

WHAT IS MARXISM ?

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CONTENTS

Page

Preface	1
Psychological foundation and origins of Marxism	1
Marxism as a Millenarian Teaching	2
II. Materialistic foundation of Marxism	5
1. Historic background of Marxism	5
2. Marxist conception of history and society	7
(i) Historic Materialism	8
(ii) Dialectic Materialism	9
3. Marxist economic theory	10
(i) The Labour Theory of Value	10
(ii) The Law of Concentration of Capital	13
(iii) Proletarianisation of Masses	13
4. Marxist ideal of future society	14
Marxism and Leninism	14
(i) Economic Order	15
(ii) Family, School and Education	16
(iii) The State	16
5. Marxist Ethics and Positive Values	17
Divinity of Mankind	17
Marxist anti-religious tendency and its causes	18
Absolutisation of earthly values	20
New conception of humanity and welfare	20
Marxist positive values	20
(i) Freedom	20
(ii) Equality	20
(iii) Earthly Creation	21
(iv) Science	21
(v) Industrialisation and Mechanisation	21
(vi) Collectivism	21
(vii) Society	22
(viii) Progress	22
6. Ways towards Socialism	23
Marxist Tactics	23
Class Interest and Class Struggle	23
(i) Evolutionary or Opportunistic Marxism	24
(ii) Revolutionary Marxism (Communism and Syndicalism)	25
Actual situation and history of Marxism	27
First International	27
Second International	28
Third or Communist International	28
Lands:	
a) Germany	28
b) France	28
c) Italy	28
d) Great Britain and America	29
e) U.S.S.R.	29

1.

MARXISM.

Marxism is not simply an economic theory. It is a new outlook on life (Weltanschauung), a new philosophy, and above all, a message of a new world. It is deeply rooted in the past and in the present. Moreover it is undoubtedly exercise considerable influence on the future.

The present essay aims at giving a general outline of Marxism as a new message to humanity. It therefore strives to describe all sides of the Marxist theory, emphasizing the most important ones.

Marxism defines itself as scientific Socialism, and draws a distinctive line of demarcation between itself and its predecessor - Utopic Socialism. However, the relationship between these two movements is far closer than the Marxist thinks. It is impossible to understand Marxism without a clear notion of the Utopic Socialistic teachings of the XIXth Century which form its context. But this essay, in view of the space allotted, is unable to deal with these teachings, and simple references will be made to them any time when the explanations of separate elements of Marxism may necessitate it.

This essay contains no criticism of Marxism. Its aim is a purely descriptive one. Also it deals with Marxist theory and not with Marxist practice. This essay is in no way a new investigation, and does not pretend to contain discoveries. It is simply a short and systematic exposition of Marxism based on some outstanding books concerning this problem.

I.

Every social movement has two sides. One is irrational and is rooted in the emotional dynamic which makes people adhere to this particular movement and not to any other. This emotional side is paramount for the mentality and psychology of the promoters and followers of the movement. The other side is the rational explanation of this dynamic - the theory. Therefore these two elements may be called the psychological basis and ideology of a social teaching or movement.

The driving motive and the theory, psychology and ideology, the irrational and rational elements do not necessarily consistently coincide. Sometimes they may even be contradictory. The theory may refute the fundamental psychological driving motives. Such contradictions are very evident in the case of Marxism.

Let us try to forget for a moment the official theory of Marxism. Let us look directly into its fundamental psychological tendencies, which fall outside the boundaries of the scientific speculations of Marxism and even outside the consciousness of the Marxists themselves. Then we shall see that Marxism is a new form (which is determined by the epoch of its creation) of one of the oldest social religious movements, based on the myth of paradise lost and regained, on the faith in a new and happy world.

This faith exists in all the religions of the world. It is inherent in human psychology itself as a longing for universal happiness on earth. When this longing is associated with an objective religious belief it comes to the surface of consciousness as a religious teaching. But when detached from its religious roots

this faith subsists in the human consciousness or subconsciousness, and thus assumes externally a non-religious, or even anti-religious, aspect.

In its purely religious form, this faith is especially strong in Judaism and its constant expectation of a Redeemer - the Messiah. Christianity inherited this faith from Judaism and incarnated it in the teaching of Millenarianism, which was condemned by the Church but which has survived, in one form or another, till the present day. The materialistic interpretation of Christian Millenarianism is affecting the psychological depths of Marxism and has more influence on its teaching than all its scientific speculation.

What is the essence of Millenarianism?

At the creation of the world man was sinless. But after the Fall evil entered the world and conquered it. The advent of the Saviour destroyed potentially the sin. He created a small community of righteous. But sin continues to exist in the world around them. Mankind is divided into two groups: the good and the bad, the righteous and sinners. The power is in the hands of the sinners who are oppressing the righteous. Evil, hatred, dissension and misery are overflowing the world. The aim and duty of the community of the righteous is to rally, to stand firm and to await the second advent of the Saviour in order to become His followers and assistants. These conditions will last till the second advent. On that day the Saviour will definitely destroy sin and the sinners. Together with the righteous He will establish a visible Kingdom on earth which will last a thousand years - till the Judgment Day. This period will be the reign of love, solidarity, happiness and abundance of all earthly goods.

During the dark and turbulent periods of history, on the threshold of new epochs, at the moments of deep changes, when people felt the end of the world to be at hand, there has always been a revival of Millenarianism in the form of revolutionary social movements. The leaders of these movements felt themselves to be those elect righteous who must rise, not following their own desire, but fulfilling the will of Providence, in order to destroy sinners and the entire sinful order of the world, and to establish the Millenium. These Millenarian tendencies were manifested by several mediaeval sects. They broke out in direct revolutionary local action during the Reformation. Thomas Muentzer and John of Leyden made an attempt to realise practically, by means of violent revolution, the thousand-year Kingdom of the Righteous on earth (x). The Levellers made a similar attempt during the English Revolution of 1642.

Up to Lilburn - the leader of the Levellers, revolutionary Millenarianism appeared constantly in its purely religious form. In the French Revolution of 1789 the psychological basis remained the same, but the ideology had changed:

(x) It is very interesting to note that all Millenarian theories, in their application to social and economic life, were imbued with communistic tendencies. Thus Thomas Muentzer proclaimed, 300 years before St. Simon and Marx, one of the fundamental principles of socialism: "To everybody according to his capacities."

religion was replaced by Rationalism, and the thousand-year Kingdom of Christ and His Righteous by the reign of the Deity of Reason.

The immediate connection of Marxism with Millenarianism is extremely obvious. The revolutionary Communism and Socialism of the 1830s and 1840s, which have given birth to Marxism, were imbued with Millenary tendencies in a far more open and clear-cut form than the revolutionary passion of the Jacobins.

Thus, describing the main tendencies of the revolutionary circles of Paris, Ruge wrote to Feuerbach in a letter dated May 15th 1834: "Two statements... are being expressed here: firstly that the present bourgeois domination will be destroyed by bloody catastrophe, and secondly that the Millenium of real freedom and equality is at hand".

One of the predecessors of Marx - the Communist, Wertling - was no less definite in his statement: "I see a new Messiah who is coming with a sword to fulfil the teaching of the first One. In His valiance He will place Himself at the head of a revolutionary army; He will break in pieces the decadent structure of the old social order; He will drown all tears in the sea of oblivion and will transform the earth into paradise".

The personal friend and collaborator of Marx - Engels - uses the same language: "Our calling is to give our lives in the last holy struggle, which will be followed by a thousand-year Kingdom of Freedom."

The same motive sounds rather strange on the lips of the materialist Trotsky - the first leader of anti-religious propaganda of the U.S.S.R.: "Whatever the priests of all denominations may utter about a paradise in the future life, we maintain that we are striving to create a real paradise on this earth. Not for a second can we lose sight of our great ideal, the most beautiful of all those for which humanity has ever longed. Let us take the old religious teachings, the teaching of Christ; the most beautiful, the most noble elements contained in this teaching are incorporated in our teaching of Socialism".

In 1929 James P. Thompson - one of the founders of the American I.W.W., repeated the same idea: "The coming of the Proletariat is the coming of the world's real saviours. Their triumph will mean the end of the world's last class struggle."

Marx and Engels were disciples of Feuerbach. They created the materialistic and atheistic branch of Socialism. But fundamentally their teaching remained the old revolutionary Millenarianism in which Divine Providence and the Divine Economy, i.e. the Divine Plan for the salvation of humanity, were replaced by an elementary and impersonal historic process.

Anticipating the further, and more detailed, description of Marxism, we can outline here the general scheme of the Marxist teaching as laid down in "The Communist Manifesto" (1847-48) i.e. before Marx formulated his theory of "economic materialism" and of "surplus value".

At the beginning of history there was a relatively sinless period - the epoch of primitive economy. But then came the Fall; a source of evil came into the world in the form of private property and money. From that time on the history of

mankind became a history of misery, injustice, exploitation and oppression of man by man - evils which have divided into two main classes: the oppressors and the oppressed, the exploiters and the exploited. "The Communist Manifesto," as well as the whole of Marxist literature, especially that of a propagandist nature, applies to these two classes a definite ethical appreciation. The exploiters, the oppressors, the capitalists - are bad and are sinners. The exploited, the oppressed, the Proletariat, are good and righteous. The present world is plunged in sin, for sinners are ruling the righteous. But these conditions will not last for ever. The righteous have a joyful promise. Like Divine Providence in the case of religious Millenarianism, so in the teaching of Marxism the inevitable historic process - the laws of which were discovered by Marx (in Millenarianism it was the prophetic vision) - will lead to the destruction of evil and of its Kingdom, for there will come a Redeemer and a Saviour. This Saviour is the elect class of the Proletariat which, by changing its own situation, will redeem and transform the whole of Mankind.

This future transformation dictates a due behaviour to the righteous, the Proletariat. They must rally, stand firm, realise their mission as that of an elect class and prepare for the last struggle. When the time is ripe, a definite historical catastrophe (social revolution) will take place. The elect class of the righteous will destroy the sinners; they will not act on their own behalf, but they will be the executors of an elementary historic process. They will establish the dictatorship of the Proletariat - the Government of the righteous - which will lead to the classless society. The whole history of the world will change. Evil and its source - private property - will be abolished. Instead of hatred, egoism and greed, there will act in the world love, solidarity and altruism. There will begin an epoch of general happiness, welfare and plenty in all things - all these conceived in a purely materialistic, eudemonistic sense.

One need only compare the general scheme of Marxist prophecy with that of the Millenarian in order to see a striking resemblance in all points. The same psychological and irrational motives are at work in both movements.

The hidden Millenarian basis of Marxism which erupts in its separate assertions and actions is extremely important. Without this basis it is impossible to understand Marxism, and especially the psychological motive of the Marxists.

This hidden basis explains the tremendous interior dynamic force and the fanaticism of Marxism (psychologically these are of a purely religious nature) which are contradictory, it would seem, to its official materialism. This basis is the source of heroism and self-sacrifice, which are incompatible with materialistic eudemonism. This basis determines the unshakable faith in the coming realm of socialism, and, what is still more important, that this realm will bring about general happiness and welfare (this shall be, for the inevitable historic process - the former Divine Providence - is working towards this end). On this Millenarian basis is anchored the conviction that the Proletariat has the supreme right of terror and of the sacred hatred; (the Proletariat is but fulfilling its mission - the angels on the Judgment Day must destroy the sinners and not pity and save them). Finally this basis is creating the revolutionary pathos of Marxism. For Marxism the coming Social Revolution is not an external change, but the end of history, the beginning of life on a new and transfigured plan, a real new earth and new heaven.

The Millenarian faith breathes in the words of "The International" to the tune of which Marxists went joyfully to death on the barricades or in the civil wars:

This will be the last, decisive fight;
With the International all mankind shall rise.

This unshakable conviction, which is playing the decisive part in all battles for Marxism, is the product of faith, and not of cold scientific investigation.

II.

Social revolutionary Millenarianism passed through various phases. In Marxism it assumed a materialistic form determined by scientific speculation. This materialistic side is no less typical of Marxism - both in the sociological and psychological aspects - than its unconscious Millenarian tendencies. The originality of Marxism consists just in this conjunction of two contradictory elements.

Therefore, our aim is now to give an outline not of the irrational but of the rational basis of Marxism.

1.

Like every doctrine, Marxism is determined, to a very considerable extent, by the epoch of its birth, i.e. by those political, economic and social conditions under which it was created, as well as by those ideological movements which were influencing, if not the actual situation, then at least the spirits and minds of people longing for a change. These ideological movements thus played a role in the origins of Marxism as important as that played by the concrete political, economic and social forces.

In what follows, when explaining one or another element of Marxism, it will be necessary for us to refer to the place of Marxism in history. In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, we prefer to group together various tendencies which were prevailing in Western Europe at the time of the first formulation of Marxism, and afterwards to make simple references to this exposition. It goes without saying that this exposition is extremely schematic and far from being complete; all tendencies are taken only in their context with Marxism.

existence

Marxism came into ~~existence~~ in the late forties of the last century. Its authors - Marx and Engels - were true children of their epoch. The middle of the XIXth century was a time of turmoil and of "revaluation of all values." The future was dark and uncertain. Out of the nebulous "to-morrow" only a few fundamental values seemed clear to those people who looked into the future and longed for a radical change.

In political life the new forms of society proclaimed by the French Revolution as an absolute truth proved abortive. The Jacobins had full opportunity of putting their political ideas into practice; this attempt resulted in a military dictatorship and Napoleonic wars. But, on the other hand, all attempt to restore the old order - whether in its absolute form (Bourbon Monarchy) or in a form adapted to new conditions (the July Monarchy) was equally a failure; the faith in their divine origin and the right for existence had already vanished. Politics overstepped the limits of nationality, and pan-European interests came

to the forefront. These conditions called forth a revolutionary wave, a negation of all existing orders and teachings. They called forth a belief that only a radical catastrophe could bring about the realisation of unrealisable longings born out of the Great Revolution.

A similar turmoil and revolution in all values were still more evident in economic life. After the Industrial Revolution, capitalism entered its heroic period - a period of rapid and apparently limitless growth. Technics were advancing from one revolution to another. Every new technical discovery changed the whole structure of the economic order. Periods of depression followed periods of prosperity. The whole economic life of Europe was passing through the stage of feverish development which seemed to be independent of any rational planning and prevision. The rapid introduction of machinery was making human labour impersonal and was constantly accelerating the tempo of production.

In connection with this impetuous growth of capitalism, and as its social consequence, towards the middle of the XIXth century the Proletariat became definitely amalgamated (and this was the most important factor in the creation of Marxism). Millions of people - former peasants and artisans - were torn away from their previous work and thrown into feverish economic activity like a herd of cattle without speech or rights, as an Army of Labour. By the force of an elementary historical process, which remained incomprehensible for them, these people were uprooted from their habits and traditions, from all natural and organic forms of life, and were transplanted into the slums of the industrial cities. In spite of formal political liberties, the wage-relationships of economic activity transformed them into actual slaves. Workmen ceased to be men and became units of work-power which were bought and sold on the market. As the result of a constant and rapid proletarianisation the supply of labour was constantly exceeding the demand; the labouring class was constantly sinking deeper and deeper into misery and destitution, and became the object of unlimited exploitation (a fifteen- or even sixteen-hour day without holidays, women's labour, child-labour, sweated wages, insanitary conditions of work, total lack of social legislation, prohibitions of Trade Unions, etc., etc). Gradually there was created a new class of people whose situation was so desperate that they had nothing to lose and nothing to fear. The consciousness of a difference existing between their formal political liberty and their actual economic slavery engendered in this class a tremendous resentment against everybody who was placed above them, and developed in them a complex of rebellion, hatred and lust after destruction.

This general political, social and economic situation created a new psychology which at the beginning became common among the upper classes, but then gradually passed on to the Proletariat.

After the high-tide of revolutionary passion there came the ebb. The interest in political action was replaced by the slogan "enrichissez-vous!" The "spirit of capitalism" moulded the whole European Culture of the XIXth century. Material interest, material welfare and utility were given the central position. A rapid development of science, especially in its practical applications, entailed on one hand the practical, naturalistic and mechanistic conception of life, and on the other hand a faith in the absolute truth and unlimited possibilities of science and technology. This new mentality considered as real only those phenomena which could be measured in exact figures

of volume, size, weight and price; that is, the so-called quantitative appreciation of life. Materialistic eudemonism, intellectualism and mechanisation of life became the very foundations of the new bourgeois culture.

This new mentality on the one hand, and the constantly increasing misery and social injustice on the other, called forth a reaction which was manifested in three main movements, the separate elements of which were inextricably interwoven:

- a) political revolutions, the wave of which swept over the whole of Europe;
- b) classical idealistic philosophy, Romanticism, the new mysticism, and a strong bias to idealise the past (especially mediaeval culture);
- c) Utopian Socialism, the foundations of which were laid down by various thinkers of the XVIIIth century, but which assumed its definite shape in the course of the first half of the XIXth century.

Marxism is connected - to some extent or other - with all these movements, and, above all, with the Utopian Socialism which contains all the main elements of Marxist teaching.

Without discussing Utopian Socialism at length, we may outline here its main characteristics:

- a) a strong revolutionary, Millemarian passion;
- b) rejection of the present and of the past, with their injustice and evil;
- c) disillusionment concerning purely political action; distinction between formal and actual freedom; conviction that the social and economic problems are paramount;
- d) a new ideal of society based on social and economic justice.

In spite of a revolutionary pathos and a full rejection of the bourgeois society and bourgeois culture, the main values of socialism were inevitably tainted by the general tendencies of the epoch during which its theory was formulated. Thus the bourgeois conceptions and appreciations described above - namely the quantitative appreciation of life, materialistic eudemonism, intellectualism and the natural mechanistic conception of life - were embodied in the ideal of the future socialist society.

2.

Begin here

All the principal elements of Marxism already existed at the time when Marx and Engels formulated their teaching in their "Communist Manifesto." These elements were contained in Utopian Socialism, in classical political economy, in the bourgeois theories of history, in the German idealistic philosophy, in the materialistic teaching of Feuerbach, in the natural sciences, etc.

However, the historic role of Marx and Engels does not become less important because of this fact. They were the first to bring all these elements together, to provide them with a scientific basis and to penetrate them by one spirit. Out of the scattered bricks they constructed one homogeneous and monolithic edifice - Marxism - which has survived till the present day.

They defined their teaching as "scientific socialism," having proclaimed materialistic science as an absolute and infallible truth. At the present stage of scientific development this absolutisation of science seems naive. Hundreds and thousands of volumes have already been published, all containing scientific criticisms of Marxism. Some of its assertions can be considered as definitely refuted. Some others have remained valid till the present day. At any rate, taking for granted that every scientific theory is relative, it is impossible to deny the right of Marxism to be called a scientific doctrine. Both political economy and history were considerably influenced by Marx and his followers.

Utopian Socialism was based primarily on an ideal, on a rejection of the present social order and the desire to replace it by another one. The main motive was more emotional than rational. As outlined above, psychologically Marxism is also based on the irrational elements. But officially it rejected them and proclaimed its scientific nature; for Marxism, the fall of capitalism and the advent of the new socialistic classless society are the result of scientific investigation and not of emotional longing. The first important achievement of Marx was the creation of the materialistic conception of history.

The middle of the XIXth century was an epoch of rapid development of natural sciences. Newtonism and Darwinism gradually became the prevailing theories. The general tendency was to discover iron laws in all branches of science.

As summarized that of nature. Marx applied the method of natural sciences to history and sociology. Thus he naturalised the historic and sociological process. *human* According to his teaching the development of society is determined by the same immutable and iron laws as the development of the non-organic world. History is a chain of causes and results which are independent of human will.

This assertion is based on three main points:

- 1) all human activity is driven by natural and material desires;
- 2) therefore idealism and ideals are only a disguise for these natural causes;
- 3) events which are predestined by the historic process will inevitably happen, regardless whether people want them or not. Thus the human personality became the object and not the subject of the historic process.

Having affirmed the natural consequentiality of the development of society, Marx had to discover also the energy and the fundamental forces which are driving this development. According to his statement, the economic activity directed to the maintenance of material life lies at the basis of human existence and wholly determines it. Sociologically this economic activity becomes manifest as productive forces which are the only real forces and the only real basis for the historic development of society. Various combinations of the productive forces are creating economic relationships between various members of society. These economic relationships are also the only real ones. Religion, philosophy and culture are simply ideological super-structures on these economic relationships.

In other words, the immediate material interest of man being refracted in human consciousness creates a whole range of abstract conceptions which assume psychologically an objective and absolute sense. But in reality these conceptions are only a mirage; there is no reality outside the human brain which would correspond to them, and they can always be explained by material causes. As economic relationships ~~unite~~ unite separate people in social groups or classes, and as material interests coincide within them, the ideological superstructure of whole

social groups and classes forms a unity; thus are created social-religious and social-philosophical systems and social ideals. At any given historical period one of the social classes is always the dominant one; therefore its ideological superstructure also becomes dominant, and is imposed on classes to whose material interest it is contradictory. This explains the famous sentence of Marx: "Religion is the opium of the People," "People" meaning here Proletariat.

This historic conception of Marx is called "economic materialism."

However, Marx not only explained the nature of social relationships and of the historic process. He also formulated the laws of their development. This formulation is based on the dialectic teaching of Hegel. But also on this occasion Marx naturalised Hegel's dialectics and transferred them from metaphysics to the empirical life. (no!)

According to this teaching, every development is achieved in a dialectic way, i.e. every phenomenon creates out of itself its own contradiction; through a further elimination of this contradiction a new phenomenon is created and the whole process can be called "development" or "evolution." Thus the dialectic process necessarily consists of three parts: position (thesis), negation (antithesis) and negation of the negation (synthesis), which is equal to a new phenomenon. This short explanation can be illustrated by an example. Position - a seed; negation - its plantation; negation of the negation equal to a new phenomenon - a new young tree. In order that a development may actually take place, it is necessary that the thesis be in a special relationship with the antithesis. Thus, for example, a simple destruction of the grain, instead of its plantation, will never produce a synthesis - a tree.

The connection of Marxist teaching with Hegel's philosophy is self-evident. However, having transferred the dialectic law from metaphysics into empirical life, Marx created an entirely new teaching which, in its spirit and main tendency, is entirely alien to Hegel's mentality. This teaching is called the theory of dialectic materialism.

Marx applied this theory to the historic development of society which, as outlined above, is defined as a development of economic relationships based on the productive forces. As the basis of these relationships is determined by person interest, the dialectic construction of Marx is concerned with the development of the principle of private property.

Marx formulates the following historical dialectic process:

Position (thesis): primitive economy where any private property was absent.
Negation (antithesis): economy based on the principle of private property which, after having passed through different phases, culminates in capitalism.
Negation of the negation (synthesis): future socialistic economy where private property will again disappear.

This Marxist theory of dialectic development is closely connected with faith in progress, which was so strong in Utopic Socialism. The transition from primitive economy to capitalism and from capitalism to communism is for Marx not only a transformation of economic forms (as is the case in our example of a seed, where a plant having passed through development again produces a plant) but also a gradual

Why?

Rather: not only the laws, but also their nature

no!

not absolute process

elevation. Any subsequent stage of evolution is higher and better than the preceding one; any new stage creates a new nature of economic relationships and consequently of social conditions. In spite of its materialism, the Marxist theory of dialectic development is imbued with ethical contents and ethical appreciations.

If one accepts "a priori" (and it is impossible to do otherwise) the main assertions of Marx, namely:

- a) that human society is based on economic relationships;
 b) that these economic relationships are subject to the law of dialectic development which leads to the abolition of private property;
 then the fall of capitalism and the advent of the new socialist society becomes a matter of historic necessity and not of a moral postulate or idealistic enthusiasm; the socialist society must necessarily come.

Herein lies the reason why Marxism is claiming the right to be called scientific socialism. By this assertion Marx provided the whole socialist movement with a profound conviction that socialism will inevitably come. 1

3.

Having taken economic forces as the corner-stone of the whole social order, Marx created a special economic theory which permitted him to condemn capitalism, not on the basis of ethical principles but on that of economic necessity.

Three elements are especially important in Marxist teaching:

- (i) the labour theory of value, which explains the fact of exploitation;*
- (ii) the law of concentration of capital;
- (iii) the law of proletarianisation.

The Marxist economic theory was severely criticised by economists. Many points of it are very dubious. But, as already stated, the aim of this essay is description and not criticism.

- (1) The real purpose of the Labour Theory of Value is to prove economically the existence of exploitation which was expounded by the "Communist Manifesto."

Marx maintains (in this regard he follows the teaching of Ricardo) that labour is the only factor which is able to create the substance of economic value. On the market goods are evaluated according to their utility. But this is insufficient. Utility varies on different occasions, and it is necessary to establish a general measuring-rod of value. According to Marx this measure is the quantity of labour which is necessary in order to create any given product; thus the product itself is a kind of crystallised labour. The quantity of labour is measured by the number

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- 1 This short explanation of materialism is necessarily too simplified. With the development of natural science, the very nature of matter became far more complicated than was the case during the lifetime of Marx. Therefore, the conception of materialism is nowadays more profound than would seem at first sight. The philosophical aspect of this problem became subject to a violent discussion between two schools of Marxist philosophers: "The Mechanists" and "The Dialecticians" in the U.S.S.R. (See Berdiaev: "Le Probleme du Communisme.")

* in spite of the exchange of equivalents.

complete
 misunderstanding
 handling
 cause:
 nature of
 dialectic
 interest

necessary to it
of hours spent on its production.

The Labour Theory of Value served as a basis for two other Marxist theories, namely the theory of surplus labour and surplus value existing under the conditions of capitalist economy.

The essence of this teaching can be best demonstrated by an example. (This method has an inherent danger - that of representing the Marxist theory in too simplified a manner. But we have to face a dilemma; to choose between a certain simplification or long and detailed description. We are forced to choose the first way.)

Labour -
If a workman works ten hours, the product created by him will have a value of ten working hours. The capitalist, who is the owner of the means of production will sell this product at its full value, i.e. that of ten working hours. For the production of this product, the capitalist will pay a salary to the workman, in other words, he will buy his ~~working~~ power. The salary paid to the workman will be determined, like any other product, by the quantity of labour which was necessary in order to create it.

This assertion sounds rather strange when applied to human labour. It becomes more clear if applied to machines. The value of horse-power can be easily defined. It will be equal to the quantity of coal consumed, while the value of the latter will be determined by the number of hours of work of a miner. Thus the value of one hour of work of machinery can be reduced to the initial factor creating the value to human labour. But in the capitalist system there is no difference between machinery and workman. The value of one hour or one day of his work is determined by the quantity of products which are necessary for his subsistence in the course of an hour or a day. This becomes especially evident in the case when his salary is being paid in products (this is a frequent practice in agriculture). But even when he receives his salary in money, this salary is equivalent to the value of products which are necessary for his subsistence.

in an industrial society
However, the value of products which are necessary in order to maintain the subsistence of a workman is never equal to the value of products which ~~the~~ workman will produce. In the above example, we can suppose that this value is equal not to ten but to five hours of work, for human labour ~~always~~ leaves a surplus value in comparison with consumed values.

The value created by labour is the property of the capitalist, and the value consumed in the process of work (in the form of salary) is the property of the workman. The capitalist sells the product at a price which is equivalent to ten hours of work, and pays the workman a salary which is equivalent to five hours of work. Thus the surplus value (Mehrwert) goes into the pocket of the capitalist.

Being fully paid for five hours of his work, the workman is working gratis the other five hours. This additional time is the surplus labour which is the source of the capitalist's profit.

Therefore capitalists try to increase the surplus value. They can arrive

at this end by increasing the number of working hours. If, for instance, the working day is increased from ten to twelve hours, the surplus labour is also increased from five to seven hours. The same result can be obtained by the lowering of salary, or in cases when life becomes cheaper. If the number of hours necessary for the subsistence of a workman is decreased from five to three hours, the surplus labour (during a working day of ten hours) will be again equal to seven instead of five hours.

With industrialisation, products become cheaper. But the surplus value remains unchanged. The value is decreased per unit of products, but it remains the same on their totality.

Thus in the capitalist system exploitation is inevitable. Even when they receive a due wage, the workmen are nevertheless constantly being robbed by the capitalists.

According to Marx, capital itself is sterile, for only human labour is able to produce values. But labour is also unable to produce without consuming a certain part of the capital.

Marx discriminates between two categories of capital:

- a) Variable Capital represented by salaries maintaining the subsistence of workmen; when consumed by labour this capital is creating in an indirect way, value and surplus value.
- b) Constant Capital - tools, machinery, buildings, etc., in other words "means of production." This capital is reproducing its own value in proportion as it is consumed in the process of production. This constant capital is also created by labour and is a "crystallised labour." Its value is determined by the number of working hours which were necessary in order to create it. This value of constant capital, as well as the value of raw material and labour, must be covered by the value of the ultimate product. This is the "amortisation" of capital which does not coincide with profit. Profits are created exclusively by labour and surplus value.

The logical conclusion would be, that it is profitable for capitalists to increase the variable capital and to decrease the constant capital. However, this conclusion is in evident contradiction with the whole economic development, with its constant tendency towards industrialisation.

Marx explains this contradiction in the following way. The rate of interest on all capital invested in enterprises of one country is equal. It is determined by the average rate of interest of all enterprises, which arises as the result of free competition. The profit of enterprises where the variable capital is greater than the constant one (for example in agriculture) is also determined by the average rate of interest; this profit is inferior to the surplus value which these enterprises would realise on a basis of the interior relationship of the variable and constant capitals. And, vice versa, the profit of enterprises where the constant capital exceeds the variable one (modern factories with up-to-date equipment and machinery), when increased to the average rate of interest is greater than the profit which would be determined exclusively by the surplus value. Therefore, mechanisation and industrialisation are profitable for capitalists.

This reasoning of Marx explains actually the process of industrialisation. But the rate of interest (and consequently the value of products) are determined in this explanation by competition, i.e. by the law of supply and demand. Thus Marx himself is dealing a serious blow to his labour theory of value.

(ii) The ~~XXX~~ law of concentration of capital, in its application to the capitalist system, is a no less important element of the Marxist economic theory.

According to this theory, at the beginning of the capitalist epoch and especially as the result of the Industrial Revolution, capitalists have gradually expropriated the small owners and the artisans. As competition is constantly increasing, those who are strong are constantly gaining power over the weaker ones. Thus constantly increasing capital is being accumulated in the hands of a constantly decreasing number of people. The contrast between wealth and poverty becomes more striking and all intermediary stages of small proprietors and capitalists tend to disappear. In this part of his teaching, Marx predicted with extraordinary foresight the development of the giant industrial trusts which are playing nowadays such an important part in international economic activity.

(iii) Concentration of capital in the hands of a constantly diminishing group of capitalists goes on simultaneously with the proletarianisation of the masses (Verelendungstheorie). The rural population is constantly moving to the cities and thus increasing the Reserve Army of Labour, i.e. a mass of unemployed, or intermittently employed, people who are looking around for employment and whose existence gives capitalists a chance to pay reduced wages. The process of proletarianisation is intensified by periodical crises and epochs of depression which cannot be avoided in the capitalist system.

The theory of crisis plays an important part in the economic teaching of Marx. A few years ago, during a period of artificial post-war prosperity, the actual state of things seemed to refute the Marxist theory. All criticisms of Marxism, written at that time by non-Marxists, rejected its explanation of crisis, and considered that new economic developments had definitely done away with periodical depressions. But the events of the last three years prove that Marx was more perspicacious than it seemed and that his foresight was clearer than the analysis of his antagonists.

According to Marx, capitalist crises are the crises of over-production. Together with the development of capitalism and industrialisation, the constant capital is increasing in a greater proportion than the variable one. Therefore, surplus value is diminishing and, in order to maintain it at its previous level, capitalists are forced to increase production. But workmen, whose numbers are constantly increasing and who form the big mass of consumers, are unable to consume all the goods thrown on the market. As a single workman would be unable to buy all the products of his labour, because his retribution is less than the value of these products, so workmen as a whole, i.e. the large bulk of consumers, are unable to consume the total of goods produced. Periodical crises, by destroying a part of constant capital, temporarily re-establish the equilibrium. But every new crisis proletarianises new groups of small owners, and plunges the working class

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Simultaneously with this process, there are appearing stock-holding companies. Capital becomes impersonal and anonymous. The shareholders, being detached from the actual process of production, become simply parasites, and industrial enterprises are being run by salaried managers.

In all these features one perceives the historic dialectic process which is driving capitalism to its ruin. Capitalism is creating its own enemies and is accumulating the destructive forces.

The class struggle becomes more acute. But the number of capitalists is decreasing, while that of the proletariat is constantly growing. Finally there will come a day when a small group of super-capitalists will be opposed to an enormous mass of proletarians. Then the situation will be ripe for expropriation; "the robbers will be robbed" as was the slogan of the October Revolution. All industry will be amalgamated into big trusts; property will be made impersonal (stock-holding companies); the group of super-capitalists will be numerically insignificant. Expropriation and socialisation can then be realised in an extremely easy way; by a simple book-keeping transfer of the rights of possession from individuals to the community. The historic process will lead capitalism to destruction; out of its ruins will be built up a new socialistic society, where the principle of bourgeois private property will be abolished for ever.

4.

Marx always maintained that his theory was scientific. He rejected Utopian socialism and refused to give an exact description of the future socialistic society. He did not follow the example of Fourier, who had established a timetable of the occupations of the inhabitants of the future socialist phalansteres.

Marx supplied the future society with definite values. This part of his teaching is so important that we will treat it separately in the next paragraph. Here we must limit ourselves to a short description of the main lines of the future society proclaimed by Marxism.

Marx himself gave a very vague picture of the future. He pointed out only basic principles. As to details, his statements are often contradictory. The ideal of the future socialistic society becomes clear only in the light of the experience of the U.S.S.R.

In this connection a preliminary remark is necessary. The present essay deals not with Marxist theory and not with Marxist practice. Communists themselves consider the U.S.S.R. as a transitory stage to socialism. Therefore, when stating that the U.S.S.R. has made the ideal of future society more concrete, we do not intend to dwell on the actual situation of Soviet Russia, but only on the concretisation of future ideals, which the U.S.S.R. has contributed to Marxist theory. It will be necessary to speak mainly about Leninism as a new stage of Marxism.

Marx was unable to foresee all the details of the future economic development. Marxism had to find a response to them. Leninism is primarily the Marxist interpretation of all new forms of social and economic development. We will have to

deal with Leninism more fully in another connection; here it will be sufficient to indicate its main characteristic traits:

- a) teaching of the imperialistic period of capitalism, which is different from the capitalism of the period of Marx's lifetime, and which places new tasks before the labour movement;
- b) development of the Marxist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat and revolutionary tactics;
- c) proclamation of a union of workmen and peasants and a new agrarian policy;
- d) development and specification of the theory of dialectic materialism and its practical applications;
- e) development and specification of the Marxist theory of state.

In what follows we will try to outline the main elements of the future socialist society laid down by Marx and developed by Leninism. This should be borne in mind whenever the term "Marxism" is used.

(1) According to Marxism, the future socialist society will differ from the capitalist one above all by its economic organisation. All means of production will be nationalised and run by the state. The management of industry will be assured by salaried specialists. But all Marxists, including Lenin, believed that the development of technology would reach, in the socialist society, such a state of perfection that the administration of industry will consist in simple accountancy and record-keeping. This job will be so simple that it will render specialists unnecessary. The workmen themselves will be responsible in turn for this function.

Abolition of private property will abolish the wage-relationships in economic activity. Exploitation will disappear and workmen will get the "full product of their work."

Marxists are convinced that this new economic organisation will tremendously increase the productive forces, that technique will reach a stage of perfection hitherto unknown, and that there will come an era of wealth and plenty in all things.

The labour problem will be solved; equal work will be imposed on all.

As a consequence of perfect technique, the number of working hours will be reduced. Workmen will have sufficient leisure to enjoy life. Different Marxist authors differ in their statements as to the working hours per day; some speak of six hours, while others go so far as to limit work to two hours or even one hour per day.

Improved technology will, moreover, have other social consequences. The process of production will be simplified and the work will consist in a simple supervision of the machine. This will enable workers frequently to change their speciality and profession. Therefore the work will lose the monotony which is oppressing workmen under the capitalist system. Work will become a pleasure.

As to the method of distribution of commodities, there is a certain contradiction. Some state that workmen will get "the full product of their work." But gradually the socialist society will accumulate such riches that it will be able to

satisfy all the needs of all its members. Then the distribution will be made according to the formula: "To everyone according to his needs, from everyone according to his capacities."

(ii) A radical change will also take place with regard to family, school and education. The family must gradually disappear and be absorbed by the society. Both sexes will have equal rights. Women will cease to be "domestic slaves" and will participate in the common work, side by side with men. Therefore the contraction and dissolution of marriage will be extremely simplified; it will become a simple formality. Education of children will be entrusted to society.

In order to liberate women from household ties, there will be created collective "kitchen-factories" and common housing. Similar attempts are actually being made in the U.S.S.R.

Marxism sets a high value on science and has a religious faith in the unlimited possibilities of science. Therefore, Marxists pay special attention to education.

The aim of socialistic education is the creation of happy, free and useful members of society. This education is based on the following principles:

- a) man is good by nature.
- b) at his birth he is a "tabula rasa," and education can make of him a good or a bad, a useful or noxious member of society.
- c) human character is determined entirely by environment.

Therefore, Marxism believes that the future socialist society will be able to produce a new kind of superman, free, strong, intelligent, whose creative forces will be limitless.

The question of utility is paramount for Marxism. Therefore it proclaims the principle of working schools, i.e. schools where theoretical instruction is combined with practical work in factories. The principle is also being realised in the U.S.S.R. under the form of political-technical schools, political because they must educate students in a definite political communist spirit, technical because they must give practical technical training.

(iii) The Marxist State is also radically different from the bourgeois one. According to Marx, every state is a class state, i.e. it is only the executive apparatus of the dominant class.

Therefore Marx refutes formal democracy and parliamentarism. He considers that these are only a veil which is destined to hide the actual conditions - the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. This rejection has several reasons:

a) the actual power in a democratic state does not belong to Parliament nor to the Cabinet of Ministers which is constantly changing, but to employees and the Army, who are actual agents of the bourgeoisie;

b) general elections, which are formally free to all, are actually a comedy. The bourgeoisie, which has money and which consequently has at its disposal the state apparatus and the press, has every opportunity of influencing the mass of the electors, of representing their own interests in a false light and thus of determining the results of the elections;

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c) in parliament, the bourgeois parties have a greater possibility of influence, even if they only form a minority, than all the non-bourgeois parties.

As, according to Marx, everything in life is due to economic causes, economic domination also determines political predominance. All political liberties are fictitious if there is no economic liberty.

In the socialist society, where social classes will disappear, the very nature of the state will change. Instead of an organ of class domination it will become a function of society. In this socialist state the legislative power is not separated from the administrative. The whole structure of government is changed. Parliamentarism is replaced by the Soviet system. Elections take place on the basis of professional activity. Higher organs are created by way of delegation. The elected member is in constant touch with his electors. He can be repealed individually without a change of the whole government.

These main elements of the future socialist state were laid down by Marx in his book "Civil War in France." They form the foundation of the present constitution of the U.S.S.R.

5.

If Marxism were a simple scientific theory it would only contain the analysis of causes which must lead capitalism to destruction and, perhaps, a cautious prognosis of future developments. But Marxism is not only a scientific theory. It not only states that socialism will come, but also that socialism will give happiness to the proletariat. It is a new message.

In order to state that a given change or a given social order will bring about happiness, it is necessary to define what is happiness; it is necessary to affirm certain values the approach to which will give satisfaction. In other words, it is necessary to create a philosophy of life. Furthermore, the ideal to which man is striving determines the mentality of this man himself. Thus the ideals of the future socialistic order proclaimed by Marxism are typical of Marxism and of Marxists.

What is the main value of Marxism, the main source of all its activity?

Without any doubt it is the affirmation of the divinity of man conceived in a materialistic and eudemonistic sense.

The spiritual father of Marx and Engels - Feuerbach - wrote: "We must proclaim, as the only true religion, instead of love to God - love of man, instead of faith in God - faith in man himself, in his power, the faith that the destiny of mankind depends, not on a Being exterior to it, but on its own power.... That what has the second place in religion - man - must be proclaimed as occupying the first place.... If the nature of man is the highest nature, the highest and the first law must be that of love to man. Homo homini Deus est - this is the highest practical affirmation - this is the turning-point of world history." (Feuerbach, W.W.8, 359; 6, 395/96).

One of the outstanding Marxist philosophers, Dietzgen, confirms these words of Feuerbach: "Social democracy is replacing religion by humanity, which will be based henceforward not on a moral postulate but on the knowledge that the Saviour who will free us from evil resides in the work of social brotherhood." (Dietzgen, "Die

Philosophie der Sozialdemokratie," 3).

A contemporary American socialist expresses the same idea: "The religion of labour is godless, for it seeks to restore the divinity of man." (J.B.S. Nordman in "Religion Speaks for Itself.")

Herein lies the clue to the understanding of the very essence of Marxism. Out of two parts of the Divine Commandment "on which hang the law and the prophets" - "thou shalt love the Lord thy God" and "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" - Marxism chooses only the second part. And it goes further; it rejects entirely the first part of the commandment and declares war on it.

This fundamental godlessness of Marxism was born out of deep spiritual misery. The beginning of the XIXth century was a period of decay in the Christian churches. The revival assumed only mystical and pietistic forms. Churches were too closely connected with capitalism. They abandoned the proletariat to its fate. All its attempts to fight against misery were led in non-religious ways, sometimes even against religion. The commandment "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" in its application to social and economic life was expelled from the Church and became homeless. It was Marxism which adopted this commandment, materialised it and filled it with new meaning. And, having done this, Marxism declared war on everything which remained within the Church and everything which had any relationship with God and with absolute and transcendental values.

Marxism is the proletarian socialism. Till the present day it is imbued with the atmosphere of the slums, of exhausting and monotonous work, of misery without any hope of amelioration. Marxism reflects also the feeling that the world is God-forsaken; a feeling that God has forgotten the poor and that they have to climb up to a better existence by their own efforts without expecting any help from above.

Marxist anti-religion had many predecessors; the French philosophy of the XVIIIth century, rationalism, free thought and especially Feuerbach's materialism. Atheism had already become fashionable in the bourgeois philosophy. The general tendency of the epoch was also playing an important part. It was a time of passion for science, especially for empirical science. It was a time of intellectualism, of cold reasoning detached from any sentiment. The "Capitalist Spirit" created a practical and materialistic attitude to life; only tangible things were considered real, only useful things were considered valuable.

Anti-religious tendencies and anti-religious theories were in existence before Marx. But, since the "Summa Theologiae" of Thomas of Aquinas, Marx was the first to create a homogenous and monolithic theory which, being based on one fundamental principle, embraced and penetrated every province of life. Therefore Marxism is the proclamation of an entirely new cultural and social epoch. One can refute its foundations; it is impossible, however, to under-estimate the tremendous importance for the present and the future of the very fact of its existence.

Marx naturalised atheism. He transformed it from an abstract conception into a natural force. He connected atheism not with an abstract right of freedom to believe or not to believe (libre pensee), not with ironical scepticism, but with activity and revolutionary passion. Religion must be destroyed, for it is a

handicap in the emancipation of the proletariat. Religion must be demolished in order to give free way to new values. The proletariat must have, not the right to believe or not to believe, but the conviction that any belief in God is absurd and contradictory to its own interests.

- 1) The main argument against religion and transcendentalism is general, is implicit in the teaching of economic materialism. The only real basis of life is economic activity. The rest is only a superstructure, a fantastic reflection in the human brain of incomprehensible processes. These reflections exist only in the human brain, and there is no objective reality which would correspond to them; therefore any idealism and transcendentalism must be refuted.
- 2) Religion is also a "superstructure" and a fantastic reflection which is hostile to the proletariat. Its cause is fear and admiration of incomprehensible forces. In primitive man it is the fear of the incomprehensible forces of nature. Natural sciences, explaining these forces, abolish all primitive religions. In a more developed society the cause of religious belief is the fear and admiration of the incomprehensible economic processes and events. The aim of the social sciences - Marxism - is to explain these economic processes and thus to abolish social religions.
- 3) This becomes still more important as religion is not an inoffensive fantasmagory. It is a poison - "opium" - which is being deliberately administered to the proletariat. Religion is useful for capitalists and noxious for the proletariat.
 - a) Religion teaches the virtues of patience and meekness, and thus undermines revolutionary passion; it induces the proletariat to bear their misery patiently, without revolting and fighting for a better existence.
 - b) By the promise of a better future world, religion depreciates the present life; it weakens the energy which is required to establish a better order on earth; religion underestimates earthly pleasures and earthly welfare.
 - c) Religion is authoritative: it proclaims that there is one Creator and one Lord of the Universe; thus it implicitly sanctifies earthly systems in which there are kings, lord and potentates ruling the masses.
 - d) Religion is aristocratic: it has "chosen" an "elect" people; it has "saints," it is based on mystery and wisdom which are not accessible to everybody; the philosophy of the proletariat must be simple and comprehensible to the lowest; such is the materialistic philosophy.
 - e) Religion is not free; it preaches that people must surrender their will to a higher Being which is exterior to man.
 - f) Religion, in actual history, has always supported the mighty against the weak; it was a tool of exploitation.

Therefore religion must be destroyed. Therefore, the fight against religion in the U.S.S.R., and which communists are trying to inaugurate all over the world, is not accidental as some think, but is dictated by the very nature of Marxism.

However, this effort to make the world godless must have a counterpart. As

Professor W. Sombart - one of the outstanding investigators of Marxism - states very justly, man, being detached from the Absolute, must necessarily absolutise the relative values. This is also the case with Marxism. It has absolutised a whole range of values which are now replacing religion (Religionsersatz).

This main value is, for Marxism, humanity and its welfare on earth. (The second part of the commandment.) However, the conceptions of humanity and of welfare assume a new meaning and become connected with a whole range of other conceptions.

Before Marx, the prevailing conception of humanity was the Christian one, even in cases when it was transformed by rationalism and had become unconscious of its religious nature. According to this conception, humanity is an organic unity; it is unified in God, in a common Father, and unity in God is the only thing which can create the conception of "humanity" and not of a mechanical agglomeration of individuals. In those theories where faith in God has vanished, there still remains "idealism" - the acceptance of a common, unifying principle. Even in this latter case the conception of humanity is real and transcendental. The unifying element is higher and exterior to the conscience of a separate man.

The Marxist conception of humanity is naturalistic, nominalistic and immanent. Only a separate individualism is real. Humanity is simply a total of individuals, and there is no objective reality which corresponds to this notion; it is purely nominalistic. However, in order to be able to speak about humanity as a whole, it was indispensable for Marx to find a common unifying principle. For him this principle is the participation of man in economic activity. As before humanity was one in God - children of one Father - so, for Marxism, humanity became one in economics, companions and collaborators in common work, in the creation of material values which are the only real ones.

This new conception of humanity had very important consequences. Being determined according to the principles of common participation in economic activity, humanity became equivalent to the proletariat. Therefore Marxism became a double-faced Janus; love and collaboration were preached with regard to humanity (i.e. the proletariat); antagonism and holy hatred with regard to everyone who is outside humanity (i.e. the bourgeoisie).

The aim of Marxism is to make this new humanity happy. It is evident that the conception of happiness has also changed.

1) In view of the general materialistic tendency of Marxism, happiness is also conceived in a mainly materialistic sense. Happiness is earthly welfare and plenty of all earthly things. It is also the possibility of fully satisfying all desires and needs. Marxism is sometimes defined - and quite justly - as materialistic eudemonism. Therefore the element of utility is so highly appreciated by Marxism.

2) However, it would be unjust to reduce Marxist ethics to a purely animal welfare. Marxism considers as happiness many other cultural and intellectual (but never spiritual) values, which are, of course, strongly tainted with materialism.

(i) Marxism considers freedom as an undeniable value; but freedom is conceived in a eudemonistic sense, as the free satisfaction of material needs.

(ii) Marxism affirms equality, especially economic and social equality. This

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tendency towards equality has two sides; a positive one - the conviction that man cannot be happy if other people are unhappy - and a negative one - the conviction that man cannot be happy (even if he is well off) if other people are in a better condition than himself. This negative element of jealousy is inherited by Marxism from the proletarian psychology, which is full of resentment.

(iii) Marxism proclaims as value the earthly creation conceived in the materialistic, or better in a technological sense, a creation of technical improvements which will ameliorate the material conditions of life.

(iv) Marxism is full of a real cult of science. In its anti-religious literature, science is always opposed to religion, namely materialistic and empirical science. Every science which does not correspond to this criterion is simply rejected as "bourgeois" science, i.e. no science at all. The paradox is that Marxism, which insists on its "scientific" nature, remained on the scientific level of the end of the last century. All the new scientific theories, which are more and more abandoning the naive conceptions of materialism, are simply neglected by Marxism. This can easily be understood. As the Marxist attitude to science is psychologically of a religious nature, its very basis - materialism - cannot be changed; for otherwise science loses its aspect of absolute truth. On the other hand, and it may seem to be a contradiction, Marxists estimate science not "per se" but in its practical applications which can ameliorate human existence. Therefore Marxism recognises technical and natural sciences and extends them to social and economic relationships. Marxism approaches even philosophy from a utilitarian standpoint. Marx himself said that "up till now all philosophers were trying to explain the world; the task of our philosophy is to change it." Therefore Marxism proclaims the unity of science and its direction towards a practical and useful aim. It refutes the dispersed and specialised "bourgeois" science which pursues only one aim: scientific investigation within its own branch.

(v) Marxism considers industrialisation and mechanisation as great positive values. In this can be traced its affinity with the "Capitalistic spirit." Marxism is striving to change the whole structure of modern civilisation, but not its essence. All tendencies which reject industrialisation and long for natural life are alien to Marxism. Marxists ridicule all bucolic tendencies. Marx himself was hostile towards peasantry. Marxism left the agrarian problem unsolved. Only Lenin, when confronted with the necessity of establishing socialism in a land where 80% of the population were peasants, had to tackle this problem. But the Russian communists extend the notion of peasantry only to poor or, at the best, to middle-class peasants. Communism conceives the final solution of the problem as industrialisation of agriculture, as transformation of peasant households into corn factories. It is well known what an important part "socialistic reconstruction" and industrialisation are playing nowadays in the life of the U.S.S.R., in its culture and its arts. The first Marxist State has turned machinery into a real poetical cult; it has raised mechanisation to the importance of a new god. The titanic construction of the industrial giants becomes a new fight against God and the construction of a new Babylon tower. This is confirmed by the Communists themselves. The godless of the U.S.S.R. are opposing industrialisation to religion; new combines and electrification are supposed to replace religious faith.

(vi) Marxism contains also a cult of collectivism. Marx considers as important only the human masses. In spite of its nominalistic tendency, according to which the "mass" would seem to be an unreal conception, Marxism is striving to create

a new collective super-man. It is sufficient to note the important place which ~~the~~ the word "mass", used as a noun or adjective, occupies in the whole of Marxist literature. The individual is important for Marxism only in as far as he is part of the mass. This tendency also prevails in Marxist education. Marxism tends to standardisation. In this glorification of the mass, Marx still reflected the Christian conceptions of unity and solidarity, of due service to the general interest and not to one's individual and egoistic self. However, these principles are also tainted by the quantitative evaluation of life, which Marxism inherited from the capitalist spirit. In this conception are also reflected the elements of proletarian psychology. A single proletarian is weak and must silently obey his master; he is forced to hide his resentment and discontent. Only having become a part of the mass he becomes strong, courageous and desperate in his negotiations with capitalists, in strikes, or in open uprising and demolition of factories and bourgeois houses. The workman becomes a man, whose desires and needs must be taken into account only as long as he feels his neighbour standing by him. When a crowd of workmen is assembled, one can hear shouts of indignation, or even see stones flung; whereas a single workman, left alone with his employer, would never dare to express his discontent. Therefore the proletariat, and also Marxism, venerates the mass and believes firmly in its power.

(vii) In connection with this veneration of the masses, Marxism is also absolutising society. It would seem that society is the only means for the practical realisation of values. However, Marxism raised society to a value per se. Society is supposed to have a magic power of transforming the individual. This is based on the belief that milieu has a decisive influence. Man - the proletariat - is good by nature. Only the corrupted bourgeois society is mutilating him and creating vices. This has also its counterpart. Socialist society will eliminate vices and transform man. Therefore the transition to the socialist society will be a "jump from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom." The socialist society is based on a belief in the "ordre naturel," a conception which was promoted also by many liberal bourgeois philosophers. The difference between these conceptions is considerable. While, according to the bourgeois conception, this social "ordre naturel" can be the result of the free play of individual initiatives and interests, Marxism believes that this natural harmony can be attained only by means of regulation. Therefore socialist society is normative in nature.

(viii) Absolutisation of society is impossible without faith in progress. This faith is actually very strong in Marxism. Progress is supposed to possess a magic force. This absolutisation is closely connected with materialism. When spiritual values are accepted, any progress becomes relative. The contact with the absolute is immediate and direct, and different historical stages do not play an important part. But materialistic Marxism considers progress and evolution as absolute values. Marxism is a social Darwinism. It believes that man transformed by socialist society will differ from the modern man no less than the latter differs from the monkey.

These fundamental beliefs and values of Marxism, being elevated to a degree of absolute truth, are replacing for Marxists religion, against which they are desperately fighting.

6.

Marx formulated the theory of the historic process which is leading to the transition of capitalism to socialism; he expounded also the ideal and fundamental values of the future society.

However, in order to assume real leadership of the labour movement in its fight for economic emancipation, Marxism had to elaborate special tactics and to indicate the due policies of the proletariat under the conditions of the capitalist order which could lead it to victory. In other words, Marxism had to elaborate tactics and the strategy of transition from capitalism to socialism.

These tactics are based on the Marxist theory of class struggle. According to this theory which, in its turn, is based on the theory of economic materialism, the real driving motive of human activity is material interest. This interest is uniting people into groups. Being connected with a whole economic system, these groups become social classes. It must be noted that the conception of "class," a conception which is fundamental for Marxism, remains rather vague. Psychological and ideological movements play a far more important part here than Marxists themselves would admit. Thus Lenin, who was a nobleman by birth, is considered as belonging to the proletariat; while a workman who favoured the old regime would be considered as an adherent of the bourgeoisie. Definitions such as "conscious proletarian," "class consciousness," "unconscious elements of the proletariat" are very frequent in Marxist literature.

According to Marx, the element of interest, when becoming class interest, becomes a real force in history. Society and history are entirely determined by the force of classes which are acting in their own interest. Political parties, government, ideological teachings are only a reflection of these forces. As the interests of various classes are contradictory, all history is the history of class struggle.

The change of political forms, achieved by revolution or evolution, is the result of a new combination of forces, i.e. the result of class struggle. It simply means that a class, acting in its own interest, has won a victory over another class. Any political revolution has its economic basis.

Therefore, the aim of the proletariat is to rally and become conscious of its class essence and class interest. Destruction of capitalism is the immediate interest and of the proletariat. Interest must be opposed to interest and force to force. The proletariat, which will gradually collect its forces and become aware of its power, will bring about a change in the interior relationship of social forces, and this will entail a political change. The power will fall into the hands of the proletariat. Therefore, it is unnecessary to silence the fact of class antagonism and class dissension. On the contrary, they must be inflamed. Only an intensification of class struggle will be able to further the transition from capitalism to socialism.

The theory of class struggle became a strong weapon of Marxist propaganda. Because of this theory, every proletarian when acting in his own selfish interest, has the conviction that he is acting altruistically, and that he is fulfilling a sacred mission - the liberation of humanity. The theory of class struggle has given an outlet to the feelings of hatred, jealousy and resentment which were accumulated in the proletarian psychology. These feelings became necessary in

order to establish a realm of love and solidarity. The tremendous importance of Marxism for the labour movement lies in the fact that it has sublimated all the tendencies which are generally considered as negative - egoism, personal interest, jealousy, lust after destruction - and transformed them into means of realising positive values. Before Marxism, the outbreak of hatred of the proletariat, erupting to the surface as destructive elementary force, was nothing but the vandalism of slaves in revolt. After Marx, these outbreaks received a definite sense as inevitable steps in the class struggle leading humanity to brighter horizons of happiness and welfare.

This theory of class struggle is common to all tendencies within Marxism. But on the question of the immediate tactics of transition to socialism - revolution or evolution - there came an important division. This division caused a split of Marxism into two wings, which fight and hate each other not less than their common enemy - the bourgeois society.

The teaching of Marx himself contains a certain ambiguity on the question whether socialism will come by way of evolution or revolution. He made statements to both effects. Therefore, both wings equally refer to Marx and try to refute the affirmations of their adversaries on the basis of statements of their common teacher.

(1) The theory of historical dialectic process implicitly presupposes the necessity of evolution. Socialism will come when capitalism is ripe for change. The transition to the socialist order will happen by means of the expropriation of a small group of capitalists.

This conviction lies at the basis of the evolutionary Marxism which is usually called the Social-Democratic Movement, or socialism in opposition to another wing - communism or bolshevism.

The acceptance of evolution for tactics has led socialists to a whole range of other deductions.

As long as capitalism is not yet ripe for a change, any premature attempt at expropriation (social revolution) is not only useless, but is even contradictory to the interests of the proletariat. Socialism is a result of conviction. It is necessary to awaken the proletariat to its class consciousness and to indicate its general aims. It is also necessary to ameliorate its material situation in the capitalist system by the way of gradual reforms. In order to achieve it, it is necessary to use all possible legal means; parliament and trade unions.

Having entered ^{and} this path, evolutionary Marxism concentrated its entire attention on propaganda ^{and} political activity. It became an advocate of formal democracy. This changed its initial spirit and psychology. Instead of illegal revolutionary society, it became a legal political party represented in parliament. In the post-war period socialism came into power in several countries. Its leaders became ministers. Considering that capitalism is not yet ripe for a change, they had to defend the status quo. Thus arose the strange situation that social-democrats sometimes ~~became~~ ^{became} leaders of the police of a bourgeois state (i.e. in Prussia). In exterior politics they became supporters of the League of Nations and of pacifism.

Logically, this path is compatible with Marxism. But the present situation of evolutionary socialism has but little in common with the mentality of Marx. His revolutionary and impetuous temper, his vision of the approaching catastrophe are miles off the general tendency of his followers belonging to the evolutionary wing.

The practical change entailed also theoretical changes. There has arisen within the evolutionary Marxism a Reformist Movement, which is mainly connected with the name of Bernstein. Maintaining that life is in constant movement and that theory must be adapted to new developments, the Reformists overhauled the fundamental statements of Marxism in the light of the bourgeois criticisms. Thus they abandoned the labour theory of value, considering that it is irrelevant to the general scheme of Marxism. But the main force of Marxism is its homogeneous character and its dogmatism, which does not tolerate any radical change of the fundamental conceptions. Therefore, reformists not only adapted Marxism to new conditions; they administered a serious blow to the very structure of Marxism. They eliminated from the Marxist theory all its revolutionary and Millemmarian elements.

Because of its practical common sense and constant desire for adaptation, evolutionary Marxism is frequently designated by the name of "opportunist Marxism."

(ii) Revolutionary Marxism or Communism makes quite different deductions from the same Marxist theory.

In the form of Leninism it also adapts the Marxist teaching to modern conditions. It states that capitalism has now entered its imperialistic phase, which is different from the classical capitalism under the conditions of which Marx had formulated his teaching. Communism accepts faithfully all Marxist dogmas and, among them, the theory of dialectic materialism. The main prophecies of Marx become flesh: there is going on the concentration of capital, proletarianization of the labouring masses and a frequent repetition of crisis. However, these processes contain some developments which Marx was unable to predict, namely: a) alongside with the consolidation of capitalism, there still survive the intermediary stages of small industrial and commercial enterprises; b) therefore, together with a small group of super-capitalists there remain wide circles of middle and lower bourgeoisie who are opposing socialism; c) the proletariat themselves, to a very considerable extent, are fooled by the bourgeoisie and remain thus unconscious of their own class interest.

Two important deductions are made from these statements:

a) The bearer of the class-conscience of the proletariat is not the whole labouring class but only its advance-guard, i.e. the communist party. Although the communist party does not count among its ranks the proletariat as a whole, it is the party, and only the party, which expresses the true essence of the proletarian conscience. Therefore, when acting without, or even against, the desire of large masses of the proletariat, the party is nevertheless acting in their interest. Any time when a proletarian disagrees with the communist party he gives an evident proof of his lack of class consciousness.

b) The modern state is a hidden dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Under this dictatorship, the proletariat can never become aware of its class interest. Therefore to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must be opposed the dictatorship of the proletariat, in other words the dictatorship of the communist party. This can happen only by means of seizure of power, i.e. by means of social revolution.

Therefore communists consider that the time for a revolution will come, not when capitalism is ripe for socialisation, but when the economic and political conditions of a given country give a chance for a successful revolution led by the communist party.

This reasoning has its basis in the teaching of Marx himself. Marx was expecting an immediate political revolution, which could then be transformed into a social one; thus he considered the Paris Commune as a first step on the way to socialism. It is self-evident that the economic development of capitalism in the second half of the XIXth century was far from being ripe for transition to socialism, as conceived by the evolutionary Marxists.

Therefore communism rejects all partial reforms, such as parliamentarism and democracy. It participates in elections and sends its delegates to parliament, with the purpose of using the parliamentary tribune as one of the possibilities of its propaganda. Its immediate aim is to stir up revolutionary movements. It uses discontent and revolt only as means towards social revolution. Therefore it utilises even national sentiments, although in principle it is against any nationalism. This attitude dictates the communist policy with regard to colonial lands or lands which are being oppressed by European or American imperialism. By intensifying the revolutionary movements in China or India, which are primarily caused by national and racial feelings, communism is trying to make use of these movements in the cause of social revolution.

Communists believe that social revolution can take place when favorable conditions arise - economic, political and above all psychological. This revolution will mean the seizure of power by the communist party, and it is not indispensable that at that time the party should be supported by the majority of the proletariat.

After the power is seized, there will come, not yet socialism, but a period of transition to socialism. Even after the bourgeois power is abolished, there will remain elements hostile to socialism. During the transition period the government will have its old purpose - to be the means of domination of one class by another. The difference will be that the advanced part of the proletariat will have the power instead of the bourgeoisie. The transition period - that of the dictatorship of the proletariat - will be a period of uprooting the remnants of bourgeois society and of educating the unconscious part of the proletariat. This cannot be achieved smoothly without conflicts and bloodshed. The dictatorship of the proletariat will have to fight against the bourgeoisie by all methods - including that of the terror. Under these conditions there can be no question of freedom in its usual sense, i.e. freedom of political activity, press, meetings, etc. The dictatorship of the proletariat must be a dictatorship in the real and full sense of this word. As a considerable part of the proletariat is not aware of its class interest, violent measures, including the terror, must be applied also to them. Roughly speaking, those who will not voluntarily enter the socialist order will be coerced into it, not only by persuasion but even by violence.

Communists are deeply convinced that they have a sacred right to proceed in this manner. Even when violating the will of separate proletarians, communists are acting in the interest of the proletariat, for they are the bearers of the proletarian class consciousness.

In its foreign policy, communism is far from pacifism. Affirming its international calling, it is striving to stir up the world revolution. When communism is established in one country, as is now the case with the U.S.S.R., it transforms this country into a fortress of international revolutionary propaganda. Therefore it foresees the possibility of exterior wars as one means to inflame the world revolution. There is created a certain kind of red imperialism which is striving to extend the communist power to all the countries of the world. This explains the special attention which is directed in the U.S.S.R. to the defence of the country and to the Red Army.

Revolutionary Marxism has one more form, besides communism - i.e. syndicalism. Being filled with revolutionary passion, this movement denies the usefulness of any political struggles, and considers the economic struggle as the only effective one. Syndicalists believe that the social revolution will be the result of a general strike. Therefore they further class struggle between employers and employed, and actively support all strikes. Syndicalism is strong only in the Latin countries - France and Italy. Its international rôle is far less important than that of communism.

III.

In this short essay, the aim of which was to describe the theoretical basis of Marxism, we are unable to deal with its practical application. All that we can do is to give a general scheme of its development which would complete the theoretical part.

Marxism conceives itself as a political and social movement. It became realised in the form of political parties, the rôle of which, as well as the degree of influence and destiny, vary from country to country.

One of the fundamental statements of Marxism is that the proletariat is one in all the countries of the world, and that, therefore, the Marxist movement is international. This international character of Marxism becomes manifest in the creation of international organisation.

In 1864, with the active participation of Marx himself, there was created the "internationale Arbeiterassoziation" (International Labour Association) which is known as the "First International." This organisation was very insignificant from the standpoint of its membership and especially of its influence. The First International was unable to survive the defeat of the Paris Commune, and ceased to exist in 1876. Marx died in 1883 during a period of decay in the socialist movement.

However, from that time the professional labour movement was able to record a considerable success. It was legally recognised in several countries, and was able to fight through to parliaments. Social legislation made a considerable step forward. This success encouraged the socialist movement in general. It brought forth a revival of Marxism. Its membership increased rapidly, especially among the labouring masses. For the first time it became of real international impor-

tance. This induced the Marxists, together with other non-Marxist socialists, to establish closer collaboration and contact, and in 1889 there was established the Second International. During the period of 1889-1914 this International played an important part in international affairs.

The world war of 1914-1918 destroyed the International. The majority of its members accepted the war and gave active support to their governments. They were thus divided into hostile camps. Socialists of France, England, Belgium, Italy and Russia made a common front with their respective "bourgeois" governments against their German and Austrian comrades who, in their turn, were actively supporting the German and Austrian Imperialists. This was especially important, for the German social-democrats played a leading role in the International. Only a small fraction of socialists of the left wing pronounced themselves very decisively against war. They met in 1915 in Zimmerwald (Switzerland) and established the "International Socialist Commission."

The Russian Revolution in 1917 and the German Revolution of 1918 created a definite gap between the two wings of Marxism - the socialist and the communist.

After the war, the socialist section of Marxism, together with other socialist parties, restored in 1923 the Second International under the name of "Socialist Labour International." Post-war developments made social-democrats participate in governments in several countries.

Communism was defeated in Germany and Hungary, but it was definitely established in Russia. This became a turning-point in the history of Marxism. In 1919 in Moscow, there was established the Third or Communist International (Comintern) which united the communist parties of all countries.

Thus divided, Marxism now participates in two international organisations (the Second and Third Internationals). The Third International is now led by the Russian Communist Party and has become the centre of revolutionary propaganda all over the world. The two Internationals are irreconcilable enemies.

The destiny of Marxism was different in different countries, of which we can mention only the most important ones.

Germany was the real fatherland of Marxism. German socialists had the greatest number of adherents and a model organisation. The scientific elaboration of the Marxist theory was mainly done by German Marxists, who also had a leading position in the Second International during the period before the war. Marxism has long been strong in Germany and that until very recently. It was represented both by Marxist socialism and by communism. During the period 1918-1933 German Socialists have actively participated in the government of the Reich.

Marxism is less important in France than in Germany. This can be explained by many reasons and, above all, by the strong individualism of French people and by their aversion to abstract dogmatism. French Marxism mainly assumes the form of syndicalism or a modified evolutionary Marxism. The same was true with regard to Italy before the Fascist revolution.

The socialism of the Anglo-Saxon lands (Great Britain and its dominions and America) assumed, from its very beginning, a practical character. It became closely connected with the Trade Union Movement and fought for social reforms. It was more concerned with immediate amelioration of the situation of the labouring masses than with ideological speculations. Therefore till recently Marxism had very little influence. The whole spirit and mentality of Anglo-Saxon socialism were alien to Marxism. Many of the characteristic traits of Marxism - for instance the anti-religious tendency - ~~fill~~ English and American socialists with genuine astonishment. More recently, however, Marxist Communism has been making headway in both countries.

The U.S.S.R. is in quite a special position. Russia was the first country to put the full Marxist programme into practice. It has not yet attained the stage of integral socialism. It is only passing through the transition period which is expected to culminate in socialism. The new social building, which is now being constructed by Russian Communists, is extremely complex. It consists of widely differing elements. But the whole structure is penetrated by Marxist ideology, is based on Marxist foundations and proclaims Marxism as the one, supreme truth. Therefore the U.S.S.R. has become the promised land of revolutionary Marxists of all countries. It is diffusing over the whole world ideological forces which are stirring up revolutionary tendencies. Therefore Marxism is assuming a new international position. Everywhere, in all lands, and even in those where it was unknown before, communism is beginning to win influence. In some countries it is able to recruit large masses; in others it is limited to a small number of followers. But everywhere it records constant growth. The U.S.S.R. is acting as an ideological laboratory where all the problems of life are being worked out in the light of revolutionary Marxism.

The future development of the U.S.S.R. will determine the future destiny of Marxism and its place in the world's history.
