TWO CONCEPTS OF HUMANS ACTING IN HISTORY IN THE WRITINGS OF KARL MARX

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ABSTRACT

TWO CONCEPTS OF HUMANS ACTING IN HISTORY
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In this work, I argue that in the writings of Karl Marx from the years 1835 to 1848 there are two different conceptions of humans acting in history, that these two different conceptions of humans acting in history give rise to two different conceptions of freedom, and that these two different conceptions of freedom differ in respect to the question of whether one can make human beings free against their will.

Specifically, I make the following arguments. First, I argue that from 1835 to 1845 the predominant conception of humans acting in history in Marx's writings is what I call the autonomous concept of human beings. The autonomous concept of human beings is that of humans acting in history from categorical imperatives--from conceptions of actions which they, in a given material and conceptual context, rationally determine to be valid for themselves qua human beings. According to this conception of humans acting in history, history is essentially the story of men

and women organizing and living their political, social and economic lives from a rational determination of what they ought to do qua human beings. And I argue that from 1845 to 1848 the predominant conception of humans acting in history in Marx's writings is what I call the heteronomous concept of human beings. The heteronomous concept of human beings is that of humans acting in history from hypothetical imperatives--from conceptions of actions which they, in a given material and conceptual context, rationally determine to meet needs which they in fact experience in that context. According to this conception of humans acting in history, history is essentially the story of men and women organizing and living their political, social and economic lives from a rational determination of what will meet their experienced, or felt, needs.

Second, I argue that these two different conceptions of humans acting in history give rise to two different conceptions of freedom in the writings of Marx. When Marx conceives of humans as acting in history from categorical imperatives, he conceives of them as being free at that point in history when they live that life which is worthy of them qua human beings <u>from the rational determination</u> that it is so worthy. Thus, when Marx conceives of humans as acting from categorical imperatives, he conceives of acting from such imperatives as being <u>intrinsic</u> to being free. When Marx conceives of humans as acting from

hypothetical imperatives, on the other hand, he conceives of humans as being free at that point in history when they are in a position to satisfy those needs which they in fact experience. Thus, when Marx conceives of humans as acting from hypothetical imperatives, he conceives of acting from such imperatives as extrinsic to being free.

Third, I argue that these two conceptions of freedom differ in at least one important respect. Whereas it would be a contradiction in terms to talk of making autonomous humans free against their will, whether or not one could make heteronomous humans free against their will would depend upon the particular historical circumstances involved.

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To my Mother and Father

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INTRODUCTION

In the following work I argue that in the writings of Karl Marx from the years 1835 to 1848 there are two different conceptions of humans acting in history, that these two different conceptions of humans acting in history give rise to two different conceptions of freedom and that these two different conceptions of freedom differ in respect to the question of whether one can make human beings free against their will.

Specifically, I make the following arguments. First, I argue that from 1835 to 1845 the predominate conception of humans acting in history in Marx's writings is what I call the autonomous concept of human beings. The autonomous concept of humans is that of humans acting in history from categorical imperatives--from conceptions of actions which they, in a given historical context, rationally determine to be valid for themselves qua human beings. According to this conception of humans acting in history, history is essentially the story of men and women organizing and living their political, social and economic lives from a rational determination of what they ought to do as human beings. And I argue that from 1845 to 1848 the predominate conception of humans acting in history in Marx's writings is what

I call the heteronomous concept of human beings. The heteronomous concept of humans is that of humans acting in history from hypothetical imperatives--from conceptions of actions which they, in a given historical context, rationally determine to best meet the needs which they experience in that context. According to this conception of humans acting in history, history is essentially the story of men and women organizing and living their political, social and economic lives from a rational determination of what will meet their empirically given or felt needs.

Second, I argue that these two different conceptions of humans acting in history give rise to two different conceptions of freedom in the writings of Marx. When Marx conceives of humans as acting in history from categorical imperatives, he conceives of them as being free at that point in history when they live that life which is worthy of them qua human beings, <u>from the rational determination</u> that it is so worthy. Thus, when Marx conceives of humans as acting from categorical imperatives he conceives of acting from such imperatives as being <u>intrinsic</u> to being free. When Marx conceives of humans as acting from hypothetical imperatives on the other hand, he conceives of humans as being free at that point in history when they are in a position to satisfy those needs which they in fact experience. Thus, when Marx conceives of humans as acting

from hypothetical imperatives, he conceives of acting from such imperatives as being extrinsic to being free.

Third, I argue that these two conceptions of freedom differ in at least one important respect. Whereas it would be a contradiction in terms to talk of making autonomous humans free against their will, whether or not one could make heteronomous humans free against their will would depend upon the particular historical circumstances involved.

However, before I even set the stage for making the above-mentioned arguments, I will attempt to justify limiting the scope of the following work to Marx's writings of the years 1835 to 1848.

CHAPTER 1

A JUSTIFICATION FOR LIMITING THE SCOPE OF THIS WORK TO MARX'S WRITINGS OF THE YEARS 1835 TO 1848

There is little difficulty in justifying the year 1835 as the year with which to begin a study of Marx's views on humans acting in history. The earliest surviving writings of Marx are three essays which he wrote for his Abitur in the spring of that year and two of these essays, The Union of the Faithful with Christ and Reflections of a Youth in Choosing an Occupation, are often included in anthologies of Marx's writings and are frequently cited in works on Marx.[1]

The difficulty, then, if any, lies in justifying the year 1848 as the year with which to conclude a study of Marx's views on humans acting in history. Space and time permitting, of course, the inclusion of Marx's writings from 1848 to the time of his death in 1883 would greatly enhance such a study. Marx's recently popularized Grundrisse, which he described as a "synthesis of my economic studies," was not begun until 1857, and the first volume of Capital, the ultimate aim of which, according to Marx, was to "lay bare the economic law of motion of modern

society," was not published until 1867.[2] Similarly, what is generally considered to be the most representative of Marx's sociological writings, The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, was not composed until 1852, and it was not until 1875 that Marx wrote the Critique of the Gotha Program, one of his most important statements on the change of historical epochs.

However, there are several good reasons for holding that Marx did not alter in any essential way his conception of humans acting in history after the year 1848. First, the two books which Marx recommended as introductions to Capital are The Poverty of Philosophy and the Communist Manifesto, the first of which was written in 1847 and the second of which was written in 1848.[3] Moreover, in 1859 Marx wrote that it was in The Poverty of Philosophy that "salient points of our conception were first outlined in a scientific, although polemical form," and that it was during his stay in Brussels (which ended in February of 1848) that he had developed the "guiding thread" (Leitfaden) for his subsequent studies.[4]

A second reason for holding that there was no essential change in Marx's conception of humans acting in history after the year 1848 has to do with the fact that the two fundamental discoveries attributed to Marx by Friedrich Engels and by later Marxists alike were both made by Marx prior to that year. The first of these was the materialist

conception of history.* In 1888 Engels wrote that by the spring of 1845 Marx had already advanced to "the main aspects of his materialist theory of history."[5] This theory of history was first put forth in written form by Marx in the years 1845-1846. To show that Marx's conception of history did not change in any of its essentials between 1846 and 1883 one need only compare Engels' description of this conception of history at Marx's funeral with the description of this conception of history given by Marx and Engels in their joint work, The German Ideology, which they wrote in 1845-1846. Thus, in his speech at the graveside of Marx, Engels speaks of Marx's discovery of the materialist conception of history as the discovery of:

> the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the

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*Marx nowhere used the terms "materialist conception of history" or "historical materialism." These two terms were first coined by Engels. The term "dialectical materialism" was first used by Georgii Plekhanov. (On this point see: Bottomore, Tom, Karl Marx, Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy, p. 20; and Jordan, Z. A., The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism, pp. 53 and 404. For a discussion of the distinction drawn between historical materialism and dialectical materialism by Eastern European Marxists see: Historical Materialism, Basic Problems, edited by G. Glezerman and G. Kursonov, Progress Publishers, Moscow, Chapter 2.)

> foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of vice versa, as had hitherto been the case.[6]

And in The German Ideology, Marx and Engels write of their conception of history that:

> ". . . we must begin by stating the first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history, the premise, namely, that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to 'make history.' But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. . . . Therefore, in any interpretation of history one has first of all to observe this fundamental fact in all its significance and all its implications and to accord it its due importance."
>
> "This conception of history depends on our ability to expound the real process of production, starting out from the material production of life itself, and to comprehend the form of intercourse connected with this and created by this mode of production (i.e. civil society in its various stages) as the basis of all history; and to show it in its action as State, to explain all the different theoretical products and forms of consciousness, religion, philosophy ethics, etc., etc. and trace their origins and growth from that basis . . ."[7]

The second fundamental discovery attributed to Marx is the concept of surplus value. It was in terms of this concept that Marx formulated what Engels called "the special law of motion" of capitalist production. According to this law, not only the prosperity, but the very survival of the capitalist, depends upon the ability of the capitalist to extract surplus value from his workers. That is to say, the survival of the capitalist depends upon his ability to see to it that the goods which the worker produces have a greater

value in terms of the socially necessary labor time required to produce them, than the value of the goods which the worker may purchase with the wages paid to him. Marx called the extraction of surplus value from the worker "exploitation," and it was this exploitation which resulted in the "relative," and, ultimately in the "absolute," impoverishment of the worker.

Now it is true that it was not until the late 1850's that Marx used the term "surplus value" (Mehrwert) or that he worked out the mechanics of how exploitation, or the creation of surplus value, resulted in the relative and absolute impoverishment of the worker. However, as early as 1847 in a series of lectures which he presented to the Brussels German Worker's Society and which were later published under the title Wage Labor and Capital, Marx had already developed the concept of surplus value.

That is to say, Marx had already developed the concept that the profit of the capitalist does not come from the process of exchange--from buying cheap and selling dear--but from "the new value created by the worker's labor."[8] And thus it was that Marx argued that "the interests of capital and the interests of wage labor are diametrically opposed" both when talking in terms of "relative wages" and when talking in terms of the very "means of subsistence."[9]

Therefore, I submit that Robert Tucker is correct in stating that "what Marx produced in the lectures of late

1847 was the future argument of Capital in embryo," and that the editors of Werke are correct in stating that in Wage Labor and Capital, Marx discovered "the essence of those relations of production which are based on the exploitation of the labour power of the worker," and put forth "in a general form the doctrine of the relative and absolute impoverishment of the working class under capitalism."[10]

A final reason for holding that Marx did not alter his conception of men acting in history in any essential way after the year 1848 is that there is, so far as I know, unanimous agreement among commentators of various philosophical persuasions that if there is any major conceptual break in the writings of Marx, that break occurs in his writings of 1845-1846. It was during these years that Marx developed his critique of Ludwig Feuerbach, a Young Hegelian whose writings had had a considerable influence on Marx, especially on Marx's own critique of Hegel.

Marx put forth his critique of Feuerbach in two works. The first of these works was his Theses on Feuerbach, eleven short statements on the philosophy of Feuerbach which he composed in the spring of 1845 and which Engels hailed in 1888 as "the brilliant germ of a new world-view."[11] The second of these two works was The German Ideology which Marx and Engels began in September of 1845 and stopped working on in August of 1846. In 1859 Marx wrote of this joint undertaking that in it, he and Engels "settle accounts with our erstwhile philosophic conscience."[12]

Usually, one or both of these works are cited by commentators as presenting the strongest case for a major conceptual break in the writings of Marx. Thus, for example, Franz Mehring argues that it is first with Marx's "aphorisms" on Feuerbach and Marx's unfinished critique of Feuerbach in The German Ideology, that Marx and Engels "completely overcome the philosophic past."[13] Similarly, H. P. Adams writes that Marx's eleven theses on Feuerbach contain the germ of a "new view of life," and that The German Ideology was written to "clear up in its writers' minds all remaining uncertainties on their position with regard to the existing German philosophies and their own fresh outlook."[14]

Sidney Hook, one of the original "break theorists," writes that Marx's criticism of Feuerbach "preceded his own constructive achievements," and that Marx's critical writings on Feuerbach (his eleven theses on Feuerbach and The German Ideology) "represent in nuce a turning point in the history of philosophy."[15] Louis Althusser, a contemporary "break theorist" who discusses this question at great length, also bases his case, as do Hook and others, upon Marx's criticism of Feuerbach. Thus, he writes:

> There is an unequivocal 'epistemological break' in Marx's work which does in fact occur at the point where Marx himself locates it, in the book, unpublished in his lifetime, which is a critique of his erstwhile philosophical (ideological) conscience: The German Ideology. The Theses on Feuerbach, which are only a few sentences long, mark out the earlier limit of this break . . .

> This 'epistemological break' divides Marx's thought into two long essential periods: the 'ideological' period before and the scientific period after, the break in 1845.[16]

Just as "break theorists" base their case on Marx's critical writings on Feuerbach of 1845-1846, thinkers who hold that there is no major conceptual break in the writings of Marx base their case on demonstrating that the writings of 1845-1846 do not constitute such a break. For example, Istvan Meszaros, in arguing against the thesis that there is a break between the young Marx and the old Marx, concentrates his efforts against representatives of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute who hold that there is a break between the Manuscripts of 1844 and The German Ideology. Meszaros argues that "there is neither a 'final reckoning' in The German Ideology, nor some kind of 'wrestling' in the Paris Manuscripts which could be interpreted as lagging behind the presumed mature reckoning."[17]

Similarly Tucker, who raises the possibility of there being a "profound rift" in the writings of Marx, sees this possibility existing, if at all, in Marx's writings of 1845-1846. Thus he argues against there being a major conceptual break* in the writings of Marx on the grounds that:

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*For views corresponding to those of Meszaros and Tucker, see Avineri, Shlomo, The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx, and Irving Fetscher's article The Young and the Old Marx and Marx Wartofsky's comment upon Fetscher's article, both in Marx and the Western World edited by Nicholas Lobkowicz.

> . . . there was no significant hiatus in time between the initial statement of the Marxist position in the manuscripts, which Marx completed in August of 1844, and the systematic formulation of the materialist conception of history that he gave in Part One of The German Ideology.

Tucker concludes:

> Scholarly opinion is inclining and will increasingly incline to the view that there is an underlying basic continuity of thought not only between the 1844 manuscripts and The German Ideology, but more broadly between the early Marx and the Marx of the later writings culminating in Capital.[18]

In summary, then, I have argued that it would be justified to limit the scope of a study of Marx's conception of humans acting in history to Marx's writings of the years 1835 to 1848. The reasons I gave were: first, Marx himself held that a knowledge of these writings would enable one to understand the "guiding thread" and "salient points" of his later writings; second, both of the fundamental discoveries which have been attributed to Marx were made by Marx prior to 1848; and third, there is, so far as I can tell, unanimous agreement among commentators on Marx that, if a major conceptual break occurred in the writings of Marx, it occurred before 1848.

However, I also noted that, space and time permitting, the inclusion of Marx's writings from 1848 until the time of his death would greatly enhance a study of Marx's conception of humans acting in history. Therefore, I will include in this work passages from such later writings as the Grundrisse, Capital, and The 18th Brumaire of Louis

Bonaparte whenever I believe that such passages will help us to understand the writings of Marx which were composed between 1835 and 1848.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL PREDECESSORS OF MARX

To set the stage for the arguments which I wish to make concerning Marx's views on humans acting in history, I will first state some of the philosophical positions of Marx's predecessors which constitute the background against which Marx wrote.

CHAPTER 2

IMMANUEL KANT

It goes without saying that the philosophy of Marx's immediate predecessors, Hegel and Feuerbach, cannot be understood without a familiarity with the basic tenets of the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Foremost among the tenets of Kant's philosophy for the purpose of this work, is Kant's view of the human will as something which, depending upon how an individual wills, can be either heteronomous or autonomous. Both Hegel and Feuerbach also maintain a view of the human will as something which can be either autonomous or heteronomous but, in the words of Hegel, it was Kant who first gave our thoughts on autonomy and heteronomy "a firm foundation and starting point."[1]

Kant grounds his views on autonomy and heteronomy in a metaphysics according to which humans belong both to the world of noumena and to the world of phenomena. In the world of phenomena,* every event takes place" in accordance

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*Kant characterizes the world of phenomena variously as: the world of "appearance" (Erscheinungen); the world of "objects of experience" (Erfahrungsgegenstaende); the world of "sensuous nature" (sinnliche Natur); and the "sensible world" (Sinnenwelt).

with natural laws."[2] By an event taking place in accordance with a natural law, Kant means that the event "invariably and necessarily follows" from an "antecedent state."[3] Such an event is said to be "determined" by this antecedent state, the antecedent state being the "efficient cause" of the event in question.[4]

Now if one wishes to develop a "natural science" of human actions--if one wishes to develop an "empirical psychology"--one must view the actions of humans solely from the perspective of the world of phenomena.* For Kant, this is because:

> . . . all the actions of men in the (field of) appearance are determined in conformity with the order of nature . . . and if we could exhaustively investigate all the appearances of men's wills, there would not be found a single human action which we could not predict with certainty and recognize as proceeding necessarily from its antecedent conditions.[5]

To view the actions of humans from the perspective of the world of phenomena, for Kant, entails viewing the will of the humans who act as being "necessitated" by "sensuous impulses."[6]

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*To view the actions of humans from the perspective of the world of phenomena is to take a point of view which Wilfred Sellars characterizes as "behavioristic in the broad sense." Of behaviorism in the broad sense, Sellars writes:

> "It has no anxieties about the concepts of sensation, image, feeling, conscious or unconscious thought, . . . but requires the occurrence of a feeling of pain, for example, be asserted only on behavioral grounds. Behaviorism thus construed is only good sense."[7]

Now if one wishes to develop a "moral science" of human actions--if one wishes to develop an "ethics"--one must view the actions of humans from the perspective of both the world of noumena and the world of phenomena. That is to say, the "will" (Willkuer) of humans, or that which directly determines their actions,* must be viewed as being "affected" both by their "reason" and by their "sensuous impulses."[8] The will of humans must be viewed as being affected both by their conceptions of laws and by their senses. Thus, when humans act from the conceptions of laws, their will must be viewed as being "constrained" by those conceptions, since their will would otherwise be necessitated by sensuous impulses. /A conception of a law which constrains the will of humans Kant calls a "command of reason" or an "imperative."[9]/

Now as we all know, for Kant, reason commands either "hypothetically" or "categorically." Hypothetical imperatives present an action as necessary as a means to achieving some "end" which is "external" to the action in question.[10] Categorical imperatives, on the other hand, present an action as necessary in and of itself without regard to an end or purpose external to it.

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*As regards the distinction in the writings of Kant between "Willkuer" and "Wille," the faculty of determining our causality thru a conception of rules, see: Beck, Lewis White, A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason, The University of Chicago Press, 1960, p. 180.

In the case of hypothetical imperatives, reason determines the will in order to achieve an object which is desired. If a human did not desire an object then their reason would not take an interest in the laws which relate that object to actions they could take to achieve it. Thus, when the will of a human is constrained by a hypothetical imperative, reason determines the will of that person "in the service of" that person's desires,[11] or, to use a phrase made famous by Hume, reason is "the slave of the passions."* That is to say, when humans act from hypothetical imperatives, their reason is only giving directions for a "reasonable obedience" to the laws in accordance with which they experience desires.[12]

For Kant, the object of a desire which a human experiences is "the condition of the possibility" (Bedingung der Moeglichkeit) or the "ground of the possibility" (Grund der Moeglichkeit) or the "basis" (Basis) of an hypothetical imperative.[13] And thus for Kant an hypothetical imperative is said to be "conditioned" (bedingt) by such an object in the sense that such an object constitutes the "matter" (Materie) of that law, the conception of which constrains

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*For a comparison of Hume's doctrine that "Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them," with Kant's doctrine of practical reason see: Kant, Immanuel, Critique of Practical Reason, Translated, with an Introduction, by Lewis White Beck (Liberal Arts Press, New York, 1956, p. xii).

the will.[14] And thus it is for Kant that in the case of hypothetical imperatives, an object which one desires because of her or his desires is the "determining ground" (Bestimmungsgrund) of the will.[15]

Now when a human's will is constrained by an hypothetical imperative, it is constrained by a conception of a "natural law"--a law which, as it were, nature "prescribes" (vorschreibt) as a means for achieving the object which he or she desires.[16] When a human's will is so constrained, it is constrained by a conception of a law which that individual did not themselves prescribe or legislate--and thus that individual's will is said to be "heteronomous."[17] When a human's will is said to be heteronomous, for Kant, the causality of that individual's actions is said to be "transcendent"--that is to say, insofar as humans act heteronomously, their causality is "dependent upon external determining causes."[18]

In the case of a categorical imperative, on the other hand, reason determines the will independently of any objects for which an individual happens to have a desire. That is to say, reason is in no way in the service of an individual's desires. Thus, Kant writes of categorical imperatives or "objective principles":

> Whatever is derived from the particular natural situation of man as such, or from certain feelings or propensities, . . . can give a subjective principle by which we might act if we have the propensity and inclination, but not an objective principle

> by which we would be directed to act even if all our propensity, inclination and natural tendency were opposed to it.[19]

When our will is constrained by a categorical imperative, it is due to the fact that our reason takes an interest in a law because that law is inherently rational and thus "valid for us as men" (fuer uns als Menschen gilt).[20] Thus, whereas the determining ground of a will which is constrained by a hypothetical imperative is the "matter" (Materie) of a law, the determining ground of a will which is constrained by a categorical imperative is the "form" (Form) or the inherent rationality of a law.[21] Therefore, there is no empirical condition, ground or basis for a categorical imperative, and thus such an imperative is said to be "unconditioned."[22]

When a human's will is constrained by a categorical imperative, it is constrained by a conception of a "moral law"--a law which is prescribed by her or his own reason alone. Therefore, when a human's will is constrained by a categorical imperative, it is constrained by a conception of a law which is self-prescribed or self-legislated--and thus that individual's will is said to be "self-determined" or "autonomous."[23] When a human's will is said to be autonomous, for Kant, the causality of that individual's action is said to be "immanent"--that is to say, insofar as humans act autonomously "their causality is determined within them."[24]

In summary, then, when a human acts from a categorical imperative he or she acts from a conception of a law which is valid for them qua human beings--valid for them independently of any inclinations or desires which they experience. Reason does not command their will in order to achieve an object for which they experience a desire. However, this is precisely what reason does in those cases in which the will of a human is constrained by a hypothetical imperative. Reason constrains that person to act in the best (i.e., rational) way to achieve the object which he or she desires.

Nevertheless, when one views humans acting from hypothetical imperatives, one does not view their actions as events taking place in accordance with natural laws, or as being determined by antecedent states of affairs which are their efficient causes. That is to say, one does not view their actions solely from the perspective of the world of phenomena.

CHAPTER 3

GEORGE WILLIAM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

Just as, for the purpose of this work, the most important tenet of the philosophy of Kant is his doctrine of the autonomy and heteronomy of the will, so the most important tenet of the philosophy of Hegel is his doctrine of ethical life (Sittlichkeit). This is because it is in terms of his doctrine of ethical life that Hegel incorporates the notions of autonomy and heteronomy into his writings.

Hegel agrees with Kant that the true freedom of the individual lies in moral autonomy--acting from duty or from a conception of what is valid for us qua human beings, even though so acting may run counter to our empirically given desires. For Hegel, it is only in doing one's duty that the individual achieves "liberation from dependence on mere natural impulse" or freedom from that which is "immediately presented by nature, by needs and by desires."[1] He writes, "Duty is the attainment of our essence, the winning of positive freedom."[2]

However, for Hegel, the philosophy of Kant ultimately reduces the concept of duty to an "empty formalism."[3]

That is to say, Kant's philosophy does not give us the basis for rationally determining the content of our duty.

According to Hegel, the philosophy of Kant deals with the concept of the will solely from the point of view of "morality" (Moralitaet). From the point of view of morality, the self-determination or autonomy of the will of the individual is taken to be the self-determination or autonomy of the will of the "single" individual--the will of the "single person in his own private self will."[4] The viewpoint of morality is the viewpoint of the "individual in isolation."[5] Hegel asserts, "I stand in the moral sphere as a single will (einzelner Wille) . . ."[6]

But, Hegel argues, from the perspective of the single will there is no way to make a rational determination concerning the content of one's duty. "From this point of view," he writes,

> ". . . no immanent doctrine of duties is possible; of course, material may be brought in from outside and particular duties may be arrived at accordingly, but if the definition of duty is taken to be the absence of contradiction, formal correspondence with itself--which is nothing but abstract indeterminacy stabilized--then no transition is possible to the specification of particular duties nor, if some such particular content for acting comes under consideration, is there any criterion in that principle for deciding whether it is or is not a duty."[7]*

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*Hegel, who sees Kant's philosophy of moral autonomy as an attempt to give philosophical underpinnings to Rousseau's notion of moral freedom, also characterizes Rousseau as dealing with the wills of individuals only from the point

For Hegel, it is only when we take the concept of the will in its moment of "ethical life" (Sittlichkeit) that we have the basis for rationally determining the content of our duty. This is because the "actuality" (Wirklichkeit) of ethical life--that which is effective in ethical life or that which is the driving force of ethical life--is "Reason" (die Vernunft). Thus the ethical life or ethos of individuals--the system of social, economic and political institutions, laws and customs in which they

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of view of morality or the isolated individual. "Rousseau," Hegel writes,

> "regards the universal will not as the absolutely rational element in the will, but only as a 'general' will which proceeds out of this individual will as out of a conscious will. The result is that he reduces the union of individuals in the state to a contract and therefore to something based on their arbitrary wills . . ."[8]

Thus, Hegel devotes a chapter of the Phenomenology of Mind as well as a number of passages in his Lectures on the Philosophy of History, his Lectures on the History of Philosophy and his Philosophy of Right to criticizing the philosophy of Rousseau for also failing to provide a basis for humans to rationally determine the content of their duty.

Hegel's criticism of Kant and Rousseau foreshadows present day Marxist criticism of the deontological theory of John Rawls who uses the Rousseauean/Kantian model of the self-determination of the single individual. Thus, for example, Rawls is criticized by Michael Teitelman ("The Limits of Individualism," Journal of Philosophy, Volume LXIX, Oct. 1972) for purporting to have a non-socially or non-historically specific concept of what is rational for contracting individuals, while actually attributing to these individuals a socially or historically specific concept of rationality in order to justify a particular concept of the just society.

participate*--provides a content for the duties of those individuals which is "independently necessary and rationally determinable."[9]

For Hegel, the ethical life of a people is an objectification of "Spirit."[11] Spirit, for Hegel, is reality--"the Idea"--as it is "in and for itself." That is to say, Spirit is the synthesis of the Idea in itself--the purely formal Idea or "God as He is in His eternal essence before the creation of nature and of finite spirit," and the Idea outside of itself--nature or "the external Idea."[12]

The history of man's ethical life is the history of the Idea becoming "for itself." That is to say, the history of man's ethical life is the history of Spirit

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*For Hegel, viewed objectively, the ethical life or ethos of a people is the "ethical order" of that people. The ethical order of a people is the system of laws, customs and institutions which "in and of themselves" regulate the life of that people. That is to say, these laws, customs and institutions do not regulate the life of that people through the threat of force. Nor, in modern ethical life, do the wills of the individuals who constitute that people "simply coincide with" these laws, customs and institutions as was the case with the Greeks and other people of antiquity. Rather the individuals who constitute that people ultimately adhere to these laws, customs, and institutions on the basis of "subjective conviction" as is the case in 19th century Prussian Germany.

Viewed subjectively, the ethical life or ethos of a people is the system of the dispositions and convictions of those individuals whose "element" is constituted by the ethical order. In a revolutionary situation, the individuals who bring into existence a new ethical order have the basis for rationally determining that it is their duty to do so, because the new ethos--of which the new ethical order is the objective manifestation--already exists subjectively in the people as a new set of dispositions and beliefs.[10]

objectifying its essence in "individuals as a mass" (Individuen als die Menge)--in individuals qua participants in a system of social, economic and political institutions, laws and customs--in order to experience its essence as phenomenon and, on the basis of this experience, to re-objectify its essence in a more concrete form in a new system of institutions, laws and customs in order to experience it in a more concrete form.

The essence of Spirit is Reason or "the union of the universal and the particular in the individual."[13] Thus, Hegel writes of ethical life, "What is rational is actual (wirklich), and what is actual (wirklich) is rational."[14]

Now, for Hegel, ethical life is comprised of three moments--the moments of family, civil society and the state. The family is the embodiment of the ethical spirit* in its moment of abstract universality. In a family, writes Hegel, an individual exists "not as an independent person, but as a member," and thus has no "determinate individuality."[15] Therefore, qua family member, an individual cannot will from duty because individual family members have no formal rights.[16]

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*For Hegel, Spirit which is objectified in social, economic and political institutions, laws and customs is "objective spirit." That moment of objective spirit which constitutes ethical life is "ethical spirit."

Civil society, on the other hand, is the embodiment of the ethical spirit in its moment of abstract particularity. Civil society is an association of individuals brought into existence by their "needs" (Beduerfnisse), in such a way that whether these needs be based on "physical necessity" or "caprice" (Willkuer), their satisfaction must be viewed as "accidental" (zufaellig) because it "breeds new desires without end," and is not "held in check by the power of universality."[17]

Insofar as civil society is viewed as such a "system of needs," the individual which we have before us in civil society is the "burgher or bourgeois" or what Hegel calls "man" (der Mensch).[18] By "man," Hegel means Rousseau's "homme" as opposed to Rousseau's "citoyen."*

Individuals in their capacity as men or burghers, Hegel asserts, are "private persons whose end is their own interest."[19] And, civil society, as a system of needs, is an association of individuals for the "attainment of selfish needs"--it is an association based on "subjective self-seeking."[20] "In civil society," Hegel writes, "each member is his own end, everything else is nothing to him."[21]

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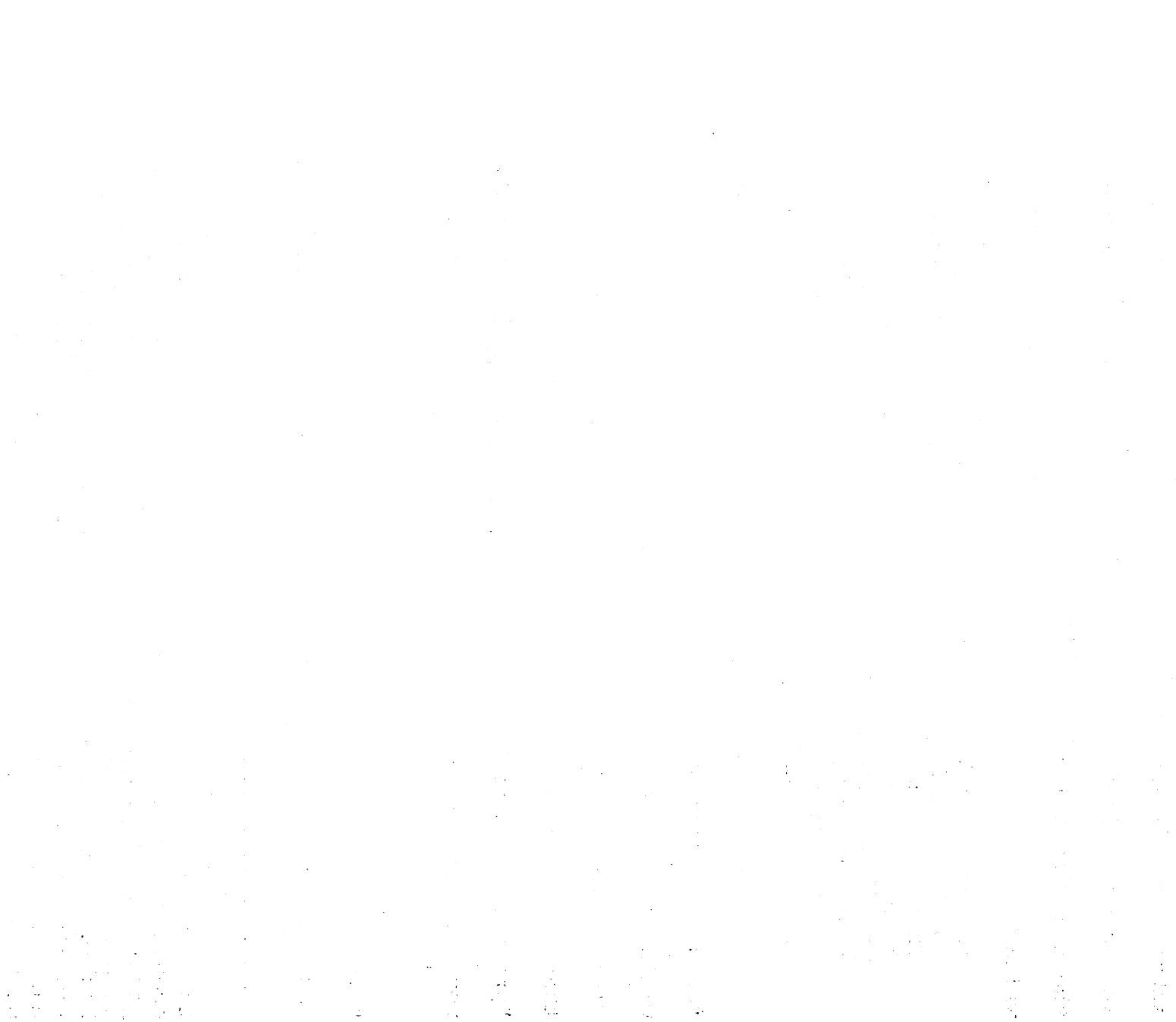
*As Knox points out, the burgher or bourgois was a burgher of a town as distinct from a citizen (citoyen) of a state, and therefore an individual interested in civil, as distinct from political, affairs. Hegel's terms for civil society is "buergerliche Gesellschaft."



Now it is true that, for Hegel, this association of subjective self-seeking is possible only because there is an "interlocking" (Ineinandergehen) of the satisfaction of the needs of private individuals.[22] In civil society, he writes,

> subjective self-seeking turns into a contribution to the satisfaction of the needs of everyone else. That is to say, by a dialectical advance, subjective self-seeking turns into the mediation of the particular through the universal, with the result that each man, in earning, producing and enjoying on his own account, is eo ipso producing and earning for the enjoyment of everyone else.[23*]

What is important to keep in mind, however, is that, for Hegel, when an individual wills in civil society, he wills solely "on his own account."[24] That is to say, in civil society, when an individual wills, he or she intends that which is particular--that which is based on their own "private," "selfish" or "subjective" need. Individuals do not will universally--they do not will from the conception that, in pursuing their own particular interest, they are helping everyone else to satisfy their particular interest. Thus, individuals qua burghers, like individuals qua family

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*Hegel read, and was considerably influenced by, the work of the British moral philosopher and political economist, Adam Smith, (On this point see: Hyppolite, Jean, Studies on Marx and Hegel, pp. 75-77). When Hegel writes of civil society as a system of needs--a system or interlocking of the satisfaction of the needs of private individuals--he has in mind Smith's thesis of an "invisible hand" which regulates the interplay of subjective self-seeking to the mutual benefit of most individuals.

members cannot will from duty. In the last analysis, when willing as members of civil society, humans are capable only of "moral frustration."[25*]

The state, however, is the embodiment of ethical spirit in its moment of concrete universality. It is the

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*True, individuals in civil society combine to form "corporations." The business or industrial class of civil society is itself composed of different "branches" or "classes." To these branches or classes there corresponds corporations--institutions which are organized to promote the "comparatively disinterested end of the whole," and which function as a "second family" to their members.[26] For Hegel, such corporations provide men, while still in civil society, "with work of a public character over and above their private business."[27]

However, once again, what is important to keep in mind is that individuals, even when willing as members of corporations, still will heteronomously. That which is willed by the corporation member is only comparatively disinterested.

When corporation members will they do not will from a conception of that which is valid for them as human beings, rather they will from a conception of that which is valid for them as representatives of a particular interest or complex of needs. And although they will as representatives of a particular interest rather than as bearers of that interest, in the last analysis they will heteronomously because the rationality or basic reason for the individual willing as a representative of a particular corporative interest consists in the fact that he or she is a bearer of that interest.

Unlike willing as a citizen of a state where "unification pure and simple is the true content and aim of the individual, and the individual's destiny is the living of a universal life," willing as a member of a corporation is to will as the member of an institution where the particular interests of the members is "the ultimate end of their association."[28] In the last analysis, the corporation, for Hegel, is an institution whose "determination" (Bestimmung) is only the "protection and security of particular ends and interests en masse."[29]

"end which is immanent" in both the family and civil society.[30] As such, the state is that moment of ethical life of which reason is the actuality. And, thus, when humans will as members of the state--when they will as citizens*--they are able to rationally determine the content of the duties which they have qua human beings.

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*In the Philosophy of Right, Hegel uses the word "state" to designate both "the actuality of the ethical Idea" (die Wirklichkeit der sittlichen Idee) and "the strictly political state and its constitution" (der eigentlich politische Staat und seine Verfassung).[31] The state qua actuality of the ethical Idea is the state qua individuals participating in a system of laws, customs and institutions which constitutes an ethos--it is the state qua ethical community. The state qua actuality of the ethical Idea is what Knox refers to in Hegel's writings as "the state proper" or "the totality of human life so far as it is the life of moral beings united in a community by tradition, religion, moral convictions, etc."[32] Pelcynski writes of the state as the actuality of the ethical Idea:

> The state in this sense means the whole population of an independent, politically and 'civilly' organized country insofar as it is permeated by 'ethical life' and forms an 'ethical order' or 'ethical community.' (Emphasis supplied)[33]

The state qua strictly political state and its constitution, on the other hand, is a moment of the state qua ethical community. That is to say, the state qua political state is the form of political organization taken by the state qua actuality of the ethical Idea. As such, notes Pelcynski, the political state constitutes the supreme public authority of the state. It constitutes the "state power" (Staatsgewalt) of the state.[34] The "political sentiment" (politische Gesinnung) associated with the state qua political state is "patriotism," and the individual qua member of the state qua political state is a "citizen."[35]

When humans will as members of the state--when they will from conceptions of the institutions, laws and customs of the state--they will those interests which they have as family members and as members of civil society, which are morally legitimate interests. Thus, for Hegel, the institutions, laws and customs of the state provide the individual with a "substantive life" which is "universally valid."[36] And thus it is that by "performing tasks and services for the state," the individual can "fulfill his duties."[37]

In summary, for Hegel, humans can only will from duty when willing as members of the state. This is because it is only when humans will as members of the state that they can rationally determine the content of their duty. This, in turn, is because the state is the immanent end or realization of all ethical life and Reason is the actuality or driving force of ethical life.

Since humans can only will autonomously when willing from duty, or from a conception of that which is valid for themselves qua human beings, humans can only will autonomously as citizens. Thus, for Hegel, human beings can only become morally autonomous or truly free when willing as citizens of the state.

Now before going on to the philosophy of Feuerbach, two additional observations concerning Hegel's doctrine of ethical life must be made for the purpose of this work.

The first observation is that history, which is the story of Spirit objectifying and re-objectifying its essence in the ethos of various peoples in order to experience its essence in an ever more concrete form, is therefore the story of the progressive realization of Reason. Thus, Hegel writes,

> The only thought which Philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of History is the simple conception of Reason, that Reason is the Sovereign of the World; that the history of the world, therefore, presents us with a rational process.[38]

Reason, or the union of the universal and the particular in the individual, is objectified in social, economic and political institutions, laws and customs as the self-determination or freedom of the individual. Thus, history is to be understood both as the progressive realization of Reason and as the progressive realization of human freedom.

The second observation concerning Hegel's doctrine of ethical life is that, insofar as the individual wills as a participant in the institutions, laws and customs of her or his ethical community, what that individual intends--or, as Hegel would put it, what that individual "consciously" wills--does not necessarily coincide with what Spirit intends or "consciously" wills. Indeed, with the exception of those individuals who have developed the same

philosophical consciousness as Hegel, individuals are "the unconscious tools and organs of the world Spirit at work within them."[39]

> They are the living instruments of what is, in substance, the deed of the world Spirit, and they are, therefore, directly at one with that deed though it is concealed from them and is not their aim and object.[40]

The fact that what is intended by individuals when they will as participants in ethical life does not necessarily coincide with what is intended by Spirit and that, "as a general rule individuals come under the category of means to an ulterior end," is characterized by Hegel at one point as the "cunning of Reason."[41]

CHAPTER 4

LUDWIG FEUERBACH

In turn, the most important tenet of the philosophy of Ludwig Feuerbach for the purpose of this work is his doctrine of "species-being" (Gattungswesen), because it is in terms of this doctrine that Feuerbach incorporates his thoughts on autonomy and heteronomy into his writings.

For Feuerbach a species-being is a being who is capable both of thinking in terms of the "essence" or "species" of a thing[1*] and acting from a conception of that

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*As species-beings, and thus as beings who are capable of thinking in terms of the essence or species of a thing, humans are capable of doing "science," for "science is the cognizance of species."[2] That is to say, science is the understanding of the nature, species or essence of a thing. For Feuerbach, then, science explains what a thing is. For a discussion of science as the explaining of the "what" of a thing as opposed to the explaining of "how" that thing came into being, see William Dray's article "'Explaining What' in History" which first appeared in Theories of History edited by Patrick Gardiner (The Free Press, New York, 1959), and Wellmer, Albrecht, A Critical Theory of Society (Herder & Herder), Chapter 1.

However, even though Feuerbach takes pains to argue that humans qua species-beings think from a scientific perspective, he more often than not refers to his own work not as science but as "philosophy." The task of philosophy, like the task of science, is to explain the "what" of a thing. He writes:

> Philosophy is the knowledge of what is. To think and know things and being as they are--that is the highest law, the highest task of philosophy.[3]

essence or species, including from a conception of its own essence or species.[4]

Now for Feuerbach, history is the story of humans developing a progressively more "concrete" consciousness of their essence--of what it is to be a human being or to be a member of the human species.[5] Due to "fear and ignorance," humans did not originally grasp the nature of their human essence concretely or in its "objective reality."[6]

Indeed, throughout most of history, men and women have unknowingly formulated their thoughts concerning what was truly human in terms of what was divine. That is to say, humans have tried to articulate what was worthy of them as human beings in terms of what was God-like. They have unwittingly created God in their own image. "Religion," writes Feuerbach, "not in intention or according to its own supposition, but in its heart, in its essence," is "the consciousness which man has of his nature"--"By his God, thou knowest the man . . ."[7]

For Feuerbach, the "secret" of "theology" or thought about God, is "anthropology" or thought about human beings.[8] Thus, for Feuerbach, there has been a "historical progress of religion" and thus of "historical epochs" as humans have developed a more concrete consciousness of what constitutes their essence or species.[9] As humans develop a more concrete self-consciousness--a more concrete consciousness of their essence--history progresses.

Now as humans have developed a more concrete consciousness of their essence, it has become increasingly more difficult for them to cast their consciousness of themselves in religious terms. Indeed, with the arrival of Protestantism, Feuerbach argues, we no longer, strictly speaking, have theology. Rather, we have "Christology" or "religious anthropology."[10]

In this state of affairs, where "theology's intelligence fails," theology more and more gives way to "speculative philosophy" which is the "transformation of God into reason," and thus the "preservation of religion under the form of its negation."[11] Speculative philosophy reaches its perfection in the philosophy of Hegel, which Feuerbach characterizes as "theology turned into logic," and the "last sanctuary, the last rational support of theology."[12*]

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*Just as the secret of theology is anthropology, so the secret of speculative philosophy is ultimately anthropology. Just as the human is the divine, so the human is the infinite.[13] Thus, Feuerbach can write:

> The method of the reformative critique of speculative philosophy as such does not differ from that already used in the Philosophy of Religion. We need only turn the predicate into the subject and thus as subject into object and principle--that is, only reverse speculative philosophy. In this way, we have the unconcealed, pure and untarnished truth.[14]

The method of reformative critique or anthropological reduction--of turning man the predicate into man the subject--is characterized by Marx in his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (1844) as a "real theoretical revolution." It is also used extensively by Marx in his Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right' as well as in

Therefore, Feuerbach argues that a "necessary turning point of history" is our coming to the awareness that our consciousness of God or of the infinite is "nothing else than consciousness of the species."[15] Once we have achieved this awareness, then we are in a position to acquire a truly concrete consciousness of our essence. That is to say, we are in a position to make a determination of our essence which is "real" or "empirical" or "materialistic" or "humanistic" --a determination of our essence which is founded on materials which can "only be appropriated through our senses."[16*]

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other works, and is encapsulated by Marx in his famous statements in The Holy Family and in Volume I of Capital, that he and Engels found Hegel standing on his head and turned him right side up.

*In Principles of the Philosophy of the Future, Feuerbach writes that, "The difference between materialism, empiricism, realism and humanism are in this work irrelevant." Although in the same work Feuerbach also writes that he understands by realism or empiricism, "the so-called real sciences, especially the natural sciences," it should be pointed out that by "natural sciences" Feuerbach means nothing more than those sciences which allow as evidence only those materials which can be appropriated through the senses--those sciences which "do not generate the object from the thought, but the thought from the object."[17]

Similarly, it should be pointed out that when Feuerbach uses the word "positive" in his own writings he uses it to mean only that the subject matter of his work is "a real being, the true Ens realissimum--man," as opposed to Tod, or Hegel's Absolute Spirit, etc.[18]

It is important to keep in mind Feuerbach's uses of such terms as "positive," "natural science," "materialism," "empiricism" and "humanism" in order to be able to

When humans as species-beings are at last in the position to acquire a truly concrete consciousness of their essence, Feuerbach argues, they are in a position to determine that, qua human beings, they have certain needs which Feuerbach calls "needs of mankind" (Beduerfnisse der Menscheit).[19] Briefly, these needs are the needs to relate in a "universal," as opposed to a limited or restricted, way to both nature and other human beings.[20]

Having made these general remarks concerning history as the story of humans, qua species-beings, developing a progressively more concrete consciousness of their essence, we will now turn to Feuerbach's explanation of how humans act in history as species-beings. For Feuerbach, the actions of humans are affected by both their "sense perception" (sinnliche Anschauungen) and their "thought" (Denken).[21]

According to Feuerbach, we perceive much more with our senses than the British Empiricists would have us believe. We not only see stones and trees, we see the feelings which people have. We not only hear the sound of running water, we hear the voice of love. He writes, "Thus, not only the external but also the internal, not only flesh

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understand Marx when he writes of "natural science" and "human science" becoming one science, or of the science developed by himself and Engels as the only real "positive" science.

but also mind, not only the object but also the ego are objects of the senses."[22]

Moreover, for Feuerbach, we not only experience material objects and egos through our senses, we experience "needs." The needs which we experience in a given historical context, Feuerbach calls the "needs of the age" (die Beduerfnisse der Zeit).[23]

Now, "When perceiving through the senses," writes Feuerbach, "I am determined (bestimmt) by the object . . ."[24] Feuerbach then goes on to argue that insofar as the ground for the actions of humans is the needs which they experience through their senses, the essence of the humans in question is determined by their sense perception. For example, Feuerbach writes of our religious needs:

> He who cultivates the soil is a farmer; he who makes hunting the object of his activity is a hunter; he who catches fish is a fisherman; and so on. If, now, God is an object of man--and, indeed inasmuch as he really is a necessary and essential object--what is expressed in the being of this object is merely the peculiar essence of man.[25]

However, when the ground for the actions which human beings take is their thought--what Feuerbach calls their "categorical impartial consciousness" or their rational determination of what is "universally valid" for them qua humans--they are no longer determined by the objects of their sense perception.[26] "When thinking," Feuerbach writes, "it is I who determines (bestimmt) the object; in thought I am ego, in perception, non-ego."[27]

The "source of freedom" for human beings, then, is to act qua species-beings as regards their own essence.[28] To act qua species-being enables man to act "immanently," and thus to "act in contradiction to his dearest personal feelings."[29] Thus, when humans act from a conception of the needs of mankind which they have arrived at by thought, they are able to free themselves from the needs of their age--the needs which they experience by virtue of living in their particular historical context.

Moreover, for Feuerbach, when humans "consciously will" from a rational determination of their essence and thus of their needs qua human beings, they are capable of character transformation. For example, the need which humans experience for God in nineteenth-century Europe can--by virtue of these humans acting as species-beings--be transformed into a sensuously perceived "need for man."[30]

Finally, that humans have made rational determinations of their essence at all is due to the fact that, down through history, men and women have not had a concrete consciousness of the nature of their needs and therefore these needs have not been adequately satisfied. That the needs of men and women qua human beings have not been adequately satisfied has, in every historical epoch, given rise to human suffering. And it is "suffering," writes Feuerbach, which "proceeds thinking."[31] Suffering gives rise to a

new species consciousness--to a new categorical consciousness from which humans act.

In summary, for Feuerbach, history is the story of humans acting from an increasingly concrete consciousness of their essence. That is to say, history is the story of humans acting as species-beings. History has progressed to the point in nineteenth-century Europe where it is possible for humans to act from a fully concrete consciousness of their essence, and thus where it is possible for humans to unite "essence with existence."[32] And when individual humans, acting qua species-beings, unite their essence with their existence, Feuerbach argues, they are "free."[33]

TWO GENERAL COMMENTS ON MARX'S CONCEPTION OF HUMANS ACTING IN HISTORY

In the following chapters, I will consider two issues which are often raised in regard to Marx's writings on humans acting in history. The first issue is that of metaphysical holism, or whether or not Marx writes about historical agents other than individual men and women. The second issue is that of mechanistic determinism, or whether or not Marx presents human actions as being determined by antecedent states of affairs in the sense that these antecedent states of affairs are the efficient cause of human actions.

The issue of metaphysical holism is important to this work because it raises the question of whether history, for Marx, was in fact only the story of the actions of human beings. The issue of mechanistic determinism is important to this work because it raises a question as to the nature of the change which occurs in Marx's conception of humans acting in history. That is to say, it raises the question as to whether the change in Marx's writings is from one conception of humans acting from practical reason to another conception of humans acting from practical reason, or from

a conception of humans acting from practical reason to a conception of humans acting which eschews the concept of practical reason.

CHAPTER 5

THE ISSUE OF METAPHYSICAL HOLISM

In this chapter, I wish to argue that whenever Marx uses such terms as "man," "men," "the proletariat," "serfs," "the landowner," "the capitalist class" or "spheres of society," he is not using them as a metaphysical holist or holist in the context of description.* That is to say, he is not using these terms in such a way that social groups or wholes, as opposed to the individuals who comprise these groups or wholes, are ever historical agents and thus true

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*Social theories are taken to be holistic in two contexts. The first context, which is the context we will discuss in this work, is the context of description or what there is. The second context is that of explanation or what laws there are.

In the context of explanation, a social theory is said to be holistic if it holds that there are laws governing the behavior of social groups which cannot be derived from laws governing the behavior of individuals who comprise those groups. A social theory may be holistic in the context of explanation without being holistic in the context of description. There are good reasons for considering Marx, at least in his later writings, a holist in the context of explanation.

historical individuals along side of, or over and above, individual men and women.*

For Marx, whether men or the proletariat or the capitalist class et al. are conceived of as acting autonomously or heteronomously, the true social or historical agents are always individual men and women, what he, in The German Ideology, calls "men in the flesh." It can be argued that even as early as his Doctoral Dissertation (April, 1841), Marx had abandoned absolute idealism.** For

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*It is not to say, however, that Marx holds that all statements about social groups can be reduced to statements about the individuals who comprise these groups. To say that all statements about a social group can be reduced to statements about individuals who comprise that group is to say that you can formulate a necessary condition for the truth of any statement about that group in terms of statements about individuals who comprise that group.

**It is not clear to what extent Marx ever did embrace absolute idealism. Although in the well-known Letter to His Father of November, 1837, Marx writes of trying to overcome the difficulty of relating ideas and reality inherent in Kantian and Fichtian idealism by "seeking the Idea in the real itself," he laments that this endeavor bore him into the clutches of his "enemy," Hegel, and complains that upon its completion he was "constrained to recognize its futility."[1] Similarly, although Marx wrote an epigram in 1837 in which he has Hegel say, "Kant and Fichte were fond of flying off into the upper air, seeking there a distant land; I only try valiantly to understand what I find on the roadway," at the same time he also wrote an epigram in which Hegel confesses, "I tell you everything because what I tell you is a non-entity."[2] Finally, although he writes in the Letter to His Father that after he had got to know Hegel "from beginning to end," he became "more and more chained to the current world philosophy," he also refers in that letter to Hegel's system as "a view I detest."[3]

example, nowhere in either his Dissertation, his Notes to his Dissertation, or in his preparatory studies where Marx writes about the "spirit," or the "world-historical character of the course of philosophy," or philosophy being "immanent" in "empirical individual consciousness," does he commit himself to the existence of anything other than "the individual human being" (der einzelne Mensch).[4]

Whether or not Marx had abandoned absolute idealism by the time he had completed his Doctoral Dissertation, it is clear that he had by the time he wrote his Critique of Hegel's "Philosophy of Right" (Summer of 1843). For in this work, Marx takes Hegel to task for what he calls Hegel's "logical, pantheistic mysticism."[5] For Marx, Hegel gives us not "the logic of that which is" but "that which is logic."[6] Hegel makes the Idea and not "empirical actuality" the starting point of his philosophy, and thus he makes Spirit and not the "corporeal individual" the subject or agent of his philosophy of right.[7]

Now in making these criticisms of Hegel, Marx mistakenly attributes to Hegel the view that within the realm of objective Spirit, Spirit exists temporally prior to the empirical individuals in which it determines itself. However, even if for Hegel the Spirit is nothing more than the universality of human reason existing in different individuals and, thus, does not exist as an agent except in those individuals, Marx is still correct in writing that,

for Hegel, "ordinary empirical existence does not have its mind (Geist) but rather an alien mind as its law."[8*]

Even if Spirit only exists as that which is universal in the minds of empirical individuals, those actions which individuals intend, when they will that which is universal, are determined by an intentionality other than their own. As Louis Dupré notes, "the empirical appearance does not coincide with the necessary, logical notion: it is only its finite manifestation."[11**] Thus, for example,

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*Similarly, when criticizing Hegel in The Holy Family, Marx writes, "Hegel's conception of history assumes an Abstract or Absolute Spirit which develops in such a way that mankind is a mere mass bearing it with a varying degree of consciousness or unconsciousness."[9] He also criticizes the Young Hegelian, Edgar Bauer, in the same work when he writes, "Self-consciousness that has come to itself, that understands itself, that apprehends its essence, therefore governs the creatures of its self-estrangement."[10]

**Similarly, Jean Hyppolite, in his Studies on Marx and Hegel, writes:

> Hegel is indeed an idealist and a monist. For him there exists a single principle, an indivisible genetic totality which experiences self-division and self-opposition in order finally to be reintegrated with itself. . . . It involves an absolute subject that alienates itself and becomes its own phenomenon in order to reconquer itself.[12]

And he remarks that it is for this reason that precursors of existentialism, as well as Marx, criticized Hegel because:

> . . . in that system the individual thinker and the historical individual disappeared. They were vanishing moments in a monumental history which represented the progressive realization of the Absolute.[13]

Concludes Hyppolite, for Hegel, "the parts only exist so that the whole may posit itself as such."[14]

Hegel cannot consistently maintain, as he attempts to do with his doctrine of the Cunning of Reason, both that "individuals come under the category of means to an ulterior end" in the sense that they have "no consciousness" of the general Idea they are unfolding with their actions, and that individuals are "objects of their own existence" in the sense that they are "responsible" for the actions with which they unfold the Idea.[15]

In the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Marx criticizes Hegel for making the "real man" (wirklicher Mensch) the "predicate of Spirit," the symbol of the self-knowing and self-manifesting Idea.[16] And by "real man" Marx tells us that he means "corporeal man, with his feet firmly on the solid ground, man exhaling and inhaling all the forces of nature."[17] By the same token, Marx praises Feuerbach for the establishment of "true materialism" and "real science" because Feuerbach makes "the social relationship of 'man to man' the basic principle of his theory."[18]

In the Manuscripts, Marx asserts that it is the mind of "the particular individual" (besonderes Individuum) which is the "real mind of social existence" (wirklicher Geist des gesellschaftlichen Daseins), and that it is these individuals who constitute the "totality of human manifestation of life" (Totalitaet menschlicher Lebenaeusserung).[19] He writes:

> Above all, we must avoid postulating "Society" again as an abstraction vis-a-vis the individual. The individual is the social being. His life--even if it may not appear in the direct form of a communal life in association with others--is, therefore, an expression and confirmation of social life. Man's individual and species life are not different, however much--and this is inevitable--the mode of existence of the individual is a more particular, or more general mode of the life of the species, or the life of the species is a more particular or more general individual life.[20]

In Marx and Engels first joint work,* The Holy Family (1845), Marx criticizes the "Critical-Critics" (Bruno and Edgar Bauer et al.) for separating "humanity from the personal individual man" and for conceiving the mass of society not as "the real masses" but as a collection of "abstract qualities."[21] He points out that when one talks about "the capitalist" one is talking about "nothing but an individual man" and rejects the view which he attributes to both Hegel and Bruno Bauer that truth is an "automaton" which man must follow.[22] Finally, in this same work, there is the frequently quoted statement of Engels that:

> History does nothing, it "possesses no immense wealth," it "wages no battles." It is man, real living man, that does all that, that possesses and fights; "history" is not a person apart, using man as a means for its own particular aims; history is nothing but the activity of man pursuing his aims."[23]

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*Although The Holy Family was a joint production of Marx and Engels, Marx wrote most of the book and we know which sections he wrote. Unless otherwise identified all quotations from The Holy Family in this work will be from the writings of Marx.

In The German Ideology (1846), Marx and Engels take considerable pains to disavow what we have called holism in the context of description.* The "premises" of a science of history, they tell us, must be "real individuals" (wirklichen Individuen) or "definite individuals" (bestimmte Individuen)--"real living individuals" in their "actual, empirically perceptible process of development."[24] And they write of the "social structure" and of the "state," that both "are continually evolving out of the life process of determinate individuals."[25] Although Marx and Engels speak of the "ideas of the ruling class," they tell us that these ideas are the ideas of the "ruling individuals." And it is not the ruling class qua class that rules, but rather "the individuals who compose the ruling class" who "for empirical reasons, under empirical conditions, and as empirical individuals" are the actual rulers.[26] Moreover, the "mode of production, they tell us, "is nothing but a "definite form of activity of the producing individuals," and the "world market" is nothing but "the world-historical cooperation of individuals."[27] They then go on to criticize

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*The manuscript of The German Ideology was written in Engel's hand from joint dictation. Except for addenda to the text added by Marx and Engels in their own handwriting and for passages whose authorship textual criticism makes clear, all quotations from The German Ideology in this work will be attributed to both Marx and Engels.

those who would think of the world market as a "single individual" or "subject," i.e., as an historical agent.[28]

In the Poverty of Philosophy (1847), Marx argues that it is individual men who are the "authors and actors of their own history," and that the "material" of economists is the "active energetic life of men."[29] He also reproaches Proudhon for transforming society into a "person" (eine Person Gesellschaft). In so doing, Marx quotes an American economist who writes:

> The moral entity, the grammatical being, called society, has been clothed with attributes which have no real existence except in the imagination of those who make a thing out of a word . . . that it is which has led to so many difficulties and to such deplorable mistakes in political economy.[30]

Finally, in his middle and late writings, Marx maintains a consistently anti-holistic position. Thus, for example in the Communist Manifesto (1848)* Marx characterizes the working class as a "combination," (Koalition), "association" (Assoziation) or "union" (Vereinigung) of "individual workmen."[31] And in The Eighteenth Brumaire of

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*Although the Communist Manifesto is generally considered to have been authored jointly by Marx and Engels, in point of fact Marx alone wrote the actual Manifesto. Engels submitted a first draft in the form of questions and answers which Marx then re-wrote. In this work all quotations taken from the Communist Manifesto will be attributed solely to Marx.

Louis Bonaparte (1852), we still find Marx insisting that "men make their own history,"--that it is they and only they who are true historical agents.

Thus, although Marx, in the Grundrisse (1857-58), argues that "society is not merely an aggregate of individuals," he also argues that society is not to be taken as anything more than "the sum of the relations in which these individuals stand to one another."[32] And even in Volume I of Capital where Marx claims to view the evolution of the economic formations of society as "a process of natural history" and where he characterizes his work as "the history of the productive organs of man," he still regards such history as "human history" (Menschengeschichte) --a history which "we" make.[33]

In summary, then, throughout Marx's writings individual men and women remain the sole historical agents. Marx does not use such terms as "the working class," or "society" or "the world market" to designate social groups or wholes which are also historical agents and thus true historical individuals along side of, or over and above, the individuals who comprise them.

CHAPTER 6

THE ISSUE OF MECHANISTIC DETERMINISM

The second issue often raised in discussions of Marx's writings on history is the issue of mechanistic determinism or whether or not Marx presents human actions as being determined by antecedent states of affairs in the sense that these antecedent states of affairs are the efficient cause of human actions.* Disputes about whether or not Marx was a "determinist" invariably boil down to disputes about whether or not Marx was a mechanistic determinist in the above-mentioned sense.

To maintain that Marx is a mechanistic determinist would be to maintain that Marx, at least in his later writings, views humans acting in history from the point of view of a Kantian world of phenomena--from the point of view of a world without practical reason.** And indeed

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*In the following discussion, the view that antecedent states of affairs are the efficient causes of human actions is not to be taken to exclude the possibility that human actions, in turn, react upon their antecedent states of affairs as efficient causes.

**Cf. pages 15 through 17 of this work.

such diverse commentators on Marx as Thomist F. J. Adelmann and Critical Theorist Albrecht Wellmer maintain that this is precisely the view of human actions which Marx comes to adopt.[1]

However, throughout the corpus of his writings, Marx explicitly denies viewing man acting in history from the point of view of a world of phenomena--of a world in which antecedent states of affairs are the efficient causes of men's actions. It is precisely such a view of the causality of men's actions which Marx rejects in his Doctoral Dissertation where he chides Democritus for being a "worshiper of autonomous nature" and thus for adopting the point of view of "relative necessity" or "determinism," while at the same time championing Epicurus for putting forth the doctrine of the declination of atoms--a doctrine which enables Epicurus to view the actions of humans from the point of view of "self-determination."[2] Thus, Norman D. Livergood writes in Activity in Marx's Philosophy that:

> It is in Epicurus' concept of the declination of the atoms that Marx finds the most fruitful grounds for the development of his own thought. The atom, with its activity of declination, became the symbol of the active self for Marx. Whereas Democritus had remained in the realm of external determinism, Epicurus offers a more fruitful conception of self-determination. If the atom can be viewed as inwardly active, then we can escape mechanistic determinism.[3]

Again, in The Holy Family Marx argues against the viewpoint of "mechanical natural science" on the grounds

that this viewpoint is "hostile to humanity."[4] However, perhaps Marx's most well-known attack against the viewpoint of mechanistic determinism is made in his Theses on Feuerbach. There Marx argues against the doctrine that "men are the products of circumstances and upbringing and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing."[5] He does so on the grounds that "it is men who change circumstances," and that these men change their circumstance through "practical-critical activity"--through actions commanded by critical thought or reason.[6]

In addition, Marx's numerous attacks upon "vulgar materialism" in his later writings are in fact attacks upon mechanistic materialism.* For example, in The German Ideology Marx attacks the vulgar materialistic position that man "has no power over his original physical organization; nor can he control the 'circumstances' and the 'impulses' under the influence of which this organization develops"--that man is "something created by the interaction between his innate potentialities and the circumstances acting on them."[8]

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*Engels actually uses the term "mechanistic materialism" (mechanistischer Materialismus) interchangeably with the term "vulgar materialism" (gewoehnlicher Materialismus).[7]

Finally, on several occasions Marx explicitly dissociated himself from economic determinism qua mechanistic determinism by commenting that if such economic determinism were Marxist then, "As for me, I am no Marxist." Thus, Engels warns Conrad Schmidt of the "dangerous friends" of the materialist conception of history who cannot comprehend "that while the material mode of existence is the primum agens, this does not preclude the ideological spheres from reacting upon it in their turn." He continues:

> The materialist conception of history has a lot of them nowadays to whom it serves as an excuse for not studying history. Just as Marx used to say, commenting on the French "Marxists" of the late seventies: All I know is that I am not a Marxist."[9]

In summary, Marx, on a number of occasions, explicitly denies that he views humans acting in history from the point of view of mechanistic determinism. I will attempt, in a later section of this work dealing with Marx's doctrine of basis and superstructure, to show how Marx's own use of the language of determinism can be interpreted in a non-mechanistic manner.

A TEXTUAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE THESIS THAT IN HIS WRITINGS OF 1835 TO 1848 MARX CHANGES FROM VIEWING HUMANS AS ACTING AUTONOMOUSLY IN HISTORY TO VIEWING HUMANS AS ACTING HETERONOMOUSLY IN HISTORY

As already stated, the first part of my thesis is that Marx changes his conception of humans acting in history. I will now proceed to argue that in Marx's writings from 1835 to 1845 the predominant conception of humans acting in history is what I have called the autonomous concept of humans. That is to say, I will argue that, during these years for Marx, history was essentially the story of men and women acting--within a given material and conceptual context*--from a rational determination of what actions are valid for them qua human beings.

I will then argue that in Marx's writings from 1845 to 1848 the predominant conception of humans acting in

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*Perhaps this is the place to emphasize that the imperatives from which--the laws from the conception of which--the early Marx saw man acting in history were historically specific imperatives. Marx in this respect was the direct descendent of Hegel, not Kant. That is to say, for Marx man did not will from the conception of historically non-specific moral laws--but from the conception of historically specific ethical laws, or laws which were determined to be rational not only within a particular material context, but within a particular historical ethos or conceptual context as well.

history is what I have called the heteronomous concept of humans. That is to say, I will argue that, during these years for Marx, history was essentially the story of men and women acting--within a given conceptual and material context--from a rational determination of what actions would best meet the needs which they experienced.

CHAPTER 7

PRE-DOCTORAL AND DOCTORAL WRITINGS

Although in his pre-doctoral and doctoral writings Marx does not often address himself to questions of history and historical change, he does make several observations which indicate that he viewed humans as acting in history from a rational determination of what is valid for them qua human beings.

In a letter written to his father in November of 1837 while he was a student at Berlin, Marx, who in his own words, "had got to know Hegel from beginning to end," characterizes the process by which historical epochs change in terms of world history "taking stock of itself" (sich beziehen) or "mentally grasping itself" (sich begreifen).[1]

That is to say, he characterizes historical change in terms of the self-consciousness qua "self-grasping of humans, and thus in terms of the consciousness which humans have of their own essence.*

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*As to the evidence for Marx being an Absolute Idealist at this period in his life, and therefore for Marx thinking ultimately in terms of the self-consciousness of Spirit and not the self-consciousness of individual men and women, see page 45 of this work.

Moreover, in the same letter Marx tells us that he was driven to a study of Hegel because he was disturbed "by the conflict between what is and what ought to be," which he found in the philosophies of Fichte and Kant.[2] The object of such a study, he writes, was to discover how the idea or the word of God--that which ought to be--"manifested itself as history" (als Geschichte sich manifestiert).[3]

In his Doctoral Dissertation, Marx argues for the superiority of the atomism of Epicurus over the atomism of Democritus on the grounds that it is the atomism of Epicurus which enables us to conceive of humans as acting from a rational determination of their essence. The atomism of Epicurus, Marx argues, enables us to conceive of man as acting on the basis of his "self-consciousness"[4]--as "consciously" acting to become "his only true object."[5] But in order for man to become his only true object," Marx asserts, "he must crush within himself his relative mode of being, the force of passion and of mere nature"[6]--his actions must be"self-determined."[7] "Thus, it is not the belly-doctrine of Archestratus," Marx writes, "but the absolute character and freedom of self-consciousness which is the principle element of Epicurean philosophy."[8]

Now in conjunction with his Doctoral Dissertation, Marx wrote a number of notes, two of which were preparatory studies for his Dissertation and a larger work which was

never completed on the relationship of the Epicurean, Stoic and Sceptical philosophies to the whole of Greek philosophy. A third note belongs to the Dissertation itself and the fourth note to its appendix. In these notes, Marx makes several observations which are of importance as to how humans acting in history are to be viewed.

In a note entitled Nodal Points in Philosophy, Marx states that there are moments in history when the theoretical tasks of philosophy seem to have been completed with the development of a total philosophical system such as that of Aristotle or that of Hegel. At such moments, philosophy becomes "free, enriched to universality," its "heart becomes strengthened to create a world," and it turns its eyes to the world "no longer reflectively but like a practical person."[9]

Similarly, in a note entitled Philosophy After Its Completion, Marx states, "It is a psychological law that the theoretical mind, having become free in itself, turns into practical energy. Emerging as will from Amenthes' shadow world, it turns against worldly actuality which exists outside of it . . ."[10] This practical movement of philosophy, Marx calls "criticism" (die Kritik). He writes:

> The practice [praxis] of philosophy, however, is itself theoretical. It is criticism which measures

> individual existence against essence, particular actuality against the Idea.[11]*

Finally, in a note entitled Platonism and Christianity, Marx goes on to argue that the "flame" of philosophical science "has been the animating spirit of world-historical developments."[12]

Humans, then, once they have arrived at a given weltanschauung, find themselves constrained to think critically in terms of this world view--to compare their individual existence against their essence as human beings. And, although at this point in his writings it is not clear whether Marx held that the actions of humans vis à vis their social relations (their individual existence) should be limited to criticism,** it does become clear that for the

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*This notion of criticism is clearly grounded in the philosophy of Hegel. For a discussion of the philosophy of Hegel as itself a critical philosophy, see Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 323-330. Marcuse portrays Hegel's attempt to measure reality according to the standards of autonomous reason, as a "critique" of irrational and unreasonable reality.

**Just as it is not clear to what extent Marx ever embraced absolute idealism, it is also not clear to what extent Marx ever embraced the position that the action of humans vis à vis their social relations should be limited to criticism. Adams, in his comments upon Marx's notes to his Doctoral Dissertation, concludes that "It is not necessary to suppose that Marx considered that action ought to be confined to criticism. . ." and Blumberg finds in these same notes "the seeds of the later dispute with the Young Hegelians."[13] The difficulty of deciding this issue as regards Marx's Doctoral writings is due to the fact that most of the arguments of the Young Hegelians to the effect that man should limit himself to criticism were published after Marx had written his dissertation. (See: From Hegel to Marx by Sidney Hook, pp. 95-97 and 108-111.)

next four years, Marx holds that it is individuals acting to overthrow their social relations from the rational determination that these social relations prevent them from realizing what is essential to them as humans, which moves history forward.

CHAPTER 8

ARTICLES FROM THE RHEINISCHE ZEITUNG, DEUTSCHE JAHRBUECHER AND ANEKDOTA

Marx was granted his Doctorate on 15 April 1841, and in July of that year went to Bonn with the hope of getting an academic chair with the help of his friend, Bruno Bauer, who was a lecturer at the University. However, by that time Bauer was under fire by the Prussian Government for his publication of the Critique of the Evangelical History of the Synoptic Gospels, in which he denied the historicity of the gospels. In March of 1842, Bauer was dismissed from his post, and Marx's prospects for an academic career became nonexistent.

In the meantime, Marx had become involved in political journalism to which he was to devote his energies until March of 1843. During this period he wrote a number of articles for the Rheinische Zeitung, a newspaper published by a group of wealthy Rhineland liberals of which he became the editor in October of 1842, as well as articles for Arnold Ruge's publications, the Deutsche Jahrbuecher and Anekdota. We will now turn to these articles for a textual justification of the thesis that, in his early writings, Marx viewed humans as acting in history from

rational determinations--made within their own historical context--of what is valid for them qua human beings.

The subject matter with which Marx most often deals in these articles is criticism. And by criticism he means the same thing as he did in the notes to his Dissertation--the measuring of existence against essence, or the measuring of what is the case against what ought to be the case. Thus, Marx writes in an article entitled The Leading Article in No. 179 of the Koelnische Zeitung that criticism of ethical life is done from "the human viewpoint."[1] Or, as he puts it in his article, On A Proposed Divorce Law, criticism of ethical life is done from that standpoint which is "deliberately universal" as opposed to that standpoint which is "eudaemonistic"--from the standpoint of that which is valid for humans qua human beings as opposed to the standpoint of what makes humans happy or meets their actually felt needs.[2]

In addition, in his journalism of this period, Marx explicitly takes the position that all men and women --"even the most uneducated vintager"* --are capable of criticism; that is, of making rational determinations as

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*A number of the articles which Marx wrote during this period were written against the background of a debate on censorship which took place in the Rheinish Diet in May of 1842. Of all the speakers in the Diet only the peasant representative demanded the unqualified abolition of censorship.

to what is valid for them qua human beings.[3] "Reason," Marx writes, "is related to every nature according to its essential character."[4] And all citizens have the "objective characteristic" of being able to think critically.[5] Thus, Marx in an article entitled Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction, characterizes the public as "the scientific public," and argues that in dealing with such a public, "the existence of light suffices to refute darkness."[6]

Moreover, for Marx not only are all individuals capable of critical thinking in questions of ethical life, they are constrained in their actions by criticism. Thus, Marx rejects the view that the human "mind" (Geist) is an "inquisitor who dryly records the proceedings."[7] Instead, Marx argues, the very "essence" of the mind is "truth," and its "general constraint" is "reason."[8] Of the truth, or what is rational, Marx writes, "it possesses me, I do not possess it."[9] And in an article entitled Communism and the Augsburg "Allgemeine Zeitung," Marx writes that ideas "won by our intelligence" are "chains from which we cannot tear ourselves away without breaking our hearts, they are demons we can overcome only by submitting to them."[10]

Thus, since Marx views humans as being constrained in their actions by critical thought, it is not surprising to find him arguing in a series of articles entitled Debates on Freedom of the Press, that the "truly historical" view of human actions is one which focuses upon "the authority of

reason."[11] In viewing history, Marx argues, one must never lose sight of "historical reason."[12] The historical actions of humans must be viewed not in terms of the "sensuous heat of passion," but in terms of "the victory-assured, enthusiasm of reason, the irresistible ardor of moral powers."[13] That is to say, humans must be viewed as acting in history from contextually specific categorical imperatives.

Finally, before leaving our discussion of Marx's journalism of 1842-1843, it should be observed that in The Defense of the Moselle Correspondent, one of the last series of articles which he wrote during this period, Marx gives us an important illustration of humans acting in history from categorical imperatives. In these articles, Marx raises the issue of human actions being determined by "the objective nature of relationships." He writes.

> In the investigation of political conditions, one is too easily tempted to overlook the objective nature of the relationships and to explain everything from the will of the persons acting. There are relationships, however, which determine (bestimmen) the actions of private persons as well as those of individual authorities, and which are as independent as are the movements in breathing. Taking this objective standpoint from the outset, one will not presuppose an exclusively good or bad will on either side. Rather, one will observe relationships in which only persons appear to act at first. As soon as it is demonstrated that something was necessitated by conditions, it will not be difficult to figure out under which external circumstances this actually had to come into being, and under which other circumstances it could not have come about although a need for it was present. One can determine this with almost the same certainty as a chemist determines under which external circumstances some substances will form a compound.[14]

These external circumstances which determine the wills of men, Marx characterizes as the "prevailing political spirit and its system."[15] Marx holds, however, that the determining effect of such circumstances not only can, but must, be overcome through the initiative of public criticism, for which a free press is a prerequisite. A free press, which Marx characterizes as "the frank admission and public form of the people's historical spirit" is the vehicle which makes critical thought on a social scale possible. Thus, in the case of the externally determined poverty of the Moselle vintager, Marx writes:

> It [a free press] alone can transform a particular object into a general one, and make the wine-growers distress an object of general attention and universal sympathy. It alone can alleviate the misery by disseminating a sense of the distress among all.[16]

By bringing about a general "cognizance" (Anerkennung) of the wine-growers misery and a "sharing of it in spirit" (geistige Beteilung), the free press makes socially effective the demand to overcome all circumstances (social relations) which prevent there being an "atmosphere" in which "the Moselle vintager can live and thrive."[17] Thus, although there is not yet any mention of changing the institutions of civil society on the part of Marx, he does take the position that critical thought creates the categorical imperative, and therefore the means, for humans to overthrow those external circumstances (social relations)

which prevent them from bringing their existence into correspondence with their essence.*

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*Already in his article Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction, Marx distinguishes between "ideal freedom" or "awareness" and "real freedom" in such a way that it is clear that the latter does not follow from the former as the night, the day.[18] Thus, even in this relatively early article, Marx recognizes the imperative for political action--for changing social relations--if real freedom is to be achieved.

In addition, after reading Ludwig Feuerbach's Preliminary Theses on the Reform of Philosophy, and while still editor of the Rheinische Zeitung, Marx wrote to Ruge:

> The only point in Feuerbach's aphorisms that does not satisfy me is that he gives too much importance to nature and too little to politics. Yet an alliance with politics affords the only means for contemporary philosophy to become a truth.[19]

Therefore, Eugene Kamenka is wrong when he writes that, "All that needed to be done and all that Marx did in his first year of political writing was to hold up the truly rational before the empirical and watch the latter disintegrate."[20]

CHAPTER 9

CRITIQUE OF HEGEL'S 'PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT'

On the twenty-first of January, 1843, the Council of Ministers of Prussia presided over by the King decided to suppress the Rheinische Zeitung. The date picked for the final issue of the paper was March 31st, but because of continuing censorship and because of an effort by the publishers to placate the authorities in order to get them to rescind their suppression edict, Marx chose to resign as editor of the newspaper on 17 March. "The government, he wrote to Ruge, "has given me back my liberty." Moreover, he had come to the conclusion that sooner or later he must emigrate. "In Germany," Marx continued, "I cannot start on anything fresh; here you are obliged to falsify yourself."[1*]

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*Now in the same letter to Ruge, Marx acknowledges the receipt of the two volumes of Ruge's Anekdota zur neuesten deutschen Philosophie und Publicistik which was published in March of 1843. These volumes contained not only Marx's own articles Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction and Luther as Arbiter Between Strauss and Feuerbach, but also Feuerbach's Preliminary Theses on The Reform of Philosophy. This was the first opportunity which Marx had to read this piece by Feuerbach and most contemporary commentators on Marx date the beginning of Marx's "Feuerbachian period" from his reading of the Preliminary Theses.[2]

The suppression of the Rheinische Zeitung by the Prussian Government was part of a move on its part to suppress the liberal press in general. Among the other publications closed down by the government was Arnold Ruge's Deutsche Jahrbuecher. At this point Ruge, a Young Hegelian of independent means and a great admirer of Marx, offered Marx a position as co-editor of a new journal to succeed the Jahrbuecher. It was decided that the journal be published outside of Germany, and Paris was finally picked as the site.

With the prospect of having a steady income, Marx settled in Kreuznach where his fiancée, Jenny von Westphalen, lived with her mother. In June of that year (1843) they were married. Marx spent a total of six months in Kreuznach during which he read extensively in history and political thought--a total of twenty-four books emphasizing recent French, English and American history and covering the political theories of Machiavelli, Montesquieu and Rousseau, as well as the works of the French socialists Fourier and Proudhon.[3]

Marx was in agreement with Feuerbach that the "necessity" and "justification" of philosophy lay in a critique of Hegel, and it is with a critique of Hegel and Hegelianism that Marx began to occupy himself. Thus, during his stay in Kreuznach, Marx returned to a project of which he had conceived as early as March of 1842--a

critique of a portion of Hegel's Philosophy of Right.[4*] Marx completed his Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right' in the fall of 1843, just prior to moving to Paris in order to begin publication of the new journal which he and Ruge planned as the successor to the Deutsche Jahrbuecher.

Marx, in his Critique spends a great deal of time and effort criticizing the "speculative character" of Hegel's philosophy.[6] The basis of this criticism is that Hegel construes the relationship between the will of Spirit and the will of individual human beings in such a way that individual humans cannot be said to act autonomously in any dimension of their ethical life, and thus in their historical life.

Marx's criticism of the speculative character of Hegel's philosophy in his Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right' is essentially Feuerbachian. For Feuerbach, as we have seen, the starting point of true philosophy is "not God, not the Absolute" but "man"--the "finite determinate individual." Hegel's philosophy, according to Feuerbach, is to be regarded as "mysticism," as speculation about the nature of man in terms of something "outside of or completely above man."[7]

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*Marx had originally planned to critique Hegel's Philosophy of Right in an essay for Ruge's Anekdota. The purpose of the essay was to "fight against constitutional monarchy as a self-contradictory and self-destroying hybrid."[5]

Thus, as we have already seen in our discussion of whether or not Marx was a metaphysical holist, Marx takes Hegel to task in his Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right' for Hegel's "logical panthiestic mysticism," and thus for Hegel providing us not with "the logic of that which is," but with "that which is logic." That is to say, Marx criticizes Hegel for making the "Idea" and not "empirical actuality" the starting point of his philosophy, and thus for giving history "an alien mind as its law." What individual men and women intentionally will when acting in history is determined by what the Absolute Spirit wills. Thus, according to Hegel, Marx asserts, "the people do not know what they want."[8*]

Marx presents this Feuerbachian criticism of Hegel at the outset of his Critique and repeats it regularly during the first half of this work. As depicted by Hegel, Marx argues, "empirical actuality"--humans acting as members of families, civil society and the state--is rational, "but not rational because of its own reason."[9] For Hegel, Marx asserts, "rationality does not consist in the reason of the actual person achieving actuality, but in the moments of the abstract concept achieving it."[10]

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*Marx makes this assertion in his commentary on section 301 of the Philosophy of Right where Hegel writes, "To know what one wills, and still more to know what the absolute will, Reason, wills is the fruit of profound apprehension and insight, precisely the things which are not popular."

Marx argues that since it is the "actual Idea"--the Idea in and for itself, or Spirit--which sunders itself into its finite spheres of the family and civil society in order to realize its essence in the state, the family and civil society must be viewed as "determinations established by a third party, not self-determinations," and the state must be viewed as issuing from families and civil society in an "unconscious and arbitrary way."[11] Therefore, Hegel is to be criticized for ". . . wanting to allow the essence of man to act for itself as an imaginary individual instead of acting in its actual, human existence."[12] That is to say, the speculative character of Hegel's philosophy is to be criticized on the grounds that history is the story of the autonomous activity of individual men and women, and not the story of the autonomous activity of Spirit.

Thus, in the Critique Marx characterizes humans qua members of an ethical community as creatures whose will is determined by their "self-conscious reason"--by what their reason "discovers" and "formulates" as "species consciousness."[13] Man, Marx argues, "is not an animal whose being coincides immediately with its determinate character." And he devotes a considerable portion of his Critique to demonstrating to men that there is a separation of civil society and the state in Hegel's philosophy which "separates man from his universal nature," and which, therefore, must be overcome.[14]

Thus, Marx also characterizes the ethical community as the self-conscious existence of the "ethical spirit" of humans--as a community whose affairs are the realization of the "self-conscious will of the people."[15] For example, in criticizing Hegel's doctrine of the monarchy, Marx writes:

> What is striking is to see as the immediate product of the physical species what is only the product of the self-conscious species. I am man by birth, without the agreement of society; yet only through universal agreement does this determinate birth become peer or king. (emphasis supplied)[16]

For Marx, "democracy" is the "truth," the "essence," the "generic form" of all ethical communities.[17] That is to say, no matter what form of political state a community has, it is still the "free product of men"--or, as Marx alternately puts it, "the product of the self-conscious species."[18]

In the ethical life of individuals, Marx concludes, "self-conscious reason must prevail."[19] That is to say, the story of the ethical life of individuals and thus the story of history, is ultimately the story of individual humans acting autonomously--of individual men and women acting from a rationally determined conception of their essence or species.

CHAPTER 10

ARTICLES IN THE DEUTSCH-FRANZOESISCHE JAHRBUECHER AND VORWAERTS

Toward the end of his work on the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right', Marx wrote the main part of a review of two articles by the Young Hegelian, Bruno Bauer, on the question of political equality for Jews in Prussia. This review was completed in Paris and was published in February of 1844 under the title On the Jewish Question in the first and only issue of the Deutsch-franzoesische Jahrbuecher, the name which Marx and Ruge gave to their new journal. Upon his arrival in Paris, Marx also wrote an introduction to a planned revision of his Critique. Although he, in fact, never revised or published his Critique, Marx did publish his introduction in the Deutsch-franzoesische Jahrbuecher under the title Toward the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right': Introduction.

Moreover, Marx also published in the Jahrbuecher a series of letters which he wrote to Ruge, Bakunin and Feuerbach between March and September of 1843 and which he probably revised prior to publication. Finally, in July of 1844, while at work on the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, Marx published in the twice-weekly Vorwaerts

an article attacking Ruge entitled Critical Remarks on the Article: The King of Prussia and Social Reform. In all of the above publications, Marx views humans as acting autonomously in history.

Thus, in the exchange of letters which he published, Marx argues that in order to make a revolution in Germany, criticism must awaken "the feeling of man's dignity" in men "who do not feel themselves to be men."[1] Arguing that a necessary condition for historical change is a "relentless criticism of all existing conditions,"[2] Marx goes on to write:

> Reason has always existed, but not always in a rational form. The critic, therefore, can start with any form of theoretical and practical consciousness and develop the true actuality out of the forms inherent in existing actuality as its ought-to-be and goal.[3]

This "ought-to-be and goal" of historical life--this "demand of reason"--asserts Marx, is the "realization of the true human essence."[4]

In these passages, which are extolled by critical theorists such as Wellmer and condemned as youthful idealism by Marxist structuralists such as Louis Althusser,[5] Marx conceives of history in terms of humans acting on the basis of an immanent moral critique of their culture or ethos. That is to say, Marx conceives of history in terms of humans acting on the basis of a moral critique of their culture which compares existing reality with culturally

embedded conceptions of a truly human reality which have been made more "concrete" or put in a more "rational" form.* That is to say, in these passages Marx conceives of humans as acting in history from a rational determination of what sort of reality is truly human, and thus of what sort of actions are required to bring this reality into existence and maintain it, and thus of what sort of actions are valid for humans qua human beings.

In On the Jewish Question, Marx reiterates the point to which he devoted so much attention in his Critique; namely, that insofar as humans will as members of civil society, they are separated from their essence or species being. Civil society, Marx writes, is a "war of all against

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*Perhaps an example of such immanent moral criticism is in order. Americans generally agree that the most human of all possible worlds would be one in which everyone could "be their own boss." However, it can be argued quite successfully that, short of giving up such blessings of industrialization as modern transportation, communication and medical care, it is not feasible for the vast majority of Americans to be their own boss in the conventional sense of the term.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that what is "rational" in the ideal of being your own boss is the ideal of being able to determine how your life on the job is run. In an industrial society, such self-determination is to be achieved through economic democracy--through democratic control of production units and worker establishment of production priorities. Hence, an immanent moral critique of our culture results in a categorical imperative for the overthrow of capitalism and the institutionalization of socialism.

all"[6] in which humans act from what he alternately calls "practical need" or "selfish need" or "egoism."[7] It is a realm in which man "is active as a private individual, treats other men as means, reduces himself to a means, and becomes the plaything of alien powers."[8] It is a realm in which every man finds in other men, "not the realization, but rather the limitation of his own freedom."[9]

That man is "alienated from himself" in civil society and thus, even if politically emancipated, is "not yet an actual species-being," is due to the fact that he is "oppressed by inhuman relations and elements," that he is "corrupted by the entire organization of our society," that he is "the passive and given result" of an inhuman world.[10] Thus, if humans are to achieve "universal human emancipation," Marx asserts, their "self-conscious activity" must be directed toward changing the relations of their "everyday life" or "work."[11] That is to say, humans must reorganize their economic life by acting from a conception of their species-life.

We find Marx returning to the same theme again in Critical Remarks on the Article: The King of Prussia and Social Reform. The organization of civil society places "natural and spiritual restrictions on the will," and thus prevents human beings from having a "human existence."[12] To achieve a human existence, human beings must engage in a "social revolution"--a "protest of man against dehumanized

life"--an overthrow of the relations of civil society "from the standpoint of the whole."[13]

Having determined that the relations of civil society have an inhuman effect both upon their "natural" and their "spiritual" life, human beings can and must overthrow these relations. That is to say, humans not only can, but must, move history forward by acting autonomously.

Finally, in his A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right': Introduction, Marx argues that it is the task of philosophy "in the service of history" to critique "the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man."[14] The "prerequisite" of such a critique, Marx writes, is the "critique of religion." "The critique of religion," Marx continues, "disillusions man so that he will think, act, and fashion his reality as a man who lost his illusions and regained his reason, so that he will revolve about himself as his own true sun."[15]

Once a critique of religion has been completed, Marx argues, criticism focuses on "genuine human problems." Criticism is then only "a matter of describing the stifling pressure of all the social spheres on one another" and of comparing this to man's "true reality"--to his "theoretical needs."[16] Such criticism, Marx asserts:

> . . . ends with the categorical imperative to overthrow all conditions in which man is a debased, enslaved, neglected, contemptible being--conditions which cannot be better described than by the

Frenchman's exclamation about a proposed tax on dogs: 'Poor dogs! They want to treat you like men!'[17]*

Marx, then, conceives of humans as acting in history from historically specific categorical imperatives. That is to say, he conceives of humans as acting in history from rational determinations, made within a given material and conceptual context, of what actions are valid for them qua human beings.

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*Perhaps this is the place to point out that by willing from categorical imperatives--from a rational determination of that which is valid for one qua man--Marx, like Kant, does not mean willing altruistically or from the point of view of the welfare of others as opposed to the welfare of oneself. There is no altruism/egoism dichotomy in the writings of Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Feuerbach and the early Marx. Rather the dichotomy is between willing that which is 'general' or 'rational' or 'concretely universal' or in accordance with one's 'species-being,' and willing that which is 'particular; or that which one 'desires' to do, or that which one 'feels a need' to do. However, as we shall see, for Marx willing egotistically is inhuman or not in accordance with the human essence or man's species-being.

CHAPTER 11

EXCERPT-NOTES AND ECONOMIC AND PHILOSOPHIC MANUSCRIPTS OF 1844

By the summer of 1844, Marx and Ruge had parted company due to Marx's increasing attachment to what was then known as "communism."[1] This sealed the fate of the Deutsch-franzoesiche Jahrbuecher. However, during the spring of that year, Marx had been reading a number of British and continental political economists and he copied extensive excerpts from their writings to which he added notes of his own. These notes have survived and are referred to in the literature as the Excerpt-Notes of 1844. Marx subsequently did a systematic treatment of a number of his notes in late summer of 1844. This work has come to be known as the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 or the Paris Manuscripts.[2] It is to these two writings of Marx that we will now turn.

Just as Marx, in the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right,' argues from the point of view that man is not an animal "whose being coincides immediately with its determinate character," so in the Manuscripts and Excerpt-Notes he argues from the point of view that man is not an animal who "is immediately one with its life-activity."[3] Instead

man is an animal who makes his "life activity"--"his essential being"--the "object of his will and of his consciousness."[4] Marx writes:

> Man is a species-being, not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species as his object (his own as well as those of other things), but--and this is only another way of expressing it--also because he treats himself as the actual, living species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being.[5]

Thus, even when humans produce--when they "work up inorganic nature"--they do so as "conscious species-beings."[6] And thus even when they produce under capitalism, they do so from a conception of what is valid for them as members of the human species. That is to say, the alienation of the capitalist and worker under capitalism is to be conceived of in terms of "the self-estrangement of man"--in terms of an estrangement through which "the consciousness which man has of his species" is "transformed" in such a way "that species life becomes for him a means."[7] For example, Marx writes of private property:

> . . . on analysis of this concept it becomes clear that though private property appears to be the source, the cause of alienated labor, it is rather its consequence, just as the gods are originally not the cause but the effect of man's intellectual confusion. Later this relationship becomes reciprocal.[8*]

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*The manuscript breaks off before Marx makes good on his promise to explain how "man comes to alienate, to estrange, his labor"--how this estrangement is "rooted in the nature of human development."[9]

Since men and women produce under capitalism from a conception of what it is to be a human being or a member of the human species, capitalism can only be overthrown by men and women acting from a new conception of what it is to be a human being--a conception which portrays life under capitalism as inhuman. Furthermore, this new conception of what it is to be human must be a conception of which humans, under capitalism, can be rationally convinced. This is because it is only through the effect of rational moral conviction that workers or capitalists can overcome being determined in their actions by the inhuman needs which they experience under capitalism.

Indeed, in his Excerpt-Notes and Manuscripts, Marx often formulates his critique of capitalism in terms of the fact that under capitalism human needs are not the needs which humans experience. Under capitalism, Marx asserts, the worker "has no human needs," he is a being "lacking all needs." He experiences only an "artificially produced crudeness" of need, the satisfaction of which is only the "illusory satisfaction of [human] need."[10] Under capitalism there is a "determination of the laborer through social needs which are an alien compulsion to him."[11] And for both the worker and the capitalist, Marx writes, "The objective of his production is the objectification of his immediate, selfish need."[12]

Capitalism, therefore, is not to be overthrown because it does not satisfy the needs which we experience under it. These needs are by and large inhuman needs. Rather, capitalism must be overthrown because, "The whole of history is a preparation for 'man' to become the object of sensuous awareness and for the needs of 'man as man' to become sensuous needs."[14*]

Now, in addition to criticizing capitalism in terms of the inhuman needs which we experience under that system, Marx also criticizes capitalism in terms of the fact that the "essence" of human beings cannot be "realized" (verwirklicht) under that system.[16] Thus, Marx also argues that capitalism must be overthrown on the grounds that it is first under communism that we have the "true resolution of the conflict between existence and essence."[17]

However, whether Marx is arguing that capitalism must be overthrown because only then can we experience true human needs or because only then can we realize our true human essence, he is presupposing that we are species-beings.

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*The concept of the needs of man as man is clearly taken from Feuerbach and indeed, in his Preface to the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, Marx writes, "It is only with Feuerbach that positive humanistic and naturalistic criticism begins."[15]

The needs of man as man are needs which humans ought to experience, but which they in point of fact cannot experience under capitalism. Under communism the needs of man as man will become "sensuous needs"--needs which humans will experience or feel.

He is presupposing that we can move history forward by acting from a rational determination of what it is to be a human being or a member of the human species. In summary, in his Excerpt-Notes and Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, Marx conceives of human beings as acting autonomously in history.

CHAPTER 12

THE HOLY FAMILY

In the autumn of 1844 Marx and Friedrich Engels (whose essay, Outlined of a Critique of Political Economy, had appeared in the Jahrbuecher) collaborated in writing The Holy Family, an attack on Bruno Bauer and the other Young Hegelian enemies of "real humanism."[1] Although Marx is critical of Feuerbach in this work for not bringing out the role of political action in the transformation of man, The Holy Family is a defense (albeit an admittedly polemical one) of the "inspired arguments" yet "sober philosophy" of Feuerbach.[2]

Marx once again discusses historical epochs and historical movements in terms of "man's consciousness of his species and his attitude toward his species."[3] "Equality," Marx therefore writes, "is the French expression for the unity of human essence."[4] And he writes of the English and French working class movements that:

> . . . the English and French workers have formed associations in which they exchange opinions not only on their immediate needs as workers, but on their needs as human beings.[5*]

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*Marx, who in The Holy Family writes of the "studies, the intellectual hunger" of workers, asserts:

Moreover, he continues:

> They know that property, capital, money, wage-labor and the like are no ideal figments of the brain but very practical, very objective sources of their self-estrangement and that they must be abolished in a practical, objective way for man to become man not only in thinking, in consciousness, but in massy being, in life.[7]

History, then, will be moved forward by workers overthrowing the relations of property, capital, money, wage-labor and the like--relations which have become "objective-sources" of their self-estrangement. They will overthrow these relations by acting from a consciousness of their "needs as human beings," or as Marx at one point writes, from a consciousness of "human dignity."[8]

In The Holy Family, as in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Marx writes of the existence of two distinct and opposed classes--the propertied class and the proletarian class--in terms of "human self-alienation."[9] Given the "indignation" of the proletariat generated by its consciousness of "the contradiction between its human nature and its condition of life," the proletariat will overthrow this class opposition.[10] Thus, Marx characterizes the proletariat as, "that misery conscious of its spiritual and physical misery, that dehumanization conscious of its dehumanization and therefore self-abolishing."[11]

> Modern prose and poetry emanating in England and France from the lower classes of the people would show it that the lower classes of the people know how to raise themselves spiritually . . .[6]

Marx, therefore, goes on to criticize Hegel in The Holy Family because Hegel "refuses to recognize the real philosophical individual as the Absolute Spirit."[12] This is but another example of Marx conceiving of history as the story of humans willing from a "philosophical" consciousness--from a consciousness of 'what is,' not from a consciousness of 'how to.'* When humans act in history, they act from a 'categorical' consciousness as opposed to an 'hypothetical' consciousness. They act autonomously.

*Cf. page 34 of this work where Feuerbach's conception of philosophical consciousness is discussed.

CHAPTER 13

THESES ON FEUERBACH

Although we know that as early as February of 1843 Marx had criticized Feuerbach for failing to point out the necessity of political action for the practical realization of man's species-being,* at one point in The Holy Family Marx appears to introduce a new and more radical criticism of Feuerbach. In Chapter 4 of this work it appears that Marx abandons the view that humans act in history from a rational determination of their species-being, in favor of the view that humans act in history in order to satisfy their needs. In a somewhat ambiguous passage, Marx writes:

> . . . since man has lost himself in the proletariat, yet at the same time has not only gained theoretical consciousness of that loss, but through urgent, no longer disguisable, absolutely imperative need--that practical expression of necessity--is driven directly to revolt against that inhumanity; it follows that the proletariat can and must free itself. . . . The question is not what this or that proletarian, or even the whole of the proletariat at the moment considers as its aim. The question is what the proletariat is, and what, consequent on that being, it will be compelled to do. Its aim and historical action is irrevocably and obviously demonstrated in its own life situation as well as in the whole organization of bourgeois society today. There

*See page 34 of this work.

> is no need to dwell here upon the fact that a large part of the English and French proletariat is already conscious of its historic task and is constantly working to develop that consciousness into complete clarity.[1]

In this passage the question of historical activity for Marx is not a question of the "consciousness" which the proletariat has of the inhumanity of its existence, but of the "absolutely imperative need" to revolt against its existence, which is experienced by the proletariat. That the historical action taken by the proletariat on the basis of imperative need will result in its freeing itself from an inhuman existence is, for Marx, "irrevocably and obviously demonstrated in its own life situation as well as in the whole organization of bourgeois society." That is to say, the fact that the proletariat can and must abolish the inhuman conditions of its life appears not to stem from the fact that proletarians have rationally determined that abolishing these (inhuman) conditions is imperative for them as human beings, rather it appears to stem from the fact that proletarians experience certain imperative needs which they can only satisfy by abolishing these conditions.

However, it is first in his Theses on Feuerbach that Marx unambiguously, and once and for all, abandons the view that humans act in history from a rational determination of their species-being. While at work on The Holy Family, Marx joined the editorial staff of Vorwaerts. Due to the increasingly radical orientation of that German-emigré

publication, the Prussian Government convinced the French Minister of the Interior, Guizot, to expel its editors from France. Marx moved to Brussels and around March of 1845 he wrote down eleven critical comments on the philosophy of Feuerbach.

In these Theses on Feuerbach, which Engels later characterized as "the first document in which the brilliant kernel of a new world view is revealed,"[2] Marx criticizes Feuerbach for holding that there is a human essence which remains the same down through history, and thus for holding that history is the story of humans acting from a progressively concrete determination of that essence. "The essence of man," Marx asserts in thesis number six, "is no abstraction inhering in each single individual."[3] Such a conception of the human essence, Marx argues, is historically "dumb" (stumm).[4] Such a conception of the human essence does not provide us with the grounds for giving historical "explanations."[5]

The case in point for Marx is religion. Feuerbach holds that religious consciousness is a projection of the consciousness which humans have of their essence. And Marx, up to this point, had been in agreement with Feuerbach. In A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right,' Marx had characterized religious consciousness as the consciousness of man "who has either not yet gained himself or has lost himself again."[6] And, as we

have seen, at one point in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Marx had characterized religion as originally being the "effect of man's intellectual confusion."[7*]

Now, however, Marx criticizes Feuerbach on the grounds that Feuerbach cannot explain how humans came to conceptualize things in religious categories. Feuerbach cannot explain, in terms of his conception of the human essence as something which remains the same throughout history, how humans originally developed a religious consciousness at all. Marx writes:

> Feuerbach starts out from the fact of religious self-alienation, the duplication of the world into a religious and secular world. His work consists in resolving the religious world into its secular basis. But the fact that the secular basis becomes separate from itself and establishes an independent realm in the clouds can only be explained by the cleavage and self-contradictoriness of the secular basis.[8]

Because Feuerbach conceives of the essence of man as an abstraction inhering in each individual--because Feuerbach conceives of the essence of man "merely as 'species'"--he is compelled to "abstract from the historical process" when writing about religion and, therefore, he fails to see that religion is a "social product."[9] What

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*See page 83 of this work. However, as we have also seen, Marx at another point in the Manuscripts fails to make good his promise to explain how man comes to alienate his labor, and thus his species-consciousness. See page 83 of this work.

Feuerbach fails to see, argues Marx, is that "in its actuality" (in seiner Wirklichkeit) the human essence is "the ensemble of social relationships" (das Ensemble der gesellschaftlichen Verhaeltnisse), in which men and women live at any point in history.[10] And it is in terms of the contradictions and cleavages in these relationships that religion is to be explained.

For Marx, then, conceiving of the essence of human beings in terms of the ensemble of their social relations enables us to explain how religious phenomena and other historical phenomena come into being. However, for Marx, it also rules out the possibility of conceiving of men and women as acting autonomously in history. It rules out the possibility of conceiving of humans as acting from a rational determination of their essence as something which they ought to realize qua human beings.

CHAPTER 14

THE GERMAN IDEOLOGY

In July of 1845, Marx and Engels (who had joined Marx in Brussels) undertook a six-week trip to England for the purpose of studying the writings of British political economists. Upon their return, they resolved to write a definitive critique both of the Young Hegelians, Bruno Bauer and Max Stirner, and of Feuerbach.* Although the section on Feuerbach was never completed, the sections of Bauer and Stirner were sent to the publisher under the title, The German Ideology. Marx later wrote of this work, that it had been written "to settle accounts with our former philosophical conscience," and that with it, "we had achieved our main purpose--self-clarification."[1] We will now turn to this work, including the unfinished section on Feuerbach.

In the Ideology, Marx and Engels write:

> No one can do anything without at the same time doing it for the sake of one or another of his needs and for the sake of the organ of this need.[2]

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*Bauer had published a rebuttal to The Holy Family in which he characterized Marx and Engels as "Feuerbachian dogmatists."

Moreover, these needs for the sake of which, and only for the sake of which, humans act are "definite, actually experienced needs" (bestimmte, wirkliche empfundene Bedeurfnisse).[3*] Such needs are either needs which we experience under all conditions, but which "change their form and direction under different social conditions," or needs which we experience "in a particular social system, under particular conditions of production and intercourse."[4**]

For Marx, the needs which we experience under all conditions, but which change their form and direction under different social conditions, are the needs for food, clothing and shelter. For Marx, these are the needs which humans must satisfy under all conditions if they are to physically survive. He and Engels write:

> Since we are dealing with the Germans, who are devoid of premises, we must begin by stating the first premise of all human existence and, therefore, of all history, the premise, namely, that men must be in a position to live in order to be able to 'make history.' But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act

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*Marx and Engels use the words "need" (Beduerfniss) and "desire" (Begierde) interchangeably at several points in the Ideology. However, in a passage which they crossed out, they write that, "each need forms the basis of a 'desire.'"[5]

**By the time Marx wrote his later economic works, such as A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859) and Capital (1867), he had replaced such locutions as "conditions of production and intercourse" with the more familiar "relations of production."

> is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself. And, indeed, this is an historical act, a fundamental condition of all history which, today, as thousands of years ago, must daily and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life.[6]

For Marx, the needs which we experience only within a particular social system under particular relations of production are needs which are "produced" (erzeugt) by that social system and its relations of production--relations within which humans produce to satisfy the needs for food, clothing and shelter which they experience. Thus, he and Engels write:

> The second point is that the satisfaction of the first need (the action of satisfying, and the instrument of satisfaction which has been acquired) leads to new needs; and this production of new needs is the first historical act.[7]

And thus Marx, in his later economic writings such as Grundrisse, characterizes the needs for commodities which we experience within a particular social system, including the form and direction of the needs for food, clothing and shelter which we experience, as being produced by the mode of production of that social system.

> Production, on the other hand, produces consumption by creating a definite mode of consumption, and by providing an incentive to consumption it thereby creates the capability to consume as a requirement. The last kind of identity has been variously interpreted by economists when discussing the relation of demand and supply, of objects and needs, of needs created by society and natural needs.[8]

In The German Ideology, and throughout his later writings, Marx takes the position that the needs which we experience are produced in us by our social relations. It is because the needs which we experience are produced in us by our social relations, and because we can only act for the sake of the needs which we experience, that Marx was able to write in his Theses on Feuerbach that "in its actuality," the essence of man "is the ensemble of the social relations."

In the Ideology, then, humans can no longer be viewed as acting autonomously--as acting from rational determinations of what actions are valid for them as human beings. In fact, in his later writings, Marx takes pains to argue that men and women cannot even make rational determinations concerning what actions are valid for them as human beings. All conceptions of what is valid for us as humans or what is in accordance with our human nature, Marx asserts, are "ideology."[9*]

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*Marx, without making any systematic distinction, uses the term "ideology" both in the sense of Karl Mannheim's conception of "total" ideology (unintentional misrepresentation of the nature of reality due to inadequacies in one's conceptual framework), and in the sense of his conception of "particular" ideology (more or less intentional disguise of the real nature of a situation, the true recognition of which would not be in accord with one's interests). When Marx speaks of ideology in the sense of Mannheim's conception of particular ideology, he is speaking of the use of concepts which have lost their "social validity" (gesellschaftliche Gueltigkeit) or "objectivity,"

For example, in Volume I of Capital, he argues that such conceptions cannot "be discovered by science" (durch die Wissenschaft entdekt werden), but rather merely "appear directly and spontaneously as current modes of thought."[12]

The "underlying reality" (zugrunde liegende Realitaet) of such conceptions as "the human essence," the "nature of man" or "man as such," Marx and Engels argue in The German Ideology, is the "practical aim" of humans to satisfy the needs which they experience by virtue of living in a particular historical context.[13] Thus, whereas in The Holy Family Marx had himself characterized the proletariat as acting from a consciousness of the "contradiction between its human nature and its condition of life," he and Engels now attack Feuerbach for his use of such "desecrated" Hegelian categories as "species," on the grounds that to say that the "'existence'" of the proletariat does not correspond to its "'essence'" is only to say that proletarians "feel by no means contented (befriedigt)."[14] They write:

> The nonsensical judgment of the philosophers that the real man is not man is in the sphere of abstraction merely the most universal, all-embracing expression of the actually existing universal contradiction

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because new forces of production have developed which are no longer "compatible" with the relations of production from which these concepts arose.[10] He refers to ideology in this sense variously as "dogmatic," "apologetic" and "sophistic," and describes it as consisting of "superstition" and "deliberate deception on the part of some and self-deception on the part of others."[11]

> between the conditions and needs of people.[15] (Emphasis supplied)

"'Political' or 'religious' motives," Marx and Engels conclude, are only "forms" (Formen) of the "true motives" (wirkliche Motive) of humans acting in history.[16] Furthermore, they argue that it is only in terms of these motives--that it is only in terms of the practical aim of individuals to satisfy their experienced needs--that we can do a "real positive science" of history.[17] Thus, given what Marx and Engels now consider to be the criteria of a "positive" science of history, our political, religious, philosophical and moral convictions can only be viewed as functions of our position on the social relations of production. Marx and Engels write:

> We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises.[18]

And from this, they conclude that we cannot make rational determinations concerning morality or our duty or what is valid for us as humans:

> Morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development; but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking.[19] (Emphasis supplied)

Still, the fact that Marx and Engels conclude that we cannot make rational determinations concerning morality, should not be taken to imply that they conclude that humans are psychological egoists. Indeed, they explicitly deny that this is the case. After dismissing the thesis that self-sacrificers are egoists, as "an old dodge, sufficiently exploited by Helvetius and Bentham," they go on to assert:

> Communism is simply incomprehensible to Stirner because the communists do not put egoism against self-sacrifice or self-sacrifice against egoism. They are very well aware that egoism, just as much as self-sacrifice, is in definite circumstances a necessary form of the self-assertion of individuals.[20]

Thus, thirty years later, in the Critique of the Gotha Program, we find Marx arguing that in a higher phase of communist society, where the division of labor has been overcome, producing for society according to one's ability will become "life's prime need." Humans do not have to act egotistically in order to be viewed as acting heteronomously, and therefore we must not be mislead by passages in Marx's later writings where he writes of workers as producing or fighting for those other than themselves.

Finally, whereas Marx had himself previously conceived of criticism in terms of distinguishing between the essence and existence of human life, in The German Ideology and in his subsequent writings, he conceives of criticism in terms of distinguishing between the "essence" and "appearance" of human life.[21] The philosophers, Marx

argues, have only conceived of human history in terms of its appearance, not its essence.* They have failed to grasp that the underlying reality of history--history appearing to them to be the story of humans acting from moral imperatives--is the story of humans acting for the sake of their existing needs. And for Marx, it is only when we adopt this "actual critical outlook on the world," that we will be in the position to best determine the way to satisfy the needs which we experience.[23]

In The German Ideology, then, Marx and Engels take what I have called a heteronomous view of humans acting in history. Humans act for the sake of needs which they experience. The needs which humans experience are a product of their social relations and, thus, using the terminology of Kant, the causality of their actions is "transcendent" rather than "immanent." However, once we begin to view history critically, we will be able to rationally determine the best way in which to satisfy the needs we experience. And, it is safe to assume from the series of "Critiques"**

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*At one point in the Ideology, Marx and Engels write "Philosophy and the study of the actual world have the same relation to one another as onanism and sexual love."[22]

**In addition to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859) and Critique of the Gotha Program (1875), Marx wrote Capital (1867), the subtitle of which is A Critique of Political Economy, and Grundrisse (1857-58), the intended title of which was Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy.

which Marx was to write during the remainder of his life, that he conceived of men and women as being constrained to act from rational determinations of how to best satisfy their experienced needs. That is to say, Marx conceived of humans as acting in history from hypothetical imperatives.

CHAPTER 15

MARX'S WRITINGS FROM THE POVERTY OF PHILOSOPHY TO THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Between January of 1847 and the Revolution of 1848, wrote a number of influential political and economic works which are based upon the conception of history which he and Engels had worked out in The German Ideology. Among these were The Poverty of Philosophy, Wage Labor and Capital, On The Question of Free Trade and The Communist Manifesto. It is clear that in these writings Marx views humans as acting heteronomously in history.

Thus, in Chapter 1 of The Poverty of Philosophy, Marx writes of the individual who acts in history as one who "feels needs" which are "determined by his social position" and "founded on the organization of production."[1*] And it is in terms of the "active, energetic life" of such individuals that Marx formulates his materialist conception of history--a conception of history which treats the moral

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*In 1859 Marx wrote of The Poverty of Philosophy that "The decisive points of our view were first scientifically, although only polemically, indicated in my work published in 1847, and directed against "Proudhon . . ."[2]

life of humans as a function of their material life. Marx writes:

> In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with industrial capitalist.
>
> The same men who establish their social relations in conformity with their material productivity, produce also principles, ideas and categories, in conformity with their social relations.[3]

Marx, then, proceeds, on the one hand, to criticize the programs of "humanitarians," because these programs are based on the distinction between "essence and reality."[4] On the other hand, he criticizes the programs of utopian socialists because these programs do not grasp what, from the point of view of making rational determinations, is the true significance of the poverty of the proletariat. Such socialists, Marx writes, "see in poverty nothing but poverty, without seeing in it the revolutionary, subversive side, which will overthrow the old society."[5] Therefore, their "science," Marx continues, is "doctrinaire," not "revolutionary."[6] The science of the utopian socialists does not describe the best way for the proletariat to satisfy its needs.

In The Communist Manifesto, Marx once more criticizes the programs of humanitarians and utopian socialists for not setting forth the best way for workers to satisfy the needs which they experience. And he bases his arguments for the

"forcible overthrow of all existing conditions" as being in fact the only way for the proletariat to satisfy its needs, precisely on the grounds that humans only act in history to satisfy needs which they experience. For example, he argues against bourgeois critics of communism on the grounds that behind their ideas "lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests." Marx writes:

> Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into law for all, a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the economic conditions of existence of your class.[7]

Furthermore in his writings of this period, Marx sees his task as that of rationally convincing the workers themselves of the best way for them to satisfy the needs which they experience. Thus, in his introductory remarks to Wage Labor and Capital, Marx writes:

> We shall try to make our presentation as simple and popular as possible and shall not presuppose even the most elementary notions of political economy. We wish to be understood by the workers.[8*]

Similarly, Marx addresses himself in The Poverty of Philosophy to working people "who have allowed themselves

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*In his Preface to the French edition of Capital, Marx writes to the publisher, "I applaud your idea of publishing the translation of "Das Kapital" as a serial. In this form the book will be more accessible to the working-class, a consideration which to me outweighs everything else."[9]

to be deluded by appearances."[10] And he writes On The Question of Free Trade, in order to "enlighten the worker upon his own interest," by pointing out "the accidental circumstances which today the worker may take to be the cause of his miserable condition."[11]

Finally, in the Manifesto Marx sees himself as writing "for the enlightenment of the working class," by "always and everywhere representing the interests of the movement as a whole."[12] Therefore, when he concludes the Manifesto with the exhortation "Working Men of All Countries Unite," Marx is merely underscoring the fact that reason dictates solidarity as the best means for working class men and women to satisfy their needs and, thus, that there is an hypothetical imperative for workers to unite.

Thus, today Marxists see it as their task to rationally convince white workers that it is not the opening up of the job market, the housing market and the schools to racial minorities which is the cause of their miserable condition, but capitalism which is the cause of their misery. However, should the white workers in question experience a need to feel superior to minorities, a student of the writings of the later Marx could not see it as her or his task to rationally convince the white workers of the inhumanness of the need which they experience in order to get them to unite.

That humans, in the later writings of Marx, are viewed as creatures who can only act on the basis of felt needs, is illustrated by a dialogue which took place between Herbert Marcuse and representatives of the German S.D.S. in 1970. After Marcuse delivered a paper in which he called for the development of "new revolutionary needs" such as the need for "unalienated work" and "undeserved happiness," a student accused him of shifting his emphasis "toward enlightenment and away from revolution." To this, Marcuse replied:

> You have defined what is unfortunately the greatest difficulty in the matter. Your objection is that, for new, revolutionary needs to develop, the mechanisms that reproduce the old needs must be abolished. In order for the mechanisms to be abolished, there must first be a need to abolish them. That is the circle in which we are placed, and I do not know how to get out of it.[13]

Needs, for the later Marx, are something produced by "mechanisms" and not something which can come into being through "enlightenment"--through a rational criticism of the needs which we in fact experience at a given time.

In his later writings, then, Marx views humans as acting from hypothetical imperatives--from rational determinations of how best to satisfy the needs which they, in fact, experience. The focal point of his criticism, therefore, is no longer the ethos of the individual, but the individual's position in the social relations of production.

However, perhaps the best way to support my contention that throughout his later writings, Marx adopts the heteronomous concept of humans acting in history, is to argue that it is in terms of this concept that one can best understand the terminology which Marx uses to state the materialist conception of history in these writings.

In A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859) and again in Volume I of Capital (1867), Marx gives us the following statement of the "general result" of an investigation into political economy which he conducted in Brussels--a general result which became the "guiding thread" of his subsequent studies.[14*] He writes:

> In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis (Basis), on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which corresponds definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions (bedingt) the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines (bestimmt) their existence, but their social existence which determines their consciousness.[15]

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*Marx, as we have seen, moved to Brussels in February of 1845. He was to stay there three years until expelled by the government as part of its strategy for keeping the revolutionary fervor of 1848 from spreading to Belgium. Marx's subsequent involvement in the revolutionary turmoil of France and Germany cut short his economic studies which he did not resume until 1850 in London.

Now when Marx writes that men's relations of production constitute the "basis" of their political and legal life, he is in fact taking the position that the particular way in which men produce food, clothing and shelter constitutes the object of the particular political and legal needs which men experience. Man's actions qua producer are the "condition of the possibility" of man's political and legal actions. Similarly, when Marx writes that the mode of production "conditions" man's intellectual life process (which would include the making of moral determinations), he is, I submit, using the word "condition" in the sense in which Kant uses it when he asserts that a hypothetical imperative is "conditioned" by an object of a desire, as that object constitutes the "matter" of the law of which the imperative is a conception. For Marx, the actions of men when they produce are, as it were, the matter of man's intellectual life--the matter of the laws, the conceptions of which constrain men's minds when they act in history. For example, in discussing the conflict between the forces and relations of production in A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Marx characterizes man's legal, political, religious, aesthetic and philosophic forms of consciousness as "forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out."[16]

Finally, when Marx writes that it is not the consciousness of men which "determines" their being, Marx can

be best understood as using the word "determines" in the way in which Kant uses the term "determining ground," when he characterizes the object of one's desire as the "determining ground" of one's will when it is constrained by a hypothetical imperative. That is to say, for Marx, man's social existence--whether one is interested in its maintenance or overthrow--is the object of man's social consciousness and, therefore, the ground of its determination as opposed to its effective cause.*

Before I rest my case, however, I would like to address myself to a point often raised by those who argue that there is merely a shift of emphasis between the earlier and later writings of Marx, or that the same concepts remain operative throughout all of Marx's writings.** The point in question is that Marx, in his later writings, frequently uses the word "human" in a normative sense. The passage

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*It should also be pointed out that Marx's assertion that man's consciousness is "determined" by his social existence is a clause in a chiasmus--a grammatical figure by which the order of words in one of two parallel clauses is inverted in the other. This literary device was often used by Marx for emphasizing what he considered to be radical differences between his views and the views of those whom he was criticizing. Since Marx was radically opposed to the Young Hegelian view that man's consciousness determines his existence, it was quite consistent with his literary propensities that he would emphasize his opposition by a chiasmus, and then rely upon the context in which he was writing to rule out the possibility of a vulgar or mechanistic interpretation being given to the word "determine."

**Cf. pages 11 and 12 of this work.

which is most often cited in this respect is from the chapter entitled The Trinity Formula in Volume III of Capital. Marx writes:

> The realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus, in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production . . . . Freedom in this field can only consist in socialized man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favorable to, and worthy of, their human nature.[17] (Emphasis supplied)

However, it should be noted that nothing in the above passage implies that Marx, in Capital, viewed men and women as acting from a rational determination of what is valid for them as human beings. Nor does anything in the above passage imply that Marx held that it was even possible to make rational determinations concerning what is human or inhuman. Indeed, Marx's moral outrage against the inhumanity of capitalist society is perfectly consistent with his own position that the underlying reality of one's moral views on something is whether or not that thing meets your needs. Although Marx, throughout his writings, consistently characterizes capitalism as inhuman and communism as human, this does not mean that he consistently held the same view of humans acting in history.

THE TWO CONCEPTS OF FREEDOM IN MARX'S WRITINGS WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE TWO CONCEPTS OF HUMANS ACTING IN HISTORY

In the previous section of this work, I have argued that in Marx's writings from 1835 to 1845 the predominant conception of humans acting in history is what I have called the autonomous concept of humans, and that in Marx's writings from 1845 to 1848 the predominant concept of humans acting in history is what I have called the heteronomous concept of humans. I will now argue that these two different conceptions of men acting in history give rise to two different conceptions of freedom in the writings of Marx.

CHAPTER 16

THE CONCEPT OF FREEDOM CORRESPONDING TO THE CONCEPT OF HUMANS ACTING AUTONOMOUSLY IN HISTORY

When Marx conceives of humans as acting autonomously in history, he conceives of them as acting from categorical imperatives--from conceptions of actions which they, in a given conceptual and material context, rationally determined to be valid for them as humans. And when Marx conceives of humans as acting from categorical imperatives in history, he conceives of humans being free at that point in history when they live that life which is worthy of them as humans from the rational determination that it is so worthy. Therefore, when Marx conceives of humans as acting from categorical imperatives, he conceives of acting from such imperatives as being intrinsic to being free.

In his Doctoral Dissertation, Marx champions Epicurus for whom freedom was the "freedom of self-consciousness"--the freedom of human beings who "consciously" become their "only true object."[1] Similarly, in a note written at the time of his dissertation entitled Reason and the Proof of God, Marx argues that an "absolutely free being" is one whose will is constrained by conceptions of laws which their reason "produces from itself."[2]

While editor of the Rheinische Zeitung, Marx argues that men are free only insofar as they form a "free association of moral human beings," an association of human beings each of whose "aim" is to live in accordance with his "essence." And in a series of articles entitled Debates on Freedom of the Press, Marx argues that in its "essence" freedom is "rational" and "moral" and therefore:

> . . . freedom includes not only what my life is, but equally how I live, not only that I do what is free, but also that I do it freely. Otherwise, what difference would there be between an architect and a beaver except that the beaver would be an architect with fur and the architect a beaver without fur?[3]

Similarly, in both his political journalism and his Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right,' Marx argues that a "truly free state"--a state whose members are truly free--cannot be ordered by "administrative reason" because in such a state "heteronomy" rather than "autonomy" of the spirit would prevail.[4] And, again, in his Critique, where Marx attacks Hegel's absolute idealism for giving individual humans an "alien mind" as their law, he does so on the grounds that "that which is free, must be done freely."[5]

In addition, in his Excerpt-Notes of 1844 and his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, Marx argues that for humans to be free it is not enough that they experience human needs and are able to satisfy these needs. Thus, in his Excerpt-Notes he argues that it is only when we "consciously" produce qua human beings, that our labor is a

"free manifestation of life."[6] And in the Manuscripts, as we have seen,* he argues that man is a "free being" only insofar as "in theory he adopts the species as his object."[7] Thus, in the Manuscripts, Marx writes:

> Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from the life activity of the animal. Only thereby is he a species-being. Or rather, he is only a conscious being--that is, his own life is an object for him--since he is a species-being. Only on that account is his activity free activity.[8]

To be free, then, it is not enough to no longer be alienated from nature, from one's work and from one's fellow humans. That is to say, to be free, it is not enough to live that life which is worthy of oneself qua human being.

To be free one also must no longer be alienated from one's "species-being"**--from one's nature as a being who acts from rational determinations of the essence of things. Therefore, to be free one must not only live that life which is worthy of oneself qua human being, one must live that life from the rational determination that it is so worthy. That is to say, acting from a rational determination is intrinsic to being free.

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*See page 83 of this work.

**For a concise discussion of the four interrelated ways Marx views humans as being alienated in the Manuscripts, see: Mészáros, István, Marx's Theory of Alienation, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970, pp. 14-15.

Although in his later writings Marx still writes of the alienation of men and women from nature, from their work and from other humans, he no longer writes of the alienation of men and women from their species-being. And, thus, nowhere in his later writings does Marx conceive of acting from rational determinations as being intrinsic to being free.

Finally, in The Holy Family, where Marx writes of history in terms of "man's consciousness of his species and his attitude toward his species," and where he characterizes the proletariat as "that dehumanization conscious of its dehumanization and therefore self-abolishing," he takes pains to argue that being free involves not only the "ability to be something," but the "will to be something."[9]

To be free, then, is not just to be free from spiritual and physical dehumanization. That is to say, to be free is not just to be from alienated relationships to nature, work and other humans. To be free one also must act from the rational determination of what constitutes dehumanization or alienation. That is to say, freedom is not merely "freedom from." Part and parcel of being free is acting from a rational determination.

In summary, in that period of his writings in which he views humans as acting autonomously in history, Marx conceives of acting autonomously as intrinsic to being free. Thus, in the early writings of Marx, an individual is free

only if the rational determinations which order her or his life are rational determinations which he or she makes. The conceptions from which free individuals act must be their <u>own</u> conceptions in the sense that they themselves have rationally determined them to be correct.

CHAPTER 17

THE CONCEPT OF FREEDOM CORRESPONDING TO THE CONCEPT OF HUMANS ACTING HETERONOMOUSLY IN HISTORY

When Marx conceives of humans as acting heteronomously in history, he conceives of them as acting from hypothetical imperatives--from conceptions of actions which they, in a given conceptual and material context, rationally determine to best meet the needs which they experience in that context. And when Marx conceives of humans acting in history from hypothetical imperatives, he conceives of humans as being free at that point in history when they are in a position to satisfy those needs which they in fact experience. Therefore, when Marx conceives of humans as acting from hypothetical imperatives, he conceives of acting from such imperatives as being extrinsic to being free.

In The German Ideology, where Marx and Engels conceive of a human being as acting in history "for the sake of one or another of his needs," they write of freedom in terms of the "power" (Kraft) of humans to "satisfy a definite need actually experienced by them."[1] Thus, they criticize Stirner's book The Ego and Its Own, because in it, "the striving for a fantastic ideal, for freedom as such, for

the 'freedom of Man' appeared instead of the satisfaction of actual needs."[2] And, thus, after chastizing Stirner for giving us a "categorical imperative" to free ourselves from "determination by nature" and, therefore, from "domination by desire," Marx and Engels write:

> The communists have no intention of abolishing the fixedness of their desires and needs, . . . they only strive to achieve an organization of production and intercourse which will make possible the normal satisfaction of all needs, i.e., a satisfaction which is limited only by the needs themselves.[3]

Therefore, Marx and Engels can assert that under capitalism freedom in fact does exist for those individuals "who developed within the relationships of the ruling class" and who remain "individuals of this class," because such an individual has "the means to develop his tendencies in all directions" (die Mittel, seine Anlagen nach allen Seiten hin auszubilden).[4] And, therefore, it is no surprise that in the Poverty of Philosophy we find Marx willing to entertain talk about "the bad sides of freedom."[5]

Now, insofar as Marx views freedom in terms of having the power to satisfy a need which one experiences, he views acting from rational determinations as being a means to an end--as a means to satisfying a need--and thus as something extrinsic to the satisfaction of needs, and thus as something extrinsic to being free. Therefore, nowhere in his later writings does Marx hold that a given individual

is free only if he or she wills from a rational determination of how to best satisfy her or his needs.

The fact that all individuals will be free under communism--that the free development of each individual will be the condition for the free development of every other individual--is due to the fact that given "the development of modern productive forces," which requires abolishing the "enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor" and which enables the "springs of cooperative wealth to flow more abundantly," each individual, thinking critically, will rationally determine that he or she can best satisfy the needs which they experience by producing "in and through association."[6] That is to say, each individual will rationally determine that he or she can best satisfy their needs by combining to "take their conditions of existence under control"--"conditions which were previously abandoned to chance and had won an independent existence over against the separate individuals."[7]

For example, with the overcoming of the division of labor, and especially the division of mental and physical labor, labor will become life's "prime need"[8*] (erstes Beduerfnis), and at that point in history each individual, thinking critically, will rationally determine that they can best satisfy their needs by producing and distributing

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*See page 101 of this work.

goods cooperatively. That is to say, the historical "transformation of human nature," of which Marx writes in The Poverty of Philosophy, simply works out so that each individual will come to rationally determine that the best way to satisfy her or his needs is in and through association.* Acting from a rational determination of how best to satisfy one's needs, however, remains a means to the end of satisfying those needs, and thus it remains a means to the end of achieving freedom and therefore something extrinsic to being free.

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*It might be argued that Hegel's "cunning of reason" or Adam Smith's "invisible hand" is the ultimate guarantor of human freedom for Marx in his later writings.

However, it might also be argued that since Marx puts forth a view of what needs men and women would experience if their lives were constituted by new social relations, he conceives of humans as being able to act from the conception of these needs and, thus, autonomously. However, textual evidence supports the view that, for Marx, men and women could act to bring into existence new experienced needs only in those cases in which they felt a need to do so by virtue of their life being constituted by particular social relations. Thus, he writes in his Preface to Capital:

> But here individuals are dealt with only insofar as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class-relations and class-interests. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them.[9]

But, it might be argued, Marx envisioned the historical transformation of human nature working out so that proletarians will come to experience a need to act from rational determinations. Although this may well be true, it does not follow that acting from rational determinations would, therefore, become intrinsic to being free. Satisfying an experienced need to act from rational determinations would become part and parcel of being free, but acting from rational determinations, per se, would not. Thus, for example, actually acting from a rational determination is only one means by which the experienced need of an individual to act from rational determinations could be satisfied. Moreover, in any given case, it might not be a sufficient means. Therefore, acting from rational determinations remains extrinsic to being free.

AN IMPORTANT RESPECT IN WHICH THE TWO CONCEPTS OF FREEDOM IN MARX'S WRITINGS DIFFER

It is my contention that the two concepts of freedom in Marx's writings differ in at least one important respect. In the following chapter, I will argue that these two concepts differ in respect to the question of whether or not a human can be made free against her or his will.

CHAPTER 18

MAKING HUMANS FREE AGAINST THEIR WILL

The concept of freedom corresponding to the conception of humans acting autonomously in history differs from the concept of freedom corresponding to the conception of humans acting heteronomously in history in the following important respect. Whereas it would be a contradiction in terms to talk of making an autonomous human free against her or his will, whether or not one could make an heteronomous human free against her or his will would depend upon the particular historical circumstances involved.

Briefly, I take making an individual free against her or his will to be a case of denying that individual one or more options to act, so that the option which he or she would have chosen is no longer available and so that the option which he or she will now choose is one that someone else--not the individual in question--has determined will make that individual free. In general, this can be done in one of two ways. Either an individual can be denied an option by coercion or force or an individual can be denied an option by manipulation or social engineering.

Clearly, the autonomous human could not be made free against her or his will. The autonomous human, for Marx, is free only when he or she acts from the rational determination that the life they are living is worthy of them qua human being. For Marx, acting from a rational determination is intrinsic to the freedom of the autonomous human.

Thus, if one were to deny the autonomous human an option by force, and he or she therefore had to take another option, he or she could not be said to be living a life which was worthy of them qua human being from the rational determination that it is so worthy. One cannot at the same time both do something because one is forced to do it, and do it from the rational determination that one ought to do it. The two motives are mutually exclusive.

Similarly, if one were to deny the autonomous human an option by social engineering, and he or she therefore had to take another option, he or she could not be said to be living a life which is worthy of them qua human being from the rational determination that it is so worthy. If the social engineering takes the form of denying an individual an option by preventing the individual in question from becoming aware of that option, that individual could not be said to be acting from a rational determination because he or she was denied the facts necessary to make such a determination. On the other hand, if the social

engineering takes the form of denying an individual an option by creating in the individual certain overwhelming desires, that individual could not be said to be acting from a rational determination of their life being worthy of them qua human being because he or she would be acting in the service of their inclinations.

The heteronomous human, however, could in particular historical circumstances be made free against her or his will. For Marx, the heteronomous human is free at that point in history when he or she is in a position to satisfy those needs which he or she in fact experiences. And thus, for Marx, acting from rational determinations is extrinsic to being free--acting from a rational determination is only a means to an end.

Therefore, in the historical circumstances where one or more individuals could justifiably claim to know how to satisfy the needs experienced by human beings who did not themselves know how to satisfy those needs, the one or more individuals in question would be able to make these human beings free against their will if they had the necessary power over them. That is to say, the one or more individuals would be able to use force or social engineering to put these human beings into a position to satisfy the needs which they in fact experience. That is to say, they would be able to make these human beings free by means of coercion or manipulation.

Now it is true that in his later writings, Marx saw the working class as acting from a critique of capitalism--from a rational determination of the ability of that system to meet its needs--and thus he writes in The German Ideology of the "self-liberation" of individuals, and of individuals who "free themselves" in history. And thus, in the Communist Manifesto, he characterizes the working class movement as the "self-sufficient (selbstaendig) movement of the immense majority in the interest of the majority."

However, the fact remains that the self-sufficient activity of individuals or the self-liberating activity of individuals is still viewed as a means to an end--as a means to the satisfaction of experienced needs and, thus, as a means to achieving freedom. In other words, the possibility of there being historical circumstances in which humans could be made free against their will is not fuled out.

In his early writings where Marx viewed humans acting autonomously in history, he argues that it would be a contradiction in terms to talk of making humans free against their will, on the grounds that "substituting the crooked deletions of the censors for mathematical constructions, and crude force for decisive arguments," would violate "the sacredness and inviolability of subjective conviction."[1] However, nowhere in his later writings does

Marx advance such an argument. Indeed, he could not develop such an argument from his new conception of humans acting in history. Thus, although Marx neither advocated nor foresaw working people being forced or engineered to freedom, he laid the philosophical foundation for this taking place when he adopted the heteronomous concept of humans acting in history.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 1

[1]See H. P. Adams, Karl Marx in His Early Writings, Atheneum, New York, 1972; F. Mehring, Karl Marx, Covici-Friede, New York, 1935; L. Easton and K. Guddat, eds., Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society, Doubleday, New York, 1967.

[2]K. Marx, Capital, Vol. I. The Modern Library, 1906, p. 14.

[3]K. Marx, Contribution to Critique of Political Economy. International Publishers, New York, 1970, p. 22.

[4]Ibid., p. 20.

[5]K. Marx, Communist Manifesto, 1888, p. 137.

[6]F. Engels, "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx," R. Tucker, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1972, p. 603.

[7]K. Marx, The German Ideology. Progress, Moscow, 1968, pp. 39-40.

[8]M-ER, p. 175.

[9]Ibid., p. 183.

[10]Werke, Vol. 6. Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1969, p. xix.

[11]F. Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach. International Publishers, New York, 1941, p. 8.

[12] CCPE, p. 20.

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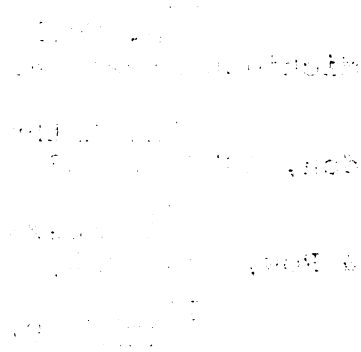

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