THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL THEORY

OF THE YOUNG MARX

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

To the best of the writer's knowledge this thesis contains no material previously written or published by another person except when acknowledgement is made in the text. No part of the thesis has been previously submitted for degree purposes at any university.

Geoff Gallop
ABSTRACT

My thesis analyses Marx's writings from the time he became a convert to Hegelianism (1837) to his expulsion from Paris in 1845. I have focused on three major issues in his political and social theory:

1. His definition of the contemporary situation.

2. His conception of the end of history (towards which the contemporary world was thought to be moving).

3. His conception of the process by which such an end would emerge (the dialectical process).

It is argued in the thesis that an 'Hegelian' approach to history, together with a 'Young Hegelian problematic' are the foundations of his early works. My thesis is that there are definite 'stages' in the development of his political and social theory. In terms of the three issues outlined above, these are:

1. From defining the contemporary situation chiefly, but not wholly, in philosophical and political terms (1837 to 1842), he moved on to stress that the study of history must begin with a study of social relations. Following Hegel, Marx defined contemporary society as 'civil society' (1843). From this he developed a class definition of the contemporary world, focusing on the social relationships that exist within the sphere of labour.

2. From arguing that history will end with a radically functioning liberal and social democracy (1842) Marx moved on to take up the cause of communism in 1843 - defined as a community of equals co-operating to plan their social and economic life, in a
stateless and private property-less society. On reducing his study of the human condition to the study of the labour process, he defined the truly human society as a community of producers, each producing under conditions of freedom (1844).

3. The movement towards the rational state is first conceived of as involving an alliance between the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie and the Young Hegelian philosophers. Marx argued it would be a step-by-step process of reform. In 1843 he took up the cause of revolution, firstly, in terms of an alliance between philosophy and the 'people' and, secondly, in terms of an alliance between philosophy and the proletariat. In 1844 he developed more fully his conception of the revolutionary process, outlining a much more historical account of the formation of proletarian consciousness and the process of proletarian self-emancipation.

My general thesis is that Marx's political and social theory must be viewed in terms of what has been called his 'primitive ethic', this being built from his critique of religion and developed from his study of contemporary history and the ideas of those who reflected upon its meaning.
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## ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
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<td>Holy Family</td>
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Like an ancient prophet performing a task imposed on him by heaven, with an inner tranquility based on clear and certain faith in the harmonious society of the future, he [Marx] bore witness to the signs of decay and ruin which he saw on every side.

Isaiah Berlin
INTRODUCTION : THE YOUNG MARX

It was not until the 1950's and 1960's that the English speaking world paid serious attention to Marx's early writings, seen by some\(^1\) to be those works up to and including the Holy Family. In Europe some of the themes developed by the young Marx had been kept alive by Marxists like Lukács, Korsch, and Lefebvre.\(^2\) In England, Christians, seeking to work out their position \textit{vis-a-vis} communism, were the first to study the young Marx.\(^3\)

But, on the whole, the unavailability of the texts, and the politics of the major social democratic and communist parties, made the early works a subject of little concern.\(^4\) As a result of this the peculiar situation arose in which 'the evolution of Marxism in its varying manifestations preceded the scientific study of Marx's thought', and 'the movement derived from him necessarily remained unaware of some of his fundamental ideas'.\(^5\)

\(^1\) See, for example, Louis Althusser, \textit{For Marx}, trans. by Ben Brewster (Harmondsworth, 1969), p.34.

\(^2\) See Dick Howard and Karl E. Klare (eds), \textit{The Unknown Dimension: European Marxism Since Lenin} (New York and London, 1972), for an assessment of these undercurrents.


In the last two decades the English speaking world has experienced what Sidney Hook has called 'the second coming of Karl Marx', which resulted from the translation into English of many of Marx's early works. Major debates developed as a consequence of this renewed interest, firstly, over whether or not one could speak of a new 'humanistic Marxism' which could be used to criticise both the communist and capitalist countries and, secondly, over whether or not Marx's earlier writings differed in any politically or philosophically important senses from his later writings.

My thesis is focused on the development of Marx's political and social theory in the early works themselves. Before commencing this study, two problems need to be dealt with: firstly, the question of which works will be dealt with and, secondly, the problem of the point of view to be taken in tackling the early works.

I will consider Marx's works up to and including the Holy Family. Until his departure from Paris in February 1845, Marx regarded Feuerbach's philosophy, despite its weaknesses, as central


7. See, for example, Erich Fromm, Marx's Concept of Man (New York, 1963), pp.1-83.

8. See John Maguire, Marx's Paris Writings: An Analysis (Dublin, 1972), pp.xiii-xxiv, for a good summary of the major positions.

9. He had been expelled by Guizot, the Minister of the Interior, after complaints from the Prussian government about the activities of radical Germans in Paris. See David McLellan, Karl Marx: His Life and Thought (London, 1973), p.135.
to any understanding of the contemporary situation. The Feuerbachian notion of man as a species-being (Gattungswesen) was basic to his critique of bourgeois society. After 1844, however, Marx claimed to have overthrown all traces of Young Hegelian 'idealism' and 'humanism' and to have developed a real science of history. I aim to analyse his early works in their own terms, and not enter into the debate about the 'young' versus the 'old' Marx. The questions of why Marx changed his terminology, and whether or not there was any real change in his position, warrants treatment on its own.

Previous analyses of the early works in the context of Marx's works as a whole, rather than in their own terms, have left out much of what is important. Very little attention has been paid to Marx's journalistic writings of 1842. Maguire has defended this by arguing that Marx's works in the period 1841 to 1843 are 'neither systematic nor positive', and that only in Paris does Marx come 'near


11. See 'The German Ideology', V, esp. Part I ('Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks').

12. See Nicholas Lobkowicz, 'Karl Marx and Marx Stirner', in F.J. Adelmann (ed.), Demythologising Marxism: A Series of Studies on Marxism (Chestnut Hill, 1969), pp.64–95, for an example of the type of work which needs to be done on this question.

to a consistent and positive statement of his own ideas'. My thesis will argue rather that there is a 'positive' perspective in the journalistic writings, which can usefully be compared with the positions Marx developed throughout 1843 and 1844.

Secondly, there has been a tendency to assume the existence of a simple unity in Marx's early works. I will argue that the framework within which Marx developed his theory, and the questions he asked, did remain constant throughout the early works. However, the answers Marx gave to these questions contained important alterations, and definite 'stages' in the development of his early thought can be ascertained. Thus, although certain 'philosophical theories and ethical attitudes', formed by the end of the 1843 Critique, continued to 'mould and direct his hopes and fears', the precise sense in which Marx understood the nature of the political and social totality within which they would be realized underwent change throughout the course of his early works.

This still leaves unanswered the question of which problems and issues should be focused upon in any treatment of the political and social theory of the young Marx. For Marx the study of politics and society was part of the study of history in general. His political and social theory only makes sense when placed in the

context of the philosophy of history he absorbed from Hegel.\footnote{16}
Isaiah Berlin has observed that the Hegelian philosophy was 'the single greatest formative influence' in Marx's life.\footnote{17}
Consequently any study of the young Marx can usefully begin in 1837 when, in a letter to his father, Marx wrote of his conversion to Hegelianism.

Marx's approach to political and social theory can best be tackled from the point of view of certain key issues which elucidate Marx's key concerns. Firstly, there was the problem of defining the contemporary situation and of deciphering the direction in which it would develop, both in the short and long term. Secondly, there was the problem of working out the means by which history would develop and, in particular, of correctly defining the relationship between philosophy and history. Thirdly, there was the problem of defining the situation in which history would come to an end, and developing an interpretation of that end. Finally, Marx always sought to work out how, as a political activist, he could help the process on its way. After absorbing the Hegelian approach to history and the Young Hegelian revisions to Hegel, all of these questions became vital issues for the young Marx.

\footnote{16. In this thesis I am only concerned with the way Marx appropriated Hegel. That Marx, and the Young Hegelians, may have misinterpreted Hegel is acknowledged. See W.J. Brazill, \textit{The Young Hegelians} (New Haven and London, 1970), ch. 1; Maguire, \textit{Marx's Paris Writings}, pp.96-101; and Louis Dupré, \textit{The Philosophical Foundations of Marxism} (New York, 1966), pp.93-97, 107-108.}
Thus Marx was never simply a philosopher or a moralist, even in his earliest writings. He was deeply aware of the context in which he found himself and the need to come to grips with it, if he was to be politically effective. Marx tried to fuse together his concern for philosophical clarity with his belief in the need for historical and political relevance. The young Marx was a philosopher, a social and historical investigator, and a political activist. His thought can only be explained if the uneasy alliance that existed between each of these elements is taken into account.
CHAPTER ONE : THE DISCOVERY OF HEGEL

A curtain had fallen, my holy of holies was rent asunder, and new gods had to be installed. (I, 18)

1. The Young Hegelian Problematic

After a year of study at the University of Bonn, Marx shifted to the University of Berlin in 1836. 'The ensuing five years of study', writes Hunt, 'were crucially important in Marx's intellectual growth'.¹ At Berlin he was introduced to the system of Hegel. In a letter to his father,² written late in 1837, Marx wrote of his increasing interest in philosophy. His absorption of Hegel's ideas was mediated by his association with the Young Hegelians of the so-called 'Doctor's Club'. It was their conception of the contemporary situation, of religion, and of the relationship between philosophy and the world which Marx absorbed and which must be defined if the development of Marx's thought is to be fully understood.³

Hegel's philosophy dominated Berlin's philosophical circles in the 1830's,⁴ being seen not as one philosophy amongst

² See I, 10-21.
⁴ Hegel had died in 1831.
others, but as the philosophy of the contemporary world. Hegel had argued that, contained within his philosophy, was the truth in all its eternity. The content of philosophy and religion, he believed, was the same, the former being a superior form of truth. Thus although the truth was originally revealed to the world through Christianity, it was ultimately put into its most precise form in philosophy. Philosophy could not, he wrote in the preface to The Philosophy of Right, overstep its own time.\(^5\)

One word more about giving instruction as to what the world ought to be. Philosophy in any case always comes on the scene too late to give it. As the thought of the world, it appears only when actuality is already there cut and dried after its process of formation has been completed... When philosophy points its grey in grey, then has a shape of life grown old. By philosophy's grey in grey it cannot be rejuvenated but only understood. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk.\(^6\)

Hegel believed that after a long and laborious process of development the rational meaning of history had found its objective expression in the nineteenth century Prussian state.\(^7\) His own philosophy was the subjective expression of this objective realization, translated into thought after the event. Such philosophy, and the historical process, were not viewed as autonomous forms of existence. They were means through which the Absolute Idea came to know itself. Thus it was consistent for

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those who followed Hegel (known as 'the Master') to have asked: 'Have we reached the end of history?'; and: 'Does any room exist for further development in philosophy?'

One school of Hegelians, known as the 'Young' or 'Left' Hegelians, developed a radical position on the questions posed by the Hegelian system. Their critique began with a critique of religion. It was described either as a mythical expression of the people's collective imagination or a form of self-alienation in which mankind falsely attributed his own powers and capacities to God. In either case the Young Hegelians asserted the unreality of God as a 'real' force within history. As a result they developed a new explanatory principle for the historical process and new criteria for assessing the human condition. Their atheism became a radical humanism, it being hoped that the world could be re-ordered according to the criterion of human reason. This inevitably brought them into conflict with the Prussian State, which was seen by the authorities as a 'Christian State', guaranteed by God himself.

Until 1841 members of the 'Doctor's Club' believed that the new king (Frederick William IV, crowned in 1840) would usher in a new order based on liberal, if not democratic principles.\(^8\) Their liberal monarchy was finally destroyed when, after a short period of reform, the young king clamped down on all religious and political dissent. The Young Hegelians themselves suffered, Bruno Bauer being dismissed from the University of Bonn for his radical views. Only then did some of the Young Hegelians begin to develop a more systematic critique of the political situation.

Even as liberal monarchists, however, they had believed that Reason was not a fact of contemporary life but a future potentiality. They argued that the contemporary Prussian State could not be the objective expression of Reason.

The Young Hegelians stressed the first half and rejected the second half of Hegel's maxim: 'What is rational is actual and what is actual is rational'.\(^9\) Hegelian philosophy was transformed into a programme for action. The Young Hegelians did not question their own ability to penetrate beneath the surface of things and discover what was both true and reasonable, nor did they question the view that their own thoughts would be a powerful lever for change. They transformed the traditional Hegelian understanding of the relationship between philosophy and history, and in Lobkowicz's words: 'Philosophy ceases to be the owl of Minerva which starts its wise flight only when a form of life has become old (Hegel) but turns into a "cock-crow" announcing a new day (Michelet) and eventually demanding action'.\(^10\) An apocalyptic tone permeated their writings, as they believed they were on the threshold of a completely new era of human history. In reality the Young Hegelians were, as Lobkowicz observed, 'a small group of eccentrics with an oddly exaggerated self-confidence'.\(^11\)

The Young Hegelians raised a series of objections to traditional self-understanding. 'Was it true that human self-consciousness was only a vehicle for the Absolute Idea?'

\(^9\) *Philosophy of Right*, p.10.


\(^11\) *Theory and Practice*, p.216.
'If God did not exist, what was man's destiny?' 'What human situation conformed with the canons of human reason?' 'Why should philosophy only come into operation after the event - why couldn't it influence change in the direction of Reason?' Thus in becoming a Hegelian, Marx became aware of a whole complex of problems which needed solution. It was as if he had entered a strange room, full of puzzles, all of which needed to be solved before he could leave.

Within the Young Hegelian movement there was disagreement over the precise meaning of the changes that were to come about, and over the interpretation of the process that would bring them about. There was agreement, however, about the belief that they lived in a revolutionary age.

2. Marx's Conversion to Hegelianism

Marx announced his conversion to Hegelianism in a letter written to his father in November 1837. His conversion came after a period of intense intellectual effort which Marx described as a struggle with the ideas of 'the enemy' (I, 18). Marx saw his conversion as a great liberation: 'There are moments in one's life which are like frontier posts marking the completion of a period but at the same time clearly indicating a new direction' (I, 10). Why was it, however, that Marx became chained to Hegelianism?

Marx saw Hegelianism as a system of thought which overcame the dualism between the 'is' and the 'ought', between 'actuality' and 'rationality'. It achieved this because it recognized that rationality was contained within actuality as a dialectical
potentiality. Thus history was seen as the external form of the 'World Spirit', the realm in which the latter realized itself:

From the idealism which, by the way, I had compared and nourished with the idealism of Kant and Fichte, I arrived at the point of seeking the idea in reality itself. If previously the gods had dwelt above the earth, now they became its centre (I, 18).

In speaking of 'the Idea' and the 'World Spirit' Marx was referring to 'an ideal, model or plan' which would eventually emerge out of the historical process itself. The nature of 'the Idea' is not clear in the text of Marx's letter. However, given Marx's association with the 'Doctor's Club', it seems difficult to place a religious interpretation on it.

In committing himself to Hegelianism, Marx absorbed the dialectical approach to history. It was as if Hegel gave to Marx a pair of glasses through which to look at the contemporary world. This approach to history became the framework within which he argued. History was seen, not as a random collection of events, but as an intelligible process, with an inner meaning which would eventually become manifest in the lives and practices of men. In studying an object, he wrote to his father, 'arbitrary divisions must not be introduced, the rational character of the object itself must develop as something imbued with contradictions in itself and find unity in itself' (I, 12).

12. See Arthur J. McGovern, 'Young Marx on the Role of Ideas in History', Philosophy Today, 15 (1971), 204-216; p.214: 'The German world "Idee", generally capitalised in English (as opposed to "Vorstellung" - "idea"), connotes an ideal, model or plan. It is the word which Hegel uses in speaking of the "Idea in History".'

History, the process from which Reason emerged, was said to involve tension and conflict. Not until the contradictions that lay beneath the surface were removed would history come to an end. Each clash of interests and ideas, Marx was to argue, would usher in a more advanced period, closer to the truly human ideal. The object, he wrote, 'must be studied in its development' (I, 12). Marx was to attack those who would wish to freeze their conception of reality to what it is at the moment. By ignoring the dialectically determined future they produced a one-sided and distorted picture of how the world was constituted.\(^{14}\)

Not only did Marx assume that the world contained within it rational principles which would eventually emerge as living realities at the end of a process of dialectical development, he also assumed that philosophers had the ability to apprehend these principles. Philosophers, he asserted, failed to grasp 'the truth' (in this case the truth about the law) because of an 'unscientific form of mathematical dogmatism, in which the author argues hither and thither, going round and round the subject dealt with, without the latter taking shape as something living and developing in a many-sided way' (I, 12). That Marx assumed the possibility of overcoming this problem and 'grasping the truth' has been noted by Voeglin: 'The starting point for the independent movement of Marx's thought seems to have been a gnostic position which he inherited from Hegel'.\(^{15}\)

\(^{14}\) Lobkowicz argues that herein lies Marx's distinction between 'science' and 'ideology'. See Theory and Practice, pp.261-262; and Kamenka, Ethical Foundations, pp.20-21.

Implicit in Marx's argument was the view that history would only come to an end when it found a unity within itself. As Kamenka has observed, the notion of 'harmony' was an essential part of his conception of rationality:

Harmony meant above all the lack of inner contradiction, in that curious Hegelian sense of contradiction that confuses it with exclusion and treats it as a character of - imperfect - existing things, thus holding that two contradictories may both be 'partially' true and both exist. Since contradiction is held to be the necessary basis of historical change, the truly harmonious is also the stable, the ultimately durable.¹⁶

Thus Marx was unhappy to concede that any situation in which inner contradictions existed was a durable one. He tried to purge his own theory of contradictory elements. In 1844 he described his theory of 'fully developed humanism' as the theory which reflected the situation in which 'the true resolution of the strife between existence and essence, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species' had been achieved (III, 296). A feature of Marx's early works was the effort to define the situation in which harmony would be realized. It would be the end of the historical process. Marx assumed that the human condition allowed for the possibility of a conflict-less life, in the relationships between men themselves, between individuals and their capacities, between individuals and the products of their labours, and between mankind and the world of nature.

Marx not only absorbed from Hegel an approach to history, he also drew from Hegel (and Hegel's generation) a conception of the central issues facing the contemporary world. As Marx himself noted

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¹⁶ Ethical Foundations, p.23.
in 1851: 'The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living'.\(^{17}\) Drawing on Scottish political economy for conceptual clarity and historical insight and using an idealized picture of ancient Greek (in particular Athenian) social and political life, they pointed to the splitting up and atomization of society itself and the fragmentation of human powers and capacities within each individual.\(^ {18}\) Modern bourgeois society and German cultural and intellectual life was criticised for its pettiness and particularism. In *Hyperion* Hölderlin wrote:

> Craftsmen are to be seen, but no human beings ... masters and men, but no human beings; young people and old, but no human beings. Is it not like a field of battle where hands and arms and other limbs lie scattered in pieces while the blood of life drains away into the soil?\(^ {19}\)

These critics of contemporary society pointed to the fragmentation of knowledge into specialisms, the division of labour within industry, the existence of political, social, and cultural divisions within Germany, the separation of private and public life, and the divorce between individual interests and the common good to explain its weaknesses. Hegel criticised the 'abstract rights' which were made concrete in 'civil society'.\(^ {20}\) To recreate a genuine political community was his fundamental aim. Indeed, in his writings

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and those of his contemporaries, the ideal of the 'whole man' and the vision of the 'true community', integrated and cohesive in its functioning, was given shape. These themes played an important part in the thinking of the young Marx.
CHAPTER TWO : HUMANISM AND THE DIALECTIC

As Deucalion, according to the legend, cast stones behind him in creating human beings, so philosophy casts its regard behind it (the bones of its mother are luminous eyes) when its heart is set on creating a world; but as Prometheus, having stolen fire from heaven, begins to build houses and to settle upon the earth, so philosophy, expanded to the whole world, turns against the world of appearance. The same now with the philosophy of Hegel. (I, 491)

1. Philosophy and Religion

Marx's doctoral dissertation, and the notes attached to it, reveal clearly that Marx was working within the Young Hegelian problematic. The thesis itself was entitled 'On the difference between Democritean and Epicurean Philosophies of Nature'. Marx hoped when he began his research to use it as the basis for an effort to obtain a teaching post at a university.

Two aspects of the thesis are crucial for any student of Marx's political and social theory. Firstly, Marx reveals a real concern for human freedom, linking it with his assault on religion. Secondly, his treatment of post-Aristotelian Greece was a parable for his own times. He used it to illustrate his conception of the contemporary crisis. Underpinning all his arguments lay Marx's conception of philosophy and its relationship to atheism.

Marx believed that human beings were conscious of themselves as human beings. Philosophy was seen as the activity in which men reflect upon their condition - the critical activity of

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human self-consciousness. Philosophy did not simply reflect the world of appearances, as it had the ability to apprehend the rational principles contained within the world. Philosophers were 'the vessels, the Pythia' through which 'the simple forces of moral life' are revealed (I,435). Marx continued: 'The real will of the philosopher, the ideality active in them, is the real "must" of the real world' (I,439). Thus the thoughts of the philosopher contained within them 'the truth-beyond' of the contemporary world (I,440).^2

Marx argued that philosophical thought was only limited by its object - the human condition. Thus the ideas in the heads of philosophers could only reflect the reality of the human world, they could go no further. He criticised Epicurus for positing 'individual self-consciousness' as an 'absolute principle'. By adopting such an approach 'all true and real science is done away with inasmuch as individuality does not rule within the nature of things themselves' (I,72). Epicurus, said Marx, had opened the door to 'superstitious and unfree mysticism' (I,73).^3

For Marx philosophy and theology were alternative thought forms. The wisdom of this world, he argued, made no secret of its opposition to all 'gods who do not acknowledge human self-consciousness as the highest divinity' (I,30). He argued that philosophy was the wisdom of this world. Consequently Marx denied that human self-consciousness was the vehicle through which God came to know himself. He maintained that human self-consciousness was

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3. Epicurus argued that men should be freed from 'science' as well as religion. Both symbolised man's subjugation. See H.P. Adams, Karl Marx in His Earlier Writings (New York, 1965), p.37.
autonomous, involving the process through which men reflect upon their own condition. He also argued that history itself was free from divine intervention, quoting Schelling with approval: 'When you presuppose the idea of an objective God, how can you talk of laws that reason produces out of itself, since autonomy can only belong to an absolutely free being?' (I,105)

In 1837 Marx did not clearly outline the meaning that was to be given to the rational principle working within history. This meaning was given in the thesis as the human essence itself, history being seen as the process of man's self-realization. Marx humanised the Hegelian dialectic, asserting that the emergence of Reason would mean that the human essence had been fully developed. The only intelligent agents involved in the historical process were human beings in their capacities as thinkers or actors.

Marx re-affirmed his commitment to a dialectical conception of history. He attacked Democritus for his empiricism and supported Epicurus' belief that the truth was not hidden and unknowable. By only looking at the outer appearance of things and collecting 'facts' Democritus could never grasp the motive power at work within things. Epicurus, on the other hand, laid the foundations for a dialectical approach because he believed that no distinction existed between what could and could not be known to the senses. He grasped that the atomic structure of the universe was not determined, that freedom lay at its source. Thus he recognized that there was a motive power within reality which was the object of philosophy. These were the key assumptions behind Marx's earliest position. Therefore, despite his objections to some aspects of
Epicurus' thinking it did fulfil all the requirements of the Hegelian dialectic. 4

Marx argued that Gods were simply products of the human imagination which could not survive the critical judgment of Reason:

Come with your gods into a country where other gods are worshipped, and you will be shown to suffer from fantasies and abstractions. And justly so. He who would have brought a Wendic God to the ancient Greeks would have found the proof of this god's non-existence. Indeed, for the Greeks he did not exist. That which a particular country is for particular alien gods, the country of reason is for God in general, a region in which he ceases to exist. (I,104)

The so-called proofs of the existence of God were for Marx nothing but 'proofs of the existence of essential human self-consciousness'. (I,104) In reflecting upon God mankind was reflecting upon his own capacity for self-consciousness: 'Which being is immediate when made the subject of thought? Self-consciousness'. (I,104) Thus real human powers (in this case the power of self-consciousness) were transformed into the powers of a transcendent God. Herein, argued Marx, lay the source of the religious illusion. 5

2. Human Freedom

It was in Berlin whilst researching for his doctorate that Marx developed his doctrine of freedom as independence and self-determination. Marx rebelled against religion, argues Kamenka, 'with prophetic fervour and an almost religious moralism'. It was,

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4. See Adams, Karl Marx, p.32.

he continued, 'primarily a metaphysical' revolt, part of his 'special philosophical doctrine of freedom'. This doctrine was given shape in his discussion of the atomic theories of Democritus and Epicurus, Marx applauding Epicurus for his rejection of the view that the world was a complex of iron laws in which the atoms reacted upon one another in a purely mechanical way.

Epicurus gave to atoms the capacity of self-determination. This allowed them to escape from the eternal regress of causality. Thus whatever happens to be the case in the universe could have been otherwise. Marx noted that Epicurus even took alarm at disjunctive propositions of the form 'so-and-so either is or is not': 'If such a proposition as "Epicurus either will or will not be alive tomorrow" were granted, one or the other alternative would be necessary. Accordingly, he denied the necessity of a disjunctive proposition altogether'. (I,82-83) The fact that atoms entered into relations with other atoms (either being attracted or repelled by them) was not seen as a denial of self-determination because atoms were indistinguishable from one another. Thus they were repelled or attracted by themselves.

According to Lewis, Marx saw in this 'the vindication of man's power to assert his own freedom and attain his own ends'. However, it is clear that the freedom Marx had in mind was not an abstract freedom from: 'Abstract individuality is freedom from being, not freedom in being'. (I,62) For Marx, man was a being who lived in and through his social relationships. Thus freedom could only be

7. Lewis, Life and Teaching, p.34.
realized within the context of social relations. The social
relations which Marx was to attack were those premised on self-
interest. In a passage which reads very much like the description
Marx was to give to bourgeois society he wrote: 'Repulsion is the
first form of self-consciousness, it corresponds therefore to that
self-consciousness which conceives itself as immediate-being, as
abstractly individual'. (I,52) Marx's aim was to transcend this
form of consciousness, to find a freedom-in-community which overcame
self-interest and yet preserved the dignity and independence of the
individual. 8

3. True Philosophy and the Contemporary Crisis

Implicit in Marx's conception of philosophy was the
possibility that man's understanding of the human condition could be
ahead of the realization of the truths revealed by that understanding.
He believed that in the contemporary world philosophy had completed
its theoretical tasks. It had established its atheistic premises and
had developed a true picture of the human condition. Philosophy now
turned against the world from which it was born and on the basis of
which it developed:

It is a psychological law that the
theoretical mind, once liberated in
itself, turns into practical energy,
and leaving the shadowy empire of
Amenthas as will, turns itself against the
reality of the world existing without
it. (I,85)

8. It is important to note that 'abstract throughout Marx's early
work has the Hegelian sense of one-sided, something seen from a
specific but inadequate point of view that fails to reveal the
logically relevant whole'; Kamenka, Ethical Foundations, p.21.
Because philosophy could not develop any further as 'thought', it was forced to take up the role of criticism. Philosophy could not stay idle in the knowledge that the world had failed to realize the potentialities contained within it:

This 'must' of reality is likewise a 'must' of the subject which has become conscious of this ideality, for it itself stands rooted in reality and the reality outside it is its own. Thus the position of this subject is just as much determined as its fate. (I,437)

This new activity Marx called 'criticism', defined as 'the critique which measures the individual existence by the essence, the particular reality by the Idea'. (I,85) He stressed that it was a 'theoretical activity'. However, criticism was different from pure theory in that it examined and assessed the world on the basis of the understanding achieved in the solitude of the study. In the earlier stages of their development, philosophers had asked about the nature of the rational principle within the world. Now they asked whether or not the world lived up to the rational principle. Philosophy moved from understanding to confrontation.⁹

Even though Marx and the other Young Hegelians followed after Hegel's 'total' system, they still had a creative role to play within history. Marx referred to the philosophical schools which followed Aristotle-Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Scepticism. Greek philosophy, argued Marx, did not come to a tame ending with these schools of thought. Rather, they became the archetypes of the Roman world: 'Rome followed the Stoic, Sceptic and Epicurean philosophy'. (I,492)

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Marx interpreted the present situation in the same light. It lay between the time in which philosophy changed direction from understanding to criticism and the time in which the world itself changed direction. 'At such times', wrote Marx, 'half-hearted minds have opposite views to those of whole-minded generals. They believe they can compensate losses by cutting the armed forces, by splitting them up, by a peace treaty with the real needs'. Marx, on the other hand, approved of the attitude of Themistocles:

Themistocles, when Athens was threatened with destruction, tried to persuade the Athenians to abandon the city entirely and found a new Athens at sea, in another element. (I,492)

Marx wanted philosophy to become 'flesh and blood'. (I,492)

The continuing assumption behind Marx's argument was that philosophy contained within it the truth about the world. The world, however, had yet to realise this truth about itself, as it had not yet shaped itself in the image of philosophy. Thus, the truth only existed in and through thought. This was a typical Young Hegelian position which begged a number of questions: How could the Young Hegelians claim to follow Hegel when he argued that nothing could be said about 'the ought' of the world? How could Hegelianism be both the subjective expression of contemporary reality and the theory of the future? Even Marx still referred to Hegel as 'the Master'.(I,84)

Marx appeared, however, to be moving towards a critique of Hegel in a section of the thesis where he criticised those who explained his desire for accommodation with the status quo 'in terms of morality'.

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10. In 1842 Engels expressed such a view. See 'Schelling and Revelation', II, 191-240.
accommodation may have its 'deepest roots in an inadequacy or in an inadequate formulation of his principle'. (I,84) It was not until the 1843 Critique that Marx fully developed his argument that Hegel's idealistic presuppositions were inconsistent with radical humanism. It required the intervention of Feuerbach to establish the reasoning behind such a view.\(^\text{11}\)

Marx believed that the contemporary world was rent with divisions. On the one hand there was the thought world of Young Hegelian philosophy. On the other hand there was the 'unphilosophical', earthly reality. This conflict manifested itself as a conflict between radical philosophers and the status quo, taking shape both at the theoretical and political levels:

When philosophy turn itself as will against the world of appearance, then the system is lowered to an abstract totality, that is, it has become one aspect of the world which opposes another one ... Inspired by the urge to realize itself, it enters into tension against the other. (I,85)

4. The Contradictions of Philosophical Criticism

Marx argued that the new direction taken by philosophy, its 'immediate realization' as criticism, was 'in its deepest essence afflicted with contradictions':

... as the world becomes philosophical, philosophy also becomes worldly ..., its realization is also its loss ..., that what it struggles against on the outside is its own inner deficiency ... In the very struggle it falls precisely into those defects which it fights as defects of the opposite camp ... It can only overcome these defects by falling into them. That which opposes it and that which it fights is always the same as itself, only with factors inverted. (I,85)

\(^{11}\) This issue will be taken up in chapter six of the thesis.
What did Marx mean by this? What philosophy was struggling against - the world as it is - was philosophy's own inner deficiency - the fact that it only existed in the form of thought. Thus Marx linked together the existence of philosophy as thought and the world which had not realized the truth about itself.

Marx made the same point in a different way in the same passage. What opposes philosophy - the world as it is - and what it fights - its own unrealized state - were, in fact, the same as itself - philosophy as thought. Philosophy only existed in thought form because its object had not yet been realized. Thus philosophers presented a 'double-edged demand, one turned against the world, the other against philosophy itself'. (I,86) In fighting for both of these demands they were fighting for the realization of philosophy.

Marx recognized that this posed a dilemma for the individual philosopher. He could only fight his battle with theory and yet his aim was to change the world such that it was cast in the image of philosophy. Moreover, theory only existed as theory because the world had yet to realize the truth about itself. Philosophers themselves only existed (as philosophers), then, because the world for which they spoke had yet to realize the truth contained within it.12

As a result of these dilemmas two schools of thought emerged - the 'liberals' and the 'positivists'. The liberals, wrote Marx, referring to himself and his Young Hegelian colleagues, maintained 'the concept' and engaged in 'criticism'. For them it was the world, not philosophy, which needed changing. The positivists,

on the other hand, attempted to maintain the non-concept - the moment of reality. For them the inadequacy lay with philosophy and not the world. They were the 'Right' Hegelians who proclaimed that philosophy should bow down to religion and the status quo. They attempted to define philosophy so that its content was in accord with the world as it was.

Whilst Marx maintained that the 'party of the concept' (the Young Hegelians) made 'real progress', he expressed doubts about whether or not they had found a formula that would bring about a unity between the Idea and reality. In fact he noted their inability to achieve what they set out to do. Marx was clearly aware of the distinction between philosophy and history. He was seeking a means by which the two could be brought together, otherwise the Young Hegelians would be doomed to the backstage of history shouting in moral imperatives. As Marx himself noted, quoting Plato with approval: 'Either the philosophers must become kings or the kings philosophers for the state to achieve its purpose'. (I,440)
CHAPTER THREE : BOURGEOIS SOCIETY AND THE AUTHORITARIAN STATE

In the year 1842-43, as editor of the Rheinische Zeitung, I experienced for the first time the embarrassment of having to take part in discussions on so-called material interests. The proceedings of the Rhenish Landtag on thefts of wood and parcelling of landed property, the official polemic which Herr von Schaper, then Oberpräsident of the Rhine Province, opened against the Rheinische Zeitung on the conditions of the Moselle peasantry, and finally debates on free trade and protective tariffs provided the first occasions for occupying myself with economic questions.¹

1. The Implications of Journalism

Marx's hopes for a university post were dashed soon after he submitted his doctoral thesis, when his mentor and Young Hegelian colleague Bruno Bauer was dismissed from the theological faculty at the University of Bonn. Marx then turned to journalism as a career. By October 1842 he became editor-in-chief of the Rheinische Zeitung, a paper financed by some leading liberals from the Rhineland. It was set up to defend the interests of the Rhenish middle class.²

In shifting from the university to a more overtly political setting Marx found himself taking an increasing interest in the political and social problems of the day. He was operating in a different milieu from that of the university: 'He now constantly came into contact with men of practical bent and immediate political purposes, and with these - some of them of Hegelian persuasion, to be

² See McLellan, Marx before Marxism, pp.106-110.
sure - he weekly discussed the down-to-earth issues as well as the more purely theoretical matters which concerned them as political propagandists, commentators, and critics'. From defining the contemporary situation solely in terms of Hegel's ideas (and in terms of the Young Hegelian revisions of Hegel) Marx was forced to develop a much more thorough and realistic account of modern political and social conditions.

This development should not, however, be viewed as a 'break' from the Young Hegelian problematic. In the doctoral thesis Marx had been aware of the need to come to terms with contemporary political forces and movements when he spoke of the contradictions contained within the 'immediate realization' of philosophy as criticism. By entering journalism and engaging in more concrete studies he was able to provide himself with a realistic picture of contemporary conditions. As he wrote to Dagobert Oppenheim: 'The correct theory must be made clear and developed within the concrete conditions and on the basis of the existing state of things'. (I,392) By developing a more concrete understanding of contemporary conditions he could more adequately answer the Young Hegelian questions concerning the end of history and the process by which it would emerge. Thus the demands of everyday journalism and the requirements of historically effective criticism were bound together, each assisting the other.


4. For a contrary view see ibid, 24-26. Lubadz argues (p.25) that for Marx 'philosophical theory' was the 'handmaiden of inquiry and critique'. Whilst historical inquiry was an essential element in the development of Marx's thought, it needs to be viewed alongside the philosophical concerns which fed and guided it.

5. See chapter two, pp.25-27.
Reform was a keyword in Prussian politics early in the 1840's. The new king, Frederick William IV, had ascended to the throne, and some of the Young Hegelians held high hopes for reform. In fact the young Frederick appeared to encourage the movement toward a liberal and constitutional monarchy. The point about his early actions, however, was not that they indicated the direction in which he was to take Prussia, but that he raised the expectations of those interested in reform and drew people into debate about the future of Prussia. As Marx wrote early in 1843:

The old ossified state of servants and slaves disgusted him ... Hence his liberal speeches and the outpourings of his heart ... A movement did result; but the other hearts did not beat like that of the king, and those over whom he ruled could not open their mouths without speaking about the abolition of the old domination. (III,139-140)

It was this movement that attracted Marx in 1842. He saw it as a practical force working for the realization of a truly rational and moral state. One of the problems that presents itself to the student of Marx's political and social theory at this stage is the fact that Marx, for tactical reasons to be discussed in chapter five of this thesis, tried to conceal the real nature of his commitments whilst writing for the Rheinische Zeitung. I am assuming, however, that one can explore the statements Marx made about the rational state to find the real nature of his commitment at this stage: 'It is important to try to get underneath Marx's journalistic work, to find out what political positions he took and

why he took them'. Before moving on to analyse Marx's conception of the end towards which history was moving and the process by which it was to come about, I will look at his understanding of the means by which reality should be studied and his own understanding of the existing situation in Germany of the early 1840's.

2. Religion, the Truth, and Reason

The study of contemporary conditions, argued Marx, still required the mediation of philosophy. In being descriptive it should still be critical. Thus he counterposed his method of study to that of religious and positivist philosophers.

The Rheinische Zeitung had been attacked on the basis that it was undermining the Christian foundation of the state, by its 'abuses' of press freedom. Conservatives believed that a prosperous culture was based on a flowering of religious consciousness. Marx replied that this argument stood 'history on its head'. He claimed that Greece and Rome flourished best when philosophy replaced religion. The 'true religions' of Greece and Rome were the cult of rationality and the cult of the state. (1,189)

For Marx true progress could only be based on the unfettered search for the truth, a search retarded by the obscurantism of religion. Progress in general was always linked with intellectual progress and freedom. Christians tried to uphold their


8. This attack was by Karl Hermes in the conservative paper, the Kölnische Zeitung. See McGovern, 'Karl Marx's First Political Writings', p.34.
principles by 'force', arguing that the state should be a Christian state. According to Marx it was this 'force' which was the real relationship between the state and religion. (I,191)

He pointed to the French charter of 1814 to contradict the claim that 'all our European states have Christianity as their basis'; since all French citizens were in theory equally eligible for civil and military posts. Similarly the Prussian law on marriage was based on a 'scientific, moral and rational conception' of the institution, free of all 'spiritual' overtones. (I,192-193) The existence of independent, humanist criteria, which could be used to assess social and political institutions, was assumed by Marx.

Marx further developed his argument by pursuing the logic of the defenders of the Christian state. Particular creeds, argued Marx, always tried to establish their rights on the basis of the 'rights of humanity'. These rights, asserted Marx, could only be interpreted by philosophy, not religion. (I,199) Human reality had to be judged on the basis of its 'own nature and essence'. A religious approach introduced those 'arbitrary discussions' about which Marx had spoken in 1837. They could only be avoided if the human world was judged in its own terms. The state was said to be based on 'natural laws' which could be deduced from 'reason and experience', not theology. (I,201)

Marx's discussion of religion was also expanded. In the doctorate religion was seen as a product of the human imagination, a consequence of mankind's inability to recognize that the powers he gave to God were his own. In 1842 Marx tried to explain religion more fully. It was 'without content', owing its 'being not to heaven
but to the earth, and with the abolition of distorted reality, of which it is the theory, it will collapse of itself'. (I,395) The sense in which it was 'the theory' of a 'distorted reality' is crucial to his argument.

Marx argued that the reality in which freedom was given to some but not to others could not be justified according to the dictates of human reason, because reason had established that freedom was a property common to all men. In order 'to save the special freedom of privilege', those in authority 'proscribe the universal freedom of human nature' and have recourse to 'the miraculous and the mystical'. (I,151-152) Religion had become 'more or less consciously only a holy cloak for very secular, but at the same time fantastic desires'. (I,152) This was their desire to rule over the people. Thus, Marx told Ruge that 'religion should be criticised in the framework of criticism of political conditions'. (I,394)

In Marx's thought religion was both a cause and a consequence of irrationality. In the doctorate Marx condemned religious self-understanding because it prevented man from seeing and acting upon the truth about himself. By losing himself in the projections of his imagination (that is, God) man forgot about himself and his own powers. History was transformed into an object of God's will; men became 'fallen' creatures unable to save themselves, and dependent on God's grace. Religion, by its very nature and through its effects on human self-consciousness, contributed to irrationality.

In the Rheinische Zeitung, on the other hand, religion was treated as an expression of an inverted world, a consequence of irrationality. It arose from the need to justify a world which failed
to live up to the demands of Reason. Thus like philosophy, but from a different point of view, religion only existed because the world had yet to realize the truth about itself. The struggle against religion was seen as necessarily involving the struggle against the status quo.

There was a tension and a contradiction between these two accounts. According to Marx's initial view, the real content of religion was humanity itself. If this was the case, religion could be demystified and humanised. If religion was a projection of man's powers onto God, then the movement towards atheism would reveal human nature itself, man replacing God at the centre of the analysis. If, on the other hand, religion was a mystical justification of secular irrationality, then its content, as well as its form, could not be demystified in a way that would reveal human nature, because religion was the theory of an inverted world. In 1842 if would appear that Marx took the latter position when he attacked the 'half-hearted, narrow-minded' rationalists who think that 'the general spirit of religion' can be separated from 'actually existing religion'. (I, 200)

Marx also attacked positivist philosophy for its sanctification of the status quo. He wrote that reason and experience were the sources from which the state would be deduced. However, experience itself was an insufficient basis. The 'Historical

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9. At this point some Christians have tried to forge a link between Marxism and Christianity. See Macmurray, 'The Early Development', pp. 218-219.

10. Even in the Introduction these two views exist in tension with one another. Religion is said to be the 'fantastic realization of the human essence' as well as the theory of an inverted world, 'its logic in popular form'. (III, 175)
School of Law', Marx argued, had built their arguments on an incorrect understanding of Kant. They were sceptical about 'the necessary essence of things', so they could become courtiers 'as regards their accidental appearance'. (I,204) They confused what was the case with what ought to be. Thus, 'the German, who brings up his daughter as the jewel of the family, is not more positive than the Rajput, who kills his daughter to save himself the trouble of feeding her'. (I,205) Marx argued that philosophers could ascertain the nature of the rational principles within the world and then demand that the state be transformed into 'a state of human nature'. (I,199)

For Marx, philosophy was part and parcel of history itself, 'developed within the concrete conditions and on the basis of the existing state of things'. (I,392) Philosophy was not merely an exercise involving human imagination; rather it was a critical analysis of the existing situation. As O'Malley concludes:

> In all this Marx makes two fundamental claims: first, the historical world of human institutions has its own immanent and substantive rational and ethical content; and second, it is the task of philosophy, properly understood, to grasp this content and criticise this world for the purpose of improving it.

Philosophy was not simply the study of human nature, but the study of human nature within history. But Marx had very little to say about how philosophy actually goes about apprehending the essence of a thing. He simply assumed that reality contained within

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it rational principles which can be, and will be, apprehended by
philosophy:

Is there no universal human nature, as there is no universal nature of plants
and stars? Philosophy asks what is true, not what is held to be true. It asks
what is true for all mankind, not what is true for some people. (I, 191)

Philosophy may very well ask such questions, but how is it
supposed to find answers?

3. The Existing Situation

The journalistic writings contain Marx's first attempt to
come to grips with the political and social complex within which he
found himself. He argued that the people had turned away from
political life and had become 'a rabble of private individuals'.
(I, 168) Self-interest was the sole basis for social intercourse.
Marx illustrated his account of modern society from the debates held
in the sixth Rhenish Diet. In these debates concern was expressed,
particularly by the nobles, about the threat to property rights
posed by the landless peasantry collecting dead wood from the forests.
The propertied class, wrote Marx, wanted the state to become nothing
but the servant of its particular interests: 'It was concluded that
since private property does not have means to raise itself to the
standpoint of the state, the latter is obliged to lower itself to
the irrational and illegal means of private property'. (I, 240)

Of self-interest Marx wrote:

The petty, wooden, mean and selfish soul of
interest sees only one point, the point in
which it is wounded, like a coarse person
who regards a passer-by as the most infamous,
vilest creature under the sun because this
unfortunate creature has trodden on his
corns ... Just as you must not judge
people by your corns, you must not see
them through the eyes of your private
interest. (I,235-236)

Because of self-interest the propertied class did not see the
peasants as fellow human beings; they attributed more importance to
their wood (dead wood at that!) than they did to the peasants. They
were victims, Marx concluded, of property-fetishism:

The savages of Cuba regarded gold as a
fetish of the Spaniards. They celebrated
a feast in its honour, sang in a circle
around it and then threw it into the sea.
If the Cuban savages had been present at
the sitting of the Rhine Province Assembly,
would they not have regarded wood as the
Rhinelanders' fetish? But a subsequent
sitting would have taught them that the
worship of animals is connected with this
fetishism, and they would have thrown the
hares into the sea in order to save the
human beings. (I,262-263)\textsuperscript{13}

Marx appeared to be well aware that it was modern bourgeois
society which was the basis of these problems.\textsuperscript{14} Traditionally
property had not been completely 'private', the peasant having
traditional rights even though he was propertyless. By reducing all
social relationships to relationships between property owners these
rights were ignored. Marx wrote on behalf of the landless peasants:

We demand for the poor a customary right,
and indeed one which is not of a local
character but is a customary right of the
poor in all countries. We go still further
and maintain that a customary right by its
very nature can only be a right of this
lowest, propertyless and elemental mass.
(I,230)

\textsuperscript{13} Marx was alluding to the debates in which a bill to deprive
the peasants of the right to hunt hares was discussed. See
Note 96, I, p.745.

\textsuperscript{14} See Lubadz, 'Marx's Initial Problematic', 30-31.
The breakdown of mediaeval feudalism into bourgeois society was manifested by the fact that the community forfeited its traditional obligations to the propertyless.

Marx also noted two other features of modern bourgeois society. Firstly, he was clearly aware of the existence of the modern proletariat. While Marx rejected communism he noted:¹⁵

That the estate that today owns nothing demands to share in the wealth of the middle classes is a fact which, without the talk at Strasbourg, and in spite of Augsburg's silence, is obvious to everyone in Manchester, Paris and Lyons. (I,216)

Marx believed that such issues needed to be debated even though they did not 'smell' of rose-water and did not seem to be suitable for drawing-room discussions. (I,215)

Secondly, he was made aware of the possible effects of an unhindered market system. Late in 1842 a correspondent from the Moselle region had written of the difficult economic situation there. The Moselle wine-farmers had been hit hard as a result of competition which had come with the establishment of the Zollverein. Marx was clearly of the opinion that the unmediated pursuit of self-interest did not necessarily lead to the common good. The state, he wrote, 'should create conditions' within which the citizen 'can grow, prosper, and live'. (I,347)

¹⁵. For Marx's views on communism see 'Communism and the Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung', I, 215-221. Marx discussed the proletariat both as a class within society ('the estate that today owns nothing') and as a political and social movement with 'demands', linking it with communism. Marx admitted later, that at the time, he had not given serious attention to these ideas. See 'Preface', p.181; and Oscar Berland, 'Radical Chains: The Marxian Concept of Proletarian Mission', Studies on the Left, 6 (1966), 30-31.
Marx did not, however, develop any further his comments on the nature of the new economy and society that was emerging in Europe. As early as 1842, then, Marx had some knowledge of the workings of a capitalist economy; the implications of bourgeois society for traditional understandings of the role of government and social relationships in general; and the implications of bourgeois society for the urban proletariat. He had not, however, reduced all criticism to social criticism. Bourgeois society was not the sole explanatory principle in modern conditions.

Because Marx wanted to avoid an intensification of the censorship he argued against 'a clear demonstration against the foundations of the present state system'. (I,392) However, his views on the system of government in Prussia can be discerned. Power lay with the king and his administrators who saw themselves as the guardian of the common good. That Marx was a republican is shown in a letter he wrote to Ruge in March 1842: 'The central point is the struggle against constitutional monarchy as a hybrid which from beginning to end contradicts and abolishes itself. *Res publica* is quite untranslatable into German'. (I,382-383) Not until the *1843 Critique*, however, did he outline what he meant by this.16

On the bureaucracy he had much more to say. There was, he argued in his discussion of the economic difficulties of the Moselle vine-growers, a distinction between the 'real nature of the world' and the picture of the world created by government officials - *bureaucratic reality*. (I,345) Because the bureaucrats took no

16. Hunt has remarked that Marx's public equivocation on the question 'should not obscure the underlying commitment to a republic'. *Political Ideas*, p.42.
notice of 'the intelligence of the citizens' their prescriptions were always inadequate. They always blamed 'nature', 'private life' or 'accidental circumstances' for any difficulties that arose, absolving themselves of any responsibilities for improvement. (I,345)

For the bureaucrat the people were private property. They censored opposing intellectual and political tendencies and refused to listen to people when they issued cries of distress. For Marx, on the other hand, 'the administration exists for the sake of country and not the country for the sake of the administration'. (I,347)

The fact that the king and his administrators could take advice from the representatives of the estates who met in the Diets was not seen as altering the fact that the people were ruled from above. They wanted the state to become a servant of private interest in the same way as the bureaucracy wanted the state to be a servant of its own interests. Thus the estate system of representation in no way went beyond the system of self-interest: 'The provincial assemblies, owing to their specific composition, are nothing but an association of particular interests which are privileged to assert their particular limits against the state'. (I,305)

For Marx the contemporary situation was characterised by a cleavage between public and private life. The state was controlled by a few, the many being left to pursue their private interests

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17. In the spring of 1841 Frederick William IV summoned the provincial diets. See McGovern, 'Karl Marx's First Political Writings', p.31. For Marx's assessment of the estate system of representation see 'On the Commissions of the Estates in Prussia', I, 292-306.
within bourgeois society. The existence of an authoritarian system of government and a society premised on self-interest went together, one presupposing the other. 18 Marx counterposed to this his notion of 'people's self-representation' in a truly rational state.

18. See Lubadz, 'Marx's Initial Problematic', 37: 'The result is impasse. People and state are at odds, and yet are systematically separated from each other. There is no forum in which the conflict can be resolved'.
CHAPTER FOUR : THE RATIONAL AND DEMOCRATIC STATE

Whereas the earlier philosophers of constitutional law proceeded in their account of the formation of the state from the instincts, either of ambition or gregariousness, or even from reason, though not social reason, but the reason of the individual, the more ideal and profound view of recent philosophy proceeds from the idea of the whole. It looks on the state as the great organism, in which legal, moral, and political freedom must be realised, and in which the individual citizen in obeying the laws of the state only obeys the natural laws of his own reason, of human reason. (I,202)

1. Introduction

Lobkowicz has argued that Marx's journalistic writings 'contain little more than brilliantly written and extremely sarcastic criticisms of the policies of the Prussian government'. However, contained within these criticisms was Marx's first conception of the end towards which history was moving. It represented the flowering of human nature and the culmination of the dialectical process.

Marx referred to this end as the 'rational' or 'true' state. By 'state' he did not only mean the institutions of government, he meant the state of human existence considered in all its aspects, political and social. The government was only 'an organ of the state'. (I,120) Thus in talking about the rational state Marx was talking about a rational 'form of life', not simply a

rational system of government. However, it will become clear that Marx's understanding of the workings of such a state implied that a rational system of government would play a crucial part. He was not an economic or social reductionist, nor was he an anarchist.

One of the difficulties facing students of Marx's journalistic writings is created by the fact that Marx's analysis was conducted at two levels. At one level he described the rational state in general terms, using the ethical and philosophical notions of harmony and freedom. At another level, in his particular criticisms of the existing situation, he provided clues as to the way he conceived of the workings of such a state. In this chapter I will begin by looking at his general description of the rational state. After that I will turn to look at his specific comments on the way it will work. Finally, I will try to weld the two together.

2. Harmony and Freedom

On the one hand Marx defined the rational state as an organic totality within which the various parts function harmoniously. An organic analogy featured in all of his journalistic writings. A 'rational perception of the organic life of nature', he wrote, will reveal 'the spirit of a living unity'. He continued:

2. See McGovern, 'Karl Marx's First Political Writings', pp.60-63. When referring to Marx's views on the State in its more common usage (the State as organized political life) I will use a capital 's'. The confusion arises because Marx regarded the State as an essential part of the rational state and at different times he used the word in the two different senses.
In the living organism, all trace of the different elements has disappeared. The difference no longer consists in the separate existence of the various elements, but in the living movement of distinct functions, which are inspired by one and the same life, so that the very difference between them does not exist ready-made prior to this life, but on the contrary, continually arises out of this life itself and as continually vanishes within it and becomes paralysed. (I,295)

All the elements in the state should be organically related, as were parts of the human body: 'The particular in its isolated activity is always the enemy of the whole'. (I,305) By the same token Marx argued that the punishment of members of society who break the law should not be undertaken lightly because 'the state amputates itself whenever it turns a citizen into a criminal'. (I,236)

Reason, argued Marx, and not self-interest should be the force which holds the state together:

The state pervades the whole of nature with spiritual nerves, and at every point it must be apparent that what is dominant is not matter, but form, not nature without the state, but the nature of the state, not the unfree object, but the free human being. (I,306)

Marx did not, however, envisage that the rational state would be free of conflict. Soon after he had defined the state as a 'great organism' he wrote: 'Without parties there is no development, without demarcation there is no progress'. (I,202)

Marx also described the rational state as the state which realized human nature. 'Freedom', he asserted, 'is the natural gift of the universal sunlight of reason'. (I,151) It was not a property held by some individuals only, but a property common to all human beings. Thus it was a 'universal right' not a 'special privilege':
Freedom is so much the essence of man that even its opponents implement it while combating its reality; they want to appropriate for themselves as a most precious ornament what they have rejected as an ornament of human nature. (I,155)

Thus Marx also spoke of the rational state as 'an association of free human beings'. (I,193) He called for a 'new form of state corresponding to a more profound, more thoroughly educated and freer popular consciousness'. (I,265) Underpinning his argument was a distinction between freedom in general and particular freedoms. Each sphere of activity in the state was said to need freedom: 'Freedom of trade, freedom of property, of conscience, of the press, of the courts, are all species of one and the same genus, of freedom without any specific name'. (I,173) For Marx, however, freedom had to be guaranteed in each of the spheres:

... it is quite incorrect to forget the difference because of the unity and to go so far as to make a particular species the measure, the standard, the sphere of other species. This is an intolerance on the part of one species of freedom, which is only prepared to tolerate the existence of others if they renounce themselves and declare themselves to be its vassals. (I,173)

Marx believed that if freedom was denied within one of its spheres of expression, then 'freedom in general is rejected and henceforth can have only a semblance of existence'. (I,181) Each sphere, Marx maintained, had its own 'inner laws' and should be free to express these laws: 'How wrong it would be to demand that the lion should adapt himself to the laws of the life of the polyp'. (I,173) Freedom, then, implied the self-determination of the major spheres of human activity - of trade, thought, property, publication and political assembly. Should any of these freedoms be denied then freedom as a whole would be denied.
The problem for Marx was to integrate his belief in freedom and his holistic organicism in such a way that there was no theoretical inconsistency. From his general definitions, however, it is clear that each of the spheres of activity engaged in by men had to be freed from external determination if they were to make their unique contributions to life as a whole. Their freedom was the freedom to realize an 'essence', to fulfil the potential they possessed.

3. The Rational and Democratic State

a. Democracy and Reason

Two things are certain about Marx's views in 1842. Firstly, as will be shown later in this chapter, he believed in the need for some form of government and system of law as part of the rational state. Secondly, he was highly critical of the existing system of government and administration; as was shown by his attacks on the bureaucracy and the provincial diets. However, his own views on government were not stated as positively or as clearly as the student of his ideas would wish. Thus what he actually said needs exploration and analysis.

According to Marx 'the people', not the estates, bureaucracy or the king, should rule. They should be free to form their own government in the same way as they should be free to form their own opinions and use their own property as they wish: 'Freedom remains freedom whether it finds expression in printer's ink, in property, in the conscience, or in a political assembly'. (I,181) Given the context in which Marx made these remarks it would seem that
by 'political assembly' he did not simply mean the freedom to hold public meetings but the freedom of the people to form their own government. Whenever a particular freedom is put in question, he wrote, 'freedom in general is put in question'. (I,180)

Marx called for a system of 'people's self-representation':

A representation which is divorced from the consciousness of those whom it represents is no representation. What I do not know, I do not worry about. It is a senseless contradiction that the functioning of the state, which primarily expresses the self-activity of the individual provinces, takes place without their formal co-operation, without their joint knowledge. (I,148)

To achieve such self-representation Marx advocated 'the consistent and comprehensive implementation of the fundamental institutions of Prussia': the spheres in accordance with which the state was ruled, judged, administered, taxed, trained and schooled. (I,297) These institutions were not the estates but the districts, rural communities, governments, provincial administrations and military departments. (I,296) According to McGovern Marx was arguing that Prussia's institutions should be 'thoroughly democratized'.


4. McGovern, 'Karl Marx's First Political Writings', pp.46-47. For a contrary view see Kamenka, *Ethical Foundations*, p.43. I have discounted Marx's own claim, made in a last ditch effort to save the Rheinische Zeitung after it was announced by the government that it was to be suppressed: 'In general ... the Rheinische Zeitung has never given special preference to a special form of state. It was concerned for a moral and rational commonweal (Gemeinwesen); it regarded the demands of such a commonweal as demands which would have to be realised and could be realised under every form of state'. (I,363) The evidence, however, leads me to conclude the Marx believed that democracy was an essential element in a truly 'moral and rational commonweal'. 
disagreement with property qualifications for elected posts would seem to confirm this view. (I,302-303)

At points, however, Marx indicated that any form of representation would be unnecessary in a truly rational state: 'In general, to be represented is something passive; only what is material, spiritless, unable to rely on itself, imperilled, requires to be represented; but no element in the state should be material, spiritless, unable to rely on itself, imperilled'. (I,306) In the next sentence, however, Marx wrote:

> Representation must not be conceived as the representation of something that is not the people itself. It must be conceived only as the people's self-representation, as a state action which, not being its sole, exceptional state action, is distinguished from other expressions of its state life merely by the universality of its content. (I,306)

Here, in remarks which preface the 1843 Critique, Marx was calling for the conversion of self-interested participants into citizens of the community as a whole and for the breakdown of the division between the electors and the elected. Only then would 'the people' rule. That he had in mind the democracy of Periclean Athens was indicated by his praise for that period.⁵ (I,189) There remained, however, a tension between his commitment to any form of government and his belief in self-determination. It was not until 1844 that Marx welded together his notions of universality and self-determination in such a way that there was no need for any political mediation. Central to this move was the conception of man as a producing being.⁶

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⁵. The relationship between Periclean Athens and Marx's 1842 and 1843 writings is taken up by Hunt, Political Ideas, pp.82-84.

⁶. This issue will be taken up in chapter ten.
Marx not only spoke of the rational state as the state in which the people ruled themselves, he also spoke of it as the state in which 'Reason' rules. When Marx spoke of the people's self-representation, he was not simply talking about the sum total of the individual wills in the community, but about a new type of will which be called, 'political intelligence' or 'free intelligence'. Marx counterposed it to 'utilitarian intelligence which fights for its hearth and home'. (I,301). 'Utilitarian intelligence' was encouraged by the estates system of representation, because the individual was not raised above his own aims and interests. It did not in any way 'make his aims and interests the aims and interests of"reason"'.(I,301) In a rational state, Marx argued, 'free intelligence' should rule:

The questions is: 'representation of intelligence' or 'representation of estates'. The question is whether a particular interest should represent political intelligence or whether the latter should represent particular interests. Political intelligence will, for example, regulate landed property according to state principles, but it will not regulate state principles according to landed property. (I,304)

Marx was left with a difficulty faced by all followers of Rousseau: '... the general will is in theory the law of reason and in practice the will of the whole or most of the people, two criteria which may at any time fail to give the same result.' Marx overcame this problem by linking together his commitment to democracy and his belief in Reason. Laws, he argued, should be a reflection of the essential nature of the activity for which they legislate; if they are to be 'true' laws. The legislator should not make laws but formulate them, expressing in 'conscious, positive laws the inner

7. Adams, Karl Marx, p.81
laws of spiritual relations'. (I,308) Marx argued that certainty about laws being rational was only possible 'if the law is the conscious expression of the popular will, and therefore originates with it and is created by it'. (I,309) In other words a government must be a government of the people if it is to express the 'real will' of the people. Laws would appear as restrictions if they were brought down from above, or if they did not reflect the essence of their objects. Hunt has argued, persuasively, that the underlying assumption in Marx's journalistic writings was 'faith in the people', backed up by the belief that the people would make correct choices if they were given freedom of choice. 8 Thus Marx linked together his commitments to democracy and rationality, arguing that each was necessary for the other.

c. Civil Law

The rule of law, argued Marx, would still be necessary in the rational state: 'No one, not even the most excellent legislator, can be allowed to put himself above the law he has made. No one has the right to decree a vote of confidence in himself when it entails consequences for third persons'. (I,243) He attacked Hess for his belief that the State and law would be unnecessary if man was what he ought to be. Marx replied sarcastically:

8. Political Ideas, pp.39-40. It is important to note that Spinoza, who Marx had been reading at this time, wrote that in a democracy 'it is almost impossible that the majority of a people, especially if it is a large one, should agree in an irrational design; and moreover, the basis and aim of democracy is to avoid the desires as irrational, and to bring men as far as possible under the control of reason, so that they live in peace and harmony'. A Theological and Political Treatise, trans. and introd. by R. Elwes (New York, 1951), p.206.
Philosophy must seriously protest at being confused with imagination. The fiction of a nation of 'righteous' people is as alien to philosophy as the fiction of 'praying hyenas' is to nature. (I,183)

Even though there was congruity between the legislator of a perfect state and the rational behaviour of a conscious citizen, it would appear that not all individuals were equally rational. There was still a 'flaw' in the human condition which made civil law necessary. The laws in a rational state would be guides to moral behaviour, educating the citizens in 'true freedom'. As a result the citizens would begin to experience 'true freedom':

The true 'public' education carried out by the state lies in the rational and public existence of the state; the state itself educates its members by making them its members, by converting the aims of the individual into general aims, crude instinct into moral inclination, natural independence into spiritual freedom, by the individual finding his good in the life of the whole, and the whole in the frame of mind of the individual. (I,193)

Marx was not a legal fetishist. If the rule of law was to make any sense the laws must be 'true' laws:

We consider that at the present moment it is the duty of all Rhinelanders, and especially of Rhenish jurists, to devote their main attention to the content of the law, so that we should not be left in the end with only an empty mask. The form is of no value if it is not the form of the content. (I,261)

True laws were said to be 'laws of freedom':

When the law is real law, i.e., a form of existence of freedom, it is the real existence of freedom for man. Laws therefore, cannot prevent a man's actions, for they are indeed the inner laws of life of his action itself, the conscious reflections of his life. (I,162)

Marx conceived of the legislator as a 'naturalist', whose laws expressed 'the inner laws of spiritual relations'. (I,308) He regarded marriage laws and press laws as examples of true laws, because they expressed the essence of the activity for which they legislated. Thus in the rational state laws were 'the positive, clear, universal norms in which freedom has acquired an impersonal, theoretical existence independent of the arbitrariness of the individual'. (I,162)

c. Government

Marx envisaged an active role for the government in the rational state. He specifically attacked the liberal conception of government, arguing that the granting of political independence to particular interests was 'the external sign of an internal sickness of the state'. (I,305) The State, acting on behalf of the consciousness of the 'people', must assert itself against particular interests. (I,305)

Marx's discussion of the economic problems in the Moselle region, and the proposed law against the theft of dead wood from the forests, illustrated his views on government. The administrators in the Moselle region argued that the distressed state of the region was incurable, and due to circumstances outside the scope of its activity. This attitude was an example of what Marx called 'bureaucratic mentality', the state asking the people to 'adjust' to economic realities rather than vice versa. Marx wanted the state to

intervene in a much more positive way to help the wine-farmers
overcome their distress. He claimed that their distress was of such
a magnitude and of such a 'general character' that the general well-
being itself was endangered. As a result 'private misfortune' had
become a misfortune for the state, and its removal was 'a duty which
the state owes to itself'. (I,348)

In the case of the proposed law against the theft of dead
wood, Marx noted that peasants were, or at least should be, regarded
as citizens of the state. The proposed law only recognised the
rights of the landowners, and ignored the peasants. Marx suggested
an alternative:

The wise legislator will prevent crime in order
not to have to punish it, but he will do so not
by obstructing the sphere of right, but by doing
away with the negative aspect of every instinct
of right, giving the latter a positive sphere of
action. He will not confine himself to removing
the impossibility for members of one class to
belong to a higher sphere of right, but will
raise their class itself to the real possibility
of enjoying their rights. (I,235)

Thus Marx wanted to see the notion of rights extended to all, and
not just to the property owners. This he called the victory of the
'human being' over the 'property owner'.

Marx also wanted the government to actively ensure that
the citizens ability to develop his talents and capacities was
guaranteed: 'The administration exists for the sake of the country
and not the country for the sake of the administration'. Too often
the bureaucrats changed the country's customs or the people's rights,
or property ownership to suit themselves, and usually came up
against 'civic consciousness'. In such circumstances Marx was on the
side of the citizen and not the administration. (I,347) There was,
however, a tension between his belief in the need for active
government and his disrespect for the arbitrary use of government
power. 11

d. Citizenship and Participation

For Marx the political institutions were only one part of
the rational state. If the government came to regard itself as
'the sole, exclusive possessor of state reason and state morality'
then it would divide, rather than unite the country. In the rational
state, the government would not punish tendency; it would assume
that the citizens had 'the frame of mind of the state, even if they
act in opposition to an organ of the state, against the government'.
(I,120) A high degree of citizen participation would prevent the
government from becoming estranged from the people. The citizens of
a rational state would not be a 'crowd of adults' being educated
from above, but would be 'an association of free human beings who
educate one another'. (I,193)

Marx postulated that there would be different philosophical
and political tendencies operating within the rational state. Without
such tendencies he believed there would be little or no progress in
the country as a whole. Thus 'political' or 'free' intelligence
would only emerge from an interplay of ideas and interests within the
polity at large. As a result of a vigorously functioning democratic
polity, people would be transformed from self-interested actors into

11. By the end of 1844 Marx had well and truly resolved this
tension on the side of philosophical anarchism. See
pp.85-91
'citizens' of the community as a whole:

In a true state there is no landed property, no industry, no material thing, which as a crude element of this kind could make a bargain with the state; in it there are only spiritual forces, and only in their state form of resurrection, in their political rebirth, are these natural forces entitled to a voice in the state. (I,306)

e. Freedom of the Press

Marx defended press freedom in three different ways. Firstly, he used traditional liberal arguments. Secondly, he pointed to its role within a properly functioning rational state; as a mediator between the government and private interests. Thirdly, he pointed to its role in the dialectical process as a whole.12

In his earliest article on press freedom, 'Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction',13 Marx made a distinction between thought and action. 'An intention only becomes recognizable, and the more so unmistakable, when it has been realized in acts'. (I,361) Laws could not be based on a person's 'frame of mind'; they must be based on actions:

Only insofar as I manifest myself externally, enter the sphere of the actual, do I enter the sphere of the legislator. Apart from my actions, I have no existence for the law, am no object for it.... The law against a frame of mind is not a law of the state promulgated for its citizens, but the law of one party against another party. (I,120)

Such a law was inconsistent with equality as it established one organ of the state as the sole possessor of reason and morality: 'It makes the censor instead of God the judge of the heart ... it exposes you

12. This issue will be taken up in chapter five.
every day to the defamatory and offensive judgment of the censor'.
(I,121)

Marx argued for complete freedom of thought. The truth 'is general, it does not belong to one alone, it belongs to all, it owns me, I do not own it'. (I,112) He wanted to see a plurality of ideas circulating within the polity, and attacked the government for thinking there was only one version of the truth:

Every drop of dew on which the sun shines glistens with an inexhaustible play of colours, but the spiritual sun, however many the persons and whatever the objects in which it is refracted must produce only the official colour! (I,112)

Although Marx was committed to the view that the freedom of thought and expression were essential elements of rationality, he did advocate press laws to deal with libel: 'The press law is a real law because it is the positive existence of freedom. It regards freedom as the normal state of the press ... and hence only comes into conflict with a press offence as an exception that contravenes its own rules and therefore annuls itself'. (I,162)

Marx not only justified press freedom on the basis of 'freedom of thought', he also pointed to the role it would play in a rational state. He related the existence of press censorship to the fact that the economic difficulties in the Moselle region persisted. A free press should play an essential part in the process by which such distress could be overcome: '... the necessity for a free press follows from the specific character of the state of distress in the Mosel region'. (I,337)

The press, argued Marx, transmitted 'with the utmost conscientiousness' the 'voice of the people'. (I,333) Sometimes, he
acknowledged, this may mean that the press spoke with 'the ruthless voice of want'. This Marx called 'the popular language of distress'. It lacked elegance and modesty but it was the journalist's duty, in certain cases, to use such language. Gradually, by means of 'a division of labour', the press would arrive at 'the whole truth'.

Marx also raised an apparent contradiction between State policy and private interests. He attacked the estates of using the state as a servant of their private interests. But Marx also asked himself: 'Are not the demands of the Mosel wine growers for help, simply private demands?' He answered himself in the affirmative, but added that the 'private interest they defend is equally a state interest'. Marx worked with a distinction between private interests which could be reasonably defended as being 'state' interests, and those which could not.

The bureaucracy, argued Marx, could never work out where private interests were at the same time state interests because of their failure to consider the citizens and their needs as having validity. However, an unmediated expression of private interests would be equally inadequate: 'There are in the state a multitude of private interests which suffer, and the general principles cannot be abandoned or modified for their sake'. Only when the private distress was of such a 'general' character, and the 'general well-being' was adversely effected did it become a 'misfortune for the state'.

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14. Within a 'lively press movement', Marx argued, 'a number of different, individual points of view' would develop 'side by side' eventually emerging as 'the whole truth'.

15. See chapter three, pp.39-40.
If it was the 'official task' of the bureaucrats to prevent the truth from being seen, and if private interests always tried to twist the truth in their own favour, how could the common good emerge? Marx introduced a third element, which was 'political' without being 'official', and which was 'civil' without being bound up with private interests — the free press. It had 'the head of a citizen of the state and the heart of a citizen'. (I,349) In the realm of the press citizens participated, not as individuals, but as 'intellectual forces, as exponents of reason'. (I,349) The language of the press was a good mixture of reason and feeling: '... it does not speak only in the clever language of judgment that soars above circumstances, but the passionate language of circumstances themselves'. (I,349) As Tarschys noted, Marx's 'notion of the newspaper as an emotional medium between the state and society placed the journalist in just about the same place as the representative of an estate in the political theory of Hegel'.

Marx argued that three barriers existed to a 'frank and public discussion' in the press. There was the external barrier imposed by governments through censorship and there was an internal barrier created by sections of the press. These sections of the press chose to be silent rather than to speak up on behalf of 'the people'. Thirdly, a free press required a nation of people interested in and actively involved in the affairs of the nation. Such a public recognition was the 'breath of life of the press'; without it the press 'hopelessly pines away'. (I,351) Thus, unless there was a high degree of citizen participation the 'voice of the people' would not find itself expressed in the most effective

medium it expressed, the free press.

For Marx, then, the press had a crucial role to play in mediating between the various interests of society such that the common good resulted.

d. Social and Economic Life

Marx argued that all the different spheres of human endeavour should be free to develop according to their own principles. Politics, philosophy and intellectual life in general should be freed from all government supervision. But what of man's overall social and economic life?

Social behaviour, argued Marx, should be governed by the 'laws of freedom'. Marriage, he argued, was a moral institution which should be governed by marriage laws. Because children and property were involved, the relationship between man and wife could not be subject to individual whims and desires:

No one is forced to contract marriage, but everyone who has done so must be compelled to obey the laws of marriage. A person who contracts marriage does not create marriage, does not invent it, any more than a swimmer creates or invents the nature and laws of water and gravity. (I,308)

Consequently Marx was against easy divorce. It was a sign that the laws were not the embodiment of reason and that the state was not performing its moral function. Thus the decision to end a marriage should be left in the hands of the state.17

17. In discussing this issue Marx made a veiled attack on the existing state: 'Just as in nature decay and death appear of themselves where an existence has totally ceased to correspond to its function, just as world history decides whether a state has so greatly departed from the idea of the state that it no longer deserves to exist, so, too, the state decides in what circumstances an existing marriage has ceased to be a marriage'. (I,309)
For Marx human existence should be governed by the 'laws of nature' in the same way as nature is. These laws would be the norms with which to judge the acceptability of social behaviour. In the case of intentions, thoughts or the written word the individual should be free.

Marx also defended the freedom to trade and to own property. He regarded such freedoms as part of 'freedom in general'. (I,175) However, such freedom had its limits. In his discussion of the Moselle wine-farmers Marx was not content to allow the outcome of the market processes to be final. Such an outcome, in that case, was inconsistent with the 'state interest'. Nor was he happy with the unregulated pursuit of private interest, as it could be inconsistent with true citizenship. Such was the case with the property-owners who proposed a law against the theft of dead wood from the forests. These property-owners disregarded the rights of the peasants whose property simply consisted of 'life, freedom, humanity and citizenship'. (I,256)

However, Marx was not a communist. Indeed he specifically attacked communist ideas, which he claimed had no 'theoretical reality'. As a result of this no attempt should be made to achieve them. (I,220) Of the system based on private interest he wrote:

We do not intend to argue with the world outlook of selfishness, but we want to compel it to be consistent. We do not want it to reserve all worldly wisdom for itself and leave only fantasies for others. We want to make the sophistical spirit of private interest abide for a moment by its own conclusions. (I,242)

'The state', he argued, 'will safeguard your private interests insofar as these can be safeguarded by rational laws and rational measures of prevention'. (I,257)
Marx was a reformist. The State should be constituted not only to allow for, but to encourage, social and economic change when and where it was necessary. The social and economic system based on private property was not seen as being inconsistent with the idea of a rational state. Nor did Marx disapprove of the division of labour or the existence of different classes within society; he disapproved of the situation in which the political or human rights of these classes were ignored: 'He did not yet consider it impossible to arrive at egalitarian political institutions without fighting through the whole antagonism of classes over the whole sphere of economic, social and political existence'. 18 For Marx a freely constituted political sphere, backed up by a free and vigorous press, would overcome the estrangement between the government and the people and allow for the emergence of a genuine unity between individual interests and the common good.

4. The Rational State: A Living Unity

Marx described the rational state as a 'great organism, in which legal, moral and political freedom must be realised, and in which the individual citizen in obeying the laws of the state only obeys the natural laws of his own reason'. (I,202) The 'spirit of living unity' which would animate the rational state would be the desire to create conditions in which the individual 'can grow, prosper, and live'. (I,237) This, argued Marx, was only a possibility if the major spheres of human activity were freed from external determination and allowed to develop according to their own principles. The disharmonies and divisions within the contemporary

world were thought to be resolvable if the 'people' could govern themselves; harmony could not be forced on the people, it had to be the result of a harmoniously functioning order.

What, then, were the central features of Marx's position in 1842? Firstly, he was a pluralist who argued that all of the major pursuits and activities of man - intellectual, political, economic - were necessary parts of the rational state. He did not reduce the human condition to one basic element. Thus if any of these pursuits were suppressed (either internally or externally) damage would be done to the system as a whole. Secondly, he was not an anarchist, believing as he did in the need for government and law. Thirdly, Marx believed that the government was only 'one organ' of the community as a whole and 'where the two came into conflict, Marx consistently sides with society against government authority'. Fourthly, he was a democrat who believed that the tension between government and society could be overcome in a system of people's self-representation. A properly functioning democracy would overcome the balance and harmony missing from contemporary political and social life. Fifthly, he was a reformist, not a communist, believing that the 'abstract' freedoms of bourgeois society could be overcome without a social revolution. Sixthly, he was aware of the existence of the proletariat both as a class and as a political and social movement, even though he was not a believer in the ideas which that movement propagated.

However, a dilemma existed for Marx, right at the heart of his account of the rational state. He dismissed the view that law

was unnecessary in a rational state, and he argued for government intervention when and where it was necessary in 'the state interest'. In other words he assumed the existence of some division and disharmony within the social and economic process which politics and law could resolve satisfactorily. The fact that they were needed indicates that Marx did not yet believe in the possibility of a spontaneous harmony between men. This conclusion, however, sat rather uneasily on top of the ethical notions he was using, assuming as it did a dualism between State and society. This revealed itself in his seemingly contradictory statements on representation, discussed earlier in this chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE : PHILOSOPHY, THE PRESS, AND HISTORY

The free press ... is the ideal world which always wells up out of the real world and flows back into it with ever greater spiritual riches and renews its soul. (I,165)

1. Philosophical Criticism and the Press

In the doctoral thesis Marx had outlined his adherence to a Young Hegelian conception of the dialectic. However, he had not shown how philosophy, traditionally an isolated activity practised by scholars, could become historically effective criticism. Although his writings expressed the realization that this was a problem, he did not come up with any answers. In his journalistic writings the first attempt was made to forge together philosophy and history in such a way that Reason would result.

Firstly he repeated his doctoral analysis of the relationship between philosophy and the world:

... philosophers do not spring like mushrooms out of the ground; they are products of their time, of their nation, whose most subtle, valuable and invisible juices flow in the ideas of philosophy. The same spirit that constructs railways with the hands of workers, constructs philosophical systems in the brains of philosophers. (I,195)

Philosophy was 'the intellectual quintessence of its time' which apprehended the truth of the world; the truth which the world had failed to build into its practices and institutions. Because of this failure philosophy was compelled to 'come into contact and interaction with the real world of its day'. In such periods of 'transition' philosophy penetrated into 'salons, priests' studies,
editorial offices of newspapers and court antechambers, into the love and hate of contemporaries'. (I,195-196)

However, Marx added to his doctoral analysis his argument that it was the press which was the forum for philosophical criticism. Philosophy exchanged 'the ascetic flock of the priest for the light, conventional garb of the newspapers'. (I,195) Despite the loud cries of the enemies of philosophical criticism, this development was 'its destiny':

The cry of its enemies has the same significance for philosophy as the first cry of the new-born babe has for the anxiously listening ear of the mother: it is the cry testifying to the life of its ideas, which have burst the orderly hieroglyphic husk of the system and become citizens of the world. (I,196)

In the notes to the doctorate Marx argued that the 'must' of reality was the same as the 'must' of the subject which had become conscious of it (that is, the philosopher). The press, he argued in 1842, was an outlet for the criticism of the philosopher. It allowed the philosopher to fulfil his mission, a mission of which he was fully conscious. Thus, for Marx, press freedom was 'a vital need', without which 'my nature can have no full, satisfied, complete existence'. (I,137)

The press could only become a vehicle for criticism if it was freed from censorship. The very essence of a free press, argued Marx, was criticism and like all other natural beings and human institutions the press could only realize its essence if it was freed from external determination:

A free press that is bad does not correspond to its essence. The censored press with its hypocrisy, its lack of character, its eunuch's language, its dog-like tail-wagging, merely
realizes the inner condition of its essential nature ... The essence of the free press is the characterful, rational, moral essence of freedom. The character of the censored press is the characterless monster of unfreedom; it is a civilised monster, a perfumed abortion. (I.158)

Even with freedom the press may not realize its critical function. Thus Marx saw press freedom as only a necessary, not a sufficient condition, for the press to engage in criticism. Some journalists, he argued, may lack the courage to perform their duty:

When ... there is no censorship because there is no press, although the need for a press and therefore censorable press exists, one must expect to find a pre-censorship in circumstances which have suppressed by fear the expression of thought even in its more unpretentious forms. (I,354)

Such a press, argued Marx, was 'internally narrow'. (I,354)

Censorship not only represented an attack on freedom of expression, it was also seen by Marx as an obstacle to the achievement of a rational state. Marx illustrated this by referring to contemporary conditions in Germany. Because of the censorship vigorously applied between 1819 and 1830 Germany's 'spiritual development' was retarded. It managed to live 'without producing or consuming spiritual nourishment', the press became 'vile', and it was only in philosophy that 'the pulse of a living spirit' was still to be felt'. (I,140) Germany's political development, Marx continued, was retarded because 'authorized writers' interposed themselves between life and science and freedom and mankind. (I,178) Marx linked together progress and the existence of a free and critical press.
2. The Press and History

The precise sense in which Marx described the relationship between the world and philosophy is crucial. Philosophy was able to apprehend the rational principles contained within the world and because of this it could contrast them with the facts of the situation via the activity of philosophical criticism. Thus philosophy understood, indeed it reflected, the contradictions of the age. These contradictions did not, however, exist because of philosophy; they existed within the world as it was presently constituted. The philosopher's job was to bring the contradictions to the level of consciousness. Implicit in Marx's argument was the belief that people needed to be conscious of Reason if they were to create a society based on its principles.

The relationship between the ideas circulating in the press and the world was presented as a reciprocal one. Even though the ideas had their source within reality (indeed, they were ideas about that reality) they represented its unrealized potential. The press was, wrote Marx, 'a people's frank confession to itself, and the redeeming power of confession is well known. It is the spiritual mirror in which a people can see itself, and self-examination is the first condition of wisdom'. (I,165)

It was because of the relationship between philosophy and the world that Marx denied that the press could cause revolutions. For the press to be a cause would imply that it was external to and independent of the events about which it spoke. Marx illustrated this argument by referring to the Belgian revolution of 1831, in which Belgium was freed from Dutch tutelage. This revolution
'appeared at first as a spiritual revolution, as a revolution of the press'. (I,143) However, just because it came first does not mean that it was the cause of the revolution. He continued:

The Belgian revolution is a product of the Belgian spirit. So the press, too, the freest manifestation of the spirit in our day, has its share in the Belgian revolution. The Belgian press would not have been the Belgian press if it had stood aloof from the revolution, but equally the Belgian revolution would not have been Belgian if it had not been at the same time a revolution of the press. The revolution of a people is total; that is, each sphere carried it out in its own way; why not also the press as the press? (I,143)

Marx established the view, as McGovern notes, that 'the press' force ... rests in its ultimate connection with the people, not in any independent power of its own'.¹ The press simply reflected contradictions which existed within society. By focusing attention on these contradictions it brought the people to full awareness of their historical duty. Unless it reflected these contradictions faithfully it would be powerless to effect any change:

The Dutch press could not prevent the period of Louis XIV; the Dutch press could not prevent the English navy under Cromwell from rising to the first place in Europe; it could not cast a spell on the ocean which would have saved Holland from the painful role of being the arena of the warring continental powers; it was as little able as all the censors in Germany put together to annul Napoleon's despotic decrees. (I,142)

By stressing that the press did not 'cause' revolutions Marx achieved two aims at once. Firstly, he emphasized the fact that he saw his own theory as a reflection of the truly rational which

¹. 'Karl Marx's First Political Writings', p.58. See also McGovern, 'Young Marx on the Role of Ideas', 205–206; and Howard, *Marxian Dialectic*, pp.34–41.
would inevitably come into being. Secondly, he was trying to defend his newspaper against the censor's scissors by playing down its assumed role in historical change. That it did have a role is clear from Marx's analysis.

By penetrating into the public mind the press was able to inform the public of the demands of Reason. Implicit in Marx's argument was the view that a truly rational consciousness would not be automatically generated. Because existence was riddled with contradictions did not mean that these contradictions would be understood and resolved both in thought and in action. Only a correct philosophical perspective, taken to the people via a free press, could lead to a solution of the dilemmas that faced mankind. Consequently, a free press was seen as a necessary condition for the emergence of a rational state. The semantic and political gymnastics which Marx engaged in, in an effort to save the Rheinische Zeitung as well as to present his real views, did not fool the authorities. Early in 1843 the journal was closed down.

3. Philosophy and the Tactics of Reform

Marx's 1842 writings do reveal an understanding of the forces that were involved in the process whereby actual historical changes were brought about. In his discussion of communism he argued that 'force' would be the ultimate arbiter of historical conflicts. Practical attempts to achieve communism could be easily answered by cannon. (I,220) Marx was also clearly aware of the role that 'interests' played within the historical process, analysing the bureaucracy, the church and property owners in this light. He had also noted the claims of the landless peasantry and the urban
proletariat, both disadvantaged by the newly emergent bourgeois society. Marx did not, however, link together the demands of these classes with the process by which the rational state would emerge - even though the rational state would speak and act on their behalf.²

The argument that the movement towards a rational state would involve the assertion of the popular will is contained within Marx's writings, if not explicitly stated. He had spoken of a 'revolution of the people' in his discussion of Belgium, and he had implied that a truly rational state would only emerge if it was 'the people' who created it. However, the tone of Marx's discussions of strategy and tactics was essentially moderate. He attacked 'The Free' in Berlin³ for their belief that the Rheinische Zeitung should act 'in the most extreme fashion'. (I,395) He described their writings as 'heaps of scribblings, pregnant with revolutionising the world and empty of ideas'. (I,393)

Marx gave two reasons for excluding their brand of 'extremism' from the pages of the Rheinische Zeitung. Firstly, Marx believed that such an approach put press freedom in jeopardy. It stretched the possibilities in the existing situation too far. In order to save the political organ, Marx wrote, it was necessary to 'sacrifice a few Berlin windbags'. (I,395) Secondly, he pointed to

². See Kamenka, Ethical Foundations, pp.18-19.
³. 'The Free' was a group of Young Hegelians based in Berlin. Their chief spokesman was Bruno Bauer, Marx's ex-friend and mentor. Because Marx refused to publish their writings he was attacked by Bauer for accommodating himself with the status quo. It was at this point that Marx first met Frederick Engels. However, Because Marx thought Engels was an emissary from 'the Free' he received him rather coldly. See McLellan, The Young Hegelians, pp.31-33 and pp.73-75; and Howard, Marxian Dialectic, pp.26-27.
the effects of their extremism on the alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie. In a letter to Oppenheim, one of the founders of the Rheinische Zeitung, he wrote:

Such a clear demonstration against the foundations of the present state system can result in an intensification of the censorship and even the suppression of the newspaper. It was in this way that the South-German Tribüne came to an end. But in any case we arouse the resentment of many, indeed the majority, of the free-thinking practical people who have undertaken the laborious task of winning freedom step by step, within the constitutional framework, while we, from our comfortable arm-chair of abstractions, show them their contradictions. (I,392)

Marx did not want the alliance between the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie and philosophy to be broken. He assumed that this alliance would be a force for change in contemporary Germany. Since a rational state did not represent the interests of any one class or interest group, but common human interests, philosophy had a crucial role to play in the alliance, ensuring that it did not become an 'interest-based' movement. Even though the rational state may be against their short-run interests, Marx assumed that the bourgeoisie would see the merits of the case.

The success of Marx's strategy, based on an alliance with the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie and backed up by the 'tactics of moderation', ultimately depended on the existence of press freedom. The press was to be a rallying ground for the ideas of reform. Such ideas would provide the basis for the step-by-step achievement of constitutional and political reforms. These reforms would eventually create a framework within which the people's 'real' will could begin to emerge. Despite Marx's own admission that this would
be against the perceived interests of the existing rulers, and against the undiluted interests of the propertied class, he still hoped that the movement towards a rational state could occur in an orderly way. Ultimately, he believed, rational men would be convinced of the need and necessity for reform:

... ideas, which have conquered our intellect and taken possession of our minds, ideas to which reason has fettered our conscience, are chains from which one cannot free oneself without a broken heart; they are demons which human beings can vanquish only by submitting to them. (I,220-221)⁴

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CHAPTER SIX : TRUE DEMOCRACY

All other state forms are definite, distinct, particular forms of state. In democracy the formal principle is at the same time the material principle. Only democracy, therefore, is the true unity of the general and the particular. (III,30)

1. Introduction

The closure of the Rheinische Zeitung had left Marx angry and unemployed, but not disillusioned with politics. He wrote to Ruge in February 1843 that politics was the only avenue through which 'present-day philosophy can become truth'. (I,400) Marx looked forward to assisting Ruge with a new journal to be published in Paris or Strasbourg. However, before Marx took up his duties as co-editor he spent a number of months in Kreuznach where he wrote the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (the 1843 Critique), On the Jewish Question (the Jewish Question), and the Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (the Introduction). The former two works, together with a series of letters written to Ruge throughout 1843, will be discussed in this and the next two chapters.

1. Eventually this journal was called the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher (Franco-German Annals). It was hoped to unite the German 'head' with the French 'heart'.

2. During this time Marx filled 250 pages of his notebooks with excerpts. Most of the works he read were concerned with modern European history, especially the history of the French Revolution. He also read Machiavelli's Discourses, Montesquieu's Spirit of the Laws, and Rousseau's Social Contract. To come to terms with Hegel's Philosophy of Right he armed himself with reading in political philosophy and history. See Hunt, Political Ideas, pp.52-53; and M. Rubel and M. Manale, Marx without Myth (Oxford, 1975), pp.30-31.
Before leaving Cologne Marx had read Feuerbach's *Preliminary Theses on the Reform of Philosophy* which had been published in February 1843. Unlike *The Essence of Christianity* (1841) the Theses 'had an immediate and important influence on Marx'. Feuerbach argued that speculative philosophy should be dealt with in the same way as theology: 'The secret of theology is anthropology, but theology itself is the secret of speculative philosophy'. He proposed that philosophy should start with the 'finite' and the 'real', recognizing the primacy of sense perception in any understanding of reality: 'Philosophy is the knowledge of what is. To think and know things and being as they are - that is the highest law, the highest task of philosophy'.

A true philosophy was one which united thought and sense perception:

> Only out of the negative of thought, out of being determined by the object, out of passion, out of the source of all pleasure and need is born true, objective thought, and true, objective philosophy.

He accused speculative philosophy of inverting the relationship between thought and being, just as theology had inverted the relationship between God and man. Thus by reversing subject and predicate philosophers would discover 'the pure and unadulterated truth'.

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Given that Marx had expressed some doubts about 'the principle' underpinning Hegel's philosophy, Feuerbach's essay came as a revelation. It gave Marx a method with which to criticise Hegel: 'Feuerbach's aphorisms seem to me incorrect only in one respect, that he refers too much to nature and too little to politics'. (I,400) In this chapter I will look at Marx's criticisms of Hegel's political philosophy and his understanding of the term 'true democracy', which he saw as the embodiment of Reason.

2. Beyond Hegel

a. Idealism and Conservatism

In the 1843 Critique Marx subjected the idealist interpretation of history to Feuerbachian criticism. In the process the 'earlier ambivalence toward Hegel' gave way to 'overt and genuine hostility'.

9 Hegel was depicted as an arch conservative rather than as a champion of social revolution.

For Hegel, argued Marx, the starting point for historical analysis was 'the Idea'. Facts were seen as nothing but internal moments of this Idea, the empirical world as nothing but the embodiment of the Idea. Marx argued that this approach converted


10. In the doctorate Marx argued that for 'the Master', 'the science was not something received, but something in the process of becoming', I,84. He saw himself as arguing from within the Hegelian philosophy.

11. Marx had attacked religion for the same reason, arguing that it acted as a moral sanction for the status quo. Reality was said to be the product of God's will and action and as such was given the divine sanction. See chapter three, pp.32-33.
'facts' into 'results'; what is became what ought to be:

Empirical actuality is thus accepted as it is. It is also expressed as rational, but it is not rational on account of its own reason, but because the empirical fact in its empirical existence has a different significance from it itself. The fact which is taken as a point of departure is not conceived as such, but as a mystical result. (III,9)

Thus Marx explained Hegel's compromise with the status quo in terms of his underlying premises. Hegel's assumption that the Idea lay behind history led him to see the real as the rational. Consequently the institutions of the Prussian state were seen as incarnations of the Idea. For instance the monarch was presented as 'the true "God-man", as the actual incarnation of the Idea'. (III,24) Marx agreed that in constitutional monarchies it was the monarch's will which finally determined what was done. This was an empirical fact. Hegel, however, converted this attribute of the monarch into 'the self-determination of the will'. The 'will' was seen as working through the monarch. What was really only a fact became a 'metaphysical axiom' within Hegel's system of thought. (III,25)

For Marx speculative philosophy and theology could be seen in the same light. The Idea took the place of God in that it became the subject of history, a subject which acted according to its own teleology. As a consequence of this human institutions had no intrinsic meaning or purpose, except as aspects of the Idea's self-determination. This principle, asserted Marx, explained Hegel's conservatism.
b. Philosophical Criticism and Historical Analysis

In his 1843 Critique Marx argued that Hegel's approach was particularly misleading in understanding the state and society. Marx believed that for Hegel the state existed independently of and prior to civil society and the family. The latter then became 'moments' of the state, depending on the state for their very existence:

Family and civil society are conceived as spheres of the concept of the state, namely, as the spheres of its finite phase, as its finiteness. It is the state which divides itself into them, which presupposes them, and it does this 'so as to emerge from their ideality as explicitly infinite actual mind'. (III,7)

For Marx, Hegel's approach did not express the truth about the relation between state and society. Indeed it makes the condition the conditioned, the determinant the determined, and the producing factor the produced:

The idea is made the subject and the actual relation of family and civil society to the state is conceived as its internal imaginary activity. Family and civil society are the premises of the state; they are the genuinely active elements, but in speculative philosophy things are inverted. When the idea is made the subject, however, the real subjects, namely, civil society, family, 'circumstances, caprice, etc.' become unreal objective elements of the idea with a changed significance. (III,8)

For Marx the state could not explain itself, it needed to be explained.\(^12\) This required an analysis of its origins and its

\(^{12}\) In the 1843 Critique Marx differentiated between a purely 'political state', separate from civil society no matter what form it took; and a 'really rational state' ('true democracy') in which state and society were merged together in a new unity. What he meant by these terms will be discussed later in this chapter. See Arthur F. McGovern, 'The Young Marx on the State'. Science and Society, 34 (1970), 443-452; and '1843 Critique', III, 116-121.
development as a sphere separate from and over and above civil society. Marx argued that the development of modern civil society explained the separation: 'The abstraction of the state as such belongs only to modern times, because the abstraction of private life belongs only to modern times'. (III,32) He linked together the process by which individuals separated themselves from one another (the development of civil society) with the process by which the state estranged itself from society.

This was an important move in the development of Marx's thought. Historical investigation, he argued, was the investigation of the social relationships of man-to-man. From his critique of religion and Idealism he concluded that the modes of thought, and the approach to history implied within them, concealed rather than revealed the truth. Marx now introduced the concept of 'profane history': 'The search for the profane history of the abstractions which Idealism had made the active agents, the self-moving subjects of history was to preoccupy Marx for the remainder of his life'.

Truly scientific history began with the social relationships of man-to-man. Marx denied that individuals could exist, in any meaningful sense, independently of social relations. In arguing this

13. A. James Gregor, 'Marx, Feuerbach and the Reform of the Hegelian Dialectic', Science and Society, 29 (1965), 76. For this reason the orthodox Marxist Maurice Cornforth has argued that this move marked the beginning of the Marxist theory of class struggle, revolutionary politics, and the dictatorship of the proletariat: 'It is a break, away from the idealist system of deducing the empirically verified reality of the State from the Idea of the State, towards the materialist and scientific procedure of basing the idea, or theory of the State on the empirically verified reality of the State', 'Some Comments on Louis Althusser's Reply to John Lewis, Marxism Today, 17 (1973), 145.
Marx was using Feuerbach's notion of man as a species-being (\textit{Gattungswesen}). Human beings, argued Feuerbach, could apprehend in thought not only their individual selves, but also their common natures and the social basis from which they developed their individual talents and capacities: 'In another I first have the consciousness of humanity, through him I first learn, I first feel, that I am a man: in any love for him it is first clear to me that he belongs to me and I to him, that we two cannot be without each other, that only community constitutes humanity'.\footnote{Ludwig Feuerbach, \textit{The Essence of Christianity}, ed. and trans. by George Eliot (New York, 1957), p.158. See also O'Malley, 'Introduction', pp.xi-xlv.}

Echoes of Feuerbach's notion are to be found in the 1843 \textit{Critique}. To talk of a separate individual, argued Marx, is to talk of an abstraction:

Without the person, \textit{personality} is certainly a mere abstraction but the person is only the actual idea of personality as the embodiment of the species, as the persons. (III,27)

It was within the 'society', 'community' or 'family' that the 'actual person manifests what is actually within him, objectifies himself and abandons the abstraction of the "person quand même"'. (III,27) The family, civil society, and the state were the 'social modes of man's existence'. (III,39) Thus, to analyse man was to analyse these 'social modes'.

Though Marx attacked all forms of a priorism in social and historical investigation, he did not feel that this contradicted his own rationalism. The distinction between the world as it was and the world as it should be still permeated his thought: 'It is not a question of bringing empirical existence to its truth, but of bringing
truth to an empirical existent'. (III,39) Hegel was attacked not because he misrepresented existing conditions, but because he did not reveal the inherent irrationality of these conditions. Hegel's presentation of the world was both true and false; true, because it reflected modern conditions, and false, because it presented these conditions as the embodiment of Reason. Marx, on the other hand, wished to subject existing conditions to systematic criticism. 

Underlying Marx's own notion of 'the truth' was his conception of man as a communal being. He defined man as a communal being in an ethical, as well as a sociological sense. Men had capacities for communal existence which were either repressed or fulfilled according to the way in which they developed in a particular society. Thus the 'community' was seen by Marx not just as a form of co-operation, but as the goal of the human species.

Only when man as an individual had fully developed his capacities as a communal being would his communal nature be realized. In Marx's writings the term Gemeinwesen (communal being) referred both to the individual and the society.15 In present-day society the interests and aims of individuals set them apart from one another and man's communal inclinations were repressed, self-interest being the sole basis of social intercourse. Thus the only 'harmony' that could come to such a society would be a forced, illusory harmony enforced from above:

15. 'Gemeinwesen means both commonwealth in the dual sense of res publica and republic in the narrower meaning, as well as man's common, universal nature and "commune". The word can be predicated on both the body politic and the individual, and as such it suggests forcefully Marx's idea of an integrated human being who has overcome the dichotomy between the public and the private self'. Avineri, Social and Political Thought, pp.34-35.
The atomism into which civil society plunges in its political act follows necessarily from the fact that the community (Gemeinwesen), the communal being (Das Kommunistische Wesen) in which the individual exists, is civil society separated from the state, or that the political state is an abstraction from it. (III,79)

Thus in modern conditions the natural unity between the individual and the community was shattered. In democracy, on the other hand, 'socialized man' would exist 'as a particular state constitution'. (III,30)

For Marx the philosopher was essentially a critic. In the first place the philosopher must understand his subject matter historically: 'The truly philosophical criticism of the present state constitution not only shows up contradictions as existing; it explains them, it comprehends their genesis, their necessity'. (III,91) In the second place the philosopher must analyse the present in terms of whether or not man's communal essence has been realised. This is what Marx meant by bringing the truth to existence. Thus Marx linked together analysis and evaluation within his methodology. In a letter written to Ruge not long after the completion of the 1843 Critique Marx argued that the task for philosophy was 'the ruthless criticism of all that exists, ruthless both in the sense of not being afraid of the results it arrives at and in the sense of being just as little afraid of conflict with the powers to be'. (III,142)
3. The Hegelian Mediations: Applied Philosophical Criticism

a. Monarchy

In the *Philosophy of Right* Hegel attempted to solve what Löwith has since called 'the problem of bourgeois society'.\(^{16}\) Whilst the economic institutions of bourgeois society sanctioned the pursuit of self-interest, the doctrine of popular sovereignty called upon the same men to concern themselves with the common good of the nation. According to Hegel this division between private and public life began during the Roman Empire when most men withdrew from public life to the private concerns of family and work. Consequently public affairs became the sole preserve of a few; the state becoming an external force, over and above modern society.

Underlying Hegel's own solution to this problem was a pessimistic assessment of the 'masses' - an assessment based upon his study of the French Revolution:

> The many, as units - a congenial interpretation of 'people', are of course something connected, but they are connected only as an aggregate, a formless mass whose commotion and activity could therefore only be elementary, irrational, barbarous and frightful.\(^{17}\)

Thus the task of mediating between the diverse private wills within civil society and bringing them together in a substantive unity was given to the institutions of the modern state. These were the monarchy, the bureaucracy, and the diets. Hegel did not want to

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destroy egoism, he wanted to temper it:

The principle of modern states has prodigious strength and depth because it allows the principle of subjectivity to progress to its culmination in the extreme of self-subsistent personal particularity, and yet at the same time brings it back to the substantive unity and so maintains this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself.¹⁸

In the 1843 Critique Marx applied the Feuerbachian method to Hegel's Philosophy of Right. For Hegel the monarchy personified unity as against division.¹⁹ Marx accused Hegel of converting the 'attributes of the constitutional monarchy' into 'the absolute self-determinations of the will'. (III,25) It was true, Marx argued, that the will of the monarch prevailed. However, it was not true that this was equal to the rule of reason:

'Political reason' and 'political consciousness' are a 'single' empirical person to the exclusion of all others; but this personified reason has no content other than the abstraction of the 'I will'. L'état c'est moi. (III,26)

What Hegel in fact sanctioned was the rule of a single individual over society and because he advocated hereditary monarchy, the inherent irrationality of the argument was further exacerbated: 'At the very summit of the state, instead of reason, the merely physical would be decisive. Birth would determine the quality of the monarch, as it determines the quality of cattle. (III,33) Hegel had indulged himself in 'the pleasure of having demonstrated the irrational as absolutely rational'. (III,33)


¹⁹. For Hegel's views on the monarch see Avineri, Hegel's Theory, pp.185-189.
The central issue for Marx was the question of sovereignty: 'Sovereignty of the monarch or sovereignty of the people - that is the question'. (III, 28) Only one of the alternatives could embody the truth. For Marx reason dictated that sovereignty be based on the people:

In monarchy the whole, the people, is subsumed under one of its particular modes of being, the political constitution. In democracy the constitution itself appears only as one determination, that is, the self-determination of the people. In monarchy we have the people of the constitution; in democracy the constitution of the people. Democracy is the solved riddle of all constitutions. (III, 29)

The state was seen as 'an abstraction': 'The people alone is what is concrete'. (III, 28) In a democracy the people were the material of politics and the state is the political form of the people:

Here, not merely implicitly and in essence but existing in reality, the constitution is constantly brought back to its actual basis, the actual human being, the actual people, and established as the people's own work. (III, 29)

b. Bureaucracy

After completing his attack on Hegel's defence of the hereditary monarch, Marx discussed the question of executive power. Hegel saw the bureaucracy as the 'universal class'. They were given the job of looking after the 'universal interests of the community'. They were to be chosen on the basis of their knowledge and ability, assessed by competitive examinations. Any abuses of power would be

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20. Philosophy of Right, p.132. See also Avineri, Hegel's Theory, pp.158-161.
prevented by counterveiling pressure from the corporations below and the monarch above. Hegel had been favourably impressed with the performance of the reformed Stein-Hardenberg civil service which would be ideally suited to provide the guardians of the common interest.

Marx argued that Hegel's approach to the bureaucracy 'does not deserve to be called a philosophical exposition. Most of the paragraphs could stand word for word in the Prussian Common Law'. (III,44) Once again Hegel had confused the 'is' with the 'ought'. In reality the bureaucracy was not an impartial and universal class but an isolated interest group within the community. Marx had reached this conclusion from his personal struggle against censorship and his study of the approach of the Moselle bureaucrats to the economic difficulties of the wine growers.

According to Marx the bureaucracy only emerged as a distinct force in modern times. Originally it fought with the monarch against the corporations, 'as every consequence fights against the existence of its premises'. (III,45) Once established, however, it needed to maintain the appearance of separation between itself and the corporations in order to justify

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21. For Hegel the term 'corporation' signified 'a wide variety of trade, professional and municipal organizations, conceived along the lines of the guild system, which are primarily economic but also political in character'; O'Malley, 'Introduction', p.xlix. See also Avineri, Hegel's Theory, pp.164-166, for a discussion of the role Hegel saw the corporations as playing.


23. For an analysis of Marx's critique of Hegel's analysis of the bureaucracy see Avineri, Social and Political Thought, pp.23-24.
its existence. Thus any attack on 'the spirit' of the corporations would be seen as an attack on 'the spirit' of the bureaucracy:

The bureaucracy must therefore protect the imaginary generality of the particular interest, the spirit of the corporations, in order to protect the imaginary particularity of the general interest - its own spirit. (III,46)

Consequently the attempt to break down the division between state and society would be opposed by the bureaucracy.

Marx described the bureaucracy as 'a particular, closed society within the state'. (III,45-46) Unlike other interest groups, however, it did not pursue its interests openly and honestly, but covered them up by mystification and secrecy: 'The bureaucracy is a circle from which no one can escape. Its hierarchy is a hierarchy of knowledge'. (III,46) As a result the bureaucracy treated any political awareness as 'treason against its mystery'. (III,47) It guarded itself against any outside scrutiny; and attempted to make the state its own 'private property', by attacking different philosophical tendencies through a strict system of censorship. (III,47)

The bureaucracy could not overcome the historically constituted division between state and civil society. According to Marx it only confirmed and reinforced this division; standing over and above civil society, not in and through it:

The 'police', the 'judiciary' and the 'administration' are not deputies of civil society itself, in and through whom it administers its own general interest, but representatives of the state for the administration of the state over against civil society. (III,50)

Hegel's identity of state and civil society was the 'identity of two hostile armies, where every soldier has the "opportunity" to become by "desertion" a member of the "hostile" army'. (III,50-51) Because
the bureaucrat was separated from society he could only treat it as a thing to be manipulated.

Marx also attacked Hegel's claim that the opportunity for anyone to become a bureaucrat made a difference:

Every Catholic has the opportunity to become a priest (i.e., to separate himself from the laity as from the world). Does the clergy confront the Catholic as an other-worldly power any the less on that account? The fact that anyone has the opportunity to acquire the right of another sphere merely proves that in his own sphere this right has no reality. (III,50)

'One does not hear', Marx noted sarcastically, 'that the Greek or Roman statesmen passed examinations'. (III,51)

Marx argued that the bureaucracy only existed because of the division between the individual and the general interest. Therefore its abolition was only possible if the general interest became the particular interest, which was only possible if the particular interest became the general interest. (III,48) This would happen in a 'true democracy' where 'socialized man' would become a reality.

c. Assembly of Estates

Marx launched his most thorough criticism of Hegel in his discussion of representative legislative power. Hegel argued that an Assembly of Estates\(^{24}\) (composed of representatives of the crown,

\(^{24}\) Hegel wanted the Assembly of Estates to reflect the class divisions (based on similar professional or occupational backgrounds) existing within civil society. Thus the term 'estate' had both a civil and a political significance for Hegel. See Avineri, *Hegel's Theory*, pp.161-167; and O'Malley, 'Introduction', pp.xlviii-l.
the bureaucracy, and the civil estates) should meet to work out a way in which the aims and interests of the state and civil society could be reconciled. The decisions made could then be translated into law. The agricultural class (the landed gentry and the aristocracy) would be represented in a chamber of peers and the 'acquisitive' estate (the industrial and commercial class) in the chamber of deputies. The Assembly would be 'the agency par excellence for the achievement of socio-political unity in the modern state' as it would both safeguard the interests of civil society and further the interests of the nation as a whole.  

Before Marx made his substantive criticisms of Hegel's conception of representation, he attacked Hegel's views on the constitution. For Hegel the constitution rather than the people was the 'supreme principle' of the state. Marx rejected this, arguing that the people were the real bearers of the constitution. In arguing this Marx also affirmed the right of the people to revolt. 'Real revolutions', revolutions which found their expression in changed constitutions had always been brought about by legislatures; because a legislature was 'the representative of the people, of the will of the species'. (III,57) Executives, on the other hand, had only produced 'the small revolutions, the retrograde revolutions, the reactions'. The executive, concluded Marx, 'was the representative of the particular will, of subjective arbitrariness, of the magical part of the will'. (III,57)

The estates system of representation did not, asserted Marx, allow for the rule of 'the people'. In the first place Marx

saw the estates as being impotent before the power of the state officials:

The estates do not possess knowledge of state affairs in the same degree as the officials, who have a monopoly of this knowledge. The estates are superfluous for the implementation of the 'matters of general concern', the officials are able to accomplish them without the estates, and indeed have to do what is best in spite of the estates. Thus from the point of view of content, the estates are a pure luxury. Their preserve is therefore in the most literal sense a mere form. (III,63)

In the second place Marx expressed the view that the estates could not do anything but represent their own interests. What was paraded before the public eye as a victory of the general interest was in fact the victory of private interests: 'Furthermore, with regard to the attitude, the will of the estates: this is suspect, for they issue from the private standpoint and from private interests'. (III,63) For a civil estate to act for the common good would require it to abandon itself as it was actually constituted. This would require a 'complete transubstantiation'. (III,77) Thus civil estates could not be used for political representation: 'The civil estate is the estate of civil society against the state. The estate of civil society is not a political estate'. (III,76)

Marx also made a third point which has been ignored by most of the commentators. 26 He argued that the role given to the estates gave the state as a whole a false legitimacy: 'The estates element is the sanctioned, legal lie of constitutional states, the lie that the state is the nation's interest, or that the nation is the interest of the state'. (III,65) In reality the monarch and his

26. An exception to this is Adams, *Karl Marx*, pp.81-82.
state officials ruled. However, it appeared that they ruled with the collaboration of the people. On the contrary, Marx argued, the 'will of the people' did not find its true expression in such a state of affairs. This 'will' finds its 'true presence as species-will only in the self-conscious will of the nation'. (III,65) Hegel's conclusion was nothing but a sop to the people.

Marx further criticised Hegel for wanting to turn the clock of history back. It was true that in the Middle Ages the private and political estates were one, civil and political positions being related. However, in modern times the estates had ceased to have any political significance, and had become 'social estates'. A man's position was determined solely by money and education:

Only the French Revolution completed the transformation of the political into social estates, or changed the differences of estate of civil society into mere social differences, into differences of civil life which are without significance in political life. (III,80)

This development was presented by Marx as an 'historical advance'. (III,79) Civil society came to consist of 'separate masses which form fleetingly and whose every formation is fortuitous and does not amount to an organization'. (III,80) Consequently 'civil estates' were 'mobile and not fixed circles of which free choice is the principle'. (III,80)

Marx especially noted one feature of modern society; that 'the estate of direct labour', 'the estate without property', formed 'not so much an estate of civil society as the ground upon which its circles rest and move'. (III,80) Marx was probably taking an analogy from the Greek polis, where there was a distinction between those who

27. See Avineri, Social and Political Thought, pp.18–22 and 24–27.
were slaves and who worked, and those who were free-men and who participated in decision making.  
Marx did not, as yet, identify this 'estate of direct labour' as the revolutionary class.

Marx also attacked Hegel's view that landowners were particularly suited to the task of legislation. Because of the system of inalienable properties and primogeniture the landowners became independent of both state and civil society. Consequently they were seen by Hegel as excellent legislators, because they could concern themselves with the general interest. Marx argued that because of this system of property land was private property par excellence. It was cut off from its 'social nerves', being independent of the favour of the executive and the 'crowd', and even independent of family decision: 'Primogeniture is private property become a religion to itself, lost in itself, elated by its own independence and power'. (III,101) Primogeniture was private property in its most extreme form because it cut land off from all forms of social determination.

Thus legislators were created solely by virtue of their birth. This was as irrational as the system of hereditary monarchy: 'In this system nature directly produces kings, directly creates peers, etc., just as it makes eyes and noses'. (III,105) Marx attacked the system in which only a privileged few were allowed to


29. Primogeniture ensured that family estates passed from the father to the eldest son. At the point of inheritance it precluded the sale of any part of the property or any division of it within the family. For Marx's discussion on it see Avineri, Social and Political Thought, pp.27-31.
participate in politics:

At the highest summits therefore the state appears as private property, whereas here private property should appear as state property. Hegel makes citizenship, political existence and political conviction an attribute of private property instead of making private property an attribute of citizenship. (III,111)

Was it not strange, he concluded, 'that the right to the supreme dignity of the legislative authority is entrusted to a particular race of men?' (III,105) Marx was against all forms of political privilege.

d. The Question of Participation

Hegel had argued that civil society should be represented in the political sphere through the corporations, as there were too many people for individual participation. Marx argued that this problem only existed because of the separation of state and civil society. To ask whether or not all should share in the legislative process, or whether they should be involved through delegates, 'is itself a question within the abstraction of the political state' or within the abstract-political state; it is an abstract-political question'. (III,117) It was contrasting the participation of all with the participation of a few. Thus 'universality is no essential, spiritual, actual quality of the individual'. (III,117) Marx called for a self-conscious citizenry who take part as concerned members of the community:

In a really rational state one might reply: 'All should not individually participate in deliberating and deciding on the general affairs of the state', for the 'individuals' participate in deliberating and deciding on the general affairs as 'all', i.e., within the society and as members of society. Not all individually but the individuals as all. (III,116)
Thus 'the problem for Marx was not the extension of participation but the conversion of the participants from private into political beings'.

However, Marx argued that the desire for the extension of participation in government reflected the desire of the people to become 'communal beings'. The desire to preserve the separation of the elected from the electors was, on the other hand, an expression of the desire to keep state and civil society separate. Only when the people as a whole governed themselves could this dualism be overcome. In this case civil society would become political society:

The striving of civil society to turn itself into political society, or to turn political society into actual society, appears as the striving for as general as possible a participation in the legislative power. (III,118)

Marx wanted to ensure that the political sphere only existed as part and parcel of the social process: 'In democracy the political state, which stands alongside this content and distinguishes itself from it, is itself merely a particular content and particular form of existence of the people'. (III,30) Politics must become one part of social life in general, not 'over and above it', but alongside it.

e. The Question of Mediation

In the Rheinische Zeitung Marx had not questioned the existence or desirability of bourgeois society. He saw politics as the process which would mediate between the tensions and conflicts within that society. Thus the unity between the particular and the

30. Tarschys, Beyond the State, p.63.
general would be a 'mediated unity'. Although he deplored some of the aspects of bourgeois society, he believed they could be overcome without a revolutionary change in the nature of the social system. In the 1843 Critique he submitted this viewpoint to systematic criticism, in the context of a discussion of Hegel's notion of 'mediation'.

For Hegel, as well as for Marx, mediation meant 'peaceful bargaining and accommodation' and 'the legitimized playing out of conflicting relationships'. Marx expressed a real hostility to this whole notion: 'It is the story of the man and his wife who fought, and the doctor who wanted to step between them as mediator, when in turn the wife had to mediate between the doctor and her husband, and the husband between his wife and the doctor'. (III,87)

As a result of all this mediation no resolution of the original conflict was achieved. Marx concluded:

Real extremes cannot be mediated precisely because they are real extremes. Nor do they require mediation, for they are opposed in essence. They have nothing in common, they do not need each other, they do not supplement each other. (III,88)

Marx drew two lessons from this. Firstly, he concluded that the very existence of mediation indicated a weakness. It implied that the natural harmony in man's social life had yet to be achieved. Secondly, he concluded that the existence of a mediated unity would not be a historically durable resolution of the initial

31. See especially III, 87-89.

conflict, as it only delayed the inevitable clash. Both of these conclusions play an important role in his political and social theory as he developed it in 1844.

f. The 'Political World of Animals'

Because Hegel had identified what was ideal with what was real, Marx argued that he (Hegel) was 'forced' to give the political institutions of his day an 'ideal necessity'; the rule of the monarchy and the bureaucracy being defended against the demands of the people for self-representation. The rule of the few over the many was irrationally sanctioned. This meant that the vast majority of the people were effectively estranged from their communal nature. What, then, was left for the people?

In a letter to Ruge written in May 1843 Marx described Germany as a 'political world of animals', a world of 'philistines'. All they appeared to want, Marx observed, 'is to live and reproduce themselves ... and that the animal also wants'. (III,134) It was only because their 'desires' and 'loftiest' thoughts did not go 'beyond a bare existence' that they could be ruled from above:

The philistine is the material of the monarchy, and the monarch always remains only the king of the philistines; he cannot turn either himself or his subjects into free, real human being while both sides remain what they are. (III,139)

In the 1843 Critique this theme was repeated. Modern society was described as the society of individualism: 'Individual existence is the final goal, activity, work, content, etc., are mere means'. (III,81) Man was separated from his communal essence and turned into an animal: 'His way of life, activity, etc., instead of
turning him into a member, a function of society, make of him an exception to society'. (III,81) Because the people only concerned themselves with their private interests, the real life of the state fell into the hands of the king and his officials. Their purposes are transformed into the purposes of the state.

In this important sense, therefore, the power given to the monarch and his officials only existed because of the people's 'slavery' to their own private concerns. Thus, Marx concluded, once 'the self-confidence of the human being' is aroused in 'the hearts' of the people, they can transform society 'into a community of human beings united for their highest aims, into a democratic state'. (III,137)

4. True Democracy

The separation of the state from civil society was seen by Marx as the central problem facing the modern world. It was the institutional manifestation of the fact that mankind had not fully realized his communal nature. This separation only occurred in modern times because 'the abstraction of private life belongs only to modern times'. (III,32) In the Greek polis and the Roman republic on the other hand, private life was integrated into public life because the state was everybody's direct and vital concern. The political state, then, was 'the true and only content of the life and will of the citizens'. (III,32) Even in the Middle Ages there was no distinction between the private and public spheres, as property, trade, society and even men themselves were politically defined:

In the Middle Ages the life of the nation and the life of the state are identical. Man is the actual principle of the state - but unfree
man. It is thus the democracy of unfreedom - estrangement carried to completion. (III,32)

In the modern world, on the other hand, civil society managed to free itself from any political or communal direction. The atomistic nature of this society, fuelled by self-interest, acted against the formation of any 'true' community in which the individual's private and public existences could be integrated. It was the society of 'individualism'. The state that existed was estranged from the social process; it did nothing to synthesize private and public life. Nor, argued Marx, would the transition from a monarchical to a republican constitution necessarily make any difference:

Property, etc., in short the entire content of the law and the state, is the same in North America as in Prussia, with few modifications. The republic there is thus a mere state form, as in the monarchy here. The content of the state lies outside these constitutions. (III,31)

Marx believed that only in a 'true democracy' could state and society be re-united in such a way that man realized his communal nature.

There has been much debate about what Marx meant by 'true democracy'. Whereas earlier works by Lichtheim, Lewis and Krieger argued that Marx was a radical democrat,33 Avineri has more recently argued that 'what Marx terms "democracy" is not fundamentally different from what he will later call "communism"'.34 The debate revolves around the precise sense in which Marx understood the synthesis of

33. See Lichtheim, Marxism, p.38; Lewis, Life and Teaching, p.31; and L. Krieger, 'The Uses of Marx for History', Political Science Quarterly, 75 (1960), 365.

34. Social and Political Thought, p.34. See also Hunt, Political Ideas, pp.74–84.
state and society, whether it implied, logically or empirically, an end to the system based on private property and a capitalist economy.

Marx argued that in a 'true democracy' civil society became political society and, in the process, society became self-governing, politics being re-absorbed into social life. He believed that two developments would lead to the creation of a 'true democracy'. Firstly, there was the movement for electoral reform. Election, he said, 'is the immediate, direct relation of civil society to the political state - a relation that is not merely representative but actually exists'. Civil society only raised itself to political being (that is it only became a 'true democracy') through 'elections unlimited both in respect of the franchise and the right to be elected'. (III,121) Thus Marx attached great important to the struggle for the right to vote.

Secondly, he saw a new conception of citizenship emerging in which everyone would participate, not as self-interested individuals or as members of classes, but as members of the community as a whole. Political changes were not, Marx's argument implied, enough to bring about a 'true democracy' if they were pursued in a purely 'formal' way. Marx saw the demand for electoral reform as being linked up with the new conception of citizenship in which all would participate as all. (III,118)

It is true that Marx argued that the demand for electoral reform 'within the abstract political state is ... the demand for its dissolution'. (III,121) It would be wrong, however, to argue that Marx was an anarchist; what he had in mind was the dissolution of the 'abstract' political state: 'The French have recently interpreted
this as meaning that in true democracy the political state is annihilated. This is correct insofar as the political state qua political state, as constitution, no longer passes for the whole'. (III,30) He wanted to see an end to the estrangement of politics from social life, not an end to politics or government. The very fact that he argued that constitutions and the law should exist for men, and not vice versa, indicated that he saw both as necessary elements of a 'true democracy'. (III,29-30)  

Politics, said Marx, in language reminiscent of the *Rheinische Zeitung* writings, would play its part in society as a whole: 

In this situation the significance of the legislative power as a representative power completely disappears. The legislative power is representation here in the sense in which every function is representative — in the sense in which, e.g., the shoemaker, insofar as he satisfies a social need, is my representative, in which every particular social activity as a species — activity merely represents the species, i.e., an attribute of my own nature, and in which every person is the representative of every other. (III,119)  

Marx presented a picture of social existence in which there was an inter-related pattern of activities, each of which played a role or served a need within the social totality. Politics was seen as the process through which the people organized their common life. As Marx did not envisage the continuation of tension and conflict within a 'true democracy' the 'mediating' function of politics would wither away to be replaced by an organizational function.  

35. 'The actual law', Marx wrote, 'has to be discovered and formulated'. (III,119)
Marx maintained that the re-absorption of politics into social life could only be preserved if those elected did not become a governing elite:

The deputies of civil society form an 'assembly' and only this assembly is the actual political mode of being of civil society and the exercise of its will. The separation of the political state from civil society appears as the separation of the deputies from their mandators. (III,123)

As Marx attacked Hegel's condemnation of the system in which delegates were instructed by and bound to their constituents, it seems that he favoured a system of mandated and bound delegates. On some issues he believed that the people 'themselves' should do the deliberating and decision-making. (III,122) This applied only to important matters of 'general concern'. 36 Marx did not attack representation per se. He attacked representation of interests and the appropriation of personal power by representatives. In a letter to Ruge, written in September 1843, he argued that a system based on representation rather than one based on social estate was an advance, expressing 'in a political way the difference between rule by man and rule by private property'. (III,144)

Marx also stressed the need for the people to have executive as well as legislative power. 'The transformation of state activities into official posts', he wrote, 'presupposes the separation of state from society'. (III,52) He hoped for the elimination of the profession of government and administration:

36. Hunt has argued that Marx was pointing to the need for referendums to decide certain issues of public importance; Political Ideas, p.81.
In a genuine state it is not a question of the opportunity of every citizen to devote himself to the general estate as one particular estate, but the capacity of the general estate to be really general - that is, to be the estate of every citizen. (III,50)

In a 'true democracy', Marx argued, man's communal nature would be fully realized. He linked together the notions of 'democracy' and 'community', presenting what Tarschys has called 'a synthesis of classical democratic theory, with its derivation of secular authority from the people, and the German cult of wholeness, couched in Feuerbachian language'. 37 The failure to acknowledge the communitarian aspects of his democratic theory has been a weakness in the case of those scholars who argued that Marx was simply a 'radical democrat'.

Marx spoke of electoral reform in the following way:

'Electoral reform within the abstract political state is therefore the demand for its dissolution, but also for the dissolution of civil society'. (III,121) By 'the dissolution of civil society' Marx clearly meant the end of civil society as a separate sphere. 38 In states other than democratic ones, he argued, 'the state, the law, the constitution is what rules, without really ruling - i.e., without materially permeating the content of the remaining, non-political spheres'. (III,30-31)

Although there was no direct statement to the effect that private property would be abolished, it was implied

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37. Beyond the State, p.61.

38. As L.J. Macfarlane puts it: 'At the same time civil society, in the shape of separate institutions and classes not subject to any effective social control, will also disappear'; Modern Political Theory (London, 1970). p.250.
in all his arguments. Firstly, he noted that private property was 'a fact', not 'a right'. It only acquired the 'quality of legal possession', as 'private property', through the 'juridicial attributes' which society gives to it'. (III,110) Secondly, he argued that private property was the institutional basis of egoism and as such the chief obstacle to the formation of a 'true democracy'. Following Hegel he asserted that it was 'the Romans who first developed the law of private property, abstract right, civil law, the right of the abstract person'. This right to do what one liked with the object became 'the basis of civil society'. (III,110)

Thirdly, Marx was aware of the existence of social, as well as political, inequalities:

It is an historical advance which has transformed the political estates into social estates, so that, just as the Christians are equal in heaven, but unequal on earth, so the individual members of the nation are equal in the heaven of the political world, but unequal in the earthly existence of society. (III,79)

Marx argued that money and education determined a man's social position. It would seem, then that Marx saw the struggle for political equality and a 'true democracy' as involving, by necessity, the struggle for social equality and common ownership of property. The latter half of the equation was not, however, clearly stated until the Jewish Question, written towards the end of Marx's stay at Kreuznach.
CHAPTER SEVEN : THE REVOLUTIONARY IMPERATIVE

It is a bad thing to have to perform menial duties even for the sake of freedom; to fight with pinpricks, instead of with clubs. I have become tired of hypocrisy, stupidity, gross arbitrariness, and of our bowing and scraping, dodging, and hair-splitting over words. Consequently, the government has given me back my freedom. (I,397)

1. Shame and Patriotism

The suspension of the Rheinische Zeitung in January 1843 shattered Marx's belief in the possibility of a step-by-step process of change. He had been aware that force was the ultimate arbiter in history and that certain vested interests were opposed to the emergence of a rational state. Despite this recognition he still believed that Reason would ultimately triumph by way of an alliance between the liberal bourgeoisie and the progressive philosophers. By early 1843, however, it had become clear to him that he had not adequately dealt with the question of power in his 1842 writings. No longer, he exclaimed, could the fight for freedom use 'pinpricks', it had to use 'clubs'. The weapon of criticism had to be backed up by the criticism of weapons.

Revolution became an essential part of Marx's conception of the dialectical process. In a letter of Ruge in February 1843, Marx mentioned that he had signed a petition on behalf of the local Jews. He gave two reasons for his personal intervention on behalf of a religion which he 'disliked'. It was necessary 'to smuggle in as much as we can of what is rational'. Such actions were also seen as important to help in the formation of a radical consciousness:
'the embitterment grows with every petition that is rejected with protestations'. (I,400)

Marx argued that embitterment was increasing in Germany. Whilst on a barge travelling through Holland he noted that 'the most insignificant Dutchman is still a citizen compared with the greatest German'. Frederick William had discarded the mantle of liberalism and disclosed to the eyes of the world 'the most disgusting despotism'. (I,400) Given this situation a revolution was inevitable.

Marx compared the roles of 'shame' and 'patriotism' in Germany. Patriotism served to conceal the realities of despotism, whilst shame was a revolutionary force. Patriotism had achieved a temporary victory, but shame would eventually triumph: 'What system is capable of knocking the patriotism out of them, if not the ridiculous system of the new cavalier?' (I,133-134) The 'present ship of fools' would face a revolution aiming to achieve the goals of the French Revolution.

Marx had serious doubts about the prospects of such a revolution being based, at least in part, on the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie. Although the date fixed by the government for the final issue of the Rheinische Zeitung was 31 March 1843, Marx resigned on 17 March. At first he explained this resignation in terms of the impending censorship: 'It is impossible for me to write under Prussian censorship or to live in the Prussian atmosphere'. (I,400) However, he later ascribed his resignation to the desire of the shareholders to compromise with the government. As early as

November 1842 he informed Ruge of 'howls' from the shareholders. (I,395) He was not willing to change the political line of the newspaper merely to save its existence. This would be an 'internally' imposed form of censorship. His failure to get support from the shareholders was a lesson for the young Marx. In August 1844 he wrote scathingly of the German liberals: 'Not a single soldier was needed to shatter the desires of the entire liberal bourgeoisie for freedom of the press and a constitution'. (III,190)

2. A New Revolutionary Alliance

In a second letter written to Ruge in May 1843 Marx further developed his conception of the impending revolution. The democratic revolution was inspired by the desire for freedom, which had 'vanished from the world with the Greeks, and under Christianity disappeared into the blue mist of the heavens'. Its return would 'transform society into a community of human beings united for their highest aims, into a democratic state'. (III,137)

Marx described the tensions inherent within the existing order in Germany. The relationship between the monarch and the people, the governors and the governed, was characterised by brutality. The state was the monarch: 'He is the sole political person. His personality determines the system'. (III,139) His subjects were 'dehumanized' men, 'brainless beings' whose 'desires and loftiest thoughts do not go beyond bare existence'. (III,137) Only a revolution could transform such a relationship, the philistine being the 'material' of the monarchy and the monarch the 'king' of the philistines. (III,139)
In this letter Marx pointed to two groups who would be involved in the revolutionary process. Firstly, there were the intellectuals — those who 'think and who suffer'. Their ideas would guide the direction of the revolution. Thus the longer the intellectuals had to take stock of the situation, the 'more perfect' would be the new order into which the world was moving. (III,141)

Secondly, Marx pointed to those who 'suffer and who think'. There were two sources of suffering in the contemporary situation: 'The passive system of reproduction ... enlists recruits to serve the new type of humanity'. (III,141) Marx believed that the irrationalities and injustices associating with the existing system of government ('the passive system of reproduction') could be exposed through the agitation for limited reforms (for example the emancipation of the Jews). As well as the existing system of government he spoke of the 'system of industry and trade':

The system of industry and trade, of ownership and exploitation of people, however, leads even more rapidly than the increase in population to a rupture within present-day society, a rupture which the old system is not able to heal, because it does not heal and create at all, but only exists and consumes. (III,141)

For the first time Marx turned his attention to the economic system as a factor to explain revolution. In 1842 he had noted the 'rights' and 'demands' of both the landless peasantry and the urban proletariat. However, he did not link their 'suffering' with the process of revolution that would alleviate it. In 1843 Marx linked these two together. Democracy was seen as a system which could solve the problems associated with modern industry, because it was a 'creative system' not a system which only 'exists and consumes'.
In the letter to Ruge Marx did not indicate whether this implied or necessitated an end to the system of private property.² It is clear, however, that it did imply the necessity of active government intervention in the social and economic process, as Marx had argued in 1842.

Even though Marx linked together the 'thinkers' and the 'sufferers', the responsibility for determining the direction in which the revolution would go still lay with the intellectuals:

The longer the time events allow to thinking humanity for taking stock of its position, and to suffering mankind for mobilising its forces, the more perfect on entering the world will be the product that the present time bears in its womb. (III,141)

3. The Right to Revolt

In the 1843 Critique Marx outlined a justification for the forthcoming revolution in terms of his theory of history. He observed that in the situation where the need for a new constitution had arisen, any gradual transition from the old to the new was impossible, and revolution was necessary and inevitable:

entire state constitutions have changed in such a way that gradually new needs arose, the old broke down, etc.; but for a new constitution a real revolution has always been required.... The category of gradual transition is, in the first place, historically false; and in the second place, it explains nothing. (III,56-57)

Legislatures, argued Marx, pointing to the French Revolution, have always made 'the great, organic, general revolutions': 'It has not fought the constitution, but a particular, antiquated constitution,  

². Hunt argues that 'the letter to Ruge of May 1843 is probably his last precommunist writing', Political Ideas, p.47.
precisely because the legislature was the representative of the people, of the will of the species (*des Gattungswillens*). Executives, because they represented what to Marx was a governing elite, produced only 'the small revolutions, the retrograde revolutions, the reactions'. The 'people', asserted Marx, should be 'made the principle of the constitution'. (III,57)

Marx believed that the historical process that would ultimately culminate in the realization of man's communal nature had begun with the French Revolution. The judgment of history, which would be recorded on the stage of history by the 'people', would be the judgment of Reason. It would be through the 'people' that man's communal nature would be revealed. Marx justified the revolution because it was aimed to remove the contradiction between man's actual existence and his communal nature:

Posed correctly, the question is simply this: Has the people the right to give itself a new constitution? The answer must be an unqualified 'Yes', because once it has ceased to be an actual expression of the will of the people the constitution has become a practical illusion. (III,57)

Marx assumed that the judgment of history would also be the judgment of Reason.

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3. On the basis of this Hunt has argued that Marx hoped that, in the development of the revolution, 'a constituent assembly would be elected by the people as a special legislature, charged with the task of drawing up a new fundamental law', *Political Ideas*, p.78.
4. *Reason and Consciousness*

Marx told Ruge in September 1843 that the only problem facing revolutionaries was that 'the world' was not aware of what needed to be done in order to bring about what was rational. Philosophers, on the other hand, knew what was needed but, on their own, they were impotent as revolutionary agents. However, they could inform those who did have the ability to bring about change: 'We can formulate the trend of our journal as being: self-clarification (critical philosophy) to be gained by the present time of its struggles and desires'. (III,145)

As a result of the intervention of philosophers on the stage of history, the aims and desires of the people could be given an intellectual foundation. This new clarity, expressed as revolutionary consciousness, was to provide the basis for revolutionary action: 'The world has long dreamed of possessing something of which it has only to be conscious in order to possess it in reality'. (III,144) Despite the fact that the people recognized the need for change, they could not, by themselves, work out what needed to be done.

Thus, for Marx, the philosophers and the people complemented each other in the revolutionary process. Marx was so sure that the principles developed by the philosophers were built 'out of the world's own principles' that he wrote: 'We merely show the world what it is really fighting for, and consciousness is something that it has to acquire, even if it does not want to'. (III,144) Marx was supremely confident that Reason itself would eventually speak through the actions of the people.
CHAPTER EIGHT : POLITICAL AND HUMAN EMANCIPATION

Political emancipation is the reduction of man, on the one hand, to a member of civil society, to an egoistic, independent individual, and, on the other hand, to a citizen, a juridical person. Only when the real, individual man reabsorbs in himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual human being has become a species-being in his everyday life, in his particular work, and in his particular situation, and when man has recognized and organized his 'forces propres' as social forces, and consequently no longer separates social power from himself in the shape of political power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished. (III, 168)

1. Introduction

In developing his critique of Hegel in 1843 Marx not only considered political philosophy but also contemporary history. In coming to terms with Hegel he felt himself to be coming to terms with the contemporary situation in which state and society had become separated. Consequently he made a study of the revolutionary histories of France, England and America in an effort to clarify his own understanding of contemporary events. These studies confirmed his developing beliefs concerning the nature of the relationship between the state and bourgeois society, the nature of the world's future, and the nature of the forces that would be involved in the transition. In the Jewish Question, written in 1843 but published in Paris in 1844, the first two issues were discussed.

In the Jewish Question Marx's move from social democratic republicanism to 'communism', only implicit in the 1843 Critique, is
firmly stated.¹ From emphasizing the political changes necessary for the achievement of a truly rational and human society, Marx focused his attention more directly on the social changes. Two influences explain this shift. Firstly, Marx realized that it was inconsistent to believe in both 'true democracy' and a social and economic system based on private property. The 'political' (or 'free' or 'true' state) was said to be the essential form of state because it achieved 'the final form of human emancipation within the hitherto existing world'. (III,155)² In fact it was the perfect ending to the purely political approach to emancipation: 'The division of the human being into a public man and a private man, the displacement of religion from the state into civil society, this is not a stage of political emancipation but its completion'. (III,155)

Such a state did not, however, overcome the contradiction between man's communal nature and his social and political existence. In the 1843 Critique Marx had argued that representation on the basis of interests could not, by its very nature, overcome the contradiction. Accordingly, he pressed for universal suffrage and

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1. 'Communism] carried with it, right from the beginning, something of a double entendre. As used by Frenchmen, it conjured up the idea of the commune, as the basic unit of neighbourhood and self-government, and suggested a form of social organization resting on a federation of free communes. But at the same time it suggested the notion of communauté - of having things in common and of common ownership': G.D.H. Cole, Socialist Thought: The Forerunners, 1789-1850 (London, 1953), p.7. It was the critique of private property which drew Marx to communism.

2. In Germany, however, there was 'no political state, no state as such'. (III,150) In other words Germany had yet to achieve political, let alone human, emancipation.
and extensive citizen participation of a new type. It soon became obvious to Marx that such citizenship was not possible if the institutional basis of self-interest in society, private property, still existed. The overcoming of the contradiction between the state and itself through a democratic republic did not overcome the contradiction between man's existence as a member of the community and man's existence as a member of civil society. At most it could only allow for mediation between the various conflicts within civil society:

> The perfect political state is, by its nature, man's species-life, as opposed to his material life. All the preconditions of this egoistic life continue to exist in civil society outside the sphere of the state, but as qualities of civil society. Where the political state has attained its true development, man - not only in thought ..., but in reality, in life - leads a twofold life, a heavenly and an earthly life: life in the political community, in which he considers himself a communal being, and life in civil society, in which he acts as a private individual, regards other men as a means, degrades himself into a means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers. (III,153-154)

Thus, in the Jewish Question, civil society, rather than the form of government, became Marx's chief object of criticism. To attain true citizenship and to realize man's communal nature in a 'true democracy', an end to civil society was required. Unless these social changes occurred the political realm would always be swamped by private interests and it would be impossible to achieve a genuine universality. Marx was forced, by the logic of his commitment to man as a communal being, to take up the cause of social revolution. As Rubel observed; Marx took up the cause of communism, 'through the adoption of an ethics of democracy'.

However, it was not simply the 'ethics of democracy' which explain Marx's shift to 'communism'. Because he saw himself as working within history, Marx always defined his conception of Reason in terms which did justice to his perception of what was both actual and possible. According to Rubel Marx's study of the histories of France, England, and America convinced him that the 'normal and even inevitable outcome of democracy is communism'.

Marx had read and taken extensive extracts from Thomas Hamilton's study of America, *Men and Manners in America* (1833). Like de Tocqueville (who Marx also read in 1843), Hamilton noted that 'the principle of absolute equality' was at work in the modern world. There would, he argued, be a rupture in American society because of the social discrepancies that existed between the different classes of American society:

> ... if the question be conceded that democracy necessarily leads to anarchy and spoilation, it does not seem that the mere length of road to be travelled is a point of much importance. In the United States, with the great advantages they possess, it may continue a generation or two longer, but the termination is the same. The doubt regards time, not destination.

On the basis of such commentaries Marx reached two conclusions. Firstly, a class approach to history was held to be necessary. This issue will be taken up in the next chapter. Secondly, he concluded that the political revolution would not contain the contradictions of the age, a conclusion consistent with the position


he developed philosophically. Thus what was seen as a philosophical necessity was also an empirical inevitability, philosophy and history were coming together in a way that Marx assumed they should.

In 1842 Marx had argued that the criticism of religion was a veil concealing the political aims of the radical movement. The real struggle, he told his Young Hegelian colleagues was the political, not the theological struggle. By late 1843 he was arguing that the political struggle was a veil concealing the social struggle beneath. In a letter to Ruge (September 1843) he wrote: 'Just as religion is a register of the theoretical struggles of mankind, so the political state is a register of the practical struggles of mankind. Thus, the political state expresses, within the limits of its form ... all social struggles, needs and truths. (III,143)

In the Jewish Question this social struggle was defined in terms of the struggle between man's 'species-life' and man's 'earthly existence'. Even though Marx had not focused his attention directly on the question of class, he was aware of the struggle between 'the rich' and 'the poor', and 'the propertied' and the 'propertyless', and he had linked this struggle to 'the system of industry and trade'. Only in the Introduction were these ideas developed.6

6. The importance of placing the Jewish Question in the context of Marx's developing understanding of man as a communal being has been noted by Maguire: 'Were we to assume that he started off with a theory of classes, we might well overlook the central importance of the idea of community and universality which lies behind [his] later theory'; Marx's Paris Writings, p.37.
2. Political Emancipation and Civil Society

(a) The Modern State and the Rights of Man

As well as pointing to the historical limitations of political emancipation, Marx also explored the connection between political emancipation and civil society. He accused the leaders of the French Revolution of a massive deception. Despite their slogans, the revolution was a 'mere means', whose purpose was 'the life of civil society'. (III,164) The 'rights' it established were what Marx called the 'rights of man':

None of the so-called rights of man, therefore, go beyond egoistic man, beyond man as a member of civil society, that is, an individual withdrawn into himself, into the confines of his private interests and private caprice, and separated from the community. (III,164)

These rights were the rights to liberty, to private property, to equality, and to security. Marx illustrated his case by referring to the declaration that prefaced the Jacobin constitution of 1793. He concluded that:

Liberty, therefore, is the right to do everything that harms no one else. The limits within which anyone can act without harming someone else are defined by law, just as the boundary between two fields is determined by a boundary post. It is a question of the liberty of man as an isolated monad, withdrawn into himself ...

... The practical application of man's right to liberty is man's right to private property ... The right of man to private property is, therefore, the right to enjoy one's property and to dispose of it at one's discretion ... This individual liberty and its application form the basis of civil society.

... Equality, used here in its non-political sense, is nothing but the equality of the liberty described above, namely: each man is to the same extent regarded as such a self-sufficient monad.
... Security is the highest social concept of civil society, the concept of poliae, expressing the fact that the whole of society exists only in order to guarantee to each of its members the preservation of his person, his rights, and his property. (III,162-163)

Thus political emancipation involved not only the freeing of man for politics, but also the freeing of the 'egoistic spirit of civil society': 'The completion of the idealism of the state was at the same time the completion of the materialism of civil society'. (III,166) For the 'political emancipators', civil society was seen as 'the basis', 'the precondition' of the political revolution. (III,167) This view had two consequences. Firstly, the rights of the 'citizen' were given second-place to the rights of 'man'. The rights of the 'citizen' 'are in part political rights, rights which can only be exercised in a community with others'. (III,160) Marx continued:

Their content is participation in the community, and specifically in the political community, in the life of the state. They come within the category of political freedom, the category of civic rights. (III,161)

Marx was apparently referring to the right of every citizen to vote and to hold public office, as well as to freedom of expression and assembly.

Because the revolution was, in the last analysis, a revolution of civil society, the rights of the 'citizen' were always given second-place to the rights of 'man': 'Whereas, for example, security is declared one of the rights of man, violation of the privacy of correspondence is openly declared to be the order of the day'. (III,165) Security, Marx argued, was 'the insurance of civil society's egoism'. (III,164) As a result it also secured private property which was 'the basis of civil society'. (III,163) For this reason Marx always spoke of the rights of 'man' contemptuously – as
the 'so-called' rights of man. According to Hunt 'Marx belaboured and abused the distinction between human and civil rights essentially to announce that he no longer believed in private property'. Marx was counterposing 'the theory' and 'the practice' of the French Revolution, the humanistic ideals and the sordid realities.

In the second place it meant that the state was no longer an 'independent' force in modern history. In 1842 he had seen the authoritarian Prussian State as the enemy. In the 1843 Critique Marx recognized that civil society had established itself as an autonomous force but had yet to work out the practical implications of this. However, in the Jewish Question he clearly recognized the political importance of civil society:

At times of special self-confidence, political life seeks to suppress its prerequisite, civil society and the elements composing this society, and to constitute itself as the real species-life of man devoid of contradictions. But it can achieve this only by coming into violent contradiction with its own conditions of life, only by declaring the revolution to be permanent, and therefore the political drama necessarily ends with the re-establishment of religion, private property, and all elements of civil society, just as war ends with peace. (III,156)

No longer did Marx focus his attention on the relationships between governments and the people to explain historical change but he looked to relations between people within civil society. The 'direct' relations of man-to-man were important in any understanding of history.

Thus, in one sense, Marx argued that the modern state was the basis of modern, bourgeois society. Even though he did not refer specifically to the bourgeoisie he came close to a class approach to

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7. Political Ideas, pp.73-74.
politics and history when he referred to 'the leaders' of the
revolution. However, the fact that he was looking to within civil
society for the forces which would play a role within history, placed
Marx well along the road to a class approach.

b. Political Democracy and Religion

Marx also defined the modern state as a form of religion.
The political state not only established civil society as an
autonomous sphere of human existence, it was also logically
presupposed by civil society in the same way that religion was
logically presupposed by secular deficiencies:

the political state stands in the same opposition
to civil society, and it prevails over the
latter in the same way as religion prevails over
the narrowness of the secular world. (III,154)

In the Introduction, written shortly after the Jewish Question,
Marx argued that it was men who made religion, not religion which made
men:

Religion is the self-consciousness and self-
esteeem of man who has either not yet found
himself or has already lost himself again. But
man is no abstract being encamped outside the
world. Man is the world of man, the state,
society. This state, this society, produce
religion, an inverted world-consciousness,
because they are in an inverted world. (III,175)

Religion was seen as a compensation for the lack of a truly human
reality, the 'universal source of consolation and justification'.
(III,175) It only existed because of the way the world of man, the
state and society was structured. Consequently 'the struggle against
religion is ... indirectly a fight against the world of which religion

8. That it is the bourgeoisie he has in mind is stated quite clearly
in the Holy Family, IV, 124.
is the spiritual aroma'. (III,175) The critic of religion, Marx concluded, must go beyond religion and become a political and social critic.

In the Jewish Question Marx noted that in the politically emancipated countries such as the United States of America, 'religion not only exists, but displays a fresh and vigorous vitality, that is proof that the existence of religion is not in contradiction to the perfection of the state'. (III,151) The state was not a Christain State but religion still flourished within society in general. Marx concluded that the roots of religion must be sought elsewhere than in the form of State, and he turned to society to provide an explanation of the religious phenomenon.

In civil society man 'acts as a private individual, regards other men as a means, degrades himself into a means, and becomes a plaything of alien powers'. (III,154) This 'secular narrowness' was the cause of religion, not its consequence. Religion was then allowed to flourish 'among the multitude of private interests', and the right to religious freedom became one of the 'rights of man'. (III,155) This explained what Marx called the paradoxical situation in which a 'free state' existed without 'free men':

Man was not freed from religion, he received religious freedom. He was not freed from property, he received freedom to own property. He was not freed from the egoism of business, he received freedom to engage in business. (III,167)

Conventional forms of religion as such did not interest Marx. He argued that democracy had emerged in the modern world as a surrogate for religion:
Political democracy is Christian since in it man, not merely one man but every man, ranks as sovereign, as the highest being, but it is man in his uncivilised, unsocial form, man in his fortuitous existence, man just as he is, man as he has been corrupted by the whole organization of our society, who has lost himself, been alienated, and handed over to the rule of inhuman conditions and elements - in short man who is not yet a real species-being. (III,159)

In a democracy man lived a double life, a real, earthly life based on private property and self-interest, and an illusory community life within the political state. In other words mankind participated minimally as a communal being, and this participation had little or no effect on civil society. It was a form of religion because men 'treat the political life of the state, an area beyond their real individuality, as if it were their true life'. (III,159) In the same way the Christian regarded his eternal life in heaven as his true life. A 'political' form of consciousness was an illusion. One could paraphrase Marx's famous statement in the Introduction: 'Man makes the political state, the political state does not make man. The political state is the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet found himself or has already lost himself again. But man is no abstract being encamped outside the world. Man is the world of society. This society produces the political state, an inverted world consciousness, because it is an inverted world'.

In his earlier works Marx had seen religion as an ideological force backing up the absolutist state. He now argued that in a democracy 'political consciousness' was a form of compensation for the secular narrowness of civil society. The religious illusion involved, however, worked in a much more subtle way. The authoritarian state was an alien power before which the people must bow. In the case of a democracy the people imagined they lived in an ideal community
(the dream of heaven?) even though the political state was an inadequate expression of their communal being. The fight against this illusion was the fight against civil society. It was only because man's social life negated his communal nature that he needed a 'compensatory community'. At most the political community could only delay the inevitable process by which civil society was destroyed. Marx did, however, acknowledge that political emancipation was a 'big step forward'; not the 'final form of human emancipation', but 'the final form of human emancipation within the hitherto existing world order'. (III,155)

In his analysis Marx made a distinction between the process of self-alienation involved in religious or political consciousness, and the explanation of that process. Religious consciousness involved attributing to God what were in fact human attributes. Political consciousness involved attributing to the political state what were in fact unrealized human possibilities. Both were explained by the deformities within the secular world, which arose as a result of the structure and functioning of civil society.

There is an unresolved tension in Marx's account of the state as a new form of religion. On the one hand he implied that the modern state was an 'ideological force' whose existence compensated for the lack of genuine community. As such it could delay, through its effects on consciousness, the process by which mankind was truly emancipated because it acted as a mediating influence on the conflicts within civil society. On the other hand, he denied that the modern state could contain the contradictions of the age, arguing that it would simply reflect them.

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Thus the conflict between man's species-life and man's social existence would not resolve itself until there was a genuine form of human emancipation. He assumed that the process of history would ensure that such a resolution occurred. Whether or not democracy could act to contain the contradictions of the age was clearly dependent on the analysis of the process by which change was supposed to come about. For Marx it was from within civil society that change would come about. In denying the possibility of the historical permanence of a purely political revolution, he denied that the conflicts within civil society, which would usher in a new society, could or would be subject to any form of mediation.

Implicit in Marx's analysis, then, is the rejection of a form of State modified civil society - a form of 'social democracy'. He moved away from his 1842 position which held that the interests within civil society could be reconciled with the common good in and through active citizenship.

3. Civil Society

Civil society, argued Marx, was based on the institution of private property. This institution was backed up by the law, which gave everyone the right to enjoy and dispose of their property at their own discretion. As a result of this institution every man saw in others 'not the realization of his own freedom, but the barrier to it'. (III,163) Self-interest became the driving force behind human action, and the sole force 'holding people together'. (III,164) Thus

private property was the institutional base and self-interest the motivational force within civil society.

In this world of 'atomistic individuals' money became the 'God', before which all would genuflect:

Practical need, egoism, is the principle of civil society, and as such appears in a pure form as soon as civil society has fully given birth to the political state. The god of practical need and self-interest is money ... The god of the Jews has become secularized and has become the god of the world. (III,172)

Because money became 'the universal self-established value of all things', the world was 'robbed' of its specific value. (III,172) Money mediated between the relationships between man and man, and man and nature, so that these relationships lost their authentic value. For instance, in the commercial society 'the species-relation itself, the relation between man and women, etc., becomes an object of trade!' (III,172) Women were transformed into commodities, losing their specific human value and becoming objects of trade to be bought and sold in the market place. People, things and nature lost their value except in terms of money. Thus money became the measure of all things.

Commercial society allowed for the perversion of all forms of human relationship, and it also created inequalities within society. The political state, despite the claims of its supporters, did not abolish these inequalities:

11. For an assessment and analysis of Marx's argument that commercial society was the practical expression of Judaism see Robert Wistrich, Revolutionary Jews from Marx to Trotsky (London, 1976), Ch. 1; and Kamenka, 'The Baptism of Karl Marx'. 
The state abolishes, in its own way, distinctions of birth, social rank, education, occupation, when it declares that birth, social rank, education, occupation, are non-political distinctions, when it proclaims, without regard to these distinctions, that every member of the nation is an equal participant in national sovereignty, when it treats all elements of the real life of the nation from the standpoint of the state. Nevertheless, the state allows private property, education, occupation, to act in their way, i.e., as private property, as education, as occupation, and to exert the influence of their special nature. (III,153)

Indeed, Marx continued, the state only asserted 'its universality' in opposition to 'these elements of its being'. (III,153)

Marx developed these themes in the Critical Marginal Notes where he condemned the conception of social reform and argued for the necessity of social revolution. The Jewish Question represents a further development of the remarks made in the 1843 Critique about the nature of the real divisions in civil society. These divisions, and the social hierarchy that went with them were not based simply on the ownership or non-ownership of property. Marx also wrote of 'birth', 'social rank', 'occupation', and 'education'. The 'social struggle' was not only the struggle of man to control his existence but also the struggle of man to remove the inequalities inherent within contemporary existence. Marx argued that the struggle for communal control was a necessary precondition for the struggle to abolish inequality. If the private property system was allowed to work according to its own logic Marx believed the political state was impotent to alter anything. Only with community control over property could the effects of the private property system be tackled.

12. See III, 189-206.
Thus Marx's definition and critique of civil society were linked together. Civil society rested upon private property and was driven along by self-interest. Its 'God' was money, its 'Heaven' the political community. Its normal functioning implied, firstly, the dissolution of 'the human world into a world of atomistic individuals who are inimically opposed to one another', and, secondly, the existence of inequalities in the distribution of wealth, power, and privilege. Such a society, argued Marx, was condemned by the canons of Reason and the logic of history.

4. Human Emancipation

In order to understand what Marx meant by human emancipation, it is necessary to examine the political and social theory which underpinned his analysis. In a letter to Ruge, written in September 1843, Marx attacked the 'communism' of Cabet, Dézamy and Weitling. Although he acknowledged that their theories were a 'special expression of the humanistic principle', Marx argued that they were still infected by their antithesis - the private system. (III,143) This argument would appear to be the same as Proudhon's, who had written in What is Property? (1840) that under a communist regime the people have no property, 'but the community is proprietor, and proprietor not only of the goods, but of the persons and will'.


Thus Proudhon attacked communism as 'oppression and slavery'.

Passive obedience irreconcilable with a reflecting will, is strictly observed. Fidelity to regulations, which are always defective, however wise they may be thought, allows of no complaint. Life, talent, and all the human facilities are the property of the State, which has the right to use them as it pleases for the common good.

Indeed, Marx referred to 'communism' as 'a special, one-sided realization of the socialist principle'. (III,143) He referred to Fourier and Proudhon as socialists who were not communists. All ready, then, Marx was distinguishing between various currents within the socialist movement. Socialist thinking in general he criticised for two reasons. Firstly, they tended to ignore the 'theoretical existence of man', avoiding discussions about science and religion. (III,143) Secondly, the Utopians such as Cabet, confronted present-day reality with a 'ready-made system'. Marx argued that critics should start from the existing 'theoretical and practical consciousness' and 'develop the true reality as its obligation and its final goal'. (III,143) Thus in Germany the issues of politics and religion needed to be confronted because they were subjects which form the main interest of the day. The new tendency in German criticism, argued Marx, did not 'dogmatically anticipate the world' but wanted 'to find the new world through criticism of the old'. (III,142)

Political struggles were seen by Marx as part and parcel of the movement for human emancipation. For example the question concerning the estate system versus a representative system of


of government 'expresses in a political way the difference between rule by man and rule by private property'. (III,144) Marx also supported the movement for political reform for tactical reasons:

In analysing the superiority of the representative system over the social-estate system, the critic in a practical way wins the interest of a large party. By raising the representative system from its political form to the universal form and by bringing out the true significance underlying this system, the critic at the same time compels this party to go beyond its own confines, for its victory is at the same time its defeat. (III,144)

From the conflict between the 'ideal function' of the political state and its 'real pre-requisites', Marx believed it would be possible to develop 'the social truth'. (III,143) This would involve the realization of man's essence as a communal being as against the atomization inherent within civil society.

There is no reason to believe that in this letter, written just before Marx left for Paris, Marx was rejecting the demand for the end to the system based on private property 19. However, he did not endorse what he was later to call 'crude communism'. 20 Marx wanted liberty-in-community. Thus he demanded the end of the rule of the monarch, the bureaucracy and 'the estates' over 'the people'; and the rule of the powers of money and private property over 'human beings'. In the new society 'social' power would no longer be

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20. See 'Economic and Philosphic Manuscripts', III,
separated from mankind in the form of 'political power'. Rather politics would be re-absorbed back into social life as a whole.

Such a transformation would require an end to civil society: 'Individual man re-absorbs in himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual human being has become a *species-being* in his everyday life, in his particular work, and in his particular situation'. (III,168) Reciprocity and fraternity would replace competition and egoism, citizenship becoming a meaningful part of the people's daily lives. As a result the 'conflict between man's individual sensuous existence and his species-existence' would be abolished. (III,174)

Such a community would require an end to all of those institutions which divided men from one another. Thus Marx attacked the State, which stood over and above and tried to 'rule' the people; money, which gave power to some over others and acted as an artificial barrier between genuine human intercourse; and private property, which was an illegitimate source of power, a cause of inequality and the institutional basis of egoism.

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CHAPTER NINE : THE PROLETARIAT

As philosophy finds its material weapons in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its spiritual weapons in philosophy. And once the lightning of thought has squarely struck this ingenuous soil of the people the emancipation of the Germans into human beings will take place. (III,187)

1. Introduction

When Marx left for Paris in October 1843 his belief in the revolutionary role of the proletariat was taking shape. The shift to Paris was merely a catalyst in the development of his thinking. Marx saw the focal point for any study of history and politics as the social relations of man-to-man. Consequently he believed that the contradictions within the human situation could only be resolved from within civil society itself. In 1859 he summarized the intellectual progress he had made in 1843:

My investigation led to the result that legal relations as well as forms of state are to be grasped neither from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life, the sum total of which Hegel, following the example of the Englishmen and Frenchmen of the eighteenth century, combines under the name of 'civil society'.

Marx noted the existence of social differentiation within civil society, it being not solely based on the ownership or non-ownership of property.

1. For a different view see McLellan, Karl Marx, p.97. He argues that Marx's espousal of the proletarian cause was 'sudden' and can be 'directly attributed' to his shift to Paris.

2. Marx was referring to the 1843 Critique.

3. 'Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy' in Selected Works, p.181.
Marx reached the conclusion early in 1843 that the modern industrial system, with its ownership pattern and institutionalized exploitation, would provide fuel for the changes to come. These changes, he argued, would involve the reconstruction of the world on a truly humanist basis.

The belief that the proletariat would be the agent for radical change was current in France and Germany in the 1830's and early 1840's. French socialist ideas had filtered through to Germany, influencing some radical intellectuals. Although not a socialist Lorenz von Stein had published a widely read study of French socialism and communism in 1842, which had been reviewed in the Rheinische Zeitung. Von Stein had argued that socialism and communism were ideas expressing the interests of the proletariat, the propertyless masses who, although most evident in France and England, were beginning to emerge in the rest of Europe. However, Stein's assessment of French socialist ideas in general did not immediately influence Marx. It took Marx the full course of the summer of 1843 to develop the view that 'the socialist principle' was consistent with his humanism, and that it was a historical possibility within contemporary conditions. As the proletarian movement had been


7. See 'Letter to Ruge', III, 143. Marx was aware of the existence of different tendencies within the 'socialist' movement. On this point see above pp.125-128.
linked with this principle it was not until Marx had established its philosophical and historical validity that he began to think systematically about the role of the proletarians.

Marx had also been left with the problem of finding a 'force' within history which could combat the combined strength of the reactionary interests in Prussian society. His faith in the strength of ideas to influence change (if unassisted) and his belief in the progressive nature of sections of the bourgeoisie had been shattered through his experiences on the Rheinische Zeitung. In shifting to Paris Marx made his first direct contacts with socialist intellectuals and the proletarian movement - 'he was now at the heart of socialist thought and action'. For Marx this was empirical verification of the ideas which had been taking shape in his mind throughout the course of 1843. In the Introduction, completed and published in Paris, he clearly outlined the nature of his commitment to the proletariat.

2. The German Situation

Marx's analysis of proletarian revolution was developed from his analysis of the situation in Germany. He asked if it was possible for Germany to attain a revolution 'which will raise it not only to the official level of the modern nations but to the height of humanity which will be the near future of those nations'. (III,182) Germany had only achieved modernity at the level of theory; it had

9. Rubel and Manale have argued that the Introduction represents 'the germ of the future Communist Manifesto'; Marx without Myth, p.40.
never achieved a political revolution like the French. Germany had simply 'thought what other nations did'. (III,181) In reality it was 'the open completion of the ancien regime'. (III,178) Only the 'German philosophy of law and state' was on a par with 'the official modern reality'. (III,180) Given these circumstances how was it possible for Germany to achieve a truly human form of emancipation?

Even though Marx argued that Hegel's idealistic presuppositions forced him, in the last analysis, to 'reduplicate the flaws'\(^{10}\) of the German status quo, he did believe that Hegel's political theory was the 'modern' world at the level of thought. Thus it also contained within it the contradictions of that world:

If therefore the status quo of German statehood expresses the perfection of the ancien régime, the perfection of the thorn in the flesh of the modern state, the status quo of German political theory expresses the imperfection of the modern state, the defectiveness of its flesh itself. (III,181)

Marx wanted to move beyond Hegel's philosophy of state and law, beyond the autocratic conditions in contemporary Germany, and beyond the liberal-democratic state.

The first condition within the German situation which made this a possibility was 'the radicalism of German theory'. (III,182) In the first lines of the Introduction Marx wrote that 'for Germany the criticism of religion is in the main complete, and criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism'. (III,173) German theory is 'radical' because it 'proceeds from a resolute positive abolition of religion':

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The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that man is the highest being for man, hence with the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being. (III,182)

German theory focused its attention not only on the political, but also on the social relations in the modern world. It was the 'modern politico-social reality' (III,179) which was to be the object of criticism. According to Marx the advanced section of the German intellectuals were no longer under any illusions about the ability of the political revolution to contain the contradictions of the age.

On its own, theory could not create a revolution: 'Revolutions require a \textit{passive} element, a \textit{material} basis. Theory can be realized in a people only insofar as it is the realization of the needs of that people'. (III,183) Thus Marx turned his attention to an analysis of the actors in the German 'politico-social' situation. The king was described as a man who tried to play many roles - 'bureaucratic, absolute or constitutional, autocratic or democratic'. (III,184) As such he would be impotent before the forces at work within civil society.

Within Germany society, however, Marx noted a lack of 'political idealism'. Whereas in France it was 'enough for somebody to be something for him to want to be everything', in Germany such an outlook was missing. (III,186) Classes imbued with such idealism, such as the French bourgeoisie in the late eighteenth century, attempted to attain \textit{general} domination' by 'arousing a moment of enthusiasm in itself and in the masses'. (III,184) By fraternising with society in general, its rights and demands were seen as the rights and demands of society itself. Consequently the French
bourgeoisie carried with it the French masses in its struggle against the nobility and clergy. Because the nobility and clergy were an 'estate of oppression' the bourgeoisie could play such a role.

In Germany, on the other hand, there was no class which 'proceeding from its particular situation, undertakes the general emancipation of society'. (III,185);

The main stem of German morals and honesty, of the classes as well as of individuals, is rather that modest egoism which assents its limitedness and allows it to be asserted against itself. (III,185)

In the Critical Marginal Notes, written later in 1844, Marx specifically referred to the weaknesses of the German bourgeoisie as a force for liberal reform. Not a single soldier, he noted, was required to shatter the desires of the 'entire liberal bourgeoisie for freedom of the press and a constitution'. (III,190) In Germany 'practical life is as spiritless as spiritual life is unpractical'. (III,186)

As a result of this state of affairs 'no class in civil society has any need or capacity for general emancipation until it is forced by its immediate condition, by material necessity, by its very chains'. (III,186) Whereas in France the role of emancipator could pass from class to class until it came to a class which 'organises all conditions of human existence of the presupposition of social freedom', in Germany such a gradual process was impossible: 'In France partial emancipation is the basis of universal emancipation; in Germany universal emancipation is the conditio sine qua non of any partial emancipation'. (III,186)
As a result of these two conditions, the existence of a truly radical political and social theory, and the lack of any 'political idealism', the roots for the development of a purely political revolution were absent in Germany. But, in Germany, 'the proletariat is coming into being ... as a result of the rising industrial development'. (III,186) The imperatives created by this industrial development provided the basis for Marx's revolutionary theory. The German situation only differed because these imperatives could work themselves out in an unhindered way. Thus Germany could be the first nation to experience truly human emancipation, a development which was also 'the near future' of other European countries.

3. Philosophy and the Proletariat

Marx defined the proletariat which was emerging in the following terms:

The proletariat is coming into being in Germany only as a result of the rising industrial development. For it is not the naturally arising poor but the artificially impoverished, not the human masses mechanically oppressed by the gravity of society but the masses resulting from the drastic dissolution of society, mainly of the middle estate, that form the proletariat, although it is obvious that gradually the naturally arising poor and the Christian-Germanic serfs also join its ranks. (III,186–187)

The proletariat was a class in the process of formation, as commercial relations came to dominate the production system and social relations in general. It was seen as a class created by a particular type of society.
Marx gave the proletariat a revolutionary role because it was 'a class of civil society which is not a class of civil society, an estate which is the dissolution of all estates, a sphere which has a universal character by its universal suffering and claims no particular right because no particular wrong but wrong generally is perpetuated against it'. (III,186) Marx forged a link between the nature of the proletarian condition and the proletarian revolution: 'By proclaiming the dissolution of the hitherto existing world order the proletariat merely states the secret of its own existence'. (III,187) It could, Marx concluded, only 'win itself through the complete rewining of man'. (III,186)

Philosophy was seen as the 'spiritual weapon' of the proletariat: 'Once the lightning of thought has squarely struck this ingenuous soil of the people the emancipation of the Germans into human beings will take place'. (III,187) Only if philosophy reflected the 'real needs' of the proletariat could it be a 'spiritual weapon': 'It is not enough for thought to strive for realization, reality must itself strive for thought'. (III,183) The proletariat desired a theory to explain to itself its suffering. German theory, which proclaimed 'man to be the highest being for man', was such a theory. Thus philosophy would be the 'head' and the proletariat the 'heart' of the emancipation that was forthcoming. (III,187)

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11. According to Middleton-Murry 'we have no word quite like the German Unding to express what Marx meant by proletariat: the embodiment of a contradiction in terms'; Heaven and Earth, p.337.
Even though Marx acknowledged that reality itself must be striving towards thought his theory rested upon the power of philosophy as a generator of radical consciousness. Marx saw himself as speaking on behalf of German philosophy, the proletariat being a means through which human emancipation could be brought about:

Even historically, theoretical emancipation has specific practical significance for Germany. For Germany's revolutionary past is theoretical, it is the Reformation. As the revolution then began in the brain of the monk, so now it begins in the brain of the philosopher. (III,182).

Marx did not define the proletarian condition in a systematic way. The link between the proletariat and philosophy was asserted rather than established. The proletariat was endorsed because it fulfilled a need within his revolutionary theory. Its 'universal suffering' gave it truly 'radical chains', which could only be broken by the 'complete' rewinning of man. Marx wrote that for the revolutionary alliance to succeed 'reality must itself strive towards thought'; but, as Talmon pointed out: 'One would search in vain in the essay for any conception of dialectical materialism'.

The systematic investigation of the proletarian condition was not undertaken by Marx until he began his study of political economy. However, despite the weaknesses in Marx's account in the Introduction, it is a vital work because in it 'two of the major intellectual movements of post-Revolutionary Europe were united: French communism and German Hegelianism'.

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CHAPTER TEN : THE TRULY HUMAN SOCIETY

Socialism is man's positive self-consciousness, no longer mediated through the abolition of religion, just as real life is man's positive reality, no longer mediated through the abolition of private property, through communism. Communism is the position as the negation of the negation, and is hence the actual phase necessary for the next stage of historical development in the process of human emancipation and rehabilitation. Communism is the necessary form and the dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism as such is not the goal of human development, the form of human society. (III,306)

1. Introduction

In February 1844 the first and only edition of the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher was published in Paris. Marx contributed three articles to the Jahrbücher - the Jewish Question, the Introduction, and the series of three letters he had written to Ruge in 1843. At this point in his intellectual development Marx explained religion and the modern state, and the forms of consciousness associated with each, by the structure and functioning of civil society. The institution of private property and the existence of egoism, led to a situation in which man experienced human self-estrangement. It was a society in which money, and not man, was the God. In writing of estrangement and alienation Marx defined the human condition in general. He had argued in the Introduction that the proletariat experienced 'universal suffering', but he did not

1. The journal was banned in Prussia and had little impact in France (there were no French contributions), and also differences of opinion developed between Marx and Ruge, the co-editors. See McLellan, Karl Marx, pp.98-99.
systematically examine the proletarian condition.

At this stage Marx also began to develop a serious interest in political economy. Late in 1843 Moses Hess submitted an essay for publication in the *Jahrbücher*, entitled 'On the Essence of Money'.

Hess argued that man was a productive being who objectified his powers in useful material objects. In modern society, however, egoistic men appropriated the productive powers of the species in the form of money or private property: 'Money is the product of men, mutually alienated, of the externalized man'. Hess argued that it was now possible to think of an alternative form of existence:

... we can at least think of a human society without self-destruction and carry it into practice, a rational, organic human society, with manyfold, harmoniously cooperative forms of production.

Marx absorbed this treatment of man as a communal and a producing being.

At the same time, his future colleague Engels, wrote an important essay for the *Jahrbücher*, 'Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy'. Engels attacked the system of production and its spirit of competition. In McLellan's view his reading of the 'Outlines of a Critique' 'marked the real beginning of his lifelong interest in

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3. 'On the Essence of Money', p.103.


5. See III, 418-443.
economic questions'. Thus from April 1844, when Marx began a systematic study of political economy, the analysis of civil society became the study of the structure and processes of production. Marx's philosophical interest in the process of production, developed from Hess\(^7\), merged with his recognition of the importance of political economy to an understanding of how civil society worked. By criticising political economy from the point of view of humanism, Engels had vindicated to Marx the plausibility, and necessity, of this synthesis.

Marx's own version of the synthesis of political economy and German philosophy was, however, a unique one. Marx's realization that Hegel's theory of history was only a disguised form of the story of man as a producer provided the foundation for the position he developed in 1844, and was given its sharpest formulation in the *Paris Manuscripts*:\(^8\) 'The drama of Hegel's Spirit was the drama of Man; the *Phenomenology of Mind* was the historical anatomy of society; the abstract civil society he had borrowed from Hobbes was capitalism'.\(^9\)

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8. 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844', III, 229-346.

2. Man as a Producing Being

Until 1844 Marx had placed the conception of man as a communal being at the centre of his ideas. Marx was forced, by the logic of this position, to argue for the abolition of private property. Only a human form of 'communism' could overcome the split in modern man's nature, and establish a new unity between his individual and species life. In Paris Marx added to this formulation the view that man was, first and foremost, a producing being. His developed conception of man as a communal being was absorbed into his theory of man the producer.

Man was seen as an integral part of nature. To stay alive he must stay in constant interaction with nature: 'Nature is man's inorganic body ... with which he must remain in continuous interchange if he is not to die'. (III,276) Thus man was said to exist in and through the world, and could not be considered as an isolated or solitary being freed from the constraints that nature imposed. Because of this man was 'a suffering, conditioned and limited creature, like animals and plants'. (III,336) The 'objects of his instincts exist outside him, as objects independent of him, and yet these objects were indispensable to the manifestation and confirmation of his essential powers'. (III,336) Marx illustrated this point by referring to hunger:

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\text{Hunger is a natural need; it therefore needs a nature outside itself, an object outside itself, in order to satisfy itself, to be stilled. Hungers is an acknowledged need of my body for an object existing outside it, indispensable to its integration and to the expression of its essential being. (III,336)}
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Man was not simply seen as a natural being, but as a 'human natural being'; as a 'being for himself'. (III,337) It was the task of history, as Marx saw it, to realize man's essence as a human being:
Neither nature objectively nor nature subjectively is directly given in a form adequate to the human being. And as everything natural has to come into being, man too has his act of origin - history ... History is the true natural history of man. (III,337)

As a result of the processes of history, man's species powers would be fully developed. These powers, which man alone in the world of nature possessed, were brought into operation in and through the process of labour. Thus, Marx's analysis of the human condition in the Paris Manuscripts began with an analysis of the relationship between the producer and the products of his work. Hegel was right, said Marx, in grasping 'labour as the essence of man'. (III,333)\(^{10}\)

In the Critical Marginal Notes written in August 1844, Marx developed the implications of this position for his revolutionary theory. He argued that the worker's isolation from 'physical and mental life, human morality, human activity, human enjoyment and human nature' was 'incomparably more universal, more intolerable, more dreadful, and more contradictory than isolation from the political community'. (III,204-205) Thus, it was within the context of his theory of man as a producing being that he rejected the political revolution as a solution to the problems of the day,\(^{11}\) as he repeated in the Paris Manuscripts:

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10. Hegel was wrong, Marx continued, in only seeing labour as 'abstractly mental labour'. However, Marx kept the insight and concretised it. Thus whereas for Hegel history was the self-development of the 'Idea', for Marx it was the self-development of 'Man'.

11. A 'true' community, Marx argued, would liberate the individual from alienated labour. The fact that Marx's notion of man as a producer was central to his 1844 conception of Gemeinwesen can be seen by comparing the critique of the political revolution in the Paris Manuscripts and the Critical Marginal Notes with that in the Jewish Question.
... the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and all relations of servitude are but modifications and consequences of this relation. (III,280)

3. The Act of Production

Marx began his analysis of the act of production in the *Paris Manuscripts* by noting that man was a 'natural' being who 'needs' to produce if he is to reproduce his existence within the world of nature. In other words, because he was a 'an objective, sensuous being' he was a 'suffering being'; and because he was conscious of his suffering, he was a 'passionate' being: 'Passion is the essential power of man energetically bent on its object'. (III,337) Thus man was driven to produce what was necessary to reproduce his existence.

Mankind satisfied his needs in a radically different way from animals. He utilised intellectual as well as material capacities, and brought to bear uniquely human capabilities and powers. Men produced according to 'the laws of beauty' because they distanced themselves from the act of production and planned before the act itself. (III,276-277) Men utilised scientific knowledge to greatly enhance their ability to manipulate nature by applying it within the productive process. (III,303) Marx argued that truly human production only occurred if the utilization of these powers was not motivated by needs external to it:

*For labour, life activity, productive life itself, appears to man in the first place merely as a means of satisfying a need – the need to maintain physical existence. Yet the productive life is the life of the species. It is life-engendering life. The whole character of a species – its species-character – is contained in the character of its life-activity; and free, conscious activity is man's species-character.*
Life itself appears only as a means to life.
(III,276)

To determine whether or not man had realized his essence as a producing being Marx split up the act of production into a number of relations, and analysed them within contemporary existence. The production process was seen as an open book which mirrored the extent to which man had developed his species-powers.

Marx first considered man in his active relationship with nature: 'It is the material on which his labour is realized, in which it is active'. (III,273) This relationship between man and nature was not direct, but mediated by the relationships that existed between men. Thus production was considered from the point of view of the social relations involved. Marx next dealt with the relationship between man and the products of his labour, which embodied in an objective form, and to varying degrees, the productive powers that man possessed. In reflecting upon the products of his labour man was reflecting upon himself as a producing being.

Thus Marx was concerned ultimately with the relationship between the act of production and man's natural and species needs. Only this relationship could establish the extent to which production was an expression or an estrangement of man's productive powers. Marx was concerned with modern industrial civilization in terms of the relationship between the worker and the machines, and also with the technical (as contrasted with the social) division of labour. 12

4. The Nature of Contemporary Society

a. Commercialism

Marx's critique of contemporary society was conducted at two levels. He analysed both the general nature of the social relations within the contemporary world, and the social relations within the production process itself. In this section I will look at Marx's discussion of the former, developed in both the Paris Manuscripts and the Comments on James Mill.

Because money was the medium of exchange in the modern, commercial world, 'the mediating process between men engaged in exchange is not a social or human process ... it is the abstract relationship of private property to private property'. (III,212-213) Each person was only concerned with his or her self-interest which, in a commercial society was best served by the accumulation of money - because money can buy things and because it can be put to use as capital to make more money. Each of the members of such a society was a 'merchant'. (III,217) It functioned on the basis of 'greed and the war amongst the greedy-competition'. (III,271)

This commercial society was destructive of both mutuality and reciprocity. Mankind's own creation - his community - became estranged from him, existing as but 'a caricature of his real community'. (III,217) Men only entered into relationships if they could gain from the exchange:

The ideal relationship to the respective objects of our production is, of course, our mutual need. But the real, true relationship, which actually occurs and takes effect, is only the mutually exclusive possession of our respective products. (III,226)
Marx called this state of affairs 'mutual plundering'. He also noted that because it was a commercial society participation was restricted to those who possessed some means of exchange. Human needs and requirements were ignored: 'As a mere human being without this instrument your demand is an unsatisfied aspiration on your part and an idea that does not exist for me'. (III,226)

Marx also noted the effects which commercialism had on the authenticity of human relationships and human self-expressions. As money mediated all human exchanges it gained a 'power', it became the 'existing and active concept of value'. (III,326) Thus a transformation occurred in the way in which people began to look at the world of nature and other men: 'What I am and am capable of is by no means determined by my individuality. I am ugly, but I can buy for myself the most beautiful of women. Therefore I am not ugly, for the effect of ugliness - its deterrent power - is nullified by money'. (III,324) The whole world was turned upside down and contradictions were allowed to embrace one another. In a truly human society the possibility for the confounding and confusing of human relationships would be absent, and the cold winds of reality would dominate all human relations:

Every one of your relations to man and to nature must be a specific expression, corresponding to the object of your will, of your real individual life. If you love without evoking love in return - that is, if your loving as loving does not produce reciprocal love; if through a living expression of yourself as a loving person you do not make yourself a beloved one, then your love is impotent - a misfortune. (III,326)
b. Capitalism

Marx developed his conception of the social relations of production from the notion of 'civil society'. These relations provided the framework within which man exercised his productive powers and as such must be the starting-point for any truly radical social analysis. Thus in 1859 he spoke of finding the 'anatomy' of civil society in political economy. 'Civil society' became 'capitalism'.

Capitalists were able to purchase large amounts of capital equipment and employ labour with the money they had accumulated. By putting this labour to work with this capital equipment, goods could be produced for the marketplace. The aim of the whole exercise was to increase the amount of wealth held by the capitalist; the capitalist being the living manifestation of the principle of self-interest.

Marx defined 'capital' in many different ways. It was seen both as 'private property in the products of other men's labour' (III,246), and as 'the governing power over labour and its products' (III,247) Marx stressed, however, that this power over the labour process and its products was possessed only because the capitalist owned 'productive stock'. (III,247) Thus capital also referred to the physical means of production necessary to begin production within the technological conditions existing at that time.

The proletariat, on the other hand, were seen as those who, being without capital, lived 'purely by labour', and by a 'one-sided, abstract labour' at that. (III,241) Even though the capitalist needed the worker to work his machines, the relationship between the two was not equal. The capitalist could live without the worker, but the worker could not live for long without the capitalist. As a result of this inequality, wage struggles between the capitalist and the worker would usually be won by the capitalist. Wages would then tend to remain low.14

Marx not only defined the proletariat by his relation to the capitalist, but also in terms of his role within the production process, considered from a technological point of view. There was not only a social division of labour (between classes) but also a technical division of labour within the production process itself: 'The worker becomes even more exclusively dependent on labour, and on a particular, very one-sided, machine-like labour at that', (III,237) because the 'fewest possible operations must be apportioned to any one individual' in the modern technological conditions. (III,322) This made it very difficult for workers to 'direct' their labour into 'other channels'. (III,236) They became chained to one type of productive activity.

Marx's analysis of the processes involved in the capitalist economy15 led him to conclude that these two classes would come to

14. See 'Wages of Labour', III,235-240 for Marx's account of the movement of wages under capitalism; and Maguire, Marx's Paris Writings, pp.43-46, for a more systematic analysis.

15. Marx wrote 'that the necessary result of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus the restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form; and ... finally the distinction between capitalist and land rentier, like that between the tiller of the soil and the factory worker, disappears ... the whole of society must fall apart into the two classes; 'Estranged Labour', III,270.
dominate the stage of contemporary history. The distinction that existed between the landowner and the capitalist would be destroyed as land itself, like labour, became private property. The landed aristocracy would be overthrown or replaced by the 'money aristocracy' and land would become an 'object of huckstering'. (III,266) Capital would become concentrated in the hands of a few capitalists as they destroyed their smaller rivals in the process of competition. The inevitable result of competition was the reduction of the competitive process itself. As a result 'the whole of society must fall apart into two classes - the property owners and the propertyless workers'. (III,270)

5. The Proletarian Condition

a. Alienated Labour

Though Marx did make some reference to the standards of living of the proletariat, from the point of view of consumption patterns and housing conditions, his central claim was that the worker's misery results from 'the essence of present-day labour itself'. (III,241) It was not enough simply to argue for an increase in wages, or indeed for equality in the distribution of income. Marx aimed for a revolution in the way labour itself was organized. The 'universal suffering' of the proletariat about which he spoke in the Introduction was now interpreted in terms of alienated labour.

Under the existing conditions of production the worker's utilization of his productive powers 'appears as a loss of realization'. Alienated labour was said to be an 'actual economic fact'. (III,271) Marx wrote:
The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and size ... The *devaluation* of the world of men is in direct proportion to the *increasing value* of the world of things. (III,271-272)

Marx attempted to explain this economic fact by analysing the relations between the labourer and (1) the products of his labour, (2) nature itself, (3) the activity of labour, (4) his species-essence, and (5) other men.

The fact that the increasing production of 'the world of things' proceeded in direct proportion to the 'devaluation of the world of men' was an expression of the fact that the object which labour produced confronted it as something alien. The product of labour, which was the objectification of labour, confronted the labourer 'as *something alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer'.

The realization of labour appeared to the labourer as *loss of realization* for the workers; objectification as *loss of the object and bondage to it*; appropriation as *estrangement, as alienation*. (III,272)

To illustrate his argument Marx drew an analogy with religion.

The more man puts into God, the less he retains in himself. The worker puts his life into the object, but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object. Hence, the greater this activity, the more the worker lacks objects. Whatever the product of his labour, he is not. Therefore the greater this product, the less is he himself. (III,272)

The products of labour, argued Marx, were 'the summary' of the activity of production. If the products of labour were estranged from the worker then 'production itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation.' In the estrangement of the object of labour is merely summarised the
estrangement, the alienation, in the activity of alienation itself'.

(III,274) Marx went on to explain activity alienation:

What, then constitutes the alienation of labour? First, the fact that labour is external to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his intrinsic nature; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not working, and when he is working he does not feel at home.

(III,274)

Marx defined such labour as 'forced labour' in that it was merely a means to satisfy needs external to it'. (III,274) The worker, possessing only his ability to work, was forced to sell this ability to the capitalist in order that he may live; labour was not an expression of his productive abilities but their very denial. The objects produced existed as independent and alien objects, rather than as expressions of the worker's capabilities.

Man differed from animals because he could distance himself from the act of production. Animals produced things but 'only under the dominion of immediate physical need'. Men, on the other hand, produced even when 'free from physical need and they only truly produce in freedom therefrom. (III,276) Whereas the animal was 'one with his life-activity' man could make his life activity 'the object of his will and of his consciousness'. (III,276)

16. In the Paris Manuscripts Marx wrote of both 'alienation' (Entäusserrung) and 'estrangement' (Entfremdung). For the slight distinction between the two see Martin Milligan, in Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (Moscow, 1959), pp.13-14. See also Bertell Ollman, Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society (Cambridge, 1971), p.132.
This freedom had a number of consequences. Firstly, man could make all of nature his 'inorganic body'. Like the animals he must stay in continuous interchange with nature if he was to live, but unlike the animals he could universalise 'the sphere of inorganic nature in which he lives'. (III,275) Secondly, man could produce not simply in accordance 'with the standard and need of the species to which it belongs ... [but] in accordance with the standard of every species'. He could form objects in 'accordance with the laws of beauty'. (III,277) Such potentialities could only be realized if the 'species-character' of man was allowed to manifest itself, if labour was 'free, conscious activity'. (III,276) However, in 'degrading spontaneous, free activity to a means, estranged labour makes man's species-life a means to his physical existence'. (III,277) For Marx the very fact of product and activity alienation implied the existence of species-alienation.

Marx's treatment of the division of labour in the *Paris Manuscripts* also implied the estrangement of man from his species-life. Universality was possible but particularity was achieved: 'The fewest possible operations must be apportioned to any one individual. Splitting up of labour and concentration of capital; the insignificance of individual production and the production of wealth in large quantities'. (III,322) This theme was not to be fully developed until *The German Ideology* (1846).^17

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17. In *The German Ideology* Marx wrote that 'in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity, but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow'. (V,47)
Marx also wrote of the alienation of man from nature itself. However, within the manuscript 'Estranged Labour', the reasons for this alienation are not altogether clear, unless considered in the context of Marx's comments on nature in his other manuscripts. Marx argued that nature did not exist in a form adequate to man, it had to be altered. In fact 'taken abstractly, for itself - nature fixed in isolation from man - is nothing for man'. (III,345) Nature had to be humanised, just as man had to be naturalised. The humanisation of nature involved the drawing out of nature all the potentialities contained within it. Marx illustrated this point in his discussion of the species-character of man. Free, conscious activity allowed man to form objects in accordance with 'the laws of beauty'. Once the world had been beautified in such a way, man could truly speak of a humanised nature, a nature 'created' by free, conscious activity in accordance with the inherent standards of beauty. Thus, estranged labour implied the alienation of man from nature itself, from all that was possible from free, conscious activity:

The care-burdened, poverty-stricken man has no sense for the finest play; the dealer in minerals sees only the commercial value but not the beauty and the specific character of the mineral: he has no mineralogical sense. Thus, the objectification of the human essence, both in its theoretical and practical aspects, is required to make man's sense human, as well as to create the human sense corresponding to the entire wealth and natural substance. (III,302)¹⁸

¹⁸. See the similar discussion by Julius Kovesi, Moses Hess' Essay, pp.54-56. Kovesi writes (p.55) that, for Marx, the end product of history 'is the all sided development of all the human senses and at the same time the development of the object of these senses - the development of the objects of these senses is the humanization of nature'.
Alienated man, in reflecting upon how he has changed nature, would not only fail to recognize his own powers congealed in the products, but would not recognize the potential beauty that could have resulted.

An immediate consequence of the first two forms of alienation was that man must be estranged from other men: 'If the product of labour is alien to me, if it confronts me as an alien power, to whom, then does it belong? If my own activity does not belong to me, if it is an alien, a coerced activity, to whom, then does it belong?' (III, 278) Marx answered his question by denying ownership to God or nature in favour of 'the capitalist'. (III, 278-279) This conclusion followed from Marx's own definition of capital as the 'governing power' over labour and the products of labour:

Thus, if the product of his labour, his labour objectified, is for him an alien, hostile, powerful object independent of him, then his position towards it is such that someone else is master of this object, someone who is alien, hostile, powerful, and independent of him. If he treats his own activity as an unfree activity, then he treats it as an activity performed in the service, under the dominion, the coercion, and the yoke of another man. (III, 278-279)

According to Marx, then, there were a number of features of alienated labour. The activity itself was a 'forced' one, induced by needs external to it, controlled by the capitalist class, and divided up into different operations. Because of this the product of the activity was not a free expression of man's powers, nor was it the embodiment of natural beauty. It was owned and used in the interests of the capitalist class. Consequently man, or more particularly the proletariat, was denied the chance to realize its species-character. It was this denial, argued Marx, which made the
interests of the two classes mutually exclusive and which would act as the cause of the forthcoming revolution.

b. Standards of Living

Although the concept of alienated labour was central to Marx's account of the proletarian condition, he also pointed to the overall standards of life of the proletariat. In this context he referred both to their wage levels and their living standards in general. Despite the great amount of wealth being created in the industrial age the worker's needs were reduced 'to the barest and most miserable level of physical existence'. (III,308) Marx argued that the periodic slumps, experienced by the capitalist economy and due to crises of 'overproduction', intensified the low level of wages received by the workers. In such slumps 'a section of the working class falls into begging or starvation' and the wages of those still in work falls 'to the most miserable minimum'. (III,238-239) Only temporarily, in periods of labour shortage, can the worker make any gains. Thus, 'whilst the division of labour raises the productive power of labour and increases the wealth of refinement of society, it impoverishes the worker and reduces him to a machine'. (III,240)

As a result of this poverty, argued Marx, the workers were forced to deny not only their truly 'human' needs but their 'animal' needs as well. Referring to the living conditions of the proletariat

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19. It should be noted that in the *Paris Manuscripts* Marx, for the first time, attempts to come to grips with the economics of capitalism - with the problem of explaining the trade cycle, the movement of wages and profits etc. See Ernest Mandel, *The Formation of the Economic Thought of Karl Marx* (New York and London, 1971), pp.30-32; and Maguire, *Marx's Paris Writings*, ch. 3.
he wrote:

For this mortuary he has to pay. A dwelling
in the light, which Prometheus in Aeschylus
designated as one of the greatest boons, by
means of which he made the savage into a
human being, ceases to exist for the worker.
Light, air, etc., the simplest animal
cleanliness ceases to be a need for man.
Filth, this stagnation and putrefaction of man
the sewage of civilisation (speaking quite
literally) comes to be the element of life
for him. (III,307-308)

Marx condemned political economists, whom he called
'empirical businessmen', for regarding the workers as beings with no
need for 'activity' or 'enjoyment': 'To him, therefore [the
political economist] every luxury of the worker seems to be
reprehensible, and everything that goes beyond the most abstract
need be it in the realm of passive enjoyment, or a manifestation
of activity seems to him a luxury'. (III,308-309)

For Marx, then, the relationship between the capitalist
and the worker was also the relationship between the rich and the
poor. All the evils in the modern world were said to rest on the
system in which the capitalist possessed power over the activity and
products of human labour.

c. Alienated Labour: Cause or Consequence of Private Property?

Marx's analysis of labour began with the assertion that
alienated labour was a 'fact' of contemporary economic life. Marx
then proceeded to explore the various aspects of this fact, linking
it up with the economic system based on private property in the means
of production. In other words, he found it impossible to discuss
alienated labour without referring to the social relations which
existed at the point of production – the 'fact' was seen as a consequence of the social relationships.

This was not, however, what Marx himself said about the relationship. He wrote that 'private property is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence, of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself'. (III,279)

The argument that the reverse was the case was said by Marx to be based on an illusion. In the same way, the gods were originally the effect, not the cause, of man's intellectual confusion:

... analysis of this concept shows that though private property appears to be the reason, the cause of alienated labour, it is rather its consequence, just as the gods are originally not the cause but the effect of man's intellectual confusion. Later this relationship becomes reciprocal. (III,279-280)

At some point in human history, Marx's argument would imply, man allowed his labour and the products of his labour to become estranged from himself. Eventually this 'loss' embodied itself in the institution of private property. There is, however, a flaw in Marx's argument. He had accused theologians of explaining evil by pointing to the 'fall of man'. According to Marx this simply assumed what had to be explained. However, in Marx's 'explanation' of private property he assumed what he wanted to explain and he treated alienated labour independently of the social relationships of which it was said to be 'the cause'. It would appear that Marx himself was aware of this problem, as towards the end of the manuscript 'Estranged Labour', he wrote:

We have accepted the estrangement of labour, its alienation, as a fact, and we have analysed this fact. How, we now ask, does man come to alienate, to estrange his labour? How is this
estrangement rooted in the nature of human
development? (III,281) 20

He does not, however, answer this question.

Two reasons have been given for Marx's reluctance to
attribute alienated labour to private property. Marx had utilised
Hegel's conception of 'production' in his account of human labour.
Thus 'the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself'
was said to be the primary datum of history. Existing society was
said to be an explicit development of the potentialities implicit in
the labour process. 21 This allowed Marx to 'explain' capitalist
society at the same time as he criticised it. Underneath the social
and economic process could be discerned the productive powers and
capacities of man struggling to free himself from the fetters that
had been created on the stage of history itself. For Marx this was
the real nature of the dialectic between freedom and necessity,
essence and existence, and man and nature. Hegel, he said, had only
presented an 'abstract, logical, speculative expression' of this
actual movement. (III,329)

Secondly, it has been argued that Marx stressed that labour
was the primary datum of history because he wanted to emphasize the
fact that the communist revolution was only a necessary, not a
sufficient, condition for human liberation:

Marx's point seems to be that if we regard
private property purely as such we will think
that the contradictions of political economy

20. See George Steiner, Nostalgia for the Absolute (Toronto, 1974),
pp.6-8 for a more general discussion of Marx's attempt to
explain the origin of alienation.

21. See J. Siegel, review of Bertell Ollman's Alienation, History and
Theory, 12 (1973), 331-332 for a clear presentation of this
position.
can be overcome by converting private property into public property, whereas in truth they can only be overcome by a thorough-going rejection and overcoming of all aspects of alienation, including the very concept of property and the very distinction between the 'individual' and 'society'.

6. The Truly Human Society

a. The Preconditions

It is clear that Marx conceived of the process by which alienated labour would be overcome as a long and protracted one: 'This [communist] movement, which in theory we already know to be a self-transcending movement, will constitute in actual fact a very rough and protracted process'. (III,313) The first stage of this process would involve destruction and dissolution:

Revolution in general - the overthrow of the existing power and dissolution of the old relationships - is a political act. But socialism cannot be realized without revolution. It needs this political act insofar as it needs destruction and dissolution. (III,206)

For Marx this implied the break up of the political and economic complex, in its authoritarian or 'bourgeois democratic' form. Marx specifically expressed his opposition to 'despotic' forms of communism. According to McLellan, Marx was alluding to the transitory dictatorship of the proletariat advocated by the followers of Babeuf. Marx appeared to have in mind the position he outlined

22. Kamenka, Ethical Foundations, p.84.

23. McLellan, Marx before Marxism, p.236.
in the 1843 Critique and the Jewish Question - communal control of the conditions effecting human existence, control which implied the end to the State and the end of private property in the means of production.

Such an achievement still left unanswered the question of the ends towards which the communal control of existence would be utilised. This question was a live one for Marx, as he indicated in the Paris Manuscripts, with his distinction between the 'mode of production' and the 'object of production'. (III,306) Similarly, in the Critical Marginal Notes he referred to the constructive side of socialism, a side which only showed its face after the political act had dissolved the old system of power. It was at this stage that the 'soul' of socialism would come to the fore. (III,206)

Marx did not regard the development of 'true' communism as being immediate or inevitable. He counterposed his own communism, which he equated with fully developed humanism, to other varieties existing at that time. There is also evidence to suggest that his description of earlier communist theories was a rough delineation of what the first stage of the future society would be like.  

24. This evidence has been collected by Avineri, in Social and Political Thought, pp.220-239; 'Marx's Vision of the Future Society', Dissent, Summer 1973, pp.232-331; and 'Comment on Resnick', American Political Science Review, 70 (1976), 1146-1149. Avineri argues that for Marx, following Hegel, 'every change has to be mediated through the process of Aufhebung - a transcendence which implies (a) aboliton, (b) raising to a higher level as well as (c) preservation'; 'Comments on Resnick', 1147. For instance in concluding his section on 'crude communism', called by Marx 'the first positive annulment of private property', Marx wrote that it was 'merely a manifestation of the vileness of private property'. (III,296 - my emphasis on positive) For a contrary view see David Resnick, 'Crude Communism and Revolution', 70 (1976), 1136-1145.
fits in with Marx's view that the movement which took mankind into the future would be a long and protracted one and that communism would ultimately be self-transcending.  

Marx certainly believed that 'crude communist' theories were still infected by private property. Firstly, they stressed equality and had little to say about private property. Contained within their writings was 'the urge to reduce things to a common level'. This entailed the negation of 'the personality of man in every sphere'. (III,295) As a result the community 'is only a community of labour, and equality of wages [is] paid out by communal capital - by the community as the universal capitalist. (III,295) Secondly, Marx noted their attacks on marriage and the family, women being turned into 'communal and common property'. (III,294) From being the exclusive property of their husbands women become the property of the community: 'Woman passes from marriage to general prostitution'. (III,295) Such forms of communism still remained 'captive to' and 'infected by' private property. (III,296)  

Marx regarded his own theory, as fully developed humanism, as the unifying synthesis of the earlier socialist and communist

25. See above, p.159.

26. According to McLellan (Marx before Marxism, p.235) Marx was referring to two groups, the Travailleurs Egalitaires and the Humanitaires. Engels described the former as a 'rough set', influenced by Babeuf, who wished to make the world a 'working-man's community, putting down every refinement of civilisation, science, the fine arts, etc., as useless, dangerous and aristocratic luxuries'. The latter, Engels wrote, were particularly well known for their attacks on marriage, the family and similar institutions; 'Progress of Social Reform on the Continent', III, 397.
theories. After discarding the inessential and arbitrary elements from these theories (the misplaced emphasis on equality as levelling and the replacement of the 'capitalist' by the 'community') and absorbing the valuable elements (the critique of private property and the concern for 'attractive' and 'free' labour), Marx developed his own position. He saw it as a theoretical reflection of the truly human society itself, the end towards which history was moving.

b. The Truly Human Society

Central to Marx's conception of the truly human society was the belief in the necessity of overcoming alienated labour. The assumptions behind his argument, not presented until the Holy Family, were twofold. Firstly, Marx assumed all men to be originally 'good', with 'equal intellectual endowments'. Flowing from this was the claim that the key factor influencing the type of 'man' that would exist and the ability of each man to develop his productive capacities was the environment in which he found himself: 'If man is shaped by environment, his environment must be made human'. (IV,130-131) Thus Marx never separated a discussion of individual self-development from an analysis of social relationships. Social relations would either help or hinder the individual as a producing being.

27. 'Just as Hegel's philosophy is a dialectical Aufhebung of all previous philosophies and contains their essential truth while discarding the inessential and arbitrary elements within them, so Marx's theory of communism is related to previous communist theories'; Avineri, 'Comment on Resnick', 1149.

Social relationships were discussed both from the point of view of their structural features and their internal features. No longer, argued Marx, should human relationships be influenced by self-interest or greed. In the truly human society men would no longer desire to use other men (or women) for their own particular ends. Mutuality and reciprocity would reign supreme. Using language reminiscent of Kant, Marx wrote that the 'other person as a person' would become a 'need' for each individual. (III,296)

Marx argued that the removal of such external determinations on individual self-expression would allow for the blossoming of authentic human relationships. He believed that the internal nature of these relationships would express reality itself:

Assume man to be man and his relationship to the world to be a human one: then you can exchange love only for love, trust for trust, etc. If you want to enjoy art, you must be an artistically cultivated person ... Every one of your relations to man and to nature must be a specific expression, corresponding to the object of your will, of your real individual life. (III,326)

Marx assumed that mutuality and reciprocity were intrinsically linked to authenticity.

The individual's intentional structure would be rid of the well to dominate and have power over others and the need to possess things and people: 'Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only ours when we have it - when it exists for us as capital, or when it is directly possessed, eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., - in short, when it is used by us'. (III,300) Private property had a similar effect on man's senses. Thus the withering away of the 'sense of having', the 'sense of possessing' also effected man's use of his senses:
Each of his human relations to the world—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, observing, experiencing, wanting, acting, loving—in short, all of the organs of his individual being, like those organs which are directly social in form, are in their objective orientation, or in their orientation to the object, the appropriation of human reality. (III, 299-300)

Such senses could only be humanised if the world itself was humanised. As Marx said in a note: 'In practice I can relate myself to a thing humanly only if the thing relates itself humanly to the human being'. (III, 300) This applied both to the relations between man and other men and to the relations between man and humanised nature, the product of man's labour.

In the truly human society 'free' labour would replace 'forced' labour. Consequently each individual could develop his capacities as a producing being. This would require, firstly, that labour be not induced by need or greed, and, secondly, that the labour process be not controlled by another person. Indeed Marx goes so far as to say that activities which involved association were only necessary and desirable 'wherever such a direct expression of sociability stems from the true character of the activity's content and is appropriate to the nature of the enjoyment'. (III, 298) Some activities in which man utilised his unique powers, such as scientific endeavour, were 'social' activities in that 'the material of my activity [is] given to me as a social product' and 'that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being'. (III, 298) It is clear that Marx did not want to see a society which smothered individual self-development, either for reasons of the self-interest of some or the so-called 'common good':
Above all one must avoid postulating 'society' again as an abstraction *vis-a-vis* the individual. The individual is the *social being*. His manifestations of life - even if they may not appear in the direct form of communal manifestations of life carried out in association with others - are therefore an expression and confirmation of *social life*. (III,299)

Thus 'society' for Marx should neither be a collection of self-interested monads or an homogenous mass but an harmoniously functioning order in which everyone can develop their productive capacities. Social relations would not exist as constraints on individual self-development but as conditions, as foundations. The truly human society would overcome the distinction between 'freedom' and 'order', and 'individuality' and 'community' in a new and liberating way.

Marx spoke of an 'immediate' unity between individuality and the community, no longer mediated by institutions such as the State, law, religion and morality. These were, argued Marx, only 'particular' modes of production, and fall under its general law'. (III,297) As forms of consciousness and institutions they only existed because of the existence of alienated labour. Thus they would have no place in the truly human society, defined in the following way:

> let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have *in two ways affirmed* himself and the other person. 1) In *my* production I would have objectified my *individuality*, its *specific character*, and therefore enjoyed not only an individual *manifestation* of my life during the activity, but also when looking at the object I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be *objective, visible to the senses* and hence a power beyond all doubt.

> 2) In your enjoyment or use of my product I would have the *direct* enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a *human* need by
my work, that is of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature. 3) I would have been for you the mediator between you and the species, and therefore would become recognised and felt by you yourself as a completion of your own essential nature and as a necessary part of yourself, and consequently would know myself to be confirmed both in your thought and your love. 4) In the individual expression of my life I would have directly created your expression of your life, and therefore in my individual activity I would have directly confirmed and realised my true nature, my communal nature. (III,227-228)

The reason Marx could argue for a 'direct' harmony between the individual and community is that he had reduced his conception of the human condition to the labour process. In the truly human society every individual would be 'caught up' in productive labour. Thus the purely derivative institutions, such as the State, law, religion and morality, would wither away:

The fundamental and animating theme of this new conception of man is that everything about men, society and history is to be understood from the perspective of productive work in society. In other words man is to be considered exclusively as one who makes himself what he is through his productive work.

As a result of this, the products of man's activities would exist as affirmations of his productive powers, and would mirror his species-powers. Nor would they exist for him as an individual, but for everyone, like paintings in a public art gallery. Marx simply assumed that 'free' labour would produce enough goods, both in quantity

29. See Kamenka, Ethical Foundations, p.xii.
and variety, to satisfy the needs of all. Presumably the end of the 'sense of having' would reduce mankind's need for unnecessary items.

In the Holy Family Marx subjected morality and the law to systematic criticism. He did this through an investigation of Eugene Sue's novel Mystères de Paris. The central character in the novel was a prostitute, Fleur de Marie. Despite her circumstances she preserved 'a human nobleness of soul, a human unaffectedness and a human beauty that impress those around her, raise her to the level of a poetical flower of the criminal world'. (IV,168) She possessed this nobleness, argues Marx, because 'she measures her situation in life by her own individuality, her essential nature, not by the ideal of what is good'. (IV,170) Unfortunately Marie was persuaded to adopt a religious attitude towards life, she lost her original vitality and goodness and became chained to 'the Christian point of view'. (IV,173) Eventually she gave herself entirely to God 'by becoming wholly dead to the world and entering a convent', where she died. (IV,175)

Religion, and the moral system behind it, were seen by Marx to force man to submit himself (or herself) to external determination. Whereas Marie, despite her situation, had been 'able to develop a lovable, human individuality', her conversion to

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31. As Engels wrote of Fourier: 'Fourier ... established the great axiom of social philosophy, that every individual having an inclination or predilection for some particular kind of work, the sum of all these inclinations of all individuals must be, upon the whole, an adequate power for providing for the wants of all'; 'Progress of Social Reform on the Continent', III. 394-395.

32. See Kamenka, Ethical Foundations, pp.34-36; and Rubel and Manale, Marx without Myth, pp.53-54.
Christianity led her to experience 'hypochondriacal self-torture'.

(IV,174) In the truly human society, in 'natural surroundings as Marx put it, the 'chains of bourgeois life' would be removed and people like Marie would be able to freely manifest their natures.

(IV,170)

In a truly human society Marx believed that externally imposed forms of punishment would be unnecessary:

... under human conditions punishment will really be nothing but the sentence passed by the culprit on himself. No one will want to convince him that violence from without, done to him by others, is violence which he had done to himself. On the contrary, he will see in other men his natural saviours from the punishment which he has imposed on himself; in other words, the relation will be reversed.

(IV,179)

Underlying Marx's position was the belief that through the experience of genuinely human relationships men would internalise 'goodness'. Marie was seen to be good by Marx 'because she has never caused suffering to anyone, she has always been human towards her inhuman surroundings'. (IV,169-170) He clearly stated his position in his discussion of French materialism:

If man is unfree in the materialistic sense, i.e., is free not through the negative power to avoid this or that, but through the positive power to assert his true individuality, crime must not be punished in the individual, but the anti-social sources of crime must be destroyed, and each man must be given social scope for the vital manifestation of his being.

(IV,131)

The truly human society would see the end of production and exchange induced by self-interest; and nature itself would be truly humanised, a genuine product of human activity. Men would utilize their knowledge of natural processes to produce things that reflected the 'laws of beauty'. Thus man would only experience what was truly
'human' and truly 'natural' in all his relations. 'For the starving man', on the other hand, 'it is not the human form of food that exists but only its abstract existence as food'. (III,302)

Marx argued that such a form of existence would allow for a completely new feeling of existential certainty. Life would make sense because men would have complete control over their own powers, they would be confirmed in what they did, other people would not exist as, or be seen as, enemies, and the mysteries of nature would be overcome. For Marx the so-called 'problem of knowledge' was a non-problem because the objects outside of man were nothing but congealments of human productive activity. Thus the relationship between the subject and the object was a non-problem. 33

All forms of morality and religion, Marx argued, would wither away:

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\text{Atheism, as the denial of this unreality}^{34},
\text{has no longer any meaning, for atheism is a negation of God, and postulates the existence of man through this negation, but socialism no longer stands in need of such a mediation. It proceeds from the theoretically and practically sensuous consciousness of man and of nature as the essence. Socialism is man's positive self-consciousness.} (III,306)
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Because the truly human society would resolve the conflicts between 'man and nature' and 'man and man' the need for religion would wither away, the 'death of God' being heralded by the 'birth of man'. 35


34. Marx was referring to the unreality of nature and of man. A belief in God, he said, 'implies the admission of the unreality of nature and of man'. (III,306)

35. As Masterson observed: 'there is a positive theory of man incorporating a programme of action which, it is claimed, will effectively eliminate the problem of God by overcoming at their source all manifestations of human alienation'; Atheism and Alienation, p.85.
For Marx such a state of affairs 'as fully developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fully developed humanism equals naturalism'. It was the 'riddle of history solved'. (III, 296, 297)

To interpret Marx as merely arguing for a new form of society would leave out the essence of his argument. This new form of existence involved the coming into being of a 'positively self-deriving humanism' in which both in his being and his knowing, man came to confirm and manifest himself in the world. Indeed, it would have been strange for Marx to argue anything else given that he believed Hegel had 'found the abstract, logical, speculative expression for the movement of history'. (III, 329)
CHAPTER ELEVEN : IDEAS, INTERESTS AND HISTORY

Since in the fully-formed proletariat the abstraction of all humanity, even of the semblance of humanity, is practically complete; since the conditions of life of the proletariat sum up all the conditions of life of society today in their most inhuman form; since man has lost himself in the proletariat, yet at the same time has not only gained theoretical consciousness of that loss, but through urgent, no longer removable, no longer disguisable, absolutely imperative need - the practical expression of necessity - is driven directly to revolt against this inhumanity, it follows that the proletariat can and must emancipate itself. But it cannot emancipate itself without abolishing the conditions of its own life. It cannot abolish the conditions of its own life without abolishing all the inhuman conditions of life of society today which are summed up in its own situation.

(IV,36-37)

1. Ideas and Interests

In August 1844 Marx met Engels for the second time. Whereas their first meeting in 1842 was clouded by the fact that Marx saw Engels as an emissary of 'The Free', the second meeting established the foundation for their lifetime of collaboration: 'Our complete agreement in all theoretical fields became obvious and our joint work dates from that time'. After long discussions Marx and Engels decided to write a critique of Bruno Bauer and his Young Hegelian colleagues. This critique turned into a book of almost three hundred pages, mostly written by Marx. It was published in February 1845 as The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Criticism: Against Bruno Bauer and Company.

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One of the central issues facing the Young Hegelians concerned the nature of the relationship between ideas and history, specifically whether history produced its own ideas, or whether history was itself the result of ideas. Marx argued that Bruno Bauer and company gave an independent creativity to ideas. He set out in the *Holy Family* to combat this philosophical tendency, which he saw as a dangerous enemy of 'real humanism'.

*Real humanism* has no more dangerous enemy in Germany than *spiritualism* or *speculative idealism*, which substitutes 'self-consciousness' or the 'spirit' for the real *individual man* and with the evangelist teaches: 'It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing'. (IV,7)

Marx accused Bauer of presenting history as 'a person apart, a metaphysical subject of which the real human individuals are merely the bearers'. (IV,79) Bauer rejected the view that the masses had a key role in the historical process: 'All great actions of previous history were failures from the start and had no effective success because the mass became interested in and enthusiastic over them'. (Marx quoting Bauer, IV,81) Bauer believed that if the subjective desires, feelings or interests of people determined the movement of history, the realisation of the 'Idea' would always be thwarted.

According to Marx Bauer's approach was only a caricatured consummation of Hegel's conception of history which, in turn, was the speculative expression of the Christian-Germanic antithesis between 'Spirit' and 'Matter'. In such a view, 'a few chosen individuals as the active 'Spirit'' were counterposed 'to the rest of mankind, as the spiritless Mass, as Matter'. (IV,85) The art of transforming society was reduced to 'the cerebral activity of Critical Criticism'. (IV,86)
Marx, on the other hand, saw history as the process in which men pursued what they perceived to be their interests:

*History does nothing, it 'possesses no immense wealth', it 'wages no battles'. It is men, real living men who does all that, who possesses and fights; 'history' is not, as it were, a person apart, using man as a means to achieve its own aims, history is nothing but the activity of man pursuing his aims.* (IV,93)

The French Revolution had not failed because the masses became involved, but because 'the most numerous part of the mass, the part distinct from the bourgeoisie, did not have its real interest in the principle of the Revolution'. (IV,82) Marx assumed that ideas must be organically linked with the interests of a class, otherwise they would be historically impotent.

For Marx the basis of historical action was to be found in the place where interests were formed. In the *Paris Manuscripts* he had written: 'It is easy to see that the entire revolutionary movement necessarily finds both its empirical and its theoretical basis in the movement of *private property* - more precisely, in that of the economy'. (III,297) In the *Holy Family* he congratulated Proudhon for his accurate presentation of the movement of history. The proletariat and the property owners were seen as opposites, the revolutionary and the conservative class, both formed by the system based on private property. Thus the system of private property 'drives itself in its economic movement towards its own dissolution' through a development which occurs in 'the very nature of things'. (IV,36)
2. The Contending Classes and the State

For Marx the interests which were the basis of historical action were class interests. The individual's position in the mode of production was seen as the crucial fact. The contradiction within modern society was seen as a class contradiction, and the conflicts which emerged from this contradiction were seen as class conflicts.

The bourgeois class owned capital and employed labour. They aimed to increase their wealth by utilising this capital and labour in the most beneficial way. Capitalists were estranged from their basic humanity, because they were owners and controllers, not producers. They sought to compete, not to co-operate; to utilise the labour of others for their own ends, not the ends of those who labour; and they did not employ their own productive powers, they merely controlled the labour of others.

For Marx the utilisation of both hand and brain was necessary if man was to realize his productive powers. However, despite the fact that they were alienated the capitalists felt 'at ease' and 'strengthened' in their alienation because from it they gained power and wealth. Significantly Marx saw a 'semblance of a human existence' in the bourgeois condition. (IV,36) They were not forced to sell their labour power, nor did they suffer the same privations of the proletariat. Consequently the property owners were the 'conservative side' of the dialectical equation of bourgeois society.²

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The proletariat was seen as the revolutionary class because of the 'outright, resolute and comprehensive negation' of human nature which was involved in their experience of life. Their interests could not be served by anything short of a revolution in the mode of labour itself. It was not in vain that the proletariat went through 'the stern but steeling school of labour'. (IV,37) They experienced alienation and the frustrations that went with it. As a class, therefore, it would only be happy when it had not only abolished capitalism but all dehumanising relations of production.

Throughout 1844 Marx also developed further his argument that the modern state was nothing but an instrument of class rule. Besides his study of political economy, he made a further study of the French Revolution. 3 He regarded the history of the French Revolution as a guide to the history of the modern state. In 1844 he prepared a draft plan for a work on the modern state. One of the headings read: 'The history and the origin of the modern state or the French Revolution'. (IV,666) In the Holy Family Marx argued that by 1830 the bourgeoisie had become fully conscious of its class interests: 'It no longer considered the constitutional representative state as a means of achieving the ideal of the state, the welfare of the world and universal human aims but, on the contrary, had acknowledged it as the official expression of its own exclusive power and the political recognition of its own special interests'. (IV,124) Thus it put into effect its 'wishes of the year 1789'. (IV,124)

The State was not seen simply as an expression of alienation as it had been in the Paris Manuscripts, but as an instrument of class

rule. Politics was the process through which classes fought for the power of the state. In modern times the State was an instrument of bourgeois rule. Napoleon falsely treated the 'state as an end in itself and civil life only as a treasurer and his subordinate which must have no will of its own'. (IV,123) By abstracting himself from civil society he was forced to adopt terrorism as a means to stay in power:

He perfected the Terror by substituting permanent war for permanent revolution. He fed the egoism of the French nation to complete satiety but demanded also the sacrifice of bourgeois business, enjoyments, wealth, etc., whenever this was required by the political aim of conquest. If he despotically suppressed the liberalism of bourgeois society - the political idealism of its daily practice - he showed no more consideration for its essential material interests, trade and industry, whenever they conflicted with his political interests. (IV,123)

Similarly, Marx argued that 'Robespierre, Saint-Just and their party fell because they confused the ancient, realistic-democratic commonweal based on real slavery with the modern spiritualistic-democratic representative state, which is based on emancipated slavery, bourgeois society'. (IV,122) Their illusions were the illusions of 'the Terrorists'. It was not until 1830 and

4. See also 'Jewish Question', III, 155-156.

5. See Avineri, Social and Political Thought, ch. 7 for an account of Marx's views on terror. For a contrary view see Levine, The Tragic Deception, ch. 4. Levine's view (p.46) that Marx was 'an admirer of the Reign of Terror' ignores the fact that, in the Holy Family, Marx treated terror as resulting from a 'subjectivist fallacy' (Avineri, p.190) For Marx the proletarian revolution would be a revolution of the vast majority imposing their will over a beleaguered minority of capitalists.
the accession of Louis-Philippe that the 'illusion' was finally removed from the stage of history.

It was, argued Marx, 'the communist idea', representing as it did the interests of the proletarian movement, which could take history beyond the bourgeois order. Only if the revolution drew close to the 'masses' could it become a communist revolution. Thus, for Marx, the left wing of the French Revolutionary tradition were the true heirs of modern socialism:

The revolutionary movement which began in 1789 in the Cercle social, which in the middle of its course had as its chief representatives Leclerc and Roux, and which finally with Babeuf's conspiracy was temporarily defeated, gave rise to the communist idea which Babeuf's friend Buonarroti re-introduced in France after the Revolution of 1830. This idea, consistently developed, is the idea of the new world order. (IV,119)

Despite the primitive nature of their ideas,⁶ and the almost pre-industrial conditions within which they found themselves, they pointed the way to the future. All that was needed was men who could exert 'practical force' to carry out the idea. (IV,119)

For Marx politics was not an independently constituted activity, it reflected class conflict. The achievement of universal suffrage was seen as the starting point of the movement towards a truly human society. In the draft plan for his work on the modern state Marx wrote of 'suffrage, the fight for the abolition of the state and of bourgeois society'. (IV,666) Universal suffrage would make politics subject to the vast majority of the people - the

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⁶ See 'Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844', III, 294-296 for Marx's criticisms of 'crude communism'.

Thus it would pave the way for a revolution with universal significance - the proletarian revolution.

Marx believed that 'the drastic dissolution' of society would lead to a proletarian majority. In the Critical Marginal Notes Marx argued that 'the progressive advance of pauperism' was the 'inevitable consequence of modern industry'. (III,195) He argued that such pauperism would spread throughout English society: 'In England, the distress of the workers is not partial but universal; it is not restricted to the factory districts, but extends to the rural districts'. (III,192) What was happening in England, the first industrial nation, was seen by Marx to be an indication of what would happen in the rest of Europe. 8

3. The Revolution and its Meaning

Marx wrote that it was in the 'nature of things' that the two major classes of modern society would confront one another. He regarded the possibility of mutual restraint to be an impossibility, as the class interests created by modern society and the passions engendered by those interests could not be reconciled. Following Hegel, he argued that morality would mean nothing on the stage of history. 9

Marx attributed a universal significance to this revolutionary clash of interests. In the Jewish Question he had

7. See Avineri, Social and Political Thought, pp.202-220.
8. See Hunt, Political Ideas, pp.84-92.
discussed self-interest and alienation as features of civil society in general, and he had not paid any special attention to the production process. In 1844, however, self-interest became the basis of capitalist conduct and alienation the proletarian condition. The capitalist sought to expand his wealth by employing labourers to work his capital equipment. For the individual capitalist the worker was nothing but an instrument of production, to be used at will. The capitalist class was seen as the world-historical representative of selfishness; the owner and controller of money, things and people.

Without the proletariat to work his machines the aims and desires of the bourgeoisie could not become realities. Because of this Marx saw revolution as inevitable.

The proletariat executes the sentence that private property pronounces on itself by producing the proletariat, just as it executes the sentence that wage labour pronounces on itself by producing wealth for others and poverty for itself. (IV.36)

The revolution, argued Marx, would achieve a completely new set of values from those of the capitalist.

Despite their alienation, the proletariat would develop as a class with universal aims. The values of solidarity and fraternity, which had vanished from the world with the development of bourgeois society, were returning with the proletarian movement:

Association, society and conversation, which again has association as its end, are enough for them; the brotherhood of man is no mere phrase with them, but a fact of life, and the nobility of man shines upon us from their work-hardened bodies. (III,313)

Consequently the clash between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie would be a clash between a competitive, commercial society and a co-operative, fraternal society.
Secondly, the proletarian class aimed to liberate mankind from all forms of externally determined labour. Their struggle was the struggle of man's productive powers against all conditions which restrict their full development. This is why Marx stressed the fact of their 'experience' of alienated labour in capitalist society. Even though the proletarian class needed power to achieve their ends, these ends implied the end to all coercive and competitive human relationships. Indeed, the proletarian desire for power was seen by Marx as the desire to begin a process which would see an end to the phenomenon of power itself. This was the 'soul' of their revolt.

For Marx, then, the clash between the two classes was, at the same time, a clash between the values of freedom and coercion, and the values of co-operation and competition. Even though Marx saw classes and not individuals as the actors on the stage of history, echoes of Hegel's conception of the 'Cunning of Reason' were present in his analysis. On the crucial point of consciousness, however, Marx's account differed from Hegel's.

4. Proletarian Consciousness

In 1843 and early 1844 Marx saw the 'people' or the 'proletariat' in the way in which 'any "planner" would look around for someone to carry out his ideas'. The revolution would come about

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11. Lobkowicz, Theory and Practice, pp.375.
when the 'lightning of thought' struck. It was on behalf of German philosophy that Marx spoke to the proletariat, who were vehicles for philosophy. In Paris, however, he began to develop a much more sophisticated account of proletarian consciousness and its generation.

In the *Holy Family* Marx saw 'contradiction', 'antithesis' and 'necessity' as features of historical reality itself. The revolution would take place in the very nature of things, and Marx tried to explain this by linking together proletarian existence and proletarian consciousness:

> Not in vain does it [the proletariat] go through the stern but steeling school of *labour*. It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment regards as its aim. It is a question of what the proletariat is, and what, in accordance with this *being*, it will historically be compelled to do. Its aim and historical action is visibly and irrevocably foreshadowed in its own life situation as well as in the whole organization of bourgeois society today. (IV,37)

Given this account it would appear that the intervention of philosophy, seen as so important in the earlier writings, was now removed from Marx's conception of revolution.

Still, Marx did see the revolution as a conscious act underpinned by some form of ideology. Communist ideas appeared on the stage of history only briefly before the communist movement itself: 'Communist criticism had practically at once as its counterpart the movement of the great mass'. (IV,84) Such ideas were not constructed by philosophers with no experience of the world, but were built by

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proletarian thinkers themselves in the course of thinking about their situation. They were ideas which were organically linked to the historical needs of the proletariat.

Marx spoke of the proletariat as a 'thinking' as well as a 'feeling' class. He wrote of the French and English workers:

The criticism of the French and the England is not an abstract, preternatural personality outside mankind; it is the real human activity of individuals who are active members of society and who suffer, feel, think and act as human beings. (IV,153)

Marx also noted 'the studiousness, the craving for knowledge, the moral energy and the unceasing urge for development' of these workers. (IV,84)

Another feature of the French and English workers which Marx approved of was their understanding of the need to overcome bourgeois society in practice. They had, he said, developed a real understanding of the necessity of 'mass action':

In their associations, moreover, they show a very thorough and comprehensive consciousness of the 'enormous' and 'immeasurable' power which arises from their co-operation ... They are most painfully aware of the difference between being and thinking, between consciousness and life. They know that property, capital, money, wage-labour and the like are no ideal figments of the brain but very practical, very objective products of their self-estrangement and that therefore they must be abolished in a practical, objective way for man to become man not only in thinking, in consciousness, but in mass being, in life. (IV,52-53)

It was also true, he noted, that the French and English workers had formed associations 'in which they exchange opinions not only on their immediate needs as workers, but on their needs as human beings'. (IV,52)
Marx discussed the effect of association on the proletariat. Originally drawn together to discuss their own situation, association became an end in itself. The workers were beginning to develop a new need - 'the need for society': 'When communist artisans associate with one another, theory, propaganda, etc., is their first end. But at the same time, as a result of this association, they acquire a new need - the need for society - and what appears as a means becomes an end'. (III,313) Thus the revolutionary process was involving the workers in such a way that other-directedness and mutuality were being developed from within civil society itself.13

Marx believed in proletarian self-emancipation. The proletariat were developing a conception of their needs as human beings, a theory of revolution based on the need for mass action, a consciousness of the universal significance of that revolution and a will to bring it about. Thus the meaning of history was no longer hidden beneath the surface, but was revealing itself through the aims and actions of an existing class - the proletariat. 'Communism', said Marx in the Paris Manuscripts, 'is the riddle of history solved, and it knows itself to be this solution'. (III,297)

Working beneath history and determining the direction in which it moved was human nature itself. The actors on the stage of history - the major classes - were seen as vehicles for the translation of particular values into practice. The proletarian class, as a result of its experiences within bourgeois society, was the carrier of the values of freedom and fraternity. Its victory would usher in a new society from which a 'new man' would eventually emerge.

13. See Avineri, Social and Political Thought, pp.140-142.
Despite this Marx had noted that the first form of communist consciousness, generated by the workers themselves, was of a 'limited character'. It would create a form of practice still 'infected' by bourgeois society. Avineri has argued that Marx's preference for English and French workers did not result from the belief that their theory was more advanced, but rather from a recognition of their 'practical bent': 'Basically Marx always remained sceptical about the speculative shallowness of these socialist views'.

In the case of Germany Marx believed that consciousness was very 'advanced', and the boundaries he placed around the development of consciousness in England and France were absent. He argued that German theory, developed from a 'positive' critique of religion, represented the 'real' needs of humanity. Secondly, he argued that the educational level and 'capacity for education' was higher amongst the German proletariat. The Germans were a 'philosophical people' who can find their practice 'only in socialism, hence it is only in the proletariat that it can find the dynamic element of its emancipation'. (III,202) This was exemplified, argued Marx in the Critical Marginal Notes, by the uprising of the Silesian weavers: 'Not one of the French and English workers' uprisings had such a


15. Marx compared the uprising of the Silesian weavers (June 1844) with that of the Lyons weavers (November 1831): 'The Lyons workers believed that they were pursuing only political aims, that they were only soldiers of the republic, whereas actually they were soldiers of socialism. Thus their political understanding concealed from them the roots of social distress, thus their political understanding deceived their social instinct. (III,204)
theoretical and conscious character as the uprising of the Silesian weavers'. (III, 201)

Several features of the Silesian uprising were noted by Marx. Firstly, the song which was popular amongst the weavers, was a 'bold call to struggle, in which there is not even a mention of hearth and home, factory or district, but in which the proletariat at once, in a striking, sharp, unrestrained and powerful manner, proclaims its opposition to the society of private property'. Secondly, not only were machines destroyed but also 'ledgers, the titles to property'. Thirdly, 'while all other movements were aimed primarily against the owner of the industrial enterprise, the visible enemy, this movement is at the same time directed against the banker, the hidden enemy'. Lastly, the uprising was carried out with 'courage, thought and endurance'. (see III, 201)

Marx concluded that the German proletariat was the 'theoretician' of the proletarian movement, the French proletariat the 'politician', and the English proletariat the 'economist'. (III, 202) Slowly but surely the proletarians were filling the gap between their experience of alienation, and their understanding of what needed to be done. Each form of 'practice' taught them something about the validity of the ideas they had developed. Because they existed in a philosophically advanced country, the German proletariat would be more advanced. Thus they could issue forth a practice which would take Germany further along the road to a truly human society.

For Marx there were two senses in which one could 'know' the truly human society.\(^\text{16}\) In the first sense it could be known as

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\(^\text{16}\). See Easton, 'Alienation and Empiricism', 402-427 for an account of Marx's understanding of the nature of knowledge and its acquisition.
an 'Idea'. German theory was such an 'Idea' as it embodied, in theoretical form, the needs of man as a human being. Secondly, Marx's analysis implied that a real understanding of what it meant to be human could only come about when it was actually experienced in every-day relationships. Each stage along the road to the truly human society, starting with the associations of workers within capitalism and the demand for universal suffrage, would create conditions in which men could experience more of their humanity. Only at the end of the process, however, would man, in both his 'knowing' and his 'being', have realized his true humanity:

... man is not merely a natural being: he is human natural being. That is to say, he is a being for himself. Therefore he is a species-being, and has to confirm and manifest himself as such both in his being and in his knowing ... History is the true natural history of man. (III,337)

Marx's first theory, then, was justified in one of two ways. On the one hand, Marx assumed that philosophers, Germany philosophers in particular, possessed the ability to probe beneath the surface of things to find the 'truth'. Marxism spoke in the name of that truth - 'Reason' itself. On the other hand, Marx argued that his theory was simply a reflection of what was happening within history. Marxism was seen as the theory which gave voice to the logic of history. In this case 'Reason' was at work within history itself. Consequently, Marx's account of human nature, whether it was explicitly stated or whether it was crept in through the back-door via his theory of history, was the foundation upon which he built his political and social theory. 17

17. See Caton, 'Marx's Sublation of Philosophy into Praxis', 251-259 for a discussion of the ideological foundation of Marx's conception of 'science'.
CONCLUSION : THE FIRST MARXISM

Underlying the whole of his work, providing the ethical impulse that guided his hopes and his studies, was a vision and a theory of human freedom, of man as master of himself, of nature and of history.1

1. Human Nature and its Realization

By 1844 Marx had developed a definite position on the major issues of the day. This view rested upon his understanding of human nature and the social framework within which it would be realized. Man was seen as a producing being with powers and capacities of a range and a scope far beyond that of any other natural creature. Consequently freedom was defined as the freedom to develop human productive powers and capacities. Given the original goodness and equality of all men, all that needed to be done was to free labour from the unnecessary and unnatural restraints that had been imposed on it. History was seen as the process of human self-development: 'The entire so-called history of the world is nothing but the creation of man through human labour'. (III,305)

The realization of man's communal essence implied the coming into being of a society in which the social relationships were structured so that each individual was treated as an end, not a means. For instance the relationship between a man and a woman indicated 'the extent to which man's need has become a human need; the extent to which, therefore, the other person as a person has become for him a need'. (III,296) Thus, the talents, capacities and powers of each individual

would blossom forth in the truly human society. Mutuality and reciprocity were seen as the social bases for the realization of this individuality.

Society was seen as the necessary condition for individual self-realization. Marx argued that men developed the ability to speak and to think, and thus the ability to develop their productive powers, through their interaction with other human beings. The Feuerbachian notion of man as a *Gattungsgesessen* was central to his understanding of man. In 1844 Marx wrote that Feuerbach had provided the 'philosophical basis for socialism' through his notion of 'the unity of man with man, which is based on the real differences between men, the concept of the human species brought down from the heaven of abstraction to the real earth, what is this but the concept of society'. (III,354)

In this way Marx welded together his twin commitments to freedom and communality. Society was the foundation for individual self-development, and individual self-development was for the good of society. Thus his commitment to the true community was at the same time a commitment to the freedom and dignity of the individual\(^2\):

'The individual is the social being. His manifestations of life — even if they may not appear in the direct form of communal manifestations of life carried out in association with others — are, therefore an expression and confirmation of social life'. (III,299)

In 1842 Marx had argued that if each of the major institutions and activities of human existence were freed from external

determination they could contribute to the good of all. In 1844 he reduced his discussion to an analysis of man as a producing being. Once again, however, freedom was seen as the only true and lasting basis for a genuine harmony. Men were, Marx assumed, naturally co-operative.

Marx was very little concerned with man as a consumer. For Marx man was an expressive being, actively related to the world of nature and other men. He simply assumed that in the truly human society the quantity, quality and variety of products would be sufficient, given the depth and range of human desires. It is important to note, however, that Marx believed that need and enjoyment would lose their 'egotistical nature' in the truly human society, and the 'sense of having' would wither away. (III,300)

Presumably then, many of the needs created in capitalist society would themselves wither away, allowing men to produce freely, liberated from 'the dominion of physical need'. (III,276)

Marx argued that such a society would not need a State, let alone the institutions of politics, morality or religion. It would be a community of producers engaged in 'free, conscious activity', unmediated by unnecessary rules and institutions. Because the division between the individual and the community had been overcome, the existence of any external form of politics, religion or morality would be unnecessary. Men would reveal their original goodness in and through their social relationships. The categorical imperative to treat every man as an end in himself would be a part of the man's very nature.

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Man's capacity to think enabled him to transcend his given situation. 'Theories' and 'ideas' were seen by Marx as expressions of human needs and the social conditions within which these needs would be fulfilled. They pointed to a future which had yet to become a reality. The fact that such theories existed was an indication of the failure of man to experience what was truly human.

Marx thought that philosophy would be abolished when mankind's nature had been realized, when the antithesis between man's essence and man's being was overcome. Only then would the will to change things vanish, as only then would there be no felt contradiction between man's being and man's essence. Two assumptions underpinned Marx's analysis of the relationship between philosophy and the world. Firstly, all of the problems within the human situation could and would be solved: 'The solution of theoretical riddles is the task of practice and effected through practice'. (III,312) Secondly, history was progressive, leading inevitably towards the truly human society. At that point the contradictions within the human condition would be overcome.

Marx also focussed on the question of man's freedom in nature. There are indications that he regarded the ability of man to understand, and therefore to control nature to be unlimited. The human capacity to think could be utilised in the process of production, and the knowledge gained from the natural sciences utilised on behalf of mankind. Just how far man could know and control nature is not clear. However, Marx did argue that 'a being only considers himself independent when he stands on his own feet; and he only stands on his own feet when he owes his existence to himself'. (III,304)
How mankind was to gain such independence is not clear. Marx argued that man was a part of nature, a natural being who was dependent on nature for his continuing existence. Nature was seen as the ground upon which mankind's existence rested. Thus Marx argued that man was 'an objective, sensuous being' and, therefore, a 'suffering being'. (III,337) This consideration did not, however, dent his faith in the power of mankind to determine his own future, free of limitations and constraints.

Underlying Marx's account was the belief that the traditional antitheses of philosophy - between 'subjectivity and objectivity', 'spirituality and materiality', and 'activity and suffering' - were not merely to be resolved in 'understanding'. Their resolution was 'a real problem of life, which philosophy could not solve precisely because it conceived this problem as merely a theoretical one'. (III,302) Marx wanted to shift the terrain of the debate from the 'heaven' of theory to the 'real world' of practice. Only then could philosophers overcome the problems that had confused them. It was 'the task of history' to 'establish the truth of this world'. (III,176)

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4. See Peter Stern, 'Marx's Critique of Philosophy', Interpretation, 6 (1976), 266-287.
2. **History and the Proletariat**

Marx argued that any discussion of human nature could not be abstracted from an analysis of history. History involved interests which were formed in and through classes. As a result of the processes of competition and concentration in the modern economy, modern society was breaking up into two major classes – the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The contending ideologies of the day – bourgeois political economy, and the various communist theories – spoke on behalf of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat respectively.

Marx aligned himself with the proletariat because he believed that it was the historical agent for the values of freedom and communality. It was 'among these "barbarians" of our civilised world', he wrote to Feuerbach, 'that history is preparing the practical element for the emancipation of mankind'. (III,355) Because the proletariat were isolated from 'human nature itself', because they experienced 'universal suffering', only they could become the basis of a social movement with a 'universal soul'. (III,205) Thus Marx's theory of human nature was used both the evaluate the situation of the proletariat and to explain the nature of the forthcoming proletarian revolution.

Marx had no doubts that the process of human liberation would be a long and protracted one. Each stage would take mankind one step closer, until one day the truly human society would be a reality. Thus it was not inconsistent for Marx to argue the inadequacies of a purely 'political' revolution and, at the same time, to describe it as and 'advance'. (III,155) Nor did he see it as inconsistent for the communist to take up the issue of political reform. The realization of
universal suffrage was viewed as a crucially important step, which
would pave the way for more radical changes in the nature of society.
Marx's argument was not simply based on the distinction between
'minimum' and 'maximum' demands, but a peculiarly Hegelian view of
history which rested upon the notion of 'Aufhebung'.

Because the proletarian's isolation from human life was more
'infinite' than his isolation from political life, the political
revolution could not and would not contain the contradictions of the
age. It merely opened the way for their genuine resolution. Thus
underneath the surface of history Marx heard the demands of man as a
producing being. Through the movement of labourers these demands
were beginning to filter through to the surface: 'Philosophy cannot
be made a reality without the abolition of the proletariat, the
proletariat cannot be abolished without philosophy being made a
reality'. (III,187)

Marx argued that the consciousness necessary for change
would result from the interaction between 'thinking', 'suffering' and
'acting'. In 1842 and 1843 Marx saw this in terms of an alliance
between those who think (the philosophers), and those who feel, suffer
and act. Theory was taken to the people, who would test its validity
in their actions. It was the theory for the people.

In 1844 Marx wrote of proletarian consciousness more in its
own terms, connecting its formation with the proletariat situation and
plotting its development in line with history. The proletariat were

5. Julius Kovesi has called this an 'escalator theory of revolution';
'Was Marx a True Socialist?', unpublished manuscript, History of
Ideas Unit, Australian National University (Canberra, 1974), p.5.
being brought together as a class by the process of industrialization. They were developing their own organizations and a will to change things, learning from each other in the process.

In the last analysis, however, Marx still felt in 1844 that German theory held the key to the proletarian commitment. Thus, given the tradition of philosophy and the educational level in Germany, the German proletariat possessed an advanced form of consciousness. A gap existed between the degree to which Germany had industrialised, and the level of understanding of the German proletariat. For this reason the German proletariat could act as the 'theoretician' for the more numerically advanced French and English proletariat.

Marx distinguished between his own position, which he called 'real humanism', and the other communist theories being circulated in the proletarian movement. 'Real humanism' represented the long term interests of the proletariat, because it proceeded from a 'resolute positive abolition of religion':

The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that man is the highest being for man, hence with the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, forsaken, despicable being, relations which cannot be better described than by the exclamation of a Frenchman when it was planned to introduce a tax on dogs: Poor dogs! They want to treat you like human beings! (III,182)

On the one hand, then, Marx was committed to a particular 'Idea' - man as a species-being with productive powers and capacities which should be liberated. On the other hand, he was aware that this

Idea was not enough for the political and social theorist who took his commitments seriously. Practical means were needed to put this 'Idea' into effect. This required an understanding of the process of history, of the way interests were formed, and of the way consciousness of those interests developed. Too often, however, Marx reverted to the simplistic view that it was philosophy which was the key force in the formation of consciousness. In the *Introduction*, for instance, he referred to the 'lightning of thought' striking the proletariat.

This position also left Marx with the problem of explaining the gap between the consciousness of existing workers, as expressed through their organizations, and the consciousness required to bring about truly radical changes. Marx's argument, never sufficiently developed, was that a process of interaction between man's social being and his social consciousness gradually led to 'experiential knowledge' of the truly human society. This solution did not really solve the problem. On this account each change in the nature of man's social condition would be absorbed at the level of thought, until there was a concurrence between being human and being conscious of being human. The problem remained for Marx to explain how changes could be implemented that would be progressive. If history was subject to the divine will, acting through people, this account might be acceptable. However, given Marx's rejection of all religious interpretations of history, he assumed that human nature itself ultimately determined the outcome of history. Thus, without necessarily knowing it, the proletarian movement was bringing about changes that would not be fully recognized until after the event.
It is also ironic that Marx's account of the politics and sociology of capitalist and post-capitalist society were especially weak in his early writings, since it was in these areas that he claimed to be stronger than his Young Hegelian colleagues. Firstly, he simply assumed that in the forthcoming conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the proletariat would win. Given his emphasis on the necessity of a 'will' to act and the need for 'association', it would seem that Marx based his optimism on the numerical strength and perceived determination of the emerging proletarian movement. Besides these remarks, and Marx's comments on the different forms the communist revolution could take, there is very little analysis of the politics of revolution. 7

Marx also assumed that the consequences of a revolutionary victory would open the way for the continuing movement towards a truly human society. However, he had very little to say about post-capitalist politics. This is a glaring weakness, given his attacks on 'crude communism', which could take a 'despotic' form, and given his belief that 'communism is the necessary form and dynamic principle of the immediate future, but communism as such is not the goal of human development, the form of human society'. (III,306) Marx needed to explain how the process of human liberation would be an ongoing one, even after the revolution.

7. Oscar Berland has argued in an interesting article that until 1848 Marx assumed the inevitability of revolution. After 1850, however, 'on pain of admitting that one's commitment had become outmoded, revolution had to be carefully documented'. In this sense Marx's retirement to the British Museum was an act of rebellion'; 'Radical Chains', 42.
Marx was very reluctant to talk about the future, his reading of Hegel teaching him to be sceptical of the 'utopian' socialists. Thus no account was given of the nature of the social forces and the social process that would exist in post-capitalist society. This leaves Marx's belief that the truly human society would emerge only after intervening periods of progress somewhat up in the air. A gap remained between his account of the 'immediate future' and his belief in the inevitability of the coming into being of the truly human society.

This gap was filled by Marx's assumption that German philosophy apprehended the essence of man, and therefore the essence of history. He believed that the 'key' to reality lay 'in essences that ultimately flowed from a single essence or principle'. This 'single essence' was thought by Marx to be the 'species-essence' of man. This moral ideal was not perceived as an external norm, but as an end developing within the historical process itself.

Marx's failure to deal adequately with the politics of revolution and the politics of post-capitalist society is equalled by his failure to deal adequately with the question of democracy. His discussion of this issue was far from consistent. In the *Holy Family*, he argued that the 'democratic representative state' was 'the perfected modern state', resting as it did on the abolition of the property qualification for voting. (IV,144) In other contexts, however, he spoke of the revolutionary implications of electoral reform. In these contexts he spoke of universal suffrage as leading to the end of the State and bourgeois society. It would seem that he had in mind two

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types of democracy - one which accepted and worked within bourgeois society (and as such was a form of State) and one which necessarily implied an end both to the State and bourgeois society.

Present within this tension was another, more fundamental problem in Marx's account. Marx argued that merely political changes could not transform people from members of classes into citizens of the community at large. People were what they had become in and through the social relationships in which they found themselves. In the modern world this made them either members of the bourgeois or the proletarian class, between which there was no room for compromise. Only through a revolutionary transformation of bourgeois society could Marx see a true community emerging.

However, Marx did acknowledge that in a democracy a community could emerge, even though it was illusory. In such a situation the individual would lead two lives - one as a citizen and one as a member of bourgeois society. Thus compromise and conciliation between the major classes, a measure of social reform, and the search for the 'national interest', could appear to make such a society an alternative to communism. Marx denied the possibility of such a development, arguing that it accepted a divorce between man's individual and communal life. It assumed that reform was possible within bourgeois society, and it did not deal with alienated labour. Marx, the economic reductionist and essentialist, could not accept the reformist argument, which accepted a divorce between man's essence and existence, and looked for ways to cover up the consequences of the divorce.
In the Europe of the early nineteenth century, bourgeois property relations, modern industrial society, and the proletarian movement were still in the process of formation. In 1842 Marx recognized this process, arguing for the universalization of political and human rights. On the basis of these reforms the foundations of a free and progressive community would be laid. In 1843 and 1844 this was precisely the view he rejected. Firstly, Marx was so impressed by the rate of social and economic change that he saw a new society on the horizon of bourgeois society. Secondly, his commitment to human freedom, backed up by his intense concern for human dignity, would not allow him to accept any political and social theory premised on mediation and imperfection.

3. The Death of God and the Birth of Man

Marx's first theory contained a clear conception of human nature and the conditions for its realization, a particular understanding of the historical process and its culmination, and a commitment to the proletarian class as a historical agent.

For Marx the coming into being - and knowing - of the truly human society would signal the death of God. The concept of an alien being, above and in control of nature and of men, would have no meaning: 'Socialism is man's positive self-consciousness, no longer mediated through the abolition of religion, just as real life is man's positive reality, no longer mediated through the abolition of private property, through communism'. (III,306) The freedom of the individual to develop his powers and capacities, and the freedom of the species
as a whole to regulate and control nature, would ensure the withering away of religion and mysticism.

Marx illustrated his argument by reference to the questions of death and creation:

In his consciousness of species man confirms his real social life and simply repeats his real existence in thought, just as conversely the being of a species confirms itself in species consciousness and exists for itself in its generality as a thinking being. (III,299)

Men were natural beings and as such had to die. Death, at one level, contradicted the unity between man's thinking and man's being. Marx responded to this problem by pointing to the fact that death only came to a 'particular species-being, not to the species as a whole'. (III,299) Thus, any existential dilemmas associated with death, which may lead individuals to believe in God, were resolved by the continuation of the species.

Similarly, Marx wrote that 'the Creation' was 'an idea very difficult to dislodge from popular consciousness. The fact that nature and man exist on their own account is incomprehensible to it, because it contradicts everything tangible in practical life'. (III,304) To refute the creation myth Marx referred, firstly, to the science of geognosy; 'the science which presents the formation of the earth, the development of the earth, as a process, as a self-generation'. (III,304-305) This science was seen as a 'mighty blow' to the idea of creation.

9. 'This expression apparently refers to the theory of the English geologist Sir Charles Lyell who, in his three-volume work The Principles of Geology (1830-33), proved the evolution of the earth's crust, and refuted the popular theory of cataclysms', Note 86, Collected Works, III, 603.
Secondly, Marx argued that the very question was 'the product of abstraction':

When you ask about the creation of nature and man, you are abstracting, in so doing, from man and nature. You postulate them as non-existent, and yet you want me to prove them to you as existing. Now I say to you: 'Give up your abstraction and you will also give up your question'. (III,305)

Marx was not at all concerned with postulating the 'nothingness of nature'; he was concerned with tracing 'its genesis'. (III,305)

In the Introduction Marx wrote that religion was 'the fantastic realisation of the human essence because the human essence has no true reality'. (III,175) Men either gave to God what were in fact their own powers and capacities, or described as existing in heaven what was in fact a real historical possibility. Thus, for Marx the critique of religion, in theory and in practice, involved the realisation of mankind's freedom within the universe. Only when man was the master of himself and of nature would the historical process come to an end:

The criticism of religion disillusioned man to make him think and act and shape his reality like a man who has been disillusioned and has come to reason, so that he will revolve round himself and therefore round his true sun. Religion is only the illusory sun which revolves round man as long as he does not revolve round himself. (III,176)

For the young Marx atheism was crucial because it excluded everything which permitted man to evade reality or be resigned. It made the revolution an event of secular history, and it ruled out a priori everything beyond man which would help or hinder the course of history.¹

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10. See Masterson, Atheism and Alienation, p.86, for an assessment of Marx's refutation of the creation myth.

11. See Nicholas Lobkowicz, 'Marx's Attitude Toward Religion', in Marx and the Western World, p.334.
4. **Concluding Remarks**

Contained within the first Marxism, then, is a tension between each of the major elements. Marx showed a clear recognition of the context within which he was working – of the real forces involved in the historical process, of the short run and the long run possibilities contained within the present, and of how he could slot into the logic of history as an effective political activist by pursuing realizable and self-transcending demands (such as universal suffrage).

Underneath these concerns, and developed more fully, was Marx's ideal of human liberation framed in terms of a theory of human nature. This ideal was used to criticise existing reality and to explain the direction in which the proletarian movement would take history. It was an ideal conceived in fundamental terms, it being believed that the self-realization of man would imply the death of God and all forms of mysticism. Thus it was this ideal which gave meaning to the seemingly unrelated events on the stage of history.

Thus the tensions of the first Marxism, implicit in any radical political and social theory aiming at a secular consummation of an ideal conceived in reductionist and essential terms: between the perceived interests of the proletariat and their 'true' interests and between the short run achievements of the movement and its long run aims. On leaving Paris early in 1845 Marx was committed both to an *ideal* and a *class*. It is not strange, then, that he should have
felt the necessity to come to terms with Max Stirner who, in *The Ego and Its Own*, had criticised all forms of revolutionary ideal-ism. 12

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