand, not just "Religious" behavior, but the reported experiences that motivate "Religious" behavior? I contend that people bring their emotional needs to these experiences and attribute sacrality to that which is unique or awesome. The question then becomes, how are we to understand the "unique"? This is where Frederick Engels enters our discussion. Dialectical materialism understands the world to be undergoing constant change–in a sense every moment is unique because it is different from what was. The patterns we see in, or even impose on, the world around us, are a comfort to us. In actuality, the ever-changing world is changeless only in that change itself is constant. It is no wonder, then, that people occasionally discover things that are different, unique, mysterious, and even awesome. I argue that these things and events are not actually hierophanies in the technical sense, but are so in a more mundane sense because the world seems to us magical by virtue of its change (motion in Engels's terminology).

> Motion is the mode of existence of matter. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be. . . . Matter without motion is just as inconceivable as motion without matter. Motion is therefore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself; as the older philosophy (Descartes) expressed it, the quantity of motion existing in the world is always the same. (1987, 55, 56)

We know now that this is not quite true, for Einstein taught us that there is a constant relationship "between the mass (inertial property of matter) of a system and its capacity to undergo transformation from one level of organization and integration to another (energy)" (Marquit 1998, 1). Thus, "dialectical materialism in this century, especially after Lenin's infinity of matter, focuses on the changes in the hierarchical structure of systems of matter resulting from the interpenetration of oppositional tendencies and forces among the different structural levels as well as within the individual levels" (Marquit 1998, 2). This is the point at which the sacred becomes relevant. The "sacred" is a concept we use to express that which we cannot understand and therefore must appreciate on another level–aesthetically. This relates to changes because that which we cannot understand is usually a change from what was, what we thought we understood before it changed.

"Religion" has always helped us to think that we understand the world. If we could not understand the immediate reasons for the mysterious ways in which the world moves, we could at least point to the sky, and believe that we have a relationship with the force(s) that cause the movement, the changes. To the Aztecs, for example, the coming of an eclipse was understood as the consumption of the sun by one of the gods. To appease this god, it was necessary to make blood sacrifices. The slaughter of relatively innocent enemy warriors to appease a "god" may seem to the modern mind an odd way to understand the ways in which the world changes, but when the change we perceive around us is beyond our control and even beyond our understanding, then some mysterious force must be at work. And if our own existence is so precarious that any misunderstood change could threaten our crops, our water supply, and therefore our survival, then we must do anything and everything to appease those mysterious forces that cause the changes, the danger, and the mystery.

There is really nothing so mysterious about human beings projecting an imagined power into the sky that can then answer the great questions, and soothe the great fears. This projection is about as human a behavior as one can conceive. However,

understanding is also part of the human equation. With thoughtful analysis, especially including the tools of dialectical materialism, we can see that this activity of projection is unnecessary. We now know that the universe moves of its own accord; the nature of the universe is matter in motion (changing). "The dialectical materialist not only regards motion as an inseparable property of matter, but rejects the simplified view of motion" (Lenin 1962, 277). There is no mystery to this, except insofar as we do not understand the motion or change. There is "magic" in the universe and in the world, but the magic is only that which we do not (yet) understand. And this mystery is good. It is the pursuit of mystery, the desire to understand that which we do not yet understand, which drives the human imagination in its most positive exemplars.

"Religion" has traditionally said that the mysterious is beyond our understanding, at least beyond the understanding of the masses. The great mysteries have been the domain of the priests and the saints, those closer to God. An inherent differentiation in power comes with "Religion," and with all idealist philosophy. So the ruling class of any society has always had a built-in motivation to play upon the mysterious, to encourage the priests with their talk of the divine and sacred. If there is power in understanding, and power in apprehending and influencing change in the universe, then it has always been in the interest of those who rule to keep this realm to themselves and their allies. The world is mysterious at times, but perhaps not nearly so mysterious as we have been led to believe.

The Aztecs (to return to this example) were a people who contemplated zero before all others (save the Maya who taught it to the Aztec), and who mapped the movement of the stars with a precision unknown again until very recent times. Is it possible that the king and his priests manipulated the fears of the people to encourage them to support the blood sports that maintained the power of the ruling class? Of course! Being closer to the sacred has always been a source of power, being able to answer questions–even if the answers are self-serving–has always been a way to manipulate people, like puppets chained by their fears of the unknown and unexpected.

This is the first function of religion–the aesthetic: to explain, or at least to appreciate, the unexplained. "Religion" has done this by appealing to our sense of magic, of awe, and of fear. But *Homo religiosus*, living conscious of the dialectical nature of change in the universe, need not be subject to this manipulation any longer. The magic of dialectical change imbues reality with a sense that the concept "sacred" may well describe. It is our task, the task of humanity, to determine what we are to make of a world that moves in wonderful, seemingly unpredictable ways. Einstein once said that he refused to believe that God played dice with the universe. This is the magic of dialectical change: it certainly *looks* like God playing dice, Einstein to the contrary notwithstanding. Even without "Religion" in the traditional sense, the magic remains, and perhaps we can better appreciate the world's beauty if we need not have God in the way.

"The Sacred Canopy": The existential side of being human

> The fundamental dialectic process of society consists of three moments, or steps. These are externalization, objectivation, and internalization. . . . Externalization is the ongoing outpouring of human being into the world, both in the physical and the mental activity of men. Objectivation is the attainment by the products of this activity (again both physical and mental) of a reality that confronts its original producers as a facticity external to and other than themselves. Internalization is the reappropriation by men of this same reality, transforming it once again from structures of the objective world into structures of subjective consciousness. (Berger, 1969, 4)

We move now to the second of religion's principal functions. The first function was personal to the individual experiencing "Religion"; this next function is social as the aggregate of all the individuals experiencing "Religion." Even the narcotic effect described by Marx is both individual and social. The social effect extends far beyond pacification. "Religion" has always had a dominant role in defining reality. Different "Religions" have different understandings of the nature of reality. These

differences seem to be eroding in the modern world, as traditional ways of living pass into history, but a socially defined reality is still necessary for us to be able to talk with each other, as well as to share culture more generally. The socially defined reality is the groundwork from which all higher human activity (culture) is built–it is the why, the reason for doing what we do.

The sociologist Peter Berger argues that because human beings are "curiously unfinished" at birth–that is, our bodies and brains (especially) have not finished their formation at the time of birth–we end up relating to the world in a myriad of ways that are simply not possible for nonhuman animals. Nonhuman animals rely on instincts; we do not. We may have drives that could be argued to be innate (certainly a drive to survive fits this understanding), but where nonhuman animals "know" how to be in the world, we must define our own way. The process by which this defining is done is a social process, because by virtue of our unfinishedness we are social creatures, and our reality is a social construction.

The nonhuman animal, Berger argues, as a result "lives in a world that is more or less completely determined by its instinctual structure. . . . By contrast, man's instinctual structure at birth is both underspecialized and undirected toward a species-specific environment" (5). Berger goes on to argue that the basic biology of humans determines that these definitions of our social environment must come out of activity–this is, of course, the position of earlier thinkers like Marx, who discussed the phenomenon in terms of species-being, the activity of humans as a group.

Our sociological understanding of the particular ways in which humans actually live their day-to-day lives has grown much more sophisticated over the years, and Berger's work is quite informative in this regard. "The understanding of society as rooted in man's externalization, that is, as a product of human activity, is particularly important in view of the fact that society appears to common sense as something quite different, as independent of human activity and as sharing in the inert givenness of nature" (Berger 1969, 8). Of course, we do know now that there is no givenness of nature (a predefined way for humans to

live), but only our developing relationship with nature (though these ways may seem predictable, if one had sufficient knowledge). The details of this relationship change with our development, with the deepening of our understanding of the ways in which matter moves. For example, the Aztec understanding of the necessity of blood sacrifice to keep the sun moving over the years has lost its hold on us because we now understand that the sun moves because of the immutable law of gravity. And we understand that it will keep moving the way it does until its mass has changed sufficiently that it undergoes collapse and destroys itself and our solar system with it. This understanding is, perhaps, less poetic than the Aztec understanding, but less people end up having their still beating hearts removed from their chests.

Perhaps, though, we get a bit ahead of ourselves. The question for Berger would be how this unfinishedness relates to religion in particular. "A meaningful order, or *nomos*, is imposed upon the discrete experiences and meanings of individuals. To say that society is a world-building enterprise is to say that it is ordering, or nomizing, activity" (Berger 1969, 19). Because we do not have a sense of the order of the world hard-wired into us in the form of instinct, Berger argues, this order must, of necessity, be constructed. The construction itself is complex, and ultimately involves entire societies, and must account for that which is not understood (the magical) as well as that which is already understood. The social construction of reality must incorporate the unusual as well as the ordinary–to use Eliade's terms, the sacred and profane. "Religion is the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established. Put differently, religion is cosmization in a sacred mode. By sacred is meant here a quality of mysterious and awesome power, other than man and yet related to him, which is believed to reside in certain objects or experience" (Berger 1969, 25).

If there is no God, no sacred, no power beyond the material world–in all its "magic"–then these "Religious" constructions of reality have in common that they appeal to a false power for their justification. The point made earlier about the class interests involved in the construction of reality is important in this regard

also. The point is not that the social construction of reality must appeal to the sacred–and it is not clear if this is Berger's point or just the facts of history–but that a social construction of reality must be accomplished, and is accomplished by any and all societies to the degree that they survive. There is another, more ordinary level, at which this social construction is accomplished that relies on the day-to-day experiences of individuals in interactions with friends, coworkers, neighbors, and others.

So what would it mean for a social construction of reality to be done in the conscious absence of the "sacred"? The social construction of reality must rely upon majority consensus–and here some may argue that it always has, but that it was the limited consensus among the ruling class. The masses are more accustomed to a social construction of reality that seems necessary, and there are those who are made anxious by the prospect of rationally configuring a social construction of reality that fits the needs of the whole species, of all members of society. It is my opinion, however, that this project of constructing society democratically, rationally, and dialectically, is the project of socialist society, as described by Marx. In the period Marx called "socialism," preceding full communism, society develops its socialist and democratic consensus and character. This process is necessarily complicated, multifaceted, and time-consuming. Human beings may be fairly elastic, but they are also conservative. Change in the way people ordinarily conceive the world takes generations to accomplish, especially when the kind of change that must unfold is change to our very basic sensibilities of meaning and purpose, the existential side of being human. Our consciousness is an outgrowth of experience, so first it is necessary to change people's experience–for example, through collective ownership–but then one must have patience as the full implications of these material changes manifest themselves over time. The social construction of reality is not complete in a weekend

Ceremonial Centers: *The social side of being human*

> This definition of religion transcends the normal understanding. I am concerned with the religious person–*homo*

> *religiosus*–the tendency of human beings to re-link, re-bind, re-connect, and re-concile themselves with each other and nature. This is precisely what the Latin 're-ligare' (from which the English word 'religion' is derived) means. Whenever people are in the process of restoring life to wholeness, integration and unity, they are engaging in religious activity. (Zepp 1986, 14)

We have seen that religion is a matter of what people do, how they behave. Religion in the generic sense is, at one level, a traditional source of connecting with the deeper levels of our humanity–what some call spirituality, here called aesthetics. But we should be clear about the implications of generic, nonidealist, religion. Some people meditate to get in touch with reality or self; some climb mountains. Some people go to sporting events with friends to help them feel in touch with their shared humanity; some go to prayer meetings. It is not the activity–no matter how passive or active–that is so important. We humans will inevitably take from any and all forms of behavior that have helped human beings keep in touch with their humanity, in all its fullness. We must understand that some of these forms of behavior are not identified as religious–but actually are in our generic sense of religious, for these behaviors are the ways in which people experience themselves, their community, and the world.

Drawing on traditional work in the history of religion, Ira Zepp has described what he sees as the religious (in our generic sense) dimension of shopping malls. Shopping malls, per se, are not my concern now, except to note the implicit argument in Zepp's work that malls have replaced more traditional religious centers. He does not explicitly explore the reasons for this, but all one need do is review the statistics about church attendance versus mall patronage–many more people go to malls than churches today. It is certainly true that "Religion" has experienced a decline since the advent of capitalism, but this is not my point here.

Zepp does offer a very interesting analysis of the ways in which malls can be seen as analogous to traditional "Religious" expressions. I have argued that religion ought to be understood as a human expression of the quest to experience our humanity.

Zepp argues that "Religion" has always served this function, that this is a necessary function (as I have argued), and that religion, in our sense, can be found in malls where it has actually been disappearing in the rest of America and the world (save some holdouts like the Promise Keepers in America or the ayatollahs in Iran).

The point Zepp makes is that religious behavior relies centrally on concepts of sacred space and sacred time–providing for the aesthetic experience of being human, as I have discussed above. Zepp relies on an argument developed in part by Eliade and, significantly for our emphasis here, on work by the anthropologist Paul Wheatley. Wheatley described sacred centers in a comparative fashion in the late 1970s. Wheatley traveled the world and discovered that many, many religions have constructions of a center as a central aspect of their activity in the world. There are cathedrals, mosques, notions of center of the world at the headwaters of the Ganges in India, notions of the center of world being in Rome, to more mundane manifestations in village and regional centers.

The one thing that many of these traditional centers have in common is that they were integrated into people's daily lives via exchange. The most dramatic examples are the bazaars of Egypt and Persia, and others may be found throughout history and across the planet. By virtue of being social animals, people have always had a need to exchange goods and services; "Religion" has had a place in this. Recall Eliade's point that almost anything, anywhere can be a hierophany. And it is a "sacred" place that would be chosen as a center–it would be the place to which people would congregate. Zepp points all of this out in making a case that shopping malls have taken over this function in our society–the social function of defining time out, and a space for this time out. Ceremonial Centers–which is how Wheatley describes them–have the function of allowing for meaningful human interactions, as well as a break from ordinary daily experience to get in touch with the fully human. In short, Ceremonial Centers have provided for the basic interchange that is our social being, as well as defining the space and time for groups to experience the existential and aesthetic functions of religion.

In the final analysis, religion must be understood as defining or delimiting truly human interactions–interactions with self, others, and the world. To do this, religion needs concepts of space and of time for these interactions. On a practical level, exchange has always formed a material justification for human beings to come together (we are social animals) so that these interactions can be meaningful (existentially and/or aesthetically). In the shopping mall, the meaningful side is exploited to bring customers to sellers. In traditional "Religion," the meaningful side has been used as a narcotic to distract people from the pain they suffer the rest of the time, rather than as a pure expression of the pursuit of the experience of being human. What is needed for the future is a recapturing of the human facilitation that the great markets of the Middle East and Mexico had in common (without the exploitative side that has always been a feature of "Religion" in class-based society).

The second half of the equation is sacred time–time out to explore the human. One cannot be expected to do a vision quest and keep up with the gardening, let alone make a car or refrigerator at the same time. Society has to have time out, has to have holidays. These so-called sacred times are often the times when the festivals occur, when the marketplaces are busiest–whether it is one day a week or a larger celebration that comes just once a year with the harvest, planting, or the new year. The social function–and even the existential and aesthetic functions–of religion must take into account the need for humans to take time to reconnect with themselves and with each other. This reconnecting is done through shared experiences, whether mundane or even ecstatic. It is important to have time for the experience of being human in all its full complexity, at all of its levels.

Conclusion

It is interesting that Marx chose the analogy of narcotics to describe religion. For our purposes we might understand the similarity to be with a profound aesthetic–even ecstatic–experience, not simply the analgesic effect of the drug Marx probably had in mind. Anyone who has not had direct experience with heroin or opium may need to rely on the reports of experiences of others to

help understand the appeal. By some accounts, the experience of narcotics is the full experience of being human–it is a complete and ecstatic experience of being human, in the fullest sense of these words. Let us put aside the physically addictive qualities for the moment, and concentrate on why people choose to begin the habit. Narcotics supposedly give one the most full and complete feeling of one's humanity possible–at least to those reporting.

Humans are both emotional and rational. We have experiences of both; some scholars and researchers may be in touch with the "ecstatic" side of the rational–those unexpected bursts of creative or analytical insight–but the rest of the world is much more in touch with the emotive side of ecstatic experience. The word "ecstasy" is of course associated with emotion rather than reason. The point, however, is that ecstatic experiences are complete experiences; they are times when we feel connected to our own humanity, in either form. "Religion" and narcotics are both common ways in which alienated people can feel their humanity.

There is no mystery in this: human beings living in conditions of exploitation and alienation feel their humanity, and the humanity of others, as being alien to them. In ecstatic experiences, we regain some minimal contact with that humanity. Narcotics users are more honest, perhaps, because they know they are not "seeing God," they are taking heroin and these are different things. The "Religious" person may think that in an ecstatic experience he or she is actually seeing God. "Religion" can be more dangerous as a result, although the addictive effect of narcotics parallels this danger. The narcotic effect of heroin and "Religion" allows people to feel in touch with their total person. By "total person" we must understand that experience of the world and experience of self are dialectically connected–that is, each informs and influences the other. Even though the "Religious" experience is of a power or force allegedly other than, greater then, human–the experience is wholly human. This is important: no matter what the content of "Religious" experience is supposed to be, it is a human experience, because the supposed other is perceived, sensed, apprehended, by the human being having the experience.

In addition to constructing social definitions of reality, meaning, and our collectives, religion plays a significant role in allowing us to keep in touch with our humanity. The fact that this contact with our humanity is ecstatic (to some degree) and therefore open to abuse as a means of escape does not detract from this claim, but in fact bolsters it. The fact that people do abuse religious and narcotic experiences to avoid reality–in an effort, ironically, to get in touch with their humanity–demonstrates the human significance of keeping in touch with our humanity, the aesthetic side of experiencing humanity.

Homo religiosus living conscious of the dialectical materiality of the world has no need to take narcotics or seek out "Religion." The full manifestation of this analysis may require a new humanity, the socialist human, living in conditions that are not alienating or exploitative, and thus not inherently painful. But even from the perspective of today we can see that humanity can experience the aesthetic daily, and can appreciate the beauty and wonder of the world and even the ecstasy of being human. It is the traditional role of "Religion" to facilitate these experiences. The substance of my argument is that this role is socially necessary and not necessarily class specific–it is the content that is brought to this role that is class specific. Indeed, fully developed working-class expressions of this social function will have vastly different contents from bourgeois, let alone feudal, variants.

One of the social functions of religion is to create, or at least facilitate, the development of space and time to devote to "being human" in the fullest (that is, ecstatic or aesthetic) sense. The aesthetic experience of being human is the experience of the "sacred" that Eliade described. The creation of the space to experience it is the role of religion Zepp described; its content and tone are the role Berger described. Perhaps a few examples might help to make the point here. The Eastern tradition–such as Buddhist, Hindu, and Taoist–have a long and rich contemplative history with meditation. The Orthodox Christian Church retained the contemplative version of what it calls ecstatic experience, while the Roman Catholic Church moved in a more intellectual, or analytic direction. But Western Christians have their own

versions of ecstatic experiences, although they are often less elegant–for example, the speaking in tongues of the Charismatic Churches, or the experience of the "spirit" in revival meetings. The traditions of Judaism and Islam have long mystical (or aesthetic) traditions. In Judaism there is the cabala and more recent Hasidism. Islam has its Sufis, and especially the active variant in the Whirling Dervishes. In the New World we find the ecstatic traditions of the Native American church (and its peyote), the Rastifarians (with their "Sacred Ganja"), as well as the ecstatic dance and vision quests.

All these traditions have value, taken as expressions of human beings in search of ways of being human–or at least the feeling of being human. The traditions themselves, obviously, would not describe their activities in these terms. They would use idealist terms, "God talk," to describe and justify their actions. More importantly, there are more common, more mundane, levels of all of these experiences, and that is why aesthetic understanding deserves emphasis. It is the everyday expression of the search for our humanity that is the most important aspect of all the ecstatic types of traditions listed above. One need not do a vision quest to feel human, but the social construction of reality that understands the vision quest to be a particularly profound human experience *is* of value.

One might ask: what is this idealist content? What then would be a materialist content to religion? The idealist content of "Religion" is the "Other." When Eliade writes about the sacred, the divine, God, the ultimate, etc., this is the idealist content. When the relationship human beings enter into with "Religion" is defined as being something beyond the human and beyond the material world, this is the idealist content. A materialist content of religion would be the individual human being experiencing self, community, and world. The materialist content is the experience of our individual and collective humanity. We must keep in mind that these experiences interact dialectically. The standard dialectical materialist understanding is that there really is no individual outside of the community in which that individual lives–for outside of that community, the individual would be completely different. There is no community without the

individuals that define that community. And our experience of the world is a human experience, dependent upon human sense organs, interpreted by a human brain, which is cognitively ordered by a human society that has interacted with its parts and the world over time.

There is magic in the world, but the magic is not a power outside of the material world. Rather, the magic simply is the material world in all its subtle and complex interrelations. And there is magic in being human, in experiencing the world and our being in ways that are human and ecstatic, and that transcend space and time. The community side of socialism is about bringing these experiences down from Olympus and returning them to the human beings who live them, who at least ought to live them if we construct society rationally and democratically without class distinctions and exploitation.

Homo religiosus living in a dialectical material world still needs religion, as we have used the term. It will be a new kind of religion, a self-conscious kind in service of all of humanity and not a ruling class. The new religion will be infused with the sacrality (in a materialist sense) of the dialectic, an aesthetic appreciation of the world and the marvelous ways in which it changes. The new religion will have a deep appreciation for all that is human, and all that it takes to be human, to live a truly human existence. And the new religion will do this by infusing itself, and all that it does, with a materialist content.

The forms "Religion" has given us from the past are of interest. The content has necessarily been the idealist content of class interests and rationalizations, but we have reached the end of that road, and the future stretches out before us. We no longer need the mythology of gods or of idealism, but we cannot deny the need for human interactions, for experiences of our full humanity, and for the social constructions of reality necessitated by our biology. Marx himself once remarked that religion (as we are denoting it) is the heart of a heartless world. The task remains to construct a living religion that represents the fullest expression of a self-creating humanity.

It is, of course, vitally important for revolutionaries to maintain their scientific understanding of society, and to analyze,

plan, and act with the best understanding possible. Yet we cannot forget that there is more to the human animal than is easily summarized in any few words. In our day-to-day experience, the world can be a confusing place. The revolution is not only about finding sterile constructions to manage the world, but also in reveling in those human experiences that include awe and wonder, reveling in the fullest possible experience of being human–socially, existentially, and aesthetically.

Department of Religion
Claremont Graduate University

NOTE

1. Initial lowercase (*religion*) denotes religion in the generic sense apart from God-talk.

2. Quotation marks and initial capital letter (*"Religion"*) denote religion in the traditional sense of being dependent on a god or gods.

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Why Marx or Nietzsche?

András Gedo~″~

The world in which we ourselves exist intellectually is a world largely molded by Marx and Nietzsche.

–Max Weber

1

In the history of the debates about Marx and/or Nietzsche, the desire for reconciling Marx *with* Nietzsche, for abandoning the choice, Marx *or* Nietzsche, has perhaps never come forth so plainly as today. At the same time, the alternative, either Marx or Nietzsche, was perhaps never more visibly in the focus of the philosophical dispute. The paradox and the ambiguity of contemporary discussions about the Marx-Nietzsche relationship ensue from the simultaneity and juxtaposition of these two tendencies.

Acknowledgment of the relatedness of Marx and Nietzsche, acceptance of their complementarity, and synthesis of both are demanded from divergent standpoints, from the left and the right, with opposite value judgments. On the one hand, a Marx located in Nietzsche's neighborhood or interpreted and supplemented according to a Nietzschean framework is affirmed; on the other, the nihilistic essentials allegedly common to Marx and Nietzsche are denied as much in the name of the traditional faith in revelation[1] as in that of a well-functioning, trouble-free capitalism.[2] Advocates of French Nietzscheanism, conceiving themselves, at least temporarily, as situated on the left, inclined toward combining Nietzsche with Marx. Klossowski tried to

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draw a parallel between the social criticism of Marx and Nietzsche (1973, 99–101). Lyotard strove in the early seventies to reinterpret Marx's *Capital* with reference to Nietzsche (1973, 145 ff.), and Foucault presumed in the midsixties to find a common denominator in Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud (1994, 564 ff.). It is, however, a sign of the fragility of the intended reconciliation of Marx and Nietzsche that Foucault announced the Marx-Nietzsche alternative quite harshly and unambiguously (and his philosophical work is marked by this alternative), while he stated that Hegel and Marx were "the ones who bear great responsibility for contemporary humanism," which was rejected by Foucault. He advocated a "nondialectic" and "therefore nonhumanistic" culture that began with Nietzsche and "appeared in Heidegger too" (cited in Ferry and Renaut 1985, 138).[3] This approach of confronting Nietzsche with Marx prevailed in the later development of French Nietzscheanism; the (exclusive) disjunction of Marx and Nietzsche overcame their conjunction.

Deleuze emphasized in his early book on Nietzsche the incompatibility of dialectics and Nietzschean philosophizing, the underlying and overwhelming antidialectic of Nietzsche's philosophy.[4] In pleading for "nomadic thinking,"[5] he also opposed the alleged trio Marx-Nietzsche-Freud and moved Nietzsche out of this supposed trio. "Marx and Freud are perhaps the dawn of our culture, but Nietzsche is quite other, he is the dawn of a counterculture" (1973, 160). The antidialectical Nietzsche versus Marx is the point of reference of French–and not only French–philosophical postmodernism.

Nevertheless, one of the trends within the contemporary third Nietzsche renaissance is the endeavor to bring to the fore a reconciliation of Marx and Nietzsche by evoking the historical traditions of left Nietzscheanism, the images of Marx accommodated to Nietzsche or of Nietzsche accommodated to Marx. It embraces present versions of the narrow current of the Nietzschean Left and of a Nietzschean Marxism that allegedly refer to the permanent crisis of Marxism (Batrick and Breines 1978, 119 ff.). The effort of this current to legitimize a Nietzschean Marxism and establish its relevance is reminiscent of the Nietzschean leanings of some Russian revolutionaries who supported Marxism in the first decade of the twentieth century

(see Kline 1969, 166–67). A concise exposition of these contemporary endeavors to Nietzscheanize Marx states that there is "a crisis of that tradition of Marxism . . . in which were captured the advocates of the polar contrast 'Nietzsche-Marx' from Mehring to Lukács, from Hans Günther to Holz" and that the counterposition to this tradition and viewpoint demands embracing of "a *residue of* Nietzsche's *thinking* that was alien to Marx and was not accepted by Marxism" (Masini 1981, 34). According to this view, Nietzsche's alternative to that which he opposed was not positive–in fact, it was nonrevolutionary in the Marxian sense. Nevertheless, this claims that a revolutionary content is inherent in Nietzsche's surmounting of humanism, while this Nietzschean surmounting of humanism is located beyond Marx; the residue of Nietzsche's thinking that one is asked to accept lies in the themes of "the destructuring of the subject . . . the infinite game between depth and surface" (34). It is a paradox of demanding a reconciliation of Marx and Nietzsche that the contrast between them is a premise and a consequence of this demanded reconciliation. It is a *premise* insofar as the disparity of Marx's and Nietzsche's frameworks is the starting point of this approach; it is the stated reason for supporting Nietzsche's philosophy, because the helplessness and inability of Marxism to look into the genuine depth of life are taken for granted. It is also a *consequence* of this approach, insofar as the "residue" that we are asked to accept and incorporate into Marxism belongs to the philosophical whole, to an antisystematic system alien to Marx's thought, just as it is alien to rational philosophizing in general. Attempting to reconcile Marx and Nietzsche reproduces the confrontation of both, instead of surmounting it.

2

The influence of Nietzsche and the attempted conjunction of Marx and Nietzsche had a molding impact not only on Adorno,[6] but also on Ernst Bloch and Althusser, although they did not cope with it. This moment was irreconcilable with their ideas borrowed from Marx and Marxism, impairing nevertheless the reception and interpretation of Marx and Marxism. The influence of Nietzsche and the attempt at combining his philosophical

thought with that of Marx–which provided a certain contact between such differing and even contrasting philosophical works as those of Bloch and Adorno–appeared in their reflections on Nietzsche, on the one hand, and in their own thoughts of Nietzschean provenance, on the other. In face of the range and scope of these works, the consequences of Nietzsche and of the sought-for combination of Marx and Nietzsche are a test of the conceptions about the Marx-Nietzsche relationship, although the thinking of Bloch and Althusser (or of Adorno) is neither understandable apart from the influence of Nietzsche nor subsumable under Nietzscheanism.

Bloch's acquaintance with Nietzsche during the first Nietzsche wave had preceded the period when he saw himself as a Marxist. His 1913 essay "Nietzsche's Impulse" belongs to the basic foundations of this philosophical work; its ideals were involved in the shaping of his later interpretation of Marx and of his whole philosophical conception.

> Nietzsche's life work quite entirely is a fight against the cold, undionysian, unmystical man, against the right to exist and against the truth of the "scientific truth" in general, that is, against a truth without the subject and without a dream. . . . For here it holds good in fact, that what matters is not only the comprehension of the world or else it matters merely in changing oneself according to one's comprehension of it. Here another autonomy than that of the *lumen naturale* is demanded, and in the second, more dangerous epoch of modern times the world ceases to be a sheer guessing game for the scientific intellect. (1964a, 107-8)

In these considerations certain tenets and ideas were formulated: the inclination to the Dionysian-mythical, the criticism of scientific rationality, also the subject of Bloch's later writings. Here he anticipated his thesis of the "cold stream" and "warm stream" in philosophy, later applied to the interpretation of Marx and Marxism. What Bloch left out in this first version of the essay "Nietzsche's Impulse," Nietzsche's thought about the "will to power," about the eternal recourse of the same, was openly

rejected in the later version of the same essay (incorporated in Bloch's book *The Inheritance of This Time*). Nietzsche as the preacher of the "Übermensch" was abhorred but the "other Nietzsche" was regarded as necessary–the Nietzsche who "is searching for that which is this-worldliness not merely bleached but also passed through utopian fire" (Bloch 1964b, 363). The early message recurred: "The *lumen naturale* became glowing here; knowledge was no longer contemplative; the world ceased to be a guessing game for the scientific intellect" (364).[7] The internally conflicting character of his interpretation of Nietzsche was manifested in Bloch's later lectures on the history of philosophy, which assigned Nietzsche to the "disaster line" of nineteenth-century German philosophy. Nevertheless, he insisted on positing the "other Nietzsche" whose Dionysos "is an enormously dialectical being" (1985, 414). This understanding of Nietzsche was interwoven with certain traits of Bloch's views in general, with his aim of philosophizing out of the "darkness of the lived moment," out of subjective inwardness, with the ambiguous attitude of his thinking towards scientific rationality.

Althusser declared his support for the alleged trio Marx-Nietzsche-Freud in his early essay "Freud and Lacan," revealing the deeply irrational roots of his philosophizing, which was indebted to the stream of *Lebensphilosophie* (Life Philosophy), "As far as I know, two or three unexpected children were born in the nineteenth century: Marx, Nietzsche, Freud. They were 'illegitimate' or 'natural' children in the sense that nature goes against morals, ethics, and manners. Our Western reason allows us to have the illegitimate child at a high price" (1976, 12). Neither this thesis nor the Nietzschean-pathetic tone recurred in Althusser's later published works. He included the essay "Freud and Lacan," however, in his last book, *Positions (1964–1975)*, a collection of his essays edited before his collapse. Althusser's philosophical biography can hardly be adequately grasped if attention is not paid to the reflections formulated in "Freud and Lacan." Nietzschean thought-motifs, even though entirely without reference to, acceptance of, or application of Nietzsche, pervade all three phases of Althusser's philosophical activity. These thought-motifs were merged with other philosophical

ideas (including those of positivistic orientation) and had a strong influence on Althusser's interpretation of Marx, an influence that was partly direct, partly mediated by philosophical structuralism, French Nietzscheanism, and even by Lacan's adoption of Heidegger. The Nietzschean thought-motifs, hidden in the presuppositions of Althusser's philosophizing, but carried in his explanation of Marxism, a philosophy alien to Nietzschean thought-motifs, brought about tempting shock effects, a shimmering intertwining of theoretical stringency and arbitrariness, transparency and opaque depth, conclusive proof and flotsam in a vacuum. In Althusser's philosophical work–already in its first phase in *For Marx* and *Reading "Capital"*–his concept of history, his demand to eradicate the idea of the subject, together with, at the same time, the subjectivizing of the epistemological problematic, were considerably stamped, even though latently and not exclusively, with Nietzschean impulses. The Nietzschean elements in the first phase of Althusser's thinking, on the whole concealed rather than outspoken, became more evident in the second phase, although even then too without alluding to Nietzsche. Present in this the second phase were attempts to justify class-struggle slogans with a voluntaristic content or in voluntaristic manner. Marxian thoughts were introduced in a Nietzschean way, decreed or reinterpreted; Nietzschean traits were also imparted to the concept of philosophy. The option for materialism or idealism appeared in Althusser rather as an act of will; the controversies about them were conceived according to the idea of the eternal recurrence of the same (see Althusser 1969, 42 ff.). Althusser held that philosophy *qua* philosophy advances unprovable theses ("dogmas") that are neither true nor false, that philosophy has no history and no subject-matter, that the "correctness" of philosophical theses must be decided only with reference to an accepted "line."[8] All these views advocated Nietzsche's voluntaristic concept of philosophy: "*The genuine philosophers are those who give orders and who are legislators*; they say: '*so should* it be!' Only they decide for man whether? and wherefore? . . . Their 'knowledge' is *creating*; their creating is legislation; their will to truth is actually *will to power*" (Nietzsche 1969b, 676–77). In the third phase of Althusser, his

"critical balance sheet of Marxism" turned out negatively (see Althusser 1978, 280 ff.). This is a consequence of the failure of the attempt to understand and reinterpret Marx on the basis of Nietzsche.

3

The alternative, Marx or Nietzsche, bears a *philosophical* character; it therefore goes far beyond the *German* history of ideas.[9] It has *general* content and *supranational* relevance.[10] In fact, Nietzsche's influence on German literature was enormous (while the manifoldness and divergencies of this impact were motivated not only by the ambiguities and the multifariousness of Nietzsche's philosophy but also by the intellectual diversity of the recipients).[11] Nevertheless, Nietzsche was located, above all, in post-Hegelian *philosophizing*: it was Nietzschean *Lebensphilosophie qua revolt* that had a fascinating effect on German literature (and also French and Anglo-Saxon literature).[12] When German writers such as Arnold Zweig, Johannes R. Becher, and, above all, the later Thomas Mann reflected in their critical reconsideration of Nietzsche and the spell he cast on European culture, the political tendency inherent in it, and its fateful potential and results emerged, The enthusiasm for Nietzsche in literature was mediated by the aesthetic moment: first, by the concept of philosophy conceived as art and that of art conceived as redemption, both aspects belonging to the essentials of Nietzsche's philosophy; second, by the artistic element in Nietzsche's *œuvre*, and third, by his life history as possible subject matter and impulse of artistic creation. These mediating links were sometimes separated from the mediated topic. The German poet Christian Morgenstern wrote in 1912 about Nietzsche:

> But I know well in what regard he was the highest to me; in his greatness as a human being, not in the kind of philosophy that belonged merely to his time. This kind of philosophy was sunset, it was not sunrise, and those who are going on from it are walking into the night. (cited in Krummel 1973, 1:111)

What, however, would have been this human fate without Nietzsche's philosophy, for which and in which he lived? The

issue Marx *or* Nietzsche, or alternatively, Marx *and* Nietzsche, lies in the field of philosophy.

As a result of the rejection of the exclusive alternative of the philosophies of Marx and Nietzsche, Marx was subsumed under the traditional readings of *Lebensphilosophie*; set up as "paradigms" for the interpretation of Marx was the trio *Marx-Kierkegaard-Nietzsche*, which was followed by that of *Marx-Nietzsche-Freud.* The trio Marx-Kierkegaard-Nietzsche, set out in Löwith's book *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, was thought of both as a counterpart to the claim made on Nietzsche by German (and Italian) fascism and as a criticism of Marxism. The differences among Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche were not simply suppressed in Löwith's scholarly and stylish explanation. Despite the acknowledged divergencies, the philosophies of the three thinkers were reduced in their essentials to the common denominator of a revolt against the bourgeois-Christian world, of the consciousness of alienation and homelessness, while Nietzsche was conceived as completing this common idea. "The world became alien to Marx and Kierkegaard, the world where Hegel still had 'settled in'; they were located over and beyond or were 'absurd' and 'transcending,' as Goethe called the coming spirit of the century. And Nietzsche was altogether nowhere at home" (Löwith 1988, 222).

Marx, when included in the *Zeitgeist* of *Lebensphilosophie,* loses his own philosophical and historical outlook. Löwith even asserted that Marx's thought remained a prisoner within the ideas of capitalist society. Even Karl Jaspers, in his later Nietzsche essay, accepted the idea of the trio Marx-Kierkegaard-Nietzsche.

> They inaugurated the modern consciousness. . . . The break of continuity was carried out in them. . . . But those three are by no means the leaders of a new humanity. They may be prophets, but prophets through their sacrifice and their own enrapturedness in the terrible distress of man losing himself, of being alienated from himself; they are not prophets as founders of a new world. (1980, 56)

Here Marx was Nietzscheanized, appearing as a prophet

pronouncing imperatives: the historical-real Marx and his theory became lost in the trio formula.

Michel Foucault formulated in the midsixties an extreme version of the other stereotypical variant, that is, of the trio *Marx-Nietzsche-Freud*. His version, however, revealed the voluntarism inherent in this formula and in its consequences. The central figure in this trio was, according to Foucault's interpretation, Nietzsche, whose epistemology, the absolute of interpretation, the dissolution of reality in interpretations, were to be used as the frame of explanation of Freud and Marx. Foucault claimed that the unfinished character of interpretation had been common to Nietzsche, Freud and Marx: "if the interpretation can never be finished, then it is plain that there is nothing to be interpreted—there is nothing absolutely primary that is to be interpreted because everything is fundamentally already interpretation; every sign is . . . an interpretation of other signs" (1994, 571). Foucault Nietzscheanized Marx differently than did Jaspers. The loss was not less, however, when Marx's theory was sacrificed to the fetish of interpretation of the Nietzschean epistemology than when Marx was transformed into a prophet à la Nietzsche.

4

The question "Why Marx or Nietzsche?" has three implications. First, it involves becoming aware of the historically changing character of the controversies between the philosophies of Marx and Nietzsche, aware of the opposition between their different social settings and their differing philosophical contents. Max Weber realized the scope of the Marx-Nietzsche problem. After a debate with Oswald Spengler, who was contemptuous not only of Marx but also of Nietzsche, the main source of his own ideas, Max Weber said:

> The honesty of a contemporary scholar and above all, of a contemporary philosopher, is to be decided on the basis of his attitude to Nietzsche and Marx. Those who do not acknowledge that they could not carry out considerable parts of their work without the work done by these two, are cheating themselves and others. The world in which we ourselves exist intellectually is a world largely molded

> by Marx and Nietzsche. (cited in Baumgarten 1964, 554–55)

The simultaneous presence and influence of the two in Max Weber seems to raise the possibility of paying tribute to and following both. The basic thought framework of Max Weber points to the opposite; he was influenced by both Marx and Nietzsche, and he admitted this honestly. He polemicized against Marx and disagreed with him even when he borrowed from his work; Nietzschean motifs had a part in shaping his way of thinking, the disparity of their attitudes notwithstanding (see Hennis 1987). Nevertheless, his assessment in 1920 that "the world in which we ourselves exist intellectually is a world largely molded by Marx and Nietzsche" retains its validity despite the alternating increases and decreases of the influence of Marx and Nietzsche.

Secondly, the philosophical Marx-Nietzsche controversy implies an awareness of the fact that Marx is *the* alternative to Nietzsche. The thought of Nietzsche is a particular variant of *Lebensphilosophie*, but also a focus of elements, germs, and possibilities for other versions of *Lebensphilosophie* and of later forms of positivism. Controversies such as the one over Heidegger's interpretation and criticism of Nietzsche or the lack of interest of logical positivists in Nietzsche may veil these interrelations. Nevertheless, it is recognizable that "many influences lead from Nietzsche to Heidegger," as the Nietzsche scholar Wolfgang Müller-Lauter stated. "There is a kinship between the two that must not be pushed aside because of misjudgements and false estimations concerning Nietzsche by Heidegger that have come to the fore" (1981/82, 362). Danto's 1965 book on Nietzsche as a precursor of analytic philosophy stresses, despite the one-sidedness and omissions in Danto's explanation (see Schacht 1983, 530–35), the positivistic traits and anticipations of Nietzsche as well as his Berkeleyan tendency.[13] In consequence, the only alternative to Nietzsche's 'philosophy in its entirety is a philosophy located outside of the controversy and complementarity of positivism and *Lebensphilosophie.*

Thirdly, the issue "Why Marx or Nietzsche?" when formulated and developed by Marxists implies the question "Why Marx and not Nietzsche?" Since the alternative, Marx or Nietzsche, persists, the criticism of Nietzsche can involve neither the deletion of a Marxist Nietzsche scholarship nor an abstract unchanging negating. It implies rather an evolving historical and theoretical surmounting. If Nietzsche's philosophy is an epitome of *Lebensphilosophie*, the source field and melting pot of different, even divergent, attempts and possibilities of philosophical decadence, the tragic character of which was experienced by Nietzsche as his personal destiny, in suffering from it and in supposing himself to have found redemption from it, then Nietzsche is in a certain sense a key to the critical understanding and discussion of philosophical decadence in general. The Nietzsche waves and renaissances following one another reflected nonidentical social and cognitive situations from a persistent standpoint that was full of ambiguities. The renewed discussions with Nietzsche and Nietzscheanism are not repetitions of the same. They involve novelties in each modified situation, first of all because the question "Why Marx?" has a bearing on the theoretical totality of the Marxian conception, the thought movement of which takes place in the dialectic of identity and change, in the historicity of knowing and acting. In the question "Marx or Nietzsche?" Marx stands for the theoretical revolution represented by the dialectics and the historical outlook of the new materialism, for the theoretical revolution that was initiated before and without Nietzsche.

The question "Why Marx and not Nietzsche?" needs to be answered in a rational–and only in a rational–manner. A theoretical option in favor of Marx, and against Nietzsche and Nietzscheanism, is not an arbitrary voluntaristic act. It can only be the result of a cognitive process, an act of thought against arbitrary voluntarism, not an unsubstantiated statement. The appearance of abstract generality in these philosophical topics and discussions, the appearance of their remoteness from life, stands apart from the debates about Nietzsche or Marx. Nietzsche himself had a foreboding of the fateful consequences of his own philosophy: "There shall one day be attached to my

name a reminder of something monstrous–of a crisis the like of which has never been on earth, of the deepest collision of conscience, of a decision *against* everything that up to now has been believed, demanded, kept holy. I am not a human being, I am dynamite" (1969a, 1152). The theoretical option in favor of grasping the historical necessities of capitalist society and the historical necessity of overcoming it, dealing with the real social crisis not as the destiny of the "last man" but with concepts of knowledge and reality, against the nihilistic negating of knowledge, against the loss of truth and the positing of a mythical quasi objectivity; in favor of a rational dialectics against the irrationalizing of dialectics; in favor of democracy and a socialist perspective against contempt for humanity, the exhilaration of the master morality and of the superman, against "philosophizing with the hammer"–this option is an act of thought not only dealing with *Lebensphilosophie*'s anticonceptual concept of irrational life, but also with the issues of the objective-real and intellectual life of social human beings.

The materialistically founded humanistic aspect of Marxist theory is neither an arbitrary supplement to, nor an idealistic substitute for, its scientific content, but a necessary conclusion from it. The intellectual experience of the inner connection of proletarian class consciousness, Marxist knowledge, and humanistic understanding was articulated in the philosophical poetry of Attila József in the early thirties: "After the priest, soldier and burgher / now it is our turn at last / to be upholder of the laws; / and so the sense of all human works / resonates in us / like so many resounding violas" (1997, 67). As the philosophical theory of materialist dialectics, in the process of sensitive recording of history and of grasping whatever "the works of man" may mean, the thought of Marx is the alternative to Nietzsche's philosophy.

Budapest

NOTES

1. Translations from non-English sources were made by the author.

2. See Rohrmoser 1981/82, 332 ff. But this view is also based on the pattern Nietzsche *versus* Marx and it, too, portends an interpretation of Marx overcome

by Nietzsche. Rohrmoser claims, "Just as we need a *postfascist* Nietzsche, we require a *post-Marxist* Nietzsche" (358). Rohrmoser too pleads "the superiority of Nietzsche over Marx" (1980, 336).

3. "From very different perspectives, Nietzsche and Marx attacked the triumph of commercial man. . . . Both Nietzsche and Marx scorned a society predominantly composed of men pursuing their self-interest" (Miller 1980, 120).

4. "Nietzsche's philosophy amounts to an absolute antidialectic" (Deleuze 1962, 223).

5. "Nomadic thinking" became a catchword in the philosophy of French postmodernism (see Grisoni 1977, 20 ff.). The idea of "nomadic thinking" stems from Nietzsche, who says in his *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* that "in contrast to the engaged and rooted intellectuals we almost see our ideal in a mental nomadism" (1969c, 817).

6. See, among others, Pütz 1974 and Maurer 1981–82.

7. For a critical analysis of Bloch's *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* that also deals with Nietzsche, see Günther 1981b.

8. See, among others, Althusser 1967.

9. See, among others, Krummel 1974–93; Thomas 1983; Bertram 1965; Raschel 1984; Lotter 1987; and Ries 1967.

10. On Nietzsche's international influence see, among others, Bianquis 1929; Serra 1984; Granier 1966; Granier 1967; volumes 1 and 2 of *Nietzsche aujourd'hui?* 1973; Künzli 1976; Bataille 1973; Kofman 1979; Bridgwater 1972; Copleston 1975; Kaufmann 1950; Stern 1979; Paci 1940; Vattimo 1974; Rukser 1962; Sobejano 1967; Becker 1983.

11. See Hillebrand 1978. For Nietzsche's impact on literature beyond the German, see Gaède 1967 and Foster 1981.

12. See, among others, Günther 1981a; Lukács 1984, 244 ff.; Holz 1976, 31 ff.; Steigerwald 1980, 69 ff.; Buhr 1988.

13. See also Danto 1979.

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Has Feminist Theory "Lost the Forest for the Trees"? A Critique of Postmodern/ Postcolonial Feminism in the West

Anne E. Lacsamana

As globalized capital continues to spread throughout the world, divisions between the North and South have grown even wider, thus resulting in a more flexible and feminized workforce. Consonant with the rise of global economic restructuring, U.S. feminist theory has become increasingly influenced by postmodern and postcolonial thought. Indeed, one could argue that over the past decade U.S. feminist theory has practically become synonymous with postmodernism. Postmodernism has been lauded for its ability to enable the "other" to emerge and speak from the margins; many proponents of postmodernism (and its offspring postcoloniality) have begun to turn their attention south and theorize about conditions facing those in the Third World. While many aspects of postmodern and postcolonial thought seem on the surface to be liberatory and transformative, a closer inspection of the central tenets of these theories, and their merger with feminism, reveals some serious deficiencies.

My purpose here, therefore, is to trace the emergence of postmodernism within the U.S. feminist movement in order to discern if it can truly account for what is happening to women on a global scale. It is my contention that many of the "radical" and "progressive" qualities (detailed later in the essay) of postmodernism/postcolonialism are actually conservatizing tendencies that ultimately mask power relationships between the North

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and the South, and, more importantly, between the Western feminist theoretician and the exoticized Third World woman who continues to perform the majority of the world's labor under increasingly draconian conditions.

Because of its focus on issues such as "identity" and "difference," postmodernist thought has often been credited for allowing the "Other" to speak. Since the mideighties, many scholars in the U.S. academy have subscribed to the theories of French philosophers like Michel Foucault and Jean Francois Lyotard, who have proclaimed the end of modernism and totalizing theories. It is posited that we have entered a "postmodern condition," brought about by global economic restructuring. This postmodern condition is marked by fragmentation, disunity, and multiplicity that can only be analyzed through discourse and discursive practices. In the essay "Identity, the Other, and Postmodernism," Jorge Larrain explains that in "postmodernism one cannot aspire to any unified representation of the world," nor can one picture the world "as a totality full of connections and differentiations . . . there is no single history, only images of the past projected from different points of view" (1995, 274). As a result of the fragmentation and incoherence that characterize the postmodern condition, issues of "otherness" have been allowed "to emerge not just as the mere antagonist of well defined rationalities, but as the new protagonist of a plurality of discourse" (275).

Due to the emphasis placed on the "other" and "difference" in postmodern thought, there has been an emergence of theories and scholars concerned with issues in the Third World. According to postmodern thinkers such as Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha, we have entered a time of "postcoloniality." As a consequence, fields such as feminist theory and cultural studies have become inundated with "postcolonial theory," and discursive modes of analysis that engage and give voice to those living in Third World countries.

The U.S. feminist movement, in which questions of "identity" and "difference" have gained importance, provides a good opportunity to explore in greater detail the rise of postmodernism in the West. During the 1970s, U.S. feminism, in what is

typically known as its "second wave," attributed women's subordination to gender; that is, all women are oppressed simply because they are "women." The flaw in this idea, however, is that the concept of *woman*, thought to be universal, actually only applied to the lives and experiences of white, middle-class, heterosexual women. As Nancy Fraser and Linda J. Nicholson write in "Social Criticism Without Philosophy: An Encounter Between Feminism and Postmodernism," while "gender identity gives substance to the idea of sisterhood, it does so at the cost of repressing differences among sisters" (1990, 31). Moreover, the desire of second-wave feminists to locate gender as the primary cause for women's oppression lent itself to

> an overly grandiose and totalizing conception of theory. Theory was understood as the search for one key factor which would explain sexism cross-culturally and illuminate all of social life. (Fraser and Nicholson 1990, 29)

As a consequence of the second wave's universalizing notion of "woman" and "womanhood," feminist theory underwent another change during the 1980s. Responding to the exclusionary practices and theory of the 1970s, women of color, lesbians, and working-class women began to voice their experiences. Arguing that women's oppression was not simply based on gender, but on race and class as well, feminists during the eighties put forth a new form of politics, one that was based on identity and the recognition of difference; hence "identity politics" or the "politics of difference" was born. In a speech to the National Women's Studies Association in 1979, Barbara Smith summed up the goals of identity politics:

> Feminism is the political theory and practice to free *all* women: women of color, working-class women, poor women, physically challenged women, lesbians, old women, as well as white economically privileged heterosexual women. Anything less than this is not feminism, but merely female self-aggrandizement. (quoted in Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981, 61)

By challenging and critiquing the "universalizing" notion of gender oppression during the 1970s, identity politics also

signaled a more complex theoretical shift in Western feminist thought. At the same time, a similar theoretical change was taking place throughout the U.S. academy, as it began to embrace French postmodernist theory. Seyla Benhabib writes in "From Identity Politics to Social Feminism":

> What is unique about American feminist reception of French postmodernist thought is that, rightly or wrongly, the interest in French theory coincided with a set of intense political struggles within the American women's movement [specifically] postmodernist sensibilities with the politics of identity and difference. (1996, 31)

Like women of color who criticized the women's movement for its "universalizing" idea of "woman," French thinkers like Lyotard, Foucault, and Derrida were becoming wary and suspicious of "grand" or "master" narratives. According to Lyotard and others, the "postmodern condition is one in which 'grand narratives of legitimation' are no longer credible" (Fraser and Nicholson 1990, 22). Therefore, all theories like the "Enlightenment, . . . Hegel's dialectic of Spirit [and] Marx's drama of the forward march of human productive capacities via class conflict" become suspect for postmodernism. In the same vein, U.S. feminist thinkers espousing identity politics began to notice that metanarratives "hamper rather than promote sisterhood, since they elide differences among women and among the forms of sexism to which different women are differentially subject" (Fraser and Nicholson 1990, 33).

Postmodernism and identity politics may have emerged coincidentally, but the similarities in their criticisms were striking. It is important to note that the "theoretical message of the French 'masters of suspicion' was at the center of *political* critique by lesbian women, women of color, and Third World women of the hegemony of white, western European, or North American heterosexual women in the movement" (Benhabib 1996, 31). It comes as no surprise, therefore, that as postmodernism began to saturate the Western intelligentsia during the mideighties, U.S. feminist theories began to stray from "Marxist and psychoanalytic paradigms to Foucauldian types of

discourse analysis and Derridean practices of textual deconstruction" (Benhabib 1996, 32). Essentially, postmodernist feminist thinking shifted away from looking at the material conditions of women (in which a Marxist analysis might have proved useful) to a more abstract, cultural level (one that is constantly shifting and changing). Contemporary Western feminist theory now finds itself grappling with "analyses of identity: its constitution and construction, the problems of collective self-and-other representation, and issues of cultural contestation and hegemony" (Benhabib 1996, 32). Currently, these issues of "self" and "otherness" have proved quite complex for postmodern feminism.

Rejecting the modernist approaches that attempted to speak *for* others (through the use of a monolithic theory), postmodernism purports to allow 'otherness' to emerge: "all groups have the right to speak for themselves in their own voice or dialect" (Larrain 1995, 275). Although this kind of analysis sounds liberating and transformative, it has questionable aspects. As Benhabib astutely notes, "construction" and "constitution" are central to postmodern feminist thinking. In a postmodern world, "the subject does not exist as a locus of agency"; instead, the subject is constituted or constructed by "knowledge/power" matrices (Benhabib 1996, 33). This interpretation fits neatly into the framework of postmodernism: reality is in a state of disorganization; therefore, the "self" is also fragmented. Once again, this breaks away from the modernist idea that the self is total, complete, and rational. Larrain writes that "the destruction of a single reality and the lack of meaning of history corresponds [to] a decentered subject which has lost its identity . . . hence the loss of identity means that the subject cannot coherently act in the world" (1995, 275–76).

What are the implications for a Western feminist theory that adheres to this kind of philosophy? Seyla Benhabib provides an answer when she states resignedly that "in the transition from standpoint feminism to post-structuralist feminisms, we have lost the female subject" (1996, 34). Does this idea of an "incoherent" or "lost" self not contradict postmodernism's claim to *allow* "others" to speak from their own standpoint? For Larrain, the

question of "self" and "other" represents a paradox in postmodern thinking. He writes that the "other appears to be integrated around a coherent, if local or different, identity but the self seems to be fragmented in a variety of contradictory identities"; therefore, how can postmodernism explain "the so-called discovery of the other and the announcement of the end of the coherent self" (1995, 276)?

Confounding these questions of self/other representations is the increased interest among postmodernist feminists concerning "issues of coloniality/postcoloniality" (Ebert, 285). Gayatri Spivak is one of the many scholars devoting attention to those living in the Third World. What exactly is "postcoloniality" then? In *Outside the Teaching Machine*, Spivak defines it as "the heritage of imperialism in the rest of the globe" (1993, 280–81). This definition begs a number of questions. Is Spivak acting under the assumption, as Aijaz Ahmad writes in "The Politics of Literary Postcoloniality," that "imperialism was a matter of the past" (1995, 3)? With the spread of global capitalism and multinational corporations, it would seem odd that Spivak senses the end of imperialism and colonization. However, as a postmodern thinker, Spivak takes the privilege of denying material/economic conditions (because they might require a class analysis or "metanarrative") and simply focuses on specific microlevel types of discourse analysis. Again, postmodern feminist thinkers find themselves focused on the "cultural" rather than the economic.

What becomes even more fantastic about postcolonial thinkers is the way in which they see "themselves as postimperialist" (Ebert 1996, 285). The privilege of postmodern theory reappears in this assertion, for the mere "assumption of the deimperialization of the center is an act of concealed imperialism" (286). It is very clear that we are *not* living in a deimperialized or postcolonial globe. In fact, with the onslaught of multinationals, it would seem more appropriate to assert that we are living in a neoimperialist society—that is, as Michael Parenti explains in *The Sword and the Dollar*, "the practice of direct exploitation without the burden of direct rule" (1988, 66). While postcolonial thinkers (by denying or ignoring economic conditions) might

still adhere to the notion that imperialism entails direct rule by a colonial power, they have remained comfortably oblivious to the "international division of labor and appropriation of economic and natural resources [that benefit] First World countries at the expense of Third World countries" (Ebert 1996, 286). Moreover, in the transition from traditional forms of "slave labor to free labor," under neoimperialism, "the workers now own themselves but not the wealth created by their labor nor the means of labor, which are also means of production" (Parenti 1988, 67).

Hence it becomes foolish to think, as Spivak does, that we are living in postcolonial or postimperial times. Imperialism is not an outmoded concept of the past, but a very real pressing concern that demands immediate attention. While postcolonial thinkers are fashioning themselves to be progressive and radical in their discursive claims to embrace the Third World, it might be more pertinent if they looked at the economic realities that enable multinational corporations, the IMF, and the World Bank to extract billions of dollars from Third World countries every year.

What we have, then, in postmodern/postcolonial thought, is a "theory which conceals the true contradictions of advanced capitalist societies in order to reproduce them in the interest of the ruling class" (Larrain 1995, 288). Expanding upon this, I would assert that in the case of postmodern/postcolonial feminist thinkers, we have a further concealment. Not only do these feminists conceal the economic realities of those living in the Third World (as well as of many in the United States), but they additionally privilege the scholar or the intellectual working within the academy. In "Feminism Without Guarantees: The Misalliances and Missed Alliances of Postmodernist social Theory," Carol Stabile argues that intellectuals

> needn't invoke the notion of class at all since the concept is intrinsically essentialist; nor do [they] need to concern [themselves] with the class privilege enjoyed by intellectuals since oppressions are within the discursive field necessarily unfixed and somehow equivalent. (1995, 285)

This would certainly be the case for most postcolonial feminist thinkers attempting to explain Third World issues as a "regime of power-knowledge relations [by foregrounding] the problems of representation [and] exploring the discursive politics of truth" (Ebert 1996, 284). Totally disconnected from economic reality, it becomes a convenience when the postmodern

> theorist . . . denies the structural endurance of histories and calls upon us to think only of the contingent moment, we are in effect being called upon to overlook the position of class . . . privileges from which such theories emanate and such invocations issue. (Ahmad 1995, 15)

These questions of class privilege are often dismissed by those immersed in postmodern thinking as "essentializing" concepts. However, I maintain that class privilege and class relations play a large role in the theory of postmodern thought.

Does postmodernism really allow the "Other" to emerge? Or, more pointedly, does the postcolonial feminist thinker truly engage with Third World women's issues? By denying the existence of imperialism, brought about by transnational capitalism, the postcolonial thinker has neglected to converse with or attempt to understand the everyday reality of those in the Third World. Instead, through the discursive landscape, the postcolonial feminist has simply reenacted "imperialism in [her] writings" through the "discursive domination in which the other is prevented from speaking for herself" (Ebert 1996, 285). In other words, postcolonial really amounts to "a polite way of saying not-white, not-Europe, not Western" (Ahmad 1995, 8). It does not really seem, therefore, that postmodernism has truly broken away from the practice of speaking *for* others, because even in the case of Third World people who attempt to speak from the margins, their "rights appear to be defended not by their own self-affirmation but, yet again, by a theory constructed in Europe" (Larrain 1995, 277).

In the postmodern condition, there is an overwhelming sense of loss. The self has been decentered, metanarratives have been abandoned, and the world is in a chaotic moment. The only sanctuary one can find is in the world of discourses and discursive

practices. "Different" identities with a multiplicity of shifting subjectivities have become standard fare. However, as I have attempted to illustrate, the focus on "difference" and "identity" does not always yield progressive or transformative results. In the essay "Equality, Difference, and Radical Democracy," Nancy Fraser explains that difference is now perceived as "pertaining exclusively to culture"; what has resulted, then, is a theory that has abandoned "questions of difference from material inequality, power differentials among groups, and systemic relations of domination and subordination" (1990, 206). This focus on "culture" in relation to difference has many serious ramifications for Western feminist theory. If we continue to ignore the material or class conditions brought about by global capitalist domination, how can we ever begin to encompass the struggles of those most affected–specifically, Third World women? How can we claim to be sensitive to the "other" when we refuse to look at a metanarrative (like class) that might actually explain power relations between groups?

By rendering all differences the same or equal, feminism has begun to "lose its theoretical bite and become a mindless, empiricist celebration of all pluralities" (Benhabib 1996, 34). As global capitalism continues to prosper, and women's labor conditions continue to worsen, Western feminism needs a theory that incorporates both cultural and social/economic conditions. Fraser states, "Cultural differences can only be freely elaborated and democratically mediated on the basis of social equality" (1990, 207). Instead of looking at difference through a postmodern lens, Western feminists need to "develop an alternative version that permits us to make normative judgements about the value of different differences by interrogating their relation to equality" (207). In order to have a truly radical and transformative feminism that will actually benefit those other than in the academy, we must reject some of the ideas within postmodernism and begin to formulate new and fresh ideas, grounded in some form of social philosophy while simultaneously committed to social change.

American Cultures Program
Bowling Green State University, Ohio

REFERENCE LIST

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MARXIST FORUM

Nature, Society, and Thought initiated with vol. 6, no. 1 a special section called “Marxist Forum” to publish programmatic materials from political parties throughout the world that are inspired by the communist idea. This section makes available to our readers (insofar as space restrictions permit) a representative cross section of approaches by these parties and their members to contemporary problems, domestic and international. Our hope is to stimulate thought and discussion of the issues raised by these documents and we invite comments and responses from readers.

The World Economy: A Futile Search for Order

Chalapurath P. Chandrasekhar

The spring meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund this year have passed virtually unnoticed. This contrasts sharply with the hype that surrounded these joint biannual meetings of the Bretton Woods institutions immediately after the Mexican and East Asian crises broke. There were reasons for the importance they received. These institutions, especially the IMF, were directly involved in efforts to stall the downturn and trigger recovery in the afflicted economies. They were also the principal agents in efforts to prevent similar crises from occurring in other countries and regions of the world, since the spread of the contagion seemed to threaten the health of the developed countries as well. Not surprisingly, these institutions were at the forefront of efforts to work out a global response to what was widely seen as the primary cause for these crises, viz. the volatility of cross-border capital flows which had become crucial to global growth. They were the fountainheads in the search for a new "global financial architecture."

Tardy progress

Close to two years after the outbreak of the Asian crises, not much progress has been achieved on any of these fronts. The IMF's *World Economic Outlook* talks of the crisis in Asia having "bottomed out," since in the two economies where the Bretton Woods twins had a major role to play, viz. South Korea and Thailand, exchange rates have stabilised, interest rates are easing

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and industrial growth over two quarters has "risen" from hugely negative rates to zero or marginally positive levels. What the *Outlook* fails to stress is that even this minimal result is because of (i) the huge "managed" capital inflows that came with the adjustment package, and (ii) a substantial easing of the fiscal and monetary requirements which came with the original package, resulting in both significant fiscal deficits in these countries and in lower interest rates. If recovery is to ensue along this path, large deficits financed with capital flows, which are anathema to both the Fund and to private international capital, appear to be a prerequisite. Given that, a second crisis is as much of a possibility as recovery in these countries.

It is not just that recovery seems a tenuous prospect in these countries. The IMF's effort to "pre-empt" financial crises in other countries through the creation of a contingency credit facility, "available to countries with strong economic policies as a precautionary line of defence readily available against future balance of payments problems that may arise from international financial contagion," has been rendered meaningless by the Brazilian experience. Despite access to a similar facility, the effort to defend the Real [the Brazilian currency] deteriorated into a crisis.

Finally, the effort to forge a new global financial architecture has proved to be little more than a charade. That the IMF, private financial markets and many developed country government are against intervention in the functioning of capital markets is clear from the steps to be followed in creating this new architecture. According to the IMF's Managing Director they involve measures to increase the transparency of the system: providing more information, strengthening data standards and improving supervision. The system itself is to be left unchanged. Capital controls are to be avoided, by ensuring that financial liberalisation, including capital account liberalisation, which ostensibly "brings important benefits" is carefully managed.

Dominance of finance

What this "package" completely misses are the characteristics of the global financial system which triggered the wave of

financial crises during the 1990s (starting with Mexico and proceeding through Asia and Russia to Brazil). To start with, the current global financial system is characterised by a high degree of centralisation. With U.S. financial institutions intermediating global capital flows, the investment decisions of a few individuals in a few institutions virtually determines the nature of the "exposure" of the global financial system. Unfortunately, unregulated entities making huge profits on highly speculative investments are at the core of that system.

Further, once there are institutions that are free of the now-diluted regulatory system, even those that are more regulated are entangled in risky operations. They are entangled, because they themselves have lent large sums in order to benefit from the large returns the risky investments undertaken on their behalf by these institutions seem to promise. They are also entangled because the securities on which these institutions bet in a speculative manner are also securities that these banks hold as "safe investments." If changes in the environment force these institutions to dump some of their holdings to clear claims that are made on them, the prices of securities the banks directly hold tend to fall, affecting their assets position adversely. That is, there are two consequences of the new financial scenario: it is difficult to judge the actual volume and riskiness of the exposure of individual financial institutions; and within the financial world there is a complex web of entanglement with all firms mutually exposed, but each individual firm exposed to differing degree to any particular financial entity.

Finally, the rise to dominance of finance is a process which feeds on itself in complex ways. The explanation for the liberalisation wave in the developing countries is that this pyramidal growth of finance, which increased the fragility of the system, was seen as an opportunity. Enhanced flows to developing countries, initially in the form of debt and subsequently in the form of debt and portfolio investments was the consequence.

It should be clear that the current effort at creating a new international financial architecture hardly touches these problems. Therefore, it does not address the adverse growth implications of the rise of finance either. The 1990s, the decade

of globalisation, is likely to yield the worst decadal growth performance in recent history. Despite starting from an optimistic baseline scenario for 1999, even the IMF has been forced to arrive at this conclusion.

Unpredictable growth

The latest *World Economic Outlook*, prepared for the unusually low-key spring meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, notes that the "average annual world output growth in this decade is now estimated at only 3.1 per cent, which is below the average growth rates in the 1980s (3.4 per cent) and the 1970s (4.4 per cent)." The IMF's estimate for the 1990s it must be mentioned are based on a rate of growth of world output of 2.5 per cent in 1998 and 4.2 per cent in 1997. However, the World Trade Organisation, in a set of estimates released almost simultaneously, places output growth at 2 per cent in 1998 and 3 per cent in 1997. It is likely that the final estimates would settle somewhere between the two.

The second notable feature of the decade of globalisation is that the slowdown in growth has been accompanied by a high degree of volatility in a range of real and financial variables. World merchandise exports, for example, which registered annual rates of growth of between three and five per cent over the first four years of the 1990s (1990–1993), accelerated sharply to over ten per cent rate of growth in 1994. The rate of growth then fell to nine per cent in 1995 and 5.5 per cent in 1996, before rising to a remarkable 10.5 per cent in 1997 and collapsing to 3.5 per cent in 1998.

Interestingly, the swings in world trade appear to be related with a lag to capital flows to "emerging markets" (defined by the IMF to include the developing countries, countries in transition and South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Israel). Net capital flows to these countries, which averaged around 120 billion dollars in 1991 and 1992, rose sharply to 182 billion dollars (or by more than 50 per cent) in 1993, which was the year prior to the dramatic increase of the volume of world trade by more than ten per cent in 1994.

Capital flows then fell absolutely to 153 billion dollars in 1994, taking trade down with them in 1995. But when they rose again sharply to 193 billion dollars in 1995 and 212 billion dollars in 1996, trade flows recovered with a lag to once again register a dramatic growth of 10.5 per cent in 1997, which incidentally was the year of crisis in Asia. The crisis brought capital flows down to 149 billion dollars in 1997, before a collapse to 64 billion dollars in 1998, which once again brought the growth of world trade down to an estimated 3.5 per cent in 1998 and a projected 3.8 per cent in 1999.

For benefit of advanced countries

The links between the growth of world trade and capital flows are obvious enough. Easy access to international liquidity allows developing countries to ignore the danger of external vulnerability, leading to trade liberalisation and the profligate use of foreign exchange. Such profligacy was during the 1970s and 1980s, predominantly driven by the profligacy of governments, which explicitly or implicitly financed high fiscal deficits with borrowing from abroad. However, once it became clear that these countries would not be able to service the foreign exchange costs of foreign capital flows, investors and lenders turned wary, flows tended to dry up and balance of payments crises ensued. Not surprisingly a large number of developing countries had to turn to the IMF for balance of payments support, which made fiscal restraint the principal focus of conditional lending. To this was tagged a range of structural adjustment measures varying from trade liberalisation to financial liberalisation.

Liberalisation as a quid pro quo for access to finance served the developed countries well. It not merely gave them access to markets and resources in the developing countries, but it also ensured that these countries acquired the foreign exchange to finance their rising import bills on terms which involved an implicit sovereign guarantee. And to the extent that such inflows were inadequate to finance their foreign exchange profligacy, policies aimed at pushing out exports were adopted by them. For most developing countries, the easiest exports to push out were primary commodities.

With world growth slowing and primary product export volumes rising, primary commodity prices have on average tended to fall and the terms of trade have shifted sharply against them in favour of manufactured exports. According to the WTO: "Oil prices fell by 30 per cent and non-oil commodity prices by 20 per cent in 1998, with very different implications for various countries and regions of the world. While the share of primary commodities (including processed food) in world merchandise trade was only slightly above one-fifth in 1997, it was more than two-thirds for the Middle East, Africa and Latin America (excluding Mexico). In a sample of 91 developing countries, 67 of them recorded a share of primary products in total merchandise exports above 50 per cent, reaching as high as 95 per cent in some cases." These recent declines in oil and non-fuel commodity prices come in the wake a collapse of oil prices in the first half of the 1980s, which has nor since been redressed, and an almost secular decline in non-fuel commodity prices since 1973. Such declines in commodity prices obviously help keep inflation down in the developed industrial countries.

Free flow of capital

The combination of greater access to newly liberalised markets on the one hand and cheap primary commodities on the other, won widespread developed-country backing for IMF-supervised lending to countries strapped for foreign exchange. Since the movement of capital was crucial to the realisation of this twin benefit, the removal of constraints to the free flow of capital became a principal plank of the developed country agenda. Not merely did structural adjustment programmes make financial liberalisation in developing countries a key requirement, but even countries that did not face balance of payments difficulties were under pressure to open up their financial sector. Thus, successful exporters like South Korea with current account surpluses, were encouraged to opt for financial liberalisation in return for unhindered access to developed country markets. They in turn chose to liberalise with the hope that they could prove to be major financial centres in a world dominated by financial flows.

What the IMF and its backers had not prepared themselves for was the fact that as countries embraced financial liberalisation, and hastened the process of globalisation of finance, private borrowers in developing countries were no more constrained by their State from accessing international liquidity. Such access was now completely unrelated to the purposes to which international liquidity was put. With interest rates in developing countries ruling well above those in developed country markets, capital was accessed at low rates of interest for undertaking risky investments, including investment in real estate and stock market speculation, where returns were high so long as a speculative boom was sustained. With investments in non-tradables not yielding foreign exchange revenues at the margin, most countries saw their current account deficits widen or their current account surpluses transform into deficits.

These deficits were ignored so long as investor confidence was sustained. But the moment such confidence was undermined, current account deficits became an indicator of the inability of these countries to meet the foreign exchange costs of their capital inflows. There were indeed a wide range of factors that could trigger a collapse of investor confidence, varying from peasant unrest, to the collapse of a speculative boom in stock or real estate markets, to bankruptcies of financial institutions that had made risky investments based on international borrowing.

Whatever the trigger, two consequences ensured. First, a panic withdrawal of foreign capital, leading to a collapse in currency values. And, second, a phase of severe contraction, needed to reduce imports to levels which could be financed by the much reduced access to foreign capital. This sequence of events, which tends to be repeated (as in Mexico, East Asia, Russia and Brazil) in a world economy virtually driven by capital flows, inevitably leads to enhanced volatility in capital flows, exchange rates, output growth and trade flows.

It is not merely that the same story repeats itself in different forms, but that such repetition makes investors virtually search for signs of an impending downturn. Waves of panic become the norm, and periodic crises in different contexts are treated as being part of a single crisis spreading through “contagion.”

However interpreted by markets, the end result is the same. The era of globalisation is characterised by a combination of slow growth and enhanced volatility, because both the North and the South come to be characterised by an almost addictive dependence on capital mobility.

It is this dependence which defines the current search for a solution to the problems of slow growth and enhanced volatility associated with globalisation. The solution being sought is not one which does away with the system's dependence on capital flows, but one which allows mobile capital to drive the system, while preventing it from being "misused." Means to ensure transparency and prudence lie at the core of the proposed solutions.

What is conveniently ignored is that in the world of finance, context defines all. An investment considered prudent when the going is good, turns imprudent when hardship arrives. Or a firm (like Long Term Capital Management [LTCM) considered an exemplar in better times, turns rogue trader when calamity strikes. To try and build a world of purely safe investments and well behaved financial agents, is to launch on a futile search for a boom-time freeze. The spring meetings of the Fund and the Bank were one more in the various fruitless attempts at such a search. Not surprisingly, they have been virtually ignored.

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Centre for Economic Studies and Planning
Jawaharlal Nehru University

BOOKS AND IDEAS

by Herbert Aptheker

Ossie and Ruby: Their life together

With Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together (New York: William Morrow, 1999, 476 pp.), Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee have produced a marvelous book. The tone is set in the page preceding the text. It is from Ossie:

> Be not deceived
> The Struggle is far from over,
> The best of being Black is yet to be–
> So said the Ones who Died to set you free.

Each writes a separate chapter. From both one gets frankness, honesty, penetration. The writing is unsparing of self and of society; the work transports one with its sincerity and beauty. The book is the kind you want to share with a loved one.

Ossie–out of Georgia, with splendid and militant parents–is the first in the family to go to college–to Howard University when Sterling Brown and Alain Locke were among its teachers. Learning here, with such mentors, thrilled him. Thus: "It was the Romantics, especially Keats, striding off the page, like fairy princes, who stooped to kiss a little black boy awake."

Ossie heard Marian Anderson that great day in 1939 when she sang at Lincoln's monument (the DAR having refused Constitution Hall):

> I remember most that voice, that indescribable voice that held seventy-five thousand people in its arms and rocked

> us like a baby. It inspired us, calmed our fears, and carried us to the mountaintop, the same one Martin Luther King climbed in Memphis, the night before he died. It was what Abraham Lincoln would have said, with just such grace and gravity, had he sung the Gettysburg Address instead of saying it. Tears, not of sorrow but of exaltation flowed down many a face, black and white, my own included. It was for me an act of defiance, with its own salute to the black Struggle. It married in my mind forever the performing arts as a weapon in the struggle for freedom. It made a connection that, for me and thousands of other artists, has never been severed. It was a proclamation and a commitment. I have been in love with Marian Anderson ever since. . . . It reminded me that whatever I said and whatever I did as an artist was an integral part of my people's struggle to be free.

The writing is unsparing, as in its description of Ossie's drinking fits–with Ruby rescuing him. The religion of the Black folk inspired them: "Seeing the white oppressor hurled from his throne down into the darkest pits of hell Sunday after Sunday was the essence of our religion."

Ruby's pages are filled with keen insight and deep passion, especially in her writing of their children. Appreciation, too, of fellow artists fills the pages; the writing on Richard Widmark, for example, was striking. Her characterizations of Ossie–his failings and his genius–and her love for him, are done especially well.

Illumination fills the book's pages, as in the characterization of the actor Howard DaSilva. The pages on the dynamic 1960s are as dramatic as that decade. Ruby: "We blacks had a sense that we and our agony and our fate were being taken seriously, in a way that had never happened before." Of course, it was not permanent, but it did produce lasting benefits.

Ossie's depiction of racism's impact upon its victims is sharp. He quotes Paul Laurence Dunbar's "We Wear the Mask" and adds that at times the peril was that the mask becomes us. Still, the lives of Ruby and Ossie show the reality and beauty of the mask's defeat.

I spent a good part of my life listening to W. E. B. Du Bois and editing his writings and correspondence. Nothing from him is better than this joint work. Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee have lived fruitful, exciting, and beautiful lives. Their book does those lives justice.

Indefatigable historian

William Loren Katz has produced scores of books during the past several decades illustrating the significant and shamefully neglected history of African-American people. His works always are profusely illustrated, carefully documented, and deeply challenging. The writing is straightforward; analysis is at a minimum, for the aim is to instruct youngsters of high school age.

The latest example of Katz's remarkable productivity is *Black Pioneers: An Untold Story* (New York: Athenaeum, 1999). The cloth-bound volume of almost 200 pages is profusely illustrated and is priced at $17. It is recommended warmly; while it is aimed at "young adults," readers of all ages will be instructed and pleased with the volume.

The book concentrates on the old "northwest territory," meaning Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, Kansas, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. It terminates with a splendid account of the Civil War years, and the Black participation therein: Lincoln had occasion twice to state that their role was indispensable to Union victory.

I cannot imagine a more worthwhile and exciting gift for teenagers than Katz's *Black Pioneers*.

A murderer finally dies

In March 1999, Sidney Gottlieb died. The obituary notice in the New York *Times* (March 10) supplied a few details on the life of this person who in 1973 was awarded by the CIA the Distinguished Intelligence Medal.

The *Times* conveys some idea of the work which earned Gottlieb this medal. He was responsible for giving mind-altering drugs "to hundreds of unsuspecting Americans," many being "mental patients, prisoners, drug addicts and prostitutes–people who could not fight back."

The *Times* continues that under Gottlieb's direction, the CIA conducted 149 separate mind-control experiments; in many cases these involved "unwitting subjects." Government documents show that "at least one participant died, others went mad, and still others suffered psychological damage." Dr. Gottlieb concluded these tests in 1972, finding "the experiments were useless."

The report noted that these experiments "clearly violated the Nuremberg standards–the standards under which, after World War II, we executed Nazi doctors for crimes against humanity." Gottlieb, this report notes, was involved in several assassination plots–especially aimed at Lumumba of the Congo and Fidel Castro.

After retiring, Gottlieb worked in his last years in a leper colony in India and finally "in a hospice, tending to the dying." The family has declined to state the site of his burial or the cause of his death.

An instructive account of the murderous activities of Gottlieb and of the CIA is offered in John Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate": The CIA and Mind Control* (1979; reissue New York: Norton, 1991). Gottlieb refused to be interviewed by Marks, and many of the relevant documents were destroyed by the CIA. But enough remains for Marks to show systematic murder and experimentation upon scores of involuntary victims (especially African-Americans). He shows the CIA instructing agencies of foreign governments in murder, and directing sabotage against Cuba, starting in 1961 and continuing for years in such efforts as creating epidemics among cattle and directing sabotage against cargo destined for Cuba.

One sympathizes with Gottlieb's spending his last years tending to the dying. Still, with the record of Gottlieb's activities on behalf of the U.S. government, one doubts that even especially merciful angels of the Lord found it possible to forgive him.

Urban culture wars

Robin D. G. Kelley, a young professor at New York University, produced in 1990 an excellent study–*Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill:

University of North Carolina Press). His recent *Yo Mama's Disfunktional! Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), an examination of "the culture wars in urban America," is a worthy successor.

Kelley sees "this book as a defense of black people's humanity," especially vital now as one faces the devastation of the Reagan-Bush counterrevolution. Between 1980 and 1993 "salaries for American CEOs increased by 514 percent while workers' wages rose by 65 percent–well behind inflation." Indeed in 1992, "the average CEO earned *157 times* what the average factory worker earned."

The social devastation wrought by this merciless assault cries out for a "social movement with a radical democratic vision." A major strength of this book is its emphasis on the work of such Black women as Patricia Hill Collins, Alice Walker, Pauli Murray, and Audre Lord. That radical literary development mirrors and was inspired by heroic battles of Black women workers who now "make up 37 percent of organized labor's membership"–the highest figure in history.

The book's information bulwarks its conclusion of a confident future. There is, Kelley writes, enough strength in rising Black militance to "put up a good fight against the right-wing, racist onslaught we now face." This study of "the culture wars in urban America" is solidly based and superbly argued. Its bibliographic section is full and sharp. Why the work of the late Philip Foner and of this reviewer is omitted, however, is inexplicable.

Capitalism's "prosperity"

Appropriations for armaments by the federal government have reached unprecedented sums, surpassed only in years of full-scale warfare. Simultaneously, despite the prosperity blessing this bastion of the free world, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Andrew Cuomo, issued in April a study of "Places Left Behind in the New Economy." As far as I know, this very important news was noted only by Bob Herbert in his occasional column in the New York *Times* (29 April 1999).

Here one learns that, according to this official report, "throughout the nation" there exist "high unemployment areas"

ranging from an astonishing 42.8 percent in Miami to about 19 percent in Yuma, Arizona, and the same in Madera, California. Unemployment in the heart of ghetto areas is not in the report, perhaps because a significant fraction of their population is imprisoned.

Since this is an official report one hesitates to suggest the full reality of unemployment despite exceptional capitalist prosperity. But even this administration document does conclude: "The great project of our nation–extending opportunity to all–remains incomplete." This observation hides the "great project" of those who rule the United States–their enrichment through that domination at the expense of tens of millions.

Washington's death squads

In an earlier column (*NST*, vol. 10, no. 3) attention was called to the exposé, published in the *Newsletter of the Organization of American Historians*, of the activities of the CIA in supporting sabotage efforts against the Cuban government headed by Castro. There also attention was called to the publication in *Record*, issued by the National Archive and Records Administration, of proof of Washington's involvement in the overthrow of the progressive Arbenz government in Guatemala.

Now, in the June 1999 *Harper's Magazine*, Kate Doyle provides decisive evidence of the slaughter of scores of thousands of peasants and suspected opponents of the dictatorial regime in Guatemala. Here torture preceded execution. The overthrow of Arbenz and the maintenance through terror of the Washington-favored murderous government was criminal behavior mimicking the atrocities of Hitler. A few of the perpetrators in the latter case were tried and executed. What will be the fate of Washington-financed murderers and of those who employed them?

Book Reviews

Beyond Postcolonial Theory. By E. San Juan. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. 325 pages, cloth $35; paper $19.95.

The recent rise to prominence of Third World scholarship within academia has crystallized around a series of issues broadly known as "postcolonial studies." Since authors associated with this trend purport, in different ways, to speak for and about the Third World, it becomes imperative for us to address the claims being made under this "new" framework. More importantly, we need to understand the political implications of postcolonial studies and postcolonial theory, both inside and outside the academic context. This is the focus of San Juan's impressive book, *Beyond Postcolonial Theory*. Through a meticulously argued set of essays, the book seeks to situate postcoloniality as "a moment in this worldwide crisis of late imperial culture," and to offer a critical explanation for "postcolonial theory's claim to institutional authority."

The essays, published over the past several years, are organized around specific themes: chapters one and three deal with the politics of representation of the Third World; chapters four and five address the contours of cultural politics in the United States, especially with regard to multiculturalism, racism, and the Asian-American experience; chapters six and eight highlight broader issues of globalization and the nation-state. While chapter two is directly concerned with the struggles of the Filipino people, the image of the Philippines is present throughout the book, allowing the author to pose questions about the relationships among imperialism, advanced capitalism, and the politics of resistance. Similarly, although chapter seven is explicitly

dedicated to an analysis of the work of the Trinidadian intellectual C. L. R. James, the role of intellectuals seeking to form broad-based historical alliances–be they among subjugated peoples of the Third World, between the oppressed masses of the North and South, or between universalist racism and capitalist subjugation–is a concern that informs the core arguments of the book.[1]

San Juan's position is most clearly stated early on: "despite its prima facie radicalism, I contend that in general postcolonial discourse mystifies the political/ideological effects of Western postmodernist hegemony and prevents change." While on the surface this may seem an excessive charge, it is a valid argument to pursue given postcolonial theory's antisocialist orientation in general and its attempts to rearticulate in Third Worldist form the central tenets of bourgeois liberalism. In its very negation of popular and national liberation struggles, and admiration for a romantic and idealist politics associated with identity and cultural difference, postcolonial theory serves to mask the brutal contours of contemporary capitalist restructuring while it applauds and endorses the indeterminacy of social relations and the limitless agency of the individual subject.

All of this, of course, sits well with the hegemonic notions of consumer choice, neoliberalism, and the "flexibility" of transnational capital. San Juan's project is thus twofold: to repudiate the epistemological and political claims made by postcolonial theory, and to argue that historical-materialist theory offers a better explanation of the intricate connections among human agency, cultural production, and revolutionary transformations.

One of the strengths of postcolonial theory has been its radical questioning of Eurocentric and imperialist discourses about the Third World. While this impulse is laudatory, as San Juan argues, postcolonial studies has placed undue emphasis on the politics of representation and the radical incongruity of the self/other binary. Issues of class formation, racism, and neocolonialism are displaced onto the politics of language and deconstruction. Furthermore, attempts to grasp the totality of the social relations in the non-European world are declared, *tout court*, to be oppressive. San Juan then questions whether it is

possible, given such posturing by postcolonial theorists, for Third World natives to comprehend and make sense of their world, and in the process critique the myriad of oppressive regimes under which they live and struggle. He points to concrete examples in the works of Rigoberta Menchu, C. L. R. James, and Maria Barros, where he finds neither a concern with the indeterminacy of language nor romanticist notions of place. Instead, these writers pursue a deeper project aiming to articulate how individuals and peoples strive to build alliances that challenge the concrete conditions under which exploitative relations and polities are reproduced.

Nowhere is the deradicalizing move of postcolonial studies more manifest than in its formulation of the "subaltern" question. Popularized in western academia through the interventions of the Indian Subaltern Studies group, "subaltern" has become a vacuous description of anyone subjugated, marginalized, or oppressed in colonial and postcolonial contexts. Further, those seeking to comprehend the politics of subalternity are deemed Eurocentric, since they seek to represent peoples who ostensibly exist outside and beyond European categories.

In opposition to this reification of peoples into fixed categories, San Juan argues (chapter three) that the original formulations of Gramsci on the subaltern question were both complex and central to his analyses of peasant-proletarian alliances. Gramsci's position toward subalternity was ambivalent as he strove to underscore its positive and radical impulses while at the same time deploring the parochialness and disorganized nature of subaltern militancy. San Juan points out forcefully that for Gramsci, subalternity was a political/ideological moment that is broken when a historic bloc strives to achieve critical self-consciousness. But this can only be achieved through organizational discipline and broad-based ethicopolitical activity, whether undertaken by intellectuals or a political party. This is precisely what different activists/intellectuals (see San Juan's discussion of Nawal el Saadawi, Paolo Freire, and Leslie Silko) have done. For them, it is less a question of who is speaking on behalf of the marginalized or what frameworks are being used,

but rather what kind of concrete political/ideological issues oppressed peoples' representations address.

Moving from the periphery to the center, one sees a similar problematic at play in the heated debates over multiculturalism in the United States. Multiculturalism, San Juan argues, has sought to achieve hegemonic stature in a country fundamentally structured by class politics and racism (chapters four and five). Cultural pluralism has gained ascendancy just as anti-immigrant policies are being reconstituted and deployed. As San Juan points out, the idea of one culture being equal to all others is derived from the logic and centrality of commodity fetishism under capitalism. Antagonism and hierarchy, whether of classes or peoples subjugated/oppressed in various ways, are displaced into a discourse of difference and mutual respect. In the process, the historical specificity of racism and its dynamic interaction with class struggle in the U.S. context are erased. This is further compounded through a lack of attention to immigration policies, which have constantly shifted in response to U.S. capital-wage labor relations, and which play a key role in the production and reproduction of human subjects as "racialized" beings.

Through its refusal to link issues of "identity" to questions of political economy, multiculturalism in its various forms ends up valorizing cultural difference as an end in itself. Just as the commodity is taken for granted and seen as exchangeable with every other commodity (expanded value), a similar operation is performed in evaluating different cultures. However, just as money under capitalism comes to assume the role of representing the value of all other commodities, multiculturalism would seem to require a similar criterion to help us deal with issues of cultural "sameness" and difference. The multiculturalist, however, would be loathe to invoke such a criterion because it would mean affirming European or American imperial culture. The only option left, San Juan argues, is the hope that the endless array of cultural artifacts produced on a day-to-day basis will "do away with hierarchy, with domination and subordination."

The case of Asian Americans (chapter five) provides San Juan with a manifest example of the inadequacies of multiculturalism.[2] Arguing that it would be better to conceive of

Asian-Americans as an internal colony, he outlines the importance of specifying the nature of settler-colonial formations and the centrality of linkages between periphery and center. This would work well against melting-pot ideology, which continues to be recycled in many forms, with assimilation into a "common" or "national" culture seen as the end point. In the face of this, postcolonial and postmodern theorizing seeks to emphasize the ephemeral, the hybrid and slippery nature of immigrant identities. But these idealist formulations cannot deal with the real issues confronting Asian Americans: significant poverty, lumpenization, and marginalization on one side, and the rise of neoconservative Asian-American political groupings (the model minority) and the growth of anti-immigrant racism on the other. Thus, precisely when historically attuned research linking political economy to cultural struggles is extremely important, emphasizing cultural pluralism only serves to reinforce the status quo.

Broadly summarizing, San Juan's analysis concludes the following: just as capitalism thrives through the endless production of commodities, each (while unique) is nonetheless subject to the laws of value and appropriation of surplus labor. So this endless parade of cultural uniqueness and difference sits well with the logic of capital accumulation, caught as it is within the hegemonic confines of a society organized around hierarchy, exploitation, stigmatization, and exclusion. For academics, dissatisfied both with capitalism and any alternative future, the choice leads in two directions. It leads either to an emphasis on cultural difference/incongruity wrapped within the idea of multiculturalism or, alternatively, to arguments that posit the impossibility of truly representing the voices and struggles of exploited peoples anywhere. Here, then, within the belly of the beast, the politics of representation is conjoined with the multicultural imaginary, and postcolonial theory and cultural pluralism move to reinforce one another.

Most of these debates have been significantly reformulated and given new life in contemporary discussions about globalization and in pronouncements about the end of the nation-state (chapters six and eight). For San Juan, globalization is nothing

but "imperialism for the twenty-first century." His larger concern is to emphasize how the struggle over the nature of the nation-state continues to remain the central problematic for progressive politics. This is not nostalgic longing for place, but rather is central to any comprehensive understanding of sovereignty and independence in a world wracked by the dictates of transnational capital and the World Bank. Theorists ranging from Fanon, to Bakhtin, to Che Guevara and Fidel Castro, San Juan shows, are concerned to delineate the importance of conjoining the "I/we the people/nation" as the means through which the struggle against capitalism and imperialism is articulated and concretely realized. Postcolonial theory, while celebrating the end of the nation-state, highlights the magical qualities of transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, and diaspora. It evades the fact that the majority of contemporary migrants who form these diasporas live in wretched conditions, are superexploited (see his discussion of sex workers), and do not even have the time to enjoy the libidinal pleasures that are the ostensible hallmarks of globalization and postmodernity. The central political question of how one can even begin to imagine "the end of empire" is not even raised within the framework of postcolonial theory. Thus postcolonial studies is rather a self-serving discourse, less about global realities and more attuned to the needs and dilemmas of academic intellectuals.

The arguments that are raised throughout the book are nothing short of impressive. To be fair, though, let me point out that San Juan's impassioned and well-thought-out exegesis suffers at times from daunting language that threatens to undercut the tenor of his writing. This is compounded also by unnecessarily long detours that navigate the length and breadth of Marxian political economy (commodity-form, value-form, fetishism, money-form, value theory, etc.) and by shoddy editorial work (repetitious arguments). Despite that, this book of essays is profoundly dialectical as it moves within and across several levels of analysis: contemporary capitalism and colonial pasts; center and periphery; intellectuals and subalterns; World Bank policies and revolutionary struggles. San Juan highlights the continued importance of historical-materialist theory in providing a much

better analysis of contemporary transformations and restructuring than is provided by postcolonial theory. Further, he brings back into the debates on cultural studies key figures of twentieth-century revolutionary politics who pose awkward questions and threaten to destabilize the individualist frameworks of contemporary theorizing. It should be essential reading for activists and academics alike who are interested in issues of postcoloniality, imperialism, cultural politics, Asian American sociopolitical formations, multiculturalism, and socialist imaginaries.

Ananth Aiyer
Department of Anthropology
Temple University, Philadelphia

NOTES

1. Constraints of space do not allow me to do justice to the range of theories, philosophers, and ideas that San Juan engages with in the book. Consequently, I make no mention of his lengthy discussions of Althusser, Bakhtin, Bhabha, C. L. R. James, Fanon, Marx, etc. Neither do I deal with his important arguments surrounding the reconfiguration of the "Third World," racialized subject-formation, the dynamics of the law of value, and commodity fetishism. What I focus upon are the ways in which San Juan demonstrates how postcolonial theory displaces political questions and reinforces notions of individualist liberalism.

2. Chapters four and five are too multifaceted to be adequately summarized here. San Juan does us an invaluable service by mapping out the broad spectrum that makes up U.S. multicultural politics and its relationship to issues to immigration, state and civil society, consumer culture, etc. He provides in chapter five powerful critiques of a large body of theoretical and literary works on the Asian America experience.

ABSTRACTS

***Frank Kofsky and Dominic Cerri,* "Truman and the 1951 War Scare."** In 1951, President Truman sent to Congress a bill to lower the age of eligibility for induction into the military, extend the term of service for inductees, and establish a system of universal military training for young men. These measures were unpopular with the country at large. The war scare of 1951 was the administration's attempt to reverse this profoundly unpromising situation. The authors describe how this war scare was generated and how it subsequently backfired.

Stephan Lieske, "The Origin of the Historical Novel: A Marxist Explanation." The rise of the historical novel, as well as of a new form of historiography at the end of the eighteenth century, is related to the development of industrial capitalism and the industrial working class. Modern capitalism is shown to be the social basis that found its theoretical representation in, for example, the Scottish philosophical historians and Hegel, and its artistic representation in the historical novel.

Richard Curtis, "The Essence of Religion: Homo Religiosus in a Dialectical-Material World." The nonexistence of God does not answer the great questions in the history of religion, but asks more. The fundamental nature of reality is material and dialectical. Perhaps, then, what we have called religious behavior is the functionally necessary behavior of humans coping with a seemingly mysterious world. From the dialectical-materialist point of view, three levels of religious expression are necessary to all societies: the Social, the Existential, and the Aesthetic.

András Gedő, "Why Marx or Nietzsche?" The desire for reconciling Marx with Nietzsche, for abandoning the issue, Marx or Nietzsche, came forth perhaps never so plainly in the history of the debates about Nietzsche and Marx as today. At the same

time, the alternative, either Marx or Nietzsche, was perhaps never so visibly in the focus of the philosophical debates. As a result of the rejection of the exclusive alternative of the philosophies of Marx and Nietzsche, Marx was even earlier subsumed under the traditional readings of Lebensphilosophie, so there were molded the trio Marx-Kierkegaard-Nietzsche, later Marx-Nietzsche-Freud, set up as paradigms of the interpretation of Marx. The philosophical Marx-Nietzsche controversy implies the awareness of the fact that Marx is the alternative to Nietzsche.

Anne E. Lacsamana, "Has Feminist Theory `Lost the Forest for the Trees'? A Critique of Postmodern/Postcolonial Feminism in the West." Since the 1980s, U.S. feminist theory has been strongly influenced by postmodernist thought. This paper seeks to understand whether or not the postmodern turn in ¬feminist scholarship can thoroughly account for the changes occurring in the lives of Third World women, who perform the majority of the world's labor in the wake of globalized capitalism. By discounting the usefulness of totalizing theories (like Marxism) in favor of fragmented, disjointed, discursive analyses, postmodernism functions as a conservatizing theory. The author contends, therefore, that U.S. feminist theory needs to rethink its current fascination with postmodernism if it is to be a truly radical and transformative social movement.

Chalapureth P. Chandrasekhar, "The World Economy: A Futile Search For Order." The author, an Indian Marxist economist, reviews the principal features of the current decade of globalization that led to the Asian financial crisis. He discusses the efforts by the international financial and trade agencies to deal with the current crisis and to prevent future crises. He concludes that the current effort at creating a new international financial architecture hardly touches these problems and therefore cannot succeed.

ABREGES

Frank Kofsky and Dominic Cerri, «||Le Président Truman et la peur de guerre en 1951||» En 1951, le Président Truman

envoya au Congrès un projet de loi pour baisser l'âge d'induction dans les forces militaires, étendre le terme de service des soldats, et établir un système de formation militaire universelle pour les jeunes gens. Ces mesures n'étaient pas populaires dans le pays. La peur de guerre en 1951 était la tentative de l'administration de renverser cette situation pas du tout prometteuse. Les auteurs décrivent comment cette peur de guerre se générait et puis s'échoua.

Stephan Lieske, «||L'origine du roman historique: Une explication marxiste||» L'ascendance du roman historique ainsi que d'une nouvelle forme de l'historiographie á la fin du dix-huitième siècle, est liée au développement du capitalisme industriel et de la classe ouvrière industrielle. L'auteur démontre que le capitalisme moderne est la base sociale qui a trouvé sa représentation théorique, par exemple, dans les historiens philosophiques écossais et Hegel, et sa représentation artistique dans le roman historique.

Richard Curtis, «||L'Essence de religion: Homo Religiosus dans un monde matérielle dialectique||» La non-existence de Dieu ne répond pas aux grandes questions dans l'histoire de la religion, mais en pose davantage. La nature fondamentale de la réalité est matérielle et dialectique. Puis, ce que nous avons appelé le comportement religieux est peut-être le comportement fonctionnel nécessaire aux êtres humains pour se débrouiller dans un monde d'apparence myst_rieuse. D'un point de vue matérialiste, trois niveaux d'expression religieuse sont indispensables à toute société: le social, l'existentiel et l'esthétique.

András Gedő, «||Pourquoi Marx ou Nietzsche?||» Le désir de réconcilier Marx et Nietzsche, d'abandonner la question «||Marx ou Nietzsche||» n'a peut-être jamais été si fort qu'actuellement dans l'histoire des discussions à propos de Nietzsche et de Marx. En même temps, les querelles philosophiques ne se sont jamais autant focalisées sur l'alternative : Marx ou Nietzsche. Conséquemment au rejet de l'alternative exclusive des philosophies de Marx et Nietzsche, Marx a même été incorporé plus tôt aux lectures traditionnelles de la philosophie de la vie. Donc on a composé le

trio Marx-Kierkegaard-Nietzsche, puis Marx-Nietzsche-Freud, comme paradigmes de l'interprétation de Marx. La controverse philosophique Marx-Nietzsche implique la conscience du fait que Marx est l'alternative de Nietzsche.

Anne E. Lacsamana, «||La théorie féministe, a-t-elle «||perdu la «||forêt au profit des arbres»? Une critique du féminisme occidental postmoderne/postcolonial||» Depuis les années quatre-vingt, la théorie féministe aux Etats-Unis a été fortement influencée par la pensée postmoderne. Ce papier tente de comprendre si, oui ou non, la tournure postmoderne dans l'érudition féministe peut parfaitement rendre compte des changements dans la vie des femmes du Tiers Monde, qui font la plus grande partie du travail de la planète dans le sillage d'un capitalisme globalisé. En ne tenant pas compte de l'utilité des théories totalisantes (comme le marxisme) au profit d'analyses fragmentées, incohérentes ou décousues, le postmodernisme apparaît comme théorie plutôt conservatisante. L'auteur soutient donc que la théorie féministe aux Etats-Unis a besoin de repenser sa fascination actuelle pour le postmodernisme, si elle veut devenir un mouvement social vraiment radical et transformateur.

Chalapurath P. Chandrasekhar, «||L'Economie mondiale: Une recherche vaine de l'ordre||» L'auteur, économiste marxiste Indien, passe en revue les traits principaux de la décennie courante de globalisation qui a mené à la récente crise financière asiatique. Il discute des efforts des organismes internationaux financiers et commerciaux pour gérer la crise actuelle et empêcher des crises futures. Il conclut que cet effort actuel de créer une nouvelle organisation internationale financière n'est pas à la hauteur de ces problèmes, et donc ne peut pas réussir.

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