Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory

Revue Canadienne de la Théorie Politique et Sociale

"devoted to the development
of a distinctively Canadian intellectual sensibility"

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Editorial and business correspondence should be sent to Professor Arthur Kroker, Department of Political Science, The University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3B 2E9. Authors are requested to forward three copies of the manuscript and to provide self-addressed envelopes with correct postage. Footnotes should be assembled on separate sheets. / Toute correspondance doit être adressée au professeur Arthur Kroker, Département de Science Politique, Université de Winnipeg, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3B 2E9. On demande aux collaborateurs d'envoyer trois exemplaires de leur manuscrit et de les accompagner d'une enveloppe timbrée et adressée à l'expéditeur. Les notes doivent être dactylographiées sur des feuilles séparées à la fin de l'article.

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Editors' Preface

The *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory* is guided by the following three principles:

First, the publication of the *Journal* is intended to provide a vital gathering-point for the generation of a new tradition of critical and creative political and social theory in Canada. Rather than assuming a fixed theoretical focus at the moment of its inception, the *Journal* declares loyalty only to the tradition of intellectuality itself. Accordingly, while the *Journal* is devoted, in general, to the appreciation of a diversity of competing theoretical perspectives, it is committed, in particular, to those theoretical viewpoints which, in addition to their scholarly excellence, are manifestations of a living intellectuality. As a working review of political and social theory, the *Journal* will emphasize articles that are "caught up" in the dialectics of development and whose final expression, and thereby full evaluation, may, in fact, await broader transformations of the process of human history. This "working" approach to political and social thought is meant to encourage critical reflection on the project of theory itself — its historical modalities, philosophical principles, and prospects for reconstruction — and to engender creative dialogue on the main question confronting contemporary theorists: How may the reification of actualities be overcome by the actualization of possibilities?

Second, the *Journal* is devoted to the application of the categories of theoretical thought to a new understanding of the Canadian public situation and, by extension, to a decisive interpretation of more general transformations of the contemporary historical circumstance. This project is based upon a firm determination to overcome both the inherent elitism of past theoretical traditions and the present indifference of the surrounding population by demonstrating a *lived* connection between the products of theoretical inquiry and the momentary settlement of the "grand" problems of human existence, whether personal or collective. For a variety of reasons, including both the sustained challenge to the development of a theoretical mentality in a technocratic age and the failure of theorists to overcome in practice the "institutional categorization" of thought, the project of theory has become intolerably distanced from the human tradition. One task of the *Journal* is to resolve the alienation of theory from the practicalities of history by encouraging intellectual discourse on public issues of pressing historical importance. While such public issues remain but passing manifestations of more immanent theoretical principles, nonetheless their clarification has always provided the basis for the most acute of political and social reflections.

Third, the *Journal* is committed to contributing in a significant way to the development of a distinctively Canadian intellectual sensibility. Ultimately, such a "sensibility" will develop not from the activities of this *Journal* alone but from a growing conjunction in Canadian life of common intellectual dispositions on the part of writers, whether of prose or poetry, visual artists, dramatists, political commentators, and other participants in the criticism and revision of public life. However, a theoretical review such as this one bears the special responsibility of delineating in a reflective and systematic way the obstacles to be overcome and the directions to be taken in the literary and cultural renaissance presently taking place in this country. Moreover, a theoretical review is obligated to remain true to the enduring values of scholarship that have continuously characterized the better tendencies of Canadian intellectuality: passionate concern for the fate of the Canadian historical prospect; genuine world-consciousness; active toleration of oppositional perspectives; and sensitivity to the moral claims of truth in a world held together by the pathological politics of power. What lends historical poignancy to the faithful discharge of these special responsibilities is the conviction that the *soul* of any country's intellectual tradition has always been the quality of its theoretical thought. Destroy the tradition of political and social theory, whether by the active assault of technocracy or by the paralysis of popular indifference, and a country — indeed a whole historical age — is cut adrift from its sense of philosophical destiny: lost in a world of provisional and disconnected events without the organizing grace of self-conscious knowledge of its principles.

The aims of the *Journal* are well-illustrated by the articles included in the present issue.

The first section, *Critical Perspectives,* contains three divergent viewpoints on the possibilities and problematics of twentieth-century political and social theory. In the lead-off article, "Dialectical Sensibility I: Critical Theory, Scientism and Empiricism", Ben Agger develops in a novel and productive fashion the theoretical categories for a "repoliticized", and thereby revitalized Marxism: a Marxism that is principled in the meta-vision of "active constitutive subjectivity", and in the regeneration of an "advisory" role for critical theory. This proposal is based upon a persuasive critique of the failure of leading theoreticians of the Frankfurt School of Sociology, particularly Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, to transcend the radical pessimism of "ideology-critique" to a reconstruction of critical thought in lieu of a transformed historical circumstance. The reciprocity of theory and praxis, of an advisory role for critical theory, is called into question by Michael A. Weinstein in his article "Political Philosophy and the Public Situation". Weinstein penetrates to the essence of the contemporary crisis of political philosophy by exploring the tragic disjunction which exists, at present, between its transcendent and immanent tendencies. This exploration interweaves two complementary strands of thought. First, Weinstein contends that the "new universalism" of twen-

tieth-century political philosophy — the discovery of the full dimensions of of "intra-subjectivity" and of "intra-consciousness" — has made political philosophy a radically impractical activity by removing politics to an inauthentic dimension of human existence. Second, Weinstein argues that the transcendentalism of the philosophy of intra-subjectivity has been blocked from its moment of actualization by the implacable social fact of a "deprived public situation" held together by organized instrumentalisms. Weinstein concludes on a searing note by affirming the tragic sense of politics: the equivocal and paradoxical character of all contemporary modes of political experience. This shearing of political philosophy from the public realm is implicitly, if not overtly, critiqued in Arthur Kroker's article "On Moral Economy". While Kroker's analysis of the coordinates of the "conglomerate of all conglomerates" is similar to Weinstein's description of the "deprived public situation", a radically different conclusion emerges. Beginning with José Ortega y Gasset's evocative image of the "generation", philosophically conceived, Kroker elucidates the regulatory ideals for a morally as well as an empirically rearmed Canadian intellectual sensibility. Within the overarching category of moral economy, Kroker draws together the epistemology of reconstructive empiricism, an historical perspective on world corporativism, and an interrelated network of problematics for further investigation. Unlike Weinstein who espouses the tragic sense of politics, Kroker's thesis envisages the inherent fragility of world corporativism being overcome by the development of new modes of philosophical politics in *marginales* such as Canada.

In the second section, *Critical Retrospectives,* two important, and indeed dramatic, reinterpretations of past political thinkers are offered. In the first of these articles, "Harold Laski: The Paradoxes of a Liberal Marxist", Irving Layton examines the unsuccessful reconciliation achieved in Laski's political thought between the altruism of reformism and the necessities of revolutionary praxis. Dwelling on the uneasy tension between the apologia of liberal parliamentarism and the revolutionary impulse of Marxism, Layton's argument is of prophetic importance for an active appreciation of the contradictions inherent within the political philosophy of "social democracy". It is, moreover, an elegant description of how the prescriptions of social democratic thought enable a bourgeoisie under-siege to save itself from the twin "catastrophes" of fascism and genuine libertarian commitments. This critical revision of the tradition of liberal democractic thought is eloquently sustained in Phillip Hansen's examination of the political thought of T. H. Green. In his article "T. H. Green and the Moralization of the Market", Hansen carefully explicates the ontological presuppositions of Green's political thought, and provides a provocative estimation of Green's contribution to the defense of capitalism. Hansen contends that the thrust of Green's thought, particularly in its movement from Utilitarian to Idealist categories, was directed towards a "developmental" reconceptualization of the human essence in accordance with the

shifting imperatives of industrial capitalism. "Positive freedom", in this sense, becomes but the opening gambit in a two-pronged liberal democratic defense of the rights of capitalism: (i) an attempt to satisfactorily resolve the worst "abuses" of early industrial capitalism; and (ii) the creation of a new "moral personality" in line with predetermined beliefs in the justice of the market economy and in the "right", indeed, the *moral* right, of individual appropriation.

In a final *Commentary,* Howard Aster provides a stimulating reflection on the debilitation of political education in a "corporate-dominated environment." Aster's contribution, "A Philosophical Commentary on the Canadianization of Political Education", combines both a retrospective survey of the dissolution of the educative function, and a prospective discussion of the possibility for its reconstitution. The article begins with a thoughtful passage on "the loss of the sense of responsibility, the incapacity of the tragic experience and the decadence of the personal" in today's educational experience. Refusing to be placated by the dictates of a conventional nationalism, Aster submits that the transformation of political education must be undertaken within the broader context of providing an explanation for the "character of our own civilization." Ultimately, such an explanation is held to involve the creation of active dialogue among participants in Canadian intellectual life: a dialogue that seeks to weave together the different modalities of our historical heritage into some "reflective whole which has shape, character, and form."

Arthur and Marilouise Kroker

Préface des rédacteurs

La Revue canadienne de la théorie politique et sociale est régie par les trois principes suivants:

Premièrement: La publication de *la Revue* a pour but d'apporter, à la génération, un point croissant et vital, celui d'une nouvelle tradition d'une théorie politique et sociale créative et critique. Lors de sa création, *la Revue,* au lieu d'assumer une mise au point théorique établie, se déclare fidèle à la tradition de l'intellectualité. Par conséquent, *la Revue,* bien que consacrée à l'appréciation de la diversité des perspectives théoriques rivalisantes, s'engage surtout envers ces points de vue théoriques qui, en plus de leur critère d'érudition, sont des manifestations d'une intellectualité vivante. *La Revue,* en tant qu'étude "élaborée" de la théorie politique et sociale, mettra l'accent sur les articles "saisissants" des dialectiques de développement et dont l'expression finale, et partant l'entière évaluation, pourrait entrainer de profondes transformations dans le cours de l'histoire humaine. Cette approche "élaborée" de la pensée politique et sociale se propose d'encourager la réflexion critique quant au projet même de la théorie — ses modalités historiques, ses principes philosophiques et ses perspectives de reconstruction — et d'engendrer un dialoque créatif sur la question principale à laquelle sont confrontés les théoriciens contemporains: "Comment l'actualisation des possibilités peut-elle maitriser la concrétisation des actualités?"

Deuxièment: La Revue est consacrée à l'application des catégories de pensées théoriques vers une nouvelle compréhension de la situation publique au Canada, et par extension, vers une interprétation décisive des transformations plus générales de la conjoncture historique contemporaine. Ce projet se base sur la ferme détermination de maitriser l'élitisme inhérent aux théories traditionnelles passées et l'actuelle indifférence de la population environnante, en démontrant une connection *"réelle"* entre les résultats d'une recherche théorique et la réalisation momentanée des "grands" problèmes de l'existence humaine, personnels ou collectifs. Le projet fut intolérablement distancé par la tradition humaine et ce, pour une foule de raisons, incluant le défi soutenu à développer la mentalité théorique dans l'ère technocratique et le manque de théoriciens maitrisant, en pratique, "la catégorisation institutionnelle" de la pensée. Une des tâches de *la Revue* est de résoudre l'aliéntation de la théorie par rapport aux pratiques de l'histoire, en encourageant des discours intellectuels sur des questions publiques d'importance historique accentuée. Bien que de telles questions publiques subsistent, tout en faisant place à des manifestations de principes théoriques immanentes, leur clarification a toujours servi de base aux considérations politiques et sociales les plus aigues.

Troisièment: La Revue s'engage à contribuer, d'une manière significative, au développement d'une sensibilité intellectuelle canadienne distincte. Ain-

si, une telle "sensibilité" ne se développera pas qu'à partir des activités de *cette Revue,* mais encore par une conjonction croissante dans la vie canadienne, des dispositions intellectuelles provenant d'écrivains, de prose ou de poésie, d'artistes, de dramaturges, de commentateurs politiques et de tous les autres participants à la critique et à la révision de la vie publique. Cependant, un tel examen théorique implique la responsabilité particulière de décrire, d'une manière réfléchie et systématique, les obstacles à maitriser et les directives à prendre dans la renaissance littéraire et culturelle actuellement instaurée dans ce pays. D'ailleurs, un examen théorique doit se conformer aux valeurs permanentes du savoir qui ont constamment caractérisé les meilleures tendances de l'intellectualité canadienne: inquiétude passionnée pour le sort des perspectives historiques canadiennes; réelle conscience du monde; tolérance active des perspectives opposées; et sensibilité au droit moral de la vérité, dans un monde soutenu par les politiques pathologiques du pouvoir. La croyance dans le fait que *l'âme* de la tradition intellectuelle d'un pays a toujours été la qualité de ses pensées théoriques est propice à la violence historique de l'accomplissement fidèle de cette responsabilité particulière. Que l'on détruise la tradition de la théorie politique et sociale, soit par une attaque active de la technocratie, soit par la paralysie de l'indifférence populaire, et un pays — même dans une pleine ère historique — rompra avec sa conscience de sa destinée philosophique, se retrouvant perdu dans un monde d'événements séparés et provisoires, sans la grâce régissante du savoir auto-conscient de ses principes.

Les articles contenus dans cette édition de *la Revue* en illustrent parfaitement les buts.

La première partie: *Perspectives de la Critique,* inclut trois points de vue divergents sur les possibilités et les problématiques de la théorie politique et sociale du vingtième siècle. Dans l'article initutlé: "La Sensibilité de la Dialectique I: Théorie de la Critique, du Scientisme et de l'Empirisme", Ben Agger développe, d'une manière productrice et inovée, les catégories théoriques pour un Marxisme "repolitisé" et de ce fait revitalisé: un Marxisme qui a pour principes une méta-vision de la "subjectivité constitutive active" et une régénération d'un rôle "consultatif" de la théorie de la critique. Ce but est basé sur la critique persuasive de l'échec des principaux théoriciens de l'Ecole de Sociologie de Francfort, en particulier Theodor W. Adorno et Max Horkheimer, de transcender le pessimisme radical de "l'idéologie critique" à la reconstruction de la pensée critique au lieu de la conjoncture historique transformée. Michael A. Weinstein, dans son article "Philosophie Politique et Situation Publique" remet en question la réciprocité de la théorie et de la praxis d'un rôle consultatif de la théorie de la critique. Weinstein pénètre dans l'essence de la crise contemporaine de la philosophie politique en explorant la disjonction tragique existant, à présent, entre ses tendances transcendentes et immanentes. Cette exploration mêle les deux fils complémentaires de la pensée. Weinstein

soutient, premièrement, que, en enlevant les politiques d'une dimension apocryphe de l'existence humaine, le "nouvel universalisme" de la philosophie politique du vingtième siècle — découverte de l'entière dimension de "l'intra-subjectivité" et de "l'intra-conscience" — a fait de la philosophie politique une activité radicalement impracticable. Deuxièment, Weinstein démontre que le transcendentalisme de la philosophie de l'intra-subjectivité a été bloqué lors de son actualisation par l'implacable fait social d'une "situation publique dépossédée", maintenue par des instrumentalistes organisés. Weinstein conclut, dans une note dure, en affirmant le sens tragique des politiques à savoir: le caractère équivoque et paradoxal de tous les modes contemporains d'expérience politique. Cette coupure entre la philosophie politique et le royaume public est implicitement, si non évidemment, critiquée dans l'article d'Arthur Kroker: "Sur l'Economie Morale". Alors que l'analyse de Kroker, quant aux coordonnées du "conglomérat de tous les conglomérats", est semblable à la description de Weinstein de "la situation publique dépossédée", une conclusion radicalement différente surgit. A partir de l'image évocative "de la génération", philosophiquement conçue, de José Ortega y Gasset, Kroker éclaircit les idéaux régulateurs pour une sensibilité intellectuelle canadienne réarmée moralement et empiriquement. Dans un éventail de catégories d'économie morale, Kroker retrace, ensemble, l'épistémologie de l'empirisme reconstructif, perspective historique du corporatisme mondial, et un réseau de problématiques, en corrélation, pour de plus amples recherches. A la différence de Weinstein qui embrasse le sens tragique des politiques, la thèse de Kroker envisage que l'inhérente fragilité du corporatisme mondial soit maitrisée par le développement de nouveaux modes de politiques philosophiques, *en marge,* comme au Canada.

Dans la deuxième partie, *Rétrospectives de la Critique,* deux importantes, et partant dramatiques, ré-interprétations des penseurs politiques du passé, sont offertes. Dans le premier article, "Harold Laski: Les Paradoxes d'un Marxisme Libéral", Irving Layton examine la réconcialiation infructueuse achevée dans la pensée politique de Laski, entre l'altruisme du réformisme et les nécessités de la praxis (du mouvement) révolutionnaire. S'étendant sur la tension gênante entre la justification d'un parlementarisme libéral et l'impulsion révolutionnaire du Marxisme, l'argument de Layton traite l'importance prophétique pour une appréciation active des contradictions inhérentes à la philosophie politique de la "démocratie sociale". C'est d'ailleurs une élégante description de la manière par laquelle les préceptes de la pensée démocratique sociale permettent aux bourgeois "sous-siégeant" de s'épargner les "catastrophes" jumelles, provenant des engagements du fascisme et des engagements authentiques libertaires. Cet examen critique de la tradition de la pensée libérale démocratique est soutenu, avec éloquence, dans l'examen de la pensée politique de T. H. Green, examen réalisé par Phillip Hansen. Dans cet article "T. H. Green et la Moralisation du Marché", Hansen explique soigneusement les pré-

suppositions ontologiques de la pensée politique de Green et apporte un jugement provocateur sur la contribution de Green à la défense du capitalisme. Hansen prétend que la poussée, de la pensée de Green, en particulier dans son mouvement partant de catégorie Utilitaire à catégorie Idéaliste, fut dirigée vers une reconceptualisation "développée" de l'essence humaine, conformément aux impératifs mouvants du capitalisme industriel. Ainsi, "la liberté positive" devient le gambit-clé, dans une defense, démocratique libérale à deux fourches, des droits du capitalisme, à savoir: (i) une tentative pour résoudre avec satisfaction les plus graves "abus" du début du capitalisme industriel et (ii) la création d'une nouvelle "personnalité morale" en accord avec les croyances pré-déterminées en la justice de l'économie du marché et dans le "droit", et même le droit *moral* de l'appropriation individuelle.

Dans le *Commentaire* final, Howard Aster apporte une considération stimulante sur la débilité de l'éducation politique "dans un environnement constitué-dominé". La contribution d'Aster "Un Commentaire Philosophique sur la Canadiennalisation de l'Education Politique" combine une étude rétrospective de la dissolution de la fonction éducative et une discussion future de la possibilité de sa reconstitution. L'article débute par un passage réfléchi sur "la perte du sens de la responsabilité, l'incapacité de l'expérience tragique et la décadence de l'individualité" dans l'expérience éducative d'aujourd'hui. Refusant d'être apaisé par les exigences d'un nationalisme conventionnel, Aster allégue que la transformation de l'éducation politique doit être assumée dans un contexte plus large, quant à l'apport d'une explication pour "le caractère de notre propre civilisation". Finalement, une telle explication est amenée à inclure la création d'un dialogue actif entre les participants à la vie intellectuelle canadienne, dialogue qui cherche à tisser, ensemble, les différentes modalités de notre héritage historique, dans "un tout réfléchi, possédant une configuration, un caractère et une forme".

Arthur et Marilouise Kroker

Foreign Exchange

Marya Fiamengo

Damnation has stunted you
into a frizzled teddy bear
with mad glazed eyes
sand hair dyed a sick yellow
like the colour of urine.

So burn in sulphur;
it is your colour, your odour.
By all the miracle-working ikons,
by the holy standards of a brave past
I will not spare you.

Not for your coward's flesh
the hard stones of the Lubianka
which incarcerated the bones
of heroes.

For you,
May you die as you have lived;
fraudulent
on the cheap rate
of foreign exchange.

Marya Fiamengo, *In Praise of Old Women* (Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press/ Valley Editions, 1976). Printed with the permission of both author and publisher.

Critical Perspectives
Perspectives de la Critique

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DIALECTICAL SENSIBILITY I: CRITICAL THEORY, SCIENTISM AND EMPIRICISM*

Ben Agger

This paper develops a critique of the Hegelian Marxism of the Frankfurt School, arguing that theorists like Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno failed to repoliticize Marxism once they perceived that the working-class would not become a successful revolutionary agent. The redevelopment of Marxism by certain original members of the Frankfurt School exaggerated about the extent to which political rebellion could be isolated and contained by dominant interests. I argue that the early Frankfurt School's thesis of the decline of human individuality forced them into a position which denied the possibility of political radicalism.

I set two tasks for a critical theory which endeavours to repoliticize its orientation to social change. Task number *a* is to redevelop a concept of human nature which grounds the possibility of political struggle in the capacity of the human being to perceive his own exploitation and to envisage and work towards alternative institutions. I believe that the assumption of active, "constitutive" subjectivity must be the foundation-stone of contemporary Marxism. In eliminating this assumption, thinking that the human being has become totally dominated, Horkheimer and Adorno deny the possibility of emancipatory struggle.

Task number *b* is to reground the theory-practice relation in Marx's concept of the advisory role of critical theory. In this sense, theory *follows* and *guides* practice, locating it in an analytic totality and explicating its revolutionary significance. Horkheimer and Adorno severed the theory-practice relation in arguing that theory could only take the form of ideology-critique because human subjectivity was no longer perceived to be capable of revolt.

I argue that Marxism today must not prematurely abandon the possibility of social change under the influence of historical pessimism. I reject the thesis of the decline of subjectivity and I wish to challenge

*This essay has been improved by Prof. Gad Horowitz of the University of Toronto, Department of Political Economy.

Ed. This is the first of two interrelated articles, the second of which will appear in the Spring issue of the *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, Volume 1, Number 2, (May, 1977).

the overly defeatist attitude of Horkheimer and Adorno with regard to the actuality of constructive change.

I apply my insight about critical theory's failure to reengage empirical research and a praxis-orientation to the actual redevelopment of a Marxian social science. I examine certain historical aspects of Marx's theory and suggest how it might be amended in light of recent political and economic developments. The result will be a concept of *radical empiricism* which renews Marx's revolutionary science by developing the political significance of contemporary struggle to destroy authority-structures and the division of labour. Radical empiricism will become a political strategy, practised by a *dialectical sensibility* which refuses to separate thought and action, even beginning to "live" the revolution in its own activity.

I. Origins of Critical Theory: Marxism Redeveloped

In the early 1920s, Georg Lukács and Karl Korsch both took issue with the species of Marxism that had been developed in the Second International under the influence of theorists like Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky. Lukács and Korsch opposed the neo-Kantian reconstruction of Marxism which separated the political from the scientific dimensions of Marx's theory of capitalism. Lukács polemicized against tendencies to conceive of Marxism as a variant of natural science which merely charted and adduced "laws" of social motion.

In a broader sense, Lukács and Korsch opposed *economism,* a theory of change which stresses the economic determination of socio-cultural and ideological forms. Economism, they believed, degraded the human being's purposeful contribution to the revolutionary process, suggesting instead that capitalism will *inevitably* collapse, given certain "contradictory" economic circumstances. Lukács and Korsch rejected "automatic Marxism"[2] because it gave too little weight to subjective and ideological factors in social analysis, and *thus* — they felt — it tended to reinforce a passive, even fatalistic attitude towards social change, eliminating the role of active subjectivity.

The philosophical reconstruction of Marxism attempted by Lukács and Korsch has been characterized as "Hegelian Marxist".[3] Lukács returned to the message of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* which, he believed, was relevant to overcoming the sclerosis of Marxism. Hegel provided an active conception of human consciousness in the *Phenomenology* and in this sense he opposed the dualism between human consciousness and the sentient, extended world, developed by Descartes. Hegel deepened Kant's notion of a "constitutive", self-conscious human being who necessarily employs "categories of the un-

derstanding" (as Kant called them) with which to perceive and order the objective universe. Hegel went even further than Kant in suggesting that human beings could perceive the essence, or Reason, of empirical phenomena, enabling them to go beyond mere common sense experience. This faculty of Reason allowed people to comprehend and indeed to *construct* their world in accordance with the revealed natural *telos* of the world.

Lukács argued that this conception of a creative consciousness rested at the core of Marx's dialectical materialism. Moreover, he felt that the concept of subjectivity had been largely eliminated by neo-Kantian Marxists who endorsed deterministic models of social change. Marxism could only be revived, Lukács felt, if the subjective factor was upgraded, giving Marxian theory a new purchase on the psychological dimension of market capitalism which had become increasingly important since Marx's path-breaking work in *Capital.*

"Reification" was a term employed by Lukács to describe new conditions in capitalism: alienation, he felt, had become ***heightened*** due to new forces of ideological and psychological manipulation. Indeed, Lukács theorized that the working-class failed to revolt between about 1900 and 1920 ***because*** it was entrapped by a conservative, bourgeois consciousness, a "reified" consciousness unable to perceive the possibility of a qualitatively different social order and to act on that insight. Lukács called this the "ideological crisis of the proletariat", a concept which directly challenged the economistic assumption that subjective factors were largely irrelevant to the revolutionary process, and that capitalism would collapse without subjective intervention.

The "ideological crisis of the proletariat" prolonged the life of capitalism. Western Marxism thus entered a holding-pattern, uncertain about its relevance to working-class sensibilities. Lukács felt that only by challenging the hold of "reification" (or deepened alienation) could the working-class be prepared for its imputed revolutionary potential and even seize power from the capitalist class. Lukács argued that the crisis of capitalism would only be resolved through "free action," explicitly opposing the deterministic model of social change endorsed by certain Marxists like Kautsky which explained the revolutionary delay by reference to purely objective economic factors.

Korsch for his part argued that ideology was an important social force and could not be treated only as an epiphenomenon, thrown up by the economic substructure. In 1923, Korsch published a work[4] which implicitly converged with Lukács' 1923 book in arguing for a revalued concept of the subjective factor in Marxism. Korsch suggested that Marxism

was not deterministic in the sense that Marx took seriously ideological forms like religion and philosophy, refusing to reduce them merely to reflexes of the economic system.

Both Lukács and Korsch stressed the importance of conceiving of society as a *totality,* irreducible to economics. They both believed that Marx was not an economic reductionist, and they took inspiration from Marx's embryonic theory of ideology in their own attempts to comprehend the altered, developed character of capitalism in the 1920s.

For Lukács and Korsch, the key element in a revised Marxism was the *critique of ideology*, a critique designed to reveal the depths of proletarian consciousness to which exploitation had penetrated. Exploitation came to have psychological as well as economic significance. Proletarian consciousness could be manipulated and shaped by bourgeois ideology and thus exploitation could be occluded and mystified. Neither Lukács nor Korsch relinquished the theories of surplus value put forward by Marx to capture the reality of the exploitation of the worker's labour-power; they only analyzed *new* relations between economic infrastructure and ideological superstructure in the context of "late" or monopoly capitalism which issued in the "ideological crisis of the proletariat."

Lukács in *History and Class Consciousness* argued that Marxists must *return* to the literal Marx, bowdlerized and distorted by economic determinists of the Second and Third Internationals. He argued that Marx developed a concept of the social "totality," a concept of the *dialectical* relationship between economics and ideology. Although Lukács had not seen Marx's 1844 manuscripts when he published the essays comprising *History and Class Consciousness* in 1923, Lukács clearly endorsed Marx's implication that *alienation,* as Marx was to call it in 1844, took both economic and psychological forms. Reification, in Lukács' usage, was deepened alienation; Lukács used the term reification to describe the nature-like, mechanical quality of social relations under capitalism. He suggested that consciousness itself was being transformed into a dead thing, becoming merely another commodity.

In this sense, it is important to stress the continuity between the first stirrings of Hegelian Marxism in the early 1920s and Marx's critique of alienation. Lukács and Korsch believed that the working-class was still a necessary and a probable revolutionary agent. The perception of Hegelian Marxism by certain orthodox Marxists[5] as a fundamental departure from Marx's theory of revolution is difficult to sustain in the light of Lukács' and Korsch's 1923 works. Korsch explicitly states that he is faithful to Marx's non-deterministic concept of social change in his revaluation of the subjective factor in the historical process.[6]

However, Hegelian Marxism, despite the apparent agreement between its co-founders on many issues of substance, is not homogeneous. Its own history is as complex and variegated as the history of organized Marxism as a whole. What has come to be called "critical theory", emanating from the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research or "Frankfurt School" founded in 1923, is a variant of Lukács' and Korsch's original work, although there are significant differences which have proven to be very consequential for Marxian theory in the years following World War II.

Lukács and Korsch were fundamentally orthodox in their orientation to Marx's original theory of economic crisis and proletarian revolution. Both were self-consciously engaged in a process of *deepening,* and not fundamentally transforming, Marx's theory. However, the "critical theory" developed by the Frankfurt circle represented a much more fundamental departure from the original theory than Lukács' and Korsch's work. Critical theory appeared to be more Hegelian than Marxian, more philosophical than political. The Frankfurt theorists were more sceptical about the prospect of proletarian revolution than were Lukács and Korsch in the 1920s.

The Frankfurt School initially embraced diverse theoretical perspectives. Orthodox Marxists like Karl-August Wittfogel joined with philosopher-aesthetes like Theodor W. Adorno and with psychoanalytically oriented thinkers like Erich Fromm. However, in the 1930s and early 1940s a distinctive perspective emerged which further set off critical theory from Lukács' and Korsch's Hegelian Marxism and from original Marxism.

This perspective shattered original Marxism in that it shed its theoretical allegiance to the working-class, an allegiance faithfully upheld by both Lukács and Korsch. Critical theory radicalized Lukács' analysis of the "ideological crisis of the proletariat" and of false consciousness by suggesting that the working-class had utterly lost its potential for revolt. Further, the Frankfurt theorists challenged the Marxian paradigm itself by suggesting that critical theory could no longer achieve a close, advisory relationship to political practice but would have to play a new, more circumspect "critical" role. The Frankfurt theorists believed that the prospects for a revolution, which might have appeared greater in the crisis-period of the 1920s than in the post-Depression period, had diminished and that the entire relationship between theory and practice had to be revised.

Where Lukács and Korsch attempted to balance the relation between economic forces and ideological forces (believing that they were faithful

to Marx in this) the Frankfurt theorists minimized economic forces. The analysis of false consciousness was extended and radicalized by Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno and Herbert Marcuse[7] such that is nearly usurped the significance of Marx's original economic critique of capitalism.

The Frankfurt School theorists did not abandon suddenly the model of proletarian revolution. Initially, in the 1920s and 1930s, Horkheimer and his associates were sympathetic to the revolutionary aspirations of original Marxism. However, it was not long before the Frankfurt circle recognized that capitalism had changed qualitatively, even since the period when Lukács and Korsch developed their theories of class consciousness. In the Institute's journal, *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, articles appeared which suggested that market capitalism had developed into late, or monopoly, capitalism, requiring new categories of analysis and thus new models of social change.[8]

Where Lukács could still retain the model of a class conscious collective subject (a class "in and for itself", the working-class), the Frankfurt theorists felt that the entire model of class consciousness needed to be rethought. Indeed, Horkheimer and others went as far as to intimate that human consciousness was far *more* exploited than Lúkacs and Korsch imagined. Lúkacs believed that the "ideological crisis of the proletariat" was owed to the entrapment of the working-class by bourgeois ideology, while the Frankfurt thinkers believed that this ideology went far deeper than ideology in the traditional sense, penetrating and distorting the deep subjectivity of the person.

Ideology in the original Marxian paradigm was deceptive in the sense that it mystified economic exploitation. Now, under late or monopoly capitalism, ideology assumes a more insidious function, preventing the development of a critical consciousness by occluding the possibility of a qualitatively different social order. The Frankfurt thinkers believed that the human being was nearly incapable of thinking theoretically and critically about his own domination. Ideology in this sense penetrated the psychological core of the human being, producing automatons charged with the infinite consumption of commodities and values. Ideology came to have more than a mystifying function (which it had under market capitalism); it now enhanced profit-levels by guaranteeing that the person would remain a willing partisan and agent of bourgeois society which required endless consumption.

This analysis of the new powers of ideology issued in a different kind of Marxism. No longer did the critical theorists assume that the working-class was either the necessary or the probable agent of social

change. Ideological pressures to conform and to consume deflected political radicalism of the original type. The Frankfurt theorist felt that consciousness itself was "in decline", owing to the new, harmonizing powers of ideology. Revolt in this sense was unlikely both in collective and in individual terms.

II. Scientism as "Para-ideology": Decline of Subjectivity

The thesis of the decline of an autonomous human being went far beyond Lukács' analysis of false consciousness. For Lukács, false consciousness could be demystified and reversed through a didactic type of political education, oriented to stimulating class consciousness. Hegelian Marxism in its original formulation was mainly concerned to return to Marx's dialectic between economic and ideological forces, opposing economic determinism which implicitly counseled passive political stances. Both Lukács and Korsch believed that Marxism needed to *retrieve* its revolutionary focus and praxis-orientation.

Critical theory in the Frankfurt formulation, however, was a product of a much more intense pessimism about the possibility of social change. Class consciousness failed to emerge from the post-Depression period, weakening Lukács' and Korsch's activist optimism about reinvigorating the working-class in western Europe. Moreover, Marxism-Leninism could no longer convincingly pretend to be a democratizing force in the Soviet Union. Where Lukács could praise Lenin as a great dialectician and revolutionary[9] the Frankfurt theorists were far less sanguine about Soviet-style Marxism as it was given a Stalinist imprint.

Capitalism was further consolidated between the Depression and the end of World War II. The critical theorists believed that the period of sharp contradictions between "capital" and "labour" had ended, with the wide-spread unionization of workers and increasing state-intervention in the economy. Keynesian economics sanctioned an increased role for the state in stimulating the economy through the creation of jobs and through large capital expenditures. This development vitiated Marx's putative hypothesis that crisis was inevitable in a capitalist system. It turned out that there were mechanisms by which the rate of profit could be sustained and even increased and by which the working-class could be gradually enriched, thus ensuring their allegiance and compliance.

There is controversy over whether Marx "predicted" the collapse of the system or merely developed several possible scenarios, one of which was heightened class-conflict and collapse. This is an extremely important issue because the theory of the transition to socialism is tied in with the theory of collapse. The concept of the dictatorship of the

proletariat, I would argue, was never central to Marx and thus he was far from being a determinist in the sense of having predicted an inevitable collapse. If this reading of Marx is accepted, then the Frankfurt concept of the new powers of ideology and of state-intervention in strengthening the economic system can be seen as continuous with the original theory. Also, the critique of Marxist-Leninist state-socialism, (rooted in the putative necessity of a transitional proletarian dictatorship) is given license if the orthodox transition-scheme is rejected or amended.

Thus, it is *possible* to perceive the critical theorists' thesis of the decline of subjectivity (and the major revision of dialiectical materialism which it occasioned) as Marxist in spirit. The clash between orthodoxy and revisionism has been productive in the sense that it has cast Marx as having been more ambiguous about the inevitability of social change than many orthodox Marxists have assumed. It can be argued that Marx appeared to stop short of predicting an inevitable collapse, thus supporting the Hegelian Marxist reconstruction of Marx as a dialectical (non-reductionist) theorist of change.

In any case, critical theory (whatever its Marxist credentials) went far beyond Lukács' and Korsch's reliance on time-worn models of revolutionary dynamics. The philosophical and psychological dimensions of Hegelian Marxism took on new significance in the hands of Horkheimer and his associates.

The crucial element in the critical theory developed in Frankfurt, and that which distinguishes its brand of Marxism from most earlier versions, was the thesis about declining, or "damaged", subjectivity. Since ideology was perceived to have developed greater powers of mystification, the concept of the critique of ideology must necessarily change. Indeed, critical theory was not to be didactic in the sense of exhorting workers to revolt but rather it exhorted all human beings to think critically about domination. The critique of ideology in this sense was transformed from a critique of the ideology of market capitalism and economic exploitation into a critique of bourgeois existence in general.

The Frankfurt theorists believed that the consolidation of capitalism strengthened the system's hold on individual psyches and wills. The "transcendent", critical faculty had been weakened by the positive ideology of advanced capitalism. In 1960, Marcuse was to lament the death of "negative thinking",[10] stressing that political education needed to strengthen this capability. Further developing Max Weber's theories of instrumental rationality (involving the equation of social rationality with economic rationality such as mathematical accounting-

procedures), the critical theorists argued that *instrumental rationality* had become a new ideology to replace liberalism.

Instrumental rationality erased the distinction between means and ends. It stressed the importance of economic and bureaucratic efficiency, neglecting the study and critical examination of the purposes and goals of efficiency. The so-called "organization man" was a characterological product of instrumental rationality, being the type of person who worries only about the efficiency of social processes and not their qualitative dimension.

The concern with profit as such had been partly replaced by the concern with efficiency and stability in the context of the expansion and consolidation of capitalism. The vast bureaucratization of modern industrial society required that people not question the contents of administrative decisions and imperative commands but instead concern themselves only with the *accomplishment* of tasks set by custodians of the system.

The critical theorists lamented the development of pervasive instrumental, managerial and scientific ideologies. They believed that the relationship between means and ends was crucial for assessing the quality of a given social order. They argued that instrumental rationality was fundamentally irrational because it *veiled* the imbedded values which it secretly held dear. The apparent concern only with means and with technical efficiency concealed the type of ends and social values which bureaucratic capitalism had institutionalized. The critical theorists argued that the so-called rational society was based upon particular value-constellations such as the belief in private enterprise. Although Weber was not completely sanguine about the existential consequences of thorough-going technical rationalization, he was nonetheless a partisan of the superficially value-neutral approach to problems of social organization represented by instrumental rationality.

Critical theory perceived that "scientism", or the belief that social problems can be solved technically, without appealing to normative or political values, had become the new ideology of late capitalism. Liberalism had been superseded by the collapse of market conditions of free competition. Class-conflict had been institutionalized and largely (or at least temporarily) contained through the rise of big unions and an interventionist state. Liberalism belonged to an earlier period of capitalism, when the ideology of individual initiative was perceived to be more realistic by workers and entrepreneurs. The bureaucratization of capitalism that largely rendered liberalism obsolete for the concept of individual initiative evidently clashed with the new reality of a bureaucratized economy and polity.

One writer has characterized scientism and instrumental rationality (which, for our purposes, are terms which will be used synonymously) as a "para-ideology".[11] As a para-ideology, instrumental rationality does not provide the kind of total legitimation of the individual's place and function in society as religion and liberalism used to provide. Scientism appears to be above the political and ethical considerations which preoccupied past ideologies. An instrumental rationality which emphasizes technical efficiency depoliticizes decision-making and thus seemingly takes social and economic organization outside the realm of ideology and moral choice (a phenomenon which Habermas has called the "scientization of politics").

The function of *expertise* in resolving social and economic crises becomes paramount because, ostensibly, the expert does not concern himself with higher-order moral issues but is concerned only with efficiency. Thus, the para-ideology of instrumental rationality legitimates and rationalizes the essentially powerless position of the individual person in face of huge, complex systems which he cannot control or even fathom. This ideology defuses rebellion by convincing the person that dominant interests necessarily act in his best interests and that, in any case, there is nothing else to be done.

Critical theory rests on this new analysis of ideology, or indeed, of para-ideology (i.e., ideology which does not *appear* to be ideological). It argues that social conflicts are contained through the institutionalization of expertise which is fundamentally unchallenged by powerless citizens. The human being merely consumes decisions and values imposed by an economic and socio-cultural elite. In this context, the development of ideological or critical consciousness is only a remote possibility, given the depoliticization of authority and decision-making. The person comes to accept whatever is given to him, regardless of its ethical or moral content, thinking that experts necessarily know best.

Where before liberalism stressed the autonomy of subjective choice and taste, today the illusion of this autonomy has largely disappeared. Conformity replaces individuality as a paramount social value. Political radicalism does not emerge as a salient possibility within the flattened, apparently de-ideologized universe of technical rationality.

The decline of subjectivity emerges from a social context in which the person is manipulated by systemic forces which penetrate his innermost being, his "sensibility". The experience of unfreedom is justified by an ideology of technocratic control which is seemingly above the dispute about competing ethics and values. The precarious economic position of

the average person requires that this average individual invest his trust in, and accord legitimacy to, experts who protect him against destitution. To do otherwise would be irrational according to the prevalent concept of rationality as involving trust in authorities.

Crisis is not eliminated, nor obviously is alienation. However, the causal relationship between capitalism and alienation is now mediated in a complex way so that the person cannot readily accuse particular individuals or elites of being oppressive. Domination is flattened out into a typical, common sense reality; it is nearly impossible to imagine a different, better world since the regime of technical rationality is self-perpetuating.

In this context, the concept of "damaged life" became critical theory's *leitmotif* in the hands of Theodor W. Adorno.[12] According to Adorno and Horkheimer,[13] there has come to be an equivalency between myth and enlightenment, between belief and reason. Progress is debunked as an irrational process of false enlightenment. The aphoristic style of critical theory written between about 1947 and Horkheimer's death in 1973 reveals that the Frankfurt thinkers no longer felt that the causal connection between capitalism and alienation could be systematically unravelled. Everything is equally reified, including organized Marxism and its causal theory of exploitation.

In his philosophical master-work, Adorno states summarily that Marxism failed to change the world.[14] His "negative dialectics" refuses to emerge in a positive synthesis, a concrete vision of communist life: philosophy becomes negative in the face of damaged existence. Adorno compared modern industrial society to the concentration camp, unwittingly relativizing the total horror of Nazi genocide. His version of critical theory unintentionally lost the specificity of Marx's critique of exploitation by descending to abstract negation, utilizing the concepts of the totally damaged life and of what might be called spurious subjectivity.

Adorno confused the non-existence of a philosophical concept of subjectivity with the empirical non-existence of struggling human beings (incinerated in the camp ovens). As a metaphor for pervasive false consciousness, the notion of spurious subjectivity may have had impact in stressing that organized Marxism had — temporarily — failed. But Adorno intended more than a metaphor in his notion of a negative dialectics. Critical theory abandoned the working-class and, with it, Marx's original concept of revolution. The experience of fascism seemed to reinforce the malaise and cynicism of the critical theorists excepting

Marcuse, whose deviation from the Frankfurt mainstream will be discussed below, in Section III).

While Lukács assumed a relatively undamaged, potentially activist human being, Adorno and Horkheimer thought that the human being had gone up in smoke, fully manipulated by imposed authority. In this context, critical theory abandoned its advisory relation to the working-class. Theory no longer presaged a qualitatively different social order (as Marx, Lukács and Korsch definitely intended); it merely reflected the disharmony of late capitalist society, imitating but not overcoming its substantive irrationality.

Adorno's concept of spurious subjectivity made a good deal of sense on empirical grounds. Adorno did not perceive a potentially radical working-class in the 1940s and 1950s; indeed, he perceived no collective movements which could be deemed revolutionary. Based on this evidence, critical theory's incipient despair seemed warranted, and the otherwise tendentious comparison of liberal democracy to a Nazi concentration camp could be justified, at least as a provocative hypothesis deserving of further inquiry. But there was nothing tentative or provisional about the concept of non-existent subjectivity. The Frankfurt critics were deeply committed to a mode of analysis which abandoned the concept of subjective autonomy, thinking that the individual as a separate monad no longer existed.

The thesis of declining subjectivity was tied in with the analysis of the changing social role of the family and particularly of the father. Since the publication of *Studien über Autorität und Familie* in 1936, the Frankfurt theorists have related the decline of subjectivity to the replacement of the father's function as an effective superego by society as a whole. The Frankfurt thinkers believed that the 19th century bourgeois family provided a haven for the individual, free to some extent from social determinations. But, they argued, the individual was no longer insulated by the family, now subject to unmediated domination from without. As entrepreneurial capitalism was transformed into monopoly capitalsim, the father lost his prior economic dependence and became merely a fungible quantum of labour, an "organization man". Correspondingly, the father lost his importance as a feared and respected figure of authority and the process of socialization gradually became extra-familial.

While this analysis has its place in critical theory, I believe that the decline of the family has not eradicated subjectivity but only produced a different kind of subjectivity. The idea that subjectivity has declined as a result of the supersession of the family assumes that the bourgeois

family provided emotional sustenance of a kind which formerly allowed the individual to resist imposed domination. This is a very optimistic assessment of the 'old' bourgeois family, neglecting especially the psychic damage done to young girls and to the mother by the bourgeois nuclear family; here, as in other ways, the nostalgic yearning of the Frankfurt theorists for certain bourgois institutions like the family and religion distorted their analyses of the present.

Adorno often indicated that modern society was fully reified. I submit that this assessment belongs to his essentially nostalgic mind-set which denigrated the present in favour of the past. He could not ultimately come to grips with the devaluation of intellectuality which was a by-product of a scientized mass society. Instead of searching for a new *kind* of intellectuality which overcame the role of the bourgeois scholar — such as Marcuse's "new sensibility" or my "dialectical sensibility" — Adorno could only fall back on the archetype of the lonely thinker. This aspect of Adorno's self-image was closely related to his attitude towards the alleged demise of subjectivity: in his thesis of spurious subjectivity Adorno meant to capture his own dissatisfaction with a society which does not listen to intellectuals.

If subjectivity no longer existed, in Adorno's sense, then theory had to abandon its traditionally advisory function. No longer could it be conceived as an expressive moment of radical activism, in the way that Marx and Engels suggested in *The Communits Manifesto.*[15] Rather, theory was only to develop conceptually the full implications of the completely damaged life, following reification to its ultimate conclusion. Horkheimer and Adorno felt that nothing guaranteed a positive synthesis: subjectivity has been irrevocably lost and totalitarianism has become eternal.

For Marxist intellectuals who lived through World War II, this kind of pessimism was perhaps an essential prerequisite of spiritual regeneration and hope. Adorno wanted to show that fascism was not an aberration, discontinuous with liberalism, but was immanent in the logic of instrumental rationality which supplanted liberalism. However, the critical theorists did not overcome their deep fatalism after the war but became further entrenched in their gloom, rejecting the possibility of revolutionary social change.

The Marxist pedigree of critical theory was correspondingly weakened. In the hands of the original Frankfurt School Marxism was transformed from a revolutionary science into a critique of total domination. The advisory relationship between theory and practice was subsequently lost, with theory becoming merely a reflection on vanished practice.

III. Repoliticization of Critical Theory: Beyond the Concept of Spurious Subjectivity

The second-generation of the original Frankfurt School includes such theorists as Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas, Alfred Schmidt (the current Director of the Institute for Social Research), Albrecht Wellmer and Kurt Lenk. Although Marcuse was invited to join the Institute in the early 1930s, he belongs more to the second distinct period of critical theory than to the first, led by Horkheimer and Adorno and characterized by the thesis of spurious subjectivity.

The depoliticization of Marxism following World War II was a product of new historical circumstances in which radicalism was defused by rising productivity and affluence generated by a war-economy. The productive capacity of American industry was then unrivalled, providing the working-class and middle-class with goods and services heretofore reserved for elites and thus partially decreasing their resentment of those elites.

Adorno and Horkheimer endorsed a "negative dialectics" to suit this new, seemingly antagonism-free reality. Negative dialectics rejected a systematic concept of political radicalism, attempting to oppose domination philosophically. Critical theory distanced itself from organized Marxism in the belief that philosophy, and not politics, was to become a "radical" battleground. The kind of work produced by members of the original Institute during the post-World War II years signalled the growing abstraction and political disengagement of critical theory (e.g. Adorno's *Negative Dialectics).*

It was left for Herbert Marcuse to reinvigorate critical theory and, if possible, to counter its abstract character. I interpret Marcuse's *oeuvre* as providing a distinct counter-force to the thesis of declining subjectivity put forward by Horkheimer and Adorno.[16] Marcuse implicitly opposed the analysis of spurious subjectivity, attempting to reground critical theory in psychoanalysis and a new concept of subjectivity.

Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization,* published in 1954, was a bold departure from the original Frankfurt reading of Freud as a sophisticated prophet of gloom,[17] and ultimately served as the point of departure for Marcuse's subsequent work on sexual rebellion and on aesthetics.[18] Marcuse did not appear to accept that the human being had been totally captured by bourgeois instrumental rationality. With Freud, Marcuse postulated the existence of a buried libidinal substratum (the id) which defied total manipulation. The sexual constitution of the human being held out against full-blown repression by advanced capitalism.

Admittedly, Marcuse sometimes repeated Horkheimer's and Ad-

orno's thesis about fallen subjectivity, especially in two 1956 essays which are contained in *Five Lectures. Eros and Civilization* contains passages about "abolition of the individual" and the "decline in consciousness". *One-Dimensional Man* suggests that the "second dimension" of critical consciousness has been irrevocably lost. Yet I read Marcuse in his more recents works (such as *An Essay on Liberation* and *Counterrevolution and Revolt*) as *implying* that human subjectivity is not yet a victim of total reification. In *Eros and Civilization* he also suggests that a "rationality of gratification" remains dormant within human beings. This concept of an ineradicable core of libidinal creativity counters the thesis of heteronomous subjectivity.

The addition of a concept of sexuality to critical theory implicitly challenged the thesis of spurious subjectivity by emphasizing that the human being is an inexhaustible reservoir of buried creative (libidinal) forces. Marcuse argued that every human being has the capacity for erotic play, which can be enhanced and developed in a non-surplus repressive social order. While accepting the thrust of Lukács' analysis of reification, recognizing that capitalism could be sustained by the creation of "false" or distorted human needs, Marcuse suggested that the subjective capability of constituting — and also of changing — the world is not *eliminated* by reification but only *repressed.* In this sense, alienation is a less-than-total condition which in spite of its increasingly pervasive nature leaves the human being some scope for erotic, and, implicitly, political freedoms. Under capitalism, sexuality is often manipulated in such a way that erotic impulses can be inauthentically "liberated" in forms of what Marcuse calls "repressive desublimation", involving merely superficial types of free sexuality (e.g. mate-swapping in the context of a monogamous society).

Marcuse's more recent work, such as *An Essay on Liberation* and *Counterrevolution and Revolt,* develops the insights of *Eros and Civilization.* In *An Essay on Liberation,* Marcuse outlined the concept of the "new sensibility" to describe a human being who has become a socialist personality in his or her everyday life, refusing to oppress others in the name of distant future liberation. In discussing the significance of the New Left for critical theory, Marcuse stresses the necessity of "utopian thinking" which refuses to postpone indefinitely the discussion of alternative social institutions. Only by speculating about and attempting to create post-capitalist alternatives can people successfully begin to overcome relations of subservience and authoritarianism in the context of their own lives.

Marcuse further develops his analysis of erotic and aesthetic radical-

ism in *Counterrevolution and Revolt.* He believes that he salvages and does not subvert the revolutionary vigour of Marxism by articulating a subjective concept of radicalsim — no matter how unorthodox it may appear. Marcuse is more traditionally Marxist than many of his critics suggest in that he explicitly rejects a romantic glorification of irrational, apolitical eroticism (e.g., in his exchange with Norman O. Brown).[19] I do not believe that Marcuse dogmatically renounces orthodox political strategies but only *supplements* them with a concept of radical subjectivity.

In this sense, the thesis of non-existent subjectivity is rejected by Marcuse. Erotic impulses escape the levelling, homogenizing influence of instrumental rationality, preserving an essential core of unadulterated humanity *beneath* the appearance of the damaged life.

This is extremely consequential for critical theory in that it mitigates the pessimism of Adorno and Horkheimer and, most important, because it provides the key to developing more feasible political and theoretical strategies. By going beyond the concept of spurious subjectivity, Marcuse opens the vista of a reengaged Marxism which can once again intersect with existing political and social forces.

Russell Jacoby in his recent *Social Amnesia* has criticized the fetishism of subjectivity that has grown out of certain schools of post-Freudian humanistic psychology. Jacoby relies on Adorno's and Horkheimer's thesis of spurious subjectivity in stating that "the subjectivity that surfaces everywhere, be it in the form of human relationships, peak-experiences and so on, is but a response to its demise."[20] Jacoby extends Adorno's critique of the damaged life in arguing that social change has become nearly impossible.

The curious aspect of Jacoby's work is that he also relies on Marcuse who in the mid-1950s appeared to endorse Adorno's thesis about subjectivity. As I noted above, I believe that Marcuse in his recent work goes beyond this thesis, providing critical theory with a new purchase on emancipatory strategies and a new concept of subjectivity. In an excellent review, Erica Sherover writes:

> Hardly one to be accused of a cheerful positivism, Marcuse is fully aware of the dangers of a falsely happy consciousness. Like Jacoby, he sees the focus on subjectivity among the New Left as a response to objective social conditions, but, unlike Jacoby; he does not view this in a monochromatic fashion. While Jacoby argues too neatly that "the cult of subjectivity

> is a direct response to its eclipse", Marcuse's discussion is truer to the ambiguous reality. Whereas Jacoby sees the focus on subjectivity simply as the abstract and impotent negation of advanced capitalist society, Marcuse sees the subversive potential of the "new sensibility".[21]

She adds: "Given that Jacoby's critique of conformist psychology seeks so much support in the writings of Herbert Marcuse, one can only be puzzled by his failure to mention either the *Essay on Liberation* or *Counterrevolution and Revolt*". Sherover shares my view that Marcuse begins to overcome the disengagement of critical theory occasioned by then-justifiable historical pessimism. The concept of a new subjectivity cannot be dismissed but must be viewed as a *possibility* within the horizon of late capitalism. I will argue that critical theory can articulate and foster the "new sensibility" as it struggles to be born, preventing its fetishism and escaping the fate of what Jacoby calls "social amnesia."

The relevance of Marcuse's implicitly creative concept of subjectivity is to force critical theory into empirical social research which can suggest and further develop new types of political radicalism. The impact of a Marcusean perspective is not merely to vindicate political optimism; rather, Marcuse provides a clue that "constitutive subjectivity" still exists and can be *discovered empirically* in the activity of rebellion and in the creation of alternative institutions.

By empirical research, I do not refer only to atheoretical fact-gathering. Empirical research here refers to a type of *historical analysis* of contemporary social forces which necessarily brings to bear theoretical and moral perspectives on social investigation. Empiricism has often been equated with atheoretical positivism, giving the impression that there can be no other type of empirical research. Marcuse intends to analyze perceivable social forces within the parameters of a theory of historical change, assessing the *meta-factual* nature of empirical phenomena (e.g. the revolutionary potential of unorthodox political forms such as the New Left). Social forces are not simply *reflected* by Marcuse's empirical methodology but are located in a theoretical totality which goes beyond the factual appearance of the New Left in order to seek its essential historical significance. When I conceive of a renewed empiricism, I distinguish between *types* of empirical investigation, some of which eschew atheoretical positivism.

The sclerosis of Marxism resulted from the retention of strictly

economic categories of analysis, where Marx did not minimize ideological and psychological forces. If this is accepted as a partial explanation for the irrelevance of orthodox Marxism today — in its deterministic, economistic forms — then efforts to reinvigorate and revise Marxism will take the form of rendering *complex* (i.e., nonreductionist) the analysis of exploitation.

In the hands of the first Hegelian Marxists, this revision proceeded apace. However, in the work of the original Frankfurt School, the revision of Marxism went too far in casting out entirely Marx's and Lukács' voluntaristic concept of a revolutionary agent. This development subtly reversed the original relation between theory and practice suggested in *The Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels.

In their attacks on utopian socialists, Marx and Engels implicitly suggested a concept of *radical empiricism* which oriented their later work, and to which Marcuse unwittingly returns. In this sense, *the critique of scientism and instrumental rationality offered by Horkheimer and Adorno discarded precisely the kind of radical empiricism which would have repoliticized critical theory and provided the concept of political activism lost by Hegelian Marxism after Lukács and Korsch.*

Both economism and critical theory withdrew from the imperative of revolutionary practice, the one thinking that the revolution would occur without subjectivity (or, strictly speaking, that the correct subjectivity would arise automatically in response to economic suffering), the other thinking that subjectivity did not exist. The analysis of captive, damaged subjectivity by the original Frankfurt theorists necessarily discarded the concept of a struggling, rebellious subject, capable of throwing off the yoke of exploitation. Marcuse's work suggests a new concept of radicalism, and further, a new concept of the relation between Marxist social science and political practice.

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels argued that radical theory would stem from, and subsequently reflect upon, given historical circumstances. Marx's famous analysis of the dependence of consciousness on social being[22] was not a *reduction* of thought to objective conditions but a deep formulation of the dialectical relation between critical theory and political activity. Marx believed that theorizing is a *retrospective* activity, emergent upon the heels of existing struggle and not antecedent to it.

Marx criticized the utopian socialists because they tried to draw up blueprints of future communism, believing that theory had a purely projective function. As a dialectician, Marx believed that theory could

only have a mediating, synthesizing role, following and guiding struggle, rendering it conscious of its motives and objective possibilities.

In this sense, Marx did not deny Hegel's formulation in *Philosophy of Right* about the owl of Minerva necessarily taking flight only at dusk (about philosophy's emergence after history had unfolded, as a retrospective activity). I submit that Marx did *not* deviate from Hegel's essentially retrospective, synthesizing concept of philosophy and theory, but only gave this concept of theory a revolutionary emphasis.

For Marx, then, social science was to "take flight" alongside of revolutionary activity, instructing and organizing that activity. Marx's empirical discovery which so influenced subsequent Marxist and bourgeois social science was his discovery of the revolutionary potential of the urban proletariat. Marx did not *impose* this insight upon history but extracted it from his analysis of social processes.

The eleventh thesis on Feuerbach is often taken to be a statement about the revolutionary contribution to be made by a critical social science. However, Marx did not intend that theory alone would change the world. Theory was to follow and to rationalize existing struggle. Indeed, the first thesis states that Feuerbach "sees only the theoretical attitude as the true human attitude". Political practice *includes* theoretical practice (i.e., the practice of thinking), although Marx implies in places that political and theoretical practice have different revolutionary priorities.

Marx's entire critique of German idealism echoes with the sentiment that idealism drops out the practical character of revolutionary activity; ultimately, Hegel reduced history to the immanent self-reflection of the Absolute Idea, subordinating practice to theory (and thus countering his own correct insight in *Philosophy of Right* about the subordinate status of thought).

Critical theory exaggerated the constitutive function of theory *because* political radicalism appeared absent during its formative period. Economism discarded the theoretical aspect of the revolution, while the critical theorists discarded the political aspect.

Marcuse implicitly returns to Marx's notion of the advisory, synthetic character of theory, refusing to conceive critical theory as a revolutionary oracle. The popular perception of Marcuse as a philosopher who relinquishes the revolutionary character of Marxism is unjustified in view of this interpretation. I read Marcuse as saying that there is a biological-libidinal human nature which provides subjective resources for rebellious, political activity. Marcuse goes deeper than the ap-

pearance of captive subjectivity in pursuit of a substratum of real autonomy. Marcuse endorses a biological, anthropological concept of this kind of human nature precisely *because* he does not want to appear to exaggerate the cerebral, theoretical roots of rebellion. Marcuse refuses to exhort people to revolt; rather, he only develops the consequences of existing, empirically discoverable rebellion, springing from the human being's inability to tolerate exploitation.

This reading of Marcuse inspires a critique of prior critical theory. Horkheimer and Adorno, I believe, exaggerated the capacity of an abstract, overly cerebral concept of reason to be an effective emancipatory stimulus. I read Marx and Marcuse as suggesting that revolt emerges from intolerable suffering caused by crises and contradictions in the social system, not from pure thought. The working-class will not awaken to their revolutionary potential by reading *Capital* (or, today *One-Dimensional Man*) but by reason of their subjectively experienced exploitation and unhappiness.

Thus, critical theory is to have the function of raising rebellion to the level of full radicalism: this is what it means to *mediate* and to *synthesize* existing struggle. As a dialectical theory, Marxism does not blind itself to shifts in systemic checks-and-balances, such as *rising* income-levels and *enhanced* welfare programs and social services. If Marxism is open-minded with respect to such developments, it will not prematurely attempt to take a more active didactic role in exhorting temperamentally unrevolutionary (or prerevolutionary) people to revolt.

The thesis of declining subjectivity advanced by Horkheimer and Adorno assumes a more cerebral subject than Marx or Marcuse presume. "Totally administered" life, as Horkheimer and Adorno called it, referred primarily to the administration of critical consciousness, not also to deeper libidinal domination. The concept of false consciousness is useful if it is not overstated. Once overstated, this concept minimizes prerational, inarticulate — even unconscious — sources of potential radicalism. People do not revolt or act constructively to transform society merely because they have read works of critical theory but because their current lives are no longer bearable. While critical theory can *organize* and *systematize* the rage behind revolt, it cannot cause revolt.

Horkheimer and Adorno countered non-existent subjectivity with *cerebral radicalism,* fighting fire with fire. But this led nowhere, or at least not towards effective political strategies. The thesis of declining subjectivity involved primarily the decline in consciousness; yet consciousness was given a particularly cerebral meaning by Horkheimer and

Adorno. Cerebral radicalism fought declining subjectivity with negative dialectics, believing that there was nothing else to do but to think one's own despair. By contrast, Marcuse could avoid the disengagement of cerebral radicalism by developing a concept of subjectivity which was not completely dominated, and which was even engaged in its own self-emancipation. Horkheimer and Adorno looked, and saw only total domination: they thus retreated into transcendent thought. Marcuse looked and saw human struggle, motivated not by readings of Marx but by unbearable alienation. Marcuse's concept of radicalism was developed from the *evidence* of radicalism, not conjured up through pure cerebration.

Why did thinkers like Horkheimer and Adorno go as far as to suggest that the alleged demise of subjectivity required a strictly cerebral radicalism? The answer, I believe, lies in the failure of the original Frankfurt thinkers to integrate psychological with sociological perspectives in such a way as to comprehend the biological-anthropological foundation of human being. The original Frankfurt thinkers did not develop an adequate concept of *human nature* — and thus of a new subjectivity — because they accepted the orthodox Marxist critique of "philosophical anthropology" and of all theories which tend to hypostatize a static human nature.

The Hegelian Marxists were *historicist*, or reluctant to speculate about invariant dimensions of human needs and human nature. The historicist strain in Marxism was inspired by Marx's reluctance to speak concretely about details of life in communist society. Historicism issued in a concept of reified human being, providing grounds for the thesis of spurious subjectivity. Lacking a definite concept of human nature, Horkheimer and Adorno could not develop the concept of a subjectivity capable of overcoming reification.

Marcuse, by contrast, was reluctant to endorse the relativistic implications of historicism. His reconstitution of psychoanalysis was meant to introduce into Marxism an *empirical concept of human nature*, free to some extent from historical determinations. This allowed Marcuse to develop a concept of radicalism which was dependent on an active, struggling — not completely manipulated — human being.

Moreover, it allowed Marcuse to *perceive* struggling humanity in the process of its own self-liberation. Marcuse did not attempt to fit a pregiven image of authentic radicalism over existent struggle, necessarily finding it to be reformist and insufficient according to the criteria of cerebral radicalsim; instead, he allowed on-going struggle to inform his own theoretical construction of relevant radicalsim.

Marcuse could therefore overcome the resistance to empirical research of Horkheimer and Adorno in their later years.[23] The "empirical" to Marcuse was the birthplace of potential radicalism, the site of human self-emancipation, Horkheimer's and Adorno's thesis of spurious subjectivity *necessarily* eschewed praxis-oriented research because all social phenomena were perceived as being equally constituted by dominant, dominating interests. The appearance of radicalism, thus, could be discounted as a product of manipulated consciousness, making empirical research a useless attempt to validate the existence of non-existent subjectivity. One even gets the impression that Adorno discounted all rebellion which did not attain the philosophical erudition of his own work.

A concept of human nature is required by a radical social science which endeavours to *locate* and to *organize* on-going struggle. Otherwise, struggle will appear superficial and reformist. A concept of *ineradicable subjectivity*, produced by philosophical insight into the empirical nature of man, allows critical theory to overcome its resistance to a practice-oriented empiricism designed to locate and organize incipient radicalism.

IV. New Epistemological and Political Strategies: The Dialectical Sensibility

Critical theory in Marcuse's hands has begun to transcend its pessimism about effecting social change in late capitalist society. The transcendence of pessimism, and the subsequent repoliticization of critical theory, turns on the concept of human nature adopted by theorists. If empirical subjectivity still exists, political radicalism again becomes a meaningful possibility.

I submit that critical theory can overcome its proclivity for abstract philosophical negation and cerebral radicalism (a) by developing a concept of subjectivity which allows it to recognize and locate empirical instances of struggle to create new institutions; (b) by developing an orientation to the relation between theory and practice which more nearly approximates Marx's own concept of the advisory role of theory.

The first task can be characterized as involving epistemological strategies, the second as involving political strategies. These tasks are intimately related, inasmuch as a Marxian theory of knowledge relates directly to its attitude towards stimulating social change. Objectivistic epistemology tends to reinforce a fatalistic attitude to social change, as I have argued elsewhere.[24] Marxian positivism degrades the role of consciousness both epistemologically *and* politically, accepting an image of fully heteronomous subjectivity.

Again, I submit that the thorough-going critique of scientism by members of the original Frankfurt School led them to scrap the advisory role of theory and to abandon the prospect of effective radicalism. It is not the case that Adorno believed that change was impossible, for he remained a dialectical thinker, fundamentally uncertain about the future. He only abandoned the advisory role of theory (developed by Marx) in the belief that human subjectivity could not be perceived as revolutionary and thus theory could not improve and deepen its political possibilities. In overcoming the deep-seated historicism and purely cerebral orientation of the original Frankfurt School, critical theory will be able to develop a *possible concept of radicalism*, rooted in an image of constitutive subjectivity. Empiricism will take the form of uncovering the objective potential of radical activity. Radical social science will locate existing rebellion and thus counter its original tendency to view modern capitalism as a self-sufficient, automatic totality, capable of integrating all opposition.

Radical empiricism will construct the model of a constitutive human being. It will utilize particular examples of struggle to illuminate a broader theory of change. Epistemological strategies become relevant to political strategies in the sense that critical theory will *locate* empirical instances of rebellion in order to *illuminate* their radical potential. Theory will allow rebellion to think its own radicalism, to locate its sense of injustice and proposed alternative institutions in a theoretical totality. *Out of struggle will spring the resources for creating a theory to improve and to enhance struggle.*

Radical empiricism becomes a form of political activity as soon as it enters the dialectic of theory and practice (task number *b*). Radical empiricism sheds the disengagement of traditional, purely contemplative theories by *taking control* of the process of cognition. The division between manual and mental labour is overcome by what Gramsci called "organic intellectuals", intellectuals who refuse to remain aloof from human struggle. The organic intellectual does not rely on experts and dead authorities, believing that cognition is a constructive activity which must be renewed continuously, never able to rest with final and ultimate knowledge.

Radical empiricism is itself a political strategy; it challenges the scientistic concept of disinterested knowledge, taking inspiration from Marx's concept of "practical-critical activity" in *Theses on Feuerbach.* Radical empiricism eschews the abstract tendencies of traditional theory by overturning the dualism between contemplation and action, a dualism which Lukács characterized as an "antinomy of bourgeois thought".

Critical theory in this sense can converge with phenomenology and ethnomethodology by endorsing their concepts of cognition as a *practical,* as opposed to a transcendental, activity. Although phenomenology and ethnomethodology fail to develop a systematic critique of domination, they both implicitly subvert the contemplative disengagement of the traditional bourgeois intellectual. Radical empiricism is an "everyday" activity, a mode of self-objectification. It relates its theoretical constructs to the "lifeworld" from which human struggle springs, attempting to develop a structural understanding of the subjective roots of emancipatory activity. Radical empiricism studies subjective radicalism, attempting to articulate a theory of change, while it is *itself* a mode of radical subjectivity: this is the ineradicable dialectic between knowledge and action which lies at the heart of a repoliticized critical theory.

The radical empiricist is thus a *dialectical sensibility*, refusing to separate his activity into reflective and activist roles. The radical empiricist is a human being who studies and attempts to assist human beings in the process of their self-emancipation. As a dialectical sensibility, the radical empiricist does not separate his own liberation from the liberation of others: he attempts to provide others with subjective, constitutive autonomy so that they might help him create a dialogical community. The dialectical sensibility must be an empiricist because he does not believe that the particular, peculiar circumstances of human beings can be ignored by a theory of change. Institutional change is contingent on organizing and developing subjective sources of rebellion.

The dialectical sensibility goes *beneath* the appearances of domination, believing that contemporary society contains inchoate, even invisible tendencies towards its own transformation. The dialectical sensibility explains how social change — in the abstract — would have concrete consequences for particular human existences. The dialectical sensibility, through the filter of radical empiricism, *begins to live the revolution.*

Critical theory will shed pregiven, abstract models of change. The models will be suggested by what people do to improve their own lives. Marx, in a similar fashion, did not develop a speculative concept of proletarian radicalism, thinking that the proletariat was an ontologically necessary radical agent. Instead, Marx analyzed empirical developments in market society which *stimulated* proletarian radicalism; Marx created a theory of change by examining the genesis and potential of existing struggle, a theory which he then articulated in order to heighten and to

rationalize the workers' movement. Marx learned from struggling workers in order to teach them about their possible historical mission.

Radical social science will create a theory of change from empirical evidence of existing struggle (task number *b*). In order to perceive existing struggle theorists must utilize a concept of constitutive subjectivity which *provides for* the possibility of radicalism (task number *a*). If society is fully one-dimensional (a thesis falsely ascribed to Marcuse, one which he has never endorsed),[25] it would make no sense to harness examples of rebellion in creating a new theory of change. The issue here is that of the existence or absence of revolutionary agents. Critical theory stands or falls on its estimate of the *possibility* of social change. A theorist indulges his insight and imagination in taking a position on the possibility of change and, implictly, on a concept of subjectivity. Once this step has been taken, certain empirical strategies suggest themselves. These strategies are oriented to developing a theory of change rooted in existing examples of rebellion.

My own position, with Marcuse and others, is that change is presently possible. My concept of subjectivity suggests the possibility that people can *and do* create alternative institutions. I am reluctant to accept the thesis of declining individuality; instead, I am concerned to locate existing rebellion in developing the foundations of a new, more relevant theory of change.

Once tasks numbers *a* and *b* have been accomplished, and a dialectical sensibility created, a radical social science can take wing. Assuming a concept of constitutive subjectivity *and* assuming an advisory role for a theory constructed with evidence from empirical cognition, a revised theory of change can be outlined.

However, there is a kind of Marxian empiricism which neither assumes the relevance of constitutive subjectivity nor conceives of theoretical cognition as advisory and practice-oriented. I submit that within bourgeois social science, Marxism is usually viewed as this type of empiricism, being merely a variant of value-free social science. I characterize this version as *Weberian Marxism* because it rests upon Weber's concept of value-free scientific objectivity, rejecting Marx's concept of practice-oriented empiricism developed, if briefly, in *Theses on Feuerbach*. Weberian Marxism is a product of the neo-Kantian Marxism of the Second International, further developing its dichotomy of knowledge and action.

While Horkheimer and Adorno overstated their critique of scientism, or appeared to do so, Weberian Marxists have neglected the theoretical significance of the critique of scientism. Marxist empiricism can take a

variety of forms, some of which depart from the dialectical epistemology embraced by Lukács and Korsch. Scientistic Marxism fails to endorse the practice-oriented implications of Marx's revolutionary science, believing that Marxian empiricism must take the form of value-neutral social science developed most systematically by Max Weber.

I contrapose Weberian Marxism to dialectical Marxism: Weberian Marxism separates Marxian social theory from radical political activity. Sociologists like Tom Bottomore[26] follow Weber in arguing that Marxian empiricism must formulate causal relationships which can provide greater comprehension of social dynamics. While the radical empiricism which I propose does not abandon the cognitive purpose of science, it is a *dialectical* empiricism in that it *intervenes* in the social processes which it cognizes. Marxist positivism, buttressed by Weber's canon of value-free objectivity, stands in a passive relationship to the objective world, failing to adopt the mediating, advisory role with respect to existing struggle that I believe Marx recommended.

Theory and practice are not identical, as certain critical theorists have unwittingly implied, believing that the critique of ideology and of captive subjectivity must *replace* political activism. But neither are theory and practice unconnected, as Weberian Marxists assume. Dialectical empiricism is unlike non-Marxist social sciences in that it seeks a particular type of information, namely, about how human struggle might be able to change society. Dialectical empiricism seeks to inform rebellion of its political possibilities. In this sense, Weberian Marxism does not think of itself as a special science — a science which struggles to make itself unnecessary by changing society — but only as an instance of value-neutral empiricism.

The Weberian Marxist *as a scientist* does not allow political commitments to affect his scientific cognition. However, the radical empiricist does not *separate* his life as a scientist from his life as a political partisan and activist. He does not make this separation because, as Marx bluntly reminded us, the point is to change the world, not only to interpret it.

Marxist social science either *acts* as a change-agent in society, advising and stimulating on-going rebellion; or it *reflects* social processes, refusing to unify cognitive and political roles.

I submit that the model of a revolutionary working-class will be replaced by a model of revolutionary self-management and deprofessionalization. In this sense, the class-specific attack on the capitalist division of labour launched by Marx will be *generalized* into an attack on all aspects of the division of labour, involving every class.

Following Habermas and Mueller,[27] I submit that economic crises, endemic to an earlier stage in the development of capitalism, have been displaced by new forms of crisis such as the crisis of *legitimacy*. This type of crisis has resulted from the near-collapse of liberalism and its ideology of individual initiative, a collapse which has eroded the bases of political and cultural legitimacy in advanced industrial societies. Legitimation crisis is peculiar to a form of capitalism which rests not on sharp class-conflict but on expanding professional and service sectors. The ideology of liberalism, suitable to an earlier form of market capitalism, no longer elicits mass belief in the rationality of the social system. Affluence has not in its own right guaranteed a stable political system, especially when human dissatisfaction in the spheres of work and leisure has not been mitigated by mere consumption.[28]

Class-conflict is now largely replaced by cynicism about the rationality and humanity of the system. A cynical public fails to trust economic and cultural elites, and begins to reject the imposition of authority. In this sense, the locus of crisis and rebellion has changed since the time of Marx. Job-dissatisfaction and moral anomie have largely replaced poverty in advanced industrial society as manifestations of alienation.

In this context, resentment of exploitative economic elites is replaced by resentment of *imposed authority*. People feel that they can have no input to complex decision-making processes, nor control over their work-places, communities and social services. The world appears to be beyond the ken of subjective control, an illusion sustained knowingly by the ideology of scientism and technocracy which has largely superseded liberalism.

Marxism thus can be most effective by enhancing the struggle to *take control* over private and public existences. The on-going rebellion against authority imposed from above can be *mediated* and *organized* by modern critical theory, and raised to a higher level of theoretically self-conscious radicalism. For example, the movement to develop neighbourhood control in large urban centres can be seized upon by critical theory and informed about its own latent radicalism, its denial of imposed authority.

Instead of searching for a revolutionary working-class, which becomes more and more bourgeois as the scope and powers of unions expand, Marxists will instead search for movements to *take control* of social and political processes. They will attempt to provide a theoretical framework within which efforts to decentralize and deprofessionalize modern life can be perceived as radical. They will refuse to minimize the "revolu-

tionary'' importance of these kinds of rebellion, no longer retaining the vocabulary of economistic radicalism appropriate to an earlier stage of capitalism.

Paradoxically, the original Frankfurt theorists remained *more* traditional in their concept of radical scholarship than perhaps appearances indicated. The pessimism which I have attributed to critical theory was a product of disappointment about a quiescent working-class. Although the thesis of declining subjectivity seems to apply to all social groups, middle-class and proletarian, I argue that it was secretly meant to apply only to the fallen working-class. The critical theorists did not believe that critical consciousness *as such* had been eradicated, but only the critical consciousness of the working-class. Horkheimer and Adorno believed that certain radical intellectuals were privileged in that they were not captives of instrumental rationality.

The original Frankfurt theorists were bourgeois intellectuals in the sense that they did not believe that intellectual theoretical practice was a political activity and, consequently, that their own activity needed to be transformed. In this regard, the critical theorists failed to develop new concepts of radical scholarship, falling back on the archetype of ''critical criticism'', as Marx called it, or disengaged intellectuality. Had the Frankfurt theorists actually *revised* Marx's revolutionary science, they could have developed a concept of intellectual deprofessionalization and even self-management, becoming ''organic intellectuals'' in Gramsci's terms. Shifting the analytic terms of Marxian theory, from the class-specific model of proletarian activism to the generalized model of revolutionary self-management, might have allowed the Frankfurt critics to shed their own self-identity as traditional scholars, disengaged from politics.

That Adorno and Horkheimer in the late 1960s felt threatened by the West German New Left, by their blatant eroticism and attack on authority-structures and professional roles *including* traditional Marxist scholarship, is comprehensible in light of this interpretation. Critical theory could not adequately shift gears in developing a radical empiricism which would allow the theory of social change to be appropriately transformed. This issued in the traditionalist concept of professional scholarship which Horkheimer and Adorno retained.

A radical empiricism based upon a concept of constitutive subjectivity requires that the role of the intellectual be rethought. An orthodox Marxist shies away from the demystification of authority-structures because he fears that his own authoritative role will be weakened in the process. A Marxist who is not reluctant to abandon faith in a

proletarian revolution can become a practice-oriented intellectual, no longer reluctant to adjust his own intellectual and political self-image to the exigencies of on-going radicalism. I would argue that Marcuse could so readily come to terms with the New Left in the 1960s because he — alone among the Frankfurt theorists — was receptive to rebellion which did not fit traditional models, being a dialectical sensibility and radical empiricist.

Unless critical theory sheds its thesis of declining individuality and recaptures its advisory relationship to struggle (tasks numbers *a* and *b*, above) it will remain politically irrelevant. Marxists can either await a delayed revolution to be carried out by the working-class, or they can return to the inspiration of Marx's revolutionary materialism and his idea that radicalism provides theory with empirical and political resources and not the other way around. Critical theory seeks the promise of emancipation in unorthodox forms of struggle, constantly putting intellectual radicalism to the test of social and political practice, becoming a *living theory* which refuses to separate cognitive and political roles.

The Marxist intellectual can become a dialectical sensibility, engaging in his own particular type of subjective revolt against imposed authority. The dialectical sensibility does not separate theory and practice, envisaging instead a radical intellectuality which itself contributes to social change. It remains for this type of theoretical practice to be articulated.[29]

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Notes

1. See pp. 37-39 of *The Communist Manifesto,* in *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy,* edited by Lewis S. Feuer, Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1959, on this.

2. "Automatic Marxism" is a term used by Russell Jacoby to characterize deterministic Marxism which eliminates the subjective factor. See Russell Jacoby, "Towards a Critique of Automatic Marxism", *Telos,* no. 10, and "Politics of the Crisis Theory", *Telos,* No. 23 for the development of this concept.

3. See George Lichtheim, *From Marx to Hegel,* New York, Herder and Herder, 1971, on this characterization.

4. Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy,* New York, Monthly Review Press, 1970.

5. See the critiques of Hegelian Marxism by Louis Althusser, *For Marx,* London, Allen Lane, 1969, and by Lucio Colletti, *Marxism and Hegel,* London, NLB, 1973. For a critique of their critiques, see my "On Science as Domination", in *Domination,* edited by Alkis Kontos, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1975, pp. 185-200.

6. "(Marx and Engels) always treated ideologies — including philosophy — as concrete realities and not as empty fantasies". Karl Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy,* New York, Monthly Review Press, 1970, p. 73. "(Marx's) was a materialism whose theory comprehended the totality of society and history, and whose practice overthrew it." p. 77.

7. See, for example, Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason,* New York, Seabury Press, 1974, Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory,* New York, Herder and Herder, 1972; Theodor W. Adorno *Negative Dialectics,* New York, Seabury Press, 1973, Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia,* London, NLB, 1974; Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1974.

8. For example, see Marcuse's essays from the early years of the Institute, *Negations,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1968. Also see Horkheimer's "Authoritarian State", *Telos,* No. 15, for a seminal analysis of the transformation of market into state, or monopoly, capitalism.

9. See Georg Lukács, *Lenin: A Study on the Unity of his Thought,* London, NLB, 1970. ". . . Lenin is the greatest thinker to have been produced by the revolutionary working-class movement." p. 9.

10. See the Preface to the second edition ("A Note on Dialectics") of Herbert Marcuse's *Reason and Revolution,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1960, for his articulation of the concept of "negative thinking".

11. See pp. 101-112, Claus Mueller, *The Politics of Communication,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1975, on scientism as a "para-ideology". ". . .the para-ideology of science and technology makes the exercise of governmental power acceptable by seemingly depoliticizing politics. Scientific and technological knowledge conceal class-specific interests, value systems, and the nature of domination. Because scientific methodologies do indeed develop independently from group or class interests, it is easy to convey implicitly the idea that decision-making based on science and technology is just as detached from special interests. This invocation of scientific methods seriously and deleteriously obscures the political process. The extent to which the para-ideology of science and technology is accepted by the population is unknown, but traces of it can be found in the refracted belief that solutions to social problems can and will eventually be found through scientific research and the application of technological knowledge. Such a belief cements the status quo by de-emphasizing political

solutions to society's problems". *Ibid.*, p. 111. Also see Jürgen Habermas, "Technology and Science as 'Ideology' ", in his *Toward a Rational Society,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1970. Habermas' essay is an original contribution to the critique of scientism, from which Meuller draws much of his inspiration.

12. The phrase "damaged life" is taken from the sub-title of Adorno's *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life,* London, NLB, 1974. For a discussion of the relevance of this concept for critical theory, see my "Marcuse and Habermas on New Science", *Polity,* Vol. IX, No. 2, Winter 1976, especially footnote 7.

13. See Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* New York, Herder and Herder, 1972, on the equivalency of myth and enlightenment.

14. "Philosophy, which once seemed obsolete, lives on because the moment to realize it was missed. The summary judgement that it had merely interpreted the world, that resignation in the face of reality had crippled it in itself, becomes a defeatism of reason after the attempt to change the world miscarried.", p. 3, Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics,* New York, Seabury Press, 1973.

15. "The theoretical conclusions of the communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes.", p. 20, *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy,* edited by Lewis S. Feuer, Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1959. This is a classic formulation of the relation between action and theory, a formulation which I consider essential to dialectical materialism.

16. For one expression of the thesis of declining subjectivity see Horkheimer's *Eclipse of Reason,* New York, Seabury Press, 1974, especially the chapter entitled "Rise and Decline of the Individual", pp. 128-161. Also see Russell Jacoby's *Social Amnesia,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1975.

17. See Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination,* Boston, Little, Brown, 1973, pp. 103-106. "It was. . .left to the member of the Institute's inner circle who had had the least to do with the psychological speculations of the American period to attempt once again to reconcile Freud and Marx in an optimistic direction. In *Eros and Civilization,* Herbert Marcuse sought to rescue that 'revolutionary Freud' whom Fromm had dismissed as a myth and whom Horkheimer and Adorno had turned into a prophet of gloom". p. 106.

18. See Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1969 and Herbert Marcuse, *Counterrevolution and Revolt,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1973. For an interpretation of Marcuse's sexual and aesthetic theories, and a discussion of differences between Marcuse and Adorno in this regard, see my "On Happiness and the Damaged Life", in *On Critical Theory,* edited by John O'Neill, New York, Seabury Press, 1976.

19. "What is to be abolished is not the reality principle: not everything, but such particular things as business, politics, exploitation, poverty.", pp. 235-236, "Love Mystified: A Critique of Norman O. Brown", in Herbert Marcuse, *Negations,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1968.

20. Russell Jacoby, *Social Amnesia,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1975, pp. 17-18.

21. Erica Sherover, review of Russell Jacoby's *Social Amnesia, Telos,* No. 25, Fall 1975, p. 203.

22. "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness.", p. 2, Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* New York, International Publishers, 1970.

23. Horkheimer and Adorno did not entirely reject empirical research as such. "The usual objection, that empirical research is too mechanical, too crude, and too unspiritual, shifts the responsibility from that which science is investigating to science itself. The much-castigated inhumanity of empirical methods still is more humane than the humanizing of the inhuman.", p. 123, *Aspects of Sociology,* by the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1973. However, they did not employ empirical research to suggest new political strategies but only to reveal the depths of which domination had penetrated.

24. See my Doctoral thesis in the Department of Political Economy, University of Toronto, 1976, "The Uses of Marx; The Concept of Epistemology in Contemporary Marxism", for a discussion of the relationship between Marxist positivism and a fatalistic attitude to social change.

25. Although *One-Dimensional Man* ostensibly posits the decline of subjectivity, Marcuse is clear that social change is not impossible. He characterizes the present historical situation as "ambiguous". He says: "*One-Dimensional Man* will vacillate throughout between two contradictory hypotheses: (1) that advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative change for the foreseeable future; (2) that forces and tendencies exist which may break this containment and explode the society. I do not think that a clear answer can be given." p. *xv,* Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1964.

26. In *Marxist Sociology,* London, Macmillan Press, 1975, Tom Bottomore develops a version of Marxian empiricism. He criticizes the Hegelian Marxists for allegedly abandoning Marxism's revolutionary purpose. Instead, he proposes a type of Weberian Marxism which separates the cognitive intentions of Marxian empiricism from the political goal of communism. ". . . sociology (is) an empirical science which comprises observation statements of diverse kinds within a theoretical framework, and aims to establish classifications of social phenom ena functional correlations and causal or quasi-causal connections; . . . Marxism (is) an attempt to construct and develop a general social science in this sense." p. 67. Bottomore's notion of a "general social science", is, I would argue, antithetical to Marx's concept of a dialectical epistemology. A general social science merely interprets the world, maintaining a passive attitude with respect to the possibility of its own activism. Bottomore's critique of critical theory and of Hegelian Marxism in general flows from his conception of Marxism as a general social science. The critical theorists made claim "to the possession of a privileged insight into the truth about history that could be opposed to any merely empirical, sociological account of historical events in all their disturbing nastiness." pp. 47-48. Bottomore here invokes criteria of cognitive validity taken directly from Weber. But I submit that all theoretical knowledge is a product of "privileged insight into the truth", in his terms, and that no theorist can be on any more solid footing than his own insight into possible historical scenarios. Had Marx been a Weberian Marxist in this sense, he probably would have failed to advance bold hypotheses about the development of capitalism which emerged in *Capital.*

27. See Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis,* Boston, Beacon Press, 1975, and Claus Mueller, *The Politics of Communication,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1975. They both develop the analysis of legitimacy crisis as the foundation of a new Marxism.

28. See William Leiss, *The Limits to Satisfaction,* Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1976, on the relationship between human needs and consumption in advanced industrial society.

29. This concept of "living theory" is further developed in "Dialectical Sensibility II: Towards a New Theoretical Practice," forthcoming in *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory.*

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POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND THE PUBLIC SITUATION

Michael A. Weinstein

Political philosophy is a compound discipline, dependent for its structure and changing conclusions upon both the character of philosophy and the configuration of the public situation in any historical period. Hence, political philosophy is a fundamentally ambiguous enterprise, because it draws from two sources, neither of which can be assumed *a priori* to be reducible to one another: it is an unwarranted and dogmatic postulation to assume either that political philosophy structures the public situation or that it is an epiphenomenon or reflection of that situation.

Philosophy as such has been traditionally defined as a search for necessary and comprehensive knowledge about reality, including political reality. Until the nineteenth century philosophical knowledge was considered to be transhistorical, referring to the permanent structure and content of being. It was an attempt to cognize the universal and the absolute. The public situation, however, is historical and mutable. The Platonic heritage, which has formed Western political thought, reduces political change to a flux of appearances defined as deviations from an essential truth about the human condition. Nineteenth-century historicism reversed Platonism and found the structure of being exemplified in the dynamics of historical change: it made philosophy immanent to the public situation.

The fundamental problem of political philosophy, whenever it is undertaken, is to coordinate the search for necessary and comprehensive knowledge with historically specific developments within the public situation. Today political philosophy is in a state of crisis, because the two traditional solutions to its problem, making truth about the human condition transcendent over or immanent to the public situation, have failed.

The failure of traditional solutions can be explained both by the character of the philosophy that has emerged in the twentieth century, which has severed the subject of philosophy from the subject of politics, and by the public situation, which may be defined as a growing deprivation of experience. Philosophy has turned once again towards transhistorical universalism, but its universals are such that they cannot

be made regulative over political conduct and, in fact, imply the negation of politics. The public situation has been delivered to an unprincipled instrumentalism that makes human beings means to the abstract ends of conglomerate organizations, which are unified only by the pursuit of such extrinsic values as wealth, power, influence, and mobilization of allegiance. The situation of philosophy and the public situation are related to one another in a complex dialectic. The two situations are opposite in direction and antagonistic, because while philosophers such as James, Bergson, Heidegger, Jaspers, Unamuno, Ortega, and Berdyaev, among many others, expanded the dimensions of human experience subject to philosophical inquiry, the public situation has developed as a deprivation and homogenization of that experience. Yet the situation of philosophy and the public situation are inextricably bound up with one another because the philosophical defense of experience is politically a rebellion against instrumentalism, while the abstractly organized public situation is an attempt to control diversity and heterogeneity.

The New Universal

At the turn of the twentieth century a profound revolution occurred in philosophy that marked a decisive break with the entire Western tradition. This revolution has not yet been assimilated by the intellectual community, not to speak of political leaders or the "general public," and perhaps it never will be fully appropriated. Nietzsche, Bergson, James, and Croce are only the most familiar names associated with this change, which was carried on throughout the world. Superficially their work was a revolt against absolute idealism and positivism, both of which were judged to be unfaithful to the structure of human experience. At a more fundamental level, however, the revolution outran mere opposition and instituted new concerns for philosophy. The radical shift undertaken by the new movement was a turning away from the world of objects and observable activities described by scientific or dialectical reason and back towards the dynamics of subjectivity.

The great discovery of early-twentieth-century philosophy was what Ortega called intra-subjectivity and what Unamuno called intra-consciousness. The book that best exemplifies the revolution is Bergson's first major work, *Time and Free Will*. Bergson broke with the Western rationalist tradition by basing his philosophy on "the method of inversion" that resulted in an intuition of pure duration and a consequent denial that practical activity disclosed reality. He found at the

depths of experience a process of "creative evolution," in which heterogeneous contents are continuously synthesized into new totalities, which are in turn broken down and resynthesized. Bergson's intuitionism is significant for political philosophy for a number of reasons. His method is a breach with the "everyday" world, or what he called the "practical viewpoint," and so it both severs the subject of philosophy (experience-in-depth) from the subject of politics (practical conduct), and it alienates the philosopher, who has privileged or extraordinary experience, from the ordinary human being, who does not undertake the intuitive discipline. Further, and more importantly, Bergson split the self or human subject into a "conventional ego" that reflects social usages and a "fundamental self" that is radically unique and spontaneously creative, thereby ushering in the study of intra-subjectivity. Finally, Bergson located the universal within experience rather than within history or nature, both of which he defined as projections of the conventional ego.

Although Bergson's vitalistic metaphysics, the thesis that the absolute is a living process of creative evolution, was not followed by most major twentieth-century philosophers, his rejection of the practical viewpoint in favor of privileged experience, his attention to intra-subjectivity, and his location of the universal within the depths of experience have been the starting points for all serious contemporary philosophy that does not repeat earlier doctrines. Jame's splitting of the subject into material, social, and spiritual selves, Heidegger's distinction between authentic and inauthentic existence, Unamuno's tragic split between the "individual" (principle of spatial unity) and the "person" (principle of temporal continuity), Berdyaev's opposition between "subjectivity" (creative freedom) and "objectivization," and Marcel's defense of "mystery" against the "spirit of abstraction," just to note a few examples, all presuppose intra-subjectivity and holding practical, end-oriented, and conventional-normed-social action relative to a wider process of experience or existence that is not itself practical.

The major implication for political philosophy of inward or "depth" universalism is that the study of politics is dethroned from its position as the "master science" because its subject matter is considered to be superficial and less real than other human processes. This dethronement is accomplished in a number of ways, depending upon what the philosopher finds at the core of experience or existence. For example, Berdyaev condemned all political activity as the purest form of objectivization: the denial of creative freedom and care for the unique individual in favor of physical control in space. He argued that politics

were necessary because of the human being's fallen condition, but that they could not be rationalized so as to appear as the consummation of the good life. Other twentieth-century thinkers, such as Jaspers and Ortega, took a more moderate position, holding that political activity is a component of the good life, but could not satisfy the demand for solutions to the problem of comprehensive knowledge about human existence.

Behind the dethronement of politics is the principle that not only is political activity less real than other dimensions of existence, such as creative freedom, the encounter with one's mortality, the yearning for comprehensive knowledge of the whole, the mystery of one's destiny, the will to love and be loved, and personal responsibility for one's decisions, but that these other dimensions are more significant or valuable than the public situation. Bergson's splitting of the self into conventional ego and fundamental self was more than the result of an ontological inquiry; it also involved an axiology in which creativity, uniqueness, and love were valued more highly than control, common good, and justice. The new universalism did not merely deny that philosophy was immanent to history, thereby challenging Hegel, Comte, and Marx, but its transcendence-in-depth negated a Platonic essentialist politics based on justice or natural law or right in favor of an anti-politics constituted by opposition to any values capable of being formally organized.

Philosophers attending to intra-subjectivity have not been anarchists in the nineteenth-century sense. They have not believed, first of all, that the exercise of human reason would allow natural social laws to substitute for positive law. Even more fundamentally they have not believed that human nature is rational, but have tended to interpret reason instrumentally and to oppose to it extra-rational factors such as vitality, charity, imagination, creativity, authentic choosing, and faith. Their anti-political stance, then, has been a call to limit the scope of political activity, not usually a program for reconstituting the entirety of social life on non-political principles. Also, the original twentieth-century philosophers have not been traditionalists or classical liberals defending freedom of enterprise. Economic activity, for them, is as much a denial of the intra-subjectively revealed dimensions as politics, while particular traditions have been predominantly viewed as barriers to the new universalism. The philosophical revolution has been unable to articulate itself to any political ideology or to develop an ideology of its own (although its partisans have made a bewildering variety of transitory political commitments), primarily because the experiences that it

has vindicated are revealed in opposition to the practical viewpoint of organized social action.

The discovery of intra-subjectivity was the result of a close examination of experience, accompanied by extraordinary conscious acts such as Bergson's "inversion" of the practical viewpoint. The defense of a philosophy based on intra-subjectivity was not, however, carried out by the initiators of the twentieth-century revolution, but was done by the succeeding generation. Marcel, perhaps, provided the most precise and cogent account of what makes intra-subjectivity possible through his notion of mystery. For Marcel, a mystery is defined as a problem, the data of which encroach upon that problem. From the standpoint of instrumentalism, or for that matter of any rationalist philosophy, the data are separate from the problem and either subject to manipulation while the problem is held constant, organizable by an independent reason, or present in their own intelligible unity. When the datum is human existence in its totality, however, and the problem is knowledge about that existence, the problem itself is a part of the datum. Reflection, then, is not independent of human existence, but one of its functions or expressions and, therefore, is incapable of grounding itself and supplying necessary and comprehensive knowledge about the object with which it is inextricably implicated. The human existent is reason, but human existence cannot be known to be rational. The claim that human existence is rational involves a reduction of the problem of existence to those data that can be rationalized. Such a reduction is performed in every philosophy that makes human existence an object of natural-scientific inquiry, but it appears as a presupposition even of those philosophies such as Marxism which postulate a unity of theory and practice, because such philosophies are based on a trans-historical and transpersonal reason that enables the thinker to contemplate the historical process as a whole and, thereby, to remain separate from it. From the viewpoint of mystery, the self is a problem to itself. Human beings attempt to know why and for what they exist, but they cannot, without falsification, make themselves objects to themselves in order to answer the question, because every act of objectivization presupposes separating the questioner who is being questioned from the question, the latter which is transformed into a series of characteristics, none of which can stand for the whole.

The notion of mystery provides a philosophical passport into intra-subjectivity. While it has no substantive consequences, it allows for the description of non-rationalizable dynamics, such as Bergson's "fundamental self" without the requirement that they be submitted to a

rational system. Mystery, in the sense that it was defined by Marcel, can be used as a convenient concept to refer to those dimensions of experience that do not find a direct outlet into the practical viewpoint (those experiences that cannot be manipulated instrumentally or experimentally), above all the fundamental experience of self-interrogation, which is not undertaken with a finite purpose, but is, for those who undergo it, the infinite purpose to which all finite purposes are held relative.

Subordinate to the fundamental mystery of being in which the self becomes a problem to itself and defines itself, in Heidegger's terms, as a search for the "meaning of being," are all of the "existentials" (non-rationalizable and, therefore, non-political dimensions of experience or existence) that appear in intra-subjectivity. Among these "existentials" are the "hunger for immortality" expressed by Unamuno, the notion of insubstitutability of each individual insisted upon by Ortega, creative freedom, nihilistic despair, the yearning to overcome alienation and appropriate all being as one's own, the necessity of exclusive either/or choices, and the drive to appreciate the other as concrete subject (I-Thou relation). Neither these existentials nor the mystery of being which makes them possible subjects for philosophical inquiry can be accommodated to any political system or to any system of political philosophy defending a transcendent or immanent common good. At best, political regimes and philosophies can make pretenses at accommodating the existentials by offering myths of supernatural or historical salvation, any of which must deny the mystery of being. Present regimes and their supporting political philosophies in the West have eschewed such myths, substituting for them, using Marcuse's term, a one-dimensional order based on instrumental reason that is militantly ignorant of the existentials.

The crisis of political philosophy today becomes apparent merely in view of the situation of philosophy as such, leaving aside concurrent developments within the public situation. If the central concern of philosophy is the radically impractical, that which cannot, in principle, become a problem subject to rationalized or institutionalized solution through manipulation and control, then philosophy must at least have no direct relevance to politics and at most may adopt a hostile stance towards politics. What, then, becomes of political philosophy? The values that it has traditionally defended, justice, rights, the common good, the public interest, the rule of law, have all been removed to the conventional and inauthentic dimensions of existence, and have been supplanted by more intimate personal and inter-personal values such as

self-interrogation and concern for the concrete other. The dialectic has been turned inward, splitting the self into contrasting and antagonistic attitudes towards existence, focusing on the conflict between relations that objectify the other person as a variable to be experimentally controlled or manipulated, and relations that preserve and enhance the uniqueness and integrity of the other person as one who bears the mystery of being. Regardless of the public situation, philosophy has made itself irrelevant to practical politics and political philosophy appears to be extinct. The new universal, intra-subjectivity and its philosophical presupposition of mystery, has the paradoxical consequence of enriching experience at the same time that it closes off any exit for that experience into the public situation.

A Deprived Public Situation

From a theoretical viewpoint, the contemporary crisis in political philosophy appears as a defect in systems of thought that provide no principles for guiding activities in the public situation, but which, instead, declare politics to be less real and less valuable than other dimensions of experience or existence. From the standpoint of the public situation, however, the crisis takes on a different and dialectically-opposed aspect: political developments in the twentieth-century have insured that no philosophy, in the traditional sense of the term, can be relevant to them. Hence, although a discussion of the contemporary philosophical revolution might seem to lead to the conclusion that theory is at fault for not directly engaging public issues, attention to the public situation discloses the possibility that an impractical philosophy might be the only one appropriate to current politics.

The great political achievement of the twentieth-century has been the perfection of complex organization, capable of creating not only enduring "secondary groups" with specialized and delimited functions, but of fusing any number of heterogeneous instrumental acts into abstract unities principled by measurable standards such as money, territory controlled, and membership. Conglomerate organizations, which are capable of assimilating conflicting and contradictory activities so long as these activities can be turned into profit or power, have increasingly appropriated space, time, resources, and, ultimately, experience itself. Concurrently, these conglomerates, whether superpowers, multinational corporations, pan-nationalist movements, or multiversities, have attempted to legitimize themselves by promoting nineteenth-century ideologies such as Marxism, liberalism, racialism, or

nationalism. Such ideologies conceal the structural similarities that unite all conglomerates into what A. Kroker has called "the conglomerate of all conglomerates:" a world-wide system of relations with no formal center of control, but with a common context of action which requires each organized unit to engage, often to its own destruction, in the struggle for wealth, power, influence, and loyalty.

Ironically, at the same time that philosophers were consummating their project of broadening the range of experiences capable of disciplined scrutiny, Lenin, Mussolini, Hitler, Roosevelt, Rockefeller, Mellon, and Carnegie, among others, were narrowing the public situation to fit the requirements of abstract instrumental reason. The hallmark of an instrumental approach is to "problematize" everything, to eliminate mystery, unfinishedness, and "loose ends:" to separate the data (in this case human beings) from the problem (control). A perfect instrumental act is one in which the means are completely divorced from and heterogeneous to the ends. Such splitting is only possible when the ends are abstract, such as profit measured in money, and the means are concrete, such as human efforts that presuppose the manipulation of states of consciousness. The only limits upon instrumentalism are the degree of plasticity of the means and the presence of competitors. Hence, whatever discontinuities are still present within the public situation depend on the resistance of human beings, whether alone or in groups, to the mechanisms of social control and, more importantly, to the encroachments of conglomerates on one another's "turf," making it necessary for them to grant concessions, or islands of self-determination, to their subjects. Insofar as processes such as "detente" and cartelization are strengthened the most significant barrier to world-wide totalitarianism will be increasingly surmounted.

The reign of instrumental reason is made possible by making human beings and quasi-organized groups radically dependent for their continuance upon the conglomerate. Overt modes of control, such as terror, torture, concentration camps, and "police riots," are effective only within a context in which "everyday life" is already organized and reinforced by social insurance schemes, collective bargaining, planning agencies, and agreements controlling supplies. When conglomerates control access to the means to live and act, human beings cannot but practically support them whatever moral standards they may hold. In a totalitarian order "conscience" is not useful and the smallest acts of opposition appear to be heroic struggles in which, in a Kantian sense, moral imperatives clash with temptations to follow the inclination to "go along." Conscience tends to atrophy both because it is not socially

supported and because it, along with all other aspects of experience, is eventually mobilized by countervailing power structures no different in essential features from the one being resisted. In order to win a battle against an organization, it is invariably necessary to appeal to another organization, thereby reinforcing the "conglomerate of all conglomerates."

The perfection of systems making people and groups radically dependent upon organizations eliminates the need for conglomerates to legitimize themselves with political philosophies. Legitimating ideologies have, in A. Gouldner's terms, served the function of moralizing power. However, power need not be moralized when there is no exit for people from the structure through which it is exercised. Increasingly, the conglomerates appeal not to any utopia or ideology, but to their indispensability for maintaining the system of life support itself, whatever its quality. In the West, particularly, a system of "crisis politics" has arisen, in which the very conglomerates responsible for inflationary spirals, environmental pollution, unemployment, and resource shortages demand support and mobilization, involving further controls, to protect the "public" against disaster. The underlying strategy of crisis politics is to implant fear and suspicion so deeply that organizations will not be judged by any moral standards but only by their success in maintaining a semblance of "everyday life." Under the regime of crisis politics, then, political philosophy is an impediment to control because its function is to diffuse illusions of hope or nostalgia, not to cultivate fear, distrust, and resentment. The "end of ideology" does not, as its prophets and apologists supposed, come about as a result of the advent of the good life and economic security, but as a consequence of radical dependence and of organizationally created and managed crises. Marx believed that proletarians had "nothing to lose but their chains." Today they are aware, sometimes dimly and sometimes acutely, that they have nothing to lose by opposition but their lives.

The philosophers of intra-subjectivity, though lacking a political program, have taken cognizance of a deprived public situation through their exercise of critical reason. The problematizing tendency of conglomerate action is critiqued, particularly by existentialists, through such categories as Marcel's "spirit of abstraction" and Berdyaev's "objectivization." The "spirit of abstraction" refers to that type of thinking about human existence which takes some aspect of the totality of experience, idealizes it as a concept, and then makes it stand for the whole. "Objectivization" is the related process of thinking the results

of an activity as the determinants of it. Hence, abstraction points to the deprivation of mystery, while objectivization points to the deprivation of creative freedom, which insures that mystery is not merely a static and formal category, but an ongoing process of interrogation and response involving integration of the experience of the other with one's own.

Both the spirit of abstraction and objectivization are presuppositions of the ability to organizationally problematize human existence. Abstraction functions in a variety of ways within the conglomerate, from the categorization of human beings according to the functions that they perform for it to their reduction to statistically-determined behaviors for the purposes of planning and their reduction to "cases" for the ends of efficient management. In all instances of abstraction, human beings are made constants or variables to be manipulated in organizational experiments. Objectivization also takes a variety of forms, ranging from exclusion or inclusion of human beings based on measures of performance or ascriptive criteria to exertion of "behavior modification" techniques presupposing objective truth about human capacities. Here again human beings are defined so as to fit the requirements of instrumental reason.

The critique of abstraction and objectivization, or of instrumentalism in general, is equivocal. On the one hand, it mirrors the operative principles of the conglomerate, which is a specific historical structure, while, on the other hand, it has global import, constituting a denunciation of any possible political system. This equivocation can be most favorably explained by the thesis that only in the contemporary era has the "rationalization" of social life proceeded to the point that mechanisms of social control are differentiated from the more intimate self-experiences that in the past engendered legitimating myths of utopia and ideology. The conglomerate, then, would not merely be a name for a new and historically relative organizational form, but, to put it paradoxically, the abstract universal made concrete. At one and the same time, the conglomerate appears as a pure facility or instrument to be shamelessly and guiltlessly used for any personal or group end, and as a totalitarian process depriving each human being and group of self-determination. Under this interpretation, the conglomerate would exemplify the purely "common," "herd," or "mass" dimensions of human existence, grounded in organic self-preservation, which have always been present in human existence, but which have in previous ages been confused with cosmic and historical myths binding personal yearnings to transpersonal or collective redemption. Behind the

problematization of existence is the motive of control, based upon what F. Moreno calls "basic" or constitutive fear. Fear, in turn, however, has roots as deep in human existence as does its counterpart, hope, which underlies mystery and the motive of creative freedom and appreciative receptivity to experience. Fear is ultimately an expression of the self-destructive and nihilistic tendencies in human existence that appear as the will to isolation and the desire to control at all costs, even when the only possibility of control is through destruction. The phenomenology of the conglomerate reveals, at its "depth level," the irreducible structure of evil in human existence, springing from what A. Basave has called "ontological abandonment."

The claim that the public situation in the twentieth century is evil, not in a superficial sense of embodying harm, but in a constitutive and fundamental sense of exemplifying the triumph of death over life, of manipulation over love, of mechanism over appreciation, of convention over solidarity, of economy over charity, of *ressentiment* over resignation, of abandonment over plenitude of existence, is radical in its import. It is, perhaps, not even useful to anyone to make this claim, although it is the result of critical reflection. No political program can be deduced from it and there are armies of psychologists who would seize upon it as an instance of "projection" of the death instinct onto the public situation or of some other "defense mechanism." Yet during the twentieth-century human beings have confronted systematic terror to which they could respond by heroism or by "giving in," and have thereby had the opportunity to discover evil. The evil revealed has not so much been the external bestiality as the internal loss of nerve and consequent slide towards despair.

The terrible truth revealed by the conglomerate is that it is not merely an external imposition, but that it is sought, affirmed, and willed by one side of human life. The spirit of abstraction and objectivization are essential features of the public situation, not because of particular historical series, but because they are primordial human functions. Applying abstraction and objectivization in social relations is not a category mistake in which the thought patterns appropriate to physical reality are illicitly transferred to social reality. It is more likely, in fact, that these ways of thinking first appeared in a social context and only later were transferred to a "natural realm," which was only slowly separated from society. The gap between contemporary philosophy, which has no direct practical relevance to the public situation, and the public situation, which finds philosophy to be an impediment, may not be a passing historical phase, but a revelation of the tragic structure of

human existence, torn between the motives of control and appreciation, problem and mystery.

The total situation disclosed by relating philosophy to the public situation poses the question of whether it is possible to introduce into politics any of the "existentials" that appear in intra-subjectivity on some basis other than fabricating a myth that will only serve as an ideology for some conglomerate. An affirmative response to this question requires not a new ideology or the stirring proclamation of values, but a way of conceiving of political action.

Tragic Politics

Prior to any discussion of practice, a political philosopher must decide whether to take the viewpoint of the philosopher who is concerned to be as truthful as possible or of the ideologist who is concerned to promote some interest within the public situation. Minimally, this choice presupposes doubt that knowledge is virtue or, in more modern rationalist terms, that theory and practice are reciprocal. The grounds for doubting the equivalence of knowledge and virtue have been presented in the preceding discussion. Those who find the grounds adequate will be able to follow the remaining analysis, which is done from the philosophical standpoint. Those who remain within the Platonic or Hegelian traditions, broadly defined, will judge the concluding remarks to be untruthful and, perhaps, immoral.

Political philosophers neither create nor reflect the public situation, although they are implicated in it. Even if their truth is adverse to politics and politics are adverse to their truth, they are human beings and, therefore, constitutively political. In the current situation, as defined above, any political commitment made by a political philosopher sharing in the perspective defined by the twentieth-century intellectual revolution will be equivocal in that it will affirm values and support tendencies antithetical to mystery, creative freedom, and appreciation of the other person as subject. There is no way out of such equivocation. Waiting for a clear case of terror to appear before making a commitment leaves the field open for tendencies to evolve towards terrorism. Trying to turn oneself into a sincere supporter of any movement sacrifices truth. Standing for humane values against all factions makes one irrelevant to some and a tool of others. Engaging in continual criticism impedes decisive action. Political philosophers have little, if any, influence over the contemporary public situation. They do not formulate the demands that others articulate, but, at best, join a

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ON MORAL ECONOMY

Arthur Kroker

In the course of probing the causes of the despiritualization of the modern age and its possible sources of regeneration, the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset was driven to conclude that:

> The changes in vital sensibility which are decisive in history, appear under the form of the generation. A generation is not a handful of outstanding men, or simply a mass of men; it resembles a new integration of the social body, with its select minority and its gross multitudes, launched upon the orbit of existence with a pre-established vital trajectory. The generation is a dynamic compromise between mass and individual, and is the most important conception in history. It is, so to speak, the pivot responsible for the movements of historical evolution.[1]

Dwelling upon the *vital sensibility* of the generation, philosophically understood, Ortega opined that each generation contains within itself an interior tension: an intense, and sometimes bitter, ambivalence between the two opposing tendencies of passive surrender to an inherited cultural tradition and spontaneous participation in a future yet to be created. Insofar as the tendency to passive acquiescence in the past is overcome in favour of an active commitment to an indeterminate future, that generation could be said to have begun to fulfill its historical project. Or, as Ortega put it so succinctly:

> If the essence of each generation is a particular type of sensibility, an organic capacity for certain deeply-rooted directions of thought, this means that each generation has its special vocation, its historical mission.[2]

What then is the *special vocation* of the contemporary generation of Canadian political and social inquirers, what is its vital sensibility?

While it would be intellectually intemperate, if not opprobrious, to seek to reduce the present heterogeneity of Canadian political and social thought to a single focus of concern, nonetheless one strand of thought that recommends itself for serious consideration as representative of the Canadian historical circumstance is what I have come to call *moral economy*. Rather than being an intellectual *approach* in the traditional sense of that term, moral economy may be understood best as a formative intellectual sensibility: an intellectual sensibility that is indigenous not only to the Canadian public situation but, perhaps, to all public situations that are typified by the presence of a *forced* market economy and by the absence of genuine political self-determination. Thus, while moral economy is concerned with a *historically specific* examination of the development of Canada into a modern corporative state, it is also devoted to an *ethically universal* description of the implications for the human value experience of the corporative life-order.[3] It is a mark of the vitality of moral economy that although it exists as yet only in the preparatory stages of its development it combines in a unitary synthesis three important intellectual components: historical, epistemological, and evaluative.

Historically, moral economy is concerned with a critical investigation of the human sensibilities, organizational principles, value-qualities, and social processes associated with the mobilization of the corporative tendencies of twentieth-century experience into a world system of action. In its most advanced and intensified expression, the corporative world system of action may be described as the *conglomerate of all conglomerates. Epistemologically,* moral economy is devoted to the elaboration of methodological procedures for the systematic analysis of the conglomerate of all conglomerates. On the basis of a revision of prevailing empirical theories of political knowledge, an interrelated series of methodological principles have been developed which, when taken together, may be described as reconstructive empiricism. And, *evaluatively,* moral economy is committed to the resolution of an interconnected set of problematics arising out of the analysis of corporative experience. While the problematics of moral economy have to do, for the most part, with the central issue of the nature of corroborative evidence in corporative analysis, they are also concerned with the main question of combining theory, practice, and sensibilities in a living intellectual synthesis.

The discussion which follows will describe in more detail the above

three constituents of moral economy. This discussion is guided by the theoretical observation that the development of an intellectual world view, like the movement of the human social process itself, is characterized by a rough order of preformance and anticipation amongst its various dimensions. From this perspective, fundamental changes in the human moral sensibility precede alterations of human consciousness; revisions of epistemological theory are objectified by restatements of the scope and purposes of human inquiry; and changes in the content of human thought result in new problematics for further investigation. Consequently, the following elaboration of moral economy begins with a consideration of the moral tendencies which fuse into the epistemology of reconstructive empiricism. It continues with an outline of the evidentiary principles supporting the political theory of the conglomerate of all conglomerates. And, finally, the discussion concludes with a prospective note on the methodology of corroboration in conglomerate analysis.

Reconstructive Empiricism

The development of moral economy has been preceded by certain assumptions concerning the character of human knowledge and the relationship between inquiry and social experience. These assumptions constitute the working postulates which guide the present effort. Rather than having been conceived *a priori* to an interpretation of human action, these postulates emerge directly from an investigation of concrete human experience and from a fundamental decision, based on that investigation, concerning how the salient tendencies of human action may most fruitfully be disclosed and clarified. These working assumptions may be scrutinized, debated, and criticized in a principled fashion. They are not rigid dogmas but verifiable hypotheses concerning the constitution of human knowledge and the place of inquiry in human action. While they may be tested according to the usual canons of evidence and logic, their ultimate ground of verification lies in the degree to which they promote a genuinely moral interpretation of the process of human experience. A genuinely moral theory is distinguished by its readiness to expose to reconstructive thought every dimension of human life — whether sentiments, ideas, activities, or values — and by its eagerness to employ the results of such inquiries to hasten the appearance of human liberation.

The present inquiry begins with the assumption of reconstructive empiricism as its chief epistemological tool. Reconstructive empiricism

may be viewed as a *movement* towards a genuinely empirical theory of human knowledge.[4] A genuinely empirical epistemology is one which continuously unifies the more ideal aspect of human life with prescriptions for social conduct, human practices with reflections on their emergent qualities, and social inquiry with the intuitive apprehension of life out of which it has been bred. Inasmuch as the unification, indeed the organic unification, of sentiments, practices, reflections, and ideals constitutes the touchstone of the process of human freedom, then in a genuinely empirical mode of inquiry the process of thought itself *takes its place* in the struggle for a more libertarian world. Reconstructive empiricism advances the development of such a genuine mode of social study by presenting human inquiry as the activity of synthesizing human sentiment into *substantive human meanings*. A substantive human meaning is any representation of the social world which discloses how impressionistic experience may be harmonized with the conduct of personal life, and how social endeavour may be made reflective of genuine moral aspirations. A substantive human meaning is, in other words, a momentary, intuitive disclosure of the possibilities existent, at any given time, for binding together the actual with the possible, practice with reflection, aspirations with realities, and apprehensions with conduct.

Three premises underlie this conception of human inquiry. First, human reflection is *implicitly* conceived as a process of self-expression.[5] Second, the content of self-expression is envisioned as any concretely apprehended aspect of human experience.[6] Third, the process of self-expression — the creation of substantive human meanings — is understood as being advanced by the combination and recombination of concrete human experience into a more comprehensive synthesis of the human social process.[7] This synthetic effort is always reconstructive. It continuously shatters the customary presentation of social reality in favour of a new and more satisfactory reworking of human experience. This reworking of concrete human experience is intended to portray a broader swath of the human social reality and to reveal more acutely the possibilities existent for the organic unification of the process of social action. And it is precisely the organic unification of social action — the binding together of affectivity, consciousness, practices, and moral aspirations into a unitary movement — which advances self-expression and, thereby, provokes the libertarian impulse.

The reconstructive viewpoint on human knowledge overcomes traditional conceptions of the place of social inquiry in human experience. Reconstructive empiricism does not conceive of human

thought as a reality-in-itself, detached from the actual life-situation of concrete human beings, or as a neutral instrument capable of "discovering" a pre-existent subject matter. Moreover, the reconstructive empirical approach does not envisage human reflection as a way of bridging an inevitably sundered universe; i.e. as a connective between the private realm of subjectivity and the more objective domain of public happenings. On the contrary, reconstructive empiricism simply presents human inquiry as the process of self-expression. And it views self-expression as the process of creating the world anew for oneself around the fountainhead of impressionistic experience. This proposal springs from a peculiar image of the human *self.* The human self is not maintained as a philosophical nicety or as a mechanical cog. It is envisioned neither as the embodiment of a hidden "spirit" nor as a discrete entity but, on the contrary, as an active, and potentially creative, social process. The human self is a social process which is concretely experienced, and in that experience, created. Rather than being the ultimate datum of human existence, the social self is developed through the process of merging the person, biologically conceived, into the broader forum of human experience. What is meant by the social self — the fact that people achieve an *affective sense of being* — is a complicated working-out of this merger. The scope of this merger cannot be reduced to the solitary person engaged in readily observable activities but extends well beyond the person, biologically conceived, to the complete social process out of which certain modes of social being have emerged as possibilities while others have not. To give full expression to the social self, therefore, is to comprehend the complete social process out of which it has developed. Self-expression is thus synonymous with the study of the broader process of human experience. And inquiry into any aspect of human experience is coterminous, or may be coterminous, with advances in self-expression.

The material out of which self-expression develops is any *concretely* apprehended aspect of social action. Concrete human knowledge is knowledge which may be gained *independently.*[8] And human knowledge gained independently is knowledge which does not depend for its existence on *before the fact* assumptions concerning the character of human existence, dogmatic convictions, irreducible explanatory principles, primal acts of faith, or on intense *credos.* All the latter may be considered, in fact, as the necessary presuppositions for *dependent* forms of human thought. There are two central varieties of dependent thinking - one *metaphysical* and the other more *abstract.*[9] Neither metaphysical nor abstract modes of human thought yield concrete

human knowledge. On the contrary, metaphysical thought is always an emergent of an intense human *credo*. And knowledge which may be gained only abstractly is always dependent for its existence on an *a priori* willingness to "reify" human existence. While metaphysical thought yields creeds and dogmas, abstract thought asserts a "method of study" as the fullest representation possible of the human social reality. Thus, while *theology* is an example of metaphysical knowledge, the *systems* approach to human inquiry is an example of abstract knowledge. Although the contents of metaphysical and abstract thought may differ, their origins are exactly the same. Both emerge from a shared commitment to overcome the concrete social world in favour of that which may never be independently grasped. Dependent forms of social thought provide an *escape-hatch* by which human beings may reach beyond the concrete social world to the nether world of abstractions and preformed realities. While such abstractions and preformed realities may be transformed into the *lightning rods* of human creed, they have never been, and can never be, apprehended concretely. Their very appearance implies the loss of independent reflection.

Reconstructive empiricism dispenses with such *escape-hatches* in favour of retaining an immediate and intuitive contact with the concrete social world. It encourages independent reflection. And such reflection is independent precisely because it is *grounded* in concrete human experience.[10] Reconstructive thought is never, in this case, thought about nothing. It is always reflection on the actual life-situation of real men and women, on the history of social action of which their life-situation is but a working-out, and on the immediate possibilities for its improvement. Reconstructive thought, in short, is grounded in the entire historical panorama of human affectivities, modes of human consciousness, patterns of social organization, and dicta of moral life. It weighs the results of all knowledge independently gained against the concrete process of human experience itself. And it further demands that all such grounded inquiries prescribe how the actual life-process of concrete human beings may be advanced towards the condition of human liberation. Conversely, metaphysical and abstract modes of human knowledge are implicitly *ungrounded*.[11] They do not designate anything in the concrete social world. Instead, they represent a negation of concrete social experience and an affirmation of that which may be only dependently experienced. Metaphysical and abstract modes of human thought, in short, are the leading agents in the flight beyond the empirical social world to the domains of anti-empiricisms and counterfeit empiricisms respectively.

So far, reconstructive empiricism has involved two basic assumptions. First, human thought has been described as implicitly a process of self-expression. Second, the content of self-expression has been defined as any concretely, or independently, apprehended aspect of human experience. As its final assumption, reconstructive empiricism maintains that self-expression may be achieved by synthesizing concrete human experience into substantive human meanings. A substantive human meaning is a fleeting vision of social reality which sums up human sentiments and which discloses the possibilities existent for organically unifying such sentiments with other dimensions of human existence — whether reflections, practices, or moral aspirations. This vision of social reality is like a movable mosaic. It unifies, for an instant, the central tendencies of human experience into a lucid image of the process of social reality. This mosaic of social reality relates the affective social self to the larger process of human experience within which the person is inextricably immersed. In doing so, the mosaic of social reality further clarifies the full web of social action out of which qualitatively distinct modes of social being have emerged and provides a tentative answer as to why other, perhaps more laudable, modes of social being have not developed. The social mosaic also reveals possibilities for concrete action and discloses how such activities may be related to the realization of libertarian ideals. The synthesis of the process of human experience thus plunges the social self, on the basis of sentiment, into the history of social action of which it is the focal point at the present moment. In a literal sense, the social self reconstructs its way to the creation of a substantively meaningful world. This implies, of course, that reconstructive thought emerges from reconstructive sentiments and anticipates the reconstruction of social life and aesthetic experience. It further implies that the process of reconstruction — the creation of substantive human meanings - is itself the process of human freedom.

This reconstructive activity is always relative, partial, provisional, and prospective. It is relative rather than absolute because broad portraits of social reality are grounded in particular human situations. The latter have referents in space and time and contain a unique constellation of experiences. There may be, at the minimum, as many images of the history of social process as there are different human situations; and as many social reconstructions as there are libertarian sentiments to be expressed and possibilities for freedom to be disclosed. The creation of substantive human meanings must, therefore, be held relative to the human circumstance. It follows that no social reconstruction completely exhausts the entire process of human experience but that each image is a

partial representation of a larger whole. The mosaic of human action which is created encompasses only that narrow band of social reality which is relevant to particular human situations. Similarly, reconstructive activity is provisional rather than permanent because the changing scene of social life cannot be immobilized. Any change in independently apprehended experience alters the basis for the reconstruction of that experience. Human life is, or may be, temporarily *thrown off balance.* And it is thrown off balance by the prospective aspect of all substantive images of social action. The synthesis of human sentiments into substantive human meanings opens up opportunities for concrete social action. Reconstructive thought *stirs up* the necessity for reconstructive activity. And this reconstructive activity serves to add a moral dimension to every aspect of human existence. Human life of this sort is bound together by the realization and practice of genuine moral aspirations. It is such genuine moral aspirations which provide the well-spring for impressionistic experience and which ultimately inspire reconstructive thought.

Reconstructive thought succeeds, of course, only to the extent that the customary presentation of human history as a serial, chronological and epochal affair is overcome.[12] Human history, in most complete sense, is the history of social action. And the history of social action is the history of the concretely apprehended universe of human experience and of the emergent qualities which develop from its combination and recombination into new and more profound portraits of social reality. While that which is *in sight* across the social domain may be dated and, on the basis of chronology, arranged serially, that which is *out of sight but not out of experience* cannot be grasped so simply. And yet, it is precisely in the domain of affectivities, reflections, practices, and moral visions that the relationship is to be discovered between qualities of social being and modes of social action. The study of concrete human experience from the perspective of its emergent qualities leads to an unfamiliar historical process. In the study of independently apprehended experience, there are no customary land-marks, no simple divisions, and no tidy arrangements of periods into past, present, and future. The study of independently apprehended experience is, in fact, nothing less than the creation of the history of that experience from the perspective of human sentiment and from the prospective urge to freedom. In short, the reconstructive empirical approach to human thought is a way of making history. And the history which is created is the history of the process of social action, its content and its qualitative modes of transformation. This history of the human social process partially clarifies

human experience and encourages a transformation, whether large or small, of the content of human life. This transformation is always preceded by the creation of a relative, partial, provisional, and prospective mosaic of social reality. One such mosaic of social reality is represented by the image of the *conglomerate of all conglomerates.*

The Conglomerate of all Conglomerates

In the broadest sense, the Canadian historical prospect can be examined only in relation to a dramatic, abrupt, and complete transformation of the nature of social reality that has taken place in the twentieth-century. The lead-point in this transformation of the basis of social reality has been the ascendency of the *conglomerate,* or more accurately, of the *conglomerate of all conglomerates* as the dominant nucleus of the contemporary public situation. By the "conglomerate of all conglomerates" is meant the emergent coordination of all aspects of human existence, on both a national and international scale, within a single, unitary context of human action. This single, unitary human context is typified by the development of a universal public morality, by the appearance of a world-governing organizational principle, by an increasingly generalized social apparatus, and, ultimately, by the creation of a mass human sensibility. While once the mobilization of all phases of human existence into a corporative world-civilization was but an immanent social possibility, it is now becoming evident that the conglomerate of all conglomerates is in the process of being objectified as the new framework of human action both by an implicit and inexorable change in the structure of social action itself and by the overt ratification of this fundamental change by public elites.

That the emergence of the conglomerate of all conglomerates represents the main developmental tendency of the human circumstance is attested to by the following four *types* of evidentiary social and political facts.

1. While the public domain is still characterized, both nationally and internationally, by a clash of perspectives based on what appear to be competing *ideal* political philosophies, it is increasingly linked together on the level of *operating* values by a unitary value experience. This unitary value experience, the major elements of which have been elucidated by the American social theorist Talcott Parsons, may be described as the public morality of "instrumental activism".[13] The principal social fact emerging from the generalization of the public

morality of instrumental activism across the human situation is that all political moralities, all competing philosophical ideals, and all popularized political ideologies are reduced to the status of instruments, indeed highly dispensable and interchangeable instruments, for the maximization of the *real* corporative interests of "wealth, power, influence, and value-commitments".[14] In its primitive stage, the conglomerate of all conglomerates requires, and even demands, for its development the playing-out of intense ideological conflicts between its political constituents. Such overt competition permits an ever decreasing number of political conglomerates to maximize control over the space and time of the global political process. However, in its advanced stage, at the precise point that the nominally competitive *lead* conglomerates of the United States, the Soviet Union, the European Common Market, China, and Japan prepare for their final fusion, distinctions of public morality being dysfunctional are abandoned altogether. At that point, the populations of leading political conglomerates are no longer mobilized against one another but are, instead, entertained by the clash of perspectives in side-theatres of the world. The chimera of philosophical competition ceases and the common ratification of the public morality of instrumental activism ensues.

2. Despite the apparent diversity of social choice in contemporary human existence, as the conglomerate of all conglomerates transforms itself from an emergent human possibility into a concrete actuality this plenitude of cultural contexts is revealed to be mediated by a solitary process of social action. The general phases of this solitary social process have been described in the sociological writings of Talcott Parsons (and alluded to in the social theory of Max Weber) as those of "value-generalization, normative inclusion, differentiation, and the enhancement of adaptive capacity."[15] From this perspective, the essence of social choice in the conglomerate of all conglomerates lies in participating in the prosection of a function within a massive social apparatus — a social apparatus which increasingly expunges itself of all substantive content in favour of the supremacy of administrative form. Inevitably, the reduction of the heterogeneous process of social experience to the arid imperatives of the social apparatus means that the will to sociability becomes more groupal than individualistic, more specialized than substantive, more passively defeatist than actively creative, and, ultimately, more infected by the repressiveness of managed loyalties than inspired by the possibility of human possibilities. And inasmuch as the development of this social apparatus prepares the way for the ratification of the conglomerate of all

conglomerates, then the immanence of that moment of ratification is evidenced by the massive, and perhaps precipitative, shakedown presently being undergone by that same social apparatus: a dramatically *purifying* shakedown that has emptied the economy of any moral quality, political life of any creative purpose, human relationships of any bond of solidarity, and value-experience of any connection with the real material condition of humanity.

3. Again, it is symptomatic of the development of the conglomerate of all conglomerates that the present diversity of *vital* organizational forms, whether multinational corporations or national polities, once penetrated reveal themselves to be not only highly interrelated and interdependent but also to be ceaselessly collapsing towards one another like fragments in search of a final synthesis. The dissolution of previously divisible corporative activities into an indivisible network of conglomerate functions has been brought about, in large part, by the emergence of a coordinated network of organizational interlinkages. Whether these organizational interlinkages be represented as national and international regulatory structures, product marketing agencies, joint-venture projects, interchanges of corporate personnel, incentive and subsidy programs, or as administrative agreements on the standardization of trade regulations, they commonly function as *fusion-points* in drawing together dispersed corporative forms into a larger whole.[16] This larger whole, being fused together by the binding strands of organizational interlinkages, is typified by an increasing complementarity of *all* conglomerate interests, whether military, economic, political, or educational, and by a rapidly surfacing sentiment of responsibility for the persistence of the whole on the part of those occupying the "command-positions" of corporative civilizations.

4. Finally, it is indicative of the ascendency of the conglomerate of all conglomerates that the greater portion of humanity has been subjugated, at present, to the governing sensibility of corporative reality — *the will to control.* While the will to control represents the interior dynamic of the corporative life-order, it is not reducible for its explanation to the vicissitudes of either personal volition, international *power* politics, or of the maximization of economic utilities. Only in the most superficial sense do the desires of the leading actors of corporative reality (whether viewed as national polities, as multinational cartels, as transnational corporations, or as conglomerate elites) to maximize their share of the public values of money, power, influence,

and loyalty explain the tendency of the conglomerate of all conglomerates to unceasingly extend its scope by the elimination of all impediments to its survival and by the transformation of all human activities into corporative functions. Rather, in the most profound sense, such public values appear to be but different manifestations of a common motive-force rather than motivating principles in their own right. And this common motive-force — the will to control — originates in the inherent fragility of corporativism: a fragility which necessitates that the conglomerate of all conglomerates compensate for its absence of any substantive human meaning by aggressively submitting the whole of humanity to a process of social reinforcements. While this process of social reinforcements involves, on its positive side, the attractants of wealth, power, prestige, and loyalty; in its negative aspect, it involves the dominations of economic oppression, political coercion, social suppression, and cultural repression.[17] Taken as a whole, the elementary constituents of the will to control — the absence of any genuine meaning-structure within corporativism and the consequent necessity for the deployment of a compensating process of social reinforcements — represents the regulatory sensibility of a new methodology of human organization. Ultimately, this new methodology of human organization interrelates the entire spectrum of human values, purposes, reason, and feelings into a monolithic construction of social reality. It is the political and social implications of this monolithic construction of social reality which, when combined, comprise the problematics of moral economy.

Problematics

Thus far, it has been shown that the perspective of moral economy consists of two governing principles — the epistemological postulates of reconstructive empiricism and the historical image of the conglomerate of all conglomerates. While reconstructive empiricism expands the scope of political thought to include a consideration of significant changes in the structure of human action itself, the concept of the conglomerate of all conglomerates *totalizes* such transformations in a comprehensive image of the contemporary human situation.

What remains to be done is to point the way to a further *objectification* of the conglomerate of all conglomerates. This process of objectification has as its purpose the translation of the general and abstract principles of the conglomerate analysis presented above into a format suitable for empirical corroboration. While the actual prosection of

such corroborative analysis runs beyond the scope of this article, nonetheless four problematics requiring further investigation may be stated. Ultimately, the gathering of corroborative evidence along the lines suggested by these problematics represents the main project of the perspective of moral economy. The actualization of this project provides in turn the basis for the development of a living synthesis of theory, praxis, and will in Canadian political and social thought.

Briefly stated, the problematics of moral economy divide into the following categories: (1) the requirement for a political theory of regulatory action; (2) the necessity for a class analysis of the tactical vulnerabilities and strategic interest-supports of the conglomerate of all conglomerates; (3) the requirement for a micro-sociology of the bureaucratization of human social settings; and (4) the development of a phenomenological critique of the "will to control".

1. *A Political Theory of Regulatory Action.* A major theme emerging from the corporative analysis presented above is that the conglomerate of all conglomerates requires for its maximization the development of an interrelated political economy, whether conceived nationally or internationally, coordinated by a network of regulatory interlinkages. Indeed, the historical tendency of the world system of conglomerate action has been towards the gradual abolition of the terms connected by regulatory relationships in favour of the superordination of the act of fusion itself. This theme requires for its empirical corroboration analysis along the following lines:

(a) Specification of the *types* of regulatory interlinkages, whether legal, economic, social, or aesthetic, together with a political analysis of their respective contributions to the transformation of Canada into a modern regulatory state.[18]

(b) A major theoretical restatement of the *purposes* of regulatory action. This undertaking is intended to supersede received wisdom concerning the political functions of regulation (Regulatories: Captives of Industrial Complexes or Proponents of the Public Interest?) by elucidating the structural imperatives that transform the act of regulation itself into a fusion-point for the expansion of the value-principles of profit, power, influence, and moral commitments.

(c) an empirical analysis of the political, economic, and cultural *constraints* environing the different terms connected by the network of regulatory interlinkages.[19]

(d) A concrete description of the *payoffs* (legally guaranteed market control, financing of political parties, inter-

institutional patterns of careerism, shared sense of historical destiny) that act as positive reinforcers in liberating the different parties to regulation from their inhibiting constraints to absorption within a unitary political economy — a political economy based on an identity of material interests and on a mutuality of value-perspectives.

2. *Class Analysis of the Conglomerate of all Conglomerates.* The development of the world system of corporative action is advanced by the reduction of all major systems of economic stratification to a common structure of class divisions. The appearance of a universal system of class divisions is assisted by the "monopolistic tendencies of conflict" within conglomerate existence, and by the proclivity of the newly emergent *lead* classes within different national settings — whether directors or managers of the *capitals* of wealth, power, influence, and value-commitments — to camouflage their expansionary intentions behind the smoke screen of ideological, and indeed populist, causes. At such time as their control over the political economy of a national setting is effectively consolidated, at that point they shrug off the end-conclusions of their ideological commitments and declare their loyalty to the main tendencies of the corporative life-order. Two strands of analysis must be pursued for the verification of this hypothesis:

(a) a fluid and dynamic analysis of the class-structure, past and present, of the Canadian public situation. Particular attention must be paid to the *key* historical shifts in the basis of Canadian political and economic power that are signified by the ascendency of ascriptive cultural movements (Quebec nationalism, *Canadianization* of the mass media, and the *domestication* of corporate boards of directors). To be complete, the class analysis of the Canadian public situation must extend to include a historically vibrant account of the interrelationships which hold between indigenous Canadian elites and the international directorship of the conglomerate of all conglomerates. While such analysis is devoted to an examination of the complementarities and contradictions existent between native and foreign elites, it overcomes the tendency to *personalize* corporative action in the form of elite self-interest by viewing all conglomerate directorships, whether indigenous or international, as but willing proponents of a system of world relations that runs beyond their abilities either to control or to comprehend.[20]

(b) A synthetic exploration of the possible sources of political op-

position to the continued maximization of the corporative construction of social reality. This exploration is guided by the observation that contemporary Canadian oppositions to corporative existence include not only members of the political left but also adherents of the political right. The unification of the political polarities of left and right in a dynamic new synthesis if made possible by the growing conjunction in Canadian public life of two moral tendencies: the rejection by political philosophers of the conservative persuasion of the technocratic implications of world corporativism on the grounds of individual freedom and national integrity; and the commitment by proponents of the political left to make solidarity with the facts of economic and political dispossession the gathering-point for resistance against the inherent elitism of corporative existence.[21] While this synthesis is as yet confined to the theoreticians of each political tendency, what makes the project particularly exciting is that it represents an opportunity, perhaps the main opportunity, for breaking beyond the ossified dialectics of liberalism, conservativism, and socialism.

3. *Micro-Sociology of the Bureaucratization of Human Social Settings.* The history of the development of the conglomerate of all conglomerates is, in its internal structural manifestations, the history of the ascendency of sociology from a partial philosophy of human knowledge into the core morphology of human action. Within the corporative construction of social reality, sociology escapes the domain of epistemology by being hurled into praxis as the conceptual methodology for the reification of organizational forms. Thereupon, the actualization of human possibilities is overcome by the reification of corporative actualities; essence is abolished in favour of existence; and existence, once coordinated within vast organizations, becomes but a living construct of the sociological principle of abstract structuralism.

Two *types* of corroboration are required for a complete exploration of the micro-sociology of the conglomerate of all conglomerates:

(a) an empirical investigation of the ways in which the diversity of human social settings have been reduced to a homogenous organizational *form* by the corporative social processes of reification, mobilization, canalization, and commitment.[22] This investigatin begins with the theoretical insight that the micro-sociology of corporativism consists of four interrelated phases: the isolation and pluralization of humanity into a

structure of reified organizational roles; the mobilization of the network of organizational roles around the promulgation of collective goals; the legitimation of corporative collectivities by appeals to self-interest, materially and individually conceived; and the historical absolution of the maximizing tendencies of corporative action by the adoption of highly variable, and indeed equally dispensable, justifying ideologies.

(b) a political inquiry into the *strains* characteristic of the social structure of corporative action. Two such types of strains exist, one internal to the world paradigm of corporativism and the other external to it. *Internally,* corporative existence binds together in an uneasy union four fundamentally irreconcilable contraditions: "commodity fetishism" versus ecological constraints;[23] profit maximization versus the demands of wage labour, individuated political authoritariansim versus mass technocratic rationality; and particularistic value-commitments versus the universal, moral claims of political and economic *détente.* And, *externally,* corporative existence gives rise to an interrelated series of contradictions based on the unceasing struggle between reason and propaganda, will and mobilization, communitarianism and materialism, and possibilities and actualities.

4. *A Phenomenological Critique of the 'Will to Control'.* Sweeping changes in the structure of human action are often preceded by fundamental transformations of the human political sensibility. Such modifications of the human political sensibility are in their most intense expressions inherently phenomenological in character; i.e. developed from a *felt* critique of the value deficiencies and historical inadequacies of any given social construction of reality.[24] This felt response to historical actualities represents what is most volatile and progressive in human existence. It is the silent precursor of decisive political movements; the genesis of what comes afterwards to be described as that which was most novel and productive in the affairs of a past human history. While the institutions of a public order may appear to be eminently adaptable, capable of persisting into an indeterminate future, nonetheless their moment, indeed their inevitable moment, of destruction and reconstruction takes form quietly and pervasively in the private reaches of human emotions. Diffuse in scope and unlimited in its aspirations, this shift of human sensibilities at some point in space and time concentrates its energies upon a single, critical public concern,

embodies itself in a political programme, and seizes on behalf of possibilities yet unexplored that which is most prospective in human history. Afterwards, the practical strategies of political change — tactical questions of how best to succeed against the lingering remnants of a social order already dead in principle if not in fact — are but the playing-out of an inevitability of the human prospect.

Thus it is that the corporative life-order, like all temporal and spatial constructions of human action, even while it approaches its moment of historical immanence already contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction. From an averse reaction to the *reinforced meaninglessness* of corporative existence, there develops the first beginnings of a prophetic shift in contemporary human sensibilities. The problematic for moral economy is of course to articulate this felt response to the corporative life-order into a coherent phenomenological critique of the will to control. The basic constituents of this phenomenological revision are as follows:

(a) an exploration of the hypothesis that the conglomerate of all conglomerates ultimately gives rise to a pervasive mood of *bitterness of the soul* — a bitterness of the soul that is qualified by the unrelieved feelings of frustration in the face of immense power, restlessness at being situated within a social order that systematically denies the possibility of human possibilities, and despair at the difficult prospect of changing a historical reality noteworthy only for the sheer capriciousness of its irrationality.[25]

(b) an investigation of the possibilities present within the Canadian public situation for transforming the mood of bitterness of the soul into the political principle of *philosophical patriotism*. This investigation begins with the dictum of George Santayana that ". . . the object of patriotism is in truth something ideal, a moral entity definable only by the ties a man's imagination and reason can at any moment realize."[26] As a type of "defensive nationalism," philosophical patriotism seeks to bind together in a new moral idiom the aspirations to national self-determination presently loosed within the Canadian public setting. The creation of such a new moral idiom is guided by Santayana's further observation that patriotism, rationally conceived, has two aspects:

> It is partly sentiment, by which it looks back upon the sources of culture, and partly policy, or allegiance to those ideals which, being suggested by what has already been attained, animate the better organs of society and demand further embodiment. To love one's country unless that love is quite blind and lazy, must involve a distinction between the country's actual condition and its inherent ideal; and this distinction in turn involves a demand for changes and for effort.[27]

Developing a moral idiom that is expressive of Canada's immanent ideal constitutes the final problematic of moral economy. While the resolution of this problematic emerges directly from a phenomenological critique of the will to control, such a critique presupposes in turn a rigorous appreciation of the structure of regulatory relations, interest-supports, and methods of bureaucratic control characteristic of the conglomerate of all conglomerates.

Conclusion

This article began with the comment that the *generation,* philosophically understood, is ultimately integrated around an "organic capacity for certain deeply-rooted directions of thought." The proposal was then made that the perspective of moral economy provides a potentially fruitful point of consolidation for Canadian political and social theory. It was shown that the perspective of moral economy transforms the enduring problems of Canadian public life — the presence of a concentrated market economy and the absence of genuine political self-determination — into a generalized analysis of the whole of corporative existence. The ensuing investigation of the corporative construction of social reality was based on a new synthetic combination of three important theoretical constituents: the epistemology of reconstructive empiricism; the historical image of the conglomerate of all conglomerates; and the statement of an interrelated series of problematics for further study. While the analysis of corporative existence presented in this article has revealed only the broadest of themes characteristic of moral economy, hopefully, these themes will play a part, indeed a significant part, in continuing political analysis of coming transformations of the human social situation.

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Notes

1. José Ortega y Gasset. *The Modern Theme* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), pp. 14 - 15.

2. Ibid., *The Modern Theme,* p. 19.

3. Ultimately, moral economy is governed by the political sensibility of "philosophical patriotism." What saves philosophical patriotism from the moral perversity characteristic of "blood gemeinschafts" or of the bogus nationalism of world imperialisms is the vital tension that it exhibits between historical particularity and moral universalism. I am indebted to Michael A. Weinstein for his intellectual counsel in the development of this seminal political insight. It is a sign of the continued responsiveness of political theory to transformations of the human situation that Weinstein and myself, while beginning with similar critiques of corporative domination, have now taken different directions in our respective analyses of the prospects for an active dialogue between theory and practice in the contemporary political situation. While Weinstein, historically situated within the American polarity of the conglomerate of all conglomerates, has embraced the tragic sense of "the philosophy of intra-subjectivity," my inquiry, historically located at the periphery of the corporative life-order, has returned to the more strategic possibilities of creative nationalism.

4. It is surely one of the more profound tragedies of twentieth century experience that the revolution in the philosophy of political thought, begun by such thinkers as John Dewey, William James, and Arthur F. Bentley, has been forced into obscurity by the penetration of the principle of "abstract structuralism" into epistemological theory itself. In a historical sense, "reconstructive empiricism" continues anew, one generation later, the "radical empiricism" of William James, the "value inquiry" of John Dewey, and the "transactional" impulse of Arthur F. Bentley.

5. In its original movement, "reconstructive empiricism" is inherently *perspectival.* It refuses the temptation to absolutize empiricism by insisting that all objective totalizations, even the most comprehensive of substantive human meanings, are relative to the subjectivity of will and imagination. Thus, at the very moment of its development reconstructive empiricism falls victim to the principle of indeterminacy that it so strenuously embraces. If all processes of consciousness are ultimately rooted in particular modes of human sensibility, then reconstructive empiricism, even while it aspires to comprehend the "context of all contexts" of human action, is held back by the immanent limitations of its own political and social context.

6. William James has noted that to be *radical* ". . .an empiricism must neither admit into its constructions any element that is not directly experienced, nor exclude from them any element that is directly experienced. *William James: The Essential Writings,* edited by Bruce Wilshire (Harper and Row: New York, 1971), p. 178.

7. The reconstructive viewpoint is principled in a broader metaphysic of human liberation: a "metaphysic" which recommends the organic unification of human experience as the regulatory ideal of human freedom in an indeterminate social condition. From this perspective, the creation of an internal process of harmony and solidarity between the material, intellectual, and practical dimensions of human existence constitutes the essence of a libertarian human situation. For a more complete discussion of the ontological and sociological character of the organic theory of human action, see chapters five and six of my unpublished dissertation "The Movable Mosaic: An Inquiry into the Theory of Reconstruction of Political Reality," (McMaster University: 1975).

8. For an excellent discussion of "mediated" epistemologies, see John Dewey, *How We Think* (Boston: D.C. Health and Co., 1912), pp. 79 - 80.

9. The central distinction between "metaphysical" and "abstract" modes of political thought has to do with the opposing human sensibilities with which each is associated. While metaphysical approaches to political thought reduce the public domain to explanation in terms of a variety of principles of *certitude* (whether theistic, historical, or philosophical), abstract perspectives, motivated by the problematic of political *order,* lineament human existence within formal cognitive categories devoid of content.

10. For some excellent accounts of the process of human experience as the *ground* for the coordination of empirical knowledge, see particularly John Dewey, *Theory of Valuation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1943), p. 57; Georges Gurvitch, *Dialectique et Sociologie* (Paris: Flammarion, 1962); Radhakamal Mukerjee, *The Philosophy of Social Science* (London: Macmillan, 1960); and Michael A. Weinstein, *Philosophy, Theory, and Method in Contemporary Political Thought* (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman, and Co., 1971).

11. A penetrating, and indeed prophetic, analysis of the mutually exclusive grounds of corroboration and evidence supporting rationalist and empiricist modes of human thought respectively is contained in Stephen C. Pepper's *World Hypotheses* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957).

12. For a similar account of the reconstructive quality of the "historical experience", see Gordon Leff, *History and Social Theory* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1971).

13. Talcott Parsons. *Politics and Social Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 337. For a full explication of the "value-principles" and "coordination standards" associated with the public morality of "instrumental activivism", see Chapter 14, "On the Concept of Political Power", of the same book.

14. Ibid., *Politics and Social Structure*. See particularly Chapters 14 - 16.

15. While Max Weber implicitly details the main ingredients of the corporative process of social action in Chapters 1 and 2, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964); Talcott Parsons explicitly describes the four phases of adaption, differentiation, integration, and value-generalization in Chapter 1 of his seminal comparative writing *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1966).

16. The political theory of regulatory agencies as *fusion-points* between dispersed corporative forms has been developed in a stimulating series of discussions involving Mr. Sheldon Diamond, Mr. Harold Henning, and the present author.

17. Michael A. Weinstein. Correspondence, February, 1973. For a provocative and eloquent account of the "modalities of human bondage", see Alkis Kontos, editor, *Domination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975).

18. A highly useful model for the development of *regulatory* analysis of this sort is provided in Chapter 2 of Max Weber's *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*.

19. I am indebted to Mr. Sheldon Diamond for his empirical insights on the nature of regulatory *constraints* (whether electoral on the political side or profit -maximization for the economic term) characteristic of the political economy of Canada. These theoretical insights have been developed in a series of intellectual discussions oriented around the theme of the "Political Theory of Technocracy."

20. In short, the class analysis of conglomerate existence seeks to situate the discussion of the political functions of "elites" in the broader context of the *structural* relationship which

holds between inegalitarian systems of political and economic stratifaction and the "maximizing" tendencies of the corporative life-order.

21. The point here is, of course, that the development of "defensive nationalism" in response to the homogenizing tendencies of world corporativism is the unifying strand that is capable of binding together the political left and the political right in Canada in a common front of collective opposition to the main principles of corporative experience. While distinctions of political analysis remain — particularly with respect to the overarching question of the functions of propertied interests in "monopoly capitalism" it may be hypothesized that the nationalist sensibility supersedes prior political claims by providing the basis for a new *moral* synthesis of Canadian oppositions. For some interesting reflections on the ideological consequences of the "corporatist" strain in the Canadian political economy, see Donald V. Smiley, "The Non-Economics of Anti-Inflation," *Canadian Forum,* Vol. LV, No. 659 (March, 1976): 11 - 15; and J. T. McLeod, "The Free Enterprise Dodo is no Phoenix," *Canadian Forum,* Vol. IV, No. 663 (August, 1976): 6 - 13.

22. The four phases of the corporative process of social action have been discussed at some length in an earlier paper that I have authored, "The Corporative Experience: Ontology and Contradictions," (manuscript, 1974). In the above manuscript, the thesis was developed that the corporative life-order is characterized by a conjunction of an interrelated network of philosophical postulates and an equally interrelated apparatus of organizational principles.

23. For an excellent description of the fetishism of consumption in contemporary corporative civilizations, see William Leiss, *The Limits to Satisfaction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).

24. For a particularly insightful account of how the dimension of "felt adequacy" may be incorporated into the evaluation of perspectives in political thought, see Michael A. Weinstein, *The Political Experience* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971).

25. Arthur Kroker, "On Philosophical Patriotism", a paper prepared for presentation at the colloquia series of the Department of Political Studies, University of Manitoba, (March, 1976).

26. George Santayana. *The Life of Reason* (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1954), p. 162.

27. Ibid., *The Life of Reason,* p. 163.

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Editor's Note

The following article will appear as part of a forthcoming book entitled ***Taking Sides: The Collected Social and Political Essays of Irving Layton*** *(Mosaic Press/Valley Editions: Oakville, Ontario) April, 1977, edited and with an introduction by Howard Aster. The article is an edited version of Irving Layton's M.A. Thesis,* ***A Critical Examination of Laski's Political Doctrines*** *submitted to McGill University in 1946.*

HAROLD LASKI: THE PARADOXES OF A LIBERAL MARXIST

Irving Layton

I

Few living political thinkers are better known than Professor Harold Laski. Educated at Oxford, he came to this continent during World War I and taught first at McGill and afterwards at Harvard. At both universities he promptly got into hot water with the authorities for publicly expressing (to them) objectionable opinions. Receiving an appointment as lecturer at the London School of Economics, Laski returned to England in 1920. A prolific writer, he has built up a solid and enviable reputation for exact scholarship (all who have met or heard Laski testify to his phenomenal memory) brilliant rhetoric and complete sincerity. A forceful and eloquent speaker, he has received this century's most positive accolade of fame — his speeches are reported. Today, the chairman and influential spokesman, he is also sometimes referred to as the one-man brain trust of the British Labour Party.

In 1939 Laski elevated a number of eyebrows, academic and otherwise, by calling himself a Marxist in an article written especially for the American liberal weekly, *The Nation,* which was then running a series under the heading of *Living Philosophies.* There he wrote that the periodic wars, crises, general insecurity and stagnation of our capitalistic era had all convinced him that, broadly speaking, the philosophy of Marx was unanswerable. "Ours is that age", he asserted, "the coming of which was foreseen by Marx, in which the relations of production are in contradiction with the essential forces of production" and that "at the historical stage we have reached, the will of the people is unable to use the institutions of capitalist democracy for democratic purposes. For

at this stage democracy needs to transform class relations in order to affirm itself; and it will not be allowed to do so if the owning class is able to prevent that achievement."[1]

In this thesis I have undertaken an examination of Laski's political doctrines with a view to determining to what extent, if any, Laski is justified in thinking of himself and in getting others to think of him as a Marxist. I have, that is to say, taken Laski at his own word and diligently sought for the evidence to validate his claim in the main body of his work which includes books, articles, brochures, as well as in the public pronouncements he has made from time to time. I have compared what I found therein with the writings of Marx and Engels, the founders of the body of doctrine known as Marxism, and with those of Lenin, whom rightly or wrongly I regard as their successor and best disciple. The conclusion which I have reached is that Laski's claim is utterly lacking in foundation and must be disregarded by any alert and well-informed student of the subject. This conclusion (my thesis) is what I have undertaken to defend in the following pages. More than that, I have also tried to set forth the reasons for my conviction that Laski, by employing Marxian terminology for his own purpose, has robbed Marxism of its revolutionary content, thereby completely emasculating and distorting it. That purpose, I believe, was to graft his earlier political doctrines, his individualistic pluralism, upon the vigorous tree of Marxism; and the result, I have tried to show, is the rather spongy fruit — Social Democracy.

Laski's first book *The Problem of Sovereignty* appeared in 1917. This was followed at two-year intervals by *Authority in the Modern State* and *Foundations of Sovereignty and Other Essays.* With these books Laski emerged alongside J. Neville Figgis, A.D. Lindsay, and G.D.H. Cole as an erudite and eloquent champion of political pluralism, a point of view which challenged the reigning monistic conception of the state as unitary and omni-competent. Laski argued that, in practice, the doctrine of a sovereign state was untenable since private groups had from time to time successfully resisted government encroachment upon their powers of inner jurisdiction and self-control. For proof of this he pointed to the determined resistance of three great ecclesiastical groups in the nineteenth-century against state interference and their triumphant assertion of extensive rights despite the opposition of the British Government.[2] Against Leviathan, Laski upheld the claims of the individual conscience, asserting that "the basis of obedience is consent".[3] Furthermore, the state, he affirmed, did not dare to "range over the whole area of human life". He meant by this that state and society could not

be equated since every society was composed of various natural and voluntary organizations with claims to the loyalties of their members as majestic as that of the state itself. The state "does not exhaust the associative impulses of men". "The group is real in the same sense that the state is real". Possessing physical superiority, the state could crush group opposition by brute force; such action, however, did not establish right. Ethically the state competed on equal terms with trade unions, churches, political parties, co-operative associations and friendly societies for the individual's allegiance. "The only ground for state-success is where the purpose of the state is morally superior to that of its opponent."[4]

Laski held that his theory of the state was more "realistic" than that of political monists. A careful reading of Laski's writings, however, will show two things: (i) that his attacks upon the political monists (Bodin, Hobbes, Austin) are based upon a simple misunderstanding and (ii) that he is not self-consistent. My reasons for thinking so are set out at some length in the following pages. My conviction is that it was mainly an outraged sense of justice which excited Laski's anti-state doctrines. From the very beginning he was aware that some groups in society, especially those who can live only by the sale of their labour-power, were disadvantaged by the state's operations. Undoubtedly, too, he was greatly influenced by the theories of the French Anarchosyndicalists. Since what he really wanted was the diffusion of sovereignty rather than its disappearance, I would consider that phase of Laski's political thought as Neo-Anarchist, as Anarchism domesticated and made palatable for Englishmen. Looked at from another angle, Laski's early doctrines were an extreme but logically permissible extension of nineteenth century liberalism. And the truth is that both liberalism and anarchism have the same social roots in the middle-class. With this important difference, however. Liberalism is the expression of a confident, self-assured middle-class, whereas anarchism expresses their bewilderment, incomprehension and rage before the advance of monopoly capitalism. Anarchism is the political philosophy of the frightened petit-bourgeois. It appeals to the small shopkeeper, white collar workers, civil servants, clerks and even makes inroads into the immature sections of the proletariat. Its primary and distinguishing feature is a wholesale ignorance of the necessary laws of capitalist development. On its gravestone (since anarchism today is no longer a political force) is engraved a single world, "Illusion". Laski's previous theories, I say, simply mirrored or were the rationalization of the bewilderment and frustration of the petit-bourgeois. Not the capitalist class, not the cap-

italist system was responsible for their social and economic predicaments — but the evil state! Abolish the state or improve it, so ran their cry, and Justice will once more dwell in the land.

Laski's doctrines, then, were hardly "realistic". They were if anything romantic, extravagant and doctrinaire. They flew in the face of the facts; moreover, Laski failed to realize that the monistic conception of the state was the theoretical justification for the transfer of power from the feudal and land-owning class to the merchants and burghers, who had established themselves as the dominant class in society.[5] As a consequence, an air of unreality clings to Laski's earlier volumes which neither his brilliant rhetoric nor his cogent reasoning ever seem quite able to dispel. Time, that great ironist, has in fact so managed it that the more solemn and earnest the argument — I say it quite respectfully — the more baroque it appears. Fertilized by illusions Laski's volumes were the colossal miscarriage of an erudite brain. They were elaborate gestures of futility which might intrigue his professional colleagues or move them to reply but whose total effect upon the state's impregnable purpose was exactly nil. In a fit of high academic scorn Laski might assert "that it would be of lasting benefit to political science if the whole concept of sovereignty were surrendered",[6] but it was as if a mummy had heaved a sigh out of a moment of eternal Silence. He might indeed go on to argue that "the State is obviously a public service corporation" or that "the State is the body which seeks so to organize the interests of the consumers that they obtain the commodities of which they have need", but to the cynical realist it merely signified that Laski was drunk with a sense of hypothetical power. Something was evidently lacking, call it realism if you will, which could convert the mould of erudition and logic into genuine political penicillin. That something being absent, those volumes are already, I suspect, museum pieces.

Since, however, my aim has been also to indicate a basic continuity in Professor Laski's outlook despite his announced conversion to "Marxism" I shall set down without apology two rather large excerpts from one of his earliest books. In doing so I hope to bring into sharper focus one or two persistent problems which have continued to agitate Laski up to the present time. Readers of his *The State in Theory and Practice* will immediately recognize the ancestor of many passages in that book in the following excerpts:

> No political democracy can be real that is not as well the reflection of an economic democracy; for the

> business of government is so largely industrial in nature as inevitably to be profoundly affected by the views and purposes of those who hold the keys of economic power. That does not necessarily mean that government is consciously perverted to the ends of any class within the state. So to argue is to project into history a malignant teleology from which it is, in so small degree, free. But when power is actually exerted by any section of the community, it is only natural that it should look upon its characteristic views as the equivalent of social good.[7]

> Government is in the hands, for the most part, of those who wield economic power. The dangers of authority become intensified if the supreme power be collected and concentrated in an institution which cannot be relied upon uniquely to fulfil its theoretic purposes. That is why the main safeguard against economic oppression is to prevent the state from throwing the balance of its weight into the side of the established order. It is to prevent it from crying peace where in fact the true issue is war. For, important as may be the process of consumption, it is in nowise clear that the state treats equally those who are benefited by the process. It is by no means certain that the standard of life of the worker is not better safeguarded by his trade union than by the state.[8]

Made aware by the impact of events of the extremely academic nature of his views, Laski set about to save them in the best way he could. And to say the least, the device he employed was both ingenious and simple. It merely consisted of rigidly segregating the two main and incompatible elements of his political doctrines which had hitherto been inextricably bound together (see the above excerpts) — idealism and realism — and giving to them separate and extensive treatment. This was accomplished in *The State in Theory and Practice,* a book which appeared in 1935 and which was hailed by some as an authoritative discussion of the Marxian theory of the state. It was, of course, nothing of the sort. Attempting to transform a defect into a virtue, Laski decided that if his earlier doctrines were futile they could at least be made philosophical; hence in the first chapter of this volume he

developed his philosophic conception of the state. This time, however, his pluralistic arguments (modified, to be sure, to square with his "Marxism") were arrayed against the philosophical idealists with Hegel as whipping-boy. Here again, as in his controversy with the political monists, I have tried to show (i) that he has misunderstood, or, at any rate, has given a misleading picture of Hegel's teachings and (ii) that Laski is himself too far committed to idealism to cry "thief". Granting that many of Laski's arguments against Bosanquet and the other philosophical idealists are shrewdly made I still feel that he and Bosanquet are merely on the opposite sides of the one pasture looking for the same mythical four-leaf clover. I cannot, that is to say, persuade myself that Laski's differences with the philosophical idealists are of any practical or even theoretical significance.

The second chapter of this volume is significantly titled *State and Government in the Real World.* It is here, if anywhere, that diligent seekers of Laski's "Marxism" must look if they hope to find it. And, to speak truthfully, there is much in these pages to convince the unwary reader that here at last is the authentic article. If I may be forgiven a personal note, I myself was taken in by them five years ago. This, of course, was several years before a deeper acquaintance with the Marxian classics had taught me to differentiate the spurious article from the genuine. For Laski is an eclectic who has tried to marry (in his career as a political thinker) an ineradicable strain of idealism, first to Pragmatism and latterly to Marxism. The first marriage was, if anything, the more successful of the two since Pragmatism (as its subsequent career has shown) can quite easily accomodate the political or the religious idealist. But not so with Marxism. Marxism is critical, revolutionary and materialistic; it is, if I may employ a violent metaphor, a blazing furnace which rapidly consumes as so much rubbish all teleologies, all perfectionisms; it is the declared and uncompromising enemy of absolutisms in any form, of all ethical and idealistic hankerings. It seeks for an explanation of what men think in their practice; and it examines that practice to discover general laws which men may afterwards use as levers for changing the world in which they live. In brief, Marxism purports to be a science, a guide to effective action.

It is, however, apparent to even the most casual reader of Laski that his sociological concerns are ethical rather than scientific. From the very outset, from indeed his first book on, Laski has attempted to discover the morally unshakeable foundations for political authority. It is this ethical and idealist outlook which Laski has attempted to unite to Marxism, with the most unfortunate consequences to both. The result

of this eclecticism has been ambiguity, confusion and sophistry as well as the unavoidable distortion of Marxism. Marxism will simply not accomodate people who talk abstractly about Justice, Morality, Right, etc. A single example of the kind of confusion which results when the attempt is made to combine idealism with Marxism will indicate what I mean. Thus Laski argues that "the full exploitation of (the means of production) does not necessarily mean a *just exploitation.* That depends upon whether the class-relations which the system of ownership involves permit an equal response to the claims made upon the product to be distributed."[9] (My italics). Seeking Justice (and Laski has been a diligent and untiring seeker for almost thirty years) Laski has said something which is either meaningless or contradictory. For a moment's reflection; in fact, some of Laski's own words will convince anyone that so long as classes are in existence (there can be no "class-relations" without classes) the system of ownership cannot and, what is more, does not allow the equal satisfaction of claims upon the social product. This might be possible if the system of ownership were public, but then classes, and with them class-relations, will have entirely disappeared.

Here, then, appropriately I might explain the use of the terms noumenal and phenomenal which appear in the following pages. It occured to me as I proceeded to study Laski's writings that he was the victim of a crippling ambivalency. He inhabits, that is to say, two sharply distinct worlds which permit of no bridgement. One is the world of reason, truth and decency; the other the world of unreason, of brutal and terrifying fact. The first I have chosen to call the noumenal world; the second, the phenomenal. Into Laski's noumenal world I have somewhat arbitrarily unloaded his idealism, his individualistic pluralism and other various odds and ends of his political doctrines which could not be considered as derivable from contemporary political fact. The phenomenal world, I think, is self-explanatory.

It is, I believe, precisely because Laski suffers from self-division that his writings possess their arresting quality. Profoundly democratic and humanitarian, Laski is also actuely aware of the harsh nature of our political and social involvements, which jeopardize, at every turn, the appeal to humanity and decency. Himself a reasonable man, he is haunted by a sense of inevitable disaster as men seem deliberately to choose the paths of unreason and violence. Having the intellectual's love of order, he fears whatever may interrupt or destroy it; the word that most frequently drops from his pen is "catastrophe". Here, and here alone, must be sought Laski's repeatedly expressed alarm at the possibility of a proletarian revolution, and his effort, as a political

thinker, to persuade an aroused working-class to take the inoffensive and constitutional path of Social Democracy.

II

Laski's schematism is a device whereby he can cement, can join together his two states, the noumenal and the phenomenal. It is the broad platform which enables the idealist and materialist, the pluralist and the Marxian, the man of action and the erudite scholar, to embrace. As a sheer intellectual achievement, it is breath-taking in its impressiveness, and convinces as much by the neatness of its execution as by the splendour of its final construction. Of course there are some hypercritical cynics who will declare that it was done by a trick and will even insist upon examining for themselves the timber with which the platform was constructed: such fellows are evidently lacking in aesthetic appreciation. Dull fellows — they are given beauty and they demand logic!

But first the state must be sent to the cleaners to have any taint of oppression removed from it.[10]

And now let us consider the following definitions of the state which Laski makes:

(i) "The state is a legal instrument for making the claims of private owners to the resources of production dominant over other claims from those who do not own."[11]

(ii) "This state-power, as I have already pointed out, has to be exercised by men; and those who are entrusted with its exercise constitute the government of the state. Their business is to use the state-power for the purposes for which it was instituted, and these, I have argued, may be summarized by saying that the end of the state is the satisfaction, at the highest possible level, of its subjects' demands."[12]

The ordinary philistine, not educated to understand dialectical subtleties, may be forgiven if he stands confused before what at first blush appears to be a contradiction. He is told that the state is a class weapon; and since that appears to him a reasonable viewpoint he has no difficulty in assimilating it. Yet a moment later, indeed with the same breath, Laski assures him that the state exists to promote the greatest possible satisfaction of the citizen's demands. One can understand his bewilderment. But let us hasten to assist him. We must explain to him that Laski is here speaking of two states, the ideal and the actual. The ideal or noumenal state is simplicity itself. Its function is to ensure the

fullest use of the instruments of production (the Marxian bridge) and to distribute their products in just measure to all its citizens. Unfortunately the historical development of the productive forces has engendered cancerous class divisions in society which prevent the noumenal state from carrying out its "theoretic purpose". Fallen from its heavenly dwelling-place it develops a secular bias in favor of the owners of the means of production, the ruling class in every society. It begins to squint, and instead of ideal justice we have class justice, that is, injustice; instead of equality, inequality; instead of harmony, conflict. The noumenal state, temporarily covered with unsightly class encrustations, appears as the phenomenal state. The latter, far from espousing justice, equality, or the happiness of its citizens, is never neutral in the struggle waged between the possessing and nonpossessing classes, is constantly favoring the one as against the other. Sovereignty, i.e. supreme coercive power, is now effectively possessed by owners of the productive instruments and is nothing else but the will of the rulers enforced by a standing army, police, prisons and all the other machinery of coercing the truculent lower orders to obedience. As for the government, it too has suffered a declension and, instead of serving the noumenal state-purpose, now acts as the agent, as the executive committee of the ruling class in power. Furthermore, since law is the will of the government, that is, the ruling class, it also is severed from its noumenal abode (justice) and never transcends the particular class interest to promote the welfare of society as a whole. Sovereignty, government and law, each has fallen back a step, but they have done so in good order, preserving like well-drilled soldiers an equal and uniform distance between themselves and their ideal counterparts.

In brief, Laski has invented an ingenious parallel construction which enables him to step easily from one kingdom to another. If however, his person be examined a curious document will be found. It is his passport, the term sovereignty. One side of the document bears the stamp "State Purpose"; the other, "The Ruling Class". It is, I maintain, this semantic ambiguity which confers upon Laski the rights of citizenship in the two separate states, the phenomenal and the noumenal.[13] Yet (and this is the whole, indeed the very crux of the matter) the two states turn out to be not so very different after all. For observe that the noumenal purpose has been defined as the satisfaction of maximum demand *through the fullest possible use of the productive forces.* And the actual historical mission of the phenomenal state (after fumigation at the cleaners) turns out to be nothing else but the successive embodiments or realizations of the noumenal purpose as defined above. The

phenomenal state, that is to say, actualizes according to Laski a portion of the ideal at every moment of its historical career. It fulfills the noumenal purpose continuously, and with each successive advance, each successive growth, there takes place a corresponding growth of justice, freedom and equality, all close to the heart of the pluralist and the idealist.[14] This — this is nothing other than evolutionary democratic socialism, but in a disguise so ingenious, so resourceful and so brilliantly executed as to be all but impenetrable. But all the same it is democratic socialism and not Marxism.

To complete the disguise, however, one further misrepresentation, one more distortion and falsification of a Marxian tenet was necessary. And this was accomplished in the following passage where Laski writes: "This is the truth in the Marxian argument that *in a classless society the state, as we know it, will 'wither away'*. For the state as we know it has always had the function not of preserving law and order as absolute goods seen in the same broad way by all members of the state; the function of the state has always been to preserve that law and that order which are implicit in the purposes of a particular class-society."[15] (My italics). The tricky and misleading words are "the state as we know it". The state, *as we know it,* will not "wither away". This fate is reserved, according to Marx and Engels, for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, which, as they pointed out from time to time, had ceased to be a state in the true and essential meaning of that word since "The first act of the State, in which it really acts as the representative of the whole of Society, namely, the assumption of control over the means of production on behalf of society, is also its last act as a state."[16] It is not "the state as we know it" which withers away but the most complete democracy. As Lenin puts it: "The capitalist State does not wither away. . . but is *destroyed* by the proletariat in the course of the revolution. Only the proletarian State or semi-State withers away after the revolution."[17]

But revolution and the proletarian state are the last things in the world that Laski wants to talk about. What better way to camouflage this reluctance than by a reference to "a classless society" whose Marxian ring sounds so much less menacing since it comes from such a conveniently remote distance? Today it is a more difficult matter to distort Marxism since it requires for its achievement a combination of virtues and powers possessed by few people: high-mindedness, erudition, marked controversial gifts and a cool, unflinching impudence. Yet it must be acknowledged that Laski, using a Marxian terminology for just that very purpose, has all but succeeded. Nevertheless, I submit that

Laski's idealistic social democracy and eclectic hodge-podge have nothing in common with Marxism which rigorously eschews all ethical and teleological presuppositions in its attempt to evaluate social phenomena scientifically. Laski's wish to envelope Marx in the same ethical fog in which he himself habitually dwells; his naive effort to equate *Das Kapital* with the Sermon on the Mount; exchange value with the Categorical Imperative; his magnificent zeal to present his teleological idealism in the guise of Marxian dialectics are, to one who has studied the Marxian classics, as futile as they are pathetic. But the wish, the effort, and the zeal are all characteristic of present-day Social Democracy.

III

For the Marxist the basic antagonism in modern society is that which exists between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; Laski substitutes for this the opposition between capitalism and democracy. "The assumptions of capitalism", he affirms, "contradict the implications of democracy."[18] By the assumptions of capitalism Laski means the subordination of the productive mechanism to the profit-seeking motive which necessarily limits welfare and happiness to the privileged few who control the instruments of production. Democracy, on the other hand, implies equality. The union of capitalism and democracy was due to an historical accident which required of the middle-classes to grant certain concessions to the urban proletariat and the peasantry to win their support in the struggle against feudalism. The offspring of that marriage was therefore not economic but political, that is, formal democracy. Laski points out that political democracy, which held out to the masses the promise of the eventual elimination of social abuses and inequalities, worked quite well as long as capitalism was in its expanding phase. Capitalism was then progressive, due entirely to the fact that is prosperous advance enabled it to afford certain concessions as the necessary price for the avoidance of social strife. Now, however, capitalism is no longer progressive; instead of expanding it has begun to contract; the capitalist system has entered upon that extremity foretold for it by Marx in which the relations of production are in contradiction with the indispensable forces of production. As a consequence of this situation capitalism has begun to revoke its former generosity and to favor repression as a means for dealing with the legitimate claims of the disadvantaged sections of the population.

Eventually, that is to say, the unstable equilibrium established by the

French Revolution of 1789 must give way, and either capitalism or democracy triumph. For the ethic of the one is unalterably opposed to that of the other. Capitalism restricts economic and political advantage to the owners of property, while democracy, Laski thinks, is a one-way street to equality. Between the two no compromise is possible. And the lesson of Fascism, Laski insists, is that the property-owners will not hesitate to suspend the democratic processes the moment they realize that the propertyless are prepared to make use of them to increase their share of the social product. With Fascism the class struggle does not come to an end; it is merely transferred to another plane. Fascism is the use of unrestrained violence against those groups, mainly the proletariat, which aspire to challenge the supremacy or to destroy the privileges of the ruling class. It is, first of all, a direct assault upon the living standards of the masses; and to that end the destruction of all their defence organizations (trade unions, workers' clubs and newspapers, etc.) as well as the destruction of representative institutions in general are essential prerequisites. Whenever, that is, the capitalist class feels itself threatened it will use the power of the state to crush democracy; in doing so it must resort to terror and continue to maintain its authority by naked repression. Fascism is the open dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.[19]

This, broadly speaking, is the dilemma confronting all capitalist democracies; and no one has argued with greater trenchancy than Laski the significance of that dilemma for our time. As a description of *one* of the major social tensions of today it is, I believe, largely true. No one, to be sure, can seriously disagree with Laski when he argues as follows:

> In a capitalist society, therefore, liberty is a function of the possession of property, and those who possess property on any considerable scale are small in numbers. There is always, therefore, a perpetual contest in such a society for the extension of the privileges of property to those who do not enjoy its benefits. There is, from this angle, a profound contradiction between the economic and the political aspects of capitalist democracy. For the emphasis of the one is on the power of the few, while the emphasis of the other is on the power of the many. Granted only security, the less the interference with economic aspects by the political power of the society, the greater will be the benefit enjoyed by the

> few; granted security, also, the greater the political interference the more widely will economic benefit be shared. The permanent drive of capitalist democracy is therefore towards the control by the state of economic power in the interest of the multitude.[20]

This picture, I say, is largely true; but it is also much too simple. It depends for its complete validation upon the construction of a model which ignores much of the essential and characteristic processes of capitalist society. It carries conviction to the mind chiefly because it is presented as the antithesis of two opposed principles one of which is, by definition, good as the other is evil. In what sense, for example, is it true to say that capitalist democracy leads on to socialism, for presumably that is what Laski means by "the control by the state of economic power in the interest of the multitude"? As an abstraction, as a principle of good, as a selection of one single aspect from the welter of social phenomena, it is certainly permissible to speak of democracy as opposed to capitalism. But what we are dealing with here is not "pure democracy" but "capitalist democracy" and to assert of the latter that it has for its end socialism is, to say the least, begging the question. Certainly such a statement cannot stand without some very serious qualifications; and these qualifications, as we shall see, are such as to throw some doubt upon the validity of Laski's over-simplified model. It is, for instance, a prime essential to the effectiveness of Laski's construction that capitalism should yield security; but this, both by definition and fact, is precisely what capitalism is incapable of assuring us.

We may legitimately identify capitalist democracy with parliamentarism; and, in essence, Laski's practical programme shakes down through many siftings to a somewhat diffident apologia for parliamentarism: the working-class can achieve its emancipation by placing the necessary legislation upon the statute books. Laski counsels a reliance upon constitutional methods, upon legalism, upon the formation of a Labour Party which will confine its revolutionary activities to "getting out the vote". This, of course, is the programme of Social Democracy everywhere. The acceptance of this counsel and its application in practice were mainly responsible for the complete degeneration of the once powerful and respected German Social Democratic Party.[21] In fact it is not too much to say that Scheidemann and Noske by incessantly preaching constitutionalism to the German workers unwittingly paved the broad highway upon which Hitler's tanks afterwards rumbled into

the working-class districts of Berlin, Hamburg and Leipzig. Wherever the programme of Social Democracy has been tried it has ended in disastrous failure or in humiliating debility. The experience of two Labour Governments under the late Ramsay MacDonald is, it goes without saying, no exception to this consistent record of failure, impotence and humiliation.[22] However, it is unnecessary to develop this point further; history has already made its wry commentary upon the futile tactics of Social Democracy.

In praising bourgeois democracy, therefore, Laski is helping to foster those illusions which led to the defeat of the working-class in Germany, Italy and Spain. He is only repeating what every bourgeois likes to hear. That bourgeois democracy is better than no sort of democracy is, of course, true; but it is the kind of truth whose utterance comes more gracefully from the lips of a liberal philistine. What the Marxist, according to Lenin, must strive to convince the masses is that "bourgeois democracy. . .remains and cannot but remain under capitalism, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a trap and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor."[23] Since Lenin presented the question from the point of view of the enslaved and oppressed masses he characterized capitalist democracy as "democracy for the rich", adding that it was precisely in the most democratic countries — America, England, France and Switzerland — that the masses were more deceived and misled than in other countries. The following passage reveals quite clearly the tremendous difference in approach towards capitalist democracy between a Marxist and a Social Democrat. (For Kautsky in this passage simply substitute Laski):

> Take the bourgeois parliaments. Can it be that the learned Mr. Kautsky has never heard that the *more* democracy is developed, the *more* the bourgeois parliaments fall under the control of the Stock Exchange and the bankers? This, of course, does not mean that we must not use bourgeois parliaments (the Bolsheviks have made better use of them than any other party in the world, for in 1912-1914 we captured the entire workers' curia in the fourth Duma). But it does mean that only a Liberal can forget the historical limitations and conventional character of bourgeois parliamentarism as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois states the oppressed masses meet at every step the crying

> contradiction between the formal equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists, and the thousand and one *de facto* limitations and restrictions which make the proletarians *wage-slaves.* It is precisely this contradiction that opens the eyes of the masses to the rottenness, hypocrisy and mendacity of capitalism. It is this contradiction which the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly showing up to the masses, *in order to prepare them* for the revolution. And now that the era of revolution has begun, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of moribund bourgeois democracy.[24] (Lenin's italics).

In the light of this passage, one is simply left wondering that Laski can still pose as a Marxist!

By artfully ignoring the profound differences which divide communists from socialists, differences which extend far beyond the belief or lack of belief in the reality of a constitutional victory (indeed, this is rather a crude way of stating the difference), Laski finds the most dexterous way of covering up his own troublesome vacillations and uncertainties, and would like, it would seem, to involve the communists in them. In fact, as any Marxist knows, communists are not out to "demonstrate" that reformism is an illusion. For a professor it may be an academic question, but not for the workers who will most certainly have to pay with their own lives for the mistaken policies of their leaders. When communists offer to form a united front with socialists, they do so for a very practical reason — to better the living conditions of the workers and to prepare them for the next round of struggle. In truth, Laski seems unable to rid himself of the catastrophic or climacteric picture of revolution, of thinking of revolution in terms of sudden upheaval, as a spontaneous outbreak of violence against the old order. His revolutionary horizon (revealing all the fears and ignorant terrors of the liberal philistine) is severely limited to Blanquism; and, as we have seen, he bends all his efforts to dissuade the exploited wage-slaves from preparing their formations for a possible attack upon the bourgeois state. The lessons of the Bolshevik revolution — the most peaceful revolution in history — are completely unassimilated by him. For Laski, therefore, the only alternative to revolution is reform;[25] and it is to the path of reformism that Laski would commit the working-class.

The Marxist, on the contrary, while believing that reforms are both

useful and necessary, insists that the capitalist state must be shattered by a frontal attack and its place taken by a proletarian dictatorship (or a proletarian democracy, that is to say, democracy for the poor) before socialism on any broad and permanent scale can be realized. The social reformist — and Laski for all his exasperated incertitudes must be numbered among them — believes that capitalism can be reformed from within; the Marxist regards reforms as concessions which are wrested from the capitalist class and which enable the proletariat to consolidate its forces, such a consolidation assuring it ultimately of an easier and speedier victory. For the Marxist, therefore, reforms are not the alternative to revolution but, in a sense, its pre-condition; they help, as all concessions won from the capitalist class do, to organize and educate the workers for the final effort to overturn the system which keeps them enslaved. Needless to say, historical, economic and psychological considerations will greatly determine the difficulty or the ease with which the exploiting minority will be eliminated. But the Marxist relies upon unrelenting struggle and preaches it unremittingly to the working class. The social reformist preaches parliamentarism and the reliance upon constitutional methods even when, as with Laski, he already senses the hollowness and insecurity of both.

The Marxist, then, believes that in a certain historical context might is sanctified by right. He therefore accepts without lamentation or despair the proletariat as the active and revolutionary agent for changing contemporary capitalist society. This is what is meant by scientific socialism. Not appeals to abstract justice or reason or any other ideal category in the mind of the political philosopher, but only the revolutionary temper and maturity of the proletariat can abolish inequality and exploitation and usher in the prerequisites for a classless society. Here I might disgress long enough to say that the transvaluation of values of which Nietzsche wrote will be accomplished by the triumphant working-class. It is not usual in radical circles to mention Marx and Nietzsche in the same breath: nevertheless I am firmly persuaded that future historians and thinkers will reckon Nietzsche as great an anti-bourgeois, as great an emancipating force, as Marx himself. Nietzsche was the poet of the proletarian revolution as Marx was its prophet. Marx analyzed the economic foundations of the old society and foretold the nature of the new foundations succeeding to it; Nietzsche witheringly dissected bourgeois psychology and morality and with the intuition of genius celebrated the morality and conduct of the future.[26] Moreover, both men were dedicated to the faith that mankind can become the confident master of its environment.

Laski's great obsession is that in any showdown between capital and labour, the result must be the curtailment of "liberty" and the establishment of either a Fascist or a Proletarian dictatorship. And, as we have seen, Laski is equally hostile to both of them, insisting that when "men fight to destroy existing authority, the victors are bound to embark upon an attack on freedom in order to consolidate their power."[27] And since it is exactly such a battle that is shaping up it is not surprising that the note of elegiac despair, of mournful threnody, makes its appearance in Laski's later volumes. For as a liberal, as a social democrat, Laski's ultimate allegiance is to the Ideal and to those ardent few within whom, as within himself, the Ideal has taken up its antiseptic residence. His agony is caused by the twofold awareness that the Ideal must step down into the arena of men, there to give battle, and that in any event the Ideal is powerless to arrest or direct the turbulent passions of our era. Such surely is the despairing mood of the following passage: "There are", Laski urges, "in every society little groups of devoted men and women who know that the spirit of evil can be exorcised where there is the will to find the terms of peace, the ardour to discover the conditions of fellowship. But it seems the inexorable logic of a material and unequal society that their voices should hardly be heard above the passionate clamour of extremes. If we make Justice an exile from our habitations, respect for her advocates lies beyond our power of achievement. We confound her claims with our own; we confuse her principles with our self-interest."[28] Not the maturity, the revolutionary temper, the patient and resourceful construction of a working-class party prepared to lead the exploited masses but the goodwill and insight of the select few; not the dictatorship of the proletariat but the benevolent dictatorship of Justice; these alone, Laski believes, may establish the socialist society of the future. What is this but a restatement of the discredited utopian socialism against which Marx and Engels levelled their deadliest and most ironic attacks? Laski, it would appear, actually deplores the growing strength and militancy of the working-class which finally enables it to challenge the rule of the capitalists; for him, it is only an ugly instance of the "passionate clamour of extremes", of evil "self-interest". Laski the idealist, with the remarkable instinct of a homing pigeon, always returns to where he started from.

Finally, since Laski asserts that Marx was over-optimistic; that is to say, unscientific, in his prognostications concerning the future;[29] since, moreover, Laski himself has never transcended the narrow horizons of "bourgeois justice" and "bourgeois rights"; since, also, Laski believes

that some kind of political authority will always be necessary so long as men are organized in societies; and since, furthermore, for Laski parliamentarism and democracy are sacrosanct idols, the timeless and indeed inevitable forms of all wise government,[30] it must be stated that Marx not only criticized parliamentary institutions but urged their supersession by a working corporation that would be legislative and executive at one and the same time and envisaged, for a later period, the disappearance of democracy itself. For, as Lenin pointed out, the "withering away" of the state actually means the "withering away" of democracy. For democracy, Lenin argued, "is a *State* which recognizes the subjection of the minority to the majority, that is, an organization for the systematic use of *violence* by one class against the other, by one part of the population against the other."[31] And Marxists set themselves, as their final aim, "the task of the destruction of the State, that is, of every organized and systematic violence, every form of violence against man in general."[32] Under Communism "there will vanish all need for force, for the *subjection* of one man to another, of one section of society to another, since people will *grow accustomed* to observing the elementary conditions of social existence *without force and without subjection.*"[33] That is, without that political authority whose operation upon the most ideal terms it has been Laski's effort, from beginning to end, whether as pluralist or "Marxist", to discover.

This task, I conclude, was the task of a liberal philistine, of one who had not yet freed himself from bourgeois prejudices and reasoning; of one who was fundamentally an idealist in temper and not a materialist. It never was, and it never could have been, the task of any genuine Marxist.

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Notes

1. Harold Laski, "Why I am a Marxist" (Jan. 14, 1939) *The Nation* Vol. 148, No. 3, pp. 59-61.

2. Harold Laski, *Problem of Sovereignty* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917) Ch. I and Appendix A.

3. Harold Laski, *Authority and the Modern State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1919) p. 34.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 46.

5. See, however, Harold Laski, *Rise of European Liberalism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1938).

6. Harold Laski, *Grammar of Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925) p. 45.

7. Harold Laski, *Authority and the Modern State*, p. 38.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

9. Harold Laski, *The State in Theory and Practice* (New York: 1935) p. 139.

10. See *The State in Theory and Practice*, pp. 100, 115, 118, 145, 179. It is relevant to my argument to point out that each time Laski ventures an explicit definition of the state.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

13. By giving the term sovereignty a double meaning Laski has taken out an insurance policy against the future: should the bouregoisie yield peacefully and democratic socialism triumph, Laski can point to the realization of the state-purpose; should they not, and after a violent revolution of the proletariat establish its dictatorship, Laski can involve the other, class rule. The ambiguity, in short, is a reflection of Laski's own divided and deeply troubled mind.

14. *The State in Theory and Practice*, pp. 78, 181, 295.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

16. Friedrich Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, p. 315.

17. V.I. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, p. 125.

18. *The State in Theory and Practice*, p. 111.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 136, 289.

20. Harold Laski, *Democracy in Crisis* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1933) pp. 205-206.

21. Eisler, Norder and Schreiner, *The Lesson of Germany*, pp. 60-62, 100-102.

22. John Strachey, *The Theory and Practice of Socialism* (London: Gollancz, 1937) pp. 440-444. The partial socialistic achievements of the present labour government under Prime Minister Attlee should not blind us to the fact that it is, quite literally, the exploited workers and

peasants of India, China, Egypt, Iran, Greece and Italy who are paying the price for them. This is nothing other than labour imperialism.

23. V.I. Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky,* p. 26.

24. *Ibid.,* pp. 28-28. Now that, as a consequence of the successful war to defeat fascism the European masses are beginning to take the revolutionary path towards their emancipation, Laski is reported to have told the French, Belgian and Dutch socialists to refuse the Communists' proposal for United Action.

25. *The State in Theory and Practice,* p. 109.

26. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra,* pp. 105-108.

27. *Democracy in Crisis,* p. 208. Lenin argued that under a proletarian dictatorship freedom and democracy were a million times greater than under bourgeois democracy.

28. *Ibid.,* p. 267.

29. Harold Laski, "Marxism After Fifty Years," (March, 1937) *Current History,* Vol. 38, pp. 691-696.

30. Harold Laski, *Parliamentary Government in England* (New York: 1938) p. 77.

31. V.I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution,* p. 187.

32. *Ibid.,* p. 187.

33. *Ibid.*

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T.H. GREEN AND THE MORALIZATION OF THE MARKET*

Phillip Hansen

> A person has as his substantive end the right of putting his will into any and everything and thereby making it his, because it has no end in itself and derives its destiny and soul from his will. This is the absolute right of appropriation which man has over all 'things' . . .All things may become a man's property. . .Since property is the means whereby I give my will an embodiment, property must also have the character of being 'this' or 'mine'. This is the important doctrine of the necessity of private property.
>
> Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*

It has become a commonplace that the political thought of T. H. Green stands as a cornerstone of the modern liberal welfare state structure. Less commonly, however, is any attempt made either to understand and explicate the ontological assumptions underlying Green's thought, or ultimately to relate those assumptions to the social institutions that they attempt to justify.[1] From this latter perspective Green's enterprise takes on a deeper significance than is commonly understood in orthodox estimations of it. Certainly Green understood the dynamics of capitalism much better than did other liberal theorists, particularly the Utilitarians. Yet at the same time, his theoretical position necessarily restricted any critical thrust which could have arisen out of his analysis of bourgeois society. For Green's fundamental categories of analysis were Idealist in nature and owed much to the work of Hegel. If, as Marx argues, Hegelianism constitutes the highest development within the realm of bourgeois thought, then it might be expected that, given the added advantage of writing within the context of the most highly developed capitalist market society of the time, Green would

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provide the most sophisticated defence of that newly emergent institutional corollary of mature capitalism, liberal democracy. And this is exactly what he did.

Less fettered by overtly Utilitarian concepts than, for example, John Stuart Mill (whose views he subjected to extensive criticism), Green discerned more clearly than most that strictly Utilitarian-Benthamite assumptions were in some way related to the deplorable social conditions of the British working class. For him, therefore, these assumptions could not form in themselves an adequate justificatory base for the market. As a result, he was led to posit something like a developmental view of man's essence in which man possessed distinctively human capacities and potentialities the realization of which constituted the chief goal of the social order. For Green, man was rather more the active being than the merely passive consumer of utilities and calculator of pleasure that the Utilitarians held him to be, and Green sensed that social order and individual moral initiative were threatened by purely unqualified Utilitarian assumptions. Not surprisingly, we find Green classifying his own enterprise in the *Prolegomena to Ethics* as an attempt to counteract the debilitating influence of Utilitarianism upon the possibility of what he called the moral life:

> We have to consider, not so much whether the principle that pleasure is the sole object of desire is itself tenable. . .as whether the doctrine which, having rejected this view of desire, professes to find the absolutely desirable, or "Summum Bonum" for man in some perfection of human life, some realization of human capacities, is a kind, not only to save speculative men from suspicion of there being an illusion in their impulses after a higher life which Hedonism naturally yields, but also to guide those impulses in cases of honest doubt as to the right line of action to adopt.[2]

Green seems to be attempting here to extend such Utilitarian insights as had in his view proven essential for meaningful political and social reform, and had served to destroy the basis of aristocratic dominance.

What I wish to demonstrate in this paper is, first, that Green was more or less aware of the major implications arising out of the ontological presuppositions entailed by Utilitarian (market) assumptions and, secondly, that he sought not so much to reject those assumptions

as to fit them into a broader concept of man's essence. This concept still saw man as an infinite consumer of utilities, but viewed the striving for want satisfaction as directed toward the attainment of a moral end: self-realization arising out of the fulfillment of the common good. In this manner, Green hoped to surmount the serious problems attendent to Utilitarianism, while at the same keeping capitalism intact.

The first step in understanding Green's political position lies in explicating Green's philosophical premises, and by so doing articulating differences between Green's epistemological stance and the Utilitarian view. On that basis we can perhaps understand the character and scope of Green's critique of "naturalist" or utilitarian ethics, and how those ethics, rooted in Utilitarian epistemological premises, suggest what for him is a dangerously inadequate account of the human essence. The limitations of Green's critique of Utilitariansim may then be gleaned from the standpoint of Green's *own* view of human nature and the elements of Utilitarianism incorporated within it. From that point we can move on to see the relationship between Green's notion of man and his ultimate justification from a moral point of view of individual appropriation and the capitalist property institution — and beyond that to the question of an individual right and its basis in capitalist society's class divisions. In the light of this analysis, Green's defence of capitalist society from the standpoint of his developmental view of the human essence can, I would suggest, be more clearly explicated than is usually the case in treatments of Green's work. Finally we can relate Green's theoretical position to his most practical political statement and from that vantage point suggest something of the significance of Green's theoretical position to his most practical political statement and from that vantage point suggest something of the significance of Green's enterprise for modern liberal democratic theory.

I

Green never really gave explicit formulation to the vital prerequisite for a developmental view of man's essence: a concept of action. His substitute for it was probably his notion of individual appropriation; and it is this that ties him to the Utilitarian outlook and prevents the break from Utilitarianism that he hoped his theory would accomplish. This weakness is central to an understanding of his theory, what he wished to do with it, and the tensions and ambiguities attendent to the whole enterprise. To the extent that Green *did* accept Utilitarian assumptions, he was unable to bring forth an explicit concept of action, as

such a concept of action is almost totally antithetical to those assumptions. His attempts to supersede Utilitarian postulates by building onto them his developmental view could not be a complete success and this accounts for the major problems to be found in his position. It could not be done because, by the mere virtue of his adoption of a developmental position, Green was cognitively committed to certain implications inconsistent with Utilitarianism. The most concrete manisfestation of that inconsistency was, of course, the existence of the British working class. Although, according to Green's theory, they would not starve, British workers would in terms of their developmental prospects find their position unchanged vis-a-vis the capitalists.

Green was aware that, with reference to a large, industrial "proletariate" reduced to selling its labour for mere subsistence income, the ontological picture of man as a pleasure calculator and consumer of utilities was not very meaningful as a description of the good life. The mere trickle of utilities accruing to such unfortunates was barely sufficient to renew their saleable productive capacities. The pleasure-pain calculus and the freedom of choice the calculus involved were concepts of negligible importance in relation to the workers. This problem was made more acute for Green by virtue of the fact that he sought to demonstrate that Utilitarian theory had done much to improve human conduct and character,[3] something which he took to be the chief aim of social theory. Clearly, the conditions under which a proletarian lived did nothing to promote character. Green saw, in fact, that the opposite was the case. His moral ideal was his way of dealing with this problem without destroying capitalism.

Since Green linked character with Utilitarian postulates and understood (or at least implied that he understood) the relationship between those postulates and a particular set of social institutions i.e. capitalist market institutions, he also was aware, to a degree not usually admitted in most liberal theory, of the extent to which human behaviour is determined by a particular institutional framework that is the product of men's relations to themselves and to their material environment.[4] Because his goal was the moralization of each individual through the self-realization attained by the free development of one's powers to contribute to the common good, Green had to assume that capitalist institutions could provide the conditions wherein the active subject posited by his developmental ideal could fulfill the posited moral potential. In other words, Green attempted to moralize the market. That is, he assumed that the moral choices necessitated by a view of man as a developer of his human powers could be registered and

effected by the market mechanism. As Green saw it, this was the essence of the character-building function that the market performed.

Green was hardly unique in linking the market with the morally good life. The Utilitarians (particularly Hume) certainly held such a view but for them the "good" was more or less defined as the maximization of individual utilities. What makes Green unique, as a liberal, is that his definition of the good life harkened back to an earlier, pre-capitalist conception of man's essence (e.g. that of Aristotle) which saw man as a teleogical being whose end was realizable only within a particular kind of social order (in Aristotle's case, the polity). Such a concept pictured man as a possesser of uniquely human attributes which achieved expression within the context of a fully human life. The fully human life, the goal of politics, was synonomous with virtue. It was virtue in something like this older sense, suitably buttressed by both liberal and democratic (i.e. egalitarian) assumptions, that, Green believed, the market could facilitate.

The problem with Green's attempts to moralize the market lay in the fact that the market, by its very nature, militates against the development of what Green called a "positive power or capacity of doing or enjoying something worth doing or enjoying". As I have argued, if a developmental view is to be at all substantively meaningful, it must include some concept of action. Action involves the exertion of human capacities (Green's view of will implies this) and the means by which that exertion is effected. In other words, men must have access to the means of life and labour. In a capitalist market society most men are denied this access and the price to be paid for it is the transfer of their ability to use their capacities for their own conscious purposes to those few who have land and capital. Committed as he was to the maintenance of capitalist institutions, Green could not see this transfer of power as a transfer of power and hence he could not recognize it as an impediment to human fulfillment. Or, more accurately, he did not see that the coerciveness which rendered the transfer inevitable was an integral and permanent aspect of the market, but believed it to be the outcome of the pre-capitalist accumulation of land on the part of the feudal aristocracy. (However, Green seemed to be in some sense aware of the problem of impediments to human development within a market framework if the ambiguity of his developmental ideal is any indication.)

To understand Green's notion of fulfillment and its relation to the moral role of the market, we must investigate what Green understood to be the moral ideal and the moral personality that actualized it. We

may then see how his position was manifested in the concept of individual appropriation and hence how private property served for him as a vehicle for self-realization.

For Green, the moral ideal could probably best be understood as a conception by a man of "a better state of himself". This conception is given recognition and substance through the autonomous action of the individual will. The will actualizes the principle of self-development which is a "divine principle", an eternal consciousness that reproduces itself in man and accounts for the fact that man cannot be satisfied with what he is but seeks to realize what he "should be". This ideal compels the individual to seek self-realization by fulfilling those capabilities of which he is conscious. As he becomes conscious of those capabilities, man conceives of the "absolutely desirable" as the goal of his activities. Green's use of the word "desirable" is ambiguous in this context and this has something to do with his conception of the role of the market and the nature of market society.

Green's conception of the eternal consciousness realizing itself through the individual will is rooted in his basic epistemological premises. These premises posit the existence of a spiritual principle of knowledge, the self-distinguishing consciousness of the knowing subject, which unifies discrete physical experiences into a connected totality. Green's position was based on his critique of the naturalist epistemology and ethics that are essential to Utilitarian theory. To the naturalist position that knowledge derived from sense impression of the external world, Green countered with the view that:

> We cannot enquire whether a being that was merely the result of natural forces could form a theory of those forces as explaining himself. We have to return once more to that analysis of the conditions of knowledge, which form the basis of all Critical Philosophy . . . and ask whether the experience of connected matters of fact, which in its methodical expression we call science, does not presuppose a principle which is not itself any one or number of such matters of fact, or their result. Can the knowledge of nature be itself a part or product of nature, in that sense of nature in which it is said to be an object of knowledge?[5]

In short, the "mere statement that facts are not feelings, that things are not ideas, that we can neither feel nor think except contingently

upon certain functions of matter and motion being fulfilled, does not help us to understand what facts and things, what matter and motion, are."[6] What Green wished to dispute was the view that there existed two discrete entities, "thoughts" and "things" — subject and object — totally segregated from one another with the latter determining the former.

Green believed that what we know concretely are not purely empirical "things" but things as determined by relations. "The terms 'real' and 'objective'. . .have no meaning except for a consciousness which presents its experiences to itself as determined by relations, and at the same time conceiving a single and unalterable order of relations determining them, with which its temporary presentation, as each experience occurs, of the relations determining it may be contrasted."[7] Green thus saw subject and object as integrally related, interacting factors of a world constituted by thought or consciousness, such a consciousness being a "mode" of the eternal consciousness which is the source of the "single and unalterable order of relations". Out of this philosophical position came Green's understanding of the relationship between an institutional framework and human self-development, such an understanding being fundamental to his moralization of the market.

II

Green's critique of naturalist ethics follows from his analysis of empiricist epistemology. Clearly, an empiricist position implies the moral view that the test of the rightness or wrongness of actions must be based solely upon whether such actions promote the presence of pleasure and absence of pain — the Utilitarian creed. The close connection between naturalist epistemology and moral theory may be seen clearly if we use Hobbesian postulates (something which Green understood quite well). If man is seen as a system of matter which seeks to remain in continuous motion, then the terms "pleasure" and "pain" refer to material conditions which, respectively, facilitate or impede that motion.[8] Green saw that if his connection of the moral ideal were to have anything resembling a solid basis, it would be necessary for him to provide a theory of motivation which took into account man's social nature to an extent not found in Hobbesian-cum-Utilitarian postulates. Indeed, it was chiefly for this reason that he adopted Idealist categories of analysis.

The main thrust of Green's criticism of Utilitarianism is that the doctrine constitutes an incomplete picture of the human essence. To say that man seeks merely pleasure, that pleasure is the only object of his

desires, conveniently overlooks the fact that men frequently desire for the good of others and fulfill family and community duties and moral obligations which could not possibly have as their basis the desire for pleasure, as the Utilitarians understood pleasure. Indeed, such actions may entail considerable self-sacrifice and pain. Green's position here follows from the idea that man seeks the "absolute and common good", a "good common as between some group of persons interested in each other, absolute as that of which the goodness is conceived to be independent of the likes and dislikes of individuals . . . (The) true good must be good for all men, so that no one should seek to gain by another's loss. . ."[9] Man has desires and seeks to satisfy them, and for Green this is inextricably linked with the idea of the good. Man is, indeed, a creature of wants, but not of mere wants. Here, we must remind ourselves of Green's Idealist conception of man: the knowing subject who is at the same time an object to himself insofar as he recognizes that he embodies the spiritual principle upon which the existence of a complete rational world conceived as a totality is possible. Green says that the "essence of man's spiritual embodiment is the consciousness of having it"[10] and this consciousness indicated to a man a potentially better state of himself which he seeks to realize through the action of the autonomous will. How wants present themselves to the willing subject is analogous to the process by which knowledge is possible. In the world of practice, where the will actualizes moral ends, the determining causes of human action are motives, which Green describes as those ideas of ends which a self-conscious subject presents to itself, and which it strives and tends to realize. Wants are the building block of motives but they can serve as motives only when they are transformed from their natural, animal state through the action of the self-conscious subject. Green remarks that "the transition from mere want to consciousness of a wanted object, implies the presence of the want to a subject which distinguishes itself from it and is constant throughout successive stages of the want."[11] As Green does not specify the wants he has in mind (other than that they must be transformed into objects of desire suitable for the attainment of the moral ideal), nor dispute the sorts of "mere" wants that Utilitarianism posited, we may assume that Green's treatment of wants is an important basis for his moralization of the market.[12]

For Green, the transformation of a want into the consciousness of desired object permits the conception of a world of practice quite distinct from a world of experience or knowledge. As we have seen, the world of practice is the realm of the will the quality of which is dependent upon the nature of the objects willed. The highest objective of

the will — the moral good — is the fulfillment of the individual's moral capacity, the harmonization of the will with practical reason, which presents man with the moral end to be attained. In other worlds, the will makes motivation possible and the good will seeks the attainment of objects consistent with self-realization.

Fettered by their conception of wants as "mere" wants, Utilitarians were wrong in that they saw the good to be generally pleasant (which it is), but assumed that the object embodying the good was desirable because of the pleasure it conveyed. In fact the opposite is true: an object's pleasantness depends upon its goodness.[13] Thus, if the basis of desire is not pleasure, then "there are many objects of desire which are not imagined pleasures and which though pleasure may be anticipated in their attainment cannot be desired on account of that pleasure."[14]

In Green's view, the theoretical weaknesses of Utilitarianism have grave significance in the social and political realm. The consistent Utilitarian could not call for the performance of particular acts because they ought to be done, even if such a performance could increase the aggregate amount of pleasure. On the basis of the Utilitarian assumption "that every one acts from what is for the time his strongest desire or aversion, and that the object of a man's strongest desire is always that which for the time he imagines as his greatest pleasure, the object of his strongest aversion that which for the time he imagines as his greatest pain"[15], it is not possible for any man, given what he is and given his particular circumstances, to gain any more pleasure at any specific time than he in fact does. This is so because for a man's present capacity for pleasure "we have. . .no test but his desire, and of his desire no test but his action."[16] The Utilitarian, regardless of his own reformist inclinations, is confronted with an ever-increasing gap between his theory and its practical application. To say that it is not possible for a man to obtain more pleasure than he actually does at any particular time is to assert the impossibility of man conceiving a better state of himself (i.e. transforming mere wants into desired objects) and fulfilling the moral ideal as Green understood it. Of Utilitarianism, Green asks: "Is not its intrinsic unavailability for supplying motive or guidance to a man who wishes to make his life better, likely to induce a practical scepticism in reflecting persons who have adopted it, which tends to paralyze the effort after a better life?"[17]

III

If Green's analysis of Utilitarianism produced this conclusion then presumably, others who had undertaken similar analyses (and Green

tells us there were many) would have reached similar judgments. Wherein, then, lies the appeal of Utilitarianism? On this question, Green reveals the extent to which his acceptance of capitalism limits his critique of Utilitarian ontological presuppositions. He tells us that the major appeal of Utilitarianism lies in the fact that it provides a substantive conception, however inadequate, of the human essence, whereas the philosopher (i.e. Green), who provides a picture of man as a being whose end consists in the perfection of human life through the realization of human capabilities, cannot do this because he does not know what any capability is until he sees its ultimate realization.[18] For "if he cannot. . .tell them what his greater perfection will positively mean for themselves and others, they will be apt to think that he has told them nothing, and to contrast the emptiness of the end to which he professes to direct them, with the definite intelligibility of that which is explained to consist in a greatest possible quantity of pleasure for all sentient beings."[19]

What Green does not seem to realize is that in a capitalist market society, an end defined as the accumulation of the greatest quantity of pleasure is the only meaningful one. A capitalist society both produces and is produced by a vision of man as an infinite consumer of utilities, a desirer of pleasures, with his power equated with his ability to gain those utilities. Green to some extent comprehended this (which explains why, given his support of capitalism, he did not reject Utilitarianism totally), but, given his assumptions and purposes, could not possibly have conceived of pleasure as the sole end in a market society. He makes this clear by asserting that the "ordinary activity of men regulated by law and custom", activity undertaken within the context of market society, contributes to the realization of man's end as a developer of his human potential. Green saw "Hedonist" (Utilitarian) assumptions as antithetical to the realization of that end. There is irony here: capitalist institutions are based on Utilitarian postulates, yet Green saw those institutions as essential to man as a developer of his capacities. He could only have believed this if his concept of realization did not require as a necessary condition the equal access of all men to the means of life and labour. And, given Green's Idealist categories, and his acceptance of capitalism (which meant a fundamental acceptance of Utilitarianism) no such requirement was necessary. All that Green in effect required was that men recognize as their moral end which of the fulfillment of their capacities entails the common good that all men share one with another. I hope to show in my discussion of Green's notion of property that what this view required in practice was

that all men have the opportunity to become capitalists (or appropriators); this I see as the essence of his moralization of the market. What Green could not see was that the logic of capitalist development is such that the vast majority of men are prevented from ever becoming capitalists.

The extent to which Green was bound by capitalist assumptions becomes clearer if we consider his treatment of market ontological presuppositions. Was man an infinite desirer whose power was opposed to that of other men as he sought satisfaction of his desires? I have indicated that Green did not criticize Utilitarianism on the basis of that doctrine's analysis of human wants and want satisfactions; what he did criticize was the way in which those wants were expressed. Certainly, no one would argue that want satisfaction in the form of an inflow of material utilities does not form one aspect of the totality of human wants, needs, and purposes, the fulfillment of which any meaningful political theory must seek. The problem with the maximization of utilities within a market framework is that man's desires are considered infinite and he is thus seen as an infinite consumer. Man as infinite consumer entails man as infinite appropriator and inequality of strength and skill lead to greatly unequal holdings of property. Such inequality denies the right of most men to exercise fully their human capacities.[20] This suggests that the two views of man, as a consumer of utilities and as an exerter of his human capacities, are incompatible. But the picture of man as a maximizer of utilities is also in an important sense inconsistent on its own terms. The freedom of choice which is fundamental to a man if he is to maximize his utilities in the market place is unavailable to most men who are forced to sell their labour on terms dictated to them if they are to survive. This, of course, is another way of saying that Utilitarianism begs all significant questions of the justice of the market distribution of income.

Green's analysis of Utilitarianism was not as far-reaching as it might appear for he did not question the principles of market justice. In fact, his criticism of Utilitarianism and his conception of the moral ideal were designed to sustain market principles, Utilitarian postulates by themselves being inadequate to the task. It is within this context that the question as to what extent Green accepted the ontological view of man as an infinite desirer must be considered. For Green to have criticized purely Utilitarian postulates as antithetical to human self-realization while at the same time claiming that capitalist institutions were necessary for self-realization (a position which meant that free access to the means of life and labour for all men was not necessary), he would

have had to have accepted as fundamentally valid the picture of man as an infinite desirer. A view of man as an infinite desirer does not, of course, require access to the means of life and labour. I think that he did accept that view, although not unambiguously so. (He could not have accepted it unambiguously given his developmental position however non-substantive that position was.[21]

Green appears to claim that the knowing and self-objectifying subject, man, is involved in a continuous process of becoming, of seeking fulfillment of the moral end, and this must be an infinitely desirous man whose wants are continuously tranformed into objects essential for his self-realization. As Green says "there necessarily accompanies or supervenes upon the idea of manifold good things, in which manifold satisfactions have been or may be found, the idea of a possible object which may yield satisfaction of the desiring man or self, as such, who, *as satisfaction of each particular desire is attained, still finds himself anew dissatisfied and wanting.*"[22]

The link between the moral ideal and the notion of man as an infinite desirer paves the way for Green's justification of individual appropriation.

> Every step in the definition of the wanted object implies a further action of the same subject, in the way of comparing various wants that arise in the process of life, along with the incidents of their satisfaction, as they only can be compared by a subject which is other than the process, not itself a stage or series of stages in the succession which it observes. At the same time as the reflecting subject traverses the series of wants, which it distinguishes from itself while it presents their filling as its object, there arises the idea of a satisfaction on the whole — *an idea never realisable, but for ever striving to realise itself in the attainment of a greater command over means to the satisfaction of particular wants.*[23]

Green's view of society is in this light most interesting. Society is the medium through which his developmental ideal is wedded to those market ontological assumptions which he accepts. It is, in other words, the medium through which human motivation and the autonomous will are related one to the other. Green, it will be remembered, held something like a classical view of man's essence: that man could

develop himself, realize his moral personality, only in relation to other men who mutually recognize a common end. Green's moral ideal was an individual end, yet it was only thus insofar as it was also a social end (the common being a social good). For him, social life is to personality what language is to thought. Language presupposes thought as a capacity, but in us the capacity of thought is only actualised in language. "So human society presupposes persons in capacity — subjects capable each of conceiving himself and the bettering of his life as an end to himself — but it is only in the intercourse of men, each recognized by each as an end, not merely a means, and thus as having reciprocal claims, that the capacity is actualised and we really live as persons."[24]

Society is the medium of self-development, but it can only be so if it accomplishes simultaneously another important function:

> Society is founded on. . .neutral interest, in the sense that unless it were operative, however incapable of expressing itself in abstract formulas, there would be nothing to countervail the tendency, inherent in the self-asserting and self-seeking subject, to make every object he deals with, even an object of natural affection, a means to his own gratification.[25]

There are shades of Hobbes here: man is naturally invasive, a man's power is his power over other, society is possible only if men temper their invasive behaviour. For Green that involves the recognition of the moral ideal, and consequently the recognition by each man of every other person as an end in himself. In a sense, Hobbes' all-powerful sovereign is replaced by the moral ideal. However, society is indispensible for individual personality development. If man is naturally invasive, then social institutions must take account of and limit invasive behaviour, but at the same time they must allow for the expression of such behaviour in as non-destructive a manner as possible. And here we have another way of understanding the moralization of the market: market institutions not only perform the negative function of limiting, while at the same time manifesting, invasive behaviour, but they also transform it into a means for attaining an ethical end.

The nature of Green's conception of the desiring subject lies, I think, at the heart of the tension in Green's thought between the ontological views of man on the one hand as an infinite consumer, and on the other hand, as an exerter of his human capacities. Green, of course, saw no

such tension because he saw the latter as related in some fundamental way to the former.

IV

It is on the foundations of his analysis of Utilitarianism and society that Green constructed his theory of property, the resulting edifice being the right of unlimited individual appropriation. That Green held a view of man as an infinite appropriator could be deduced from the fact that he believed man to be an infinite desirer. As Professor Macpherson tells us, [26] all that is required to convert man as an infinite desirer or consumer into a man as an infinite appropriator is the assumption that land and capital must be privately owned to be productive — and Green made such an assumption.[27] However, Green also made an explicit defence of individual appropriation on essentially the same basis as did Kant and Hegel: that it was necessary for the realization and objectification of the individual personality.

In Green's case the developmental role of property was brought out within the context of his discussion on rights. By a "right," Green meant a claim that all members of a society share with one another which is granted because it aids the fulfillment of the common good. It is acknowledged as a right by society and is immanent in the institutions and practices of the social order.

Green's concept of a "right" served an important function with respect to his practical political position. Following Hegel, Green saw the state as the harmonizer of rights. Within the context of Green's thought this meant in effect that the state provided (or, more correctly, maintained) the conditions necessary for the attainment of the common good. By virtue of its commonality, such a good theoretically admits of no competition. Translated into practical terms, this meant that the purpose of the state, indeed, of liberal democratic institutions generally, was to effect class conciliation.[28] Green did not conceive of class conflict as an ineradicable feature of market society (although he did recognize and gave a moral justification of the class divisions such a society entails). Thus, he could assert the necessity and justice of competition without any sense of contradiction — "that each member of the society . . . contributes to satisfy the others in seeking to satisfy himself, and that each is aware that the other does so; whence there results a common interest in the free play of the powers of all."[29] The corollary of this position is that Green did not see as an integral aspect of market

society the coercion arising out of dominance of the owning class. Or, more specifically, he did not see such coercion *as* coercion.

As might be expected given the nature of a right in Green's system, and the view that Green held of the necessity for private property as a means to develop individual personality, his ultimate justification for individual appropriation rested on its being essential for the fulfillment of the moral ideal. The moral justification for property is therefore totally dependent upon the existence of the divine principle which manifests itself through the action of the rational will. Appropriation is the individual's effort to realize through the act of will the potentially better state of himself of which he is conscious. Private property is therefore essential for the development of the free morality as it makes possible that self-imposed individual restraint necessary for the free submission to the moral ideal. The market not only registers human material choices but moral choices as well. Without private property, "The area within which (a man) can shape his own circumstances is not sufficient to allow of the opposite possibilities of right and wrong being presented to him, and thus of his learning to love right for its own sake . . ."[30]

Through property a man moralizes himself and develops a sense of responsibility. The extent to which Green conceived of private property and the market as crucial to the fulfillment of individual capacities may be seen from the fact that this most concrete statement of what the exercise of those capacities entailed was given in that context. Thus clan ownership of property and the restriction on individual appropriation therein implied was to be superseded with a view toward "the emancipation of the individual from all restrictions upon the free moral life and his provision with means for it."[31] However, the property gained from the free interplay of men's appropriative powers was only of value "as a permanent apparatus for carrying out a plan of life, for expressing ideas of what is beautiful, or giving effect to benevolent wishes."[32] One could hardly wish a better expression of what it means to lead a fully human life. We are once again shown that Green's chief importance as a theorist lies in his attempt to depict capitalism as the essential means to the realization of that life.

In essence, Green packed his views on the nature of appropriation and property into his famous concept of positive freedom. This concept involved "the liberation of the powers of all men equally for contributing to a common good." The progress of society is thus measured "by the increasing development and exercise on the whole of those powers of contributing to social good with which we believe the mem-

bers of society to be endowed; in short, by the greater power on the part of the citizens as a body to make the most and best of themselves."[33] Given Green's views on property, we will see that the condition for freedom was that all men must be allowed the opportunity to become appropriators and this could only come about if the market as the vehicle of free moral choice was to operate fully in accordance with its principles, with all obstacles removed. This is crucial with respect to the scope that Green granted to state intervention in the economic sphere.

What of those who have done little if any appropriating; "an impoverished and reckless proletariate"? Green admitted the existence of a vast number of men for whom the right to property was chimerical. Men in such a condition had no opportunity to live the moral life:

> In the eyes of the law they have rights of appropriation, but in fact they have not the choice of providing means for a free moral life, of developing and giving reality or expression to a good will, an interest in social well-being. A man who possesses nothing but his powers of labour and who has to sell these to a capitalist for bare daily maintenance, might as well, in respect of the ethical purposes which the possession of property should serve, be denied rights of property altogether.[34]

An accurate analysis and, on the surface, a fatal criticism of capitalism from Green's perspective. Any developmental view of man requires that all men have property in order to develop themselves. What Green did not see was that the capitalist property institution — the right to exclude others from the benefit of something coupled with the tendency in capitalism for land and capital to accumulate in the hands of a few — prevents most men from every having property in the only sense that means anything: access to the means of labour. Thus Green attributed the existence of a large, propertyless class to the historical setting in which capitalist societies had grown. Through regimes of force and conquest, the landed aristocracy (a favourite liberal *bête noit* had without the expenditure of labour or the results of labour, appropriated virtually all the land in most industrial countries. The result was the creation of a large, landless class, trained in the habits of serfdom, whose members lived lives of forced labour and were unable to develop that sense of responsibility necessary for the growth of the free morality. The industrial proletarait was their progeny. Hence the solution to the

problems posed by the existence of this proletariat lay in the abolition of those landlord rights, traceable to the original conquest, which interfered with the right of each individual to make the most of himself. By and large, save for certain state-imposed restraints designed to prevent land from being made unserviceable to human wants and landlords from creating conditions deleterious to general health and freedom, the answer lay in exposing land as fully as possible to market forces. To that end, the right of entail was to be abolished. By thus making land "a much more marketable commodity," the benefits inherent in capitalism could overcome the disabilities (i.e. the existence of a large, impoverished proletariat) imposed by the antecedent system.[35]

V

Having attributed the problems of industrial capitalism to the feudal distribution of land, Green took to defending capitalism from charges that such problems were inevitable in a market society. All we must do, Green tells us, is to investigate the social outcome of those antecedent conditions and "we shall see the unfairness of laying on capitalism or the free development of individual wealth the blame which is really due to the arbitrary and violent manner in which rights over land have been acquired and exercised. . ."[36] It is true that large accumulations of capital through the market process lead to the employment of large masses of hired labourers, "But there is nothing in the nature of the case to keep these labourers in the condition of living from hand to mouth, to exclude them from that education of the sense of responsibility which depends on the possibility of permanent ownership. . . Therefore in the accumulation of wealth, so far as it arises from the saving by anyone of the products of his labour . . . there is nothing which tends to lessen for anyone else the possibilities of ownership."[37] The remedy for propertyless workers is obvious: they must become capitalists. There is nothing in market society preventing them from doing so and in fact many of them do insofar as they own homes and furniture and participate in benefit-societies. The market process itself is essential if this state of affairs is to come about in that it provides wages to workers — and Green appears to say that wages are a form of wealth similar to profits. Thus, in a sense, Green gives us an early version of the "filter-down" theory: ". . .supposing trade and labour to be free, wealth must be constantly distributed throughout the process in

the shape of wages to labourers and of profits to those who mediate in the business of exchange."[38]

At bottom, Green's rebuke to those who argued that capitalism entailed the existence of a class of men who were reduced to selling their labour power for subsistence wages was that such a position followed from an inaccurate picture of the nature of wealth production. The increased wealth of one man does not mean the diminished wealth of another. He says, "We must not think of wealth as a given stock of commodities of which a larger share cannot fall to one without taking from the share that falls to another. The wealth of the world is constantly increasing in proportion as the constant production of new wealth by labour exceeds the constant consumption of what is already produced."[39]

Green misses the point here, somewhat in the same way as did John Rawls when he attempted to calculate the advantages to the working class wrought by the class inequalities attendent to capitalist production incentives.[40] Given Green's fundamental acceptance of the Utilitarian ontology, this is understandable. In effect Green says that the productive power of capitalism will make possible an ever-increasing flow of material utilities and part of this increase may go to a worker in order to make him "a possessor of property. . .and of such property as will at least enable him to develop a sense of responsibility, as distinct from mere property in the immediate necessaries of life."[41] A flow of utilities beyond that necessary for the renewal of a worker's productive capacities would suffice to moralize him and enable him to formulate and execute a plan of life consistent with fulfillment of the moral ideal. The dictates of positive freedom would thus be realized. But the point is that a man so situated is not free to formulate his own life plan: he must continuously make over his ability to do things and to make things to those who own the means of labour and it is for *their* purposes that he exercises his powers. Given the Utilitarian basis of his thought, Green saw as sufficient for the moral life the fact that all men could appropriate consumables. He did not have to deal with the question of the impossibility of all men being able in a market society to appropriate the capital necessary as a medium for the exercise of their human capacities. He did not see clearly that a system of property relations was also a system of power relations; the issue of access to the means of labour did not pose itself.

Thus for Green, the existence, on the one hand, of the right of all men to make the best of themselves and, on the other, the reality of a class-divided society where those who control land and capital have

vastly greater life-possibilities presented no problem (as it likewise did not nearly a century later for John Rawls and John Chapman). Here Green's refusal to deal with the possibility of social conflict is important. The right to private property, like any other right, is universal: it must exist for everyone if it is to exist for anyone. A man has the right to appropriate (i.e. fulfill himself morally) only so far as the exercise of that right does not interfere with the like prerogative of another. Because the common good admits of no competition, Green did not really foresee any conflict here, so long as the basis in the common good of all rights was clearly understood. This is the key point. Presuming, as market theory does, that each individual is equally free, how can all men make the best of themselves within a class-divided society without there being conflict of rights? We have already seen the answer: the market generates a sufficient flow of utilities so that even the lowliest proletarian may get enough to moralize himself. But why is that sufficient given man's nature as an infinite consumer and given the fact that the market liberates all men's powers of appropriation? Why, especially, is that sufficient given man's naturally invasive behaviour and the fact that the market manifests that behaviour although in a limited form?

The answer, I suggest, lies in an understanding of what is involved in the notion of a "right." A right is essential for the fulfillment of the moral ideal which is the same for everyone. Yet Green not only recognizes but justifies a class-divided society:

> Once admit as the idea of property that nature should be progressively adapted to the service of man by a process in which each, while working freely or for himself, i.e. as determined by a conception of his own good, at the same time contributes to the social good, and it will follow that property must be unequal . . . Considered as representing the conquest of nature by the effort of free and variously gifted individuals, property must be unequal; and no less must it be so if considered as a means by which individuals fulfill social functions . . . those functions are various and the means required for their fulfillment are various.[43]

Since the exercise of rights is dependent on the performance of social functions, (those that contribute to the common good), Green's

analysis, like Locke's,[44] would suggest that there may be different substantive content to rights in accordance with different class positions. Appropriation, remember, "is an expression of will; of the individual's effort to give reality to a conception of his own good."[45] The personal good is inseparable from the common good. Those few who have appropriated much more than all the others in a capitalist society, who control that society's land and capital, must presumably be performing social functions consistent with that extensive ownership. In short, such men must be making greater contributions to the common good than those who have less property; inequality of holdings could not otherwise be justified. In the context of Green's analysis of capitalism Green took such a position. In a manner similar to that of John Rawls, Green justified class inequalities as essential incentives to production: the existence of a capitalist class is the necessary condition for the creation of wealth for anyone, and hence the possibility of individual moralization. Capitalist production is therefore essential if anyone is to realize himself, even an individual without any capital at all. (This is why Green supported "those two great sources of inequality," freedom of trade and freedom of bequest.) If all this is recognized, conflict can be mitigated.

Let us put the issue another way. We have seen that Green explicitly postulated that unequal capacities entailed unequal property holdings. In his system this difference translates into a difference in moral capabilities: those with capital contribute more to the fulfillment of the common good than those without. This assumption is a central aspect of Green's conception of society. Society is based on differing moral capabilities take this to be implied in Green's claim that "It is in fact only so far as we are members of a society, of which we can conceive the common good as our own, that the idea has any practical hold on us at all, and this very membership implies confinement in our individual realisation of the idea. Each has primarily to fulfill the duties of his station. His capacity for action beyond the range of those duties is definitely bounded also by his sphere of personal interests, his character, his *realised* possibility."[46] Society, indeed, ought to make self-realization possible for everyone, but self-realization is within the "confinement" of one's station in life, for such "confinement" is "the condition of social life."[47] In the capitalist market society which Green is writing about and which for him is the good society, one's means of confinement is his class. Although theoretically everyone is "confined," those who own the land and capital are hardly so, as they can determine how society's productive resources will be used and thereby

determine the conditions of self-realization for everyone else.

Since capitalism is necessary for everyone's self-realization according to Green, it follows that the capitalist, within the "confines" of his social position must be performing a "higher" moral function than the worker. The other side of the coin is that the capitalist has a greater capability for fulfilling the moral end than does the man without any capital. The argument is circular: the capitalist is entitled to his property because of his greater moral capability and he has a greater moral capability because of his capital. The argument must be circular because Green does not deal directly with the question of equal access to the means of labour.

VI

Green's most practical political statement was his essay "Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract" wherein he discussed the extent to which the state might interfere with that most hallowed of liberal institutions. The essay demonstrates both the extent to which Green's theoretical analysis was manifested in his substantive political position and the size of the debt owed to Green by modern welfare-state liberals.

Green was no great exponent of state intervention in the social and economic order. In fact, the presumption of his thought was against it, especially in view of his claim that the state could not legislate morality. (This implies more than it would seem on the surface: in essence, property is objectified morality.) Nevertheless, there are circumstances in which the state, as maintainer of the conditions of self-realization, must step in to regulate contracts that would impede the fulfillment of the moral ideal. In the case of "Liberal Legislation," such intervention is on behalf of the dispossessed in the nineteenth century British society, the factory worker reduced to selling his labour for subsistence, and the Irish tenant farmer in somewhat the same position vis-a-vis his landlord. Although, as we have seen, Green took pains to absolve capitalism of any blame for this situation, his acceptance of a developmental view made him slightly uncomfortable about some of the characteristics of market society. He saw, quite rightly, that moralization was not possible for factory workers or tenant farmers, and in effect admitted that freedom of contract may have had something to do with it.[48]

At the same time, Green proposed to do nothing about changing the contractual nature of the social order because freedom of contract, suitably purified, and the market mechanism that embodied it, were essential for the presentation of the moral choices necessary for self-

development. Thus, while the conditions under which a labourer would sell his labour power would be limited to those which make it possible for him to be a contributor to the social good (i.e. minimum welfare standards would be established), he would still be a *seller,* his labour power still alienable. Inasmuch as this is the case, there would still be a transfer and diminution of powers since the labourer would have to pay for access to the land and capital which any meaningful theory of self-realization required him to have. This despite Green's contention, a product of his own developmental view, "that, though labour might be reckoned an exchangeable commodity it differed from all other commodities inasmuch as it was inseparable from the person of the labourer."[49] Once again we are made aware of the limitations of Green's critique of classical liberalism.

From this analysis we may contend that state intervention in order to remove obstacles to self-realization is for Green equivalent to removing impediments to the fullest operation of the market. Inefficient land use? Abolish entail and protect Irish tenant farmers from undue exploitation. Workers require skills in order to enhance production? Pass a compulsory education act. Healthy workers essential to increased efficient production? Pass factory laws and laws restricting the hours of work for women and children. Drunkenness deleterious to the workers' health? Enact temperence legislation. Green was among the first to glean the major insight of twentieth century capitalism: that reasonably healthy, literate, well-fed, well-clothed and well-housed workers not only increase production and therefore profits, but are less likely to engage in revolution. For most everyone else it took a massive depression, fifty years after Green's death, for them to get the point.

We may conclude that Green saw liberal legislation as a device which provided for the conditions within which workers could moralize themselves. Such legislation could help raise them to a material level sufficient to allow them to make the correct moral choices, those choices being determined through the operation of an autonomous market mechanism which expresses human material wants and provides the conditions which allow for the transformation of those wants into objects of the will. Like James Mill, Green wished the working class to be middle class in outlook if not in ownership, (although, as we have seen, Green saw workers as "owners").

VII

It is clear that any critic of capitalist democracy most come to terms with the thought of T.H. Green. Within his premises, he argues his

position quite persuasively and his ideas find expression in some form in the writings of such men as Walter Lippmann and John Kenneth Galbraith. His theoretical analysis was a response to the social conditions which he saw as attendent to and caused by the nineteenth century industrial capitalism and which he also saw as an affront to human dignity. He recognized that the narrow Utilitarian, liberal ontological assumptions which underlay the market had something to do with the existence of those social conditions and saw the need for a much broader and morally satisfying concept of the human essence if those conditions were to be ameliorated. He saw also that if Utilitarian ontological postulates were to be superseded, Utilitarian philosophical premises had likewise to be transcended. To this end he adopted Idealist categories of analysis.

As a result, Green posited a developmental view of man's essence with society as the medium through which men continuously seek to realize their human potentialities and so fulfill the moral ideal immanent in all rational human action. This position he embodied in his view of positive freedom. But, believing as he did in the productive efficiency of capitalism and the justice of the market distribution of income, he felt that self-development could occur only in a market society. Individual appropriation thus becomes the objectification of the moral personality: the market is moralized, fulfilling a purpose broader than that granted to it by Utilitarianism. Thus the issue of equal access to the means of life and labour, which would seem to be implied by any meaningful view of man as a rational, purposive being who seeks to develop his attributes in accordance with his own conscious purposes, is not considered by Green. His belief in capitalism, which necessarily entails the belief in the alienability of labour power and the freedom of contract by means of which that power is to be used in the most gainful way possible (albeit *morally* gainful), places Green firmly in what, following Professor Macpherson, we might call the possessive individualist camp.

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Notes

1. A notable exception is the work of Professor C.B. Macpherson. See his *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford, 1962). My considerable debt to Professor Macpherson's insights will be evident throughout this paper.

2. *Prolegomena to Ethics,* par. 351.

3. See, for example, *Prolegomena,* par. 331.

4. See, for example, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation,* par. 24. Here, Green links a social and institutional analysis with his basic philosophical position.

5. *Prolegomena,* par. 8.

6. *Ibid.,* par. 37.

7. *Ibid.,* par. 13.

8. Cf. *Prolegomena,* par. 345: "The course of man's actions. . .depends on the pleasure and pains that have happened to come in his way, through a chain of events over which he has no control. These determine his desires and versions, which in turn determine his actions and through them to some extent the pleasures and pains of his future."

9. *Ibid.,* par. 218.

10. *Ibid.,* par. 180.

11. *Ibid.,* par. 85.

12. There was one want which Green felt should be suppressed to some degree: the desire for liquor. For reasons I will later suggest, Green was a staunch advocate of temperance legislation.

13. *Prolegomena,* par. 171.

14. *Ibid.,* par. 219.

15. *Ibid.,* par. 341.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.,* par. 338.

18. See, for example, *ibid.,* par. 172.

19. *Ibid.,* par. 337.

20. C.B. Macpherson, "Democratic Theory: Ontology and Technology," in *Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval (Oxford, 1973), p. 35.*

21. As non-substantive as Green's developmental ideal was, it did serve to indicate that he was aware to some extent of the alienation resulting in capitalist society where man is separated from his labour power and from that which his power produces, that power being turned

against him through objectification into a set of social relations which assume an existence independent of human will and which force all men to play determined roles. For Green the aim of philosophy was the articulation of a conception of the world as a rational, coherent universe whose parts manifested in their different ways the same basic principle. This desire for unity was expressed in his notion of the unity of subject and object, and his view that the moral ideal was achieved through the union of will and reason, or knowledge (theory) and practice. This union of theory and practice was an expression of "the consciousness of self and a world. . .in a sense opposed to each other, and. . .the conscious effort to overcome this opposition." *(Prolegemena, par. 130).* The developmental ideal was an expression of "an inward demand for the recognition of a unity in the world answering to the unity of ourselves — a demand involved in the self-consciousness which, as we have seen, alone enables us to observe facts as such." *(Prolegomena,* par. 186). In short, Green saw man as estranged from the world (and from himself), and believed that his philosophical position would indicate the solution. The extent to which Green understood the nature of alienation may be seen from the fact that his analysis of labour, although cursory, indicates that he saw labour as something more than a mere commodity. Yet his acceptance of capitalism prevented him from carrying his analysis through to the point where he saw that alienation could be overcome only if a man exercised his labour power fully in accordance with his own rational, conscious purposes. Labour power in this context could no longer be viewed as alienable (Green still held that it was) and society would necessarily provide for equal access for all individuals to the means of labour.

22. *Prolegomena*, par. 219 (emphasis mine).

23. *Ibid.*, par. 85 (emphasis mine).

24. *Ibid.*, par. 183.

25. *Ibid.*, par. 190.

26. Macpherson, *loc. cit.*, p. 30.

27. *Political Obligation,* pars. 218, 219. Here, Green does not speak explicitly of the greater material productivity to be had by private ownership of land and capital, but of the greater possibility for the development of the "free morality" necessary for the attainment of the common good. Given Green's conceptual framework, however, both positions are virtually the same.

28. Of Green's position, Sabine wrote:

> Green's philosophy attempted to state a moral platform so broad that all men of social goodwill could stand on it. . .It's purpose was to transform liberalism from the social philosophy of a single set of interests seen from the point of view of a particular class into one which could claim to take account of all important interests seen from the point of view of the general good of the national community.

G.H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory* (New York, 1961), p. 737.

Perhaps in the final analysis, however, Green was not totally certain of the inevitability of class harmony. Thus he argues that mutual recognition of a right to private property is inadequate by itself for the maintenance of the right. "This customary recognition, founded on a moral or rational will, requires indeed to be represented by some adequate force before it can result in a real maintenance of the rights of property. The wild beast in man will not otherwise yield obedience to the rational will." (*Political Obligation,* par. 217). Man being naturally invasive, the state, in the best liberal tradition, ought to maintain the rights of those who have property against the invasiveness of those who have little or none. I believe that

Green's analysis implies this view of the state as class instrument because of (a) his belief in the rightness and justice of middle class morality, or, putting it another way, (b) his belief in what I call the differing moral capabilities of men in accordance with their class positions. It is those in the lower class who are least likely to act voluntarily in accordance with the rational will (i.e. respect for the right of property and individual appropriation) and may need coercion.

29. *Political Obligation,* par. 216. Cf. par. 219: "A necessary condition at once of the growth of a free morality. . .is that free play should be given to every man's powers of appropriation."

30. *Ibid.*, par. 219.

31. *Ibid.*, par. 220.

32. *Ibid.*

33. "Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract," in J.R. Rodman (ed.), *The Political Theory of T.H. Green* (New York, 1964), p. 52.

34. *Political Obligation,* par. 220.

35. *Ibid.,* pars. 228-230; "Liberal Legislation," pp. 60ff. Interestingly enough, the closest Green comes to formulating something like a conception of the transfer of powers is in his discussion of the almost feudal relationship existing between Irish landlords and tenant farmers ("Liberal Legislation," pp. 66-68).

36. *Political Obligation,* par. 230.

37. *Ibid.*, pars. 226. 227.

38. *Ibid.*, par. 226.

39. *Ibid.*

40. Cf. Macpherson, "Revisionist Liberalism," in *Democratic Theory,* pp. 87ff.

41. *Political Obligation,* par. 221.

41. See J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, 1973); and J. Chapman," Natural Rights and Justice in Liberalsim," in D.D. Raphael (ed.) *Political Theory and the Rights of Man* (London, 1967).

43. *Ibid.*, par. 223. Cf. *Prolegomena,* par. 191: ". . .it would certainly seem as if distinctions of social position and power were necessarily incidental to the development of human personality. There cannot be this development without a recognized power of appropriating material things. This appropriation must vary in its effects according to talent and opportunity, and from that variation again must result differences in the form which personality takes in different men."

44. Cf. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism,* pp. 221ff.

45. *Ibid.*, par. 213.

46. *Prolegomena,* par. 183.

47. Cf. *Political Obligation,* par. 224 and par. 17.

48. Cf. "Liberal Legislation," pp. 59-60: "No doubt there were many high-minded employers who did their best for their workpeople before the days of state-interference, but they could not prevent less scrupulous hirers of labour from hiring it on the cheapest terms. It is true that cheap labour is in the long run dear labour, but it is so only in the long run. If labour is to be had under conditions incompatable with the health or decent housing or education of the labourer, there will always be plenty of people to buy it under those conditions. . ."

49. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Commentary / Commentaire

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A PHILOSOPHICAL COMMENTARY ON THE CANADIANIZATION OF POLITICAL EDUCATION

Howard Aster

At present, all appears calm, quiet, ordered at most universities in Canada, the United States and in most western European countries. The era of student protest, activism and so-called radicalism seems to have vanished like the flowers of past flower children. The dominant conception of the university today is that of an institution specifically and functionally designed to transmit and produce knowledge, a place where the better informed transmit vital, functional information to the lesser informed. The university is now a technological factory where the finished products are skilled technicians who maintain and develop further the prevailing technologies of society. Today, students are willing to accept this conception of the university partly because we apparently live in a 'no-growth' situation, a 'conserver' society, in a condition of limited access to resources. In order to prosper, one must be familiar with the technologies of the age; in order to succeed, one must develop the skills of 'survival', 'competence' and 'productivity'; the qualities of 'competitiveness', 'success' and 'efficiency.'

What was student protest about? Where have we come from and where do we stand today in terms of education? Does the term education itself have meaning in a situation where society is comprehended as a set of interdependent technological systems?

Education is the process operative in each society whereby one generation is initiated into the civilization of the previous generation. The purpose of education is to practice conversation, to speak a language of a civilization, to develop the quality and character of judgment. A society without a civilized heritage, without a quality of conversation, cannot maintain the character of education.

Today, we have confused education with socialization. Socialization is the collective social process of training a younger generation in the habits, rituals, beliefs and practices of a previous generation. It is acritical, oriented towards extending and defending previous patterns of training — and control — against critical judgment and novelty. It is the process of maintaining habit in the face of change, the manner in which a society extends itself from one generation to the next without

incurring the possibility of breakdown; it is the mechanism of imposing an existing conception of value, or good, upon the next generation. In order to do so, training is vital. Training is the process of acquiring skills and competence in the prevailing social technologies, whether they be the skill of parentage, management skills or even the skills of speech and thought. Training in this sense is similar to bionomics, that is the branch of biology concerned with organisms in their relations to the prevailing environment. The emphasis is upon adjustment, adaptation to a given set of conditions, now known as 'quality control', whereby the organism is adequately equipped to sustain itself in a given environmental situation.

The society we know is increasingly environmentally oriented. It places great emphasis upon the ability of people to adjust, to accomodate themselves to the environment and, also, to adjust the environment to the organism. Adjustment, is therefore a dual process. Training ensures success, that is the ability of the person, or the organism to live in relative equanimity within the context of a given situation. It involves the capacity of the person to acquire skills, through training in information and manipulation so that he/she can succeed in maintaining their existing character within the environmental context. Our society prizes and exalts this bionomic person! Our present educational system in this bionomic situation is, therefore, oriented to this training process.

Our present education system moreover is an extension of the corporate-dominated environment in which we live. We can witness the duplication of the governing structure of large corporations in our universities. The pretense at democracy exists, but persons are ascribed membership in some functionally determined corpus (workers = students, management = lecturers, executives = high-level administrators) and decisions are taken through a process of ritualized, hidden bargaining between these various bodies. The classical liberal-democratic conception of decision-making involving public debate, responsible decision-making, accountability and individual choice is absent. Further, the language of consumerism has overpowered the educational system. At universities, we now hear the language of 'productivity', 'cost-benefit' and 'quality control'. Alas, the instrumental language of vulgar consumerism and the deathly language of technological efficiency has permeated the discourse carried on in the universities.

What has resulted from this system? First, technologically advanced societies have succeeded in destroying the possibility and reality of the sense of responsibility. Tradition, which previously defined the con-

tours of responsibility, has collapsed. The classic notion of "struggle" both for survival and for personal efficaciousness has been emptied of content. The locus of responsibility previously fixed in family kinship and interpersonal relations has been dissolved. The irresponsibility of childhood where everything is "taken" and life is experienced as a "game" now extends into adult life. Life has no orthodox purpose and individuals no longer mature into responsibility. Consumerism or "taking" and the psychological predisposition to playing "games" has become the predisposition of most people. The present educational system socializes one into this environment. We learn the skills of choice between commodities, and cleverness is distinguished by the ability to make good deals; we acquire the skills of playing the "game", learning the rules and how to manipulate them in order to succeed.

How to be responsible? How does one experience today the sense and the agony of responsibility in life? The experience of life with the possibility of the feelings of intimacy, love, friendship, of tradition, of conversation, of discourse, of pain, exaltation, joy, grief has been submerged in the all pervasive character of instrumentality. Today we experience life either as an instrument or as a victim. We all worship the idolatry of utility, and utility corrupted becomes the vehicle for control. If we are trained to 'use' or to be 'used' we exhaust the human experience of responsibility. We no longer consider acts as expressions of human worth and character but we search for the explanations and the excuses of acts; we have sociologized action! People now no longer feel, sense, acknowledge themselves. Individuality, the springboard for thought, has been emptied, submerged in instrumentality. The 'system' has launched individuality into the gutter of history. Responsibility — the basis of conversation, of discourse, of experience — has been dissolved.

The relevance of history, of our own individual past, of culture, and ethnic identities, the relevance of will, purpose, revolt and meaningful individuality seem to be rendered minimal in our present instrumental age. Further, we assure that this instrumentality is a force devoid of specific context, it is an aspect of our age, a consequence of a Hegelianized notion of history where human action is either an accident, or the unwitting servant of some abstracted forces of history. The normal and mundane processes of life and of experience are therefore robbed of their specificity and particularity.

The irresponsibility of human action has led to the end of the possibility of tragedy. We can observe the pervasiveness of the in-

strumental in our arts. We relate, in our arts to terror, violence, obscenity in terms of irresponsible instrumentality. We all relate to the symbols and operations of a tyranical or benevolent technology. Our cultural fantasies reflect the terror and the possibility of machines gone astray, of the loss of control, of the 'game' out of hand. Though we sense the irresponsibility of life, we release our fears in the cinema or the television, we exercise there our doubts and feelings of impotence and we empty our minds and our souls of the experience of responsibility and the seeds of revolt. Devoid of responsibility, of the human capacity for action, we have lost the sense of the tragic. Impotence does not lend to tragedy, it leads to the pathetic.

The third quality resulting from our instrumental age is the loss of the personal. This is indeed a paradox. Today, we absorb information on a global level. Our age is super-saturated with information but is devoid of specificity, of the texture of the concrete, of the experiential in any direct sense. For example, Japanese technology or whatever, becomes part of our own information storehouse and we consume Taiwanese hardware without any racial prejudice. The German Volkswagen and the Swedish Volvo are as much a part of our sensory experience and our suburban character as the American Cadillac. A South African heart transplant, pollution in South America, a bomb in the pacific, the earthquakes in China — through the media, they all become part of our global consciousness and our global information network. Our power, however, has in no way increased with this increase in information. Mentally, the world is now our evocator. Consciousness has exploded; power to effect change, the sense of potency, has decreased. We are all now more alienated from the world. This global consciousness breaks down national and regional standards but it also makes us more alone. We use various rituals to create temporary cohesion and community. We borrow the clothes of the Iroquois, the slang of Harlem, the ethics of our film heroes, the mores of some social clique — and our identity becomes more and more diffuse. We become anxiety-ridden! Our consciousness has expanded, but we cannot synthesize, rationalize, or organize the content of our minds or our experience. We suffer the after effects of an information explosion — shock, resignation, confusion. Action devoid of information is meaningless; however, information devoid of action is nonsense. We are receptacles of information, but have become paralyzed. The fragments of the world are within us, but we cannot act. There is no sensible context for personal action, for personal efficacy, for a sense of personal proportion and dimension, for judgment. We either become meglo-

maniacs, dressed in the latest fashions, hidden behind the veneer of executive power, or else we become whimpering idiots caught in the distorted web of our own expanded consciousness.

Education Reconstituted

To reconstitute education we must have a firm grasp and recognition of our present condition — the loss of the sense of responsibility, the incapacity of the tragic experience and the decadence of the personal. We must also recognize that socialization and training, while necessary processes for organisms and most rudimentary life, are inadequate for the continuation of the human experience. We are not then organisms; we bear the burden and the joy of civilization! The reconstitution of education must, therefore, begin with the unravelling of the burden of our civilization.

"A civilization may be regarded as a conversation being carried on between a variety of human activities, each speaking with a voice, or in a language of its own . . ."[1] It presupposes both the centrality of human activity and the specificity of voice and language. The cumulative character of various human activities, specific and particular as they may be, is a conversation, a form of human interchange based upon mutuality, respect and recognition. Conversation is the reflection, the crystallization, the articulate characterization of the varied human activities engaged in by persons in societies. It is the art of giving shape, dimension, and quality; of providing the voice for that which persons 'do' when they act. Activity without the parallel quality of conversation is merely a mime, a set of soundless movements. It is only when activity seeks its voice through conversation that we can acknowledge and recognize the human element in activity.

Conversation, therefore, provides the mesh and the web of meaning which surrounds us all in the normal context of life and living. It provides the character of place, time, specification and extension from which we recognize the world around us. Conversation is the extension of man from the 'ego' to the 'other', the link between the specific 'self' and the general 'them', the connection between what one senses or feels in an immediate manner and the vast heritage which surrounds us.

A civilization may thus be regarded as the continuous art of conversation whereby the varied, specific, particular human activities, or the deeds and actions of persons, are woven together into some reflexive whole which has shape, character, and form. Conversation is an art like that of the weaver, who takes fibres of specific length, colour and tex-

ture and blends them so that form becomes apparent, rather than immanent. Every civilization requires this sense of conversation, so that human activity in its specific, particularistic character becomes comprehensible as part of a wider, woven tapestry of human endeavour. A civilization devoid of this art of conversation, with merely a set of specific, particularistic human activities, is a civilization without a voice, a chaotic scramble of disconnected 'doers' and 'doings'.

Education is the process of learning the character of a civilization, of being initiated into the activities of a society and their reflections in conversation. It means appreciating the character of 'doing' and 'doers' and, as well, it means cultivating the capacity to weave together these various 'doings' and 'doers' into a coherent form. This can only be achieved through conversation and judgment, the art and practice of which constitutes the basis of education. In this process of learning both activity and conversation, we not only make something of ourselves, but we also add to the civilization in which we participate. Education is, hence, a process of direct participation through activity and conversation in a web of human endeavour. It is both particular, specific activity as well as the practice of conversation and judgment.

It should be clear now how socialization differs from education. The former involves the bionomic practice of information and technique, the introduction of persons merely into the activities and technologies of an ongoing social matrix composed of organisms and their environment. The latter involves the human art and practice of conversation and judgment. The former is repetitive and extensive; the latter is creative and participatory. The former is mechanistic and directed; the latter is precarious and indeterminate.

I have argued that the results of socialization and training have led to the loss of the sense of responsibility, the demise of the tragic and the decadence of the personal. The genuine process of education must restore the sense of responsibility, the possibility for the experience of tragedy and the joy and anguish of the personal to human experience. This can only be done if we recognize the weight and the demands of our civilization as it impinges upon us all.

Today, in Canada, we are faced with a dual task — the genuine reconstitution of our educational system and the explanation of the character of our own civilization. These two tasks are, obviously, interrelated, one entailing the other. The issue of 'Canadianization' is a vital one if, and only if, we understand 'Canadianization' as posing to us the challenge of reflecting upon and engaging in the conversation concerning our civilization. In many ways, the question of exploring the

voices and the languages of our civilization may lead us to the resigned recognition that there is no authentic character to our conversation; that the specific, particularistic human activities — the noises of the 'doers' and the 'doings' — that have resulted from the instrumentality of our age have stifled the art of conversation forever. Or, we may discover that we do not have a civilized heritage in Canada; that we lack an authentic quality of conversation; that our language and our voices are merely parrot calls, sad immitations of British and American forms of conversation. I, personally, do not think this is the case!

To reconstitute our educational system is to explore the character of our civilization, the immediate form of which we experience as Canadians. This is the genuine and pressing issue. It means going beyond the specific and particularistic explanation of those human activities, the 'doings' and the 'doers' located in the geographic area called Canada. Human activity is only one dimension of civilization. It provides the experiential basis out of which conversation emanates. To Canadianize education, we must civilize our own understanding. We must be bold enough to ask ourselves what is the character of our civilization? What are its voices and languages? What is the quality of our conversation? What is the texture and depth of our civilized heritage?

If we pose the problem of Canadianization in these terms we will avoid the shrieks of those shallow Canadianizers who seem to dominate our debate today. We will recognize that conversation, not polemics constitutes the basis for education. We must realize that our civilization does have character and depth, authenticity and texture. It is only through the reconstitution of education as the conversation of our civilization that we can avoid the impaling of our minds and spirits on parochialisms. The conversation of our civilization extends us beyond particularistic human activities and puts us in touch with the art of the weaver, the tapestry of civilized human endeavour. We all participate in the extension of this tapestry; we are all responsible for its quality and its continuity.

The challenge to Canadianize our education demands that we recognize, explore and appreciate the immediate, specific and particularistic character of human activities as they are located and experienced in the Canadian setting. Canadian activities demand, indeed, they crave for specification, identification, exploration, attention. We must be willing to focus our attention on the contextual character of these human activities. But we must do more! We must also provide the voices, the authentic language for these activities. The articulation and

crystallization of these activities into language is the practice of the art of conversation. It begins with the direct experiences of human activities and moves beyond to a conversation about a civilization — that larger backdrop against which human activities play out their parts. It is only in relation to that wider backdrop that we can begin to restore the quality of responsibility, tragedy and the personal to the character of human action. Without conversation about our civilization we will remain objects of instrumentalities, whimpers, devoid of responsibility, tragedy and personality.

Politics can be understood as the public conversation about human activities. Today, in the age of instrumentality, politics is understood as power. Instrumentality triumphant has resulted not only in the corruption of conversation but in the debasement of politics. To reconstitute education would imply the restoration of politics as public conversation about the various and the desirable forms of human activities as they are located in specific contexts. It would also imply the will and the capacity to act consistent with the character of that public conversation. Devoid of conversation, we now collapse into hollow rhetoric, captivated by our own words, corrupted by our own impotence, servants to the idolatry of power. The restoration of politics must begin with an appreciation of our specific human activities, progress to a conversation about our civilization and culminate in the restoration of the authenticity of human action.

The question of Canadianization is much larger than we have been willing to admit until now. Understood in its widest sense, as I have attempted to articulate it, Canadianization is the critical issue facing us. It may turn out that we lack the imagination or the will to appreciate the question. I hope not!

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Notes

1. Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, London, 1967, p. 304.

REVIEWS/RECENSIONS

William Leiss, *The Limits to Satisfaction: An Essay on the Problem of Needs and Commodities.* Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1976, pp. 160. $4.50 paper, $12.50 cloth.

Lives abandoned to the frenzy of our material paradise of purchase and consumption; lives obsessively given to the joyless quest for satisfaction in the midst of objects, fragments of an incomplete whole; such is the ritual of our affluent daily existence so benevolently ordained by fantastic gods and their new political priesthood, all guardians of the sacrosanct market place of desires and commodities. We must examine, interrogate, and judge the quality of our lives and the meaning of the growing materialistic orientation of our destiny. It is imperative that we pause before the gates of the citadel of our affluence and ponder whether we are indeed as blessed as we are told.

William Leiss, a thoughtful, prolific young social thinker does just this in his latest book, *The Limits to Satisfaction: An Essay on the Problem of Needs and Commodities.* The thesis of this attractively slim volume is complex. It deserves careful consideration. Its tentative theoretical character, so intended, and its modest aim — to initiate a new beginning, a reorientation of our thinking about human needs and commodities, could easily obscure its originality as well as the philosophical limitations of its perspective.

My intention here is to present what I take to be the fundamentals of his essay.

Leiss opens his case with the precision of statistical figures which capture the grotesque magnitude of our material consumption. Projections about future consumption hold no hope for moderation. It is in this context that the problem of needs and their satisfaction is raised. Leiss is absolutely correct in claiming that exclusive emphasis on the crucial question of resources, supply and devouring demand misplace the real but neglected problem of needs — their nature and the possibility of their satisfaction.

Leiss insists that the contemporary high-intensity market setting, a novelty to be contrasted to a more limited market economy, under close scrutiny reveals best the problematic character of needs-commodities relationship. It is this setting that Leiss seeks to isolate and dissect,

acknowledging that this mode of inquiry does not suggest that such setting exists in a socio-political vacuum. Its isolation aims at greater analytical clarity. Leiss' thesis is informed by what might be called the strategy of the minimum normative presuppositions regarding the consumer's intentions, actions, desires and thought process. Leiss is adamant on this: the actual, everyday mode of satisfying needs is the key to our understanding of the character of human needs.

This almost pure empiricism permeates the whole study. Abstractions are rejected; theorizing which tends to ascend toward abstraction is shunned politely and with evident suspicion as to its futility. Perhaps it is not an accident that the essay is fashioned after the medical model of inquiry; the essay's three parts are titled examination, diagnosis, prognosis. Though Leiss is not advocating a *tabula rasa* attitude toward the concrete reality of consumerism, he does argue that no *a priori* articulation of a perspective on needs-commodities relationship could grasp reality adequately.

The high-intensity market setting, unlike its less complex predecessor, does not allow a direct relationship between the consumer's needs and the objects sought as means of satisfying those needs. The inherent quality and characteristics of commodities prevalent in less advanced economies is destroyed by the very intensity, fury and diversity of our market setting. More precisely, Leiss is arguing that the "craft knowledge" on the part of the consumer, in the past, furnished the ground upon which an organic experientially validated bond between needs and commodities as individualized, meaningful objects was present. This relational context rendered the choice of commodities purposive and knowledgeable. Commodities, though indispensable, were not regarded as endowed with the exclusive potential to satisfy human needs. Not all human needs were presumed to be under the sway of material objects. A material-symbolic symbiosis was maintained with respect to the needs-commodities nexus. Leiss, here, is not addressing himself to happier bygone days; he is defining a sociological context of pre-modernity against which he can contrast the current prevailing situation.

The market setting emphasized by Leiss, his indispensable empirical, non-suppositional unit, suggests an immense and crucial shift away, indeed against, the past organic, meaningfully confined scope of human concerns with commodities. Now, what Leiss so appropriately calls "craft knowledge" has been lost. The inability of reasonable, ordinary consumers to master the pertinent expert knowledge regarding the technological characteristics of commodities is obvious. Neither the ex-

pertise is there nor is it wise or possible, in practical terms, to consume the necessary time to achieve it. Also such skill, once achieved, cannot serve a lasting function. The continuous revision of commodities demands a corresponding updating of our information about the properties of the new commodities. The obsolescence of yesterday's commodities renders, once again, the consumer ignorant. The consumer's re-education will be nullified by the next ingeniously new, improved products.

This process, in what Leiss calls the jungle of commodities, forces the consumer to surrender to the rhetoric of advertising as a guide to his commodity choices. The structure of the high-intensity market setting — plethora and flux of commodities, absence of craft knowledge, convenience and time considerations, reliance on advertisements — tends to fragment and destabilize the bond between needs and commodities. This results, according to Leiss, in the consumer's psycho-mental confusion. The coherence of human personality is undermined. Commodities are divested of their actual attributes. The consumer relates primarily to collections of characteristics rather than to the goods which possess those characteristics. Leiss utilizes intelligently Kelvin Lancaster's insight about commodities as "characteristics" relations.

The ultimate cultural consequence of all these non-coherent interconnections is that "the high-consumption ideal tends to orient all aspects of an individual's striving for personal satisfaction toward the realm of commodities". (p. 50). This exclusive orientation of needs toward commodities, fetishism, is, inevitably, the source of our inability to find satisfaction. The dualism of commodities, material-symbolic, and the ambiguous character of needing which is associated with it get totally deranged in the grand scale of our market setting.

It is precisely in this context that Leiss claims, equipped with the description-analysis I have summarized here, the imperative necessity of a more rational perspective on needs, consumption, commodities and resources.

Our obsessive consumption should be restricted not because of inherent limits to growth but primarily because it is self-defeating. Quality must be restored where quantity with blind ferocity has levelled everything. Leiss draws out very well the practical consequences of quantitative thinking about needs especially with reference to social policy in general and the welfare state in particular. Furthermore, and this might be Leiss' most original contribution, the restoration of a sensible set of needs and modes of satisfaction warrants the transvaluation of our basic attitude toward nature. A new ecological balance, rejecting

the old anthropocentric perspective, is indispensable. Leiss argues his case here cogently, persuasively and free from any bucolic romanticism. The plea for a new awareness of the environmental impact of our needs, calls for a creative, dynamic perspective regarding both human needs and the needs of non-human nature under the auspices of which the establishment of the conserver society or the steady state would be perceived as a positive event and not as our surrender to brute necessity.

Leiss is excellent on the ecological context of needs. Those are the best sections of his essay and the most challenging.

Leiss argues his whole thesis with conviction, multidisciplinary knowledge and a penetrating single-mindedness. However, notwithstanding Leiss' diligent argumentation and methodical, coherent reasoning, I find the study marred by the refusal to grant to needs an explicitly ontological status, the only normative criterion upon which to evaluate any empirical setting. With the exception of the ecological sections, I remain unpersuaded both by Leiss' assertion that confusion does aptly characterize the mental state of the consumer, and by his rejection of false needs as an inadequate conceptionalization. Leiss examines and rejects various theoretical perspectives on needs (biological-cultural, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, behaviourist, critical — such as Fromm's, Marcuse's). Leiss' own theoretical position, though not entirely agnostic, has affinities with the critical perspective and with Marx's theory of society but it is meant to stand on its own; it is a "negative critical perspective".

To begin with Leiss alludes sporadically to capitalism and multinational corporations indicating that specific and unacceptable conditions are not accidental but the products of intentional decisions. The detailed empirical analysis of the high-intensity market setting tends to show not confusion but manipulation and domination. The rhetoric of advertising and the pseudo-happiness attached to the status of certain commodities suggests to me the intentional reorientation of the human desires. The setting Leiss examines is the labyrinth of commodities prefabricated so as to facilitate the gradual fragmentation of the human personality as the pre-condition of the market domination. The constant revision of commodities is not the result of pure advance in science or technology; it is a conscious policy. There is a direct, complex and profound conflict between the production of commodities in our society and the human interests of the consumer. What actually takes place is the gradual elimination of the human element. Leiss' confused consumer is the dominated individual.

Leiss' impatience with abstraction leads him to unnecessary empirical constrictions. Ontology cannot be determined *a priori* in an artificial,

lifeless fashion in the silence of our study. But the sound and the fury of the market place cannot yield the true vision of ontology unaided. Since ontology is nowhere outside historical time and since historical practice does not exhaust ontology, it behooves us to examine more carefully what is in front of our eyes. And yet we must be able to see beyond for otherwise our ontological utterances would be nothing more than precise descriptions of specific historical moments without prescriptive validity. History offers no exterior archimedean point. Ontology demands a transhistorical vantage point. This point exists in the normative realm of philosophical critique and finds its articulation in the poetic visions and metaphors of the "educated imagination" (N. Frye's elegant term). Ontological presuppositions should not be frozen, fixed conceptualizations rigidly denying all human experience. Delusions and illusions should not be confused with imaginative transcendence.

The consumer's modern fate must be examined, interpreted and evaluated under the aegis of an incomplete ontology. It must be so for it belongs to the future and only a partial vision of it is permitted to those so immersed in the damaged life. Our normative, imaginative pronouncements do not allow a systematic, exhaustive definition of our telos. They do give the human orientation to our life. It is from such orientation that we can reasonably utter our indictment of historical reality as opposed to a human reality in history.

What our eyes encounter is an empirical actuality; but not necessarily what ought or could be. The determination of the distance between the *is* and the *ought* mediated by what *can be* is simultaneously a simple and an abysmal task.

The term false needs refers to a political denial of a potentially other and humanly appropriate quality of life. It refers to a negative transformation of human values and aspirations. False does not mean it does not exist. It exists as a betrayal of the human essence.

Leiss might be right when he suggests that those who subscribe to the notion of false needs complacently rest on their insights as if all our problems have been solved. Indeed asserting the existence of false needs could only be a beginning. An indispensable beginning. The validity of Leiss' dissatisfaction is lost in the excess of his reaction.

My disagreement with Leiss on the ontological prerequisites and the fact of false needs, though fundamental, does not permit me to simply reject or ignore his thesis. It forces me to take it as a challenge. Here I had to confine myself to preliminaries. More must be said about the imagination and the truth of the world. For it is central to my position that such truth is told neither by the episodes of history alone nor by the

mere intensity and logic of our mental activity. The dialectical interpretation, creative transvaluation and humanization of the meaning of our voyage lies beyond any particular method but within the boundaries of dialectical discovery and poetic articulation. Imaginative, comprehensive images of humanity should not be viewed as arbitrary gestures equally valid and therefore, equally futile. It is here that the question of ontology commences rather than terminates. Marx had his images and spoke of freedom. Durkheim had his and spoke of moral authority and discipline. What of humanity, of the quality of life? We cannot begin with a closed, fixed, preconceptualized notion. We cannot begin with the way things are for no particular can give birth to the catholicity of quality. Only from a qualitative perspective can I say that the Labyrinth of commodities is inhabited by a monstrously defaced humanity in quest of the satisfaction of denied, lost desires. To utter this is not to validate it. But it is the only beginning. This is how adventures start: with the eyes open and with a dream. That fools and the educated imagination speak in dreams is not adequate ground to renounce the voice of the imagination. After all wisdom is the ability to discern quality, even in dreams. Fools, in defence of their dreams, would be the first to dispute this.

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Sandor Halebsky, *Mass Society and Political Conflict: Toward a Reconstruction of Theory*. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. ix, 309. $19.95 cloth, $6.95 paper.

Mass Society and Political Conflict by Sandor Halebsky, a sociologist from Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, is another of a by now considerable list of scholarly efforts which have been dedicated to criticism of mass political theory, particularly as that theory is exhibited in William Kornhauser's *The Politics of Mass Society* (1959). It begins with an analysis of the viewpoints of a variety of contributors to mass political theory from Tocqueville and Max Weber to Riesman and Nisbet. One sees here the emphasis upon the presumed rationalization and depersonalization of the social situation as a background for mass behaviour and the absence in its participants of any intimate relationship to class or other intermediate group forms. One is made aware as

well that the exponents of this position frequently imply, as in the case of Tönnies, a looking back to some romanticized past where *Gemeinschaft* rather than *Gesellschaft* relationships prevailed and hierarchies were clearly defined and stable while elites were not intruded upon by non-elites in their decision making functions. Intermediate groups — kinship, community, and religious — were also common in this dreamed-up halcyon past which prevented the full weight of the ultimate organization, the state, from falling on an unprotected individual. Such intermediate group structures are conceived as providing a sense of personal security and nurturance, partly because of the conditions they afford for personal expression, responsiveness, and control. They make possible the maintenance of a sense of membership within a community. Although the purpose of Halebsky's study is negatively to criticize this body of mass political theory, he does an excellent job of presenting it with the intonations and the intentions of its spokesmen.

When he turns to his own purposes, however, the author of this book shows a keen sense for the weaknesses of his adversaries. He displays familiarity with the work of other political and social theorists, such as Pinard and Gusfield, who have preceded him in the task of assailing Kornhauser and his fellows, but he affords a summarizing and integrating view which more than justifies its *raison d'être.* Developments in modern industrialized and urbanized societies, he points out, have not destroyed the strength of intermediate groupings to anything like the extent that mass political theorists usually assume. He refers to studies which confirm the continuing vitality of kinship groupings in the contemporary city. The data that have been gathered do not support a contention of a population troubled by lack of ties. The problem of political unrest and potential support for demagogic leaders among important elements in contemporary society rests not so much with those who are adrift and isolated but depends, instead, on whether there is a lack of any meaningful sense of a means to control one's environment.

The most impressive argument which Halebsky develops against political mass theory is to be found in the central section of his book where he considers the cognitive and rational (as opposed to the emotional and irrational) aspects of radical political behaviour. Dissident politics does not so much represent a response to the alienated character of individuals as much as it reflects the dissident's location within the principal social forms in terms of which the society is structured, the social organization which surrounds him, and the political forms and processes which are characteristic of his time and place. Political forms and processes play an especially significant role, par-

ticularly with regard to the appearance of violence or revolutionary action. They create the timing, opportunity, and spur for action whose potential is principally generated by these factors.

Halebsky proceeds to survey a series of radical protest movements from early peasant and labor agitation to the Nazi movement in Weimar Germany; and he indicates, in each instance, how specific group alliances and completely logical interest orientations have conditioned each extremist response. Granting the preconditions for the social experiences, there was literally no other direction in which the movements in question might have been expected to go. Communist party support, likewise, does not appear to arise from political estrangement or from the absence of ties and the consequent search for community. It also does not arise out of irrational and emotional pique or merely reflect a vague *ressentiment.* While Communist voters may be more disaffected than other groups, this disaffection is based on social realities rather than on character structures. The nature of radical or protest political behavior will be misunderstood, aserts Halębsky, in the absence of attention to its possible class or other interest group character and the broader determining circumstances within which it arises.

Some aspects of Halebsky's work may be repetitive of earlier endeavors but in the eyes of this reviewer even repetition is desirable in terms of the climate of much present opinion which fosters the contention that a primary source of human behavior lies in the realm of the irrational. A major theme running through Halebsky's book is the affirmation, in the face of all such doubt, of the dignity and reasonableness of man as he seeks to come to terms with an often stressful and confusing world. There is also here an emphasis on the broad scope of social factors that both shape the activities of individuals and provide the broader context in which individuals — to evoke the Marxian insight — may create their own destinies.

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Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing: 1900 - 1970.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 300. $12.50 cloth.

In *The Sense of Power* (Toronto, 1970) Carl Berger examined the ideas of Canadian imperialists in the fifty years before the First World

War. Although they were committed to imperial unity he saw their ideas as essentially a species of Canadian nationalism. *The Writing of Canadian History* continues some of the themes of the earier work and makes a substantial contribution to the intellectual history of English Canada.

The body of ideas that Berger now has taken as his frame of reference is that provided by English-Canadian historians who were born, roughly speaking, in the half century before 1914. In the universe of twentieth century English-Canadian historiography, as Berger observes it, there are two levels: the superluminaries — Wrong, Shortt, Underhill, Innis, Lower, Clark, Creighton and W.L. Morton, and the mere luminaries — Brebner, Burt, Careless, Doughty, Forsey, Kennedy, Mackintosh, Martin, Masters, A.S. Morton, Skelton, Stacey, Stanley and Wallace. The former receive close biographical and analytic attention, and the book is really about them.

It is sobering to realise how recent is the writing of history in Canada, and how in the early days of this century there still had to be built up the rudiments of the tools and facilities needed by historians. Archives still had to be assembled, academic journals established and basic documentary sources edited and published. That all this was quickly achieved is a measure of the diligence and enthusiasm of these early historians. The work in particular of Doughty in this regard shows that he was certainly not misnamed!

Seventy years ago universities in English Canada were very elitist in composition. This, combined with the influence of British ideas, (many of the historians in Berger's study received at least part of their university education in Britain) produced a tendency by historians such as Shortt, Wrong and Underhill to see the university as an institution that would produce a widely educated and highly civilised clerisy whose task was to provide the general society with guidance and leadership. And indeed it is interesting to notice the extent to which Canadian historians, like a large number of intellectuals in this country, have played important political roles. Shortt was on the board of conciliation set up under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act and was a member of the Civil Service Commission; Skelton became Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs after 1925; Underhill was the principal author of the Regina Manifesto and in fact declared that the writing of history must inevitably be partisan and political; and, of course, in recent years Creighton and W.L. Morton have assumed a major role as opinion leaders of educated public debate.

It is this 'politicising' of their discipline that is at the back of Berger's

main criticism of English-Canadian historians. They have tended, he says, to write history as if they were contributing to pressing matters of contemporary public concern, especially the matter of national survival:

> All these historians described the past at least partially in relation to what they knew of their present and in terms of an image of what the future should be. They were at times directly engaged in contemporary issues. (p. 260) Canada's historians have all been nationalists of various hues, and sometimes their judgments about what was central to the past and what was peripheral arose as much from divergent conceptions of nationality as from disagreements about interpretations of the same evidence. (p. 259)

Before 1900 conventional nationalist wisdom in English Canada was concerned with the evolution of responsible government within an increasingly co-operative Empire-Commonwealth. Kennedy, Wallace, Wrong and Martin accordingly wrote history in keeping with such a theme. Between the wars, and especially during the depression, there was concern over the economic foundations of society. Not accidentally, Berger argues, this was coeval with Underhill's and Lower's preoccupation with the economic origins of the Canadian community. After 1945 public opinion changed again. The cold war and the Atlantic alliance fostered a concern for free institutions, the dignity of the individual and the collective inheritance of western civilization. As a consequence Canadian historiography became interested in biography, the transplanting of metropolitan ideas and the nation's traditions of democracy and civil liberties.

Berger sustains this general thesis convincingly, though I believe that his description of all Canadian historians as nationalists places much too much weight on that over-used term. There is, as in fact Berger recognises, a large difference between Wrong's and Skelton's views of the role of Canada in the Empire, and between Clark's frontierism and Careless's metropolitanism, not to mention the ideas of even two nominally Tory historians, Creighton and Morton. They may all be concerned with the survival of the nation but they have very different conceptions of the nation that is to survive. Certainly, however, Berger's claim that Canadian historians have been generally unconcerned to ex-

plore the group loyalties of class, region, culture and family is unimpeachable.

Other criticisms of what is basically an excellently written and meticulously researched book are small ones. The last chapter which summarises the general character of Canadian historiography is unfortunately all too brief. In the main body of the work a case seems to be made for the relativity of all historical ideas. The brevity of the last chapter left this reader wondering whether this was indeed the author's intention.

Other social sciences in Canada have often disparaged the 'historical-descriptive' approach of Canadian political history. They seem to mean by this that Canadian historiography has been atheoretical, methodologically unaware and hyper-factual. A reading of Berger's book will convince them of the invalidity of this view. Canadian historiography is rich in theory and speculation, and at times replete with superb literary style. In short it has, with all its faults, produced a highly commendable body of literature.

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HOW NOT TO TREAT OLD PEOPLE

In almost all societies, some people have been moved to observe how strange it is that we have so little interest in the plight of older people; for since most of us will eventually be old, cold prudence itself dictates that we should set a good example for the young by showing concern for the elderly. Lately there has been a revival of interest in the problems of old people, and social policy has reflected this increased concern. But while recent social policy concerning the elderly has grown out of our compassion, shame, and heightened sensitivity, much of it has been immoral and has only made things worse for old people and young people alike. Let us see why.

1. *Reverse Discrimination against the Young.* Consider this simple example of recent social policy concerning old people: in many North American cities, including the small Canadian city in which I live, people who reach a certain age — usually sixty or sixty-five — are permitted to use public transportation at a reduced cost. A "senior citizen" in my city pays less to ride on our buses than a student who must use the buses to get to school. There are, of course, more impressive examples of this sort; for example, last year, residents of Canada who were born in 1910 or earlier were entitled to a personal tax exemption of $1,174. But if we reflect on the case of the reduced bus fare, we can see the main weakness of most of our recent social policy concerning the elderly. For one thing, it involves "reverse discrimination" against the young. There are many thirty and forty-year-old people in my city who are poor, unemployed, handicapped, etc. and yet are required to pay the regular bus fare. On the other hand, many of the seventy-year-old people in this city are wealthy and can easily afford the regular bus fare. What, then, is the rationale behind the social policy in question here? One argument is that older people, being retired, tend to have lower incomes than people in their thirties and forties. Moreover, they have fixed incomes; adjustments in pensions rarely compensate for increases in the cost of living. But if this is the rationale for the reduced bus fare, then wealthy "senior citizens" should not be permitted to ride at the reduced fare, and poor, young and middle-aged people should not have to pay the regular fare. For it is not *age* which is the relevant

criterion here but *ability to pay*. A sound welfare program is one which takes from the comfortable to give to the needy, not vice versa. When a program takes from the needy to give to the comfortable, it is unsound.

The proposition that older people have, as a general rule, less money than young people is a contingent one, not an *a priori* one. I suspect that in many communities — in, say, Florida or California — older people tend to be fairly affluent. But even in those communities where older people tend to be less wealthy than thirty and forty-year-olds, they do not usually constitute the poorest minority group. In Canada, for example, Canadian Indians and immigrants from Pakistan have a lower average income than people past the age of sixty-five. In my city, Italian-speaking people tend to have significantly lower incomes than Anglo-Saxons. But Canadian Indians, immigrants from Pakistan, and people who speak Italian in the home must all pay the regular bus fare, even if they have six children, have a terminal illness, and are unemployed. So defenders of the social policy in question must give us more than just an economic argument. And they can. They can point out that people in all ethnic groups get old, and so Canadian Indians will eventually benefit from the policy. There seems to be an element of "equality" involved here, but the appearance is a deceptive one. First, affluent people tend to live longer than poor people. Secondly, the Indians and immigrants from Pakistan need the money now, when they have young children to support, more than they will ever need it. Of course, politicians in our society have considerable difficulty in selling citizens on the idea of expensive welfare programs. By supporting reduced bus fares for old people while cutting back more important welfare programs, they are guilty of a deplorable "tokenism" which is rooted partly in a concern for what is politically expedient.

In the last analysis, however, the policy we have been considering is rooted more in emotions than in reasons. Most of us are worried about what will happen to us when we are old, even though we usually try to repress these worries. Many of us also feel guilty about the way in which we treated our parents and grandparents and senior colleagues. Our anxieties and guilt-feelings are to some extent mitigated by our acceptance of policies like the one we have been considering. Unfortunately, such policies often tend to degrade old people rather than to indicate to them that we have a healthy respect for them.

2. *The Other Side of the Coin.* Consider now the following case, one which seems to be the opposite case but is actually a similar one. In our society, people in their sixties are usually forced to retire. They are

forced to retire not because of a decline in their competence but because of their age. What is the rationale behind this kind of policy? One argument that we hear is that old people tend to be less competent than younger ones. But if it is competence that is at stake here, why force out older people in those cases where they are more competent than the younger ones who are retained? Another argument we hear is that old people must give up their jobs to make way for younger people who are raising families and need the money more than elderly people. There are several reasons why this argument is unsatisfactory. One is that, as we have already seen, old people are not necessarily all that affluent and may well need the money (at least in some cases). A second is that from a utilitarian point of view, *competence* may, at least at times, outweigh *need* in importance. We cannot always afford to allow talented people to vegetate while second-rate people attempt to do their jobs. A third is that there are ways of coping with rising unemployment which do not require us to discriminate against people on the basis of age. For example, young people can be encouraged to spend more time in university, and the work-week can be shortened to twenty-five or thirty hours.

This case seems to be the opposite of the first one we considered, but it is really only the other side of the same coin, and the proper policy here is not to flip the coin but to dispose of it. Jobs should be awarded primarily on the basis of ability to perform, not age; bus fares should be based primarily on the ability to pay, not age. In both cases, decisions are being based on considerations of age when other categories are more relevant. The first case seems to reflect respect for the aged while the second reflects disrespect; but actually both reflect a disrespect for the aged. In both cases we refuse to look at all of the qualities of old people. We see their age as being a factor so important that it outweighs all other factors — from relative affluence to relative competence. And so in both cases there is an unhealthy kind of discrimination. Certainly old people tend to have certain qualities; they usually cannot run as fast, see as well, etc. But how relevant are these qualities to bus fares, tax obligations, and university lectures? Moreover, it is surely fallacious to infer from the fact that old people *tend* to have certain weaknesses that *all* old people have those weaknesses and to the same degree.

3. *The Proper Social Policy.* Enlightened people have recognized that almost all of the atrocities that have been perpetrated on the elderly have stemmed from a refusal to look beyond their age to their more important qualities. Most of us can see the cruelty of forcing them out of jobs which they are still capable of performing well; and we have also taken a closer look at nursing homes and other facilities for the elderly.

Unfortunately, in trying to correct abuses in this area, we have acted on the basis of the very principle which has led us to mistreat old people in the first place. Rather than treating old people as our equals, we have degraded them by dispensing "charity" in the form of reduced bus fares and tax privileges — even when they neither need nor ask for such gifts. When an old person is sick or blind or senile, he requires special care; but he requires that care because he is sick or blind or senile, ***not because he is old.*** The same care should be made available to young people or middle-aged people who are sick or blind or mentally disturbed.

Most of our so-called "liberal" social policy concerning old people has not been based on this principle. Consequently, we have harmed needy young and middle-aged people by forcing them to support welfare programs which do not substantially benefit the elderly people that they are supposed to benefit. Such social policy can and occasionally does promote hostility to and resentment of the elderly. It harms old people by making it harder for them to assert themselves as creative, productive individuals. Now, it is also worth observing here that a similar kind of unwarranted discrimination harms those at the other end of the age-scale. For many twelve-year-olds are as capable of, say, voting intelligently, as many thirty or forty-year-olds. When they are not so capable, it is not simply because of their age but because of *specific* limitations, e.g., inability to comprehend certain issues. When we reflect on both kinds of unwarranted discrimination, we are forced to conclude that age, *in itself,* should not be regarded as a major factor in the construction of social policy.

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