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Maurice Cornforth's Contribution to Marxist Metaethics

Renzo Llorente

In *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*, Maurice Cornforth set out to provide a comprehensive evaluation of one of the major currents of analytic philosophy from a Marxist perspective. Since its first publication in 1965, however, Cornforth's book has been altogether ignored by left-wing philosophers. While such indifference on the part of conservative philosophers would hardly be noteworthy,¹ the fact that progressive philosophers should likewise have neglected Cornforth's book does appear somewhat surprising, for at least two reasons. First, Cornforth, although not an academic (i.e., professional) philosopher, was hardly a mere amateur. Indeed, A. J. Ayer himself, writing in 1977, said of Cornforth that he was "to this day the only philosopher in England of any standing to have embraced Marxism" (1977, 156).² Second, and more important, the fact is that Cornforth's text remains one of the few attempts to produce a sustained Marxist critique of analytic philosophy.³

At the same time, in light of the development of Marxist philosophy since the mid-1960s, this neglect of Cornforth's work among even radical philosophers proves rather less remarkable, for the most impressive and fruitful work within Marxist philosophy over the past quarter of a century has emerged from the current known as *analytical Marxism*, whose adherents appear to share none of Cornforth's misgivings vis-à-vis analytical philosophy.

Nature, Society, and Thought, vol. 16, no. 3 (2003)

Indeed, the work of G. A. Cohen, the most distinguished exponent of analytical Marxism, in many respects epitomizes the very linguistic philosophy that is the object of Cornforth's critique.⁴

Given the subsequent emergence and consolidation of this methodological reorientation in Marxist philosophy—and I should stress that, in my view, this has been an unequivocally positive development, analytical Marxism representing an immense advance over the Hegelian and structuralist versions of Marxism that had previously dominated Marxist philosophy⁵—it is well to ask, then, why Cornforth's *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* might still merit attention today.

Let me suggest two basic reasons why a reconsideration of Cornforth's work is indeed warranted today. First of all, the fact is that a strong case for reacquainting oneself with Cornforth's book can be made on *political* grounds, for *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* provides an unambiguous corrective to the view, promoted by today's ideological revisionism and abetted by a partisan ignorance, that would have us believe that a project such as Cornforth's, undertaken as it was by a Communist Party intellectual in the mid-1960s, could hardly have amounted to anything more than a sterile exercise in orthodox Stalinist dogmatics. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth, as even a cursory look at Cornforth's text makes clear. Thus his book furnishes a useful document with which to combat at least one form of contemporary anti-Communist calumny.

A second and more strictly philosophical reason for reconsidering *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* is that much in Cornforth's critique of "linguistic philosophy" remains interesting and instructive today (especially given the book's accessibility). This is particularly true of his treatment of analytic moral philosophy, for his discussion constitutes a lucid compendium of the main premises of what we might call a *Marxist metaethics*—that is, those general political-theoretical postulates that (should) guide and inform a Marxist approach to ethical theory and moral thinking generally.⁶ In the following pages I should like to focus on this aspect of Cornforth's work, by way of elucidating at least one aspect of his achievement in *Marxism and the*

Linguistic Philosophy that cannot but be of interest to Marxists today.⁷

Let me begin with what is undoubtedly the central feature of Cornforth's critique of analytic moral philosophy in *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* (and a basic component of what I have called a Marxist metaethics), namely his insistence on the inherent injustice of attempting to universalize ethical norms in class-divided societies. Before reviewing the substance and scope of Cornforth's criticism, however, it will be helpful to say a word about the principle of universalizability and its importance in ethics.

In moral philosophy, or ethics (for our present purposes we may use the two terms synonymously), we say that a judgment is universalizable if, to quote R. M. Hare, "it logically commits the speaker to making a similar judgment about anything which is either exactly like the subject of the original judgment or like it in the relevant respects" (1963, 139, cited in Cornforth 1965, 214).⁸ Put more simply, this principle holds that "what is right (or wrong) for one person is right (or wrong) for any similar person in similar circumstances" (Singer 1999, 941); the mere fact that individuals differ from one another—as opposed to finding themselves in situations that are dissimilar (or being themselves dissimilar) *in a morally relevant sense*⁹—in and of itself never justifies the application of different moral standards or the imposition of different moral duties. Universal applicability is, according to this thesis, a formal feature of all moral principles, indeed, a necessary condition for any proposition or judgment to qualify as a moral principle. While the basic intuition reflected in this criterion was first explicitly developed by Immanuel Kant, we owe the strongest modern statement and elucidation of this principle to R. M. Hare, who is for this reason—and because of his stature as one of the leading figures in twentieth-century analytical moral philosophy—the main target of Cornforth's criticism in the pages devoted to ethics within *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*.

Cornforth does not take exception to the principle of universalizability as such. To the contrary, he, like the great majority of contemporary philosophers, acknowledges its validity, noting that it "is a consequence of the essentially social nature

of morality. . . . [I]t is simply the result of the fact that such principles are enunciated for the purpose of regulating social life” (1965, 235). The problem, argues Cornforth, concerns the contradiction between a demand for, and injunction to, universalizability as the guarantee of fairness and impartiality, on the one hand, and the inherent injustice and unfairness of seeking to universalize moral norms and precepts in class-divided societies. For the insistence on universalizability, save in a situation of rough equality of condition, imposes very different burdens on the agents subject to this demand, and thus proves inherently unfair, a violation of the fundamental moral precept, already formulated by Aristotle, of equality of treatment for equals.¹⁰ As Cornforth puts it, “How, in a class-divided society in which the profits of one class are derived from the labour of another, can public policies and social aims be judged by a criterion of universal acceptability?” (228). Or again, putting the same point a bit differently (i.e., in terms of *interests*): “Until all exploitation of man by man is ended, morality cannot be based on a generalised human standpoint, expressing a common human point of view and interest” (357).

We shall return to Cornforth’s remarks on interests shortly. Before doing so, let us first consider Cornforth’s discussion of the consequences attending the attempt to comply with the imperative of universalizability in class-divided societies. As Cornforth shows, two outcomes are possible. On the one hand, insofar as determinate moral principles are established as universally valid and used to regulate social life, the result is the enshrinement of a system of moral rules that is intrinsically unfair and inevitably class-biased. As Cornforth observes, “Where there are class divisions and one class interest is dominant within the given form of association, the corresponding obligations and rights express the dominant class interest, and the corresponding moral code becomes class-biased, not a code of universal but of class-biased morality” (1965, 354).¹¹ In other words, if class divisions preclude the rough equality of condition necessary for the principle of universalizability to function properly (i.e., impartially), then the prevailing moral code will normally comprise duties, obligations, and so on that favor the dominant classes,¹² since their interests are sure to take

precedence in a situation in which there exist divergent, mutually exclusive interests and they alone possess the economic and political resources to ensure that their interests prevail.¹³

The other possible outcome of striving to redeem or salvage the pretension to universalizability of moral principles in a class-divided society consists in limiting their applicability or operativeness to the private realm (i.e., the realm of individual relations, encounters, interactions, etc.). As Cornforth writes, "that morality reconciles interests supposes that interests are reconcilable. But this is true only within certain limits of individual interests" (225).¹⁴ If this is the only sphere in which, in class societies, reconciliation of interests is possible to a considerable degree, it is mainly because of the *kinds* of interests implicated in our dealings within this sphere: they often do not impinge upon or implicate economic interests—or in any case do not do so directly and immediately—and thus may be largely devoid of the straightforward self-interest and desire for trade-offs characteristic of our activities beyond the private sphere. (It is also the case, of course, that in societies evincing marked social stratification along class lines, people will tend to establish friendships and other significant interpersonal relations with others who are similarly situated in socioeconomic terms and so likely to share many of the same overarching interests regarding society's socioeconomic arrangements and institutional structure.)

Of course, by so restricting the scope of universalizability, the underlying principle is crucially undermined, and the character of morality itself is compromised, as it must forfeit much of its social character. Yet, as Cornforth demonstrates, this curtailing of the scope of universalizability, and morality generally, has a further, less obvious but no less momentous, consequence as well: it in effect divorces morality from politics and, at the same time, establishes an opposition between the two realms and their respective norms. "For practical purposes," remarks Cornforth, this understanding of ethics "turns morals into a system of exhorting individuals to act on one set of principles while the society on which they depend for their health, education and happiness is managed on quite contrary principles" (237).

One might well ask at this point how it is that moral philosophers, writing in good faith, have failed to appreciate that these are the most likely outcomes—the establishment of a class-biased moral code or the partial desocialization of morality—of adhering to the imperative to universalizability within class-divided societies. The answer lies, of course, in the essential abstractness of their theorizing. “The argument from universalisability,” notes Cornforth, “depends on evading any close examination of the actual social condition of mankind, and instead trying to prescribe universal principles of human conduct on the basis of an abstract conception of what Mr. Hare calls ‘men as men’” (1965, 228). Indeed, “the new linguistic analysis of moral reasoning . . . states that human individuals as such are basically identical in desires and inclinations, and that therefore there can be worked out a morality for men as men, prescribing ways of living together, which is absolutely impartial as between particular interests and ideologies and adjusts and reconciles them all” (228).¹⁵ The upshot of such philosophers’ endorsement of the principle of universalizability for class-riven societies bespeaks both a recognition of the intrinsically social nature of morality *and* a failure to appreciate the way in which social, or rather socioeconomic, institutional structures may radically undermine the fairness and impartiality in moral deliberation and the allocation of duties that it is intended to ensure. In other words, *they fail to realize that (appreciable) class inequalities constitute morally significant dissimilarities among agents from different social classes.*

At any rate, while a de facto class bias results from all attempts to apply the principle of universalizability consistently in societies founded upon class divisions, there is, Cornforth argues, an additional form of class bias specific to the ethical theory propounded by Richard Hare,¹⁶ who, as noted above, has been one of the most influential moral philosophers over the past half century, and certainly one of the most representative figures of “linguistic philosophy” in ethics. The basis of this additional source of class bias in Hare rests, argues Cornforth, on Hare’s view of the relationship between *interests* and *ideals*, and specifically the limits that his ethical theory places on the pursuit of ideals. “According to the

[i.e., Hare's] moral argument," writes Cornforth, "the pursuit of ideals is morally justified only in so far as it does not infringe on existing interests" (226). In other words, Hare's theory enjoins us not to pursue (sociopolitical) ideals which may threaten others' interests. However, if, as Cornforth plausibly contends (in effect restating a basic Marxist premise), "ideals in the sense of social aims are always, if they count for anything, reflections of social interests, and primarily of class interests" (226)¹⁷—that is, if most ideals *qua* social objectives normally are shaped by and correspond to class interests—then this injunction in effect amounts to a moral prohibition against the pursuit of any ideals that threaten, or merely deviate significantly from, the prevailing aims and values. (Insofar as the latter have already been attained or realized, they cease, in one basic sense at least, to be ideals,¹⁸ and, in any case, their adherents need not actively pursue or advocate their acceptance because they already constitute the dominant values.) In short, if "social ideals are in fact tied with interests," then "it follows once again that the moral reasoning is rather heavily biased on the side of the social *status quo*" (226). Correlatively, the only ideals whose pursuit is sanctioned are those that reflect *all* interests—Cornforth lists the examples of theft, cruelty, and the initiation of nuclear war¹⁹—and within a class society this set of interests will naturally exclude all aspirations that have any connection with alternative forms of socioeconomic organization. So it is that Hare's theory goes one step further in implanting a class bias in "mainstream" ethical theory and in ensuring that the ruling ideas will indeed continue to be those of the ruling class.

As the foregoing remarks should make clear, the crucial, underlying defect that Cornforth identifies in his critique of analytic moral philosophy, whether discussing moral philosophers' treatment of the principle of universalizability or Hare's more specific views on interests and ideals, is the *abstraction* from socioeconomic and historical circumstances characteristic of this approach to ethics.²⁰ This characteristic abstractness is likewise the source of a second, and more general, shortcoming elucidated by Cornforth's critique, namely the (ahistorically) individualist presuppositions informing the analytical approach to ethics. It is

a criticism that anticipates, in a very general way, a similar vein of criticism developed by left-wing philosophers in response to the publication of John Rawls's immensely influential *A Theory of Justice* in 1971,²¹ and for this reason alone worth mentioning briefly.

Cornforth's basic claim in this connection concerns the attempt—typical, he argues, of the method employed by linguistic philosophers—to derive socially or universally valid moral norms from those that serve individuals in their private, locally circumscribed dealings:

The individualistic way of posing moral questions . . . assumes that once having worked out principles of what each individual ought to do, all moral questions are by implication answered. . . . On this assumption Mr. Hare concluded that the same principles which work in private life when individuals respect each other's interests are equally applicable in public affairs. (236)²²

As suggested above, the error of proceeding in this fashion lies in the failure to realize that “the human relationships and conflicts of interests and aims which arise in public life are of a different order from those affecting people in their private lives” (236). In fact, to the extent that there does exist an affinity between the two classes of norms, Hare's account, according to Cornforth, *inverts* their actual relationship, envisaging socially valid precepts as though they were derived from those that ought to regulate individual practices and not, as is in reality the case, the other way around. That is, Hare and others who seek to derive universal moral duties from individual duties fail to recognize:

that logically, conceptions of people's personal duties follow from conceptions of what sort of social organization they ought to maintain, and not the other way round; [and this] follows from the consideration that the use of language to utter moral imperatives is not a use whereby each individual decides for himself how to regulate the action of his own free will, but is a use whereby individuals associated

in society state principles for carrying on their social life. (1965, 238–39)²³

Those who reason in this fashion fail, then, to gauge, in this respect too, the full implications of the essentially and irreducibly social nature of morality, substituting thoroughly ahistorical individualist foundations for properly social ones.²⁴

Up to now I have discussed only the critical aspects of Cornforth's treatment of moral philosophy in *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*. I should like to conclude by discussing briefly one of the positive, constructive results that emerges—often in a merely implicit fashion, to be sure—from Cornforth's analysis. The conclusions I have in mind bear on the general approach to ethical problems defended by Cornforth and his suggestive, if incomplete, account of the relation between ethics and politics as understood from a Marxist viewpoint.

Regarding his general conception of moral reasoning and methodology, Cornforth maintains, as we have seen, that norms for individual conduct should properly be derived from—that is, should be conceived as dependent upon—logically antecedent choices concerning the sociopolitical structure of society: “In practice and in logic the answers to questions about the rights and wrongs of personal behaviour depend on the answers to questions about the rights and wrongs of social organisation” (238).²⁵ In other words, “People in society cannot but regulate their affairs by judgments answering the question ‘What should we do?’ and the answers to questions ‘What should I do?’ are consequent on these” (233).²⁶ In this connection, Cornforth points out that in the case of “socially controversial questions”—he gives the example of choosing whether or not to strike (233)—one's position, and hence the duties one assumes, will be determined mainly by one's view as to whether or not the existing form of social organization ought to be preserved (more or less as it is), i.e., will depend on one's answer to this previous question. (That conceptions of personal duties have indeed varied with different forms and conceptions of social organization is undeniable, as Cornforth points out in the course of defending this claim [238].)

As for a Marxist conception of the relationship between ethics and politics, Cornforth's account defends a radical attenuation of the separation of politics and ethics that characterizes the thinking of linguistic philosophers, and that leads them to posit, or in any case accept, one system of normative principles for public policies and affairs and another for transactions within the realm of personal affairs. In Cornforth's view, Marxists should reject this dichotomy not only because of the incoherence that it yields, as already discussed above. Over and above this shortcoming is a decisive political justification: "The divorce which some have made between political questions on the one hand, and moral ones on the other, is totally alien and contradictory to the scientific socialist conception of human ends. This kind of separation, indeed, has no place in socialist political theory, but was made in the political theory of exploiting classes" (361–62). While Cornforth neglects to offer any elaboration in this regard, the principal way in which this separation functions as a tool of class domination is not difficult to fathom: insofar as there exists this cleavage between moral and political questions, normative ethical considerations become illegitimate in, and foreign to, politics, and all consideration of truly universalizable moral canons is foreclosed.²⁷

These are a few of the most important aspects of Cornforth's critique of analytic moral philosophy presented in *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*. As will, I think, be clear, what I have called Cornforth's contribution to Marxist metaethics lies not so much in any original theoretical developments as in his having provided, first, a clear exposition of a Marxist approach to moral reasoning and, second, having earnestly engaged with, and responded to, analytic philosophy from this perspective (rather than simply limiting itself to a dogmatic restatement of Marxist thought). While *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* may prove less than wholly successful in its attempted critique of analytic moral philosophy, let alone its critique of linguistic philosophy as such,²⁸ its lucid, relatively nondogmatic exposition and updating of Marxist philosophy was an impressive achievement in 1965, and one for which we ought to remember Cornforth today.

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NOTES

1. Indeed, given the hostile reaction of many Anglo-American philosophers to Ernest Gellner's earlier non-Marxist critique of linguistic philosophy in his *Words and Things* (published in 1959), such indifference was perhaps to be expected.

2. While one can hardly dispute Ayer's appraisal of Cornforth's professional competence, his knowledge of the state of Marxist philosophy in Britain at the time was clearly deficient: witness the fact that a number of major works on Marx and Marxism, including G. A. Cohen's masterpiece, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence* (2001 [1978]), and the four-volume *Issues in Marxist Philosophy* (Mepham and Ruben, 1979–81), appeared in the late 1970s. In any event, in a contemporary review of *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* nine years earlier, Frederick C. Copleston, the well-known historian of philosophy, expressed a very similar view: "There are very few Marxist philosophers in this country. And, as far as I know, Mr. Cornforth is the most competent of them" (1968, 16).

3. Perhaps the closest thing to Cornforth's undertaking is Alex Callinicos's *Marxism and Philosophy*, published in 1983. Oddly, Callinicos completely ignores *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*, despite its obvious relevance to the themes he addresses and the dearth of other works devoted to these themes. For another, brief critique of analytic philosophy that displays some affinities with Cornforth's book, see chapter 7 of Herbert Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* (1964).

4. See Cohen's "Introduction to the 2000 Edition" of *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence* (2001), especially pages xx–xxii, for a brief account of his embrace of, and commitment to, analytic philosophy. In any event, Cornforth's strictures against analytic philosophy notwithstanding, he himself acknowledges the virtues and contributions of linguistic or analytic philosophy on numerous occasions in *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* (for representative passages see, for example, pages 12 and 263). Moreover, the book employs a style of exposition and argumentation that analytical philosophers would not find wholly uncongenial.

5. Paraphrasing Michael Dummett's remark that "it is undoubtedly true that the overthrow of Hegelianism was a precondition of advance in philosophy" (quoted in Callinicos 1983, 3), one could say that the overthrow of Hegelian *Marxism* was undoubtedly a precondition of advance in *Marxist* philosophy (no doubt because the latter is but a special instance of the general rule). It is interesting to consider in this light G. A. Cohen's claim that "once . . . (as we may designate it) pre-analytical Marxism encounters analytical Marxism, then it must either become analytical or become bullshit" (Cohen 2001, xxvi; Cohen explains, and briefly defends, this claim on pages xxv–xxvi).

6. Metaethics may be understood as "the philosophical study of the nature, justification, rationality, truth-conditions, and status of moral codes, standards, judgments and principles, abstracting from their specific content" (Copp 1992, 790). The hallmark of what I am calling a Marxist metaethics is its insistence on the socioeconomic conditioning of, and constraints on, moral principles, standards, and so on, as well as their justification.

7. While this aspect of Cornforth's work is of considerable interest in its own right, it proves that much more interesting in light of what we might term the "ethical turn" within recent analytical Marxism, i.e., the increasingly central concern with fundamental normative issues evinced by many of its leading practitioners. (G. A. Cohen's work over the last decade is perhaps the most notable example of this trend.)

8. Marcus Singer, another influential writer on universalizability, formulates this principle—which he calls the *Generalization Principle*—as follows: "A particular judgment of the form 'A is right in doing x' is said to imply that anyone relevantly similar to A would be right in doing any act of the kind x in relevantly similar circumstances" (1999, 941).

9. Of course, one still has to determine which similarities and dissimilarities are "morally relevant." As a starting point and general guide, William Frankena's answer proves helpful: "Those that are relevant are the ones that bear on the goodness or badness of people's lives, for example similarities or dissimilarities in ability, interest, or need" (1973, 51).

10. For Aristotle's discussion, see book 3, section 9 of his *Politics* (1984).

11. It is worth noting that, in this respect, Cornforth anticipates one of the objections that some left-wing philosophers would subsequently raise against John Rawls, following the publication of his *A Theory of Justice* (1971). Kai Nielsen articulates this objection as follows: "What Rawls utterly fails to consider is whether placing on the dominated classes a commitment to keep the social contract, to assume certain natural duties and political obligations, will not in reality work against their interests and support instead the interests of the dominant classes. . . . That there is either a universal or moral basis for mutual respect across classes, cannot, unless it is given a very circumscribed reading, simply be assumed as unproblematic" (1982, 233).

12. It is not surprising, therefore, that various methods and varying degrees of coercion are needed to ensure that members of the subordinate classes comply with such a code. As Cornforth observes, "where class interests are in conflict, and where also the private interests of individuals are in conflict with proclaimed social obligations, it is impossible that any obligations should be generally fulfilled or rights respected without being in some measure enforced. Consequently, the assertion of obligations and rights, necessary in human association, has to be effected by socially organized means of moral exhortation, persuasion and pressure backed by physical coercion and the exaction of penalties" (1965, 354).

13. It follows, then, that Marxists should be suspicious of any insistence on a (synchronic) transclass universalization of moral precepts. I stress this point because I believe that it is less obvious, or at any rate more often forgotten, than the fact that—as most Marxists are well aware—historical materialism proves incompatible with another, related attempt at universalization, namely the *trans-historical*, or what we might call *longitudinal*, universalization of moral principles. John McMurtry puts the latter point well: "Historical materialism precludes the universalizability of prescription which morality by its very nature entails. Thus, for example, Marxian theory regards slavery as progressive in one historical context (if the old alternative was to kill captives for lack of food to keep them),

but depraved and inexcusable in another (e.g., in the United States of Lincoln and Lee). Morality proper, on the other hand, demands universalizability of what it prescribes as a formal property of its being morality. The position must be, slavery is always wrong everywhere, or it is not in principle a moral position at all" (1981, 183). For a briefer statement of the same idea, see Cornforth (1965, 242).

14. Cf. Cornforth (1965, 228): "The fact is that the prescriptions of liberal morality universalise admirably for the sphere of what may be called private life, and likewise for the purely administrative sphere of public life."

15. This tendency in much of "mainstream" ethical and political theory also works to the detriment of women's interests, of course, as feminists have rightly pointed out.

16. Which is to say, there are two ways in which Hare's theory proves class-biased—as a theory which insists on universality even in class-divided societies, and by virtue of his view of the relationship between *interests* and *ideals*, which I discuss presently. Actually, insofar as the uses of *language* itself reflect and legitimate a social order designed to serve the interests of the dominant classes, one might well argue that there are in fact *three* ways in which his theory contains such a bias. Indeed, Cornforth himself mentions this problem, if only in passing: "To think better about moral or any other questions cannot be done with no other aid than describing the actual uses of language and stating only what everyone admits" (244). In his *One-Dimensional Man*, Marcuse addresses the same problem in criticizing analytic philosophy as a whole (1964, chap. 7).

17. From which it follows that if interests are not reconcilable, then ideals will not be reconcilable either.

18. That is, they cease to be "ideals" in the sense in which "ideal" is roughly synonymous with "aspiration." An "ideal" may also, of course, denote a guiding norm or model whose attainment or realization is impossible in practice, but this sense of "ideal" is not relevant here.

19. "Generally speaking, moral judgments reflect interests. And naturally, when there exists a fair amount of agreement on the desirability or otherwise of certain kinds of action (for example, theft, or cruelty . . . or . . . starting a nuclear war) that is because those kinds of action appear desirable or undesirable from the standpoint of all or at any rate most interests" (Cornforth 1965, 240).

20. No doubt it would be more accurate to say that the problem is one of *overabstraction*, inasmuch as some level of abstraction is of course necessary and inevitable in the elaboration of any sort of social or ethical theory.

21. For a useful, if dated, overview of these and other left-wing criticisms of Rawls, see Nielsen 1982.

22. Cf. 231: "They arrive at individualistic answers because they ask individualistic questions."

23. Cf. 239: "The universalisability of moral judgments, on which Mr. Hare's account of moral reasoning hinges, is a consequence, as I have already noted, of the essentially social nature of morality. Mr. Hare, however, treats each individual as if he existed as an individual person independent of society."

24. It is worth noting in this connection that Cornforth's discussion also refers, albeit very briefly, to that process Jon Elster would later term "adaptive

preference formation”—that is, the exogenous determination of individuals’ preferences, a phenomenon which he brilliantly analyzes in his book *Sour Grapes*. For some of Cornforth’s remarks, see pages 230 and 242 of *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*. Kai Nielsen discusses the ways in which this phenomenon appears as an “ideological premise” in Rawls’s work (Nielsen 1982, 235–36).

25. Cf. 240: “The primary moral questions, on which all others depend, concern the desirability of different forms of social association. And with these moral reasoning has to begin.”

26. Cf. 236: “The key questions to decide in moral argument are, then, not individual questions but social. Before people try to work out ‘on what principles should I act?’ they should give some consideration to the question ‘on what principles should we act?’”

27. In one respect, Cornforth’s whole discussion plainly recalls the theses that Marx develops in “On the Jewish Question” (1975). At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that Cornforth’s account concentrates as much on the moral divisions, so to speak, within “civil society”—to the extent that this category, which Cornforth does not employ in his treatment of analytic ethical theory, is applicable in his account—as on the contradictions between one’s identity as a member of civil society and one’s identity as a citizen of the state.

28. Copleston discusses some of the philosophical shortcomings of Cornforth’s critique, while also acknowledging some of its achievements and giving Cornforth his due as a philosopher in “Words and Marx” (1968), an early review of *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*. Contemporary Marxist philosophers, on the other hand, would probably be most likely to take issue with some of the utopian elements in Cornforth’s exposition of communist objectives (see, e.g., page 356), as well as the generality, or rather lack of detailed analysis, which characterizes some of his objections to “the linguistic philosophy.”

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Applying Dialectical Materialism

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For textbook purposes, Marxist philosophy is commonly divided into dialectical materialism and historical materialism, and historical materialism is often said to be the application of dialectical materialism to history.¹ However, I do not exactly wish to oppose this tradition today. I do wish to qualify it in a major way, and then qualify the qualification.

Historical materialism is an empirical science. What, in general, does any empirical science learn from dialectical materialism? On the score of materialism, it learns to look to nature for objective explanations of all phenomena, to seek out their objective causes located in time and space and connected with those results by way of “mechanisms” proceeding through time and space from the one to the other. What dialectics teaches scientific research is to look for interconnection and change everywhere, to distrust any so-called “eternal laws” that could, logically speaking, break down at any time but supposedly never do, and to find objective contradictions, transformations of quantity into quality and vice versa, and instances of negation-of-the-negation everywhere. Some would-be Marxists or neo-Marxists used to make a point of decrying the dialectics of nature, but the dialectics of nature was not in fact their real target. Their real basic objection, arguably, was, on the one hand, to philosophical materialism’s insistence on the existence of scientifically knowable objective reality and, on the other hand, to the dialectical principle of

universal interconnection, of which cause-and-effect determinism is an immediate corollary.

There is not time to defend these two tenets of scientism here, but, assuming them, we are led to wonder if historical materialism can be considered any more an application of dialectical materialism than any other empirical science is—for example, any more than Darwinism is an application of dialectical materialism to biology or special relativity theory an application of dialectical materialism to physics. That was the qualification which I said I would be proposing to the textbook story that historical materialism is the application of dialectical materialism to history. Now for the qualification of the qualification.

Historical materialism, as any textbook will tell you, teaches that the main features of a society's politics, law, religion, art, and so on are determined in the long run by the forces and relations of production predominating in that society. Hostile critics have objected that, as far as this goes, the *long run*—the determining “last instance”—need never actually arrive. But the objection is captious. Given capitalist productive relations in England or Japan, how many centuries must have passed before the feudal-type culture in those two countries would be replaced by a predominantly bourgeois culture? Not too many.

Today I think we ought to spend more of our time looking at the question which of a culture's features are to count as its “main” features and which are not. Take religion, for example. Compare Japanese religion and Italian religion. The two countries are roughly comparable when it comes to their forces and relations of production. As far as religion goes, however, there are both obvious similarities and obvious dissimilarities. According to historical materialism, the similarities ought to outweigh the dissimilarities, either now or pretty soon. Comparing present-day Italy and thirteenth-century Italy, on the other hand, we find altogether different forces and relations of production, and so the dissimilarities ought to outweigh the similarities as between thirteenth-century Italian religion and contemporary Italian religion, according to historical materialism.

But does present-day Italian religion really resemble present-day Japanese religion more than it resembles thirteenth-century

Italian religion? When it comes to the attitude taken toward business or the family, there are striking resemblances between contemporary Italian and Japanese religion, resemblances with respect to which they both contrast with the attitude taken toward business and the family in thirteenth-century Italian religion. On the other hand, there is an obvious resemblance between present-day Italian Catholicism and thirteenth-century Italian Catholicism when it comes to the theological doctrine of the Trinity, but there is nothing at all like that in present-day Japanese Buddhism or Shintoism. According to historical materialism, therefore, something such as the attitude taken toward business or the family should be more important—at any rate more important in people's lives—than theological tenets like the doctrine of the Trinity. But is it really more important?

By what objective criterion can it be determined if something like the attitude taken to business or the family really is more important than something like the doctrine of the Trinity? Who is to say? It is here that recourse to dialectical materialism is in order. According to dialectical materialism, there is no God (a conclusion amply borne out, it is claimed, by all the evidence of flood, fire, famine, plague, pestilence, and drought, for a start). If there is no God in fact, then Trinitarianism as opposed to unitarianism, polytheism, and pantheism is going to be an issue in itself of relatively little importance. So this consequence of historical materialism can be unproblematic, given dialectical materialism.

It appears, thus, that the claims of historical materialism do depend, after all, on the conclusions of dialectical materialism in a specific way that is not paralleled in all the other empirical sciences. If it really is too much to say, more than for all other empirical disciplines, that this association makes historical materialism constitute the application to its own field of study of the philosophical science of dialectical materialism, nevertheless we are forced at least to qualify our previous qualification of that traditional catch-phrase.

The present paper was read on 20 February 1998 to a conference organized by the Institute of Philosophy in Havana to mark the 150th anniversary of the Communist Manifesto. Cubans at the conference explained that this formulation

of the relation between dialectical materialism and historical materialism had come under strong criticism there in recent years.

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The Self-Organization of Matter

Christian Fuchs

Matter and substance in dialectical materialism

Fredrick Engels formulated some theses of a dialectical philosophy of nature that remain very topical today:

- “The real unity of the world consists in its materiality” (1987a, 41).
- “The basic forms of all being are space and time, and being out of time is just as gross an absurdity as being out of space” (1987a, 48–49).
- “*Motion is the mode of existence of matter. . . . Matter without motion is just as inconceivable as motion without matter. Motion is therefore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself. . . . Motion therefore cannot be created; it can only be transferred*” (1987a, 55–56).
- The human mind is the highest product of organic matter (1987b, 335; 1990, 369).
- “Nature does not just *exist*, but *comes into being and passes away*” (1987b, 324); it “has its existence in eternal coming into being and passing away, in ceaseless flux, in unresting motion and change” (327).
- Matter is “eternally changing, eternally moving, . . . we have the certainty that matter remains eternally the same in all its transformations, that none of its attributes can ever be lost, and therefore, also, that with the same iron necessity that it

will exterminate on the earth its highest creation, the thinking mind, it must somewhere else and at another time again produce it” (1987b, 335).

- Nature forms a system, an interconnected totality of bodies that react on one another; this mutual reaction constitutes motion (1987b, 363).
- “The basic form of all motion is approximation and separation, contraction and expansion—in short, the old polar opposites of *attraction* and *repulsion*” (1987, 364). This can today be interpreted in such a way that all forms of matter are in continual motion; they produce chaos, and they also produce order from chaos, and hence higher levels of organization. The dialectic of attraction and repulsion is a description of dynamic movement that produces emergent qualities on higher levels of organization.
- “Matter is nothing but the totality of material things from which this concept is abstracted. . . . Words like matter and motion are nothing but *abbreviations*,¹ in which we comprehend many different, sensuously perceptible things according to their common properties” (1987b, 515). Matter is an abstraction in the sense that we abstract from the qualitative differences of things and combine them as physically existing in the concept of matter (533–34).

Matter is the totality of objects that constitute reality and is itself constituted in space and time by an interconnected totality of bodies that react on one another (motion)—that is, they repulse and attract each other. Motion is the mode of existence of matter in space-time. Matter is an eternal process of becoming and passing away, a ceaseless flux; it is uncreatable and indestructible. Matter is the totality of objective, really existing systems that are interconnected and subject to different physical laws. Matter develops dialectically, and this development produces various forms of matter that have emergent qualities that distinguish these different forms. Matter can exist independently of human consciousness. Consciousness is not a necessary result of the development of matter, but it has historically emerged from it. As an activity of the thinking brain and as part of the human being, it thus forms part of a specific organizational level

of matter that we can term the level of human beings. The material unity of the world means that the motion of matter results in a natural hierarchy of relatively autonomous forms of movement of matter, where each level has new, emergent qualities that cannot be reduced to lower levels or an assumed primary form. Time is an expression of the irreversible changing state of matter. Movement in time means movement in space and vice versa. Both space and time express the permanence of change that is a fundamental property of matter. Matter permanently organizes itself and produces an irreversible sequence of states.

Attraction and repulsion are the essence of matter (Hegel 1973, §§97f); as polar opposites they are “determined by the mutual action of the two opposite poles on one another, . . . the separation and opposition of these poles exists only within their unity and inter-connection, and, conversely, . . . their inter-connection exists only in their separation and their unity only in their opposition” (Engels 1886a, 357).

Energy is the measure of the capacity of a physical system to undergo change (Marquit 1980); it is an attribute of matter. Energy is not something external to matter, but is inherent in matter. Physical conceptions, such as Heisenberg’s conception of the field as the source of particles, the assumption of quarks as elementary particles, etc., show that the source of existing forms of matter is itself material and that the unity of the world is its materiality (Hörz 1976).² In contrast to dialectical materialism, mechanical materialism has been invalidated by modern physics. Dialectical materialism’s assertion that the world is in constant flux and process is continually borne out. The basic hypotheses of Marx and Engels about the dialectics of matter still remain topical. Complementarity does not mean a dualistic, but a dialectical, relationship of wave and particle.

Energy and information do not exist outside of, nor are they external to, matter; they are specific aspects of the movement and development of matter and as such are integral aspects of the world.

The Middle Ages were dominated by a religious conception that considered matter as a creation of God. This was questioned

by pantheistic conceptions such as that of Giordano Bruno, who considered God as an eternal force immanent in nature. The Newtonian worldview was characterized by its belief in the absolute immutability of nature and a reductionist methodology. Nature was considered as a conservative system that remains stable from its beginning until its end. Organic matter was reduced to mechanics. French materialism of the eighteenth century (La Mettrie, Holbach, Diderot, Helvétius, Condillac, d'Alembert, Condorcet, Bonnet, Robinet, Laplace) as well as the "mechanical" materialists (Engels 1990, 369) of the nineteenth century (Moleschott, Büchner, Vogt) were influenced by this worldview. The human being was considered a machine, and the universe was not comprehended "as a matter undergoing uninterrupted historical development" (390). Relatively autonomous objective systems with higher forms of motion were reduced to mechanical ones.

Marx and Engels, as well as Hegel (the latter remained trapped in irrational thinking, although he revolutionized philosophical methodology), were highly critical of the Newtonian worldview. They emphasized interconnection and processes instead of singularities and reduction. Hegel criticized atomistic philosophies by saying that they fix the One as One, "the Absolute is formulated as Being-for-self, as One, and many ones." They do not see that the One and the Many are dialectically connected: the One is being-for-itself and related to itself, but this relationship only exists in relationship to others (being-for-another), and hence it is one of the Many and repulses itself. "But the Many are one the same as another: each is One, or even one of the Many; they are consequently one and the same. . . . [A]s those to which the One is related in its act of repulsion are ones, it is in them thrown into relation with itself. The repulsion therefore has an equal right to be called **Attraction**; and the exclusive One, or Being-for-self, suppresses itself" (Hegel 1973, §§ 97–98).

Marx and Engels, in criticizing Max Stirner's reductionism and individualism, put forward the notion of the individual as a social being that is estranged in capitalism and can only become a well-rounded individual in communism (1976, 117–427). Engels criticized the reductionism and individualism of "metaphysical thinkers":

To the metaphysician, things and their mental reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, are objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all. He thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses. "His communication is 'yea, yea; nay, nay,' for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" [Matthew 5:37—Ed.]. For him a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another, cause and effect stand in a rigid antithesis one to the other. (1976a, 22)

HARD AND FAST LINES are incompatible with the theory of evolution. . . . For a stage in the outlook on nature where all differences become merged in intermediate steps, and all opposites pass into one another through intermediate links, the old metaphysical method of thought no longer suffices. Dialectics, which likewise knows no HARD AND FAST LINES, no unconditional, universally valid "either—or" and which bridges the fixed metaphysical differences, and besides "either—or" recognizes also in the right place "both this—and that" and reconciles the opposites, is the sole method of thought appropriate in the highest degree to this stage. (1976b, 493–94)

Self-organization theory today also stresses the interconnectedness and process-structure of the world and criticizes reductionism. Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers, the founders of dissipative systems theory, stress that Hegel, Marx, and Engels are important process-thinkers in this regard: "The Hegelian philosophy of nature systematically incorporates all that is denied by Newtonian science. In particular, it rests on the qualitative difference between the simple behavior described by mechanics and the behavior of more complex entities such as living beings. It denies the possibility of reducing those levels, rejecting the idea that differences are merely apparent and that nature is basically homogeneous and simple" (1984, 89). "The idea of a history of nature as an integral part of materialism was asserted by Marx and, in greater detail, by Engels. Contemporary developments

in physics, the discovery of the constructive role played by irreversibility, have thus raised within the natural sciences a question that has long been asked by materialists. For them, understanding nature meant understanding it as being capable of producing man and his societies” (252).

Marx and Engels opposed the idea of substance (an everlasting, changeless carrier of changing qualities³) as primary matter because they considered such a position as mechanical and undialectical, and argued that it neglected the fact that matter is always in motion, and develops higher levels of organization in the dialectical process of becoming. In the history of dialectical materialism, one finds an animosity toward the notion of substance. Lenin, for example, wrote: “The recognition of immutable elements, ‘of the immutable substance of things,’ and so forth, is not materialism, but metaphysical, i.e., anti-dialectical, materialism” (1962, 261). Herbert Hörz, one of the main philosophers of the German Democratic Republic, argued that owing to the physics of fields, the discovery of radioactivity, relativity theory, and quantum theory, the notion of substance has become untenable (1976, 222–25). Modern physics has shown that elementary particles are transformed into one another; particles arise and continue to exist only in qualitative relationships to others. Hence the idea of an unchangeable carrier of qualities seems no longer to be valid. “Whereas the substance concept presupposes an unchanging carrier, . . . modern physics conceives material events primarily as change and interaction, and searches for the structural laws of this change” (225). The notion of substance would not be able to show the dialectical relationship of particle and field that was introduced by quantum theory. Fields and elementary particles cannot be substance because they are subject to change.

Hegel opposed the notion of substance for other reasons: Spinoza sees substance as *causa sui*—it is its own reason. Hegel says that such an assumption would exclude the creation of the world by God, which he believed in. “A deeper insight into nature reveals God as creating the world out of nothing. And that teaches two things. On the one hand it enunciates that matter,

as such, has no independent subsistence, and on the other that the form does not supervene upon matter from without, but as a totality involves the principle of matter in itself" (1973, §128; see also §§150–51).

Modern physics repudiates the mechanistic and reductionist conception of substance. Nonetheless, there seems to be an alternative conception of substance immanent in Engels's works on nature: The substance of the world—that which exists permanently and endlessly—is the process-structure of matter. Matter is without pause in permanent motion, in ceaseless flux, and is a self-producing entity. In its dialectical movement it produces different levels of organization that have higher, emergent qualities that cannot be reduced to earlier qualities. Engels stressed that matter is a producing entity, and through its permanent flux and motion "remains eternally the same in all its transformations" (1976b, 335).

The Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch worked out an alternative conception of substance and matter within the framework of dialectical materialism (for details, see, for example, Zeilinger 2003). In opposition to mechanical materialism, Bloch argues that matter is process-like; it is not a "dead block, moved only by pressure and push and remaining itself all the time" (1963, 230), but nonetheless he does not give up the notion of substance.⁴ Matter for Bloch is fermenting and process-like (203); it is a process-being, being-in-possibility (1963, 207) and has a historical-dialectical character (209). Bloch's concept of matter anticipated the modern theories of self-organization that also stress the productivity of matter resulting in different organizational forms and hierarchical levels of matter and the self-reproduction and reactivity of self-organizing units.

Nature is for Bloch a producing subject; he says it is forming itself, forming out of itself (234). In this context Bloch takes up Spinoza's concept of *natura naturans* in order to stress that nature is not only passively produced, but is also itself an actively producing system. The relationship of tendency and latency in matter also reappears as a dialectic of chance and necessity in self-organization theory (the concepts of relative chance by Kolmogorow and Chaitin and of incomplete determinism). What

Bloch calls a *novum* is called emergent qualities in the sciences of complexity. Bloch used the term *emergence* himself by stressing that all gestalt figures *emerge* from the dialectical process and from matter as developing, producing (*ausgebären*⁵) substance immanently as well as speculatively (Bloch 1975, 165). For Bloch matter is a dialectically developing, producing substance. Substance for Bloch is *process-substance* (1975, 246); it opens up possibilities, is fermenting, and actively producing.

Self-organization and dialectics

Saying the substance of the world is the permanent dialectical movement of matter and its self-productivity corresponds to saying that matter organizes itself and that nature is a self-organizing system. Wolfgang Hofkirchner has stressed that the new results of scientific research have been anticipated by Marx and Engels, and that the concept of dialectical development reenters science with self-organization theory (1993; see also Hofkirchner 1998).

The theory of self-organization has led to a change of scientific paradigms—from the Newtonian paradigm to the approaches of complexity. There is a shift from predictability to nonpredictability; from order and stability to instability, chaos, and dynamics; from certainty and determination to risk, ambiguity, and uncertainty; from control and steering to the self-organization of systems; from linearity to complexity and multidimensional causality; from reductionism to emergentism; from being to becoming; and from fragmentation to interdisciplinarity. This has been interpreted as a shift from modern to postmodern knowledge (Best and Kellner 1997).

Concepts of physical self-organization have been put forward in Ilya Prigogine's theory of dissipative systems (Nicolis and Prigogine 1989; Prigogine 1980), Hermann Haken's synergetics (1978, 1983), and Manfred Eigen's hypercycle theory (Eigen and Schuster 1979).

The principles of physical self-organization⁶ are (see Fuchs 2001, Ebeling and Feistel 1994, and Arshinov and Fuchs 2003):

1. *Control parameters*: A set of parameters influences the state and behavior of the system.

2. *Critical values*: If certain critical values of the control parameters are reached, structural change takes place and the system enters a phase of instability/criticality.
3. *Fluctuation and intensification*: Small disturbances from inside the system intensify themselves and initiate the formation of order.
4. *Feedback loops, circular causality*: Feedback loops occur within a self-organizing system; circular causality involves a number of processes p_1, p_2, \dots, p_n ($n \geq 1$), and p_1 results in p_2 , p_2 in p_3, \dots, p_{n-1} in p_n and p_n in p_1 .
5. *Nonlinearity*: In a critical phase of a self-organizing system, causes and effects cannot be mapped linearly: similar causes can have different effects and different causes similar effects; small changes of causes can have large effects, whereas large changes can also result in only small effects (but nonetheless it can also be the case that small causes have small effects and large causes, large effects).
6. *Bifurcation points*: Once a fluctuation intensifies itself, the system enters a critical phase where its development is relatively open, certain possible paths of development emerge, and the system has to make a choice. This means a dialectic of necessity and chance. Bifurcation means a phase transition from stability to instability.
7. *Selection*: In a critical phase that can also be called point of bifurcation, a selection is made between one of several alternative paths of development.
8. *Emergence of order*: In a critical phase, new qualities of a self-organizing system emerge; this principle is also called *order from chaos* or *order through fluctuation*. A self-organizing system is more than the sum of its parts. The qualities that result from temporal and spatial differentiation of a system are not reducible to the properties of the components of the systems; interactions between the components result in new properties of the system that cannot be fully predicted and cannot be found in the qualities of the components. Microscopic interactions result in new qualities on the macroscopic level of the system. Checkland defines an emergent quality in

similar terms “as a whole entity which derives from its component activities and their structure, but cannot be reduced to them” (1981, 314). The emergence of order includes both (a) bottom-up-emergence (a perturbation causes the system’s parts to interact synergetically in such a way that at least one new quality on a higher level emerges) and (b) downward causation (once new qualities of a system have emerged they, along with the other structural macro aspects of the system, influence—that is, enable and constrain—the behavior of the system’s parts). This process can be described as top-down-emergence if new qualities of certain parts (seen as wholes or systems themselves) show up.

9. *Information production*: Information is a relationship between specific organizational units of matter. Reflection means reaction to influences from the outside of a system in the form of inner-systemic structural changes. A causal relationship exists between the result of reflection and the reflected. The reflected causes structural changes, but does not mechanically determine them. The system has a certain relative autonomy that can be described as a degree of freedom from perturbations. On the different organizational levels of matter, we find different degrees of freedom. The degree increases along with complexity if we go up the hierarchy from physical-chemical to living systems, and finally to social systems. The causal relationship between the reflected and the result of reflection is based on a dialectical relationship of freedom and necessity. Information is an objective relationship between the reflected, the result of reflection inside the system’s structure, and the realization of functions of the system within the reflected environment of the system (see Hörz and Röseberg 1981, 273–96). This means that information is a relationship of creative and active reflection between a system and its environment—to be more precise, between units of organized matter. Stimuli and fluctuations cause inner-systemic structural change; fluctuations are actively reflected within the system. Information is not a structure given in advance; it is produced

within material relationships. “Information is a physical structure and at the same time a structure which dominates the physical forces. . . . Information is not a physical substance; it is instead temporarily ‘attached’ to it. Information must be understood as a specific effect and as a relationship” (Fuchs-Kittowski 1997, 559–60).

10. *Fault tolerance*: Outside a critical phase, the structure of the system is relatively stable concerning local disturbances and a change of boundary conditions.
11. *Openness*: Self-organization can only take place if the system imports entropy that is transformed; as a result, energy is exported, or, as Prigogine says, dissipated.
12. *Symmetry breaking*: The emerging structures have less symmetry than the foundational laws of the system.
13. *Inner conditionality*: Self-organizing systems are influenced by their inner conditions and the boundary conditions from their environment.
14. *Relative chance*: There is a dialectic of chance and necessity in self-organizing systems; certain aspects are determined, whereas others are relatively open and subject to chance.
15. *Complexity*: Self-organizing systems are complex systems. The term *complexity* has three levels of meaning: (1) There is self-organization and emergence in complex systems (Edmonds 1999). (2) Complex systems are not organized centrally, but in a distributed manner; there are many connections between the system’s parts (Kauffman 1993, Edmonds 1999). (3) It is difficult to model complex systems and to predict their behavior even if one knows to a large extent the parts of such systems and the connections between the parts (Heylighen 1996, 1999; Edmonds 1999). The complexity of a system depends on the number of its elements and the connections between the elements (the system’s structure). According to this assumption, Kauffman defines complexity as the “number of conflicting constraints” in a system (1993). Heylighen says that complexity can be characterized by a lack of symmetry (symmetry breaking), which means that “no part or aspect of a

complex entity can provide sufficient information to actually or statistically predict the properties of the others parts” (1996), and Edmonds defines complexity as “that property of a language expression that makes it difficult to formulate its overall behavior, even when given almost complete information about its atomic components and their interrelations” (1999). Aspects of complexity are things, people, number of elements, number of relations, nonlinearity, broken symmetry, nonholonic constraints, hierarchy, and emergence (Flood and Carson 1993).

16. *Cohesion*: Cohesion means the closure of the causal relations among the dynamical parts of a dynamical particular that determine its resistance to external and internal fluctuations that might disrupt its integrity (Collier 2003, 2004). It is a “dividing glue” of dynamic entities (Collier 2004).
17. *Systemness*: Self-organization takes place in a system—in a coherent whole that has parts, interactions, structural relationships, behavior, state, and a border that delimits it from its environment.
18. *Hierarchy*: The self-organization of complex systems produces a hierarchy in two distinctive senses: (1) The level of emergence is a hierarchically higher level—that is, it has additional, new emergent qualities that cannot be found on the lower level that contains the components. The upper level is a sublation of the lower level. (2) Self-organization results in an evolutionary hierarchy of different system types; these types are hierarchically ordered in the sense that upper levels are more complex and have additional emergent qualities.
19. *Globalization and localization*: Bottom-up-emergence means the globalizing sublation of local entities; downward causation means the localization of more global qualities (Fuchs 2003c).
20. *Unity in plurality (generality and specificity)*: The organizing system is characterized by a number of distinctive qualities that distinguish it from other self-organizing systems. On the other hand, each type of self-organizing system also shares general principles and qualities with all other types of

self-organizing systems. Both generality/unity and specificity/plurality are characteristic of self-organizing systems.

The concept of emergence is the central notion of self-organization concepts. Aspects of emergence are:

- *Synergism*: Emergence is due to the productive interaction between entities. Synergy is a very general concept that refers “to combined or ‘co-operative’ effects—literally, the effects produced by things that ‘operate together’ (parts, elements or individuals)” (Corning 1998, 136). Synergy takes place and shapes systems on all organizational levels of matter; it is a fundamental quality of matter. Synergies between interacting entities are the cause of the evolution and persistence of emergent systems.
- *Novelty*: On a systemic level different from the level of the synergetically interacting entities, new qualities show up. Emergent qualities are qualities that have not been previously observed and have not previously existed in a complex system (“a whole is more than the sum of its parts”).
- *Irreducibility*: The newly produced qualities are not reducible to, or derivable from, the level of the producing, interacting entities.
- *Unpredictability*: The form of the emergent result and the point of emergence cannot be fully predicted.
- *Coherence/correlation*: Complex systems with emergent qualities have some coherent behavior for a certain period of time. This coherence spans and correlates the level of the producing entities into a unity on the level of emergence (Goldstein 1999).
- *Historicity*: Emergent qualities are not given a priori, but are the result of the dynamical development of complex systems.

One example of physical self-organization is the Bénard cells: A special liquid is heated at a certain temperature t_2 from beneath and cooled down to a certain temperature t_1 from above. The temperature difference $\Delta t = t_2 - t_1$ becomes control parameter of the system (principle 1). At $\Delta t = 0$ the system is in equilibrium, the temperature gradient rises, and, at a certain critical

value (principle 2), a new pattern emerges in the liquid that looks like honeycombs (principles 8 and 9). The liquid particles are located in layers; lower layers result from their temperature being warmer than upper ones; they expand and their density decreases. At the beginning of the critical phase, a first small fluctuation occurs, which means that a particle is displaced from its position in a certain layer and enters an upper or lower layer (principle 3). The layer in which this fluctuation will occur is not predetermined. Fluctuations only take place if a certain threshold of the control parameter Δt is crossed. The fluctuation intensifies itself (principle 3); more and more liquid particles are detached from their stationary position; disorder, chaos, and motion appear (principle 6). The liquid particles arrange themselves in cells that have different forms (round, square, broad, thin, large, small, etc.). These forms are dependent on the elementary modes of motion. Several types of cells exist simultaneously. Finally, one type can assert itself and become a dominant form due to a selection process within the system (principle 7). As a result of the superimposition of many cells of the same form, a pattern emerges that looks like a honeycomb (principles 8 and 9). So from an initial chaos of particles, order has emerged. At a certain value of the temperature gradient, this order disappears. In this process, order will definitely emerge, initial fluctuations will spread out, and one of several types of roles will be selected. But it is not determined in which layer the fluctuation will occur, exactly how the cell-types will look, and which one will be selected (principle 14). This experiment will only be successful if energy in the form of a temperature difference is applied to the system (principle 11).

A laser is another example that is frequently used to explain self-organization (see Haken 1987). A laser consists of an active medium that is situated between two mirrors. This medium is either a gas that is radiating due to the discharge caused by the entry of current or a crystal that is pumped by a flash lamp (e.g., a ruby with chrome ions). The flashes stimulate the crystal, and an electron changes its trajectory, jumping from an inner trajectory to an outer one, absorbing energy from the flash lamp. It

spontaneously returns to its former trajectory and emits energy in the form of a light wave. Therefore, the atoms emit light waves because of their stimulation by the flash lamp. The two mirrors continually reflect the light. First there is a chaos of light waves. A light wave can hit other atoms and force an increase in the light intensity. By such processes, the light waves reach certain amplitudes. Haken says that one light wave “enslaves” the others; this means that it becomes dominant and orders the system. As a result, an ordered light wave—the laser beam—emerges. From a chaos of light waves, an ordered pattern emerges (principles 8 and 9). The decisive control parameter is the current supply (principles 1 and 11). The system can only enter criticality if the current reaches a certain threshold (principle 2). A light wave is caused by a fluctuation—that is, an electron returns to its inner trajectory and emits energy; a light wave can intensify itself by “enslaving” electrons (principle 3). Such an intensification always means circular causality, because one entity causes the behavior of another entity, and this behavior results in a transformation of the first entity (principle 4). Due to such intensifications, the system enters a state of chaos/instability/bifurcation (principles 5 and 6). A certain light wave is selected (principle 7) and determines the emergence of the laser beam (principles 8 and 9). It is determined that a laser beam will emerge, that fluctuations and intensification will result; but not determined is exactly how this will take place and which light wave will order the system (principle 14).

According to Hegel’s outline, the purpose of dialectics is “to study things in their own being and movement and thus to demonstrate the finitude of the partial categories of understanding” (1973, note to §81). Self-organization refers to the forms of movement of matter and hence is connected to dialectics. What are called control parameters, critical values, bifurcation points, phase transitions, nonlinearity, selection, fluctuation, and intensification in self-organization theory (principles 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7) correspond to the dialectical principle of transition from quantity to quality. This corresponds to what Hegel discussed as *Measure* (1973, §§107–11):

Measure is the qualitative quantum—quantum is the existence of quantity.

The identity between quantity and quality, which is found in *Measure*, is at first only implicit, and not yet explicitly realized. In other words, these two categories, which unite in *Measure*, each claim an independent authority. On the one hand, the quantitative features of existence may be altered, without affecting its quality. On the other hand, this increase and diminution, immaterial though it be, has its limit, by exceeding which the quality suffers change. . . .

. . . But if the quantity present in measure exceeds a certain limit, the quality corresponding to it is also put in abeyance. This however is not a negation of quality altogether, but only of this definite quality, the place of which is at once occupied by another. This process of measure, which appears alternately as a mere change in quantity, and then as a sudden revulsion of quantity into quality, may be envisaged under the figure of a nodal (knotted) line. (§§108–9)

What is called emergence of order, production of information or symmetry breaking in self-organization theory (principles 8, 9, 12) corresponds to Hegel's notions of sublation and negation of the negation. Something is only what it is in its relationship to another, but by the negation of the negation this something incorporates the other into itself. The dialectical movement involves two moments that negate each other, a somewhat and an another. As a result of the negation of the negation, "something becomes an other; this other is itself somewhat; therefore it likewise becomes an other, and so on *ad infinitum*" (Hegel 1973, §93). Being-for-self or the negation of the negation means that somewhat becomes an other, but this again is a new somewhat that is opposed to an other and as a synthesis results again in an other and therefore it follows that something in its passage into other only joins with itself; it is *self-related* (§95). In becoming, there are two moments (Hegel 1969, 176–79): coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be: by sublation—being passes over into nothing; it ceases to be, but something new shows up, is coming to be. What is sublated on the one hand ceases to be and is put to an end, but on

the other hand, it is preserved and maintained (185). In dialectics, a totality transforms itself; it is self-related. This corresponds to the notions of self-production and circular causality. The negation of the negation has positive results—that is, in a self-organizing system, the negation of elements results in positive new qualities.

The two examples mentioned here in fact are examples of the dialectical development of matter. Hegel says that when the control parameters reach a certain threshold, a point of bifurcation, or criticality, a nodal-line arises. The quantities that are increased and transform into quality are the temperature gradient and electric current. The emergence of the honeycomb pattern or the laser beam means sublation and negation of the negation. The old states of the systems are eliminated, but nonetheless preserved in new qualities. New qualities arise and the systems thereby reach a higher level.

The principle of relative chance that is typical for self-organizing systems had already been considered as a dialectic of chance and necessity by Hegel, Marx, and Engels (Hegel 1973, §§144–49; Engels 1987b, 497–501). Engels stressed that the dialectic of attraction and repulsion is an aspect of matter and its movement. Both elements are also described by self-organization theory: chaos, noise, or instability is described as disordered movement of the elements of a complex system. One can also say that the elements are repelling each other. But this repulsion is one that turns into attraction, because the elements interact, there are processes of ordering and selection—attraction takes place as the emergence of a coherent whole and new qualities.

As an example of the transition from quantity to quality, Engels mentions the homologous series of carbon compounds:

Here therefore we have a whole series of qualitatively different bodies, formed by the simple quantitative addition of elements, and in fact always in the same proportion. This is most clearly evident in cases where the quantity of all the elements of the compound changes in the same proportion. Thus, in the normal paraffins C_nH_{2n+2} , the lowest is methane, CH_4 , a gas; the highest known, hexadecane, $C_{16}H_{34}$, is a solid body forming colourless crystals which melts at 21°

and boils only at 278°. Each new member of both series comes into existence through the addition of CH₂, one atom of carbon and two atoms of hydrogen, to the molecular formula of the preceding member, and this quantitative change in the molecular formula produces each time a qualitatively different body. (Engels 1987a, 118)

Nodal lines or the transition from quantity to quality is today also studied in self-organization theory. The theory of self-organized criticality (SOC) (Bak 1996) especially focuses on this. It studies phenomena where perturbations that normally have small effects have large effects in a critical situation and push the system into chaos. A frequently mentioned example is a pile of sand. Dropping grains of sand onto each other will result in a pyramid. When the pile reaches a certain critical point, there is the possibility that just one additional grain results in the avalanching collapse of the whole pile. In a phase of SOC, the effects of one additional element vary from small to large, either pushing the system into chaotic behavior or locking it into a fixed behavior. The system is on the “edge of chaos.” One feature that characterises SOC systems is a power-law distribution of the characteristic events such as avalanches, quakes, crashes, etc. The average frequency of the event is inversely proportional to some power of its size: $\log(F) = -\log(M)$. The log of the frequency of events is a linear function of the log of their magnitudes. The theory of SOC assumes that SOC patterns can be found, for example, in wars, wildfires, stock prices, traffic jams, international conflicts, and the collapse of society (Brunk 2002).

Almost everywhere in chemistry one can find examples of the transition from quantity to quality. Therefore Engels speaks of chemistry as the “science of the qualitative changes of bodies as a result of changed quantitative composition” (1987b, 359). This transition is what today in self-organization theory is called emergence.⁷ In a self-organizing system, a certain threshold of a control parameter is crossed and order emerges. What is today called a point of bifurcation, instability, or criticality, Engels refers to as “Hegelian nodal line of measure relations—in which quantitative change suddenly passes at certain points into qualitative transformation” (Engels 1987a, 117), or

even directly anticipating the modern terminology, he speaks of “critical point” (Engels 187b, 359). As other examples of nodal lines, Engels mentions a certain current strength that is required to cause the platinum wire of an electric incandescent lamp to glow, the temperatures of incandescence and fusion of metals, the freezing and boiling points of liquids, the critical point at which a gas can be liquefied by pressure and cooling (1987b, 359). The transition from quantity to quality that occurs, for example in the homologous series of carbon compounds when certain atoms are added can also be termed the emergence of a qualitatively different body.

Other examples that Engels mentioned for the transition from quantity to quality, and that could equally be described as the emergence of new qualities in a critical situation after a threshold of a certain control parameter has been crossed, include:

- Change of form of motion and energy:

All qualitative differences in nature rest on differences of chemical composition or on different quantities or forms of motion (energy) or, as is almost always the case, on both. Hence it is impossible to alter the quality of a body without addition or subtraction of matter or motion, i.e. without quantitative alteration of the body concerned. . . .

. . . Change of form of motion is always a process that takes place between at least two bodies, of which one loses a definite quantity of motion of one quality (e.g., heat), while the other gains a corresponding quantity of motion of another quality (mechanical motion, electricity, chemical decomposition). Here, therefore, quantity and quality mutually correspond to each other. (1987b, 357)

- Engels’s citation of Hegel’s example of the states of aggregation of water (Engels 1987b, 359):

Thus the temperature of water is, in the first place, a point of no consequence in respect to its liquidity: still with the increase of diminution of the temperature of the liquid water, there comes a point where this state of cohesion

suffers a qualitative change, and the water is converted into steam or ice. (Hegel 1973, §108)

As other examples, Hegel mentions that a point is reached where a single additional grain makes a heap of wheat; or where a bald tail is produced by plucking a single hair from a horse's tail.

For Engels, "the negation of the negation" is "an extremely general . . . law of development of nature, history, and thought; a law which, as we have seen, holds good in the animal and plant kingdoms, in geology, in mathematics, in history and in philosophy" (1987a, 131). As an example from nature, he mentions the development process of a grain of barley:

Billions of such grains of barley are milled, boiled and brewed and then consumed. But if such a grain of barley meets with conditions which are normal for it, if it falls on suitable soil, then under the influence of heat and moisture it undergoes a specific change, it germinates; the grain as such ceases to exist, it is negated, and in its place appears the plant which has arisen from it, the negation of the grain. But what is the normal life-process of this plant? It grows, flowers, is fertilised and finally once more produces grains of barley, and as soon as these have ripened the stalk dies, is in its turn negated. As a result of this negation of the negation we have once again the original grain of barley, but not as a single unit, but ten-, twenty- or thirtyfold. (126)

As similar examples, he mentions the development process of insects, geology as a series of negated negations, a series of successive shatterings of old and deposits of new rock formations, differential and integral calculus, the development of philosophy and society. These development processes can also be described in terms of physical self-organization: the control parameters that influence the development of the grain are time and natural conditions such as heat and moisture. During this development, new seeds will show up. At a certain time, a critical point is reached and the grain ceases to exist. But at the same time, new grains emerge.

Dialectical processes and negation of the negation mean not only just the emergence of other, new qualities. Dialectical development also includes development process that results in higher qualities and other structural levels. Dialectical development is not just change or self-transformation and self-reproduction; it is also the emergence of higher levels of organization (Hörz 1976, 311–24). Hence dialectical thinking assumes an immanent hierarchy in nature and evolutionary leaps. This was also pointed out by Engels:

The transition from one form of motion to another always remains a leap, a decisive change. This is true of the transition from the mechanics of celestial bodies to that of smaller masses on a particular celestial body; it is equally true of the transition from the mechanics of masses to the mechanics of molecules—including the forms of motion investigated in physics proper: heat, light, electricity, magnetism. In the same way, the transition from the physics of molecules to the physics of atoms—chemistry—in turn involves a decided leap; and this is even more clearly the case in the transition from ordinary chemical action to the chemism of albumen [proteins] which we call life. Then within the sphere of life the leaps become ever more infrequent and imperceptible. (1987a, 61–62)

Self-organization theory is also dialectical in the respect that it frequently considers self-organization as emergent evolution. This means that there are different hierarchical organizational levels of self-organization that differ in complexity and where new qualities of organization emerge on upper levels. In self-organization theory, Ervin Laszlo, for example, argues that evolution does not take place continuously, but in sudden, discontinuous leaps (1987). After a phase of stability, a system enters a phase instability, fluctuations intensify and spread out. In this chaotic state, the development of the system is not determined; what is determined is only that one of several possible alternatives will be realized. Laszlo says that evolution takes place in such a way that new organizational levels emerge, constituting the successive steps of evolution. Not all scientists who speak

about self-organization include the development of higher qualities into their concepts. Hence, in this respect, dialectical materialism can be considered as a broader evolutionary concept than self-organization.

In his *Anti-Dühring* and his *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels pointed out the problem of defining life and intuitively anticipated the theory of autopoiesis. Of course today we know much more about life than Engels did, especially since the discovery of the double helix. But what is important is that Engels anticipated the idea of autopoiesis. He said that life exists in the “constant self-renewal of [its own] chemical constituents”; life is a “self-implementing process” (77). Proteins not only continually undergo decomposition, but also continually produce themselves from their components (1987b, 576–77).

Science, materialism, and religion

As Engels implicitly pointed out, the substance of the world is its process character, the continual dialectical movement of matter, and the productivity of matter that results in self-reproduction and the emergence of new, higher qualities and organizational forms of matter. This corresponds to saying that the substance of the world is the continual self-organization of matter. As has been shown, processes of physical self-organization can be described in dialectical terms. Control parameters, critical values, bifurcation points, phase transitions, nonlinearity, selection, fluctuation, and intensification in self-organization theory correspond to the dialectical principle of transition from quantity to quality. What is called emergence of order, production of information, or symmetry breaking in self-organization theory corresponds to Hegel’s notions of sublation and negation of the negation. The concept of emergent evolution corresponds to the principle of dialectical development, the dialectics of chance and necessity, as well as of attraction and repulsion that have been described by Hegel, Engels, and Marx are constitutive for processes of self-organization. Conversely, the examples Engels gave for the dialectics of nature can also be seen as examples of the self-organization of matter.

Self-organization theory shows that Engels's *Dialectics of Nature* is still very topical and that dialectical materialism, contrary to mechanical materialism, has not been invalidated; rather, it confirms that dialectics is the general principle of nature and society. Self-organization theory supports Engels's assumptions that the real unity of the world consists in its materiality, that matter is process-like and in constant flux, that it is a producing entity that is uncreateable and indestructible. That the substance of the world is self-organization of matter, which results in higher forms of organization of matter—the highest form of organization of matter thus far being human society—means that God does not exist, that there is no *creatio-ex-nihilo* and no first mover that is not itself moved. Hence religion and esoteric thinking are mere ideology and false consciousness. Dialectical materialism seems to be confirmed by modern science, whereas serious problems arise for idealist worldviews. "The conceptions of self-organization, the conceptions that assign a determining role to the activity of inner factors instead of outer, are new scientific affirmations of the old dialectical theses, as well as the conceptions of the general connection of all things and appearances" (Steigerwald 2000). Self-organization theory is indeed a dialectical-materialist theory, but unfortunately its representatives all too often do not realize this and do not acknowledge the dialectical tradition and heritage of the philosophy of nature in the line of Frederick Engels and Karl Marx.

The natural sciences that emerged during the last century, such as quantum theory, quantum mechanics, first- and second-order cybernetics, general system theory, nonequilibrium thermodynamics, synergetics, dissipative systems theory, autopoietic systems theory, catastrophe theory, punctuated equilibrium theory, hypercycle theory, string theory, loop theory, etc. deal with the ontology of the material world. Hence there seems to be scientific evidence that nature is a self-organizing totality and is its own cause. This seems to confirm the materialist notion that matter is uncreateable and indestructible.

Twentieth-century science indicates that dialectical development is a universal law of nature and that dialectical materialism

is correct, but that human consciousness frequently lags behind the progress of science, technology, and society. Linked to the current crisis of the capitalist world system is a tendency to spread mysticism and irrationalism in society. This tendency also affects the scientific community.

It is quite common today in idealistic thinking to interpret the big bang as the creation of the world by God, where nothing turns into something. But if before the big bang there was nothing except God, what is the foundation of God? There has never been scientific evidence that God could really exist as an eternal substance outside of material existence and that God is his or her own reason, whereas modern science has produced evidence that matter is *causa sui*, organizes itself and has not been created by an external first mover out of nothing. It is not reasonable to assume that the world has been created out of nothing by God and that God really exists. In such arguments, a causal principle is applied to matter, but the same causal principle is declared as not holding for God. There are no rational reasons why this should be the case. Talking about God and the origin of the world means talking about universality. It is unreasonable to apply a form of universal causality to one universal phenomenon, but simply ignore it for another one.

Philosophy deals with explanations of how single aspects of the world and single sciences are connected. It is the science of universality. Philosophy is the thinking study of material reality and the things that comprise reality. Philosophy works out notions and categories in order to describe and explain the total world process on a general level. Various idealistic, religious, and esoteric theories explain the world as being created by God as an external first mover who is not moved himself. This violates fundamental philosophical theorems such as Occam's Razor: if the material world can be explained as its own reason, as can be done by philosophically generalizing theories of self-organization, reference to an external creator is an unnecessary over-specification and multiplication. The theorem of foundation holds that everything that is or can be has some foundation or ground. With physics serving as the starting point for the history of the cosmos, matter can be

conceived as its own reason and as the self-referential foundation of the world. Philosophy actually must explain the development of the universe, and must start from physics as the fundamental natural science; idealistic conceptions that stress spirit will fail to find a sufficient ground of the universe (Zimmermann 1999).⁸ If Spirit and God are conceived as eternal entities that are their own reason, irrational categories are simply defined tautologically and without reference to the really existing, material world that can be rationally explained by the natural and social sciences. Idealism cannot provide a reasonable foundation of the world.

While we have no scientific proof for the existence of God, we have every reason to assume that matter is organizing itself and that this is a universal phenomenon. Manfred Eigen's hypercycle theory provides an explanation of the origin of life and the human being that requires no argument assuming divine creation, because it explains the emergence of life as a qualitative leap in the self-organization of matter that results in a new level of organization within an evolutionary hierarchy. Life is the result of a cross-catalysis between autocreative nucleic acids and proteins. "There is no need for a miracle, for a divine, supernatural act to explain biological development. The only possibility of avoiding this conclusion would be the statement that the laws ruling it have been created together with the world by an extrahuman force. But then reasonable arguments for the possibility and necessity of this extranatural power must be found, and that cannot be established by scientific means" (Steigerwald 2000). The existence of life is due to self-reproducing molecules; there is no scientific evidence for a creation of life and human beings by God.

In one of its versions, idealism is based on a dualism of mind and matter; in another, matter is reduced to mind. Examination of the history of the division of labor shows that this division resulted in a widening separation between manual and mental labor. The emergence of this separation coincides with the emergence of class-based society. Idealism received a boost from the emergence of classes and heteronomous societies; conversely, it is an ideology that justifies and is helpful in upholding such societies.⁹

With the breakdown of Fordist capitalism in the sixties, the capitalist world system entered a permanent crisis, and global problems have quickly worsened since then. A new post-Fordist mode of capitalist development emerged and individualization has shown up as a new phenomenon that serves dominating interests and results in the erosion of collective institutions that formerly seemed to give sense to the human being. Such institutions are traditional religions, unions, associations, families, etc. Capitalism is now based on a deregularized and flexible institutional setting (flexible regime of accumulation, neoliberal mode of regulation), and people throughout the world are faced with the dangers of precariousness and extinction due to the development of the internal antagonisms of the capitalist world system. With the breakdown of the Soviet Union, an ideological vacancy appeared, and the former Eastern European states have been fully included into the global capitalist dynamics.

In ideology and science, the emptiness and helplessness felt by many due to the antagonisms of the capitalist world system have resulted in a search for new transcendental and mystical explanations and salvations. As a result, there is a boom of various forms of mysticism, esotericism, and spiritualism. People are looking for irrational guidelines, instead of looking for the foundations of problems and developments within the real world. The new irrationalism is a result of the increased complexity of the world with which people cannot cope.

These irrational tendencies can also be found within the self-organization paradigm that has been interpreted by some as holistic spiritualism (for example, Capra 1982; Jantsch 1975, 1992).

In such mystical views, the universe is seen as one large living totality that consists of a network of equal parts. There is no hierarchy in nature in such conceptions and hence also no qualitative differences between systems. They are all considered as an expression of spirit. Based on the Gaia hypothesis, biologicistic and ecofascistic arguments are frequently employed. In such new mystifications and irrational understandings of science, God is not necessarily considered as an eternal creator, but an eternal principle exists external to matter.

Philosophy is not an area of religious belief; religion is not a part of science and philosophy. Values and norms are part of ethics, which comprises one part of philosophy. The other parts are ontology (what is the world and all being like?) and epistemology (how do we perceive the world?). Philosophy is not an area where “anything goes” in the sense of a radical constructivist or anarchistic epistemology of science as put forward, for example, by Paul Feyerabend. Philosophy, instead, tries to connect, to generalize, and to unify single sciences. It produces interrelationships between single sciences on a more general metalevel. Hence it is based on the natural and social sciences; philosophical categories are related to the single sciences; categories like reason, love, human being are related to the humanities; categories like nature, space, time, matter are related to physics, etc.

Categories like God and Spirit that are conceived as the Absolute, as something infinite and unquestionable and as absolute truth, are not at all connected to the single sciences. This results in isolated doctrines that cannot be analyzed, questioned, and examined scientifically. For example, there is no proof for the claim that humans occupy some lower steps in a universal field where God means the Absolute. The realm of religion, mysticism, spiritualism, and esotericism is where science ends and pure ideology starts.

Hegel said that “what is reasonable is actual and what is actual is reasonable.” Actuality means materiality, hence turning Hegel right side up means that only material reality can be reasonable, and that something that is conceived as existing prior or external to matter is unreasonable. Areas such as religion and esotericism are unscientific and irrational; they proclaim absolute truths that cannot be researched or contested. Irrational arguments avoid objectivity, exactness, logic, verifiability, and falsifiability. Pseudosciences use strategies of immunization in order to avoid criticism. If pseudosciences like creationism, spiritualism, mysticism, parapsychology, and astrology were right, this would mean that the modern sciences are all wrong. Hence isolationism is typical for such areas of thinking.

Religion and other irrationalisms have no scientific grounds. Religions might include some elements that are interesting for

science and philosophy, but one should deal with these topics scientifically, not religiously and in terms of absolute truths. Religion and esoterics are a “universal basis of consolation and justification. . . . Religious distress is at the same time the *expression* of real distress and also the *protest* against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people” (Marx 1975, 175).

There is no need to refer to mystic forces for explaining the self-organization of the universe and society. New properties simply emerge due to the complex interactions of the parts of a system, not because some external holistic force is at play. The founders of the philosophy of emergentism, Conwy Llord Morgan and Samuel Alexander, saw emergence as something mystic, and so they introduced spiritual forces (known as “Nisus”) as the driving principle. To posit such forces shows a lack of understanding of the dialectical relationship of quality and quantity and the whole and its parts. The emergence of order need not be explained metaphysically, because new qualities of the whole are solely constituted by interactions of its parts. The philosophical mistake of overspecification that is grasped by Occam’s razor is made by holistic thinkers such as Jantsch and Capra. This opens the way for irrationalism and esotericism, which belong to the scope of ideology rather than to (critical) *science*.

This paper is based on research done within the framework of the project “Human Strategies in Complexity: Philosophical Foundations for a Theory of Evolutionary Systems” (<http://www.self-organizatin.org>) funded by INTAS (#0298). Translations of quotations from sources not originally in English were made by the author.

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NOTES

1. For Hegel also, matter is an abstraction. He defines the Thing as the determined and concrete unity of Ground and Existence. It consists of matters or materials, which are themselves partly things, which in that way may be once

more reduced to more abstract matters. Numerous diverse matters coalesce into the one Matter.

Thus Matter is the mere abstract or indeterminate reflection-into-something-else, or reflection-into-self at the same time as determinate; it is consequently Thinghood which then and there is—the subsistence of the thing. By this means the thing has on the part of the matters its reflection-into-self . . . ; it subsists not on its own part, but consists of the matters, and is only a superficial association between them, an external combination of them. (1973, §127)

2. “The process of continual change which characterizes the world at the subatomic level is a striking confirmation of the fact that dialectics is not just a subjective invention of the mind, but actually corresponds to objective processes taking place in nature. This process has gone on uninterruptedly for all eternity. It is a correct demonstration of the indestructibility of matter—precisely the opposite of what it was meant to prove” (Woods and Grant 2002, 105).

3. In the eighteenth century, Kant, too, assumed a permanence of substance and said that “throughout all changes in the world *substance* remains, and that only the *accidents* change” (1933, 214).

4. Bloch says that mechanical materialism has a concept of matter that is only analytical and static; it does not know history, perspective, and horizons of transformation (Bloch 1963, 208).

5. The German term used by Bloch is *ausgebären*, which corresponds on the one hand to “bearing,” and not only points at an active production, but also refers to a developing process.

6. Due to the fact that the physical principles are the most fundamental ones, they can also be considered as general principles of self-organization. Self-organization in other systems like biological or social ones is based on these fundamental qualities, but also shows additional emergent qualities. For a detailed discussion of principles of social self-organization see Fuchs 2002a, 2002b, 2000c, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2003d, 2003e, 2004; Fuchs and Hofkirchner 2003.

7. Geoffrey Hodgson points out that the concept *emergence* was anticipated by the philosophies of Hegel, Marx, and Engels: “The terms ‘emergence’ and ‘emergent property’ date from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. However, the general idea behind these terms is older. It is redolent, for example, of the ‘law of the transformation of quantity into quality’ laid down by G. W. F. Hegel in his *Logic* and subsequently taken up by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels” (2000, 65).

8. Law of Ground:

Ground, like the other determinations of reflection, has been expressed in the form of a law; everything has its sufficient ground. This means in general nothing else but: what *is*, is not to be regarded as a merely *affirmative immediate* but as something *posited*; we must not stop at immediate determinate being or determinateness as such, but must go back from this into its ground, in which reflection it is a sublated being and is in and for itself. In the law of ground, therefore, the essential character of reflection into into-self in contrast to mere being is expressed. To add that the

ground must be *sufficient* is really quite superfluous for it is self-evident; that for which the ground is not sufficient would not have a ground, but everything is supposed to have a ground. (Hegel 1969, 446)

9. “Essentially, philosophical idealism is a product of the extreme division between mental and manual labor which has existed from the dawn of written history down to the present day” (Woods and Grant 2002, 36).

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Engels on Motion: A Comment

Erwin Marquit

Engels used the term *motion* as a fundamental category of philosophy referring to processes that involve a material system undergoing change. In *Dialectics of Nature*, he began the chapter “Basic Forms of Motion” with the statement, “Motion in the most general sense, conceived as the mode of existence, the inherent attribute of matter, comprehends all changes and processes occurring in the universe, from mere change of place right up to thinking” (1987, 362). He then pointed out that the historical development of the natural sciences began first of all with the theory of the simplest change of place, the mechanics of heavenly bodies and terrestrial masses, followed by the theory of molecular motion, physics, and chemistry. “Only after these different branches of the knowledge of the forms of motion governing non-living nature had attained a high degree of development could the explanation of the processes of motion representing the life process be successfully tackled.” He therefore focused the rest of the chapter on basic forms of motion on “the forms of motion of non-living nature,” beginning with the statement that “all motion is bound up with some change of place, whether it be change of place of heavenly bodies, terrestrial masses, molecules, atoms, or other particles.”

At the time Engels was writing this, atoms of the various chemical elements and the molecules into which they were clustered were thought to be the most elementary forms of matter. The mechanistic materialists sought to explain all material

processes by reducing them to various spatial arrangements of atoms and molecules. In their view, the motion of the atoms and molecules was subject only to the laws of Newtonian mechanics. All changes in the motion of physical bodies—individual atoms and molecules or large bodies composed of them—were due to the forces of attraction and repulsion by which one physical object affected another. The force that one body exerted on another could only be a *central force*—that is, it could only be directed along the line joining their centers. With some exceptions, most physicists at that time saw their main task to be finding all possible central forces and determining how they depend on the distance between the interacting objects. Once this task was completed, it would then be possible to determine fully the behavior of any physical system by applying the laws of Newtonian mechanics. Hermann von Helmholtz, in his famous paper in 1847 on the law of conservation of energy, wrote:

If we think of the universe as consisting of elements with inalterable qualities, the only possible changes in such a system are spatial ones, that is, movements. . . .

. . . The problem of the physical sciences is to trace natural phenomena back to inalterable forces of attraction and repulsion, the intensity of the forces depending on distance. The solution of this problem would mean the complete comprehensibility of nature. (1971b, 5–6)

Among the known fundamental forces that Helmholtz mentioned in his various lectures on the subject were gravitational force, electrical force, force of chemical affinity, adhesion, and capillary force. In Helmholtz's view, the "ultimate aim of physical science must be to find the movements which are the real causes of all other phenomena and to determine the motive forces upon which these movements depend. In other words, its aim is to reduce all phenomena to mechanics" (1971a, 231).

Engels was critical of Helmholtz's conception of attributing all material changes of a body to the action of forces of attraction or repulsion arising from another body external to it. Nevertheless, in dealing with the motion of physical bodies, Engels was constrained in his view by the atomic/molecular model of matter.

He considered motion to be the result of interactions between the bodies, rather than a force from one acting on the other: “In the fact that these bodies are interconnected is already included that they react on one another, and it is precisely this mutual reaction that constitutes motion” (363). Still constrained by his view that “all motion [of nonliving matter] is bound up with change of place,” he considered the dialectics of attraction and repulsion to lie at the root of all physical processes. Although quick to seize upon the new understanding of energy and assert that the law of conservation of energy was in essence a law of transformation of matter, he attempted to fit heat into the attraction/repulsion scheme of physical change by considering it to be a repulsive force that leads to a system breaking out from the attractive forces that hold it together, enabling it to undergo qualitative transformation (368).

Nevertheless, discussing the more complex forms of matter that emerged from the clustering of atoms and molecules, Engels stressed that the new properties resulting from the qualitative changes of structure could not be explained by the laws of mechanics that one applied to atoms and molecules (531–32).

With the discovery of the radioactive decay of radium by Becquerel in 1896, the inalterable atom collapsed, and the program to explain the world entirely in terms of forces of attraction and repulsion had to be abandoned. Lenin, building on the view of the Marxist worker/philosopher Joseph Dietzgen (a contemporary of Marx and Engels) that “the subject matter of science is endless,” that “nature in all her parts has no beginning and no end,” would write in 1908 that “the electron is as inexhaustible as the atom, nature is infinite” (Lenin 1962, 261–62). Marxist scientific methodology now views material structures as levels of integration and organization (see, for example, Needham 1937). The scientist must recognize that each level has its own laws of motion arising from the dialectics of interpenetration of oppositional tendencies within the level, while not ignoring the interrelationships among the levels.

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MARXIST FORUM

At its Twenty-Third Congress in January 2004, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) adopted the first major revision of its program since it was originally issued in 1961. The full text of the revised program can be found in *Nature, Society, and Thought*, vol. 16, no. 2. A detailed explanation of the nature of the revisions made because of changes in the domestic and international situations was presented to the congress by Tetsuzo Fuwa, chair of the JCP Central Committee. Because the 400,000-member JCP is the largest Communist Party in any developed capitalist country, the theoretical basis for these revisions should be of particular interest to our readers. We therefore present Tetsuzo Fuwa's report in this issue.

23rd Congress, 13–17 January 2004

Report on Revision of Program of the Japanese Communist Party

Tetsuzo Fuwa, Central Committee Chair

Delegates, nonvoting observers, and JCP [Japanese Communist Party] members throughout the country, I will report to you, on behalf of the JCP Central Committee, on the revision of the JCP Program.

During the last seven months since the Seventh Plenum of the JCP Central Committee, very active, pre-congress discussions have taken place on the draft JCP Program (although there was a pause due to the House of Representatives general election). We have received nine reports from each prefectural committee concerning how the discussion has been proceeding in the JCP branch assemblies, in the district JCP conferences, and in the prefectural JCP conferences. We also have received about 2,000 letters expressing opinions and comments on the draft JCP Program, including 567 letters for publication. The draft we have proposed is an overhaul of the JCP Program, which includes new theoretical standpoints. Most opinions expressed during the pre-congress discussions were in favor of the draft.

Many of the differences of opinions that have been expressed as well as many of the questions that we have received seem to require in response only clarification of what the Program is all about for the JCP.

What is the Party Program?

The JCP Program is a document that sets out the party's objectives and basic strategy. The JCP Constitution states that the ultimate goal of the Japanese Communist Party is to "realize a community of truly equal and free human relations." It means achieving a socialist/communist society, but we need to develop a particularly Japanese path of social development in terms of stages and courses of development toward a future society. All this is to be made clear by the Program of the Japanese Communist Party.

In particular, the main role of the JCP Program is to explain the present-day conditions of Japanese society, the challenges facing our society, and the road to the solution of related problems. The JCP Program must put forward not only the party's response to immediate problems but also the party's basic ideas and goals concerning long-term problems facing Japan and the world. Although advances and setbacks alike are inherent in the development of the JCP, we need to maintain a strategy that runs throughout our activities. That is the Party Program, and it is in this sense that we emphasize the importance of sticking with one that can stand the test of a longer term.

We cannot determine the stages, the goals, and the tasks of Japan's social development based on wishful thinking. On these issues, we can only reach an accurate conclusion by undertaking a scientific analysis of the present-day situation in Japan. In this sense, the JCP Program represents a conclusion arrived at based on our world outlook of scientific socialism. If a party wants to establish an accurate program, it must carry out a ceaseless study that deepens, develops, and revises its world outlook. This is an effort that will test not only the accuracy of our understanding of the present-day situation in Japan and the world but also our theoretical capability to acquire a world outlook of scientific socialism to the utmost.

The JCP Program represents the party's strategy, but an appropriate program does not merely need to be acceptable to those within the party. Our predecessors described the Party Program as "a banner that the party publicly puts up" and as "a banner that the public uses to form opinions about the party."

How Japanese society is going to develop must be determined by the Japanese people; therefore, any JCP policy can only influence society when it is understood and supported by the majority of the people. For this reason, the revision of the JCP Program at this time focused on making it easier for the public to understand.

So these are the basic characteristics of the Party Program.

We have received many requests for various policies to be included in the JCP Program; however, I want you to know that the Party Program is neither a summary of the people's needs nor a complete collection of policy statements. As regards the issue of realizing the people's common demands, the task of the Party Program is to decide on changes necessary for meeting the diverse needs of the people in all walks of life. In the future, we will set forth concrete policies in various fields, in line with the Party Program and in line with the general situation of the time. The Party Program also sets forth major directions for immediate change, giving the policy-related activities of the JCP a consistent and a systemic character. I want you to understand this relationship between the Program and policies.

Main points of revision

Turning to current revisions, let me explain the proposal for the revision of the JCP Program.

The present JCP Program was adopted in 1961 after a long inner-party discussion that included two party congresses.

The central points set out at the time in the Program were as follows:

- the definition of the immediate Japanese way of transformation as a democratic revolution that includes the task of achieving national independence;

- the explication of the democratic revolution as a majority revolution that calls for any change in Japanese society to be carried out through the establishment of a stable majority in parliament;

- and the clear commitment to pursue a united front and a coalition government in all processes of social development.

The validity of this programmatic line has been confirmed in the more than forty years of political developments and party activities subsequent to its adoption.

As I stated in my report and in my concluding remarks at the 7th Central Committee Plenum, the revision at this time represents major progress in the programmatic line of the JCP in several areas, while maintaining the basic character of the present JCP.

First, we have developed the theory and the strategy of democratic revolution into a more realistic and a more rational set of guidelines for progressive change in Japanese society;

Second, having analyzed the historical changes which humanity experienced in the twentieth century, we have defined new characteristics of and an outlook for the development of the world; and,

Third, having studied in depth the theoretical aspects of scientific socialism, we have carried out a settlement of accounts concerning some past, fallacious legacies and have made clear the importance of the historical significance of socialism and communism as the ultimate objective of our movement.

You will note that I explained the basic issues of these points in my report to the 7th Central Committee Plenum, so I would like to focus on only the most important issues.

Japanese society and JCP in prewar days (concerning Part One)

Concerning prewar Japanese society and the Japanese Communist Party, Part One of the draft basically follows the text in the present Program, but we tried to improve its wording to make it easier to understand. We also added paragraphs concerning the Japanese war of aggression focusing on the basic events leading up to the war's outbreak and its escalation and on Japan's defeat, as well as on the calamities caused by the war of aggression.

As we have received many questions and opinions regarding Part One, which begins with a description of prewar Japanese society, let me explain the meaning of this description.

Events that took place before World War II constitute the starting point of Japanese Communist Party's activities. In prewar

days, Japanese society was one of the most brutally repressive of the world's capitalist countries, and there arose a struggle for a future society free of exploitation and oppression. History recorded an undaunted struggle against the emperor's autocracy and the war of aggression and a tireless struggle for peace and democracy. Many people fell to indescribable persecution in these opposition struggles. Many young people, along with central leaders of the JCP, gave their lives in these struggles.

In defiance of all hardship, our predecessors firmly maintained the belief that the people are sovereign, and they stood for the goal of the JCP of a peaceful and a democratic Japan as well as for a future society in which all men and women would be truly free. Theirs is a spirit which we must emulate in the new situations we face at present.

This is why it is important for the JCP Program to mention the struggles the JCP led for more than twenty years after its founding.

Secondly, I want to stress that knowledge of prewar events is essential for us to understand the present-day situation and the current challenges facing the JCP.

For example, you cannot understand "why Japan is under 'capitalism without rules'" unless you know the fact that until 1945 Japan was a society in which the people were deprived of all basic rights. Look at what the 1930s were like. In Europe, the Popular Front movement increased dramatically, and in France a major struggle in 1936 won historic reforms concerning wages, working hours, paid leave, and rights of collective bargaining for labor contracts. In that same period, Japan was about to escalate its aggression in Northeast China into a total war. The wartime system, which repressed workers and all other strata of people, was being strengthened year by year within the context of a Japanese society that had already deprived the people of all basic rights. Japan's "society without rules" is conspicuous because of these differences between Japan and Europe.

Just think why it is that Japan's arms buildup and dispatch of troops abroad are a grave problem causing strong opposition in many Asian countries. People can only understand why these acts

are problematic and why these acts cause opposition when they recognize the history of the Japanese war of aggression.

In setting out the way for a new diplomacy of peace for Japan, the draft states that we “attach importance to promoting friendship and exchange with Asian countries on the premise that Japan should express remorse for its history, for its war of aggression, and for its colonialism.”

Japan is the world’s only country to include peace provisions in its constitution. The JCP calls for the defense of the Constitution as its main task, and the diplomacy of the JCP as an opposition party earns the trust and support of many countries. You can only understand these issues, which at present take political center stage, when you understand their history.

Those who try to lead the effort to develop Japan’s future must have a deep understanding of the Japanese war of aggression and of the colonialism that caused enormous damage to the rest of Asia and the world, and they must have a full appreciation of Japan’s prewar society as well.

I hope you now have a conception of the meaning of the opening part of the JCP Program.

Essence of present Japanese society (concerning Part Two)

The draft Program points out two aspects that characterize the present Japanese situation. They are the U.S. domination of Japan and the control of the people by large corporations and businesses.

The events that have taken place during the last seven months since the JCP Central Committee 7th Plenum have tested the draft Program’s definition of the present-day Japanese situation. Many stated that the draft Program was helpful as a guideline for campaigning in the House of Representatives election. The proven usefulness of the draft Program shows its validity.

Linking Japan’s extraordinary subordination to the United States, the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces to Iraq, and the plan to adversely revise the Constitution

First, the draft Program characterizes Japan as being dominated by the United States in a condition of “extraordinary

national subservience to the United States.” The dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq, now under way, and the proposed adverse revision of the Constitution will further deepen Japan’s subordination to the United States.

Sending the SDF to battlefields in Iraq is a most flagrant violation of the Constitution. The government is carrying it out because it puts allegiance to the United States before its allegiance to the Constitution. This will drag Japan and its people into the terrible situation in which Japan will dispatch troops to fulfill its obligations within “the Japan-United States alliance partnership” whenever the United States starts a war in any part of the world, even if it is a preemptive strike or a war of aggression in violation of an international law. In fact, the Koizumi Cabinet is making legislative and other preparations to enable the SDF to go out to “any part of the world, at any time” as part of their day-to-day operations in case of requests by the United States for their dispatch overseas.

Furthermore, Prime Minister Koizumi has presented a timetable for enacting a constitutional revision in the party’s “electoral platform” in the recent House of Representatives general election. This evidently reveals his intention to go further in an attempt to revise the Constitution to further “Japan’s extraordinary subordination to the United States.”

It is ironic that those in favor of “Japan’s submission to the United States” describe themselves as “advocates of Japan’s independence” calling for a “revision to the Constitution, which was imposed on Japan by the United States.” A just reflection on past history reveals the absurdity of their logic.

Let us look back on history. Official U.S. government documents show that as early as 1948, the year after the new Constitution went into effect, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Defense had on their agendas a study on amending the Constitution to pave the way for Japan’s rearmament.

From the beginning, concerned U.S. officials were aware that revising the Japanese Constitution was no easy task. That is why Japan’s rearmament was carried out little by little, with Article 9 of the Constitution left ostensibly intact. The first step was the creation in 1950, at the time that the Korean War broke out, of the “National

Police Reserve” by order of General MacArthur of the Allied Forces. Four years later in 1954, it was renamed the Self-Defense Forces. This “interpretative revision” approach, as it is called today, is what was imposed on Japan by direct order of the United States.

The most flagrant example of such a stretched interpretation is the recent successive overseas dispatches of the SDF. Is it not well known that all of these dispatches are being carried out under coercive pressure from the United States?

Far from an effort to secure Japan’s “independence,” the call from the United States has been the major driving force that has boosted the movement for an adverse revision of the Japanese Constitution over the past fifty years. This is an evident fact of history, is it not?

And its final target is the specified adverse revision of the Constitution as the Koizumi Cabinet has presented in its “electoral platform.”

Advocates of revisions to the Constitution are not aiming to transform a dependent Japan into a free and independent country; their real aim is to use the Japanese Constitution as an instrument to make Japan’s subordination to the United States even more extraordinary. This can never be tolerated.

The JCP 7th Central Committee Report stressed that “defeating this system of Japan’s subordination to the United States is the central task facing Japan in the twenty-first century, and those who do not seriously address this task are not qualified to be politicians in the twenty-first century.” The struggle to prevent the SDF dispatch to Iraq and to defeat the designs for an adverse revision of the Constitution is not simply a grave task in defense of peace and democracy. It is also the key to the struggle for winning Japan’s sovereignty and independence.

This is what I would like to strongly appeal to you to consider.

Concerning the control exerted by large corporations and business sector

In analyzing the situation in Japan, the draft Program depicts the harmful influence of big business and of the financial sector as

another key characteristic of contemporary Japan. Regarding the nature of the control big business and financial institutions exert on Japan's political and economic systems, the draft Program points out that they "have placed the Japanese government under their strong influence and have made the most of the entire state machinery for their class interests." The draft Program goes on to argue, "Domestically, big business and the financial sector, linked with the U.S. domination of Japan, constitute the central forces currently dominating Japan and its people." This analysis is a clear definition about what is the center of the class-oriented ruling forces.

Let me talk about some points in relation to the control of Japan by big business and financial interests.

First, one major issue in the recent general election was the large-scale political intervention by big business and the financial sector. This intervention was an attempt to establish a two-party system, and it marked the resumption of political donations while specifying the policy goals to be achieved, screening the parties of their choice. This means that big business, feeling a sense of crisis over Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) politics, have started, more indiscreetly than ever, to exert their influence on politics. This is confirming proof, by their own political behavior, of the accuracy of the provision given by the draft Program that "big business and the financial sector constitute the central forces dominating Japan and its people."

Second, in a following section, the draft Program deals with the current situation of the Japanese economy that is under the tyrannical control of big business and financial institutions.

It says that in many fields related to the protection of the people's livelihoods and rights, we have not yet seen established any such rules as are commonly accepted in Europe; the Japanese government, on behalf of big business and the financial sector, has continued to pursue its economic and financial policy giving top priority to securing the interests of big business.

All of this is typically revealed in its "upside-down" approach to financial policy.

Thus, the draft Program brings to sharp focus the marked brutality of the control in sharp contrast to common practices in European countries.

Describing another major problem of the Japanese economy, the draft Program also points out that “U.S. intervention in the Japanese economy” is a major influence that has misled the Japanese government in its economic policy and has caused the current crisis and contradictions in the Japanese economy.

What calls for your attention here is this: plans for democratic economic reform in Part Four are proposals for various reforms inevitably called for by the current situation as analyzed in Part Two. These include overcoming the current situation marked by “capitalism without rules,” regulating the interests of big business democratically, changing the economic policy of the Japanese government radically, and removing the unreasonable intervention in the Japanese economy by the United States.

The question of deciding the course of democratic reforms in view of the correct analysis of the situation is not limited to the economic part of the draft Program. I would like to call your attention to the fact that on the whole, the draft Program emphasizes the coherence and unity between its analysis of the current situation and its reform proposals.

Third, the old JCP Program invariably used the phrase “control by Japanese monopoly capital” in describing any form of control, political as well as economic, by big business. Namely, “Japan’s monopoly capital” had been used as an expression describing the economic and political rulers of Japan put together. This simplified expression represented our previous stand that “Japanese monopoly capital” had been responsible for all such actions by the Japanese government including the conclusion of the Japan-United States Security Treaty, the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces overseas, and the agreement to strengthen Japan-United States joint operations.

However, as the JCP Central Committee 7th Plenum Report states, political control and economic control differ in substance as well as in the way they can be overcome. With special regard to this point, the draft Program replaces the phrase “Japan’s monopoly capital” with “central forces that dominate Japan and its people.” Thus, the new draft Program definitely specifies big business and the financial sector as the key players. We changed the substance of our understanding of political

control by offering a more detailed description based on the current reality.

While we say that big business and the financial sector constitute “the central forces dominating Japan and its people” even at a political level, they do not always intervene in the same way at the political level. At times, they take more exposed and more reactionary approaches; while at other times, pressed by various power relationships, they may adopt more indirect approaches. This difference of approach can be a focus of political struggle. The political struggle over ending the cozy relationship among politicians, bureaucrats, and the economic sector is one such example.

In relation to this, in last year’s general election, we squarely fought against the political interference of the financial sector’s clamoring for the “establishment of a two-party system.” It was a great experience that involved what was outlined in the draft Program. Only according to the new Program could we question the difference of approaches taken by big business to place politicians under its influence. This means that when big business and the financial sector attempt a new form of political intervention, as we have seen lately, we can correctly identify the danger. The previous Program that reduced all forces into the concept of “Japan’s monopoly capital” would have led us to regard this kind of attack as “a storm in a teacup” within the framework of control of the ruling class.

Let us grasp this situation at its core

The last point I want to stress in relation to how to comprehend Japan’s current situation in view of the JCP Program is that the two characteristics of Japanese society identified by the Program reveal the fundamental contradiction between the present system and the people’s interests.

Adverse changes may often occur in the political superstructure, but the forces currently in power lack any will or ability to touch any reform involving the root of the Japanese people’s domination by the United States or by big business and the financial sector. So far as it is true, no “reorganization” or apparent “reforms” on the surface of politics can be a solution to the fundamental

contradictions emerging from the bottom of Japanese society, nor can it establish a lasting, secure government, either.

As long as these contradictions persist, it is inevitable that the people will seek a way out on a national scale, no matter what zigzags there may be in the development of the situation, and that is why we can envisage the formation of a majority in support of a democratic reform of politics.

This must be the core of our recognition of the Party Program, grasping the present situation thoroughly. It is important to firmly maintain this recognition particularly at a time when adverse moves are taking place, such as setbacks in elections and intense anticommunist attacks.

The world situation—From the twentieth century to the twenty-first century (concerning Part Three)

Part Three is given to an analysis of the world situation. It includes the changes and the achievements of the twentieth century in Section Seven; a summary and an assessment of the actual situation of movements toward socialism in Section Eight; a view of world capitalism in Section Nine; and a listing of tasks for international solidarity in Section 10. Let me explain these analyses from the viewpoint of changes in the world structure.

Collapse of colonialism brought about a major change in the world

One viewpoint involves the fall of the colonial system [as having] caused major changes worldwide

The draft Program points out that the most fundamental change of the twentieth century was the collapse of colonialism. It is significant as a major transformation affecting the making of the world.

First, in the early twentieth century, a majority of the world's peoples lived in colonies or in dependent countries, and they were excluded from world politics. As these colonies and dependent countries became independent, they became proactive participants in international politics. This phenomenon has set a new trend in the world in the twenty-first century.

Secondly, it is important to note that in the course of these changes, a new international order emerged in opposition to colonization. Subsequently, countries practicing monopoly capitalism were forced to change their ways.

The third point is, in the arena of international politics, international organizations, such as the Non-Aligned Summit, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), are increasingly playing a role. The United Nations is being called upon to abandon its conventional way of being led by great powers and to become an international organization that truly represents the whole international community.

Fourthly, the international emergence and development of the Islamic countries show clearly that the question of coexistence among different cultures with different values has inevitably become a major issue on the international agenda.

These are the main points concerning the changes that have taken place. The twenty-first century is expected to witness even greater development in the same direction.

New development in coexistence of two world systems

Another viewpoint involves how the world has changed because of the developing coexistence of two world systems.

The rule of the world by capitalism was replaced by the coexistence of two socioeconomic systems. This change marked the most outstanding feature of the twentieth century. Indeed, this characteristic persisted even after the collapse of regimes in the Soviet Union and in the Eastern European countries. A new development is taking place in the area of coexistence between the two socioeconomic systems. This is an important characteristic of the world situation at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

As the draft Program states, efforts toward building socialism that began with the October Revolution in Russia are continuing in some countries in their own ways. In particular in Asia, China and Vietnam have begun to pursue "socialism through a market economy." This is taking place in a large region with a population of more than 1.3 billion (China's 1.3 billion and Vietnam's

80 million), and it is becoming a factor for change in the world's structure and picture. Politically, economically, and diplomatically speaking, it will definitely be a significant world current in the twenty-first century.

On the definition of "countries striving to achieve socialism"

Several questions have been asked about this issue.

The first question was about the draft Program's evaluation of China and Vietnam as countries "striving to achieve socialism." The question asked was if this means that the JCP affirms every aspect of what is taking place in these countries.

Our definition of these countries as "would-be socialist countries" is aimed at describing them as countries that maintain a direction toward socialism. It is our independent opinion.

As we have explained on various occasions, we do not swallow whatever a government or the leaders of a ruling party of a country have said in order to judge if the country is trying to achieve socialism. I would like to stress again that we voluntarily make such a judgment based on corroborative evidence.

The JCP does not easily consider a nation to be "socialist" just because its citizens or its political forces declare it to be "socialist." This is one of the fundamental lessons we have learned from the history of the Soviet Union.

The description represents both our recognition of and our judgment of the direction of a country, and it does not mean that the JCP agrees with everything that that nation does; as the draft Program states, "they (would-be socialist countries) still have political and economic problems to solve."

However, when we think about the affairs of other countries, we must keep in mind that the JCP is not an arbiter of processes of social transformation or an interventionist. What kind of a course a particular country takes to achieve socialism should be decided by the people and political forces of that country as is their voluntary responsibility. Although the JCP actively researches situations in various countries and learns valuable lessons from the experiences of others, it is not in a position to criticize other countries for holding different

opinions or for establishing different timelines for solving their problems.

When we are openly attacked or interfered with by governments or political parties of other countries, we openly refute the attacks, but we stick to the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries. We have made it a rule to take a position and to publicly make a critical statement only when we encounter problems having international characteristics or having the potential to negatively influence the rest of the world.

This is the principle of diplomatic policy that the JCP has consistently maintained. We strongly believe that it is an important rule in developing relations with various countries and civilizations and in coexisting with them.

The other question asked was whether North Korea is counted as a “would-be socialist country.” As I answered in the Central Committee 7th Plenum, we consider China, Vietnam, and Cuba as countries making practical efforts to achieve socialism, and we do not include North Korea among such countries.

*The practical significance of new developments
in the theory of imperialism*

The third viewpoint is about the deepening contradictions of world capitalism.

Referring to these economic contradictions, Section 9 of the draft Program analyzes at its outset the state of capitalism from the viewpoint that the contradictions of capitalism means “it is incapable of regulating the enormously developed productive power” citing seven typical manifestations found in the present-day world. This is a brief analysis but very important. This analysis is connected to the explication of the necessity of socializing the means of production, which I will touch on later concerning “Part Five: For a Communist/Socialist Society.” It is also connected to the analysis of the conditions for a worldwide change in socioeconomic system.

Concerning political contradictions involved in world capitalism, the report to the JCP 7th Central Committee Plenum pointed out that the view that puts monopoly capitalism and imperialism in the same light is no longer practical under the present conditions and that it is not appropriate to regard all monopoly capitalist

countries as imperialists on the grounds of their economic system. This also has something to do with the change that took place in the twentieth century in the state of the world, its structure and power balance, as represented by the collapse of colonialism. It is important to look at this point.

In this regard, I want to stress two points which I deem important for our practical activities.

One is that labeling by a political party of a country as “imperialist” inevitably implies that this party is critical of and even condemning that country for its policy of aggression and imperialist acts.

For this reason, the draft Program makes it clear that, in the present-day international order outlawing colonization, identifying a country as ‘imperialist’ requires a new criterion to ascertain whether its policies and actions systematically have an aggressive character in addition to its being a monopoly capitalist country.

This is a criterion immediately necessary for analyzing world politics on the ground.

Using this criterion, the draft explicates that U.S. foreign policy represents a systematic “imperialist” policy in real terms. This makes the definition given by the draft Program an exact criticism of U.S. policies.

In the present-day world, if we were to stick to the old definition that imperialism is merely a political act committed by countries which are economically at the stage of monopoly capitalism, the term “imperialism” would be effective for only political condemnation; no country would receive the blow of its criticism since colonialism has been abandoned, yet obviously imperialism remains a force in the present-day world.

The other important point is that this question has an important bearing on the objectives and future outlook of the peace struggle. In Lenin’s day, if one thought that popular struggles and changes in the political situation may be able to force monopoly capitalist countries to abandon their colonialist policies or that it would be possible to prevent an imperialist war under the monopoly capitalist system, one was criticized for lacking an understanding of the aggressive nature of imperialism. That is because such a thing was impossible in those days.

In sharp contrast, the present-day world has seen a sea change in this regard. For example, the draft Program in its section on “National independence, security, and foreign policy” for “democratic changes in Japanese society” makes a proposal for eight-point peace diplomacy. If this proposal had been made in Lenin’s day, most of these points would have been regarded as a mere fantasy of one who misguidedly expected monopoly capitalism to be compatible with nonimperialist policy. In the contemporary world, international peace movements and democratic movements regard this proposal as a realizable task and are actually pursuing such objectives.

I want to emphasize that these and some other points in the draft Program concerning the new development of the theory on imperialism will have great practical significance for the analysis of the present-day world.

Our outlook on the twenty-first-century world

The next concern is the struggle over the two international orders.

The draft Program states that the founding of the United Nations was a milestone of the twentieth century, and it highly evaluates the outlawing of war as showing the major direction of the world’s development. The U.N. Charter established the principle that no country has a right to interfere with the internal affairs of other countries. It made clear that any use of force in international relations must be in compliance with U.N. decisions. It also provided that arbitrary, national military action is only legitimate when such action is taken in self-defense. These provisions were included in the U.N. Charter with the aim of establishing an international order of peace dedicated to the prevention of war.

Although the U.N. Charter proclaims an international order of peace as its objective, such an international order remains to be realized fully. It is necessary to note that at issue in the struggle over the question of war and peace in the twenty-first century is the task to make such an international order of peace a reality.

From this point of view, the draft Program puts forward the issue of choosing between the two international orders as a central

task, which we must carry out in the struggle to achieve world peace: one choice results in peace based on the U.N. Charter and the other choice is plagued with war, interventionism, aggression, oppression, and tyrannical U.S. policy.

This confrontation between the two world orders has expression in most international questions, the most immediate one being the issue of Iraq. This is the issue that most acutely challenges a country's outlook on the world and its support of an international order.

In deciding to send Japan's Self-Defense Forces to Iraq, Prime Minister Koizumi argues that the move is a contribution to the international community. By the international community he means an order led by the United States, one that puts U.S. interests over those of world peace.

This view is different from that held by the JCP and that of other peaceful and democratic forces, which regard the international community as being composed of many independent, sovereign states and of many cultures with different values. In the international community, no superpower has a right to be authoritarian in putting its own interests above those of world peace. An international order based on the U.N. Charter must be the most respected priority.

The term "international community" is thus used in very different ways by Prime Minister Koizumi and by the JCP.

In other words, international struggles as well as domestic struggles concerning the Iraq War have historic significance in that they have shown in a specific way that the choice between two international orders is a focal issue of world politics in the twenty-first century.

If you have an accurate understanding of the historical sequence of events marking the transition from the twentieth century to the twenty-first century, you will know which of these two international orders represents the future to be developed and which represents the past that has been inherited from the previous era.

That concludes my explanation of the draft Program in regard to the world situation, but I would also like to add that the

propositions put forward in this part of the draft Program have been met with favorable international reactions as evidenced by responses to our diplomacy as an opposition party.

We will continue to develop our international activities using a broad perspective to ascertain the direction of the tumultuous world of the twenty-first century.

The democratic revolution and a democratic coalition government (concerning Part Four)

Now let us move on to “Part Four: The Democratic Revolution and a Democratic Coalition Government.”

The democratic revolution theory is the core of the JCP Program line. When we adopted this policy of pursuing a democratic revolution in Japan, a developed capitalist country, it was an idea unparalleled among the communist movements of the world at that time. We have enriched this policy through our activities of the past forty-two years. In drafting the Program, we have tried to make it more up-to-date and more rational, building on these practical and theoretical achievements.

Concerning the democratic revolution line

For the past forty-three years, Liberal Democratic Party politics have maintained a policy of subservience to the United States, following the Japan-United States Security Treaty and serving the interests of large corporations and businesses. These politics are deeply contrary to the people’s interests. Against this background, the JCP, guided by the Program, countered with a policy for change, which if implemented would take Japan from a dependent and occupied country to an independent and sovereign country. Additionally, politics would be transformed from a system serving businesses to one in which the people would play the key part.

Only the democratic revolution policy of the JCP has proposed in a systematic way a confrontation with LDP politics to change Japan’s course. Today, some opposition parties are even joining in the currents for a power change within the framework of LDP-style politics, backed by the strategy of businesses for establishing a “two-party system.” In this context, the significance

of the democratic revolution policy that the JCP has put forward has more bearing than ever on the Japanese situation.

We have established this policy based on our own analysis of the Japanese situation, but I think our experience includes universal values to a certain extent.

Take the “globalization” of the world economy, for example. How to tackle this problem of globalization that is contrary to the interest of the people has now become a leading issue worldwide. The JCP put forth a proposal for the establishment of a “democratic international economic order” (JCP 22nd Congress Resolution), but some European parties, based on the socialist revolution theory, tried to counterpropose the goal of “opposing capitalistic globalization.”

Despite this fact, I understand that the actual movements of the people in Europe are developing almost in line with the idea proposed by the JCP, i.e., to counter “globalization” with the big powers at the center with a “democratic international order.”

This can be understood to mean that the validity of the goal of democratic reform within the framework of capitalism has been vindicated on the international stage.

In our exchanges with other parties and organizations, many people have given attention to the line of the democratic revolution as maintained by the JCP. They do so because they see in the Japanese movement’s policy of democratic revolution a way of achieving a socialist transformation by way of democratic change in a developed capitalist country.

Characteristics of rational and realistic elaboration

Regarding the characteristics of the Program’s rational and realistic elaboration in bringing this line to completion, we put forth the following two points as the fundamentals of the whole framework:

First, the goal to be achieved by a democratic revolution is “democratic reform within the framework of capitalism”; and,

Second, a democratic coalition government will carry out these democratic reforms and will carry through a revolution with the support of the people.

As an example, we classified various governments provided for in the previous Program, such as “a people’s government,” “a government based on the national democratic united front,” “a government instrumental for defeating the rule of U.S. imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital” or “a united front government” on the objectives that the democratic forces can agree on temporarily, and “a revolutionary government or revolutionary power,” into two categories—i.e., “a democratic coalition government” and “a united front government” during a transitional period.

As a result, a present-day perspective of the future is clearer than ever. At the same time and while retaining flexibility as regards the Party Program, we propose to address complex situations foreseeable in the future.

This ensures the fundamental position of the JCP for social progress allowing it to weather all sorts of turbulence.

In the Program, provision is not made for an action program but for the basic content of democratic reform

One of the major points in the revision is that the former action program has been changed into provisions for the basic content of democratic reform. I hope you will grasp the significance of this change.

The former Program only gave a general description of the “genuine independence” and the “democratic change of politics, of the economy, and of society” to be carried out by the democratic revolution. Underlying this thinking was a reflection of the situation in the days when it was adopted when the people’s movement and the Party’s struggle had not yet reached a stage where such a transformation was taken up in terms of specific agendas.

An action program is a list of immediate demands of various strata and classes of people as well as the corresponding tasks required in various fields in social life. The Party will strive to achieve them, but the essential role of the Program is to answer the fundamental question as to what sort of transformation could satisfy these demands.

The draft revision categorizes the content of the transformation to be carried out by the revolution into three areas: “national independence, security, and diplomacy,” “Japan’s Constitution and democracy,” and “economic democracy.”

We took heed of the content of the revision to show the basic direction for the reform, not a temporary direction. We formulated reforms in various fields, on the basis of a ten- or twenty-year perspective. You can find here basic points for reform, unaffected by a given situation and a given change in government policy.

Among suggestions for amendments, there were many calls for the betterment of content and of wording appropriate for the action program. We would like to find ways to address such demands, not by inserting words into the Program but by means suitable for the character of such demands.

Policies for democratic reform, put forward in the draft revised Program, constitute the fundamentals of our activities. Herein may be found the reason for the consistency of JCP policies. In the period running up to the campaigns for the recent House of Representatives election, many party organizations worked hard using the policies embraced by the draft revised Program as the pillar of their policy-making activity. This is a very positive tendency.

Let us make efforts to regularly publicize the Party's policy for remaking Japan so that the Party Program is usefully employed.

The issues of the emperor system and of the Self-Defense Forces

We received a number of questions and opinions concerning the emperor system and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF). Some said, "The JCP position is ambiguous." Others said, "It is irresponsible to shift the resolutions of these issues onto the consensus of the Japanese people."

The JCP's positions are clear on both issues, and by explaining the positions, I hope to end misconceptions in regard to these issues.

As regards the emperor system, the JCP takes the stance that "the present system allowing an individual or a family to be a symbol of 'the unity of the people' is not compatible with democracy and the principle that all people are equal." Further, the JCP believes that "the consistent implementation of the principle of people's sovereignty calls for a political system to be established under a democratic republic."

As regards the SDF, the draft Program takes a position in favor of the “complete implementation of Article 9 of the Constitution, which requires the dissolution of the SDF.” This clearly specifies our recognition that the SDF contravenes Article 9 of the Constitution, and our objective is the complete implementation of Article 9, which can only be achieved through the dissolution of the SDF.

The declaration of objectives only, however, is not sufficient for a political party’s program. Only after specifying the way to accomplish its objectives can a party be said to have a program. In light of this fact and considering our objectives, the draft Program sets forth the way to accomplish our objectives.

As to the questions of the emperor system and the SDF, the majority opinion today is in favor of them. Until this condition changes and the majority of the people agree to abolishing or dissolving them, we cannot make any changes in these institutions.

As for the question of the SDF, it is clear that its existence is unconstitutional. Once a democratic coalition government is established under the Constitution, the government will need to express its position as to how to resolve the contradictions between the SDF and the Constitution from the day of its inauguration. Thus, the Program indicates a way to reach this stage.

The question of the emperor system should be dealt with differently in that any change requires constitutional revision. How we see this issue today is fundamentally different from that of the prewar era of the absolute emperor system, where democracy and peace could never be guaranteed without solving the issue of the emperor system.

It is true that we do need to talk actively about the JCP’s views on the Constitution based on our fundamental belief in democracy.

However, the primary responsibility revolving around the Constitution today is to oppose any attempt to revise the Constitution since the primary purpose of proposed revision is to adversely revise Article 9. Therefore, we currently need to defend the present Constitution. The JCP in the short run will not make proposals for partial constitutional revision. Therefore, as to resolving the issue of the emperor system, which also includes the

question of when in the future the proposal for abolishing it could be put forth, the draft Program goes no further than listing it as a question to be overcome “when the time is ripe to do so.”

There was a small amount of criticism about the solution the draft Program stated. According to this criticism, waiting for the people’s consensus or for a decision by the will of the majority of the people was just postponing the problem. We think such criticism is untenable without walking away from our commitment to revolution by the majority and without rejecting the principle of people’s sovereignty.

In the draft Program, we stopped defining the system, which recognizes the emperor as a symbol of the nation, as a monarchy. There were some who argued against this change and for sticking with the previous definition of monarchy. As mentioned in the report to the Central Committee 7th Plenum, it is clear in the constitutional debate that in a country where the sovereignty resides with the people, a person who “shall not have powers related to government” cannot be considered as a “monarch.”

In addition, by regarding the emperor as a monarch, the forces of reaction are attempting to give the emperor “powers related to government,” if only partially, despite the constitutional prohibition. Arguments calling for the definition of the emperor as a monarch to be preserved are tantamount to practically pleasing those forces of reaction.

There was also a suggestion that the JCP Program should make clear whether Japan is a monarchy or a republic. Even though Japan adopted the democratic principle that sovereign power resides with the people, given the present circumstances, Japan belongs to neither of these categories. Thus, the report to the Central Committee 7th Plenum described the character of Japan’s polity as one in which “owing to various historical circumstances, the emperor system has been sustained in some form or another under which the principle of sovereignty residing with the people was embodied in a peculiar way to Japan.” It is important to grasp this peculiarity based on historical facts.

Any matter goes through transitional phases. When the will of the people in the future allows Japan’s national institutions to make steps forward towards a democratic republic, the phase for

overcoming Japan's peculiar institution will have arrived. Also, the draft Resolution further describes this broad direction for Japan's social progress.

People's parliamentarianism and the revolution by the majority

Concerning people's parliamentarianism and the revolution by the majority, the 13th paragraph of the draft Program, which describes a path to revolution, hardly requires additional explanation, as it was comprehensively explained before, but I would like to pick up on one point concerning the Diet and the government.

Regarding Diet activities, the 11th JCP Congress in 1970 formulated a policy of people's parliamentarianism, and this marked an important step to explicating the programmatic line.

"The Diet not only reveals the real state of politics before the people, but also plays an important role as an arena of the struggle to reflect the demands of the people in the state administration including the realization of reforms in the interests of the people. Furthermore, in the present political system of Japan, there exists a possibility to legally establish a democratic government on the basis of gaining a majority in the Diet" (The 11th JCP Congress Resolution).

This formulation is of great significance in elucidating the three tasks of Diet activities:

- (1) The Diet reveals the real state of politics before the people;
- (2) The Diet is an arena of the struggle to reflect the demands of the people in the state administration including the realization of reforms in the interests of the people; and
- (3) The Diet legally establishes a democratic government on the basis of a majority gained in the Diet.

In the draft Program, these three tasks are fully interwoven into the provisions of the Party Program.

I would also like you to take note of the depiction that links the JCP's principle of "the people are the key players" with the aim of establishing a democratic coalition government on the basis of a majority gained in the Diet.

"A political party that consistently stands for the 'people first' principle in its activities, the JCP fights to establish a democratic coalition government supported by a parliamentary majority."

This means that the JCP policy of establishing a democratic coalition government by gaining a majority in the Diet is not a strategy, but it is a policy based on the democratic principle of “the people are the key players,” under which the JCP has consistently stood. What embodies this principle as a policy of a revolutionary movement is the idea of “revolution by the majority,” which depends on the support of the majority of the people for any change in Japanese society.

This policy can be encapsulated advocating a “revolution by winning the majority in the parliament,” and it has a clear, historical context in the theory of revolution espoused in scientific socialism since Marx and Engels.

As I briefly mentioned before when describing the issues of the emperor system and of the SDF, this draft Program is permeated by the policy of revolution by the majority, underpinned by the “people first” principle, through all the stages of social progress, from the stage of democratic revolution to that of socialist revolution. I would like you to deeply understand this point.

Toward a socialist/communist society (concerning Part Five)

Part Five of the Program is a section to which we paid special attention in drafting the revision. I want to first talk about our major premise.

Concerning the question of scientifically assessing the failure of Soviet society

First of all, it was essential to establish a clear view of Soviet society before developing a theory on future society in the JCP Program.

In assessing the Soviet Union, the JCP distinguishes its early period under the leadership of Lenin and its later period of degeneration and downfall that began under the leadership of Stalin. An assessment of Soviet society after Stalin is an issue the JCP began to work on in the course of its struggle against Soviet interference with the JCP that began in 1964.

During that struggle, the JCP perceived the following realities from an early period.

(1) The Soviet Union carried out not only interference with the JCP but also launched an invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and an aggression against Afghanistan in 1979. We have pointed out that a socioeconomic system that openly carries out interference, invasion, or aggression cannot be deemed socialist.

(2) We have said that a socioeconomic system that carries out a reign of terror, such as the reign of terror carried out by the Soviet Union—a massive repression of its own people, who should be the key players of society—cannot be socialist.

While the JCP established its understanding of the Soviet Union in the early stages of this struggle, it was at its 22nd Congress in 1994 that the JCP made a fundamental, historical reexamination of Soviet society, including its economic system, and arrived at the conclusion that it had nothing in common with socialism. In drawing that conclusion, we particularly paid attention to several points.

First, although the Soviet Union technically carried out “nationalization” and “collectivization,” these measures did not result in transferring the means of production to the people. On the contrary, the application of these measures resulted in the exclusion of the people from economic management, thus laying economic foundations for authoritarianism and bureaucracy under the Stalinist leadership, which took full control of the economy.

Second, a vast amount of prison labor supported the Soviet system. Millions of peasants were forced out of rural areas before becoming the victims of massive repression and being forced to provide slave labor. The millions sent to concentration camps every year were mobilized as prison labor supporting the Soviet economy, in particular carrying out huge construction projects. This system had a role in supporting the autocracy that was taking control of the entire society through the implementation of terror.

At the same time, an objective and impartial assessment requires attention to the systems concerning the guarantee of the people’s livelihood. In the Soviet Union, social security systems that guaranteed minimum living standards took on the character of socialism, but these were limited to the realm of distribution and did not extend to that of production. Thus, they were not incorporated into the basic elements forming the economic structure of the society.

Based on these points, we drew the following conclusions:

First, the degeneration during and after the Stalin era was characterized by an antisocialist system that not only denied democracy in the political superstructure and violated the right to national self-determination but also oppressed the working people and precluded the people from economic management.

Second, the Soviet Union was a society in which the people were denied access to the management of the economy, including agriculture and industry, and in which the people could even be described as oppressed. It was also a society sustained by millions of prisoners providing a slave labor force. Such a society cannot be considered a socialist society or one in transition to socialism.

These are the conclusions of the JCP Twentieth Congress included in the Program.

Although the Soviet Union collapsed more than a decade ago, the issue of the Soviet Union is not merely a question of history. Even today, there are many people throughout the world who believe that the Soviet Union was a socialist country. Some try to use the Soviet Union as a textbook example of socialism, and because of its obvious failure, this misuse is instrumental for exalting capitalism. Others, who are seriously striving to achieve socialism, misguidedly try to depict Soviet society as a form of socialism, even if it was irredeemably corrupted.

We believe it is necessary for those concerned individuals who are seriously exploring a new way to overcome capitalism and to create a new society in the twenty-first century to adopt a critical attitude on the issue of the former Soviet Union. I mean that they must break away from the view that Soviet society was a form of socialism even if its bureaucratic autocracy and its aggressive hegemony were essential for paving the way in a capitalist world for the socialist movement to become the majority force.

An overall review of the international "established theory" originating from Lenin

Second, in order to explore the way to attain a socialist/communist society under the conditions of the modern era, it has been deemed necessary to assimilate and to develop the theoretical

achievements left by the predecessors of scientific socialism in this particular field.

At the international level, the development of research in this theoretical area has been dragging behind. No serious recent efforts have been made to evaluate the theoretical legacies of Marx and Engels, especially after the Soviet Union declared the “completion of socialism.” The theory of the future society that dominated thought was that of a two-stage evolution of communist society as developed by Lenin in his work entitled *State and Revolution*, relying on Marx’s “Critique of the Gotha Programme.”

This theory divided the evolution of a future society into two distinct stages according to the way products are distributed. The “first stage” is one in which the principle of “working according to one’s abilities and receiving according to one’s work” is realized; while the “higher stage” is where the principle of “working according to one’s capacities and receiving according to one’s needs” is established. Usually, the “first stage” is called the “socialist stage” and the “higher stage” is known as the “communist stage.”

This two-stage theory has been considered to be the “established theory” among international communist movements for envisioning the future society. In the Soviet Union, this theory was given the role of rationalizing the state at different times. Especially since the Stalinist era, Soviet society departed from the socialist path to evolve on a completely different path by using slogans such as “socialism has been completed” or “now is the time for heading towards a communist society.”

However, the vision of future society held by our predecessors, who built the theory of scientific socialism, is far too rich in substance to be readily accommodated in the “established theory.” If we want to preserve this vision with all it contains and develop it, we cannot but make a thorough review of this internationally established theory including an attempt to correct the errors made by Lenin in interpreting Marx’s ideas.

The following points have emerged as problematic in the course of the Party’s overall review of the theory.

The idea of dividing the future society itself into two stages, differentiated by their method of product distribution, the distribution “according to work” and that of “according to needs” is not an idea from Marx but an interpretation of Marx’s thought by Lenin. In fact, in “Critique of the Gotha Programme,” Marx strongly warns against discussing and envisioning the future society by focusing on the question of distribution.

Both Marx and Engels, when envisioning the future society, refrained from presenting a ready-made blueprint based on a fixed form of society. According to them, such an approach would tie the hands of future generations who would engage in the construction of a new society. They did not make an exception for the distribution method in that effort.

As the core of a socialist transformation to be inscribed in the program of a political party, Marx asked above all that we clearly spell out how to change the mode of production, or more concretely, to set out the “socialization of the means of production.” The “socialization of the means of production” is thus the key concept for understanding the future society.

Both Marx and Engels saw the future society as a stage of formidable development similar to a “major episode” in human history. They did not adopt a narrow view of taking the realization of the “distribution according to one’s needs” as the indicator of the completion of socialism. The main content of social development should be the effort for ensuring everyone the freedom of living, for achieving a thorough development of human abilities, and for maintaining remarkable scientific, technological, cultural, and moral advancements in the society as a whole.

Part Five has been drafted on the basis of the theoretical positions mentioned above.

What then should we call the future society?

Let me answer by explaining a few main points on this question in the draft Program, though not in a particular order.

The following is a summary of new ideas included in the vision of the future society presented in the draft.

First is the question of what to call the future society.

The draft Program calls for an end to dividing the future society into a two-stage society or a socialist society followed by a communist society. Marx and Engels used these two terms to describe the future society but not to differentiate them in terms of developmental level. Indeed, these two terms express the same society in different ways; they do not differentiate a higher stage from a lower one.

Going back to the original usage of these two different terms, the draft Program introduces the expression “socialist-communist society” in order not to divide the future society into two different stages but to designate the substance of that future society.

This does not signify, however, that the terms “socialist” or “communist” will never be used to describe a future society. The draft uses the term “socialist” separately.

There is a complex background to the question of what to call the future society.

In the classics, Marx in *Capital* expressed the future society as “a communist society,” while Engels in *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* and *Anti-Dühring* used the term “socialist society”—but both of these terms mean the same thing.

Obviously, they continue to be in usage in Japan as well as continuing into the world of the future, but often they appear in their conventional and false usages to mean different developmental stages of the future society.

The fact that the JCP in its Program introduces the expression “socialist-communist society,” putting both “socialist” and “communist” explicitly together, shows that the Party uses the terms “socialism” and “communism” as having the same meaning for indicating the future society in accordance with their original usage.

This is the main purpose of this particular amendment. Party members should understand that they do not have to always use both words together in their discussions.

By the way, renouncing the two-stage theory does not mean that we deny the possibility that the future society may evolve through different stages.

I told you earlier that Marx said that the “main episode” of human history would begin with the future society. According to

his forecast, the “main episode” would last far longer than the whole of human history experienced up to that point. At that time, the life of the solar system was said to be several millions of years, and Engels predicted that the “main episode” of human history would have a similar duration and last for “several millions of years or several hundreds of thousands of generations.” The current human knowledge of the cosmos makes it possible for human society to last in a time scale with a hundred or a thousand times greater than what was originally envisaged by Marx at that time.

Marx and Engels admitted that there would naturally be various stages during that period, but they abstained from making assumptions about these stages. We should adopt their principled position on this question.

Two angles for understanding the “means of production”

Secondly, there are two angles from which to view the “socialization of the means of production.” The focus of our argument about a future society has been shifted onto the “socialization of the means of production.” I said that this is the key concept for a future society. It is very important to understand it in depth. First I want to give two angles from which we should grasp the significance of the “socialization of the means of production.”

The first angle is the need to deeply understand that the “socialization of the means of production” is a necessary and a lawful path for the society to surmount the contradictions of capitalism.

In Part Three, which was given over to an analysis of the world situation and of the capitalist world, we recognized seven specific manifestations of the contradictions of capitalist economy. They are “the worsening living conditions of the broad strata of the people, the widening gap between rich and poor, the cycles of economic recession and massive unemployment, the rampant speculative financial investment beyond national borders, the global destruction of environmental conditions, the heavy burden of the negative legacy of colonialism, and the exacerbating poverty (or the North-South problem) in the countries of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.” The draft Program also

points out that these contradictions of capitalism have as their expression “the largest scale and sharpest form ever” in that capital is “incapable of regulating the enormously developed level of productive power.” This contradiction fundamentally arises from the very nature of capitalism in which individual capital is in possession of the means of production since production and the economy are moved by capital’s quest for profit as the central motive power.

The socialization of the means of production is defined as a socialist task and as an inevitable way out of this contradiction.

The Japanese polity, as a member of the capitalist world, faces a similar contradiction. Carrying out democratic change may mark a significant stage toward a historic advance in light of people’s livelihoods and the Japanese economy, but it will not remove the contradictions inherent to capitalism. To remove the contradictions at their source, it is necessary for Japanese society to advance as the next step from a democratic to a socialist one.

To make clear that the transformation is a necessity, the present society must come to understand in concrete terms that it needs the change. This is why the JCP in the last few years has developed our view on how the twenty-first century should unfold. This vision has been published in such publications as “On Marx’s Scientific View—A Discussion of Capitalism and Socialism in the Twenty-First Century,” among others.

Only by making unmistakably clear that a future society is to achieve the socialization of the means of production by fundamentally redressing the contradictions of the present society can we establish the superiority of a socialist/communist society over a capitalist one.

The second angle concerns an outlook on human history. It is a view of history in which the “socialization of the means of production” enables humanity to become what it should become, to return to its origins, which will mark a new epoch of human history.

A deeper look at history shows that the means of production has been the means by which humankind worked upon nature.

During the dawn of human history, which probably lasted for at least several thousand years, men and women were originally designed to work upon nature as producers using all the means of production at their disposal. This is a natural picture of men and women as possessors of the means of production.

The transition into class-based societies drastically changed the relations. During subsequent class-based societies, which include the three major systems of slavery, feudalism, and capitalism and which have lasted for several thousand years in total, producers were severed from the means of production, and the means of production came under the possession of rulers. The mainstream mode of production is now one in which producers have to work for rulers, who are strangers.

In the most recent or capitalist society that is based on exploitation, the means of production and productive power have been highly developed to set out a material basis for a new form of society. At the same time, the means of production have developed to such an extent that an individual corporation can no longer control the enormously developed level of productive power. On the producers' side, as a group, they have acquired a new ability to influence this highly developed means of production. In this we see the general characteristic of the capitalist era.

Here, the development of a new stage in which the link between producers and the means of production is recovered by society as a community coming into possession of the means of production through social changes comes up on the agenda of development towards the "main episode" of human history.

I want to stress that this is the significance of the historical objective of socializing the means of production as seen in the greater perspective of human history.

The question of private property

Now, let us move on to the provision on the "socialization of the means of production" in the draft Program.

The draft Program summarizes the significance of the "socialization of the means of production" in three points, which the 7th Central Committee Plenum called the "three advantages." There is a reference to one more important advantage in the draft Program.

It is that what is to be socialized will be confined to the means of production, excluding private property held by individuals.

This point was made clear for everybody when Marx summarized the objective of socialist/communist society as the transfer of the means of production into the hands of society or as the “socialization of the means of production.”

In fact, Marx reached this summary of the objective of socialist/communist society by using the key concept of the “socialization of the means of production” only in a later stage of his life when he was writing *Capital*. This definition was of great significance for an accurate description of the content of the future society.

In the time of Marx, the accusation that communism was a system that takes all private property away from individuals was widespread. The summary of communism as the “socialization of the means of production” provided a solid foothold from which to counter this anticommunist propaganda. Marx and Engels themselves immediately used this foothold in their practical activities either in the stage of the International or in the theoretical area.

The following paragraph of the draft Program is, therefore, based on a historical and a theoretical background:

“The key element of socialist transformation is the socialization of the means of production, which transfers ownership, control, and management of the means of production to society. Socialization only concerns the means of production; as far as the means of subsistence are concerned, the right to private property will be protected throughout all stages of social development.”

The full development of humanity is the objective of society

In the draft revised Program, this paragraph is followed by a list of what the 7th Central Committee Plenum called the “three advantages of the socialization of the means of production.” They are:

To improve the life of human beings and eradicate poverty by abolishing exploitation;

To create the possibility of planned economic management through redirecting the productive and economic power to the development of society and the lives of all its members and to open the way for a fundamental solution to recessions, environmental destruction, and social differences; and

To liberate the economy from the narrow framework of the “profit first” principle and to lay the foundations for a healthy and prosperous economic development.

By analyzing how the socialization of the means of production changes society and the lives of human beings, each of these provisions emphasizes the contributions provided by the “socialization of means of the production” in approaching the great objective of human liberation.

The point I want to stress most is the shortening of working hours, which will “lay the groundwork for ensuring the sound development of all individuals.”

Every individual has a high level of potential energy within himself or herself. However, in present-day society, in which each individual person is bound by the structure of capitalism, an overwhelming majority of people end their lives without their abilities having a chance to bloom.

In formulating the concept of a new society, Marx and Engels put the greatest emphasis on the need to create a society that will give every person a chance to develop [his or her] abilities and activities to the full.

Let me quote a paragraph from Engels’s *Anti-Dühring* and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. He states that a future society should guarantee human creativity as follows:

“The possibility of securing for every member of society, by means of socialized production, an existence not only fully sufficient materially, and becoming day-by-day more full, but an existence guaranteeing to all the free development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties—this possibility is now, for the first time, here, but it is here.”

This in short is the standpoint that ensures the material improvement of livelihoods and the full development of humanity. It is what the liberation of humanity in a future society is about.

Marx and Engels thus signified the full development of humanity as the most important element of the cause for the liberation. It is for this reason that they regarded the shortening of working hours as a fundamental issue in formulating the concept of future society.

Sticking with the position of warning against drawing a blueprint

Thirdly, the draft Program sticks to a principled standpoint of warning against attempts to draw a blueprint for the future.

The draft Program states, "The road to socialism in Japan will be a challenging and pioneering process in which many emerging problems will be solved by the wisdom and creativity of the Japanese people."

Referring to the question of "distribution," the present JCP Program states what it will be like at both lower and higher stages. The draft Program makes it clear that the distribution of products should not be bound by a static scheme. This is also what the draft Program is about.

A more important question is how and in what form the means of production should be socialized. We received a number of calls for more specifics to be included in the draft Program. I think that this is an issue on which the wisdom of future generations, as they creatively tackle this task, will have a role to play. While addressing specifics in situations ripe for immediate action, we should not bind those future generations by offering specifics in issues of future concern.

Earlier, I referred to the question of the "socialization of the means of production." I did so because we consider it important as the fundamental way out of the contradictions of capitalism as well as being the direction of the true history of humankind. The point I made was that the major direction of social development should be achieved through the transformation of the social system in which the means of production will come to be held by society instead of by individual persons or corporations. In such a society, goods will be produced for society. This, I said, should be the key to explaining the future society of communism/socialism.

As to what form such “socialization” will take, it is something we cannot predetermine today. In Japan, the generation at the stage of the democratic revolution will have accumulated much experience in many fields, including practical techniques for the democratic control of large corporations and the democratic management of the economy. At that stage, people will have greater wisdom than we currently enjoy, and there will also be many international developments from which they will have learned. The idea is that we today should use all of these experiences freely so that eventually the means of production will be held and controlled by society. In this respect, the task is for us to explore and choose a way and a form for the socialization of the means of production in a way that is appropriate to Japan today and rational as well without binding the future.

It is our conviction that the wisdom and the capacity necessary for such a task will be developed in the unfolding of social progress in Japan in a form appropriate to Japan.

Thus, the draft Program sticks to a principled standpoint which rejects drawing a blueprint, but it boldly makes clear ideas [when we consider it] necessary to do so. Doing so is the responsibility of those who have lived in the twentieth century. The ideas put forward in the draft Program are as follows:

—A socialist/communist Japan will inherit and further develop all the valuable gains of the capitalist era, including those concerning democracy and freedom.

—Building a consensus among the people is a prerequisite for making the first step in the socialist transformation as well as being necessary during the process leading up to this stage.

—In socializing the means of production, it is important to explore forms peculiar to Japanese society and to stick to the principle of socialism that producers are the key players. In addition, the mistakes committed by the former Soviet Union in imposing things that had nothing in common with socialism under the false pretense of “socialism” must not be repeated.

—“Advancing toward socialism through a market economy” is a lawful way for the development of socialism conforming to Japanese conditions.

On international conditions in the twenty-first century

It is important to note that the draft Program sets forth the path to a future society as part of the global development of the twenty-first century instead of as an isolated process in Japanese society.

The belief that the twenty-first century will be a tumultuous one implies that a current will grow up in every corner of the world in pursuit of a new society beyond the confines of capitalism and that it will develop further.

In considering the future, the draft Program states briefly that the world is made up of three major groups.

First, there are the developed, capitalist countries, which are characterized by economic and political contradictions giving rise to popular movements. The contradictions are seen in the problems of economic recessions and depressions as well as in the destruction of the global environment, which is so serious that it now places before us the issue of whether the capitalist system should be allowed to continue or not at the risk of environmental Armageddon. It is a characteristic of the age that many knowledgeable persons are expressing a sense of crisis at the self-centered behavior of the United States, recalling the examples of the Roman Empire and of the British Empire, which once dominated the world but later fell.

Second, there are other countries, which have already broken away from capitalism and which are making efforts to explore independent paths toward socialism. Particularly, a way to socialism through a market economy, which is only at a budding stage, is attracting the world's attention as an attempt to create a socio-economy filled with vitality. Indeed, its political and economic importance in the international community is far greater than that of the Soviet Union when it came into being in the early twentieth century.

Finally, in a wide range of countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, movements are increasing to achieve new societies through overcoming capitalism. Many countries have come to understand that there is scant hope for their economic development within the framework of capitalism. As they have obtained political independence with increased influence

in international politics, they feel the gap especially unbearable. In these regions, calls for new, postcapitalist societies are erupting in various forms. Such calls do not necessarily lead to social changes, but it can be safely said that this is a major force that can be linked to perspectives for the change of social systems in the twenty-first century.

These currents are correlated with each other and are stimulating each other in the tumultuous process of development in the world of the twenty-first century. Without doubt, the twenty-first century will see an upheaval in terms of socioeconomic systems.

We will steadily step up the movement to develop the future in keeping with the stages of social development in Japan. The new JCP Program can be an accurate and powerful guideline for this effort.

***Let us use the new JCP Program as our JCP banner
and let us discuss Japan's path with the people***

Let me conclude my report to you on the draft JCP Program.

At the end of the 23rd Congress, we will propose a final amended draft Program that will reflect opinions that are considered appropriate, including those expressed during this congress.

I ask you to hold a lively discussion on the draft Program.

The new JCP Program is not a temporary document. Once it has been adopted, we will make efforts to help all party organizations and members learn of its substance, and we will make use of it as the guideline for our day-to-day activities.

The JCP must develop policies for democratic change that will lead to the solution of various problems in the world as well as in Japan. Also, the JCP has a perspective for the future society beyond capitalism. This means that the JCP must have a position that will help us confront all the problems facing Japan and the world in the twenty-first century. The history of an indomitable struggle for peace and democracy during the dark days of war and authoritarianism is inscribed in the name of the Japanese Communist Party. The name of the JCP is connected with the proud future of a Party that carries on into the twenty-first century.

Keeping this in mind, we will discuss Japan's course and its future, based on the new JCP Program, with the people.

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Edited by David Laibman

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Book Reviews

Reactionary Philosophy and Ambiguous Aesthetics in the Revolutionary Politics of Herbert Marcuse—A Review Essay

Ralph Dumain

Art, Alienation, and the Humanities: A Critical Engagement with Herbert Marcuse. By Charles Reitz. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000. 336 pages, cloth \$26.50, paper \$25.95.

Charles Reitz's essential contribution to the study of Marcuse is his marvelous demonstration of how deeply Marcuse's philosophical framework is imbued with reactionary *Lebensphilosophie*. While Reitz successfully locates Marcuse's ideas in their original European social and intellectual context, he fails to explain adequately how Marcuse's ideas function in the U.S. context. Although chapter 10, presenting Reitz's contemporary perspective, is disappointing, this book is an outstanding achievement and indispensable for anyone interested in Marcuse.

Reitz points out that "Marcuse holds positivism and rationalism, rather than metaphysics or irrationalism, to be among the more pernicious intellectual forces," favoring "romantic oppositional philosophies of protest like *Lebensphilosophie*" and finding "a liberating negative, that is countercultural, value in Nietzsche

and Schopenhauer” (114–15). Marcuse even finds a spirit of negativity in traditional metaphysics and advocates a retooled Platonism (153). Marcuse assigns an important role to imagination and the consciousness of death. The influences of Heidegger and Nietzsche are pervasive.

Reitz provides an extensive analysis of Marcuse’s early intellectual work, imbued with the weighty influence of Dilthey (chapter 2). Marcuse was the first to review Marx’s newly available 1844 manuscripts, but Dilthey and Heidegger determined Marcuse’s reading of the young Marx (58–61). Marcuse was heavily influenced by Lukacs, whose notion of reification is rooted in German idealism, not Marx (65–66). Marcuse was concerned here and elsewhere with reification and the alienation of the human essence, not historical materialism.

Marx is nowhere mentioned in the “critical” philosophical discussion central to *Eros and Civilization*. There is also no evidence to suggest that Marcuse’s “philosophical inquiry into Freud,” . . . occurs on the basis of a Marxist philosophical analysis. Quite to the contrary, it appears that Marcuse turns primarily to Nietzsche’s critique of the traditional metaphysics in this regard. (126)

Culture and aesthetic ontology

Reitz is troubled “by the way in which *Marcuse’s* theories of art, alienation, and the humanities displace *Marx’s* structural analysis of social life to such an extent that the former’s work also takes on ironically conservative political overtones.” Reitz concludes that Marcuse’s concept of reification is “ultimately detached from the materialist context of the Marxist economic analysis” (7–8).

Art, alienation, and the humanities (humanistic education) coalesce as the decisive themes of Marcuse’s lifelong work. Marcuse pitches his philosophical tent in the humanities, demarcated from the world of science and technology. In his “militant middle period” (approximately 1932–1970), he promotes an educational activism in opposition to traditional aestheticist quietism, to which he reverts in this third period (11–12). His questionable

philosophical foundations are rooted in the Frankfurt School's conception of *alienation as reification*.

After 1933, Marcuse shifts his affiliation from Heidegger to the Frankfurt School. Marcuse bases his investment in critical theory on utopianism, not scientific objectivity (81). His aesthetic conceptions undergo a shift in his second period, decisively registered in his 1937 essay "The Affirmative Character of Culture." Here he attacks the quietism of the traditional role of culture, advocating instinctual gratification—not just the liberal arts, but a reshaping of life and experience (81–84). Even in this most progressive period, his aesthetic ontology is predicated on an aesthetic rationality (as opposed to science) that negates the existent (106–7). Marcuse's "dialectic" is Romantic negation, a conception rooted in dualism, not historical materialism (109).

High culture, popular culture, and politics

Reitz rightly sees a lasting contribution in Marcuse's notion of *repressive desublimation* brilliantly articulated in *One-Dimensional Man* (144). In 1964, Marcuse concluded that popular culture had obliterated the negative, that the disjunction between culture and the social order was closed, no longer to be disrupted by unruly outsiders (149). Reitz's neglect of a comparison between that period and today augurs a fundamental defect in his conclusions about the present.

In his 1967 lecture "Art in the One-Dimensional Society," Marcuse emphasizes the liberatory power of art against the prosaic routine of daily life. He argues that revolutions in art and culture—manifestations of the rebellious spirit of the aesthetic imagination—can fuel social-protest movements, especially in today's advanced technological society, in spite of the danger of cooptation (166–71). Reitz interjects a perplexing criticism:

In contradistinction to dialectical materialism, Marcuse preserves here a dualistic conception of the relationship of politics to art (as "extraneous activity"). While aesthetics must *inform* politics, Marcuse is adamant in emphasizing throughout his middle period that "the real change which would free men and things, remains the task of political

action.” Marcuse’s major contention in this essay is, however, that no negation of the alienating conditions of social existence is even possible apart from the emancipatory potential of the aesthetic dimension. (173–74)

While highlighting a possible contradiction in Marcuse’s program for the aesthetic emancipation of social life, Reitz is unclear about what is precisely wrong with Marcuse’s view of the division of labor between art and instrumental politics. Perhaps this confusion is a foreshadowing of what will go wrong in chapter 10.

Education, reification, and social change

Marcuse’s views come closest to revolutionary politics in his 1969 book, *An Essay on Liberation*, when student activism was at its height. Lukacs and Marcuse both saw the necessity for a new form of reason to serve an educative function in the struggle against reification. Unlike Lukacs, Marcuse adopted Schiller’s principle of aesthetic education, directing education not against capitalism, but against the reification of reason (177–79). Marcuse incorporated psychoanalysis into educational and aesthetic theory (180). Reitz is correct to criticize Marcuse’s substitution of the dialectic of aesthetically conceived forces for the conceptual apparatus of historical materialism and class struggle, but he detracts from the validity of his argument by opposing Marcuse’s aesthetic ontology to the historical-materialist philosophy of art (181), injecting a philistine leftist approach to art into the discussion.

While Marcuse’s reversal of the position of his middle period is clearly marked in his 1978 *The Aesthetic Dimension*, precedent for it can be found in his 1972 *Counterrevolution and Revolt*. Marcuse presents essentially “a favorable reappraisal of the *validity* of the culture of the bourgeois era.” He speaks of art as a “second alienation,” which is “emancipatory rather than oppressive.”

Here, the *affirmative* character of art itself is thought to become the *basis* for the ultimate negation of this affirmation. Affirmation represents a dimension of withdrawal and introspection, rather than engagement. This permits the artist to disentangle consciousness and conduct from the

continuum of first-dimensional alienation, and thus to create and communicate the emancipatory truth of art.” (197)

Marcuse is convinced that overtly bourgeois art—because it is *art*—retains a critical dimension, and should, itself, be regarded as a source of sociopolitical opposition to domination. Marcuse maintains in fact that the art of the *bourgeois* period indelibly displays an *antibourgeois* character, and in this manner he rejects the orthodox Marxist emphasis on the class character of art. (198)

Marcuse also criticizes the “living-art” and “anti-art” tendencies that he associates with the politically progressive art of the leftist-oriented “cultural revolution,” as representing a “desublimation of culture” and an “undoing” of the aesthetic form. . . . Marcuse explicitly turns away from the immediacy of sensuousness and militance characteristic of his own middle-period aesthetic. (198)

There may well be abstract justification for Marcuse’s position, but the warrant for immediacy or critical distance must surely depend on particular circumstances. Without a detailed analysis of the aspects of the counterculture of the 1960s to which Marcuse specifically reacted, there is no way of judging his position. Is there a generational issue here? Could Marcuse have been too traditional, too elitist and European, or did the counterculture merit such criticism? Reitz’s total failure to address this crucial question contributes to the central flaw in his book. Reitz only hints at a few cultural expressions of the 1960s that Marcuse condemned. On the other hand, it seems that Bob Dylan joins the august company of Joyce, Beckett, and others in standing up for art-as-alienation (199). Marcuse reverses his former critique of affirmative high culture against the attempt of the countercultural revolution to eradicate it (202). Again, nothing could be more crucial than a detailed analysis, but Reitz has nothing to offer here.

In his last book, *The Aesthetic Dimension*, Marcuse opposes Marxist aesthetics and argues for the permanent value of art (204–6). Marcuse has returned to his earliest ideas. There is a

dualism between art and society; art is permanently incompatible with life. Art is inherently alienated and rebels against the established reality principle (210). Marcuse's conception of education is affected also, as he attempts to deploy the notion of "educational dictatorship" to oppose an otherwise hopelessly reified reality (215–16).

Marcuse argues for the universality and permanence of the classics. Aesthetic "stylization reveals the universal in the particular social situation." The historical content of an art work becomes dated, but the universality of the forces represented transcends the particular history (217–19). While it is clear that the aesthetic *ontology* supporting Marcuse's judgments is highly questionable, it is not immediately evident that his aesthetic *principle* is wrong. This is an important distinction that Reitz does not make. Specific examples must be analyzed. Since Marcuse's death, in the culture at large and in the specialized world of cultural criticism, cultural and social assumptions have altered so drastically that we are now aware of the vast discrepancy between our assumptions today and those current in former times and even when Marcuse wrote in the 1970s. A sophisticated analysis of what is permanent and what is dated in works of art is needed, but apparently Marcuse did not provide it, nor does Reitz.

In sum, an analytical distinction should be drawn between Marcuse's aesthetic *ontology* and some of his stated aesthetic *principles* or *judgments*, and between the latter and his politics.

The missing link: Marcuse and U.S. culture

The most glaring omission in Reitz's presentation is an analysis of the links connecting Europe of Marcuse's youth and the United States today. We see Marcuse's intellectual and cultural socialization in Europe, and the circumstances of his radicalization with the conservative ideological baggage he inherits. Then as an émigré living in the United States, he develops his ideas further in an altered context. Emerging from the repressive 1950s, Marcuse makes his closest approach to a popular movement at the height of the protest movements of the 1960s, then retreats as revolutionary hopes recede. We require, however, an assessment of the transplantability of ideas based on a European cultural heritage to American conditions.

Why did the youthful revolutionary generation of the 1960s find Marcuse's ideas so congenial? Does the reactionary, irrationalist *Lebensphilosophie* that Marcuse imbibed intersect with the very different youth culture of the sixties on the basis of the latter's primitivist, escapist, instinctualist tendencies? Do the two then diverge because the latter was putting into practice what the former could only theorize? What did the students who studied Marcuse think of his reactionary *Lebensphilosophie*? What did they think of the irrationalist, New Age currents in their own generation?

When avant-garde and popular culture are contrasted, the issue of art as immediacy vs. alienation enters. I do not find the rigid opposition that grew out of the European context adequate to American conditions. (Consider the history of jazz, for instance.) There is no a priori way to decide when a principled refusal to participate in compromising cultural forms is warranted. When is participation in popular forms possible without being swallowed up by the mechanisms of the culture industry? Is it even possible now for an avant-garde to deploy alienation effects to break through the wall of commodity fetishism, conformity, and false values? The old avant-gardes were squeezed dry to feed the popular culture of the present; no technique seems to be left by which to defamiliarize the taken-for-granted.

It is astounding that Reitz, who experienced the generational cultural shifts of both the 1960s–70s and the 1980s, fails to pose any of these questions. How can the baby boomer intellectuals' amnesia about their own history be accounted for?

The future

Chapter 10 asks how the "critical" in critical theory can be liberated. Reitz summarizes the ways in which Marcuse dissociates himself from the traditional concerns of Marxism, but here he adds "the identification of revolutionary art and education with the cultural forms actually experimented with by communist societies" (224). What can he mean by "communist societies"? Have any existed? Can Reitz have in mind the Soviet Union, since he criticizes Marcuse's analysis of Soviet education and aesthetics (157–63)? Or perhaps Mao's China?

Following Mitchell Franklin's lead, Reitz argues that Marcuse is a "beautiful soul" in Hegel's sense, essentially dualist and incapable of overcoming contradiction (228). Reitz also documents the sense of betrayal that radical activists felt towards *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, taken to be a call for postponement of revolutionary action (229). Reitz is guilty of two significant omissions here. First, he assumes that Marcuse's stance was the direct result of the quietism implicit in his underlying ontology and the vacillation inherent in his dualism. The second omission is even more glaring: an uncritical attitude toward the student radicals and the ultraleftist revolutionism of the time. Could Marcuse's pessimism have had sound reason?

Reitz is quite correct that an ontological, abstract philosophical anthropology cannot adequately cope with the specificity of historically occurring social and cultural forms (234). He has little to offer, though, in delineating the dialectical-materialist alternative to cultural analysis, except to cite some of its stodgiest representatives. He takes this opportunity to attack essentialism by quoting some fashionable ideas and thinkers of the current postmodern dispensation (235–42), not a move that inspires confidence. Reitz wants to preserve the "militant and adversarial dimension of Marcuse's philosophy," but adds nothing about what there is in it worth preserving except for its militant and adversarial moments (243, 246).

The assumptions behind the academic-activist agenda that Reitz advocates need to be critically examined, and the fruitful proposals sifted from the unconvincing social-service rhetoric so characteristic of the middle-class professional, activist or not. How is it possible that Reitz combines such brilliant analysis of Marcuse's philosophy with such blithe gullibility in an attempt to make it more politically relevant? Again, the missing link is the failure to analyze the application of Marcuse's European ideas in the American context. The failure lies in the silence about the relationship of these ideas to the 1960s student generation beyond the congruence or rift between Marcuse's advocacy or quietism and the students' activism. Finally, I conjecture that there is a failure here of the sixties generation to mature and to disentangle a

century of confusion over the relation of intellectual and cultural work to political practice.

My harsh evaluation of the final chapter should not distract unduly from my overall commendation of the book. The book's shortcomings reflect the lack of opportunity for meaningful dialogue in this society. I urge the reader to use this invaluable book as a springboard for further discussion.

For a more detailed critique, see my unabridged draft of this review at <http://www.autodidactproject.org/my/marcuse2.html>.

Washington, D.C.

James Hanley: Modernism and the Working Class. By John Fordham. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002. 315 pages, cloth £35.

Fordham's stimulating study of the British writer James Hanley (1901–1985) deserves our critical attention in the context of the current dominant culture of postmodernism. It offers opportunities to recover meanings from the largely neglected tradition of working-class writing, and it engages fruitfully in the debate about what constitutes an adequate Marxist method in literary criticism.

Fordham has produced the first comprehensive analysis of this important writer with a working-class background who started as an ordinary seaman and eventually became a professional novelist and dramatist. Hanley first made his reputation in the 1930s with his sea-novels, in which he portrayed the impact of the rapid industrialization of seafaring on ordinary sailors and the working-class communities in the English Midlands. While Hanley continued writing novels after World War II, he produced more and more radio and later TV plays for the BBC, using these media to explore the effects of the welfare state on working-class communities and its later destruction by the Tories.

Even though Fordham's brilliant study only focuses on one writer, Hanley's work is interpreted as exemplary for much working-class fiction of the twentieth century in the way it captures aspects of working-class experience and searches for artistic forms of representing this experience.

Fordham's analysis is alert to the problem of the working-class novelist who, on the one hand, writes within the ideological and aesthetic parameters of a cultural tradition, such as the sea-faring novel, but, on the other hand, reshapes this tradition from a working-class perspective. For example, he elaborates this problem in connection with Hanley's sea-novels of the 1930s, such as *Captain Bottell* (1933) and *Hollow Sea* (1938). While these novels reveal close affinities to Conrad's *Nigger of the Narcissus* and *Chance* in terms of plot and figure construction, Fordham also convincingly demonstrates how Hanley rewrites the Conradian sea-novel in order to "represent the ordinary seaman's view, the view from the fo'c'sle" (46). According to Fordham, Hanley rejects Conrad's

anti-industrial stance and fear of the rapid influx of democratic ideas and movements into the realm of shipping, which provide the ideological basis for Conrad's romantic and melodramatic aesthetics. By contrast, Hanley parodies Conrad's self-created nostalgic myth of the sailing-ship days. As Fordham convincingly demonstrates, he reveals the hardships of the seamen's everyday life on shipboard and the reckless manipulation of ordinary servicemen by a callous military bureaucracy in the navy.

Fordham's study also reminds the reader that to understand the complexity of British culture between the World Wars, we must direct our attention beyond the canonical "high modernists." Hanley's work is a case in point. If Hanley is considered at all in interpretations of 1930s culture, he is most often relegated to a group of British "proletarian realists" allegedly concerned merely with the workplace and the manifold changes in the industrial communities. Hence, the "realism" of their writing is taken to be at best of sociological interest in terms of the recovery of working-class experience in a period of major political and cultural crisis. In terms of aesthetics, these texts are seen to offer little, if anything at all—in contrast to the artistic innovations of the high modernists. To be sure, one finds occasionally an appreciative reference to Hanley's style of writing, as, for example, in the *Cambridge Guide to Literature in English*, where he is mentioned as "a novelist with a direct and painstaking style." Yet Hanley's attempts to modernize the novel from a working-class perspective are never considered.

Fordham convincingly refutes the antithetical opposition of working-class realism and modernism, and demonstrates that Hanley's novels radically depart from the critical commonplace that working-class writing is mere naturalist description, and, consequently, only of sociological interest. Rather, the author identifies Hanley as a modernist in novel writing whose working-class experience "affords a unique expression of the social totality, challenging those restrictive aspects of bourgeois thought which—both artistically and critically—reduce the function of art to affirmation and consolation" (235). On the one hand, this focus on the writer's class experience as an essential component of his

cultural production illustrates the importance of the category of class in the context of the currently dominant postmodern discourse in cultural criticism. On the other hand, it also emphasizes the need for an interpretation of British literary modernism of the 1930s and '40s that is much wider than its conventional identification with a small section of bourgeois writers, such as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, or Joseph Conrad.

Fordham's book also reveals the usefulness of a Marxist interpretation of cultural production, of a critical method that locates literature within the complex of social conflicts at a particular historical moment. As Fordham convincingly argues, Hanley's career and texts disclose "the presence of a pervasive social conflict—a class struggle—which takes place both at the level of ordinary social reality . . . and at the level of texts" (235). More concretely, while a working-class writer's intervention in cultural production involves his or her engagement with existing, at times dominant, artistic forms and inevitably the politics inscribed in their aesthetics, yet writing from a working-class perspective can also significantly reshape the aesthetics of the adopted artistic forms.

Hanley's novels show this dialectic as well as the possibility of refunctioning existing artistic forms and traditions from a different class perspective. Fordham demonstrates, for example, how Hanley tried to become accepted in the bourgeois literary scene of the 1930s, writing according to both the prevailing institutional and aesthetic parameters of the literary market that expected adventure novels about the romanticism of seafaring or at least novels that follow Conrad's critical reshaping of this myth. At the same time, however, Hanley's working-class experience as an ordinary seaman and of the industrial conflicts and trade union resistance in Liverpool generated a perspective that is essentially opposed to the conventionally prescribed romanticism of seafaring. As a result, his novels portray the brutality of everyday life of ordinary seamen in the days of highly industrialized seafaring, the alienation in the modern city as well as the increasing destruction of older forms of working-class solidarity. According to Fordham, Hanley's texts also register this experience aesthetically in their narrative structure. Hanley adopts, for example, the Conradian

modernist model of seafaring, yet rejects Conrad's deployment of an impressionist narrative as well as of elements of romance to achieve structural unity.

Fordham sees the specific quality of Hanley's working-class modernism in the refusal of "any artistic totalization or aesthetic unity" and in "an inherent dialectical quality which preserves the textual contradictions and tensions" (235). He reveals essential aspects of this dialectical quality in Hanley's portrayal of the emotional collectivity of the seamen on board ship in contrast to the human isolation of modern city life, and, at the same time, the physical brutality of the officers toward the sailors and among the sailors themselves. Hanley also traces these tensions at the level of the narrative structure of the texts by filling his novels with realistic details of the sailor's rough life on board, while employing modernist narrative devices, such as stream of consciousness, in order to portray the psychological tensions of his characters.

This study is also important in the context of the Marxist debate about what constitutes working-class writing, about whether such a thing as a working-class novel exists at all—if we consider the origin of the novel as an essentially bourgeois form of art. One can only agree with Fordham's diagnosis that so far there is no "overall theory of working-class writing . . . to cope with the multiplicity of forms which have evolved since the beginning of the twentieth century" (2). To be sure, Fordham knows that much original work has been done in Britain and in East and West Germany. Mary Ashraf (whose seminal study *Introduction to Working-Class Literature in Great Britain* [1979] is, surprisingly, not mentioned), Hanna Behrend, Andy Croft, H. Gustav Klaus, Jack Mitchell, Ken Warpole, and others have made major contributions by reconstructing the largely ignored tradition of working-class writing and establishing aesthetic criteria for its interpretation. Yet he is right that a Marxist theory of working-class literature has not as yet been elaborated, even though I do not think that is necessarily the result of what Fordham considers "a common tendency to suppress the inherent dialectic or ideological complexity in working-class texts in favour of their 'political accentuation' or their conformity to a prevailing political orthodoxy" (2).

From a Marxist perspective, a theory of working-class writing must locate the social experience of the writer within the complex of contradictions in industrial class society at a particular historical moment, and explain on this basis how particular forms of the social experience of the working class are given artistic expression. Hence, very specific aesthetic parameters are required that differ from those of the writers who represent a bourgeois form of historical consciousness. At the same time, however, this is not to suggest that these “working-class texts” ought to be reduced to a mere reflection or representation of some sort of monolithic class or political consciousness of the writer, or to isolate working-class writing from bourgeois or other forms of writing. In short, a Marxist theory of working-class writing must explain how both the ideas and the formal structure of these texts engage at a cultural level in the class struggle of capitalist society and (re)present the contradictions of “real history” artistically from a working-class perspective.

This approach also raises the question of what constitutes the specific quality of a working-class perspective. Fordham’s study is very suggestive in explaining the specific nature of a working-class perspective on the basis of the “life experience” of that class in contrast to the bourgeoisie, focusing on Marx’s concept of reification as an essential component conditioning the thinking of workers under capitalism. Following Marx, Fordham argues that as the working class experiences its existence as commodity, it “comes to a consciousness of itself—as a historical subject—as object (that is, worker as commodity), and thus comprehends the social totality.”

In other words, the working class’s life-experience, “which is determined by a perception of the self as object,” produces a form of thought that apprehends “the totality of a capitalist society in which all relations and values have been reduced to that of the commodity” (4). Fordham sees here the crucial difference from bourgeois thought. As the bourgeoisie’s life-experience is essentially shaped by the fact that it does not need to reify itself, this class does not perceive itself as object or commodity, and, therefore, does not apprehend the essence of capitalist social relations

as commodity relations. According to Fordham, the bourgeoisie develops a sense of itself as being separate from and (I would add) aloof to social reality. Hence, bourgeois thought remains only partial and fragmented, since the modes of the bourgeois apprehension of the world are not material and direct. He interprets this difference in the life-experience of the bourgeoisie and the working class as the essential reason for the crucial difference of the respective forms of thought that are generated. Bourgeois thought apprehends reality primarily in terms of formal connections between phenomena, and, in Kantian terms, as antinomies, such as subject/object, freedom/necessity, society/individual, artistic form/content. Moreover, because bourgeois thought is encapsulated in these antinomies, it is incapable of perceiving the dialectics of social being and thinking; it compensates by emphasizing the centrality of the perceiving subject (4), and, I may add, by foregrounding the individual's subjectivity in the process of theoretical apprehension as well as of cultural production.

Fordham argues that to apprehend reality from a working-class rather than a bourgeois perspective makes it possible "to overcome the antinomies of bourgeois thought" (2), and, therefore, to perceive the social totality dialectically. While I agree with the author thus far, I wish to stress that the working class is not only able to comprehend the totality of capitalist society in terms of its irreconcilable class contradictions, as Fordham suggests, but also to apprehend a nonclass or socialist society in which commodity production is not the center of the individual's life or the basis of its values. If so, it is also a form of thought that comprises both the heritage of utopian thinking and the conviction that the working class is the essential agency of social production and a major shaping force of social relations.

With regard to Hanley's writing, Fordham sees the working-class quality of his modernist texts in the way Hanley's life experience of the working class enables him to grasp the essence of capitalist society, namely reified social relations. In other words, Hanley succeeds in portraying the working world on shipboard so that the sailors appear as objects, as embodiments of the reduction of man to a commodity. Moreover, Fordham also convincingly

demonstrates how Hanley's working-class experience determines the aesthetics of his novels. His texts "are grounded in an ostensible realism," which reveals the inhumanity of the capitalist world of work and its social relations. At the same time, however, Hanley incorporates elements of seafaring romance, popular adventure tale, expressionist symbolism, and impressionist modes of narration (4). One can only agree with Fordham's interpretation that this lack of artistic coherence or closure is not a sign of artistic incompetence but a narrative strategy that makes the reader aware of the contradictory nature of working-class life in a world of industrial seafaring.

On the other hand, the author fails to probe the texts to find what if anything might indicate a resolution of the contradictions of industrial capitalism. If we remember that utopian thinking, which can be traced to Hesiod, reaches back into the days of emerging class society, and that, in terms of Marxist thinking, the industrial working class is one of the forces capable of resolving the contradictions of industrial capitalism, it is surprising that Fordham does not investigate the potential of Hanley's texts—and hence of working-class writing—to envisage social relations beyond their reified state, to foreshadow a nonclass society. Moreover, if we remember the importance of the politics inscribed in texts: should a theory and definition of working-class writing insist that this literature contribute toward our ability to move beyond the present systems of class society?

As my questions indicate, Fordham's study is very stimulating, particularly in the context of much postmodernist criticism that interprets culture as texts without the historical context and outside the life-experience of their producers as major elements of its shaping force. The author has made a major contribution to the present debates on modernism and working-class realism, on what working-class literature and culture are, and why we should reinvestigate them at the beginning of the twenty-first century when the concept of class, if considered at all, has been reduced to a cliché with little critical impact in much postmodern theory. Moreover, the study reminds the reader that "the 'project of modernity' is incomplete and that a radical, alternative position

can be established from which to address and challenge the cultural dominance of 'late capitalism' (236)." I wish there were more academic writing to remind us of the need to rethink interpretations of the present in terms of class relations.

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Walkin' the Talk: An Anthology of African American Studies. Edited by Vernon D. Johnson and Bill Lyne. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, 2002. 808 pages, paper \$59.

During the mid-1960s, many African American community leaders and student activists involved in the larger civil rights movement began to pressure several historically Black universities and colleges to create courses on the history, economics, politics, and culture of Black Americans. Eventually established as the field of African American Studies, this interdisciplinary and scholarly endeavor gained institutional legitimacy during the 1980s, and by the 1990s most major American higher educational facilities had developed an African American (or Black) Studies department or program. Today it is rare to find a department of English, history, political science, sociology, or social work without at least one faculty specialist in African American studies or a number of course offerings in this field.

With the rapid growth of African American Studies departments, programs, graduate students, and professorships over the years, however, the difficulty of capturing this multifaceted and evolving area of analysis in a single textbook or volume has tended to increase. A new collection of readings edited by Vernon D. Johnson and Bill Lyne seeks to reverse this tendency.

In *Walkin' the Talk: An Anthology of African American Studies*, Johnson and Lyne have produced an illuminating volume of essays, letters, poems, speeches, short stories, and book chapters

to provide a deeper understanding of African American life. This impressive array of documents, which ranges from the colonial period to 2001, rests on the notion that Black American history, politics, and culture are indivisible. More specifically, according to the editors, the goals of this book are to “place African American Studies in the social, political, and economic context of Africans in the United States,” as well as to construct a book that disregards the traditional “disciplinary boundaries” of academia (xvi).

Walkin' the Talk does not have a single central argument, but rather several themes. For example, in the first two sections of the book, Johnson and Lyne highlight the experience of Africans and African Americans in the British North American colonies and the United States from the 1660s to the antebellum period to illustrate the existence of various viewpoints on the issue of enslavement. Specifically, the writings of African American pioneers like Benjamin Banneker, Martin Delaney, Frederick Douglass, Olaudah Equiano, Harriet Jacobs, Sojourner Truth, Phillis Wheatley, and David Walker, as well as the works of contemporary scholars such as Angela Davis, David Brion Davis, Vincent Harding, C.L.R. James, and Howard Zinn, demonstrate how persons of African descent responded to human bondage and the eventual abolition of the “peculiar” institution.

Next, Johnson and Lyne explore African American life during Reconstruction and the Jim Crow period. In this section, the letters, speeches, poems, and editorials of influential Black American writers and activists, like Anna Julia Cooper, Mae V. Cowdery, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, W. E. B. DuBois, Angelina W. Grimke, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Claude McKay, A. Philip Randolph, Booker T. Washington, and Ida B. Wells-Barnet, convey how African Americans functioned as newly freed persons of color and eventually developed various strategies to recapture their cultural identity and gain political power.

Johnson and Lyne then turn to an examination of the civil rights movement during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Some of the most inspirational pieces in this section are those produced by African American writers, civil rights leaders, poets, and scholars such as Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks,

Eldridge Cleaver, Harold Cruse, Mari Evans, Martin Luther King Jr., LeRoi Jones, Carolyn M. Rogers, Bobby Seale, and Malcolm X. In general, these pages illustrate the strengths, weaknesses, contradictions, and legacy of the Black American freedom struggle.

Finally, the editors close with a dynamic section on the post-civil rights era and African American life today. Some of the most pungent works in this section are those written by scholars or activists like Molefi Asante, Amiri Baraka, Manning Marable, and Cornel West, where the focus is on the creation of a “new” Black American consciousness. Angela Davis, Georgia Persons, Adolph Reed Jr., and William Julius Wilson argue that a radical transformation of the current political and economic structures within the United States is needed to solve the current state of crisis clearly present within certain segments of the Black American community.

Without question, Vernon D. Johnson and Bill Lyne’s *Walkin’ the Talk* is a valuable and powerful piece of scholarship. The editors’ superior ability to select a wide range of cultural, historical, literary, and political text from the 1660s to the present make this volume a must for those searching for the idea book for courses in African American history, literature, culture, and Black studies. Indeed, Johnson and Lyne should be congratulated for such a remarkable achievement. Despite these strengths, this book does have some minor shortcomings. One is that the areas of African American educational history and Black feminist theory receive very little or no attention. Also, the inclusion of some documents viewing the experience of African Americans from an international perspective would have added much to the volume. In general, however, Johnson and Lyne should be applauded for their intriguing, valuable, and much-needed collection of African American readings.

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ABSTRACTS

Renzo Llorente, “Maurice Cornforth’s Contribution to Marxist Metaethics”—Maurice Cornforth’s 1965 *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* attempts to provide a comprehensive evaluation of one of the major currents of analytic philosophy from a Marxist perspective. This paper argues that Cornforth’s book contains much that remains valuable and instructive today, particularly his treatment of analytic moral philosophy. Cornforth’s discussion constitutes a lucid compendium of the main premises of what might be called a *Marxist metaethics*. Llorente also finds that Cornforth offers a suggestive account of the relation between ethics and politics as understood from a Marxist viewpoint.

Danny Goldstick, “Applying Dialectical Materialism”—The author finds at least this much truth to the claim that historical materialism presupposes dialectical materialism: historical materialism says the *main* features of a society’s ideological superstructure are traceable to its forces and relations of production. Thus, twentieth-century Italian religion should resemble twentieth-century Japanese religion more than it resembles, for example, thirteenth-century Italian religion. This can be true only on condition that Italian Catholicism’s changing attitude to the family, for instance, is *more important* than its unchanging Trinitarianism. But who is to say that belief in divine threeness is *less important* than norms regarding the family? Such a judgment does follow, however, from the atheism inherent in dialectical materialism.

Christian Fuchs, “The Self-Organization of Matter”—Concepts from self-organization theory such as control parameters, critical values, bifurcation points, phase transitions, nonlinearity, selection, fluctuation, and intensification correspond to the dialectical principle of transition from quantity to quality. What is called

emergence of order, production of information, or symmetry breaking in self-organization theory correspond to Hegel's notions of sublation and negation of the negation. Self-organization theory shows that Engels's *Dialectics of Nature* is still very topical and that dialectical materialism, contrary to mechanical materialism and idealism, has not been invalidated. Rather it seems to be confirmed that dialectics is the general principle of nature and society.

Erwin Marquit, "Engels on Motion: A Comment"—In his use of the term *motion*, Engels was constrained by the view that inalterable atoms were the basis of all material structures. Nevertheless, he put forward the dialectical view that qualitative changes in the formation of material structures made futile the program of Helmholtz to explain the properties of complex systems by reducing them to spatial arrangements and clustering of atoms in accordance with the laws of mechanics.

Tetsuzo Fuwa, "Report on Revision of Program of the Japanese Communist Party"—In his report to the Twenty-Third Congress of the Japanese Communist Party Central Committee, Chair Tetsuzo Fuwa explains the new theoretical approaches on which the revised program was based.

ABREGES

Renzo Llorente, «La contribution de Maurice Cornforth à la métaéthique marxiste»—*Le marxisme et la philosophie linguistique* (1965) de Maurice Cornforth tente de fournir une analyse complète sur un des courants majeurs de la philosophie analytique d'un point de vue marxiste. Cet article affirme qu'une grande partie de l'oeuvre de Cornforth est toujours valable et instructive aujourd'hui, notamment sa façon de traiter la philosophie morale analytique. La discussion de Cornforth constitue un compendium lucide des principales prémisses de ce que l'on peut appeler une *métaéthique marxiste*. Llorente trouve aussi que Cornforth offre

une explication des rapports entre l'éthique et la politique selon la perspective marxiste qui invite à la réflexion.

Danny Goldstick, « Appliquer le matérialisme dialectique » —

L'auteur part du principe que le matérialisme historique présuppose un matérialisme dialectique: le matérialisme historique veut que les caractéristiques *principales* de la structure idéologique d'une société soient en relation avec ses moyens de production. Ainsi la religion en Italie au XX^{ème} siècle devrait ressembler plus à la religion japonaise au XX^{ème} siècle que, par exemple, à la religion italienne au XIII^{ème} siècle. Ce ne peut être vrai que si l'attitude changeante du catholicisme italien face à la famille, par exemple, est *plus importante* que son immuable trinitarisme. Mais que dire de la supposition que la croyance en la Sainte-Trinité est *moins importante* que les normes concernant la famille? Un tel jugement découle cependant de l'athéisme inhérent au matérialisme dialectique

Christian Fuchs, « L'auto-organisation de la matière » —

Des concepts de la théorie de l'auto-organisation tels que les paramètres de contrôle, les valeurs critiques, les points de bifurcation, les transitions de phase, la non linéarité, la sélection, la fluctuation et l'intensification correspondent au principe dialectique de la transition de la quantité vers la qualité. Ce que l'on appelle l'émergence de l'ordre, la production de l'information ou encore la rupture de la symétrie dans la théorie de l'auto-organisation correspond aux notions de Hegel de la sublation et la négation de la négation. La théorie de l'auto-organisation démontre que *La dialectique de la nature* par Engels est toujours d'actualité, et que le matérialisme dialectique — contrairement au matérialisme mécanique et à l'idéalisme — n'a pas été infirmé. Il semble plutôt qu'on puisse confirmer que la dialectique est le principe universel de la nature et de la société.

Erwin Marquit, « Engels sur le mouvement : un commentaire » —

En utilisant le terme *mouvement*, Engels était gêné par l'idée que toute structure matérielle était basée sur des atomes invariables. Néanmoins, il a énoncé le point de vue dialectique selon lequel des changements qualitatifs dans la formation des

structures matérielles contredisaient le programme de Helmholtz qui expliquait les propriétés des systèmes complexes en les réduisant à des arrangements spatiaux et à des amas d'atomes conformément aux lois de la mécanique.

Tetsuzo Fuwa, « Compte-rendu de la révision du programme du parti communiste japonais »— Dans son compte-rendu au 23^e Congrès du Parti Communiste Japonais, le président du comité central Tetsuzo Fuwa explique les nouvelles approches théoriques à l'origine des révisions du programme.