

T.H. GREEN AND THE BRITISH LIBERAL TRADITION

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Whatever else T.H. Green might be, he is an anomalous figure. A hybrid of the Utilitarian and Idealist schools, it can be said of him what Marx said of Bentham: he "could only have been manufactured in England." He is, consequently, a solitary figure. His Idealist disciples, principally Bradley and Bosanquet, moved off into realms rather more ethereal than the one he had trodden while liberals such as Hobhouse shifted toward the 'mundane'. Everyone (including a Prime Minister, Lord Asquith) paid tribute to him but no one really followed him; hence, his legacy is both diverse and elusive. It is, therefore, not the easiest of tasks to define just how, or why, Green is important to the British liberal tradition, although it is generally assumed that he is. Toward such definition, Phillip Hansen's article, 'T.H. Green and the Moralization of the Market' makes a useful contribution.* However, I cannot totally agree with Hansen's assessment of Green. I think he miscalculates the *nature* of the man's importance and, in doing so, implies a view of nineteenth century British liberalism which is unrealistic. In this paper I should like to suggest an alternative assessment of Green's significance, and of the tradition of which he is a part.

My disagreement with Hansen really concerns his 'rating' of Green as a liberal theorist. "Certainly", he writes (p. 91), "Green understood the dynamics of capitalism much better than did other liberal theorists, particularly the Utilitarians." In my opinion, the degree of certainty displayed in this judgment is matched only by the extent to which it is debatable. In opposition to it, I would contend that, *especially* compared to the Utilitarians, Green had a very meagre comprehension of the dynamics of capitalism. His defence of it, and of liberal democracy, is not so much "sophisticated" (p. 92) as blind. It is this reversal of judgment which leads to an assessment of Green's significance which differs, at least in emphasis, from Hansen's.

I

At the outset, a brief comment on the term 'Utilitarian' is necessary. My concern is not with what it implies but to whom it is applied. Hansen, for

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example, appends it to Hume (p. 95), which is stretching the case. John Stuart Mill had most to do with appropriating the term for a particular school of thought and it is unlikely that he intended the designation to extend back beyond Bentham.¹ The limitation is reasonable since it was Bentham who broke conclusively with natural law theory and established a wholly materialist system based on the principle of utility. Pain and pleasure were the constant 'sovereign masters' which guided his development from a Tory legal reformer to a radical democrat, via a decade and a half's immersion in political economy. In this way, he was distinct from earlier British 'Utilitarians', Hume among them, who were partially located in a natural law universe. Hence, I shall restrict my comments on Utilitarianism to Bentham and his somewhat heretical 'successor', John Stuart Mill.

For his part, Bentham displayed a remarkably precise understanding of early-nineteenth century capitalism. From the 1790's, one of his principal concerns was to indicate how an efficient market could be established, that is how the economy could be perfected, and the political barriers which prevented it be removed. Of Bentham's economic writings, virtually nothing can be said here; he wrote too widely on the subject to allow of any brief summary. All that can be noted is that his works stemmed from a vision of a society haunted by chronic scarcity, most concretely and starkly in the form of overpopulation. Consequently, the main social priority was the expansion of production; the feudal fetters to the accumulation and employment of capital had to be broken. This he set out to do, opposing what restricted the flow of capital (laws against usury, primogeniture) and supporting what stimulated it (laws of escheat). Generally, Bentham favoured a policy of *laissez-faire* which he thought would allow the countless individual calculations of pain and pleasure to give rise to a more productive (and therefore happier) society. Politically, this led Bentham along the road to democracy, for which his *Plan of Parliamentary Reform* is perhaps the seminal document — far more so than James Mill's more famous *Essay On Government* which pulls up short of Bentham's work on a number of points.² His contention was that government had to be placed under the scrutiny of the whole of the adult population³ as a guarantee against rule by "sinister interests". Specifically, the argument was directed against the control of the non-productive, aristocracy/landholder class.⁴ In short, Bentham argued that democracy involved transferring political power to the productive part of the community, to the capitalists and wage-earners.

In other words, Bentham found that liberal democracy was necessary to the further development of capitalism. In fact, democratic capitalism seemed to represent the epitome of social stability: he had little understanding of the problems to which it would give rise. There are, however, good historical reasons for this. In the first place, Bentham's primary political opponent was a feudal remnant, the aristocracy/landholder class mentioned above. For him

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the bourgeoisie and the as yet ill-formed⁵ working class were part of a 'productive alliance' against its parasitical life-style. Given this anti-feudal context, one can scarcely expect Bentham to have seen very clearly the fundamental nature of the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, especially since the latter was still hardly discernible as a class. So far as he was concerned, both capitalist and wage-earner stood to gain by removing control of the government from unproductive hands. If their relationship involved a contradiction, it was secondary to their shared interest. This is underscored by the fact that, in Bentham's day, the forces of production were still relatively undeveloped.⁶ He had, for example, little idea of the impact machinery would soon have on the process of production.⁷ This too obscured the extent of the opposition between capital and labour; it simply had not developed to the point where a Marx could meticulously analyze it. This is not to say that Bentham was totally unaware of the 'transfer of power' involved in the relations of production; only that he thought it to everyone's advantage to accept it.⁸ In his terms, such a transfer was part of a market which created a surplus of pleasure over pain. What this represents is not a failure to understand the dynamics of capitalism, but an understanding of them within certain historical limits. However one judges Bentham, that much credit should be accorded him.

I would therefore argue that Bentham had a very good comprehension of the capitalism of his day, of the way in which wealth was amassed under it, how it was distributed and the kind of political machinery it required. Most of what he did not see he cannot reasonably have been expected to see. His is a very complete theory of early-nineteenth century capitalism, one which supported Ricardo and, in a different way, Marx.

The degree to which Mill backtracked on Bentham is still insufficiently recognized. Indeed, commentators on Mill tend to praise his retreats from Benthamite principles as necessary correctives to the master's rather vulgar approach to life. But the vulgarity was often no more than a refusal to moralize about topics not susceptible to such treatment. Bentham summed up the matter in one of his earlier writings on political economy:

I beg a truce here of our man of sentiment and feeling while from necessity, and it is only from necessity, I speak and prompt mankind to speak a mercenary language. The Thermometer is the instrument for measuring the heat of the weather; the Barometer the instrument for measuring the pressure of the Air. Those who are not satisfied with the accuracy of those instruments must find out others that shall be more accurate, or bid adieu to Natural

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Philosophy. Money is the instrument for measuring the quantity of pain and pleasure. Those who are not satisfied with the accuracy of this instrument must find out some other that shall be more accurate, or bid adieu to politics and morals.⁹

The passage could well have served as a warning to Mill (and more so, to Green) who tended to reject Bentham's moral standard but to retain the market structure from which it had sprung and to which it was so well suited. Given this adherence to the market, it is doubtful whether he ever provided a more accurate moral and political thermometer than Bentham.

The problem is central to Mill's work. On the whole, he remained faithful to the political economy he had learned in his father's study,¹⁰ which means, among other things, that he never overcame the troublesome relations of production encased in wages and profits. At the same time, in the spheres of politics and morals, he moved quite far from his original Utilitarian positions, ruminating about the "higher" pleasures and the sense of public interest¹¹ which he hoped would eventually supplant the Benthamite insistence on self-interest as the basis of social life.¹² This movement can be related to the fact that, since Bentham's day, relations between the bourgeoisie and the now fully formed working class had become antagonistic.¹³ Mill was well aware of this fact, almost painfully so, but as I have noted, he was unable to theorize its resolution at the level of political economy. Hence he was forced to find his antidote elsewhere, to envisage a political-moral world, which when properly developed, would overcome the opposition of economic life. But Mill was never sure of his vision and his uncertainty was reflected in the cautious nature of his support for democracy.¹⁴ That caution — the enthusiasm for such devices as weighted votes and an established clerisy — was indicative of the resilience of the opposition between labour and capital. Try as he might, Mill could not make it go away, and as a result there was a tension in his political works, a fear of mass politics which sometimes drove him to the kind of moralizing about working class depravity so typical of the bourgeoisie of his day (although he was too intelligent a theorist to sink to the depths of many writers).¹⁵ In the end, Mill's work suffers from the same double vision as Green's, envisaging a competitive and class-divided economy coexisting with a non-competitive and unified political-moral world. The two realms are ultimately irreducible; the best Mill can do in the *Principles of Political Economy* is to suggest that the co-operative movement will foment a "moral revolution" in which class conflict will be transformed into a "friendly rivalry" between capital and labour.¹⁶ The opposition of economic life is complemented with the friendship of political and moral life.

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Mill's work is difficult to assess. I would contend that it is less consistent than Bentham's, and in many ways less valid. But I would also contend that one cannot thereby infer that Mill's grasp of capitalism was weak. On the contrary, the inconsistencies and the vacillations in his theory may well be attributed to his sharp awareness of the contradictions of capitalist society, of his keen insight into the reasons for the hostility with which "buyers and sellers of labour" eyed each other. Why he did not produce a systematic answer to the problems he saw is a question which stretches far beyond the limits of this paper. All that can be said, and only argumentatively, is that while Bentham was up to the task of theorizing early-nineteenth century capitalism the same cannot be said (at least not so emphatically) for Mill in mid-century. Again, this is not to say that he did not understand his subject in terms of seeing many of its problems, but he was uncertain of how to deal with them. The "stationary" state of the *Principles of Political Economy* is perhaps symbolic of Mill's plight. Based on an insight into the tendency of the rate of profit to decline, and of capitalism to stagnate, it freezes rather than corrects the problem. The stationary state is a vision of a world suspended in a capitalist limbo. Ricardo had also seen that vision but, in an earlier period, he could ignore it. Mill could neither ignore it nor surpass it. His claims for it to the contrary, the stationary state is very much the product of historical befuddlement. Given his remarkable intellectual capacity, he reminds one here of a theorist's version of a person whose party has been cancelled: all dressed up with no place to go.

II

In this sense, Green was quite faithful to Mill's legacy. He went nowhere with a flourish, appending to Utilitarianism an elaborate metaphysical structure which, when all was said and done, served basically to justify the tired old system of *laissez-faire*. There is a certain simplicity to Green's approach; he simply ignored many of the touchier problems of political economy which had constantly commanded Mill's attention. Far from understanding capitalism better than Mill, he scarcely understood it at all, except perhaps intuitively. After all, what is the evidence of his comprehension — that he saw that the proletariat had to be better treated? Long before Green, feudal Tories like Shaftesbury had realised as much. And a quarter of a century before Green's principal writings, Mill was well aware that a badly fed working class was likely to be revolutionary material.¹⁷ (cf. Hansen, p. 112) Compared to Mill, Green offered an opaque view of class conflict; his references to it were mainly testaments to obscurity. Generally, his concern for the working class took the form of demands for more education and better working conditions (not to mention restriction of the sale of alcohol),¹⁸ demands which many Tories could

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support. As Hansen notes (p. 110), Green suggested no fundamental change in the class structure itself; it is doubtful he understood it well enough to do so. The players were to be better provided for but the game was to go on as it always had.

Not only did Green have a shaky grasp of class conflict, he had almost no comprehension of basic political economy, something to which his chapter on property in *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* gives testament. There, after laying the blame for the miserable condition of the proletariat like a wreath on feudalism's grave, he proceeds to a discussion of that class' expectations under capitalism. Green concludes that despite the desperate circumstances of many workers, they can reasonably hope to obtain sufficient property to live moral lives. In fact, as Hansen observes, (p. 107), he believes that they can themselves become capitalists, adding that in the better paid industries this is already the case inasmuch as workers there often own homes and furniture and belong to co-operative societies.¹⁹ Now the problem here is not so much as Hansen puts it (p. 101), that Green could not see that "the vast majority of men are prevented from ever becoming capitalists," but that he obviously did not understand what constitutes a capitalist in the first place. The essential point is the utter naivety of his view of property. Hansen comments (p. 107), somewhat peripherally that Green "appears to say that wages are a form of wealth similar to profits", but he fails to follow the remark to its conclusion — which is that Green (unlike Bentham and Mill) did not understand, or at least make the distinction between property which is utilized as capital and that which is simply consumed. In short, he did not understand a basic concept of capitalism. To him property was all of one type and capitalism simply signified private ownership of any kind.

Green's dictum that workers can become capitalists thus boils down to the contention that they can be adequately paid. In making it, he actually abolishes capital, collapsing it into an undifferentiated mass of possessions. Thus Green provided no particular justification for capitalism at the level of political economy. Theoretically, any mode of production which provides people with enough property to live moral lives, on his account an amount far less than the fortune of the average entrepreneur, should be acceptable. Of course, as Hansen points out (p. 105), Green's justification of capitalism stems not primarily from the wealth it produces but from the way in which it is produced. Capitalism is necessary because it involves the private appropriation which allows the individual to "realize his will". However, this makes Hansen's criticism (p. 108), that Green did not see the systematic transfer of power which capitalism entails, curiously beside the point. Had he seen it he probably would have eulogized it in the same way Mill eulogized competition, as a stimulant to private initiative.²⁰ The position of the worker relative to that of the capitalist, his dependence on him for access to the means of labour, was

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irrelevant for Green as long as his wages were not so low as to preclude moral life. Green's overt concern for capitalism extended no further than was necessary to his metaphysics; he justified it by turning it into a by-product of the will's search for "self-realization". In his concern to point out the lacuna in Green's theory which hurts his case for capitalism — essentially the transfer of wealth and power from worker to capitalist — Hansen slides by the one which helps his case, or at least allows him to make it. That is his utter disregard of even the basic concepts of political economy.

Hansen's neglect of this point leads him into a rather speculative and debatable interpretation of Green's defence of capitalism. He interprets (pp. 110-11) Green's assertion that in his "realization of the [moral] idea" the individual is limited to the "duties of his station" as implying that the capitalist performs a higher moral function than the worker. I would suggest that by lumping together all types of private property Green precluded the possibility of such a distinction. The capitalist is not entitled to property because he has, in Hansen's words, (p. 111), "a greater capacity for fulfilling the moral end than does the man without any capital." He can, in fact, lay claim to no special justification for the extent (and for Green it is 'extent' not 'type') of his ownership. The capitalist's property, just like the worker's, is the result of the teleological requirement that individuals seek self-realization through private appropriation. Now there may be a puritanical suggestion here that he who appropriates most is most moral, but that does not seem to me to be the thrust of Green's writings. For him, differences in property indicate differences in talent, but they are not the ground of moral distinctions.²¹ Property is a basis — a first stage — of morality, not a test of it; the test is one's contribution to the common good. The whole point of Green's defence of capitalism is that worker and capitalist are *equally* free to contribute.²² At the level of morality, his view of the class structure was not so much that it was necessary but that it was, or should be, irrelevant. The argument is virtually an inverted Utilitarian one; since classes are an unavoidable by-product of the private appropriation so essential to moral growth, it is to the net advantage of society to accept their existence. In terms of morality, they are neither necessarily helpful nor hurtful. Beyond this, Green did not go: he was too rooted in a *laissez-faire* world to develop either the incisive class analysis of Hegel or the corporatist leanings of Bosanquet and Bradley.

The peculiar mix of Green's theory is important. He overlaid Utilitarianism with a strong dose of German metaphysics filtered through the prism of British Nonconformism. This 'layering' and 'filtering' is the essence of his defence of capitalism. His metaphysics and his religion isolate him from a realm (the one in which Utilitarianism was rooted) essential to an understanding of capitalism, that of political economy. If, "within his premises, he argues his position quite persuasively . . .," (pp. 112-13) it is largely because within his premises

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teleology suffocates science. Capitalism is justified *a priori* and subsequent independent criticism at the level of political economy is ruled out. That would seem to be the source of Green's great confidence in the chapter on property in *Political Obligation*. On the basis of his metaphysics, he knows what the answers to his questions about the political economy of capitalism must be. The queries are purely rhetorical. In comparison, Mill's uncertainty is much more enlightening, and enlightened.

III

Having said this, I must warn against the conclusion that Green is entirely to be ignored or denigrated. I agree with Hansen that an understanding of his work is important to a critique of capitalist democracy. However, such a critique should not depend upon presenting Green as anything like a clear-eyed marshal of capitalism's defences. His success in that role has rather more to do with his vagueness about what capitalism is and how it unfolds. Vagueness and obscurity are a large part of Green's legacy to liberal theory. A brief look at the fate of his concept of positive freedom may help to explain this point. As Hansen notes (p. 105), the concept is an important one in Green's writings; it contains his vision of social improvement, linking the private appropriation of negative freedom to a communal ideal in an attempt to promote social unity. Yet, when one looks for it in the work of younger Idealists like Bradley and Bosanquet it is virtually unrecognizable. There, positive freedom has been turned into what Green termed "moral freedom", which is basically an individual state of grace, the absolute communion of reason and will. The social intention of Green's concept is by-passed and the result, in both cases, is an archly conservative doctrine which ignores his concern for reform.²³ The spirit of the concept was given continued life in the work of men such as Hobhouse, A.D. Lindsay and even Harold Laski but its fate has not really been a happy one. By the end of the Second World War, it has largely disappeared as an explicit concept in British liberalism. In Sir Isaiah Berlin's 'Two Concepts of Liberty', for example, it serves as a whipping boy for all that is wrong with the tradition and in the end is rejected as anti-liberal.²⁴

One could perhaps argue that positive freedom has been rejected mainly because even its indirect insight into the contradictions of capitalism and liberal democracy — the lack of 'social unity' it points to — is too much for liberalism to bear.²⁵ There is, however, another point which should not be missed. Green — and the debate about negative versus positive liberty is an example of this — has provided liberal theory with 'safe' ground for discussion. By artificially covering the realm of political economy with a metaphysical layer, he has made it possible to carry on a debate about the shadow rather than

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the substance of social issues. The problem of class conflict, for example, is imbedded in the concept of positive freedom but it is not easy to find it there. It is, as it were, kept out of sight. Thus, writers can discuss the concept of liberty without risking a direct confrontation with one of the very things which gives meaning to such discourses, the very real class antagonisms of our society.²⁶ In fact in many cases, they can discuss liberty instead of class conflict. In this manner, we can arrive at one critic's opinion that there is only a "mere historical connection" between the development of the concept of positive freedom and the circumstances of late-nineteenth century British liberalism.²⁷ Perhaps Plato's analogy of the cave serves as the best description of the theoretical space which Green created for succeeding generations of liberal theorists.

Attributing Green's importance more to his misunderstanding than to his understanding of capitalism necessarily involves a view of British liberalism which differs from Hansen's. To note the obvious, it removes Green from the mountain top. And, when that is done, it is possible to indicate for the nineteenth century a pattern of decline. Of the three thinkers I have considered, each of whom stands out in his own day, Bentham's understanding of his own period was the greatest, Green's the smallest. To borrow the terminology of psychoanalysis, Bentham's theory is relatively healthy, in touch with the demands of the day; Mill's is somewhat neurotic, trying desperately to mediate between the demands of the ethos of *laissez-faire* and those of an increasingly socialized, interdependent world; Green's is psychotic, reality has succumbed to fantasy and can only be glimpsed through its obscuring haze. It is precisely this 'psychotic' haze which has enveloped much of liberal theory for the past century, producing reified debates about concepts that are divorced from the social reality which could, and once did, give them meaning. That I think, is Green's real political legacy.

To conclude, I must stress that my disagreement with Hansen is partly a matter of emphasis. I do agree with him that Green was a "possessive individualist" (of sorts), that one purpose of his work was to provide a defence for capitalism and liberal democracy, and that it was based on a theoretical position which precluded thorough criticism of either. But I would contend that Green's defence depended very much on the obscurity of his analysis of capitalism, on the fact that he ignored issues Bentham and Mill refused to ignore. I have further contended that that was the secret of the appeal he had for his fellow liberals. In this context, it is instructive to note how soon after their deaths Bentham and Ricardo became embarrassments to the bourgeoisie, how much energy was expended in refuting them.²⁸ Perhaps Keynes explained why this was so when he referred to "the final *reductio ad absurdum* of Benthamism known as Marxism."²⁹ The point is that Bentham, along with Ricardo, did provide much of the foundation for *Capital*. This perspective may

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help us to extract new meaning from Hansen's observation (p. 92) that, for Green, "strictly Utilitarian-Benthamite assumptions . . . could not form in themselves an adequate justificatory base for the market." Within their historical limits, I think they could and did. They constituted a very reasonable analysis of early-nineteenth century British society, providing a base not only for Marx but also for the working class political economy of men like Thompson, Hodgskin, Gray and even Owen (for whom Bentham provided financial backing). I suspect that Green's problem had rather more to do with the fact that they did not, after about 1830, easily admit of development in a manner acceptable to the bourgeoisie. It is in his role as a representative of that class that Green rejects them. Yet Utilitarian-Benthamite assumptions could not be safely done away with without also doing away with the market. Consequently, Green did all he could do; he covered them over, obscuring their influence and their meaning.

Keynes' comment, and Marx's own implicit assumption that he was the real heir of the Utilitarians and the Classical Political Economists as well as of Hegel, should be taken seriously. From different perspectives, both carry a warning against accepting too uncritically the interpretation liberals generally put on their tradition. For to do so is to risk castigating theorists for being unscientific, or 'incorrect', when what they are really guilty of is outliving their usefulness to the bourgeoisie. If the sons are not to be blamed for the sins of the fathers, neither should the fathers always be blamed for those of the sons.

Postscript

In this paper, I have considered Green in his role as a defender of capitalism. I should now like to soften the harshness of my judgement by noting its narrowness, which I think stems from my adopting the standard 'political' perspective on Green. While he is best known for his political writings, they in fact constitute a very small part of his work. Essentially, there are just two. One, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, is a posthumous compilation of his university lectures; the other, 'Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract', is the text of a public lecture. When Green actually sat down to write a book, it was *Prolegomena to Ethics* which, in its concern with epistemology and psychology, is very representative of the bulk of his life's work. However, since the turn of the century, and especially since Russell and Moore,³⁰ his contributions in these fields have generally been debunked, so much that his reputation as a political theorist is virtually all that remains to him. As a result, the rest of Green's work is now usually interpreted in the light of his political writings, as the groundwork for them. I have done that and so, I think, has Hansen.

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Without rejecting this perspective, I should like to hint at another which would place Green in a better light. If we, however artificially, isolate Green's metaphysics from his politics we can perhaps indicate a positive contribution which he made to British thought. In a word, he brought to it what is essentially a theory of ego-development. He traced the process through which the individual takes his original self-image from the community, then personalizes it (in Green's case, through appropriation) in order to become a self-conscious social being. This essentially Hegelian psychology offered Britain a fuller portrait of the individual than the one the associationist psychology of the Utilitarians could provide. But when Green proceeded to a political application of his insight, he did so in the context of capitalism. Thus his "self-distinguishing consciousness"³¹ manifested itself by appropriating property, hardly a surprising method in a society which worshipped property to the extent Victorian Britain did. The important question is thus whether such unlimited³² appropriation is necessary to his theory of ego-development, for that is where his political theory (and his defence of capitalism) begins. It is unlikely; Freud's child, for example, does with language what Green's adult does with property. In any event, we are approaching from a different direction the point I stressed above; that Green's knowledge of capitalism extended no further than his argument about the necessity of private appropriation. The whole mode of production is condensed into that act making it the shaky bridge between his 'philosophy' and his 'politics'. If it crumbles, it takes with it the latter but not necessarily the former. I think it is possible to question Green's political writings, to question the incisiveness of his analysis of capitalism, without denying the existence of a real insight in his philosophy. I can say it only tentatively but it may be that most of us have highlighted the least valuable part of Green's work.

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Notes

1. J. S. Mill, *Autobiography*, New York: Signet Classic, 1964, pp. 86-94.
2. Mill favoured a relatively high age qualification for the franchise and seemed to find the argument for majority, as opposed to universal, suffrage convincing. (*An Essay On Government*, New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1955, pp. 74-77.) Bentham supported universal suffrage (see, e.g., *Works*, John Bowring Ed., Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843, vol. 3, p. 452.) and saw no reason for a high age qualification (see e.g., University College London Mss., Box 34, fo. X, 302-03.).
3. Privately, Bentham favoured the inclusion of women in the franchise; publicly, he excluded them because he thought the prejudice against their inclusion to be "at present too strong". (*Works*, vol. 9, pp. 108-09.)
4. *Works*, vol. 3, p. 451 & vol. 9, p. 43.
5. E.P. Thompson (*The Making of the English Working Class*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970.) argues, for example, that it was not until the second decade of the nineteenth century that wage-earners and craftsmen began to locate their protests in the context of capitalism, ceased in effect to look back to a lost age. Moreover, it was not until the third or fourth decade that one could think in terms of a 'working class'.
6. E.J. Hobsbawm notes that, before the 1830's, "there was probably no enterprise except perhaps the occasional gasworks or chemical plant which a modern production engineer would regard as having anything but archaeological interest." (*Industry and Empire*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970, p. 68.)
7. Thirty years later, it was Marx's appreciation of the role of machinery in production which had much to do with his ability to surpass the political economy of Bentham and Ricardo.
8. Bentham did not see these relations, and the inequality they entailed, as good in themselves; quite the opposite in fact: "In proportion as equality [of fortune] is departed from, inequality has place: and in proportion as inequality has place, evil has place . . ." (*Works*, vol. 2, p. 271.)
9. *Economic Writings*, W. Stark Ed., London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952, vol. 1, p. 117.
10. Samuel Hollander argues that "the only full-fledged system in Mill's *Principles* is that of Ricardo." ('Ricardianism, J.S. Mill and the Neo-classical Challenge', in *James and John Stuart Mill/Papers of the Centenary Conference*, Robson & Laine eds., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976, p. 84.)
11. Here, Mill employs language which brings him very close to Green. For example, he contends that the education which would instil in people awareness of the qualitative differences between pleasures would also "give to each individual a stronger personal interest in practically consulting the welfare of others; it also leads him to identify his feelings more and more with their good . . . He comes, as though instinctively, to be conscious of himself as a being who, of course, pays regard to others. The good of others becomes to him a thing necessarily to be attended to, like any of the physical conditions of our existence." (*Collected Works*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969, vol. X, pp. 231-32.)
12. Bentham wrote that: "In spite of everyting which is *said*, the general predominance of self-regard over every other sort of regard, is demonstrated by everyting that is *done*: . . . in the ordinary tenor of life, in the breasts of human beings of every mould, self is everyting, to

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- which all other persons, added to all other things put together, are as nothing." (*Works*, vol. 9, p. 61.)
13. John Foster, in his study of three industrial towns (*Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974.), documents the aggressiveness the working class displayed toward the bourgeoisie in the 1830's (to the extent that in some towns the bourgeoisie demanded permanent militia detachments) and the latter's counterattack in the 1840's and '50's. Asa Briggs ('The Language of Class in Early Nineteenth Century England', in *Essays in Labour History*, Briggs & Saville eds., London: Macmillan, 1967.) has shown the degree to which class terminology became prominent in the Chartist years after the crisis of 1837.
 14. Cf. J.H. Burns, 'J.S. Mill and Democracy, 1829-61', in *Political Studies*, 1957, vol. V, nos. 2 & 3.
 15. Certainly, there are moments of frustration in Mill's work. "Few," he wrote, "have considered how anyone who could instil into these people [i.e., the working class] the commonest worldly wisdom . . . would improve their conduct in every relation of life and clear the soil for the growth of right feelings and worthy propensities." (*Collected Works*, vol. IV (1967), p. 377.) Green's close friend, Arnold Toynbee, was more direct, and perhaps more typical, when he warned his proletarian audience to "remember that the material change you want can only be got by the development of higher moral qualities." (*Progress and Poverty*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, 1883, p. 54.)
 16. *Collected Works*, vol. III (1965), p. 792.
 17. In the *Principles of Political Economy*, Mill wrote that: "The working classes have taken their interests into their own hands, and are perpetually showing that they think the interests of their employers not identical with their own, but opposite to them. Some among the higher classes flatter themselves that these tendencies can be counteracted by moral and religious education: but they have let the time go by for giving an education which can serve their purpose." (*Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 762.) Toward the end of his life, Mill posed the problem even more directly: "A portion of society which cannot otherwise obtain just consideration from the rest, may be warranted in doing a mischief to society in order to extort what it considers its dues. But, when thus acting, that portion of society is in a state of war with the rest . . ." (*Ibid.*, vol. V, pp. 665-66.)
 18. Most of Green's 'practical politics' can be found in 'Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract' and, to an extent, in his various essays on education. (See, *Works*, R.L. Nettleship ed., London: Longmans, Green, 1891, vol. III.)
 19. *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, London: Longmans, Green, 1941, par. 227. (Hereafter, *P.O.*)
 20. Hansen notes (p. 110) that "Green justified class inequalities as essential incentives to production." There is no reason to suppose that recognizing the transfer of power involved in this situation would have changed his mind. On his account, the limited power of the reasonably well-paid worker was sufficient for moral life.
 21. This is the interpretation I would place on *P.O.*, par. 223, which Hansen quotes on page 109 of his article.
 22. *Works*, vol. III, p. 372.
 23. With respect to the 'Greenites' concern for the living conditions of the working class, Bosanquet wrote: "I am jealous — I frankly admit it — of any movement which appears to

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- disparage by comparison the life of the citizen who lives at home and works among his neighbours. This and not the other, appears to me to be the ideal." ('The Duties of Citizenship', in *Science and Philosophy and Other Essays*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1927, pp. 290-91.)
24. 'Two Concepts of Liberty', in *Four Essays on Liberty*, London: Oxford University Press, 1969, esp. pp. 154-72.
 25. See e.g., C.B. Macpherson, 'Berlin's Division of Liberty', in *Democratic Theory*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973. Macpherson argues that there is a sense of positive freedom — the sense in which Green used it — which entails criticism of the impediments to self-direction created by the class structure. He further argues that Berlin does his best to bury this sense of the concept beneath a more authoritarian one.
 26. These class antagonisms do surface, but in a way which estranges them from liberty. For example, Maurice Cranston (*Freedom: A New Analysis*, 3rd ed., London: Longmans, Green, 1967.) argues, on linguistic grounds, that negative liberty is the true variant, while positive liberty is an authoritarian imposter. Only then does he admit (p. 53) that English liberalism and negative liberty have been to the advantage of "big employers". Nonetheless, since their validity has already been demonstrated linguistically, Cranston implies that to redress the balance may involve a sacrifice of liberty along with liberalism. Similarly, Berlin argues that "it is a confusion of values to say that although my 'liberal' freedom may go by the board, some other kind of freedom — 'social' or 'economic' — is increased." ('Two Concepts', p. 126.) Class revolutions involve the "conquest of power and authority," (*Ibid.*, p. 162.) not the conquest of freedom. Thus, both Cranston and Berlin assume the incompatibility of discussions of class and freedom.
 27. W.L. Weinstein, 'The Concept of Liberty in Nineteenth Century English Political Thought', in *Political Studies*, 1965, vol. XIII, no. 2, p. 154.
 28. In his own way, Mill was in the forefront of the refutation of Bentham, and he was followed by Green and many others. For the rejection of Ricardo, see Ronald Meek, 'The Decline of Ricardian Economics in England', in *Economics and Ideology and Other Essays*, London: Chapman & Hall, 1967, esp. pp. 66-72.
 29. J.M. Keynes, *Two Memoirs*, London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1949, p. 97.
 30. See e.g., Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, London: Oxford University Press, 1912; and Moore's article in, A.C. Ewing ed., *The Idealist Tradition*. Glencoe Ill.: The Free Press, 1957.
 31. T.H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 3rd ed., Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1883, par. 52.
 32. It is important to note that Green favoured unlimited appropriation, not just appropriation to the point where one could live a moral life. The reason for this is to be found in metaphysics, not political economy. See, e.g., *P.O.*, par. 219.