Ninety Years of the Communist Manifesto

Preface to the first edition of the Manifesto in the Afrikaans language.

by LEON TROTSKY

It is hard to believe that the centennial of the Manifesto of the Communist Party is only ten years away! This pamphlet dazzling greater genius than any other in world literature, astounds us even today by its freshness. Its most important sections appear to have been written yesterday. Assuredly, the young authors (Marx was 29, Engels 27) were able to look further into the future than anyone before them, and perhaps than anyone since then.

Already in their joint preface to the edition of 1872, Marx and Engels declared that despite the fact that certain secondary passages in the Manifesto were antiquated, they felt that they no longer had any right to alter the original text inasmuch as the Manifesto had already become a historical document, during the intervening period of twenty-five years. Sixty-five additional years have elapsed since that time. Isolated passages in the Manifesto have receded still further into the past. We shall try to establish succinctly in this Preface both those ideas in the Manifesto which retain their full force today and those which require important alteration or amplification.

1. The materialist conception of history, discovered by Marx only a short while before and applied with consummate skill in the Manifesto, has completely withstood the test of events and the blows of hostile criticism. It constitutes today one of the most precious instruments of human thought. All other interpretations of the historical process have lost all scientific meaning. We can state with certainty that it is impossible in our time not only to be a revolutionary militant but even a literate observer in politics without assimilating the materialist interpretation of history.

2. The first chapter of the Manifesto opens with the following words: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." This postulate, the most important conclusion drawn from the materialist interpretation of history, immediately became an issue in the class struggle. Especially venomous attacks were directed by reactionary hypocrites, liberal doctrinaires and idealistic democrats against the theory which replaced "common welfare", "national unity" and "eternal moral truths" as the driving force by the struggle of material interests. They were later joined by recruits from the ranks of the labor movement itself, by the so-called revisionists, i.e. the proponents of revising ("revising") Marxism in the spirit of class collaboration and class conciliation. Finally, in our own time, the same path has been followed in practice by the contemptible epigones of the Communist International (the "Stalinists"): the policy of the so-called "People's Front" flows wholly from the denial of the laws of the class struggle. Meanwhile, it is precisely the epoch of imperialism, bringing all social contradictions to the point of highest tension, which gives to the Communist Manifesto its supreme theoretical triumph.

3. The anatomy of capitalism, as a specific stage in the economic development of society, was given by Marx in its finished form in Capital (1867). But already in the Communist Manifesto the main lines of the future analysis are firmly sketched: the payment for labor power as

equivalent to the cost of its reproduction; the appropriation of surplus value by the capitalists; competition as the basic law of social relations; the ruination of intermediate classes, i.e. the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry; the concentration of wealth in the hands of an ever diminishing number of property owners at the one pole, and the ~~numerical~~ growth of the proletariat, at the other; the preparation of the material and political pre-conditions for the socialist regime.

4. The proposition in the Manifesto concerning the tendency of capitalism to lower the living standards of the workers, and even to transform them in o paupers has been subjected to a heavy barrage. Parsons, professors, ministers, journalists, social democratic theoreticians, and trade union leaders came to the front against the so-called "theory of impoverishment". They invariably discovered signs of growing prosperity among the toilers, palming off the labor aristocracy as the proletariat, or taking a fleeting tendency as permanent. Meanwhile, even the development of the rightest capitalism in the world, namely, U.S. capitalism, has transformed millions of workers into paupers who are maintained at the expense of the federal, municipal or private charity.

5. As against the Manifesto, which depicted commercial and industrial crises as a series of ever more extensive catastrophes, the revisionists vowed that the national and international development of trusts would assure control over the market, and lead gradually to the abolition of crises. The close of the last century and the beginning of the present one were in reality marked by a development of capitalism so tempestuous as to make crises seem only "accidental" stoppages. But this epoch has gone beyond return. In the last analysis, truth proved to be on Marx's side in this question as well.

6. "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." This succinct formula, which the leaders of the social democracy looked upon as a journalistic paradox, contains in fact the only scientific theory of the state. The democracy fashioned by the bourgeoisie is not, as both Bernstein and Kautsky thought, an empty sack which one can undisturbedly fill with any kind of class content. Bourgeois democracy can serve only the bourgeoisie. A government of the "People's Front", whether headed by Blum or Chautemps, Caballero or Negrin, is only "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." Whenever this "committee" manages affairs poorly, the bourgeoisie dismisses it with a boot.

7. "Every class struggle is a political struggle." "The organization of the proletariat as a class (is) consequently its organization into a political party." Trade-unionists, on the one hand, and anarcho-syndicalists on the other, have long shied away--and even now try to shy away--from the understanding of these historical laws. "Pure" trade-unionism has now been dealt a crushing blow in its chief refuge: the United States. Anarcho-syndicalism has suffered an irreparable defeat in its last stronghold--Spain. Here too the Manifesto proved correct.

8. The proletariat cannot conquer power within the legal framework established by the bourgeoisie. "Communists openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." Reformism sought to explain this postulate of the Manifesto on the grounds of the immaturity of the movement at that

time, and the inadequate development of democracy. The fate of Italian, German, and a great number of other "democracies" proves that "immaturity" is the distinguishing trait of the ideas of the reformists themselves.

9. For the socialist transformation of society, the working class must concentrate in its hands such power as can smash each and every political obstacle barring the road to the new system. "The proletariat organized as the ruling class" --this is the dictatorship. At the same time it is the only true proletarian democracy. Its scope and depth depend upon concrete historical conditions. The greater the number of states that take the path of the socialist revolution, the freer and more flexible forms will the dictatorship assume, the broader and more deep-going will be workers' democracy.

10. The international development of capitalism has predetermined the international character of the proletarian revolution. "United action, of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." The subsequent development of capitalism has so closely knit all sections of our planet, both "civilized" and "uncivilized", that the problem of the socialist revolution has completely and decisively assumed a world character. The Soviet bureaucracy attempted to liquidate the Manifesto with respect to this fundamental question. The Bonapartist degeneration of the Soviet state is an overwhelming illustration of the falseness of the theory of socialism in one country.

11. "When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character." In other words: the state withers away. Society remains, freed from the straitjacket. This is nothing else but socialism. The converse theorem: the monstrous growth of state coercion in the U.S.S.R. is eloquent testimony that society is moving away from socialism.

12. "The workingmen have no fatherland." These words of the Manifesto have more than once been evaluated by philistines as an agitational quip. As a matter of fact they provided the proletariat with the sole conceivable directive in the question of the capitalist "fatherland". The violation of this directive by the Second International brought about not only four years of devastation in Europe, but the present stagnation of world culture. In view of the impending new war, for which the betrayal of the Third International has paved the way, the Manifesto remains even now the most reliable counsellor on the question of the capitalist "fatherland".

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Thus, we see that the joint and rather brief production of two young authors still continues to give irreplaceable directives upon the most important and burning questions of the struggle for emancipation. What other book could even distantly be compared in this respect with the Communist Manifesto? But this does not imply that, after ninety years of unprecedented development of productive forces and vast social struggles, the Manifesto needs neither corrections nor additions. Revolutionary thought has nothing in common with idol-worship. Programs and prognoses are tested and corrected in the light of experience, which is the supreme criterion of human reason. The Manifesto, too, requires corrections and additions. However, as is evidenced by historical experience itself, these corrections and additions can be successfully

made only by proceeding in accord with the method lodged in the foundation of the Manifesto itself. We shall try to indicate this in several most important instances.

1. Marx thought that social system departs from the arena of history before exhausting its creative potentialities. The Manifesto excoriates capitalism for retarding the development of the productive forces. During that period, however, as well as in the following decades, this retardation was only relative in nature. Had it been possible in the second half of the XIXth century, to organize economy on socialist beginnings, its tempos of growth would have been immeasurably greater. But this theoretically irrefutable postulate does not, however, invalidate the fact that the productive forces kept expanding on a world scale right up to the world war. Only in the last twenty years, despite the most modern conquests of science and technology, has the epoch begun of out-and-out stagnation and even decline of world economy. Mankind is beginning to expend its accumulated capital, while the next war threatens to destroy the very foundation of civilization for many years to come. The authors of the Manifesto thought that capitalism would be scrapped long prior to the time when from a relatively reactionary regime it would turn into an absolutely reactionary regime. This transformation took final shape only before the eyes of the present generation, and changed our epoch into the epoch of wars, revolutions, and fascism.

2. The error of Marx and Engels in regard to the historical dates flowed, on the one hand, from an under-estimation of future possibilities latent in capitalism, and, on the other, an over-estimation of the revolutionary maturity of the proletariat. The revolution of 1848 did not turn into a socialist revolution as the Manifesto had calculated, but opened up to Germany the possibility of a vast future capitalist ascension. The Paris Commune proved that the proletariat, without having a tempered revolutionary party at its head, cannot wrest power from the bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, the prolonged period of capitalist prosperity that ensued brought about not the education of the revolutionary vanguard, but rather the bourgeois degeneration of the labor aristocracy, which became in turn the chief brake on the proletarian revolution. In the nature of things, the authors of the Manifesto could not possibly have foreseen this "dialectic".

3. For the Manifesto, capitalism was --the kingdom of free competition. All referring to the growing concentration of capital, the Manifesto did not draw the necessary conclusion in regard to monopoly which has become the dominant capitalist form in our epoch, and the most important precondition for socialist economy. Only afterwards, in Capital did Marx establish the tendency toward the transformation of free competition into monopoly. It was Lenin who gave a scientific characterization of monopoly capitalism in his Imperialism.

4. Basing themselves primarily on the example of "industrial revolution" in England, the authors of the Manifesto pictured far too unilaterally the process of liquidation of the intermediate classes, as a wholesale proletarianization of crafts, petty trade and the peasantry In point of fact, the elemental forces of competition have far from completed this simultaneously progressive and barbarous work. Capitalism has ruined the petty bourgeoisie at a much faster rate than it has proletarianized it. Furthermore, the bourgeois state has long directed its conscious policy toward the artificial maintenance of petty bourgeois strata. At the opposite pole, the growth of technology and the rationalization of large scale industry engenders chronic unemployment and

obstructs the proletarianization of the petty bourgeoisie. Concurrently, the development of capitalism has accelerated in the extreme the growth of legions of technicians, administrators, commercial employes, in short, the so-called "new middle class". In consequence, the intermediate classes, to whose disappearance the Manifesto so categorically refers, comprise even in a country as highly industrialized as Germany, about one-half of the population. However, the artificial preservation of antiquated petty bourgeois strata revise mitigates the social contradictions, but, on the contrary, invests them with an especial malignancy, and together with the permanent army of the unemployed constitutes the most malevolent expression of the decay of capitalism.

b. Calculated for a revolutionary epoch the Manifesto contains (end of Chapter II) ten demands, corresponding to the period of direct transition from capitalism to socialism. In their preface of 1872, Marx and Engels declared these demands to be in part antiquated, and, in any case, only of secondary importance. The reformists seized upon this evaluation to interpret it in the sense that transitional revolutionary demands had forever ceded their place to the social-democratic "minimum program", which, as is well known, does not transcend the limits of bourgeois democracy. As a matter of fact, the authors of the Manifesto indicated quite precisely the main correction of their transitional program, namely, "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." In other words, the correction was directed against the fetishism of bourgeois democracy. Marx later counterposed to the capitalist state, the state of the type of the Commune. This "type" subsequently assumed the much more graphic shape of Soviets. There cannot be a revolutionary program today without Soviets and without workers' control. As for the rest, the ten demands of the Manifesto, which appeared "archaic" in an epoch of peaceful parliamentary activity, have today regained completely their true significance. The social democratic "minimum program", on the other hand, has become hopelessly antiquated.

6. Basing its expectation that "the German bourgeois revolution... will be but a prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution, the Manifesto cites the much more advanced conditions of European civilization as compared with that existed in England in the 17th century and in France in the 18th Century, and the far greater development of the proletariat. The error in this prognosis was not only in the date. The Revolution of 1848 revealed within a few months that precisely under more advanced conditions, none of the bourgeois classes is capable of bringing the revolution to its termination: the big and middle bourgeoisie is far too closely linked with the landowners, and fettered by the fear of the masses; the petty bourgeoisie is far too divided, and in its leading tops far too dependent on the big bourgeoisie. As evidenced by the entire subsequent course of development in Europe and Asia, the bourgeois revolution, taken by itself, can no more in general be consummated. A complete purge of feudal rubbish from society is conceivable only on the condition that the proletariat, freed from the influence of bourgeois parties, can take its stand at the head of the peasantry and establish its revolutionary dictatorship. By this token, the bourgeois revolution becomes interlaced with the first stage of the socialist revolution, to subsequently dissolve in the latter. The national revolution therewith becomes a link of the world revolution. The transformation of the economic foundation and of all social relations assumes a permanent (uninterrupted) character.

For revolutionary parties in backward countries of Asia, Latin American and Africa, a clear understanding of the organic connection between the democratic revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat --and thereby, the international socialist revolution--is a life-and-death question.

7. hile depicting how capitalism draws into its vortex backward and barbarous countries, the Manifesto contains no reference to the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial countries for independence. To the extent that Marx and Engels considered the social revolution "in the leading civilized countries at least", to be a matter of the next few years, the colonial question was resolved automatically for them, not in consequence of an independent movement of oppressed nationalities but in consequence of the victory of the proletariat in the metropolitan centers of capitalism. The questions of revolutionary strategy in colonial and semi-colonial countries are therefore not touched upon at all by the Manifesto. Yet these questions demand an independent solution. For example, it is quite self-evident that while the "national fatherland" has become the most baneful historical brake in advanced capitalist countries, it still remains a relatively progressive factor in backward countries compelled to struggle for an independent existence.

"The Communists," declares the Manifesto, "everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things." The movement of the colored races against their imperialist oppressors is one of the most important and powerful movements against the existing order and therefore calls for the complete, unconditional and unlimited support on the part of the proletariat of the white race. The credit for developing revolutionary strategy for oppressed nationalities belongs primarily to Lenin.

8. The most antiquated section of the Manifesto--not with respect to method but material--is the criticism of "socialist" literature for the first part of the 19th century (Chapter III) and the definition of the position of the Communists in relation to various opposition parties (Chapter IV). The movements and parties listed in the Manifesto were so drastically swept away either by the revolution of 1848 or the ensuing counter-revolution that one must look up even their names in a historical dictionary. However, in this section, too, the Manifesto is perhaps closer to us now than it was to the previous generation. In the epoch of the flowering of the Second International when Marxism seemed to exert an undivided sway, the ideas of pre-Marxian socialism could have been considered as having receded decisively into the past. Things are otherwise today. The decomposition of the social democracy and the Comintern at every step engenders monstrous ideological relapses. Senile thought seems to have become infantile. In search of all-saving formulas the prophets in the epoch of decline discover anew doctrines long since buried by scientific socialism.

As touches the question of opposition parties, it is in this domain that the elapsed decades have introduced the most deep-going changes, not only in the sense that the old parties have long been brushed aside by new ones, but also in the sense that the very character of parties and their mutual relations have radically changed in the conditions of the imperialist epoch. The Manifesto must therefore be amplified with the most important documents of the first four Congresses of the Communist International, the essential literature of Bolshevism, and the decisions of the Conferences of the Fourth International.

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We have already remarked above that according to Marx no social order departs from the scene without first exhausting the potentialities latent in it. However, even an antiquated social order does not cede

its place xxx to a new order without resistance. A change in social regimes presupposes the harshest form of the class struggle, i.e. revolution. If the proletariat, for one reason or another, proves incapable of overthrowing with an audacious blow the outlived bourgeois order, then finance capital in the struggle to maintain its unstable rule can do nothing but turn the petty bourgeoisie ruined and demoralized by it into the pogrom army of fascism. The bourgeois degeneration of the recent democracy and the fascist degeneration of the petty bourgeoisie are interlinked as cause and effect.

At the present time, the Third International far more wantonly than the Second performs in all countries the work of deceiving and demoralizing the toilers. By massacring the vanguard of the Spanish proletariat, the unbridled hirelings of Moscow not only pave the way for fascism but execute a goodly share of its labors. The protracted crisis of the international revolution which is turning more and more into a crisis of human culture, is reducible in its essentials to the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

As the heir to the great tradition, of which the Manifesto of the Communist Party forms the most precious link, the Fourth International is educating new cadres for the solution of old tasks. Theory is generalized reality. In an honest attitude to revolutionary theory is expressed the impassioned urge to reconstruct the social reality. That in the Southern part of the Dark Continent our co-thinkers were the first to translate the Manifesto into the Afrikaans language is another graphic illustration of the fact that Marxist thought lives today only under the banner of the Fourth International. To it belongs the future. When the centennial of the Communist Manifesto is celebrated, the Fourth International will have become the decisive revolutionary force on our planet.

October 30, 1937
Coyoacan, Mexico

2247

No. 48-7

December 15, 1937

Dear Comrade,

The translation of my article on the Manifesto contained some meaning-distorting errors. We corrected them here with the greatest attention in collaboration with Joe. The text was re-typed and sent November 17 to Comrade Shachtman as well as to all the other destinations in different countries. Now I see with stupefaction that the old non-corrected text is published with a scandalously erroneous foot-note. I know the possible apologies: "We are so busy," and so on. Dear Comrades, we are also busy. But we have enough respect for the New International and its readers in order to devote a working day of our common time solely for a good correcting of the translation. Not the lack of time is responsible for such things but the lack of a carefub editorializing. The staff must have somebody who is totally responsible for the good technical editorializing of the New International. In any case I must know with whom personally I must deal before I send any new articles to the New International.

Coyoudan, D.F.
LT:joe

L. Trotsky

P. S.

We note that the title of the article is correct in the body of the magazine. This must indicate that you received the corrected manuscript in time to make editorial corrections even if you had the old copy set up in type.

P.S.

We have crossed with a red check those corrections which we categorically insist must be published in the next issue of the New International.

Copies to:
Shachtman
Cannon
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D. I. MENDELYEEV AND MARXISM*

by Leon Trotsky

(A Necessary Explanation: This speech, as the date below indicates, was made in 1925 when its author still firmly hoped that Soviet democracy would overcome the tendencies towards bureaucratism, and create exceptionally favorable conditions for the development of scientific thought. By virtue of a series of historical causes this hope has until now not been justified. On the contrary, the Soviet state during the thirteen following years has fallen victim to complete bureaucratic ossification and has assumed a totalitarian character which is baneful to the development of science as well as of art. Through the cruel irony of history genuine Marxism has now become the most forbidden of all doctrines in the Soviet Union. In the field of social science shackled Soviet thought has not only failed to utter a new word but, on the contrary, has sunk to pathetic scholasticism. The totalitarian regime exerts a disastrous influence also upon the development of the natural sciences. Nevertheless the considerations developed inthis speech preserve their force also in the part which concerns the inter-relations between the social regime and scientific thought. But it is necessary to place them not in the time of the present Soviet state, a product of degeneration and disintegration, but in that socialist state which will arise out of the future victorious struggle of the International workingclass.--L.T., 4/18/33)

The Sequence of Cultural Inheritance

Your congress is taking place amidst the celebrations on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences. The relationship between your congress and the Academy is the firmer since Russian chemistry by no means occupies last place in the achievements which have brought fame to the Academy. Here it may perhaps be appropriate to ask oneself: what is

*In 1925 Trotsky, as chairman of the technico-scientific board of industry, was head of all the scientific institutions and in that capacity delivered the above speech to the Mendelyeev Congress on Pure and Applied Chemistry on September 17, 1925. This speech was later published as a pamphlet by the State Publishing House, Moscow, 1925. It reappeared in the Russian edition of Trotsky's WORKS, series VI, PROBLEMS OF CULTURE, vol. XXI, THE CULTURE OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD, section, SCIENCE AND REVOLUTION (State Publishing House, Moscow-Leningrad, 1927). It is here translated for the first time into English.

the past which in certain aspects deserves deep respect -- if we were to speak indiscriminately about inheritance. Not everything of the past possesses worth for the future. And the course of human culture is decided not by a simple accumulation. It has known periods of organic growth as well as periods of rigorous criticism, of sifting, and selection. And it is hard to say which of these periods is the more fruitful in the general development of culture. In any case, we live in an epoch of sifting and selection.

Roman jurisprudence from the time of Justinian(2) had established the law of inventorial inheritance. In distinction from pre-Justinianian jurisprudence which gave the inheritor the right to accept inheritance only under the condition that he likewise assume responsibility for all debts and obligations, inventorial inheritance gave the inheritor a certain right of choice. The revolutionary state representing a new class is that kind of an inventorial inheritor in relation to the accumulation of culture. We will state frankly that not all of the 15,000 volumes which have been published by the Academy during the 200 years of its existence will enter into the inventory of socialism! The scientific contribution of the past with which we now live and pride ourselves comprised two aspects of by no means equal worth. As a whole science was directed toward acquiring knowledge of reality, toward research into the laws of evolution, and the discovery of the properties and qualities of matter in order all the better to master it. But knowledge developed not in the closed circle of the laboratory and the lecture room; no, it was a function of human society and reflected the structure of the latter. Society demanded knowledge of nature for its needs. But at the same time society demanded an assertion that it was in the right; a justification of its institutions; in the first place, the institutions of class domination, as it had formerly demanded justification of serfdom, class privileges, monarchical prerogatives, national exceptionalism and so forth and so on. Socialist

(2)Byzantine emperor, 483-565 A.D.

the inner historical significance ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ of the drawn-out academic celebrations?(1) They have a significance which is not grasped merely by visits to museums, theatres, banquets. In what way can we estimate this significance? Not, merely because foreign scientists who were kind enough to come here as our guests had the opportunity to witness the fact that the revolution not only did not destroy scientific institutions but, on the contrary, even developed them. This evidence acquired by the foreign scientists has a significance of its own. But the significance of the academic celebrations is wider and deeper. I would pose it thus: the new state, the new society basing itself on the laws of the October Revolution, before the eyes of the whole world, triumphantly takes possession of the cultural inheritance of the past.

Having inadvertently spoken about inheritance, I must now make clear in what sense I used this word so that there may arise no misunderstandings on that score. It would be disrespectful to the future which is dearer to all of us than the past, and it would be disrespectful to

(1) The 200th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences was celebrated in Leningrad and Moscow in September 1925. Scientists from nearly all countries participated in the celebration and became acquainted with the museums and scientific institutions of Russia.

society with especial gratitude accepts the inheritance of the positive sciences, brushing aside, as is the right of inventorial choice, all that serves not toward acquirement of knowledge of nature but toward the justification of class inequality and every other kind of historical untruth.

Every new social order appropriates the cultural inheritance of the past not as a whole but in accordance to its own structure. Thus medieval society embodied in Christianity many elements of antique philosophy, subordinating them, however, to the needs of the feudal regime and transforming them into scholasticism, "the servant of theology". Thus bourgeois society inherited from the Middle Ages, among other things, Christianity, but subjected it either to the Reformation, that is to the rebellious in the form of Protestanism, or to the pacific in the form of the adaptation of Catholicism to the new regime. In any case, Christianity of the bourgeois epoch had to stand aside to the degree that it was necessary to clear the road for scientific research, at least, within those limits which were required for the development of the productive forces.

The relation of socialist society to scientific and general cultural inheritance is to an even less degree an attitude of indifferent, passive acceptance. It can be said: the greater the trust of socialism in the sciences devoted to direct study of nature, the greater is the critical distrust with which it approaches the sciences and pseudo-sciences closely linked to the structure of human society with its economic institutions, its state, its law, its ethics, etc. Of course, these two spheres are not separated from each other by an impenetrable wall. But at the same time it is indisputable that the inheritance embodied in the sciences which deal not with human society but with "matter",-in the natural sciences in the broad sense of the term and thus, of course, in chemistry,-is of incomparably greater weight.

The need to know nature is imposed upon man by his need to subordinate nature to himself. And my digression here from objective rela-

tionships determined by the properties of matter itself is corrected by practical experience. This alone seriously guarantees natural, science and, in particular, chemical research from intentional, unintentional and semi-intentional distortions, misinterpretations and falsifications. Social research first of all devoted its efforts toward justifying society historical forms in order to preserve it from the attacks of "destructive theories", etc. Herein lies the apologetic role of the official social sciences of bourgeois society and the reason why their achievements are of small value.

So long as science as a whole was a "servant of theology" it could produce valuable results only surreptitiously. This was the case in the Middle Ages. It was during the bourgeois regime, as already pointed out, that the natural sciences gained the possibility of wide development. But social science became the servant of capital. This to a large degree is also true of psychology which binds the social sciences to the natural ones, and of philosophy which systematizes the generalized conclusions of all sciences.

I have stated that official social science has produced little of value. This is revealed best of all in the incapacity of bourgeois social science to foresee tomorrow. We have seen this in relation to the imperialist World War and its results. We have seen it again in relation to the October Revolution. We now see it in the complete helplessness of official social science to evaluate the situation in Europe, the interrelation with America, the Soviet Union; its inability to draw some sort of conclusion regarding tomorrow. And precisely in this is the significance of science: to know in order to be able to foresee.

Natural science - and chemistry occupies one of the most important places in that field - indisputably constitutes the most valuable part of our inheritance. Your congress stands under the banner of Mendelyeev who was and remains the pride of Russian science.

To Know In Order that We May Foresee and Act

There is dissimilarity in the degree of foresight and accuracy achieved in the various sciences. But through foresight -- in some cases passive as in astronomy, in others active as in chemistry and chemical technology -- science checks itself and justifies its social purpose. An individual scientist may not at all concern himself with the practical results of his research work. The wider, the bolder, the freer from practical daily necessity his mind operates, the better. But science is not an individual scientist's function, it is a public function. The social evaluation of science, its historical evaluation is determined by its capacity to increase man's power, arming him with the strength to foresee and master nature. Science is knowledge that endows one with power. When Leverrier on the basis of "eccentricities" in the movement of Uranus concluded that there existed an unknown celestial body which "disturbed" the movement of Uranus; when Leverrier on the basis of his purely mathematical calculations asked the German astronomer, Galle, to find a body without passport in the sky at such and such an address; when Galle directed a telescope toward this place and found the planet called Neptune;--at that moment the celestial mechanics of Newton celebrated its great victory.

That was in the autumn of 1846. In 1848 revolution passed like a whirlwind through Europe, demonstrating its "disturbing" influence on the movement of peoples and states. And in the intervening period, between the discovery of Neptune and the revolution of 1848, two young scholars, Marx and Engels, wrote The Communist Manifesto, in which they not only predicted the inevitability of revolutionary events in the near future but also analyzed in advance their constituent forces, the logic of their movement,--up to the inevitable victory of the proletariat and the establishment of its dictatorship. It would not be at all without value to juxtapose this prognosis with the prophecies of the official

social science of the Hohenzollerns, the Romanovs, Louis Filippe, etc., etc. in 1848.

In 1869 Mendelyeev on the basis of studies and reflection upon atomic weight established his "Periodic Law of the Elements". To the atomic weight as the more stable criterion Mendelyeev linked a series of other properties and traits, placed the elements in a definite order and then through this order revealed the existence of a certain disorder, namely, the absence of certain elements. These unknown elements or chemical units, as Mendeleev once expressed it, should, according to the logic of the "Law" occupy specific unoccupied places in that order. Here Mendelyeev with the authoritative gesture of a research worker who believes in himself knocked at one of the hitherto closed doors of nature and from within a voice answered: "Present!" Actually three voices at once, for in the places Mendelyeev had indicated there was discovered three new elements which were later called gallium, scandium, and germanium.

What a marvelous triumph for thought, analytical and synthesizing! In his "Principles of Chemistry" Mendelyeev vividly characterizes scientific creation, comparing it with the propulsion of a bridge across a ravine: to do this it is unnecessary to lower one's self down into the ravine to seek support at the bottom; it is sufficient to establish a base upon one of the shores and then project an accurately designed arch which will then find support upon the opposite side. So it is with scientific thought. It can base itself only on the granite foundation of experience but its generalization, like the arch of the bridge, separates from the world of facts in order that later, at a different point calculated in advance, it may meet with it. And that moment of scientific thought when generalization becomes foresight --and foresight triumphantly verifies itself through experience --invariably gives human thought the proudest and most justified satisfaction! Thus it was in chemistry with the discovery of new elements on the basis of the Periodic Law.

Mendelyeev's prophecy which afterwards produced a tremendous impres-

sion upon Friedrich Engels was made in 1871, that is, the year of the great tragedy of the Paris Commune in France. We can judge the attitude of our great chemist toward this event by his general hostility to "Latinism" with its violence and revolutions. Like all official thinkers of the ruling classes not only in Russia but in Europe and the whole world , Mendelyeev did not ask himself the question: what is the real mainspring of the Paris Commune? He did not see that here the new class which was growing out of the old society exhibited in its movement as "disturbing" an influence upon the orbit of the old society as the unknown planet upon the orbit of Uranus.But the German exile, Marx, at the time did analyze the causes and inner mechanics of the Paris Commune and the rays of his scientific searchlight extended to the events of our October and shed light upon them.

The time has long since passed when we had need to resort to the more secret substance which was called phlogiston for an explanation of chemical phenomena. Essentially phlogiston served merely as the generalized ignorance of the alchemists. In the sphere of physiology the time has long since passed when we felt the need for a special mystical substance which was called the vital force and which was the phlogiston of living matter. In principle we now have sufficient knowledge of physics and chemistry in order to explain all physiological phenomena. In the sphere of the phenomena of consciousness we are no longer in need of the substance called soul which in reactionary philosophy performs the role of the phlogiston of psychological phenomena. In the final analysis psychology for us is reduced to physiology as the latter -- to chemistry, physics and mechanics. This is incomprably more viable than the theory of phlogiston in the sphere of social sciences where phlogiston presents itself in different costumes: now in the form of a "historical mission", now in the form of a changeless "national character", now as the bodiless idea of "progress", as so-called "critical thought", and so forth and so on. In all these cases an attempt has been made to find some super-social substance to explain social phenomena

There is no need to repeat that those idealistic substances are only ingenious masks for sociological ignorance. Marxism renounced super-historical essences just as physiology renounced the vital force, or chemistry -- phlogiston.

It is in this that the essence of Marxism is lodged - it views society concretely, a subject for objective research, examining human history as one would a gigantic laboratory journal. Marxism evaluates ideology as a subservient integral element of the material social structure. Marxism examines the class structure of society as a historically conditioned form of the productive forces; Marxism deduces from the productive forces of society the inter-relations between human society and surrounding nature which, in turn, are determined at every given historical stage by the technique of man, his weapons, his capacities and methods for struggle with nature. Precisely such an objective approach endows Marxism with the insurpassable strength of historical foresight.

Consider the history of Marxism even if only on the national scale of Russia and follow it not from the point of view of your political sympathies and antipathies but from the point of view of that definition of science which Mendelyeev gave: to know in order that we may foresee and act. All the initial history of Marxism on Russian soil is the history of a struggle for correct socio-historical prognosis (foresight) as against official government and official oppositionist viewpoints. From the beginning of the 80's, that is, the time when official ideology existed as a triad of absolutism, orthodoxy, and nationalism; liberalism dreamed about a Zemstvo Assembly, i.e., about a semi-constitutional monarchy, and populism combined pale socialistic fantasy with economic reaction, at that time Marxist thought predicted not only the inevitable and progressive work of capitalism but also the appearance of the proletariat in an independent historical role -- the proletariat taking hegemony in the struggle of the people; the proletarian dictatorship leading the peasantry behind it.

Between the Marxist method of social analysis and those theories against which it fought, the difference is not a whit less than that between the Periodic Law of Mendelyeef with all its latest alterations on one side, and the nonsense of the alchemists on the other.

Natural Science and Marxism

"The cause of chemical reaction lies in the physical and mechanical properties of its components." (The Principles of Chemistry, p.35*) This Mendelyeev formula has a thoroughly materialist character. Chemistry does not resort to some new super-mechanical and super-physical force to explain its phenomena but reduces the chemical process to the mechanical and physical properties of its components.

Biology and physiology stand in a similar relationship to chemistry. Scientific, that is materialist, physiology has no need for a special super-chemical vital force (as claim the Vitalists and neo-Vitalists) for the explanation of its phenomena. Physiological processes reduce themselves in the last analysis to chemical ones as the latter -- to mechanics and physics.

Such is the relationship of psychology to physiology. Not for nothing is physiology called the applied chemistry of living organisms. Just as there is no special physiological force, so it is true that scientific, i.e., materialist, psychology has no need of an inexplicable force --a soul -- to explain its phenomena but reduces them in the final analysis to physiological phenomena. The Pavlovian school is such a school; for it the so-called soul is a complex system of conditioned reflexes, entirely rooted in the initial physiological reflexes which in turn through the potent stratum of chemistry find their r ot in the subsoil of physics and mechanics.

The same can likewise be said about sociology. In explaining social phenomena there is no need to adduce some kind of eternal source or origin from another world. Society is a product of the development

*All references to page numbers are to the Russian editions.

of primary matter, like the earth's crust and amoeba. In this manner scientific thought through its methods of diamond drills boring finds its way from the complex phenomena of social ideology to matter, its component elements, its particles with their physical and mechanical properties.

But, of course, this does not mean that each phenomenon of chemistry can be reduced directly to mechanics and, even less, that each social phenomenon can be reduced directly to physiology and then - to chemical and mechanical laws. It can be said that such is the uppermost aim of science. But the method of gradual and continuous approach toward this aim is entirely different. Chemistry has its special approaches to matter, its methods of research, its laws. If without knowledge of the fact that chemical reactions reduce themselves in the final analysis to mechanical properties of elementary particles of matter, there is not and cannot be a finished philosophy linking all phenomena into one system, so, on the other hand, the mere knowledge of the fact that the phenomena of chemistry root themselves in physics and mechanics does not in itself give the key to even one chemical reaction. Chemistry has its own keys. One can close them only through experience and generalization, through the chemical laboratory, chemical hypotheses, and chemical theory.

The same applies to every science. Chemistry is the powerful pillar of physiology with which it is directly connected through the channels of organic and physiological chemistry. But chemistry is no substitute for physiology. Each science seeks support in the laws of other sciences only in the so-called final instance. But at the same time the separation of the sciences from one another is determined precisely by the fact that each science covers a particular field of the phenomena, i.e., a field of such a complex combination of elementary phenomena and laws that it demands a special approach, special research procedures, special hypotheses and methods.

This idea seems completely indisputable insofar as the sciences of mathematics and natural history are concerned so that to insist on

it would be like forcing an open door. It is entirely different in the science of society. The most distinguished scholarly naturalists who in the field, say, of physiology do not take one step forward without taking into consideration strictly established experiments, verification, hypothetical generalization, new check-up and so forth; with considerable more boldness, with the boldness of ignorance, approach social phenomena as if tacitly avowing that in this more complex sphere of phenomena it is sufficient to have a worldly profundity, daily observations, family tradition, even an accumulation of current social prejudices.

Human society has developed not according to any kind of plan, not according to a system traced out in advance, but empirically, in the process of the prolonged, complicated and contradictory struggle of the human species for existence and then for greater and greater subordination of nature to itself. The ideology of human society arose as a reflection of and a weapon in this process--belated, desultory, uneven, piecemeal, in the form so to speak of conditioned social reflexes which, in the final analysis, reduce themselves to the necessities in the struggle of collective man against nature. To form judgments upon the laws governing the development of human society from their ideological reflection, from the state of so-called public opinion, etc. is almost the same as forming a judgment upon the anatomical and physiological structure of a lizard from its sensations while basking in the sun or crawling out of a crevice to escape dampness. Between the sensations of a lizard and its organic structure there exists, it is true, a most direct bond. But the bond is a subject for research by objective methods. We slip into the greatest subjectivity, however, when we judge the structure and laws that govern the development of human society by the so-called consciousness of society, that is, by its contradictory, disjointed, conservative, unverified ideology. One can, of course, become insulted and raise the objection that social ideology will, after all, be higher than the sensations of a lizard. This

depends upon how you approach the question. I think that there is no paradox in saying that from the sensations of a lizard one could, if it were possible to bring them into focus, draw more direct conclusions about the structure and function of its organs than about the structure of society and its dynamics from such ideological reflections, for example, as religious representations that once occupied and still occupy a gigantic place in the life of human society; or the contradictory and hypocritical codexes of official morality or, finally, the idealistic philosophical conceptions which in order to explain the complex organic processes occuring in man, place responsibility upon some confused, vaporous essence which it calls the soul and which it endows with the qualities of impenetrability and eternity.

Mendelyeev's reaction to the problem of social reorganization was one of hostility and even scorn. He held that even since ancient times nothing had yet resulted from the attempt. In place of this Mendelyeev expected a happier future to arise through the positive sciences and, in the first place, from chemistry which should reveal all the secrets of nature.

It is interesting to juxtapose to this point of view that of our remarkable physiologist, Pavlov, who holds an attitude toward wars and revolutions as if they were something accidental, reaped from people's ignorance; and he conjectures that only a profound knowledge of "human nature" will eliminate both wars and revolutions.

Darwin can be named in the same category. This highly gifted biologist demonstrated how an accumulation of small quantitative defections produces an entirely new biologic "quality" and by that token he explained the origin of species. Without knowing it he thus applied the method of dialectic materialism to the sphere of organic life. Darwin, although philosophically unenlightened, brilliantly applied the Hegelian law of transition from quantity into quality. At the same time we quite often discover in this same Darwin, not to speak of the Darwinists, com-

pletely naive and unscientific attempts at transplanting the conclusions

of biology into society. To interpret competition as a "variety" of the biological struggle for existence is the same as to see only mechanics in the physiology of mating.

In all these cases we observe one and the same fundamental mistake: the methods and achievements of chemistry or physiology, ignoring all scientific boundaries, are transplanted into human society. A naturalist would scarcely carry over without modification the laws governing the movement of atoms without change into the movement of molecules which are governed by other laws. An entirely different attitude can be observed in many naturalists upon the questions of sociology. The historically conditioned structure of society is very often disregarded by them in the name of the atomical structure of things, the physiological structure of reflexes, the biological struggle for existence. Of course, the life of human society, interfused with material conditions, surrounded on all sides by chemical processes, itself represents in the final analysis a combination of chemical processes. On the other hand, society is constituted of human individuals whose psychological mechanism dissolves into the system of reflexes. But public life is not a chemical process and not a physiological one but a social one and is formed according to its own laws which are subject to an objective sociological study whose aim should be: acquirement of the capacity to foresee and master the fate of society.

IV The Philosophy of Mendelyeev

Mendelyeev states in the commentaries to his Principles of Chemistry: "There are two basic or positive aims to a scientific study of objects: foresight and usefulness...The triumph of scientific foresight would have a very insignificant meaning for people if in the end it did not lead to direct general usefulness. Scientific foresight, basing itself on learning, endows human mastery with convictions with the help of which it is possible to direct the substance of things into the desired channel." And further Mendelyeev cautiously adds: "Religious and philosophical ideas have lived and developed for many thousands of years

but those ideas which govern exactly-predicting science have been regenerated for only several hundred years and have succeeded in embracing but very little. Scarcely two hundred years have passed since chemistry became part of such sciences. Truly there lies ahead in the offing very much both of prediction and usefulness to be derived from such sciences."

These cautious, "insinuating" words are very noteworthy on the lips of Mendelyeev. Their half-concealed sense is clearly directed against religion and speculative philosophy. Mendelyeev contrasts them to science. Religious ideas - he says - ruled for thousands of years and benefits from these ideas are not so many; but here you can see what science has contributed in a short period of time and from this you can judge what its future benefits will be. Such is the undoubted sense of this phrase, included by Mendelyeev in one of his commentaries in the finest type printed on the 405th page of his Principles of Chemistry. Dmitry Ivanovich was very cautious and did not intend to quarrel with official public opinion!

Chemistry is a school for revolutionary thought not because of the existence of a chemistry of explosives. Explosives are far from always being revolutionary. But because chemistry is, first of all, a science of the conversion of elements, it is dangerous to every kind of absolute or conservative thinking cast in immobile categories.

And it is very instructive that, under the undoubted pressure of conservative public opinion, Mendelyeev in the great process of chemical transformation defended the principle of stability and immutability. A great scientist with remarkable stubbornness insisted on the immutability of chemical elements and their non-transmutation into each other. He needed reliable pillars of support. He said, "I - Dmitry Ivanovich, and you - Ivan Petrovich. Each one has his individuality even as the elements."

Mendelyeev more than once sorrowfully denounced dialectics. Under this nomenclature he understood not the dialectic of Hegel or Marx but the superficial art of the play with ideas, partly sophistry, partly scholas-

ticism. Scientific dialectics embraces general methods of thought which reflect the laws of development. One of these laws is the change of quantity into quality. Chemistry is thoroughly permeated with this law. Mendelyeev's whole Periodic Law is built entirely upon it, concluding qualitative difference in the elements from quantitative differences in atomic weights. Precisely from this point of view Engels evaluated the discovery of new elements by Mendelyeev. In his sketch, The General Character of Dialectics as a Science, Engels wrote: "Mendelyeev showed that in a series of related elements divided by atomic weights there are different gaps pointing to the existence of other hitherto undiscovered elements. He described in advance the general chemical properties of each of these unknown elements and foretold approximately its relative and atomic weight and its atomic scope. Mendelyeev, unconsciously applying the Hegelian law of change of quantity into quality, accomplished a scientific feat which in audaciousness can be placed alongside the discovery of Leverrier who computed the orbit of the yet unknown planet Neptune." (Archives of K. Marx and F. Engels, vol. 2, p. 227.)

The logic of the Periodic Law, although altered afterward, proved stronger than the conservative limitations which its creator tried to place upon it. The kinship of elements among themselves and their mutual metamorphoses can be considered as empirically proved from the moment when with the help of radioactive elements it became possible to resolve the atom into its components. In the Periodic Law of Mendelyeev, in the chemistry of radioactive elements dialiots celebrates its own remarkable most/victory!

Mendelyeev did not have a finished philosophical system. Perhaps he did not even want to have one since it would have led him into inevitable conflicts with his own conservative habits and sympathies.

A duality upon the most basic questions of knowledge can be observed in Mendelyeev. Thus it appears as if he tended toward agnosticism, announcing that the "essence" of matter is for us impenetrable because "alien to our knowledge and spirit" (1) (D. M

Mendelyeev, The Principles

of Chemistry, p.406). But here he offers a remarkable formula for knowledge which with one wave of the hand brushes aside agnosticism: "People, gradually learning about matter," says Mendelyeev in the very same note, "master it and to the degree in which they do so they make even more exact prophecies which are in fact justified and there is no way of seeing how there can be a limit to the knowledge about and mastering of matter." It is entirely evident that if there is no limit to the knowledge and mastery of matter, neither is there an unknowable "essence". Knowledge which arms you with the ability to foresee all possible changes in matter and endows you with the necessary power to call forth these changes, such knowledge in fact exhausts the essence of matter. The so-called unknowable "essence" is only the generalized form for our lack of knowledge about matter. It is a pseudonym for our ignorance. Dualistic separation of unknown matter from its known properties resembles the anecdotic definition of a gold ring as a hole surrounded by precious metal: it is entirely clear that if we know the precious metal of phenomena and learn how to work it we will be completely indifferent to the "hole" of the substance, and we will gladly present it to the agnostic philosophers and theologians.

Right Miscalculations

In spite of verbal concessions to agnosticism ("unknowable essence"), Mendelyeev is a dialectic materialist in his methods and in his higher achievements in the sphere of natural science and, first of all, in chemistry. But his materialism appears as though covered by a conservative film, shielding its scientific thought from too sharp conflicts with official ideology. This does not mean that Mendelyeev artificially created a conservative covering for his methods; he himself was sufficiently bound to the official ideology and therefore undoubtedly felt an inner need to blunt the too sharp edges of dialectic materialism.

A different situation existed in the sphere of sociological relationships: the basic cloth of Mendelyeev's social philosophy was a conservative one but from time to time remarkable conjectures, materialist

in their essence and revolutionary in their tendency, penetrated through this cloth. Yet alongside the conjectures - miscalculations, and what miscalculations!

I shall cite but two out of many examples. Rejecting all plans for social reorganization as Utopianism and "Latinism", Mendelyeev pictured a better future only in connection with the development of scientific technique. But he had his own Utopia. According to Mendelyeev better times would come then the governments of the bigger States of the whole world came to understand the need of being strong and were sufficiently unanimous among themselves as to the necessity for eliminating all wars, revolutions, and Utopian principles of Anarchists, Communists, and all other "mailed fists" who fail to understand the progressive evolution occuring in all humanity. The dawn of this general agreement of national governments was already seen in the Hague,[3] Portsmouth,[4] and Moroccan[5] conferences. These examples represent a big miscalculation on the part of a great man. History subjected the Mendelyeev social Utopia to a rigorous test. From the Hague

(3) The Hague peace conferences of 1899 and 1907 adopted some recommendations to "humanize" wars. In spite of the illusions of the pacifists who ascribed great significance to these resolutions, the recommendations were never carried out any more than, needless to say, was the other recommendation that the next conference be held in 1915.

(4) In May 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt proposed a peace conference to Russia and Japan who were on the point of war. The conference was held in Portsmouth on July 27th and the agreement signed on August 23rd. Both countries promised to evacuate Manchuria, which was to be returned to China, and to use the railroads belonging to them and running through Manchuria for commercial and industrial purposes and not for strategical aims. The Russo-Japanese war broke out a few months later.

(5) The Morocco conference was held in Algiers in January 1906. Called to define the mutual "relations" of European powers in Morocco, which had come under French "influence" since 1904 according to an Anglo-French agreement, it ended in the diplomatic victory of France -- until Germany was more ready to challenge France's "right" to exploit Morocco.

and Portsmouth conferences blossomed the Russo-Japanese war, the Balkan war, the great imperialist slaughter of nations, a severe decline in European economy, and from the Moroccan conference in particular there arose that disgusting carnage in Morocco which is being completed now under the flag of defense of European civilization. Mendelyeev did not see the inner logic of social phenomena or, better, the inner dialectic of social processes and therefore did not foresee the consequences of the Hague conference. But we know that the significance of science lies, first of all, in foresight. If you turn to what the Marxists wrote about the Hague conference in the days when it was arranged and convoked, then you will easily convince yourself that the Marxists correctly foresaw the consequences. That is why in the most critical moment of history they proved to be armed with the "mailed fist". And really it isn't at all lamentable that the historically rising class, armed with a correct theory of social knowledge and foresight, finally proved/likewise with a fist sufficiently mailed to be able to open up a new epoch of human development.

Permit me to cite yet another example of miscalculation. " I especially fear," wrote Mendelyeev not long before his death, "for the quality of science and of all enlightment and for general ethics under "State Socialism'." Was that born out? Already now the more far-sighted students of Mendelyeev have begun to see clearly the gigantic possibilities for the development of scientific and technico-scientific thought thanks to the fact that this thought is, so to speak, nationalized, torn away from the internecine war of private property and does not lend itself to bribery by individual proprietors but serves the economic development of the nation as a whole. The net of technico-scientific institutes that are now being established by the State is only a small and so-to-speak material symptom of the limitless possibilities that have been disclosed...

I do not cite these miscalculations in order to diminish the great renown of Dmitry Ivanovich. History has spoken on the chief

point of contention and there is no basis for resumption of the dispute. But permit me to say that the huge miscalculations of this great man bear an important lesson for students. From the field of chemistry there is no direct and immediate outlet to social perspectives. The objective method of social science is necessary. Marxism is such a method.

Whenever any Marxist attempted to transmute the theory of Marx into a general master key in order to ignore other spheres of learning, Vladimir Ilyitch* rebuked him with the expressive phrase "komchvanstvo" ("Communist swagger). This meant in particular: Communism does not replace chemistry. But the reverse theorem is also true. The attempt to walk past Marxism under the proposition that chemistry (or natural science in general) should decide all questions is a peculiar "khimchvanstvo" (Chemist swagger) which is theoretically not a whit less mistaken and practically not a particle less pretentious than "khmchvanstvo" (Communist swagger).

Great surmises

Mendelyeev did not utilize a scientific method for the study of society and its development. An especially cautious investigator who repeatedly verified himself before permitting creative imagination an outstanding leap of generalization, Mendelyeev in socio-political problems remained an empiricist, combining surmise with an outlook inherited from the past. It is but necessary to state that the surmise was Mendelyeevian especially where it touched directly upon the scientific industrial interests of the great scientist.

The very core of Mendelyeev's philosophy can be defined as technico-scientific optimism. This optimism of his, coinciding with the line of development of capitalism, Mendelyeev directed against the populists, liberals, and radicals, against the Tolstoyans and in general against every kind of economic retrogression. Mendelyeev believed in the victory of man over all the forces of nature. From this arises his hatred of Malthusianism.(6)

*Lenin

(6) The theory of T. R. Malthus (1766-1834), English economist, that poverty was inevitable since population tends to multiply faster than its means of subsistence.

This is a remarkable trait in Mendelyeev. It passes through all his writings, those purely scientific and socio-journalist as well as those upon applied questions. Mendelyeev with pleasure remarked that the yearly increase in population in Russia (1¾%) is higher than the average growth in the whole world. Computing that in 150 to 200 years the population of the world would reach 10 billions Mendelyeev did not at all see cause for alarm in this. "Not only 10 billions," he wrote, "but a population many times that size will find nourishment in this world through the application not only of labor but also of persevering inventiveness which governs knowledge. To fear that there will be no nourishment is, in my opinion, sheer nonsense if the peaceful and active communion of the masses of people can be considered guaranteed."

Our great chemist and industrial optimist would not have listened with any sympathy to the late advice of the English professor Keynes who told us during the days of the academic celebrations that we must busy ourselves about limiting the increase in population. Dmitry Ivanovich would only have repeated his old words: "Or do the new Malthuses wish to arrest this growth? But I think that the more crowded it is, the merrier." The revelation shrewdness of Mendelyeev has often expressed itself in such deliberately simplified formulas.

From the same point of view - industrial optimism - Mendelyeev approached the great fetish of conservative idealism, so-called national character. "Wherever agricultural industry in its primitive forms predominates," D.I. wrote, "there the nation is incapable of permanent, regular, and continous labor but can work only fitfully and in a harvest-time manner. This is reflected clearly in the customs in the sense that there is a lack of equanimity, calmness, and frugality; in everything fidgetiness can be observed: everything runs in a happy-go-lucky fashion, extravagance -- there is either miserliness or squandering... Wherever at the side of agriculture factory industry has developed on a vast scale, where before one's eyes one can see, in addition to fitful agriculture

industry also regular, continuous, uninterrupted labor in the factories, there is a correct ostimation of labor, etc." What is especially valuable in these lines is the outlook on national character not as some initial and principle element created for all time, but as a product of historical conditions and, more exactly, social forms of production. This is/indubitable, though only a partial approach to the historical philosophy of Marxism.

In the development of industry Mendelyeev sees the means of national re-education, the working out of a new more steady, more disciplined and self-restrained national character. If we actually contrast the character of peasant revolutionary movement with the movement of the proletariat and especially the role of the proletariat in October and now, then the materialist prediction of Mendelyeev will be illuminated with a sufficiently clear light.

Our industrial optimist expressed himself with remarkable clarity about the elimination of the contradictions between city and country, and every Communist will accept his formulation on this score. "Russian people," wrote Mendelyeev, "have begun to go to the city in large numbers...My view is that this evolution is such that it is sheer nonsense to fight against it; this process will finish only when on one side the city will widen to include more parks, gardens, etc., i.e., in the cities they will aim not only at making life as healthy as possible for all, but at providing sufficient open space not only for children's palygrounds and sport but for every form of promenade; and on the other hand, in the villages and on the farms, etc., the non-city population will so multiply that there too it will become necessary to build many-storied houses, and there will arise the need for water-conduits, street lighting and other city comforts. In the course of time all this will lead to the whole countryside (which is sufficiently densely populated), becoming inhabited by a serried population and between the building there will be so-to-speak kitchen-gardens and orchards necessary for the production of nutritive products, and factories and plants for manufacturing and altering such products." (D.I. Mendelyeev, Toward an Understanding of Russia, 1906, pp.61-2)

Here Mendelyeev convincingly testifies in favor of the old thesis of socialism: elimination of the contradiction between city and country. However, Mendelyeev does not here pose the question about changes in the social forms of economy. He considers that capitalism will automatically lead to the levelling out of city and rural conditions through the formation of a higher, more hygienic and cultural form of human dwelling. Here in lies Mendelyeev's mistake. We see it most clearly in England to which Mendelyeev referred with such hope. Long before England could eliminate the contradictions between city and country, her economic development had already landed in a blind alley. Unemployment corrodes her economy. The leaders of English industry see the salvaging of society in emigration, in forcing out the surplus population. Even the more "progressive" economist Keynes told us only recently that the salvaging of English economy lies in Malthusianism!...For England as well, the road to overcoming the contradictions between city and country leads through socialism.

There is yet one other surmise, dictated by that industrial optimism.

"After the industrial epoch," Mendelyeev wrote in his last book, "there will follow in the future perhaps a most complex epoch, which, according to my view, would denote a facilitation, or an extreme simplification of the methods of obtaining food, clothing and sustenance. Experienced science should aim at this extreme simplification toward which it has already partly been directed for the past decades." (D. Mendelyeev, Toward an Understanding of Russia, 1906, p.73, footnote.)

These are remarkable words. Though Dmitry Ivanovich in another place makes reservations -- against, god forbid, the realization of the Utopia of Socialists and Communists, nevertheless, in these words he outlines the technico-scientific perspectives of Communism. Such a development of the productive forces through which we could attain extreme simplification of the methods of obtaining food, clothing, and sustenance clearly leads us to reducing to a minimum the elements of coercion in the social structure. As completely useless cupidity is eliminated from social relations, the forms of

labor and distribution will assume a Communist character. In the transition from socialism to Communism revolution will be necessary since the transition depends entirely upon the technical prowess of society.

Utilitarian Science and "Pure" Science

Mendelyeev's industrial optimism constantly directed his thought upon the road of practical industrial questions and problems. In his purely theoretical works it can be seen that they are directed through the same channels to the problems of economy. A dissertation by Mendelyeev is devoted to the question of combining alcohol with water, a questions which receives economic significance even now.* Mendelyeev invented a special smokeless powder for the needs of state defense. He attentively occupied himself over petroleum and at that in two directions --one purely theoretical: what is the origin of petroleum? --and the other in a technico-industrial sense. Here we must always remember Mendelyeev's objections against burning petroleum simply for heating: "Heating can be done with banknotes!" exclaimed our chemist. A convinced protectionist, Mendelyeev took a leading part in the elaboration of tariff policies and wrote his "sensible tariff" from which one can quote not a few valuable instructions even from the point of view of socialist protectionism.

Problems concerning the northern sea routes stimulates his interest up to a short time before his death. He recommended to young investigators and navigators the solving of the problem of opening up the North Pole. He held that commercial routes would be opened up incidentally. "And near that ice there is not a little gold and other goods, one's own America. I should be glad to die at the pole for there one will not putrefy". These words sound very fresh: when the old chemist thought about death, he thought about it from the point of view of putrefaction and, incidentally, dreamt about death in the sphere of eternal cold.

*Ironic reference to State resumption of sale of vodka.

Mendelyeev never tired of repeating that the aim of knowledge was to be "useful". In other words, he approached science from the point of view of utilitarianism. And at the same time, as we see, insisted on the creative role of disinterested passion for knowledge. Why particularly does one have to seek commercial routes through round-about ways, past the North Pole? Because reaching the pole is a problem for disinterested research capable of arousing scientific research-sport passions. Is there not a contradiction between this and the affirmation that the aim of science is usefulness? No, there is no contradiction. Science is a function of society and not of an individual. From the socio-historical point of view science is utilitarian. But this does not mean that each scientist approaches the problem of research from a utilitarian point of view. No! Most often scholars advance because of their passion for knowledge and the more significant a man's discovery the less can he as a general rule foresee in advance its possible practical consequences. Thus the disinterested passion of the research worker does not contradict the utilitarian meaning of each science any more than the personal self-sacrifice of a revolutionary fighter contradicts the utilitarian purpose of those class needs which he serves.

Mendelyeev excellently combined his passion for knowledge for its own sake with incessant preoccupation about raising the technical power of man. That is why both wings of this congress -- the representatives of pure chemistry and the representatives of applied chemistry -- with equal right stand under the banner of Mendelyeev. We must educate the new generation of scientists in the spirit of this harmonious coordination of pure scientific research with industrial tasks. Mendelyeev's belief in the unlimited possibilities for knowledge, prediction, and mastery over matter must become the scientific symbol of faith for the

chemists of the socialist country. The scientist, Du Bois-Reymond visualized philosophic thought departing from the scene of the class struggle and crying out: "<u>Ignorabimus!</u>"(7)--i.e., we will not attain, we will not know, we will not understand. "A lie!" replies scientific thought, linking its fate with the fate of the rising class, "the impenetrable does not exist for cognizant thought. We will reach everything! We will master everything! We will rebuild everything!"

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(7) The concluding words of a speech, "Regarding the Limits of the Knowledge of Nature", by E. Du Bois-Reymond (1818-1896), German physiologist.

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February 22, 1939

Dear Comrade Shachtman:

A few days ago Comrade Lillian sent the article, "Behind the Kremlin Walls," according to your request. I am far from certain that the article is suitable for the New International. It might rather be divided in two parts and used as a literary section in the Socialist Appeal, if it is suitable at all.

On the other hand, I am a bit curious as to why you did not accept the speech on Mendeleieff, which Rae translated. I hope that it was not for the reason that the speech tried to defend the dialectic method. In any case, the translation should be carefully revised and corrected, because I did not have time to supervise it with Rae.

Best greetings.

Comradely,

Coyoacan, D. F.
10-93-19

other way than as *the organization of the proletariat as a genuinely ruling class.* But for all the Dimitrovs, the "people's democracy" is transformed into dictatorship of the proletariat" when control becomes absolute not only over formations of the bourgeoisie, yesterday's allies, but also over the proletariat whose dictatorship they confound with the real dictatorships of the bureaucracy of the parties and the states they direct.

—January 1949.

The Meaning of Hegel

By GEORGE PLEKHANOV

In 1891 the editors of Neue Zeit, theoretical magazine of the German Social Democratic Party, requested G. V. Plekhanov to write an article in connection with the 60th anniversary of Hegel's death. Few were better qualified to deal with this subject than Plekhanov, a profound student of philosophy and the best trained Marxist theoretician of Russia at the time. Plekhanov's philosophical writings, including his Hegel essay, were for the most part written in the heyday of his brilliant Marxist career, long before his desertion of the cause to which he owed his fame.

Engels, who chose his words carefully, especially on questions of theory, praised Plekhanov's 1891 essay in the highest terms. Lenin's views on Plekhanov's philosophical writings were so emphatic that he took time out to recommend the study of Plekhanov's philosophical writings while the Civil War was raging in Russia. Exactly the same was Trotsky's view.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lenin said that "it is impossible to become a real communist without studying—really studying—all that Plekhanov has written on philosophy, as this is the best of the whole international literature of Marxism."

In 1922, Trotsky wrote: "The great Plekhanov, the true one, belongs entirely and wholly to us. It is our duty to restore to the young generations his spiritual figure in all its stature."

The essay on Hegel was first published in Russian in a collection of Plekhanov's articles entitled, A Critique of Our Critics, and was republished in Vol. VII of Ryazanov's monumental edition of Plekhanov's collected works (Moscow, 1923).

The translation by F. Forest was checked against both the original German and Russian texts.

One of the first places in the history of thought indisputably belongs to a man who died 60 years ago, on November 14, 1831. None of those sciences, which the French call "*sciences morales et politiques,*" escaped the powerful and fructifying influence of Hegel's genius. Dialectics, logic, history, law, esthetics, history of philosophy and history of religion assumed a new aspect, thanks to the impetus given them by Hegel.

Hegelian philosophy trained and tempered the thought of such men as David Strauss, Bruno Bauer, Feuerbach, Fischer, Gans, Lassalle, and, finally, Engels and Marx. Even during his lifetime Hegel enjoyed world renown. After his death, from the '30s to the '40s, the practically universal enthusiasm for his philosophy became even more intense. But a reaction quickly followed. Hegel began to be treated—to use Marx's words—"in the same way as the brave Moses Mendelssohn in Lessing's time treated Spinoza, i.e., as a 'dead dog'." Interest in his philosophy disappeared completely among the "educated" circles. His influence in the academic world as well became so weak that to this day it has not occurred to a single specialist in the history of philosophy to define and point out "the lasting value" of Hegelian philosophy in the varied fields of knowledge it embraces.

We shall presently explain the reasons for this attitude toward Hegel. Suffice it to note here that in the near future we may expect a revival of interest in his philosophy and especially in his philosophy of history. The tremendous successes of the labor movement, which compel the so-called educated classes to concern themselves with the theory under whose banner the movement is developing, will also compel these classes to become interested in the historical origin of this theory.

And once they do become interested in it, they will quickly discover Hegel, who will thereby become transformed in their eyes from "a philosopher of the restoration" into the forefather of the most advanced modern ideas.

And for this very reason we can predict that although interest in Hegel will revive among the educated classes, they will never show the same profound sympathy for Hegel as was shown 60 years ago in countries of German culture. On the contrary, bourgeois scholars will zealously occupy themselves with a "critical reexamination" of Hegel's philosophy; and many doctoral diplomas will be acquired in the course of the struggle with the "exaggerations" and the "logical arbitrariness" of the dead professor.

Naturally, from such a "critical reexamination" there will be only one gain for science, namely: the learned apologists of the capitalist order will again and again reveal their bankruptcy in theory, just as they have in politics. But not for nothing has it been said that it is always beneficial "to burrow around the roots of truth." The revival of interest in Hegel's philosophy will impel unprejudiced people to make an independent study of his works. Such mental labor will not be easy but it will be highly rewarding. Those who really strive for knowledge will find much to learn from Hegel.

In this article we shall try to evaluate the philosophic-historic views of the great German thinker. In general outline, this has already been done by the hand of a master in the excellent articles of Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of German Classical Philosophy,* which

were first published in the *Neue Zeit*, and later appeared as a separate pamphlet. But we think that the above-mentioned views of Hegel fully deserve a more detailed analysis.

The importance of Hegel in social science is determined, first of all, by the fact that he examined all social phenomena from the standpoint of the process *des Werdens* (of becoming), i.e., from the point of view of their rise and dissolution. To many this may not appear as a very great contribution since, it seems, it is impossible to look at social phenomena in any other way. But first, as we shall show later, this point of view even now is not really understood by many who consider themselves *"evolutionists."* Secondly, in Hegel's day, those engaged in the social sciences were even further away from this viewpoint. Suffice it to recall the socialists and economists of the period.

The bourgeois order was, to be sure, looked upon as a very great evil by the socialists at that time, but they nevertheless considered it as a perfectly *accidental* product of human *errors*. The economists, for their part, were delighted by the bourgeois order and were at a loss for words to praise it, but they considered it as no more than the product of an *accidental* discovery of the *truth*. Neither the Utopians nor the economists went beyond this *abstract counterposing of truth to error* although the teachings of the Utopian socialists already contained *inklings* of a more correct approach to things.

To Hegel such an abstract counterposing of truth to error was one of those absurdities into which "rational" thinking so often fell. J. B. Say considered as worthless the study of the history of political economy because prior to Adam Smith all economists had advanced erroneous theories. To Hegel, on the other hand, philosophy was only the intellectual expression of its time.

At each stage every "transcended" philosophy was *the truth of its time*, and for this reason alone Hegel could never have discarded all previous philosophic systems as something worthless, as old rubbish. On the contrary. "In philosophy," he writes, "the latest [philosophic] birth of time is the result of all the [philosophic] systems that have preceded it, and must include their principles."* At the basis of this view of the history of philosophy lay, of course, the purely idealistic conception that the "Architect has directed the work [i.e., the work of philosophic thought] and that Architect is the one living Mind whose nature is to think, to bring to self-consciousness what it is, and, with its being thus set as object before it, to be at the same time raised above it, and so to reach a higher stage of its own being." *(Ibid.)*

But the most consistent materialist will not deny that every given philosophic system is only the intellectual expression of its time.** And if, in returning to the history of political economy, we ask ourselves from what point of view must we approach it at the present time, then we will immediately see how much nearer we are to Hegel than to J. B. Say. For example, from the point of view of Say, that is, from the point of view of the abstract antagonism between truth and error, the mercantile system, or even the physiocratic system, must and did represent no more than an absurdity which accidentally befell the human mind. But we know today to what extent each of the above systems was the necessary product of its time:

> **If the monetary and mercantile system single out international trade and the particular branches of national industry directly connected with that trade as the only true source of wealth or money, it must be borne in mind that in that period the greater part of national production was still carried on under forms of feudalism and was the source from which producers drew directly their means of subsistence. Products, as a rule, were not turned into commodities, nor, therefore, into money; they did not enter into the general social interchange of matter; did not, therefore, appear as embodiments of universal abstract labor; and did not in fact constitute bourgeois wealth. . . . True to the conditions as they prevailed in that primitive stage of bourgeois production, those unrecognized prophets held fast to the pure, tangible, and resplendent form of exchange value, to its form of a universal commodity as against all special commodities. (Marx, "Critique of Political Economy," pp. 216-17.)**

Marx explains the polemic between the physiocrats and their opponents as a dispute over which kind of labor "it is that creates surplus value." *(Ibid.* p. 64.) Is it not clear that this question was completely "timely" for the bourgeoisie which was then preparing to become master of everything?

But it is not philosophy alone that appears to Hegel as the natural and necessary product of its time. He regards both religion and law in this same way. Moreover, one has to recognize that, according to Hegel, philosophy, law, religion, art and even technique *(Technische Geschicklichkeit)* are most closely interrelated: "Only in connection with this particular religion, can this particular political constitution exist; just as in such or such a state, such or such a philosophy or order or art."* This, again, can appear somewhat trivial. Who does not know how closely interrelated are all aspects and manifestations of national life? At present this is familiar to every school child.

The Laws of Reciprocity

But Hegel did not at all understand the interrelation of the varied aspects and manifestations of national life in the same way as it is understood to this very day by many "educated" persons and school children. This relation is regarded by them as a simple reciprocal action of the aspects and manifestations referred to. In addition to this, there is, first of all, the interaction itself which remains entirely unexplained. Secondly—and this is of primary importance—it is entirely forgotten that there must be one common source from which all these interrelated aspects and manifestations originate.

Thus this system of interaction appears to be based on nothing, hanging in mid-air: law influences religion;

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*"The Logic of Hegel," translated from The Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Science, by William Wallace, Oxford University Press, London, 1931, Sec. 18.

**Of course it can be, and always has been, the expression only of a specific aspect of its time. But this does not change the matter in its essence.

*Philosophy of History by G.W.F. Hegel, translated by J. Sibree, The Colonial Press, 1900, p. 63.

religion influences law, and each of them and both together influence philosophy and art, which, in their turn, influence one another, influence law and religion, etc. Such is the wisdom of this universally familiar doctrine of the primary schools. Let us grant that for any particular period we can be satisfied with such an exposition. But after all we would still be left with the question of just what conditioned the historical development of religion, philosophy, art, law, etc., right up to the particular historical period.

Generally, reciprocity itself is adduced in answering this question. Thereby, in the long run, it ends up by explaining nothing. Either we have pointed out to us some accidental causes influencing this or that other aspect of national life, and having nothing in common with one another—or, finally, the whole matter is reduced to a question of the subjective logic of individuals. For example, it is said that the philosophic system of Fichte logically flows from the philosophic system of Kant, the philosophy of Schelling logically flows from the philosophy of Fichte and the philosophy of Hegel—from the philosophy of Schelling. In this same way the changes in the different schools of art are likewise "logically" explained. Undoubtedly, contained here is a grain of truth. Unfortunately, it explains absolutely nothing.

We know that sometimes the transition from one philosophic system, or from one school of art, to another, is accomplished very rapidly, in the course of a few years. At other times, however, centuries are needed for a transition. Whence does this difference arise? The logical connections between ideas do not explain it at all. Nor do the references of academic wisdom to reciprocity and to accidental reasons. But the "educated" circles are not embarrassed by this. Having uttered profundities concerning the reciprocal action of the different aspects of national life, they remain satisfied with this "manifestation" of their own profundity and stop thinking exactly where *rigorous scientific thought first fully comes into its own.* Hegel was as far removed from such profundities as heaven is from earth.

"If we get no further than looking at a given content from the standpoint of reciprocity," Hegel says, "we are taking an attitude which is really unintelligent. We are left with a mere dry fact; and the call for mediation, which is the chief question in applying the relation of causality, is left still unanswered. And if we look more narrowly into the dissatisfaction felt in applying the relation of reciprocity, we shall see that it consists in the circumstance that this relation cannot possibly be treated as an equivalent for the notion, and ought, instead, to be known and understood in its own nature. And to understand the relation of action and reaction we must not let the two sides rest in their state of mere given facts, but recognize them . . . as factors of a third and higher order . . ." *(Enzyklopedia,* Sec. 156, *Zusatz.)*

What Hegel means by this is that we must not, when speaking about different aspects of national life, for example, be satisfied simply to point out their reciprocity, but must search for an explanation in something new, something "higher," i.e., something which conditions both their very existence as well as the possibility of their acting and reacting upon one another.

Where, then, are we to search for this new, this "higher" something?

Hegel's Idealism

Hegel answers that one must search for it in the "notion"—in the peculiarities of the national spirit. And this is entirely logical from his point of view. For Hegel, all history is only "the development and realization of the universal spirit." The movement of the universal spirit takes place in stages.

> "Every step in the process, as differing from any other, has its determinate peculiar principle. In history, this principle is . . . the peculiar National Genius. It is within the limitations of this idiosyncrasy that the spirit of the nation, concretely manifested, expresses every aspect of its consciousness and will—the whole cycle of its realization. Its religion, its polity, its ethics, its legislation, and even its science, art, and mechanical skill, all bear its stamp. These special peculiarities find their key in that common peculiarity—the particular principle that characterizes a people; as, on the other hand, in the facts which history presents in detail, that common characteristic principle may be detected." (Cf. Philosophy of History, pp. 63-4.)

There is nothing easier than to make the brilliant discovery that Hegel's view of world history as set forth above is permeated with *idealism of the purest water.* As Hegel would have put it, this is obvious to everyone, even those who never studied in a seminary. There is also nothing easier than to limit the "critique" of Hegelian philosophy of history to a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders because of its extreme idealism. This is often done by people who are themselves incapable of any consistent thinking—people who are not satisfied with the materialists because they are materialists; and who are not satisfied with the idealists because they are idealists, and are overly satisfied with themselves because their own world outlook is supposedly free from all extremes. Actually, their own outlook is nothing more than a completely undigested hash of idealism and materialism.

"Not a Grain of Eclecticism"

The philosophy of Hegel possesses, in any case, the undisputed merit that it contains not a single grain of *eclecticism.* And if its mistaken idealistic basis does make itself felt all too often; if it does place extremely narrow limits to the development of the genius thoughts of a great man, then precisely because of this should we study the philosophy of Hegel all the more closely, for it is precisely this which makes it so highly instructive. The idealistic philosophy of Hegel contains the best, the most irrefutable proof of the inadequacy of idealism. But at the same time it teaches us consistency in thinking. He who will devotedly and conscientiously pass through this severe school will forever acquire a healthy aversion to eclectic hash.

We now know that world history is not at all "the development and realization of the world spirit." But this does not mean that we can rest satisfied with academic banalities to the effect that the political order of a given

nation influences its customs, while its customs influence its constitution, etc. We must agree with Hegel that both the customs and the political structure arise from a common source. What this source is, is exactly what the modern materialist analysis of history tells us. Suffice it here to limit our remarks on this subject to stating that Messrs. Eclectics have as great a difficulty in understanding historical materialism as they have in penetrating into the secrets of the diametrically opposed idealistic views of Hegel.

Every time Hegel undertakes to characterize some great historic people, he reveals encyclopedic knowledge and great penetration. He gives truly brilliant and profoundly instructive characterizations, punctuating them with a whole series of the most valuable remarks about different aspects of the history of a particular people. He fascinates you until you are ready to forget that you are dealing with an idealist. You are ready to acknowledge that he actually "*die Geschichte nimmt, wie sie ist*" ("takes history as it is"), that Hegel strictly adheres to his own rule: "to keep to the historical, empirical soil."

But why does Hegel need this historical, empirical soil? To determine the *peculiarities of the spirit* of each particular people. The spirit of a particular people is, as we already know, no more than a stage in the development of the universal spirit. But the peculiarities of the universal spirit are not at all derived from the study of world history. On the contrary, knowledge of it is *introduced into the study of world history* as knowledge which is ready-made and completely finished from all sides.

The Contradictions in Hegel

Therefore, this is what takes place: so long as history does not contradict the "notion" of the universal spirit and the "laws" of the development of this spirit, history is taken "as it is"; Hegel "keeps to the historical, empirical soil." But as soon as history not so much contradicts the "laws" of development of the universal spirit but rather falls outside the orbit of this assumed development, and appears as something unforeseen by the Hegelian *logic*, then no attention whatever is paid to it.

Obviously such an attitude toward history should have at least saved Hegel from contradicting himself, but actually this is not the case. Hegel is far from being free of contradictions. Here is a sufficiently striking example. Hegel writes about the religious conceptions of the Hindus as follows:

> On the one hand Love-Heaven—in short everything spiritual—is conceived by the fancy of the Hindus; but on the other hand, his conceptions have an actual sensuous embodiment, and he immerses himself by a voluptuous intoxication in the merely natural. Objects of religious worship are thus either fantastic forms produced by art, or those presented by Nature. Every bird, every monkey is a god, an absolutely universal existence. The Hindu is incapable of holding fast an object in his mind by means of rational predicates assigned to it, for this requires Reflection. (Cf. Philosophy of History, p. 157.)

On the basis of this characterization, Hegel considers animal worship—zoolatry—as the natural consequence of the circumstance that the spirit of the *Hindu people* represents one of the *lowest stages in the evolution of the universal spirit*. Ancient Persians, worshipping fire and also "the sun, the moon and five other luminaries," recognizing them as "the honorable images of Oromaz," are placed by Hegel on a higher plane than the Hindus. But let us now listen to what Hegel himself has to say about animal worship among the ancient Egyptians:

> Egyptian Cult is chiefly zoolatry . . . To us zoolatry is repulsive. We may reconcile ourselves to the adoration of the material heaven, but the worship of animals is alien to us. . . . Yet it is certain that the nations who worshipped the sun and the stars by no means occupy a higher grade than those who deify animals, but contrariwise; for in the animal world the Egyptians contemplated an inner and incomprehensible principle. (Cf. Ibid. p. 211.)

Depending upon whether the Hindu or the Egyptian is under discussion, the very same animal worship assumes, in Hegel's eyes, an entirely different meaning. Why is this so? Is it really true that Hindus deified animals in an entirely different way from the Egyptians? Not at all. The whole point here is this, that the Egyptian national "spirit" represents a "transition" to the Greek, and therefore occupies a comparatively high stage in the Hegelian system of classification. For this reason, Hegel does not wish to indict the Egyptians for those same weaknesses for which he indicted the lower-ranking Indian national spirit.

In the same way, depending on whether he meets them in India or in Egypt, Hegel takes a different attitude toward *castes*. Indian castes "become natural distinctions," and therefore the individual in India has even less value than in China where there exists the unenviable equality of all before the despot. Regarding the Egyptian castes we are told that they "are not rigidly fixed, but struggle with and come in contact with one another: we often find cases of their being broken up and in a state of rebellion." (*Ibid.* pp. 204-5.) But even from what Hegel himself says about the castes in India, it appears that in India, too, there was no lack of struggle and contact between the castes.

Achilles Heel of Idealism

In this case, as on the question of zoolatry, Hegel, in the interests of a rather arbitrary logical scheme, has to attribute completely different meanings to completely analogous phenomena of social life. But this is not all. The Achilles heel of idealism reveals itself before us especially in those cases where Hegel has to deal either with the shift of the center of gravity of the historical movement from one people to another, or with a change in the *inner* condition of a given people.

In such cases, there naturally arises the question of the causes behind these shifts and changes, and Hegel as an idealist seeks the answer in the attributes of the very same *Spirit*, the realization of which comprises, in his view, history. For example, he asks himself why did ancient Persia fall while China and India survived. Hegel's answer is prefaced with the following remark:

> In the first place we must here banish from our minds the prejudice in favor of duration, as if it had any advantage as compared with transience: the imperishable

> mountains are not superior to the quickly dismantled rose exhaling its life in fragrance. (Ibid., p. 221.)

In no case is it possible to consider this prefatory comment as an answer. There then follows argumentation like this:

> In Persia begins the principle of Free Spirit as contrasted with imprisonment in Nature; mere natural existence, therefore, loses its bloom, and fades away. The principle of separation from Nature is found in the Persian Empire, which, therefore, occupies a higher grade than those worlds immersed in the Natural.* The necessity of advance has been thereby proclaimed. Spirit has disclosed its existence, and must complete its development. It is only when dead that the Chinese is held in reverence. The Hindu kills himself—becomes absorbed in Brahma—undergoes a living death in the condition of perfect unconsciousness—or is a present god in virtue of his birth.**
>
> "Here we have no change; no advance is admissable, for progress is only possible through the recognition of the independence of Spirit. With the "Light" [the fire-worship] of the Persians begins a spiritual view of things and here spirit bids adieu to Nature. It is here, then, [sic.!] that we first find . . . that the objective world remains free—that the nations are not enslaved,*** but are left in possession of their wealth, their political constitution, and their religion. And, indeed, this is the side on which Persia itself shows weakness as compared with Greece. (Ibid. p. 221.)

Idealism Barrier to Explanation

In all this lengthy argument only the last few lines, relating to the inner organization of the Persian kingdom as a cause of the weakness revealed by Persia in its conflict with Greece, can be considered as an attempt to explain the historic fact of Persia's fall. But this attempt at explanation has very little in common with the idealist interpretation of history which Hegel held. The weakness of the inner organization of Persia stands in a very dubious connection with the "Light of the Persians." Precisely where Hegel remains true to *idealism*, the best he is able to do is to hide that fact which needs explanation behind an idealistic curtain. In his hands, idealism invariably ends up this way.

Let us take as another example the question of the internal disintegration of Greece. The Greek world was, according to Hegel, the world of beauty "and of beautiful moral ethics."† The Greeks were a superior people, deeply devoted to their fatherland and capable of every self-sacrifice. But they achieved great feats "without Reflection."

For a Greek, "the fatherland was a necessity without which he could not live." Only afterward "did the sophists introduce principles"; there appeared "a subjective Reflection," "moral self-consciousness," the teaching that "each must behave in accordance with his convictions." From then on there set in the disintegration of the above-mentioned "beautiful moral ethics" of the Greeks; the "self-freeing of the inner world" led to the downfall of Greece.

*That is, the Chinese and Indian "world."

**As a Brahmin.

***That is, those nations which became part of the Persian kingdom.

†As is well known, Hegel drew a sharp distinction between morals and ethics.

One of the aspects of this inner world was *Reflection*, or thinking. Consequently, we meet here with the interesting historic phenomenon that the force of *thinking* acts, among other things, as a "principle of corruption." Such a view merits attention if only because it is considerably more profound than the one-sided view of the Enlighteners for whom success of thinking of any people must lead inevitably and directly to "progress."

Nevertheless, there still remains the problem—whence comes this "self-freeing of the inner world"? The idealistic philosophy of Hegel answers: "the Spirit could only for a short time remain on the plane of beautiful moral ethics." But this again is of course no answer, but merely a translation of the question into the philosophic language of Hegelian idealism. Hegel himself seems to feel this and therefore hastens to add that the "principle of disintegration *displayed itself first* in the external political development—in the contest of the states of Greece with each other, and the struggle of factions within the cities themselves." *(Ibid.*, p. 265.)

Anticipating the Materialist Interpretation

Here we find ourselves already on *concrete* historic soil. The struggle of "factions" inside the cities came, in the words of Hegel himself, as a result of the *economic* development of Greece. In other words, the struggle of political parties was only an expression of the unfolding *economic contradictions* in the Greek cities. And if we recall that the Peloponnesian war—as is clear from a reading of Thucydides—was only the class struggle which spread throughout Greece, then we will easily arrive at the conclusion that one must seek the principle of the disintegration of Greece in its *economic* history. Thus in Hegel we find the anticipation of the materialist interpretation of history, although to him the class struggle in Greece is only a manifestation of the "principle of disintegration."

To use Hegel's terminology, materialism manifests itself as the truth of idealism. And we continually run up against such surprises in the Hegelian philosophy of history. It is as if the greatest *idealist* had set himself the goal of clearing the road for *materialism*. When he speaks of the medieval cities, immediately after paying due tribute to idealism, he analyzes their history on the one hand as a struggle of citizens against the priesthood and the nobility, and on the other hand as a struggle of different strata of citizens among themselves, of "rich citizens against the common people."* When he speaks about the Reformation, he again first reveals to us the secrets of the "universal spirit," and then makes the following remark—entirely surprising on the lips of an idealist—regarding the spread of Protestantism:

> In Austria, in Bavaria, in Bohemia, the Reformation had already made great progress, and though it is commonly said that when truth has once penetrated men's souls, it cannot be rooted out again, it was indisputably stifled in the countries in question, by force of arms, by stratagem or persuasion. The Slavonic nations were

*Hegel himself explicitly explains the emergence of Sparta "as a result of the inequality of possessions."

agricultural. This condition of life brings with it the relation of lord and serf. In agriculture the agency of nature predominates; human industry and subjective activity are on the whole less brought into play in this department of labor than elsewhere. The Slavonians therefore did not attain so quickly or readily as other nations the fundamental sense of pure individuality—the consciousness of Universality . . . and could not share the benefits of dawning freedom.* (Ibid., p. 420.)

Economic Development as the Source

With these words Hegel tells us clearly that the explanation of the religious views and of all those liberating movements which arise in their midst, must be sought in the economic activity of the given people. But that is not all. Hegel's state reveals itself to be nothing else than *the product of the economic development*, although, according to his idealistic explanation, the state "is the actuality of the ethical Idea. It is ethical mind *qua* the substantial will manifest and revealed to itself, knowing and thinking itself and accomplishing what is known and in so far as it knows it." **

"A real state," Hegel says, "and a real government arise only after a distinction of estates has arisen, when wealth and poverty become extreme, and when such a condition of things presents itself that a large portion of the people can no longer satisfy its necessities in the way in which it has been accustomed to do." ("Philosophy of History," pp. 85-6.)

Exactly in the same manner Hegel considers the historic appearance of *marriage* to be closely related to the *economic* history of mankind:

The real beginning and original foundation of states has been rightly ascribed to the introduction of agriculture along with marriage, because the principle of agriculture brings with it the formation of the land and consequentially exclusively private property . . . ; the nomadic life of savages, who seek their livelihood from place to place, it brings back to the tranquillity of private rights and the assured satisfaction of their needs. Along with these changes, sexual love is restricted to marriage, and this bond in turn grows into care for a family, and personal possessions.†

We could cite many similar examples. But since space does not permit, we shall limit ourselves to denoting the significance Hegel attached to the "geographical basis of world history."

Much has been written *before* as well as *after* Hegel, regarding the significance of the geographic environment in the historical development of humanity. But just as up to Hegel, so after him, the researchers often sinned by having in mind the exclusively *psychological* or even *physiological* influence of the natural environment on man. They entirely forgot the influence this environment exerts on the development of the social *productive forces and, through them*, on all social relations of people along with all the ideological superstructures.* Hegel was entirely free of this great error in the *general posing* of the question, although not in this or that particular aspect. According to Hegel, there are three characteristic distinctions in geographic environment: (1) the arid elevated land with its extensive steppes and plains; (2) the valley-plains, criss-crossed by big rivers; and (3) the coastal regions directly adjoining the sea.

In the first, cattle-breeding predominates; in the second, *agriculture;* in the third, trade and handicraft. In conformity with these basic distinctions there are also the variously formed social relations of the people inhabiting these areas. The inhabitants of the plateaus—for example, the *Mongols*—lead a patriarchal, nomadic life and have no history in the real meaning of the word. Only from time to time, assembling in great masses, they descend like a storm on civilized land, leaving behind them everywhere devastation and destruction.** Civilized life begins in the valleys, which owe their fertility to the rivers.

Such a Valley-Plain is China, India . . . Babylonia . . . Egypt. In these regions extensive Kingdoms arise, and the foundation of great states begins. For agriculture, which prevails here as the primary principle of subsistence for individuals, is assisted by the regularity of seasons, which require corresponding agricultural operations; property in land commences, and the consequent legal relations . . . (Philosophy of History, p. 89.)

But the agricultural people inhabiting these valley-plains are characterized by great inertness, immobility, isolation; they are incapable of utilizing in their mutual relations all those means which nature provides. This shortcoming is foreign to the peoples who populate the coastal regions. The sea does not divide people but unites them. That is why it is precisely in coastal regions that civilization, and together with it human consciousness, reaches the highest degree of development. It is not necessary to go far for examples. It is sufficient to point to ancient Greece.

Perhaps the reader is acquainted with the book of L. Mechnikov, *Civilization and the Great Historical Rivers*, which appeared in 1889. Mechnikov indubitably has idealistic inclinations, but in general he nevertheless takes a materialist viewpoint. And what is the result? The view of this materialist on the historical significance of geographic environments coincides almost entirely with the views of the *idealist* Hegel, although Mechnikov undoubtedly would be very astonished to hear of this similarity.

Hegel also explains the appearance of inequality among more or less primitive societies as a result, in part, of the

*Hegel remarks: "In contemplating the restless and ever-varying impulses that agitate the very heart of these cities and the continual struggle of factions, we are astonished to see on the other side industry—commerce by land and sea—in the highest degree prosperous. It is the same principle of lively vigor, which, nourished by the internal excitement of question, produces this phenomenon." (Philosophy of History, p. 386.)

**Hegel's Philosophy of Right, translated by T. M. Knox, Oxford University Press, 1942, Sec. 257.)

†Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Sec. 203. There is no point to discussing the fact that Hegel's view on the primitive history of the family and property could not distinguish itself by any great definitiveness owing to the state of science at the time; but what is important is that he sensed where it is necessary to search for the key.

*Thus, for example, Montesquieu in his Esprit de Lois engages in many discourses on the influence of Nature on the physiology of man. He tries to explain many historical phenomena through such influence.

**Plateaus lead to narrow mountain valleys, inhabited by peaceable mountain peoples, herdsmen, engaged partially in agriculture. Such are the Swiss, Hegel says. Such people one also meets in Asia, but, on the whole, they are of no importance.

influence of geographical environment. Thus he shows that *before the time of Solon* the difference between estates in Athens (by "estates" Hegel designates the various more or less well-to-do classes of the population: the inhabitants of the plains, the hills and the shores) rests upon the difference in localities. And undoubtedly the difference in localities and the difference in *occupations* connected with them must have exerted a big influence on the *economic* development of primitive societies. Unfortunately, contemporary researchers very seldom consider this aspect of the question.

Hegel hardly concerns himself with *political* economy; but the genius of his mind in this case as in many others helped him grasp the most characteristic and most essential side of the phenomena. More clearly than any economist of his time, not even excluding Ricardo, Hegel understood that in a society based on private property the growth of wealth on one side must inevitably be accompanied by the growth of poverty on the other. He categorically asserts this both in his *Philosophy of History* and especially in his *Philosophy of Right*. According to him, "this dialectic"—namely, on the one side, a living standard for the majority of the population so low that they cannot adequately satisfy their needs, and, on the other side, a great concentration of wealth in comparatively few hands—must of necessity lead to a situation where civil society, despite *"the superfluity of wealth, is insufficiently wealthy,"* i.e., has not the means sufficient to eliminate the superfluity of poverty and of pauperized dregs *(des Pobels)*.

As a result of this, civil society* finds itself forced to go outside of its own boundaries and search for new markets, to turn to world trade and colonization. Of all the contemporaries of Hegel, Fourier alone was distinguished by such clarity of views, and understood as well the dialectic of bourgeois economic relations.

The reader has undoubtedly noted that, for Hegel, the proletariat is nothing more than *"Pobel,"* incapable of benefiting from the spiritual advantages of civil society. Hegel did not suspect how greatly the modern proletariat differs from the proletariat of the ancient world, say, the Roman proletariat. He did not know that in modern society the oppression of the working class inevitably arouses the opposition of this class, and that in this society the proletariat is destined to far outdistance the bourgeoisie in intellectual development. But after all, the Utopian socialists—for whom the proletariat also was no more than *"Pobel,"* deserving every sympathy and help, but incapable of any kind of initiative—did not know all this either. Only scientific socialism has been able to comprehend the great historic significance of the modern proletariat.

*Hegel has here in mind mainly England.

(Second part in next issue.)

January 5, 1938

Dear Comrade Shachtman,

I received your explanation of the misfortune with my article and I accept your propositions. I know that Comrade Wright is extremely careful and attentive and I am sure that he will help eliminate any further misunderstandings in my relationship with the New International.

Concerning my old speech about the Red Army, I didn't have the slightest initiative in the translation of it, and naturally you must yourself decide if and when you can publish it. But I regret that the editors' staff didn't answer Comrade Roe concerning the latter. A regular correspondence of the editorial board with authors, translators, and readers has the greatest educational value. It is absolutely necessary to have on the board a comrade who will conduct such a correspondence with the greatest attention to the contributors, especially those who are young and not sure of themselves.

I have read what you wrote to Joe about articles on Latin America for the New International. Everything will be done naturally in order to assure the necessary collaboration. But for the next period you have a considerable amount of articles or theses on these countries of Latin America. I have read them with the greatest interest and profit for myself. Don't you find it necessary to publish as early as possible the thesis written by Diego?

My best greetings to you and Comrade Edith.

LT:joe
No. 1-50-5

P.S. The proposition of Comrade James concerning a symposium of my books is unfortunately not acceptable because it would bring me into conflict with my different publishers and would interfere with the publication plans of Pioneer Publishers and others. Please communicate this to Eastman and to James, that I am categorically opposed to this plan.

No. 19-55-13

February 5, 1938

Dear Comrade Isaacs,

Thanks to the help of Rae I was able to write the preface to your book. I must confess that the work gave me some difficulties. At one time it seemed to me that I repeated commonplaces. At another time that I entered into too complicated general questions. But I contented myself with the assertion that first our "commonplaces" are not known by the greater part of your future readers and that secondly some complicated or abstract ideas of the preface will be illustrated by the content of your book. Well I did what I could under the given conditions. I am sending you the preface in Russian thus letting you take charge of the translation and reserving for us the privilege of criticizing.

I don't know if your contract with the editor hinders the publishing of the preface in a magazine? It would be only favorable for the book. I am not sure that it is possible to find a bourgeois magazine for this article. If not it could be published in the New International. But I leave the matter entirely with you.

Best greetings from Natalia and myself to Viola and you.

Yours comradely,

Coyoacan, D. F.
LT/joe

Leon Trotsky

THE MAN TROTSKY

I.

Rounding out his second year on the North American continent, Leon Trotsky, at 59, is as optimistic and energetic as in 1902 when as a 22 year old revolutionist he made his first audacious escape from Siberia.

Work on two major biographies -- one of Lenin and one of Stalin -- dictation at the rate of 1,000 words per day, careful perusal of the world press, checking and rechecking translations of his own works in five languages is only part of the daily routine of the ex-Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs.

Intrenched in the blue house which the Riveras have furnished for him in Coyoacan, Russia's ex-Commissar of War is more heavily guarded now than in the days of his power.

The elaborate flood lights lend the residence the appearance of a Hollywood movie theatre during a world premiere. But the sentry box on the roof, the high walls, the barred windows and doors, and the intricate alarm system sharply alter that impression.

The structure now bears a resemblance to a well-nigh impregnable fortress. A sentry booth on either side of the alcazar houses police armed with bayoneted rifles, automatics, and shrill whistles. This is Mexico's contribution to the protection of the noted exile.

A second line of defense is provided by inside guards composed of Trotsky's devoted and unflinching revolutionary followers who patrol

the grounds within. The well-armed secretarial staff helps the inside guards.

The muzzle of an automatic staring at us through a slight crack in the door was the response to our ringing. Apparently satisfied at the sight of Diego Rivera (who had driven me up from his home in San Angel), the inside guard quickly opened the door and as quickly shut it.

I was introduced to Joe Hansen - - a man of literary talent who had come from the Far West to be Leon Trotsky's English secretary. He in turn introduced me to Trotsky's tall reddish-blond French secretary, Jean Van Heijenoort, who led me into Trotsky's study.

The spectacle of a household of armed men was not calculated to soothe the nerves of an American girl and my uneasiness was heightened by the thought of the ordeal I would soon have to face. I, with little more than a year's study of Russian, dared to present myself for the post of private secretary to an acknowledged master of the language. I was nervous: would my Russian stand up?

I half regretted that I had become so bored with my job in the States that I had left it for adventure in Mexico. Through my mind flashed descriptions of Trotsky as "dictatorial and exacting," "a genius but a great egotist," "arrogant." I realized that I was actually afraid to meet the "Man of October" - - so called because the day of his birth, October 25, (modern calendar, November 7) coincided with the date of the successful Bolshevik revolution of 1917.

With military stride Trotsky advanced toward me. He shook my hand firmly. I was instantly struck by his tremendous head, the like of which I had never before seen, the high forehead, the lion-like skull crowned with silver grey hair flowing back as though just touched by a breeze, the set jaw and chin upon which the grey moustache and goatee

bristle. All of this was firmly set on enormous, sturdy shoulders.

A Titan towered above me and I felt the force of a great intellect. "Formidable," I whispered in French to Jean Van Heijenoort.

To Trotsky I spoke in Russian. He smiled - - the ingenuous smile of a pleased child - - and said that my Russian had a perfect "Manhattan accent." "But," he began in English, "you will do." Then he added that perhaps I wished to "try him out;" he was referring to his newly acquired English.

Trotsky left the room for a moment and returned with a jacket for me. Mexican evenings are cool but I was ebullient at meeting the famous exile and was not conscious of being chilly. How had he noticed it? There was an unexpected simplicity about Russia's former War Commissar that put me at ease, and I began to anticipate with pleasure the prospect of becoming his secretary.

But at dinner that evening my social poise suffered considerably when my mouth first came into contact with chile poblano. Even now I am not sure whether I swallowed the "flame projector," as I later named the dish. Trotsky remarked that his was an international house and, glancing at my plate, added, that no "national prejudices" were tolerated. The laughter at the table did not lighten my task for my tongue was literally burning when I had finished my chile poblano.

In spite of the spirit of gayety at the table I still felt somewhat uncomfortable because as a new member of the "family" I was under the surveillance of Trotsky's keen eyes. Before we had finished dinner I again felt his eyes measuring me; this time he disapproved of my extreme slenderness.

Solemnly but with a twinkle in his eye he summed up the situation: "R[redacted] - - she does not exist. She is just a mathematical abstraction."

Golden-haired Natalia Ivanovna (the wife of Leon Trotsky) took the

remark so seriously that I was given a double portion of chile poblano! Double portions had their effect and when I left this genial family I was 15 pounds the weightier...

II.

The following day I was initiated into the daily routine. L. D. - - as I soon learned to refer to Leon Davidovich Trotsky - - is up at 7:00. He waters the garden and takes a long walk in the patio. He is not to be disturbed because it is then that he plans the day's dictation, which begins at 9. Important articles and, of course, his major literary works are written in Russian. Letters are dictated in whatever language the addressees speak: Russian, German, French, English, Spanish.

Because Trotsky has written so voluminously I had the impression that he composed rapidly. However, he not only dictates slowly but works over the typed copy many times. After the transcript is handed to him for correction, he introduces so many changes that it is often hard to recognize the original. What was originally a page and what he returns to the secretary for retyping is not what she gave him, but something four times as long.

While the "collaborator" - - so he calls his secretary - - is making neat copies and dividing the "page" into four numbered ones, Trotsky strides in and out of the room and again adds and subtracts. The greater length of the final copy as compared to that of the original is not so much a result of polishing as it is of expansion of content.

Trotsky does not work from a written outline. What he dictates is thus the first "draft" of his thoughts. I found that the first dictation is often more flourishing than the final text in which he mercilessly cuts out all adjectives that are not absolutely essential. It is precision of expression that he strives for and the final text most

tersely expresses his thoughts.

In measured steps L. D. paces up and down the study while he dictates, weighing every word as he pronounces it. But there is nothing phlegmatic in this slow dictation. His low, calm tone serves to emphasize the limitations that conditions of exile impose upon a man of such dynamic energy. The beauty of the Russian language is enhanced by the eloquence of a master orator. There is no vanquishing the verve and sweep in his compositions which expound the cause of the world revolution.

During dictation Trotsky sometimes stops to examine his library - - long, plain shelves against the walls lined with the writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, his own works, and reports of the Congresses of the Communist International; other shelves are filled with works on economics, science, philosophy, psychoanalysis; and below these are books of fiction, mostly in French.

Trotsky is not only familiar with the contents of each book but the exact place it occupies on the shelves. He is quick to note any change in the arrangement, any new bindings, or - - calamity! - - a book missing.

At other times his eyes gaze into the patio where strange, primitive stone idols stand, grimly oblivious to the pungency of the jasmine, the roses and the oranges; on the high walls on which cluster bougainvillea; upon the horizon, beyond the horizon.

My first experience with the press began with the close of my first day's work. An interview had been granted a correspondent for a New York leading daily.

As a rule, journalists were granted the courtesy of interviewing Leon Trotsky in his study. But that night Diego and Freda (Rivera) were spending the evening with L. D. and Natalia Ivanovna, and hence Trotsky merely saw the reporter in my workroom.

When the reporter came, I gave him Trotsky's written answers to his written questions. He read them in my presence and signed a statement to the effect that these answers would be published in full and exactly as written. Trotsky came in and I introduced the two to each other.

I found the interview most interesting to watch and now, in the light of subsequent events, I cannot help but smile at the memory of it. Both in appearance and manner the correspondent was a little man. He seemed to have "melted" out of sight the moment the former War Commissar entered the room.

The reporter was so overwhelmed by the presence of Leon Trotsky that he dared no more than ask approbation for his "behavior:" Did Mr. Trotsky like his questions?

The ex-Commissar of Foreign Affairs smiled: "I answered them to the best of my ability."

The gentleman of the press looked foolish. At the conclusion of the ten minute conversation, he praised the "brilliant clarity" of Trotsky's answers. He begged forgiveness for being sentimental. "But it would mean a lot to me if I could have Mr. Trotsky's autograph."

Trotsky appended his signature to the statement, and returned to the Riveras in the study. The reporter was escorted through the other side of the patio. He was later to present this (not in the New York daily for which the interview was requested, but in a lurid Chicago monthly) as proof of the fact that Leon Trotsky and Diego Rivera were not on speaking terms!

That same correspondent did not stop with this figment of the imagination but so quoted statements of Trotsky as to give them a peculiar unreal twist. This feat was achieved by breaking up the quotations with the interpolations of the correspondent's own independent

- - save the mark! - - remarks. This also created the impression that the answers were given orally, and that the author of the article had had a lengthy session with Leon Trotsky, instead of a mere ten minutes.

There is no way for me to judge whether the actions of the New York (Chicago?) reporter were hypocritical while he talked with Trotsky, or whether he chose to forget what had occurred when it came to marketing his literary wares. Perhaps I have tarried too long with the puny, but this kind of reporting is typical of how interviews with Leon Trotsky are actually enacted and how they are prepared for consumption by the reading public. The knowledge of this revealed and flung to the winds the flimsy fabric of the descriptions of Trotsky I had read.

III.

In December of last year the press reported that Leon Trotsky and his staff were "vacationing." While we were driving out to the country, Trotsky asked: could I take dictation in the forest, that is, on my lap. I was about to answer in the affirmative when a gentle kick from Natalia reminded me that we were, after all, on vacation, and that the proper answer should be, "No."

Even this negative answer, which L. D. accepted, did not keep him from writing part of each day. When the two weeks' vacation came to an end, Trotsky had dictated three articles, of some 20 pages each, on widely different topics: Spain --the Last Warning, Behind the Ramparts of the Kremlin, and an introduction to Harold R. Isaacs book, The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution.*

Not having brought all our office supplies to the country, we had no sponge, and hence one morning I was licking the flap of an envelope prior to sealing it. At that moment L. D. came into the room, looked in

*Secker & Warburg, London.

utter astonishment at the contortions of my tongue, and exclaimed: "What savagery!"

I watched his now familiar vigorous stride as he walked out of the room. According to his high hygienic standards, licking an envelope was nothing less than barbaric. But he thought that he had been too brusque. When Trotsky has had occasion to be brusque with any of us, he is immediately contrite and seeks a basis for a "rapprochement."

In less than fifteen minutes he was back in my room with a big bouquet of flowers that he himself had picked. I liked the beautiful bouquet and was very eager to conclude a "rapprochement."

The Riveras arrived in the country and joined us in a hike through the woods. L. D., however, was skeptical about Diego remaining with us throughout the morning. Diego protested: he did wish to hike and did not want to paint. L. D. said, "Yes, yes, I know, Diego. You will be with us -- provided you do not meet a tree."

Diego Rivera did "meet a tree," and he and his easels sat down. We did not see either of them till twilight.

We were constrained to return to our home in Coyoacan somewhat earlier than we had anticipated as we had received information that an attempt was being prepared on the life of Leon Trotsky. (Walter Krivitsky who had refused to return to Russia during the wholesale recall of the diplomatic staff so informed Trotsky's son in Paris, Leon Sedoff.)

The GPU had increased its activity in Mexico by the importation of two professional cut-throats: a French agent who had been responsible for the murder at Lausanne, Switzerland, of Ignace Reiss (important GPU agent who had broken with Moscow and joined the Trotskyist Fourth International) and a petty thug from Philadelphia who, while in charge of the GPU in Spain, had been instrumental in causing the "disappearance"

of Trotsky's Czecho-Slovakian secretary, Irwin Wolf.

The murderous hand of the Stalinist GPU then extended to France where it perpetrated the gruesome murder -- a body found headless and legless in the Seine -- upon another of Trotsky's former secretaries, the young, talented German refugee, Rudolph Klement.

We had been sent a picture of those two members of the dark international mafia. One of the guards suggested that we use it in our target practice.

Not only could there be no laxity in our vigilance but extra precautions had to be introduced. I understood now the necessity of the heavy guarding and no longer felt ill at ease in our fortress.

The vacation over, the working day was normalized. During the day we had a rest period of an hour. L. T. spends his rest period reading newspapers, foreign -- Le Temps, The New York Times, Pravda, The Manchester Guardian -- as well as local.

Trotsky has an elaborate system of underscoring articles that he deems important: neat lead pencil marks, blue and red lines, and once in a while a remark, usually written in Russian, at the side of a paragraph. When we file away the papers -- which require a whole room -- we carefully examine the underlined articles for, in addition to geographical and chronological files, we maintain a special file, according to subject matter, of important articles.

When at the conclusion of the siesta work is resumed, it continues till 7 p.m. at which time we dine. After dinner Trotsky again reads -- magazines and books this time -- and most of us follow suit in our individual rooms.

I became absorbed in reading some of Trotsky's Russian works that had never been translated into English. The particular volume, Science

and Revolution, that held my attention contained a speech delivered to a chemical society, entitled Mendelyeev and Marxism. I decided to translate the lecture because it showed a side of Trotsky not generally known to the public who considers him a "politician."

The circumstances under which the speech was given intrinsically reveal the man Trotsky. In 1925 when the Stalinist bureaucracy had already loosed the fight against Trotsky, the latter resigned as People's Commissar of War. In order to embarrass him the bureaucracy gave him posts not related to each other and wholly unfamiliar to him : chairman of the technico-scientific board of industry. He thus found himself in charge of the scientific institutions.

In that capacity he addressed the Mendelyeev Congress on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences. Though he considered himself an amateur in this field, the lecture he gave is remarkable for its profound evaluation of the relationship of science and historical trends.

It is interspersed with characteristic flashes of humor: "Chemistry is a school for revolutionary thought not because of the existence of a chemistry of explosives -- explosives are far from always being revolutionary -- but because chemistry is, first of all, a science of the conversion of elements, and is thus dangerous to every kind of absolute or conservative thinking, cast in immobile categories." And, referring to Darwin's naive attempts to transfer the conclusions of biology into society, Trotsky said: "To interpret competition as a 'variety' of the biological struggle for existence is the same as to see only mechanics in the physiology of mating."

Having translated the speech on my own initiative, I was especially anxious to make a good impression and carefully compared the English

with the Russian text. I then asked Trotsky's opinion of the translation, without showing him the original.

When he returned the manuscript to me, he indicated one place and stated that there a sentence had been left out. I was astounded: was it possible that he so well recalled a speech made some thirteen years back and upon a subject in which he was an "amateur" that he remembered a sentence which I had left out in translation? I had heard of Trotsky's phenomenal memory but I was clearly skeptical of the manner in which this was being proven to me.

In defense of himself, he stated: "I do not remember exactly the statement but I think this is it..." He dictated the sentence.

Upon rechecking, I found it to be exactly as in the original!

IV.

The whole life of this affable, hard-working family was suddenly changed. From Paris came the news of the untimely death, under mysterious circumstances, of the eldest son of Leon Trotsky and Natalia Sedoff. Leon Sedoff had been their only child who hitherto had escaped the clutches of the GPU.

When they were exiled in 1927, Sergei, their younger son, a brilliant engineer, had remained in Russia. He thought that his non-interest in politics guaranteed his serving the Soviet Union without being persecuted. But he has since been arrested and has now "disappeared."

Zina, Trotsky's eldest daughter by his first wife, Alexandra Lvovna Sokolvskaya (who is an exile in Siberia because of "Trotskyism,") committed suicide when Stalin, after having granted her permission to leave the country for medical treatments in Berlin, vengefully refused her a visa to return to her home, her husband and children.

Yagoda, Yezhov's predecessor as head of the GPU, had driven

Trotsky's younger daughter, Nina, to a premature [illegible]

The death now of Leon Sedoff inflicted the deepest wound and in the most vulnerable spot. It came like a predetermined, insidiously planned feat of a master intriguant. Leon Davidovich and Natalia Ivanovna locked themselves into their room and would see no one.

For a whole week they did not come out of their room and only one person was permitted in -- the maid who brought them the mail, and food, of which they partook little.

Those were dismal days for the whole household. We did not see either L. D. or Natalia. We did not know how they fared and feared the consequences of the tragedy upon them.

We moved typewriters, the telephone, and even door bells to the guard house, out of sound of their room. Their part of the house became deathly quiet. There was an oppressive air, as if the whole mountain chain of Mexico were pressing down upon this house.

The blow was the harder not only because Leon Sedoff had been their only living child, but also because he had been Trotsky's closest literary and political collaborator. When Trotsky was interned in Norway, gagged, unable to answer the monstrous charges levelled against him in the First (August 1936) Moscow Trials, Sedoff had penned Le Livre Rouge,* which, by brilliantly exposing the Moscow falsifiers, dealt an irreparable blow to the prestige of the GPU.

In the dark days after the tragic news had reached us, when L. D. and Natalia Ivanovna were closeted in their room, Trotsky wrote the story of their son's brief life. It was the first time since pre-revolutionary days that Trotsky had written by hand.

*First appeared in Russian as special issue of the Opposition Bulletin (organ of the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists), edited by Sedoff in Paris.

On the eighth day Leon Trotsky emerged from his room. I was petrified at the sight of him. The neat, meticulous Leon Trotsky had not shaved for a whole week. His face was deeply lined. His eyes were swollen from too much crying.

Without uttering a word, he handed me the hand-written manuscript, Leon Sedoff, Son, Friend, Fighter, which contained some of Trotsky's most poignant writing.

Having learned to know Trotsky as well as I had, I knew that every word, every comma had a meaning and that each word that was finally chosen was the most meagre he could find to express the profoundest sorrow.

"Together with our boy has died everything that still remained young within us."

But even this great grief did not dim Trotsky's ardor for the revolutionary cause. The pamphlet was dedicated "to the proletarian youth."

It ended with the following appeal: "Revolutionary youth of all countries! Accept from us the memory of Leon, adopt him as your son -- he is worthy of it -- and let him henceforth participate invisibly in your battles, since destiny has denied him the happiness of participating in your final victory."

Though Trotsky has a strong physique, he suffers from a peculiar ailment that saps much of his energy and often keeps him confined to bed. The new sorrow resulted in the recurrence of his illness. A complete rest was prescribed by the doctor.

The following morning the papers carried the announcement of the Third (March 1938) Moscow Trials, scheduled to open within two short weeks of the death of Leon Sedoff. Was this merely a coincidence? We who knew that the GPU dogged Sedoff's steps for years were firmly convinced otherwise.

Hadn't the memory -- and the circulation -- of Le Livre Rouge

so stung the GPU that they wished to rid themselves of this valiant fighter before the new "Trials" were staged? Hadn't they hoped that the tragedy would stun Trotsky,* would render him incapable of answering the present accusations?

If the GPU counted on that result, they underestimated their opponent. No personal tragedy could daunt Trotsky when the important task of exposing the greatest frame-up in history cried for accomplishment.

It was a joy to have Trotsky working with us again and to note the speed, accuracy, perseverance and unflagging energy of this modern Prometheus.

Trotsky labored late into the night. One day he was up at 7a.m. and wrote until midnight. The next he arose at 8 a.m. and worked straight through to 3 a.m. the following morning. The last day of that week he did not go to sleep until five in the morning. He drove himself harder than any of his staff.

Leon Trotsky wrote an average of 2,000 words a day. He gave statements to the NANA, the UP, the AP, Havas Agency, France, the London Daily Express, and to the Mexican newspapers. His declarations were also issued in the Russian and German languages.

The material was dictated in Russian. While I transcribed the dictation, the other secretaries checked every date, name and place mentioned at the trials.

*Before he was murdered, Ignace Reiss told us that in the GPU circles Leon Sedoff was referred to as "Synok" (little son), and elaborated upon thus: "'Synok' is a good worker; it would be difficult for the 'Old Man' (meaning Trotsky) without him."

Trotsky demanded meticulous, objective research work. The accusers had to be turned into the accused.

Leon Trotsky at no time let the subjective factor enter into his analysis of the "confession." He was deeply incensed when the papers printed "rumours" that Stalin had at no time been a revolutionist but had always been an agent of the Tsar and was now merely wreaking vengeance.

When I brought L. D. the newspapers that carried this explanation of the blood purge, he exclaimed, "But Stalin *was* a revolutionist."

"Wait a moment," he called to me as I was leaving the room, "we'll add a postcript to today's article."

He dictated: "The news has been widely spread through the press to the effect that Stalin supposedly was an agent-provocateur during Tsarist days, and that he is now avenging himself upon his old enemies. I place no trust whatsoever in this gossip. From his youth Stalin was a revolutionist. All the facts about his life bear witness to this. To reconstruct his biography *ex post facto* means to ape the present Stalin, who from a revolutionist become the leader of the reactionary bureaucracy."

To us the "trials" did not lack a humorous angle. The chimerical accussation that Trotsky earned a million dollars as an "agent of Hitler" seemed like a monstrous joke at the expense of this household that is perenially "broke." Trotsky's literary earnings, and they are by no means fabulous, support us all.

L.D. himself is completely unaware of his material surroundings. I believe comforts would distract him.

He once overheard Natalia and me discussing the possible purchase of a soft chair for him. (The chairs in his study are all of plain wood.) He was shocked at our contemplating the purchase of such a "luxury." What is more, he added, he did not like soft chairs; those he had were best for working.

It isn't only that the furnishings are very unpretentious but that often we do not have enough money for the simplest necessities for the table. At the time of the trials we were forced to cut eggs and butter from our breakfast menu and meat from our dinner.

This "million" was a thicrl enough to us.

Imitating Trotsky's military stride, a burst into the kitchen. There stood the diminutive, charming Natalia Ivanovna. It is her quiet, efficient way of doing her work -- whether it is typing his diary, (for his autobiography Trotsky had liberally drawn from it), helping us in our research work, controlling the purse strings, or managing the kitchen that makes her indispensable, though inconspicuous.

With a most serious mien, I demanded two eggs and buttered toast for breakfast. Natalia Ivanovna was perplexed. She thought that I should get such a morning meal instead of merely cereal (mush we called it), roll and coffee. But -- but until the money came in for yesterday's article, she could not promise me that I would get it. She assured me that the London paper had promised to cable the money that very day.

"But," I insisted, "why do we need to wait for that money when Trotsky has 'earned a million'?"

"Oh," she said, much relieved, "those negodyai.*"

After all the strictly political articles I had been typing, it was a delight to hear this simple an expression about the well-fed Thermidorians entrenched in the Kremlin.

Trotsky's phenomenal memory was of great assistance, not only to his extraordinary political perspicacity, but also to his secretarial staff who searched for old documents, as some of the ludicrous charges about Trotsky's attempt to "assassinate" Stalin date back to 1919 when Trotsky was in power and Stalin a nonentity.

*Scoundrels

Credit should, of course, be likewise accorded to the Kremlin slanderers who assisted us greatly by repeating dates and places already refuted in the first two trials (August 1936 and January 1937).

It took Moscow over a year to complete the new frame-up and inquisitorially extract the new "confessions" but Trotsky had to demolish the calumny just as fast as he read the press account of each court session!

Even during this trying week Trotsky's infectious optimism was ever present and inspired us all. He was asked whether "Pessimistic conclusions in regard to socialism do not flow from the Moscow trials and from the verdict of the Commission?"

Trotsky replied: "No. I do not see any basis for pessimism. It is necessary to take history as it is. Humanity moves forward as did some pilgrims: two steps ahead, one step back. During the time of the backward movement, all seems lost to skeptics and pessimists. But this is an error of historical vision. Nothing is lost. Humanity has developed from the [illegible] to the Comintern. It will advance from the Comintern to actual Socialism. The judgment of the Commission demonstrates once more that the correct idea is stronger than the most powerful police force. In this conviction lies the unshakable basis of revolutionary optimism."

V.

The week of the "trials" was over. The secretarial staff was ready to slide back and do nothing.

But L. D. announced that he would now resume work on the life of Lenin, which he had been constrained to abandon since his internment in Norway. Simultaneously he would write a biography of Stalin, a sociological and psychological study of the man who "from a revolutionary became the leader of a reactionary bureaucracy."

The verdict of "Not Guilty" handed down by the International Commission of Inquiry headed by Dr. Dewey.

L. D. emphasized how glad he was that no more of his time need be spent exposing frame-ups. Now he could devote himself to "real work." We marvelled at the energy of Trotsky. He is 53, an exile, and has just suffered the death of his son.

"I told Natalia of the death of our son -- in the same month of February in which 26 years ago she brought to me in jail the news of his birth. Thus ended for us the day of February 16, the blackest day in our personal lives."

We of the younger generation were fagged out by the week's speed and strain and thought we deserved laurel for our accomplishments. But to the indefatigable Trotsky it was just something that took precious time from his major literary works!

When Trotsky was asked whether he didn't think his personal fate pathetic, he very firmly replied in the negative. No, he said, he did not view the world from a personal viewpoint; it was the tide of history and we had to know how to swim against the current as well as with it.

We knew, of course, that his whole life dramatically illustrates that Trotsky can swim against the stream. We recapitulated the main events of his life from the time he first entered the revolutionary movement. He was eighteen then, and for participating in a strike, was arrested and exiled. But Lev Davidovich Bronstein assumed the name of his jail guard, Trotsky, and made an audacious escape from Siberia.

When he was 26, in 1905, he tore up the Manifesto of the Tsar, and became the president of the first Petersburg Soviet of Workers and Peasants Deputies. The period of reaction that followed the failure of the revolution demoralized many an old revolutionist. But to the young Trotsky imprisonment and exile was a period of "leisure" in which to hammer out a theory (the theory of the "permanent revolution") which would assure success to the next revolution.

1905 was merely a "dress rehearsal" for the 1917 Revolution which, with Lenin, he led successfully.

When the failure of the revolution in other countries made fertile soil for bureaucratization to flourish in Russia, Trotsky continued his Spartan way of living, and fought the bureaucracy. When Stalin (whom Trotsky has called the "organizer of defeats") rode into power on a wave of defeats, and Trotsky found himself an exile for the third time in his life -- the Tsar had exiled him twice -- he turned to his one remaining weapon, the pen. Yes, Trotsky can swim against the current.

We knew these events of Trotsky's life and a recapitulation of them helped us understand the Trotsky of today. Still we wondered, didn't he miss his life in power?

But Leon Trotsky draws no line of demarcation between his life in exile and his life in power. It was theory, he maintains, which answered the desires of the masses for freedom, which inspired them with a will to power, and with will to power came the weapons for it. And it is the word of class truth which will again turn the tide.

I could not participate in the meticulous, objective research work on the life of Stalin which was put on the order of the day because word had reached me of the death of my father. I decided to return to the States.

When I arrived in New York, I heard that another tragedy had occured in my family: my brother met death in an auto accident. I immediately left for Chicago where my mother was at the time. There a letter from Trotsky was waiting for me.

"Dear Rae," the handwritten Russian note said, "Natalia and I were shaken by the news of the death of your brother. What can one say?... Two blows fall upon your family in so short a time. Your mother is especially

to be pitied; for her it is hardest of all.

"Dear Mac, we wish you strength and courage in face of it all. Natalia and I express our warmest, our most sincere sympathy to all members of your family and, you, dear Mac, we firmly embrace.

"Your, L. D."

Even my mother who is a religious woman to whom Trotsky is merely an "infidel" could not but be moved by the warm note. "How" she asked, "can a great man like that be so simple?"

"It is his simplicity which makes him great," I answered. And yet it is a trait the world has overlooked in Trotsky. I, too, had been wary of his "egotism," his "coldness." Though his greatness had inspired me with a desire to work for him, I feared his "dictatorial" methods. But his simplicity had quickly dissipated that wrong impression.

We -- his secretariat -- felt uncomfortable when he referred to us as his "collaborators." We appreciated his magnanimity but naturally considered the appellation fantastically exaggerated. But he meant it genuinely enough. He never regarded us as people who worked "for" him. He considered us members of his family who assisted him in his literary creations.

I know now the simple, personal traits in Trotsky. They do not detract from his greatness but make him, oh, so human.

It is his simplicity, the devotion to one cause throughout his life, his fervent belief that the revolution which began in Russia is but a link in the "permanent revolution," the world socialist revolution, that makes of him not a lone exile but a power.

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