

(Part IV of New Book—Subjectivity of Self-Liberation)

"The Algebra of Revolution" or the Dialectic of Thought and Action" is so full of history and philosophy, it is a need the masses themselves feel most acutely. It is they who demand that there is a movement from practice, to theory as well as from theory to practice. At the crossroads they found that without the unity of these movements a process of suction emanating from the two nuclear world powers would pull them away from their very reason for being, as they have shown in the Congo. To use an expression of Hegel's, who had the much easier job of unifying theory and practice in the restricted realm of thought, "each of these by itself is one-sided and contains the Idea itself only as the sought Beyond and unattained goal." (Sc. of L., II, p. 466)

The African Revolutions have opened a new page in the dialectic of thought as well as in world history. A re-examination of the relationship between theory and practice is imperative. The forward movement of humanity is far from being a need for intellectual only, it is a need the masses themselves feel most acutely. It is they who demand that there is a movement from practice, to theory as well as from theory to practice. At the crossroads they found that without the unity of these movements a process of suction emanating from the two nuclear world powers would pull them away from their very reason for being, as they have shown in the Congo. To use an expression of Hegel's, who had the much easier job of unifying theory and practice in the restricted realm of thought, "each of these by itself is one-sided and contains the Idea itself only as the sought Beyond and unattained goal." (Sc. of L., II, p. 466)

The decade of the 1950's has been marked by 3 kinds of revolution: I. The African Revolution seeking freedom from Western imperialism and symbolic of the revolutions in all underdeveloped economies, stretching from Africa to Latin America, and confronted with the alternative of "the China Road" in Asia, or the "Russian Rd." in the Middle East and Cuba. Because all of these are inseparable from the color question, the Negro and the U.S., becomes the "Hic Rhodus, hic salta,"

II. The E. Ger. and Hungarian Revolutions seeking freedom from Russian totalitarianism and symbolic of not only East Europe, but of the West as well. As witness the revolt of the forced labor camps at Vorkuta. The slogan of "Bread and Freedom" epitomized the inseparability of economics, politics and philosophy with its direct link to the humanism of Marxism, even as the Russian counter-revolution travelled with both tactics and the ideology which claimed it was fighting as alleged "revisionism." That this ground was accepted by the intellectuals of the West should have known that the humanism was the true origin of Marxism, which the Communists were choosing to pervert to suit their possession of power, discloses a greater theoretic void than any other brainwashing.

III. The 2nd Industrial Revolution in the technologically-advanced world of the U.S., Russia and Western Europe, symbolic of the worldness of the epoch following World War II. It is true that automation is "only" the logical conclusion of the 1st Industrial Rev. that birth to our machine age at the end of the 18th century. But once we stop for a moment to consider and contrast all the revolutions produced in life and in thought in the nearly two centuries since that revolution, we will see at once that there is something so totally different in the present technological revolution that they can by no means be returned as "only the logical conclusion" of the 1st Industrial Rev. Thus, that industrial revolution which produced both the American and French revolutions of the 18th century revolutionized also English politics, economy and German idealistic philosophy. On the foundation of classical pol. eco. & classical Ger. philosophy, but with an entirely new "subject"—the proletariat—Marxism arose simultaneously with the 1848 Revolutions. From that point on, we have no firm division between a demand of the workers' movement and Marxist thought. Thus the struggle for the shorter working day is recognized by Marx as a philosophy greater, because more concrete—"the 1st necessity of freedom" than either the Declaration of Independence or the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

With the development of capitalism from competition to monopoly to state-control, we had no less than two World Wars, the first resulting in the Russian Revolution, and the second in the colonial revolutions of today. By 1950, when Automation was being the most technologically backward countries in Africa,

not only take the center of the stage away from the Asian and Middle Eastern Revolutions, but match in profundity the attitudes, both of the American workers to Automation and the Hungarian workers to labor under Communist totalitarianism. That is to say, they raised the question of the alienation of labor under capitalistic conditions of production in which Marx 1st raised it in purely philosophic terms. Those who did not hear the voice of the American worker asking "What kind of labor should man perform?"; those who were willing to agree with the Russian ideologists that the Hungarian revolutionaries unfolding the banner of Marxist-Humanism were "revisionists" are the very ones who are dismissing the slogans emanating from the African revolutions as "backward."

It may be true that when you take the official slogan issued by the leaders, whether it be Nkrumah's "seek ye first the political kingdom, or Kaunda's "one man, one vote", or the brief but decisive "No" of little Guinea to remaining part of the mighty (but not almighty) French Empire, none measure up to the challenge of the mass movements they lead, but neither are they as vacuous as are the heads of the Western intellectuals.

Quite the contrary. Not only have they shaken empires and re-shaped the map of the world in a single decade, but they are the result of the previous decades of thinking about African freedom, which were of a more advanced nature than the national freedoms. For example, in the African quiet 1930's Azikiwe was writing of continent-wide, or at least West African, freedom, rather than freedom of single countries. In the not-so-quiet 1940's the methods of class struggle, whether large Nigeria or little Guinea, were like those of the advanced West European proletariat, that of general strikes and mass political demonstrations. By the 1950's as freedom was being won, we had the theoretical unfolding of Marxist-Humanism, though hampered in by apologetics, of Leopold Senghor, and the concept of Universalism for both technological and ideological know-how of Sekou Toure. These are abstract when compared to the subjectivity of self-liberation of the masses, they are nevertheless so great a leap forward that we can gain perspective only by both moving forward to listen to the voice of the rank and file and backward to the dialectic method which Hegel had elicited from the French Revolution as the "Absolute Method" of thought and that Alexander Herzen rightly called "the algebra of revolution."

Lack of confidence in those masses is the common root of all the objections to "abstruse, idealistic, mystical Hegelianism" from the Communists to the academic Marxists. I have shown elsewhere that the Communist attack on Hegelianism is in fact an attack on the Humanism of Marxism. The whole struggle with "revisionism" ever since near-Polish revolution and the actual Hungarian Revolution is proof of this theoretically even as the actual capitalist production relations within Russia is proof of it factually. On the other hand, the academic Marxists would rather argue with other intellectuals on "technicity" vs. "ontology" and thus appear to be against both positivism and idealism while retaining the theoretic void resulting from the combination of not listening to the new in the workers and consigning Hegel's Absolute Idea to the "pre-technological" stage of capitalism which allegedly compelled Hegel back to the old Aristotelian ontological tradition. Hegel's Absolutes have as little to do with Platonian philosopher-kings as the slavery which characterized Greek society has to do with the freedom established in the French Revolution. Precisely because Hegel's point of departure had this actual ground of revolution, his Absolutes enable a serious Marxist to build on the inherent logic of the present-day revolutions, their subjectivity and the "philosophers" subsumption so that the whole of humanity can realize philosophy, that is to say, the recognition that they have a future to build.

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(A) The one element of truth that all these detractors of Hegel express is the need to break with bourgeois idealism, including that of Hegel. For, without Marx's discovery of the materialist foundations of history, Hegelian dialectic remained imprisoned in an idealism that was abstract enough to serve as apology for the Prussian state. Had Marx not broken with the historic form of Hegel's Absolute as expressed in the Prussian state, we wouldn't have discovered the algebraic formula of revolution inherent in it. But the Prussian state's prison house for Hegelian dialectics was no worse than S.D.'s and vulgar communism's (without without its fellow-travelers) perversions of the Marxian dialectic.

9. Where the mature Marx returned to Hegel, declaring in CAPITAL that Hegelian contradiction was "the source of all dialectic" (CAPITAL, III, p.654), the present-day Marxists throw out HEGELAND, with IT, Marxian dialectics. Because Marx recreated the dialectic on the ground of the class struggles of his day, he was enabled to split the Absolute into 2, thereby gaining a new dimension in his analysis of capitalism: 1) the "absolute general law" of capitalistic development and collapse—the unemployed army—and 2) "The new passions and forces"—the elements of the new society imbedded in the old—that would achieve the new "negation of the negation", not through mere abolition of the old, nor through mere establishment of "true" private property of the artisan, but rather to the construction of a new society whose reason for being was the "all-round individual", whose freedom was "the basis for the freedom of all."

(B) But that only element of truth that all these detractors of Hegel (incl. those who expounded what Marx called "abstract materialism"\*) expressed, the need to break with bourgeois idealism—was transformed into the "whole" that quite shut out the voice of those "new forces and new passions", as Lenin found out when the 2nd Int collapsed and he had to return to Hegelian dialectics. People who have admitted the objective base for the collapse of the 2nd Int. failed to follow Lenin in his freeing the subjective idealism of Marxism from its narrow confines of "higher wages" and towards a self-movement in the dialectic of thought that would meet the objective of the dialectic of action.

\*To be distinguished from "vulgar materialism" which Marx had used to separate himself from the communists of his day. The "abstract materialism" he attacks in CAPITAL (Vol. I, p. 406) is the bourgeois materialism plus natural science that leave out "history" and its process" which resolve contradictions, that is to say, the actual class struggle.

Henceforward, Lenin's re-embrace of the dialectic did not stop short of the Absolute Idea itself. Thus, of the last chapter of Hegel's Science of Logic, Lenin wrote the following: "It is remarkable; in the whole ch. on the "Abs. Idea" there is almost not a single word on God (scarcely a "godly" "notion" slips out even accidentally) and, moreover, this NB—this chapter almost does not contain idealism specifically, but its main object is the d i a l e c t i c method. The sum and summation, the last word and gist of the Logic of Hegel is the dialectic method—that is extremely remarkable. And another thing: in the most idealistic work of Hegel, there is most materialism. "Contradictory" but a fact!"

But Central Lenin It is true, nevertheless, and there would be something amiss if it were otherwise, that Marx and Lenin solved the problem of their ages not ours. Lenin did indicate politically what should be the point of departure for our age as well—since he was beginning to see the problem of underdeveloped countries. I'm referring to the three new elements in the thesis of the 2nd Congress of the C.I. These are:

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1) the world role and relationship/e victorious prol. revolution to the technologically underdeveloped countries\*; 2) the role of national liberation movements in the context of the imperialist world; and 3) the revolutionary role of the peasantry within the country fighting for liberation.

\*In the advanced role that a 'backward' group plays as impulse to world revolution could also illuminate what I will call "the historical law of compensation". Unfortunately IT failed to develop that aspect of his theory & proceed, instead, to develop features that were proven wrong over and over again--the backwardness of the peasantry.

With that and the deeper revolutions of our own era, we must now turn to that most materialistic-idealistic chapter in Hegel's Science of Logic. The Absolute Idea. Up until we reach the 2nd negation, the A.I. sounds almost familiar, or at least does not create insurmountable differences to academic Marxist. Although the "translation" from thought to act may sound a bit more brash than they would care to indulge in, nevertheless [Self-determination of the Idea] and self-determination of nations are definitely not poles apart, and the corollary to "self-determination in which alone the Idea is, is to hear it self speak" would therefore naturally be that the people as well as the Idea must also be heard and out of it a new dialectic would be created. Just as Marx saw that only with the transcendence of 1st negation--abolition of capitalism--would there arise "positive Humanism," so it is with "the transcendence of the opposite between Notion and Reality." Yet, if they based themselves on the negative force, the proletariat, that is precisely where they should begin "to translate" easily Hegel's A.I. and that means self-liberation. Thus "the word negative (SC of Logic, p.478, II)... personal and free."

That precisely is the proof, the only proof, that there has been a true transcendence of class society. Only where "the individual is the social entity", to borrow from Marx again, is society not counterposed to the individual as opposite. What, therefore, was only potential ("in itself") or implicit becomes actual ("for itself") or explicit. All division between inner and outer has come to an end and "Each new stage of exteriorization" (that is, of further determination) is also "interiorization" and greater extension is also higher intensity" (p.483)

[Since all proof is in the subject (man), absorbing all objectivity (a world outside of him, science) the move towards a new society cannot be a mere transition as if it were only "a perfected becoming." The key is, instead, "absolute liberation ...." (p.485) The greatest force for the future is this total release. Total release is not only release from exploitation, but the release of all his thoughts, freeing it from fetishism, and making man for the first time truly free.

Man, having incorporated all of science in his own knowledge, the latter can no longer exist as mere objectivity, but "arises to perfect its self-liberation in the "new sphere", that is to say, the new society. All the exaltation about freedom, self-liberation, release, absolute liberty is due to the leap from necessity into the realm of freedom, or, as Marx put it, "positive Humanism starting from itself."

Any other basis, any other basis, whether that be the state, as "collective property" or leaders as sort of "mental repositories", that would "represent" humanity instead of be it, would once again signify outside tyranny.

"If that's all you mean, why can't you say it without leaning on the mystical,

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abstract, idealistic, ontological, confining language of Hegel?" Even if no superciliousness were involved in the phrase "if that's all"...the question is a trap that would soon unfold its many and varied hues and open endless illusory doors leading nowhere.

For to rob thought of its historic link is worse than not finding the "missing link" in man since, at least, is obviously here alive and kicking, and needs no other proof of his existence ~~than~~ the continuity in thought needs inter-communication between the ages for its proof. ~~And~~ inter-communication between the ages is not quite as tangible as tapping out a Morse Code, and when you drop that historic link, then truly, as Hegel long ago saw, we should be in for nothing but "error, and gloom, opinion, striving, caprice and transitoriness" (p.466) Or, as Marx put it .

Where there is continuity, the Logic of Thought and the Logic of Objective and Subjective Development are not as far apart as would appear on the surface. At the moment of the opening of the Machine Age and the self-activity of the French masses, as well as in the Hegelian dialectic, we confront the self-development or negativity (both of alienated consciousness and oppressed man) that has as proof 200 yrs. of mass struggle, on the one hand, and 1,000 closely worked out pages of categories, on the other. Whether you consider the details of 197 categories and sub-categories, or taken them only in their quintessential movement of Being, Essence and Notion,

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