



# Common Sense

A Journal of a wholly new type



# 2



BRIAN Mc GRAIL

# Common Sense

Issue No. 2 (July 1987)

<u>Contents</u>	page
Richard Norris: Selfhood - The Options.....	3
Murdo Macdonald: The Centre of Psychology.....	14
Richard Gunn: Notes on 'Class'.....	15
Filio Diamanti: "Class" in Marx's Thought and beyond...	26
Olga Taxidou: Performance or Bodily Rhetoric.....	42
Nigel Gunn: Democracy of a wholly new Type?.....	52
Keith Anderson: A Consideration of Perpetual Motion....	54
Richard Gunn: Marxism and Mediation.....	57
Werner Bonefeld: Marxism and the Concept of Mediation..	67
Free University of Glasgow: The Free University: A Background.....	73
Interview with Hans Magnus Enzenberger.....	76

The third issue of Common Sense will appear in August 1987, during the Edinburgh Festival.

Notes for contributors: send articles in clean typescript, single-space or space-and-a-half (not double-space). Leave wide margins on both sides.

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## WHY COMMON SENSE?

In the 18th century, Scottish philosophy understood common sense to mean (a) public or shared sense (sensus communis) and also (b) an as-it-were "sixth" sense which establishes relations and distinctions between the data supplied by the other five. What is exciting in this philosophy is its thesis that these two meanings of common sense by no means exclude, but on the contrary imply, one another. On the one hand, I can achieve a coherent totalisation of my experience only in and through interaction with other people; and, on the other hand, it is only as a totalised (an autonomous) individual that I can authentically interact. Thus selfhood and society form a unity. So too do theory and practice, since I can theorise my experience truly only where social and practical conditions making for a free interaction obtain. Theorising, in short, both summons and presupposes what Hegel terms 'mutual recognition': an interest in truth and in social emancipation go hand in hand.

For the Scottish philosophers, common sense enters crisis in a society where a social division of labour exists. In the Hegelian and Marxian traditions, this becomes the thesis that truth can appear only once existing alienations have been set at naught. The journal Common Sense draws the conclusion: wherever it enters crisis, common sense can go forward only as critique.

In keeping with its inspiration, the procedures of Common Sense are wholly novel. Material submitted is photocopied, stapled and distributed on a non-profitmaking basis by a non-existing editorial board. Only boring - which is to say unthinkingly conformist - material counts as non-commonsensical inasmuch as such material merely reproduces the categories which underwrite existing alienations, i.e., the existing order of social things.

In this way, the hegemony of the division of labour as between theory and practice, between readership and contributors and between contributors and editors is thrown to the winds. So too is the division of labour between academia and the outside world (a division which academia itself, like any closed monopoly or corporation, seeks always to keep in play). Thereby, through a detonation of existing boundaries, a space is cleared in which common sense in its two-fold meaning can authentically come to be.

Common Sense is thus as much an idea as a journal: start your own, on the same minimalist basis, and let discussion proliferate outwith the confines which orthodox academia, always respectful of authority, adopts as its favoured own.

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Note: If you would be interested in participating in discussion of any issue raised in Common Sense, please contact us. A discussion-meeting on 'Mediation' is planned for September: details in CS 3.

Further note: donations towards our production-costs will always be more than welcome!

The following is a reprint of the initial announcement (carried in Edinburgh Review No. 76) of the idea underlying Common Sense.

## A Journal of a wholly new type

Problems of production, of sales/distribution and of editorial policy seem intrinsic to the publication of any journal, whether mainstream or alternative; these problems have stood in the way of the emergence of new alternative journals especially of a theoretical and therefore a relatively non-popular kind. The consequence of this is that universities and professional-academic journals retain their fateful monopoly on the life of the mind. In a period of recession, with universities becoming more restrictive and bureaucratic and with (as a result) increasing numbers of people being driven away from universities, whether into unemployment or non-academic employment, this monopoly seems even more vicious than it was before. A non-university based theoretical journal has thus a sound political point.

In order to minimise the problems of production/distribution/editing, such a journal must be of a wholly novel type. In fact, these problems can almost entirely be avoided if journal-production is thought of in a fresh way.

Technology, (word-processing, xeroxing, etc.) is increasingly on our side. Contributors to such a journal would submit their work in readable (which means: attractively readable) typescript, A4, single spaced, so that articles are not retyped but merely photocopied; the resulting bundle of different articles can then be stapled together and put between simple folded covers (a different colour for each issue, perhaps, but retain the same format each time in order to keep production-costs down). The *only* tasks confronting the production-group would then be photocopying, stapling and distributing. An editorial policy could *virtually be dispensed with* since there would be no fixed limit on the number of articles a given issue might contain; for the same reason, articles could be short or long. The journal could be published occasionally rather than regularly depending on material to hand. It would be sold at more or less cost price.

Initially, its circulation could be minimal: today, a readership of half a dozen and tomorrow the world . . . . Back-issues could be reproduced either as a whole or in part, depending on demand, simply by xeroxing a master-copy. Starting small would to keep initial costs very low; we could build up a readership by means of a 'network' of personal contacts depending solely on the quality of the material carried; there could also be some local sales. Thereby, problems of distribution could be avoided no less than the other problems mentioned above. Financial risks would be minimal, and we would need to aim only at producing a 'readable-attractive' as opposed to a 'commercial-attractive' publication since it would only be the quality and interest of our contents that was germane.

The attraction of the scheme is its anarchism: it ignores all problems, all commerce, all professional boundaries, all academic establishments, all editorial anxieties. We could publish matter which was esoteric, heterodox, inflammatory and beyond every pale. Articles on anarchist collectives would sit side by side with articles on aesthetic theory; medieval theology could be juxtaposed with venomous political attacks. There would be absolutely no need to write in a popular or accessible way, and yet there would be no need to write in an academically respectable fashion either. The only material to be anathematized would be material which was boring. Through a minimalist approach to journal-production, we solve all problems by ignoring them and circumvent all authority by attacking it, not head-on, but from behind its back.

AN ATTEMPT AT UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF THROUGH SOME POSSIBLE  
POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS

OR  
SELFHOOD - THE OPTIOUS

Richard Morris

To talk about the 'concept' of the self may not be a good start. What if the self is something that is perceived rather than conceived? Rather than discussing different conceptions perhaps the question should focus on different interpretations. On the other hand maybe the self should be characterised as a construct so that from the outset the self is viewed as architecture. A constructed self is a self denied a basic authenticity, but renders discussion about a 'religious' self or a 'political' self much more immediately intelligible. To go further would be to talk about the various 'languages' of the self so that the correct acknowledgement is made at the beginning that the 'self' is being treated as a discourse rather than as a brute fact. But even if it can be denied that the self exists purely as a 'brute fact' (and hopefully this is the case otherwise there will be nothing further to discuss), at some point allowance must be made for the unquestionable immediacy of subjectivity that is partly entailed in the idea of selfhood.

To speak of the self is to attempt to render subjectivity objective, and therefore starting off in such a contradictory way necessitates that there is no clear clean beginning. The word 'concept' will have to do as a term of convenience, and the difficulties involved in any characterisation of the self as 'concept', 'percept', 'construct', 'language', or whatever else come in mind.

THE PURSUIT OF THE SELF

The relationship between the enquirer and 'selfhood' and the relationship between the quest for authenticity and selfhood posit that the self is the object of pursuit. Now this is to explicitly undermine any idea that the self is in some sense static, i.e. unitary and limited to the present tense. Such terms as 'self-determination', 'self-discovery', 'self-transcendence', 'self-realisation', all speak of a self that is not fully in possession of itself.

The pursuit of authentic selfhood takes the form of an eternal quest in religion, magic, myth, psychotherapy, and politics. It may seem that to talk about the pursuit of authentic selfhood is to presuppose that there is a predefined self being pursued. Whilst this may be the case, is it possible to pursue an authentic selfhood that is not predefined? If this predefined selfhood is in itself a starting point, a 'free space', then the predefinition of selfhood includes an arena of possibility. In this sense the self is not regarded as a substance inserted into an empty world, but an emptiness imposed into a world of substances. In any event to talk of the 'pursuit of the self' is to postulate the self as a dynamic relationship (between the pursued self and the pursuing self) which seeks the goal of self-transparency. The idea that the self is a dynamics of movement seeking transparency as a solution to its own opacity is a view shared by the various founders and prophets of religion and modern pioneers of psychoanalysis. On the other hand, the idea of an authentic selfhood gained by 'self-overcoming' finds expression in religious mysticism and Nietzsche. These two views are of course not necessarily contradictory, for although in the first the self is identified with transparency, and in the second the self is identified with opacity, the movement towards authenticity is the same, in the sense that there is the act of transparency penetrating opacity. This is the recurring problem in comparing different views of the self, for the process may be the same, but the 'self' located in different parts of that process. However the important point about the self as

'pursuit-pursuer-pursued' is that the notion of the self as a set, stable entity is rejected in favour of a self consisting of a set of relationships that mutually interact, and maybe even eliminate one another.

#### SELF AND OTHER

The distinction of selfhood and otherness seems to be an inescapable constituent of consciousness. The basic item of selfhood is the differentiation between 'me' and 'not-me', and the process of this increasing distinction is seen as the process of maturation e.g. the process of a baby becoming a child and a child becoming an adult. Insofar as the distinction seems to break down, consciousness seems to cease; as in deep sleep. However even when in deep sleep it would seem at least that there is still existence both subjectively and objectively. There is subjective existence insofar as when one awakes to a conscious reaffirmation of existence the period of deep sleep is inserted into one's linear-time conception. Objectively the sleeper exists simply by the fact that such a sleeper can be observed. This point is being made to underscore the observation that whilst the self/other dichotomy seems to be a necessary constituent of consciousness, it does not seem to be a necessary constituent of existence. Thus the abolition of the self/other dichotomy may lead to either death or enlightenment.

Selfhood and otherness may seem easily distinct but there are problems, both in terms of identity and embodiment. If there were no problems of selfhood and identity it would not be possible to hear (or utter) the following type of statement:

'I am not feeling myself today'.

This statement indicates a lack of clear subjective unity and there is correspondingly also an objective failure of clear demarcation. The distinct 'edge' of the embodied self gets blurred by its own maintenance operations e.g. food being processed into cells, skin dropping off as dust, limbs being amputated, organ transplants, artificial limbs, and the whole problem of where in the body, if anywhere, the self resides. The embodied self cannot be physically isolated from the surrounding world, but exists rather as a factor of exchange.

The self could be reduced to immediate sensory experience, but if the experience alone is valid, there is no subject/object split, no selfhood and otherness, therefore no self...just the experience. Such relief from the problem of dualism and self is claimed by practitioners of Buddhist meditation. The annihilation of the self is seen as precisely the answer to the problem of the 'unhappy consciousness'.

To talk about the self is to objectify the feeling of subjectivity, to posit that there is more to the self than the immediacy of simple sensory experience. On the one hand the self can always be present to itself, or rather present in itself, but also partly concealed from itself, that is, more complicated than a simple state of awareness, but nevertheless located in the present tense. Such a self consists of both a conscious self and an unconscious self, a mixture of transparency and opacity. On the other hand, selfhood transcends a simple symmetrical relationship with otherness when it encounters time.

#### SELF AND TIME

In time the self can stand outside of itself ('I see myself doing so and so') and become alienated from itself ('I hate myself for what I did'). It can also be disorientated by such a separation ('I am not myself today'). In time the self no longer contains the sense of immediacy and unity it has in its encounter with space. Otherness can mean the immediate world which is not self (space) but can also mean 'absent tense' - the past and the future. However, to allow the 'past self' and 'future self' to be part of otherness

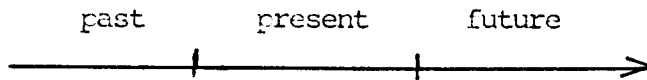
leaves any remaining conception of selfhood stranded in the present, confined to the awareness of immediate sensory experience as discussed previously. If selfhood is allowed to embrace all three tenses then the demarcation between self and other breaks down even further. The attempt to objectify the self is essential, for the self is more than subjective, immediate experience. Once immediate subjectivity starts to present a future self or past self to itself as an object of reflection it objectifies itself for it has gone beyond its own immediate subjectivity. The attempt to objectify subjectivity encounters time, for through time the self is objectified just as through space the self is objectified through embodiment (by thus I refer to the experience of the body as an object in space amongst other spatial objects, an experience that goes beyond regarding the body as purely a 'house of subjectivity'.)

Thus the self is objectified through embodiment and temporality (space and time). Alternatively, space and time are mediated through the self. The spatial analogy of otherness 'surrounding' the self is suggested by the surrounding of the embodied self by the physical world. If this picture is reversed, so that otherness is surrounded by its selfhood, it may give an insight into the nature of 'realisation' and alienation. 'Realisation' may be the experience of the structure of the self embracing all, whereas alienation may be the experience of otherness within all. Any way, I hope to show that the simple vision of a self surrounded by otherness breaks down once the relationship of self and time is considered, for through time the identity of the self loses its essential unity in the present, and through memory and expectation it becomes much more interwoven into the otherness of the world.

THE TENSE OF THE SELF

The only tense that an immediate subjectivity has access to is the present, it is shut off from the past and the future. Traces of the past as memory, and hopes and fears for the future as anticipation, contrast with the experience of the present. The most common characterisation of time is linear continuity i.e.

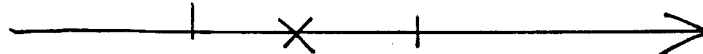
The process of time thus depicted has no demarcations between the tenses, and thus does not accord with the self's experience of time. This is because in experience the tenses are distinct and not continuous, that is, they do not flow into each other. Linear time broken up into distinct tenses looks like this



However in order for the continuous line now broken up into stages to have descriptive value the present tense would have to be envisaged as a moving point along the line - thus at one 'time' the present would be in the past



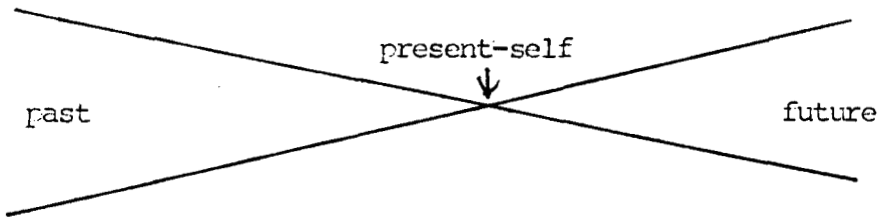
at another in the present



and at another in the future



However the model breaks down because the present tense is depicted as two things at once, a partition and a moving point. This is all to say that a subject does not experience time as a linear continuity but as three tenses radically shut off from each other. The unity of the temporal self is sacrificed to this separation of the tenses, which is another way of saying that the 'future self' and the 'past self' can never be present, and therefore the self can never be self-contained. Of course the past self can be present in the form of memory, and the future self can be present in the form of anticipation, but the fabric of both is interwoven with the reality in which it is placed. The past self and the future self cannot be recovered in their distinctiveness, for the memory of the past is the memory of events, and the anticipation of the future is also the anticipation of events. What follows is that the self is only distinct at the vanishing point of the present moment, diagrammatically shown as



On this view the present tense of the self is not a partition of time, but the point of contact between past and future, but yet past and future can never meet. The point at which the past and future tense both do and do not meet is the 'vanishing point' of the present-moment self and the mark of both its distinctiveness and obliteration. However only by sacrificing itself to the interwoven web of events can the self have an existence (that is, move beyond immediate sensory awareness) but such existence is bought at the price of its distinctiveness.

This means thinking about the self as a dynamic movement between the tenses e.g. the present and the future. The 'pursuit of the self' is the pursuit of a future self by a present self. This pursuit can be envisaged in either spiritual or material terms. Examples would be apocalyptic Christianity and Marxism. Alternatively in Buddhism the self seeks its own blissful annihilation by entering the present moment - the 'eternal now'. The self is alienated insofar as it is shut out of the eternal present and confined to the other two tenses in the form of memory and expectation. The combination of memory and expectation produce dissatisfaction and the sense of self. The 'future self' and the 'present no-self' are opposed, for in the former, meaning is the future promise of authentic selfhood, whilst in the latter meaning is contained in the present obliteration of selfhood.

#### THE "NOT YET" SELF

The idea of a future-orientated self can be more radically stated if time is conceived as a movement from the future to the present via the past (Hegel's 'Historical Time'). Here Selfhood is not substantial insofar as it is not located within any tense, but instead it exists as movement from the future into the present, and therefore can only be understood on the basis of the primacy of the future, i.e., it is what it is 'not yet' (Bloch). However on this model, autonomy would depend not on the movement from the future to the present, but on the freedom of the present to respond to that movement. Desire is future-orientated but autonomy would be the capacity to follow and satisfy desire. This leaves the question as to what or who directs the desire that streams into the present from the future, for otherwise existence is purely random, but if randomness is rejected then cosmology can reemerge as the source of desire. In order to maintain autonomy for the not-yet self freedom must be seen as a property not attached to substance but to



movement, thereby allowing autonomy to the movement from future to present as well as to the present-based response. The not-yet self is then an autonomous movement from the future which encounters the present, and is also the response to that encounter; the movement of return from the present into the future.

#### SELF AND MEANING

Insofar as the self seeks meaning in its quest for authentic selfhood it may well annihilate itself. Truth as external to selfhood easily leads to the extinction of the self. Often this is explicitly recognised in religion, where the 'false self' is an obstacle to the realisation of truth, and the 'true self' is a mirror image, or reflection, of divine order. The idea of a correspondence also occurs in philosophy e.g. parallels between the self and the polis were drawn by Plato in his search for justice. The chief principle of such a religiously orientated self is that it understands itself in terms of the relationship between self and not-self, and in its quest for self-realisation is inextricably bound up with, and mirrored by, the cosmos within which it is situated. The contradictions existing within both the cosmos and the self entail each other. The contradictions within both cosmos and self (and human society) are necessarily solved simultaneously. The 'cosmological' self seeks its truth and meaning in a cosmic order. When it is reconciled to such a true order it finds its freedom. It is a feature of the cosmological self that it has to lose itself and seeks to regain itself, but in religion it is precisely insofar as the self loses itself that it has any chance of regaining itself. The cosmological self exists as a contradiction - it exists to negate itself, but what it specifically repudiates is the life of a self lived for itself, and what it seeks to attain is a life of the self lived for 'not-self'. The cosmological self may be more properly styled the 'mimetic' self insofar as it seeks to imitate a divine order, but it may also be styled a 'cosmic' self insofar as it seeks an expressive unity with the cosmos.

#### SELF AND FREEDOM

It may happen that truth or meaning are not the ultimate values, but instead freedom is valued the most. A self in pursuit of freedom will immediately encounter conflict with the world as opposed to reconciliation (the cosmological self may also encounter conflict with the immediate world through its adherence to a set of values belonging to an 'other-worldly' cosmic order that nevertheless promises eventual reconciliation.) The pursuit of the self for its own, or human, freedom brings it into the realm of politics. In politics the self is defined through its outward action. The cosmological self may well be inclined towards contemplation to reconcile itself to the universe but through outward action the political self differentiates itself as fact. Whereas the cosmological self aims at ultimate perfection the political searcher of autonomy, the 'autonomous' self is always to some extent a compromised self, for it has to accept the unknown and potentially infinite consequences of action entered into under finite limitations of knowledge and will. However this condition is acceptable to the autonomous self for such finite limitations are the preconditions for its existence.

Can the autonomous self of politics be said to be in pursuit of authentic selfhood? The autonomous self exists as the source of its own future possibilities, as opposed to being the vehicle for the unfolding of potential. The only authenticity for the autonomous self is its own autonomy, which means to say it must remain in a state of becoming, in order to carry on freely deciding what it is to be. In view of the fact that it is chasing a freedom to determine what it is to be, a freedom moreover that can never be realised fully, the autonomous self is no more substantial than the

cosmological self.

Why is the autonomous self a source of possibility as opposed to a vehicle of potentiality? Insofar as a self is constituted of potential it is not self-determined, for it cannot decide for itself what it is, but is in fact a vehicle for the unfolding, if circumstances prove propitious, of a pre-determined set of attributes. As its potential is pre-given and not a matter for the self's own choice, its autonomy is denied. If the prospects of the future self are defined as possibilities then its autonomy is preserved, although the problem entered then is one of control, for unless the self is an arena for random possibility there has to be some control exercised over the various possibilities in order to preserve the idea of the self acting as agent. Therefore when the autonomous self is defined as a source of possibility it should be kept in mind that this is controlled possibility as opposed to random possibility. However, hoping that the distinction between possibility and potential is clear the following three-fold classification can be made -

Ontological self	a self instantaneously grounded in its own being
Eschatological self	a self open to future possibility
Teleological self	a self open to the unfolding of its own potential

Here the teleological self exists as narrative, it is the unfolding of a story, and the ontological self is static, but the eschatological self seems to lack any sort of unity, for it must always contain the possibility of its own contradiction. A conception of the self as constituting a basic unity but at the same time enjoying freedom and bearing moral responsibility for its actions is a combination of all three models of the self. However such a self is a space that combines both substance and emptiness at the same time.

#### SELF, POLIS AND COSMOS

By designating the autonomous self 'political' it is inferred that the cosmological self is non-political or anti-political, but whilst the cosmological self may not have too much respect for politics, this does not mean that it necessarily spurns politics. The political arena can be viewed in three ways -

1. A reflection of the cosmological sphere
2. A sphere of action in its own right
3. An irrelevant distraction

Freedom as a political value only exists in 2, which is the attitude least likely to be taken by a thorough-going cosmological self. In 1, politics plays its part in an integrated Divine order, where reality is divided into three -

cosmos  
polis  
self

The divisions reflect each other, and therefore a truth pertaining to one can be sought in one of the other divisions. Thus Plato sees Justice in the state as the reflection of Justice in the individual. Similarly the medieval world saw the feudal order as a reflection of the hierarchical spiritual order. It follows from this that the overthrow of a celestial order can coincide with the overthrow of a political order. In ancient Rome and

elsewhere there was an awareness of the mutual vulnerability of the gods and the political authorities. If the idea of arbitrary spiritual rule is challenged, so must the idea of arbitrary political rule be inevitably challenged. Thus Greece was the birthplace of both philosophy and democracy. Thus Bakunin coins the slogan 'neither God nor master'.

Paradoxically then, the idea of an autonomous self corresponds cosmologically to a universe without prior purpose, a universe that is either random or accidental, or like the autonomous self exists only as possibility. Such a paradox becomes a critique, for the autonomy of the political self depends for its self-definition on a particular scientific or rationalist world view. How far can any true autonomy be cosmologically derived?

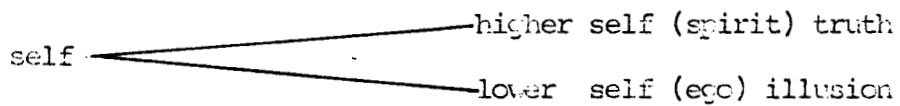
#### DISCOVERY AND INVENTION

It has been said that the cosmological self, more properly termed the mimetic self in this context (the differences will be discussed later), 'discovers' itself whilst the autonomous self 'invents' itself. But these different modes of knowing extend into its relation with the surrounding world. Just as it discovers itself, the cosmological self also discovers the world, and just as it invents itself, the autonomous self invents the world. Thus all things in a cosmological world, including all 'inventions', are really discoveries. Thus in the Platonic system, a table formed and fashioned by human creativity is in fact a discovery of the ideal form of a table rendered imperfectly into the world of shadows. A most exact equivalence of this view is found in the Chinese I Ching, where all things come to pass first in Heaven, before following through into Earth. All things in the world, including the correct political order, are to be discovered through insight rather than invention. The reverse is true for the autonomous self, which extends the domain of invention over the realm of discovery. Thus the positivist idea of science discovering fixed laws has been discredited, firstly by Popper's view that hypotheses are invented as candidates for refutation, and secondly by Kuhn and Feyerabend's view as science as invented paradigm. Disagreements over whether the Law of Gravity was discovered or invented go to the heart of the difference between the cosmological and autonomous self. The tendency of the 'discovery' mode of knowledge is to attempt to make final and absolute pronouncements, whilst the 'invention' tendency looks upon advances in knowledge as relative and temporary. The question of whether it was 'discovered' that the sun was the centre of the earth's orbit, rather than the other way round, or whether this is just a more useful explanatory paradigm, is related to the question of whether we hunt for correct moral laws, or invent morals that 'work' in a particular situation.

The importance of this distinction means that the cosmological self seeks, through discovery, the absolute, and wishes to avoid uncertainty, whilst the autonomous self, through invention, challenges certainty and substitutes relativism. The danger for the cosmological self with its quest for certainty is the fall into dogmatism, whilst the uncertainty and relativism of the autonomous self can lead it into nihilism. One attempt by the autonomous self to find an escape route is to construct 'dual ontologies' where the universe is constructed on one principle and humanity on another. Such dual ontologies enable it to 'discover' objective laws in the universe whilst preserving a distinctive arena of human freedom for invention. The paradigm of anthropocentric freedom in a mechanistic world has recently been under great strain however, partly because it recreates the cosmological problem of an alienated relationship between humanity and nature, and partly because the inflexible laws of objectivity come to predominate over humanity's free subjectivity and lead it into the prisonhouse of instrumental reason.

## INTEGRITY AND UNITY OF THE SELF

The traditional pre-modern idea of the self corresponds to the cosmological self. It is dominant in all pre-modern religious and philosophical systems. The autonomous self as a political value is modern, and exists in the Western political theories of liberalism and socialism, and philosophically in existentialism and more generally in secular humanism. However the autonomous self is an object of criticism from the days of early religion, which shows itself as not unaware of the distinction, and attacks on the autonomous self can also be found in the dialogues between Plato and the Sophists. From the cosmological view the freedom of autonomy represents enslavement to the values of the world. True freedom is seen as liberation from the world of the senses and correspondingly as entry into a higher realm e.g. the Buddhist idea of Nirvana as pure freedom. Here absolute truth and freedom are seen as complementary, not as a contradiction. Such a religious self can be seen as having a two-fold structure -



Western values of autonomy and freedom are seen as false if this involves subordination of spirit (higher self) to ego (lower self). Freedom as a value can be true or false, depending on which part of the self enjoys the freedom.

A Marxist conception of the self in some ways approximates to this view in so far as it posits 'false consciousness' or any idea of false interest. The preference of the lower self must not be mistaken for the interest of the real or higher self in religion and in Marxism there is a similar distinction of interest although it does not postulate a 'higher self'. Liberalism, however, at least in its purest or least unadulterated form (if it is at all possible to talk of such a thing) does not recognise a possible conflict of interest within the self, at least in terms of authenticity. Although there may be conflicting preferences the self is seen as the ultimate referee and so the stated preference is taken at face value. This formula solves the problem of attributing interests contrary to expressed preferences, but at the price of ignoring the problem of the 'happy slave'. It is generally characteristic of liberalism that it regards the self as synonymous with the unitary individual.

A problem of the self encountered in both religious and political ideas is how to conceptualise the self in such a way that account is taken of both

1. the basic integrity of the self, and
2. the conflict within the self.

Extreme political liberalism asserts 1. and ignores 2. whilst pure religious mysticism asserts 2. and ignores 1. Conservatism and Marxism can be seen as compromises between these two positions insofar as they both value integrity but also are not content to always accept expressed preference as real interest.

## SELFHOOD AND RATIONALITY

What could be the basic cohesive that glues the self into an integral whole? Perhaps it is Reason, which takes the role of adjudicating between the different desires, feelings, emotions, and intuitions of the self. Such a view of the self favours political theories and philosophies that 'bid' for rationality in proposing schemes that appear rational. This approach can be contrasted with particular strands of conservative thought that eschew rationalism in politics in favour of the binding cohesiveness of tradition,

and any form of religion that appeals to a spiritual essence in the self that may actually operate against rationality. In certain spiritual schemes rationality is presented as a stumbling block to full personal realisation, (present I think in the utterances of Jesus in the New Testament but also recently re-discovered in the West in the form of Zen), where rationality is an instrumental self-interested rationality (the modern rational agent), and such reasoning opposes enlightenment. Alternatively, there is the view that reason, whilst not an impediment, nevertheless cannot take the self the whole way, so that the self, having reached the edge of reason, takes the 'leap of faith' to get to the other side.

Given the excess of irrationality that is often displayed in human behaviour, the rational actor theorist may wish to posit the concept of a multiple self in order to save the possibility of a rational explanation. Alternatively, religious and psychoanalytic views would argue for a self partly concealed from itself, and subject to unconscious rational motivations. Such a stricken self would need external help in order to resolve the problem, and such external help is available through prayer, the psychiatrist's couch, or finding the right guru. Insofar as the disease of the self is a societal disease help comes in the form of radical politics and revolution, aimed at realising group realisation and mutual recognition. On the other hand the sickness of the self may be due to too much 'permissiveness' and rapid social change. The unchecked application of rationalism to the social structure may lead to anomie within the self, which needs a certain level of secure familiarity. When robbed of such secure familiarity, the self acquires the urgent need to restore something that is 'known', and such an attempt, being intimately linked with memory, leads to the recreation of the past and past values as the only salvative for the anxiety and insecurity suffered by living in the present. In such a way the past takes on a new life, refashioned as a soothing alternative to the present and used to legitimise the 'return' to past spurious values ('spurious' because they have been invented through fear of the present and then cloaked with the false legitimacy of the past.) Such deceit may have its uses if it represents the last resort for a fragmented and anomic self no longer able to bear the pain of living in the state of continuing uncertainty that is the present tense. However such a surrender almost certainly does involve the abdication of reason and a retreat from the 'courage to be'.

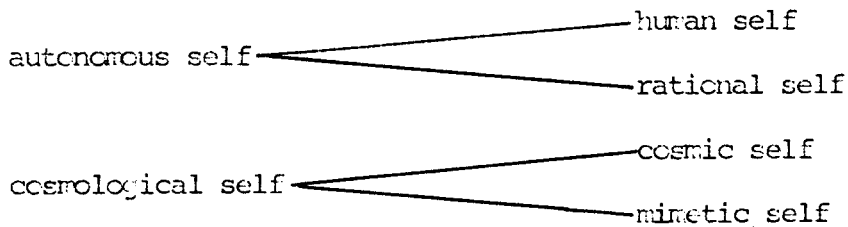
#### THE PROCESS OF ENCHANTMENT

A similar sort of escapism can be found in enchantment, the subject of many folk tales. Here the self 'forgets' itself either through a spell or total devotion to something or someone else. The attraction of enchantment may precisely be the loss of self and the relief that it brings. The problem is that it does not usually last, but when it ends, the awakening and rediscovery of the self is usually just as much a relief as the initial enchantment (in a different context this explains the ambiguity felt over the disenchantment of the world by science). The danger of enchantment is that it is a false solution to the problem of the self, for the self is never really lost, just forgotten. The appeal of enchantment is that it is an imitation of the real thing, for the foremost desire of the self is self-negation, for both the autonomous self and the cosmological self wish to go beyond the self and thus negate the self, although for different ends. But authentic selfhood cannot be won at the price of temporary enchantment, however enjoyable it may be, and therefore part of the price of attaining an authentic selfhood is tearing away the veils of enchantment and entering the disenchanted world. Both the cosmological self and the autonomous self have to undergo disenchantment as part of their journey.

THE MIMETIC AND THE FREE SELF

The cosmological self and the autonomous self have served as a starting point for a discussion of the self. Earlier however, the point was made that the cosmological self may more properly be styled the 'mimetic' self in view of its imitative function. But can the mimetic self be more properly regarded as one aspect of the cosmological self? In my view it can. The idea of the cosmological self is that it sees a unity between itself and the cosmos. A true unity would not imply that the self played a purely imitative part, for this places too much stress on determinism. There has always been a place in religions and cosmological schemes for the creative and expressive freedom of the self (in Christianity this is the teaching that God has given Free Will to the human race). If truth and freedom are not located in a cosmos that stands against the self, but in a cosmos that exists through and in the self, where self-reflection is both a property of the self and the universe becoming self-aware, then the cosmological self could be styled the 'cosmic' self. How far is mimetic selfhood an aspiration towards cosmic selfhood, and how far is it a blocked and mutant form of cosmic selfhood?

The autonomous self too, may be composed of contradictory elements. Reason is of primary importance for the autonomous self, and yet the over-reliance on reason can lead to collapse into instrumental reason, where autonomy is subordinated to already existing (pre-given) goals. Insofar as the autonomous self attains only to a rational instrumental autonomy it exists in a shrunken form, the 'rational' self. The rational self is free only in a very limited sense, if at all, for it is free only to decide on means, not on ends (by 'ends' I mean transcendent ends i.e. ends that lie beyond the scope of instrumental reason). The 'appeal to reason' is necessary, but does not encompass the limits of human experience. The confidence to express feeling is of prime importance for the true autonomy of the self. The true 'human' self demands both rational autonomy and the sort of full human creativity that combines imagination and feeling. Such a self must feel both empowered by, and driven by, the full range of human response, and so I term it the 'human' self. Now we find that the conceptual scheme is as follows -



Neither the rational self or mimetic self can be said to be 'free' in any real sense, for one is subordinated to instrumental reason and the other is an imitation of a greater cosmic reality. A remaining question is to what extent are the human self and the cosmic self one and the same? Each seeks an expressive unity and neither sees itself as a concrete and definite article. Both the human self and the cosmic self pursue both freedom and truth, whilst the rational self is confined by its 'freedom' and the mimetic self is subjugated by its 'truth'. However the human self remains committed to the pursuit of human freedom (either on individual or collective terms), and the cosmic self aims at an authentic life that is underpinned by a relation to the cosmos. Both can meet on the arena of community, which can be viewed as a sphere of human freedom or as a mediation between self and cosmos. Alternatively, the individualist autonomous self can view the community as a threat to personal freedom (e.g. Liberalism, Anarchism), and the cosmological self can be placed in opposition to the community by

preferring individual communion with God (e.g. Protestantism) or pursuing philosophical elitism (Plato).

#### SELF AND COSMOS

The autonomous self must live in an autonomous cosmos or construct a dual ontology. Either way human existence becomes radically 'open-ended'. There can be no final truths, morals, aesthetics, endings. Because the idea of meaning is very much inscribed into the idea of purpose, a purposeless cosmos is threatened with being a meaningless cosmos. Does freedom continue to have a value in these circumstances, or do we not ask whether in a meaningless world freedom is not meaningless too? Similarly, can there be any real authenticity in a cosmological world that denies freedom for the sake of truth? Does not a world deprived of human freedom become a pointless charade? Truth and human freedom may be contradictory, but neither on their own seem to be sufficient. It is difficult to construct a concept of selfhood that incorporates both, but it is also difficult to see how a concept that denies one of these principles can be saved from absurdity.

## **The Centre of Psychology**

Psychology is a science in which the object of study can be the same sort of thing as the studier. "I study human beings", or, more radically: "I, a self, study the self."

As psychology tends on the one hand to biology and on the other to sociology, things are more straightforward, studied and studier are clearly differentiated: "I, a self, study genes" or "I, a self, study groups." Both genes and groups may be related to selves, but they are not selves. The problems come when you say: "I, a self, study selves." It is not that objectivity is impossible, it is that empathy and objectivity cannot be distinguished. This is, at one and the same time, the essence of psychology and the most difficult area of psychological study. And it is, of course, the area which arouses most passion in psychology. Freud recognised its importance and welcomed it. Eysenk recognises its importance by responding to it as a threat.

It is both important and difficult to think scientifically about this subject. This paradox is not surprising when we note that we are attempting to grasp the nature of the thing that does the grasping, but we have no direct (e.g. sensory) information about it, as we would have if we were examining the hand or the eye. In addition our language is used by this self (or is this self) to illuminate other things: it has no obvious use as a way of illuminating the self itself. Even the identification "self" risks the false hypostatisation against which Craik cautions us. We must try to avoid giving substance (in its literal sense) to something to which the idea of substance is inappropriate. The problems of language here are evident in my use of the word "thing". Literally, I risk reification. I am, however, comforted by my dictionary which gives as its first definitions of "thing", an assembly, parliament, court, council. This at least stops one using words ("thing", "reification") uncritically and reminds one that definition is no simple business and should perhaps be ignored except in a rough-and-ready sense.

Note that this key area of psychology: (a) is disregarded by most psychologists (not recognised as important) (b) has not yet been properly examined (those who have examined it are peripheralised) (c) is difficult to examine.

Psychologists must both encourage research in this area, and also, crucially, be aware of the central importance of this area of study for the coherence of the subject as a whole. Without "the study of the self by the self" we have no psychology. All we have are separate sub-disciplines which seem to have some sort of affinity, without anyone quite knowing why.

**Murdo Macdonald**



NOTES ON 'CLASS'

Richard Gunn

1. It is much easier to say what, according to Marxism, class is not than to say what class is. A class is not a group of individuals, specified by what they have in common (their income-level or life-style, their 'source of revenue',<sup>1</sup> their relation to the means of production, etc.). The proletariat, for example, is not to be defined as a group 'as against capital' (Marx 1969 p. 173). Nor is class a structurally or relationally specified "place" (or "position") in the social landscape (a place which individuals may "occupy" or in which, as individuals, they may be 'interpolated',<sup>2</sup> etc.). The difference between "empiricist" and "structuralist" Marxisms, which respectively treat classes as groups of individuals and as "places", is in this regard a trivial one. For want of a more convenient term I shall refer to the view which treats classes either as groups or as places as the 'sociological' conception of class.

2. Marxism regards class as, like capital itself (Marx 1965 p. 766), a social relation. That which is a relation cannot be a group, even a relationally specified group; nor can it be a position or place (a relationally specified place) in which a group may be constituted, or may stand. Setting aside such views, we can say that class is the relation itself (for example, the capital-labour relation) and, more specifically, a relation of struggle. The terms 'class' and 'class-relation' are interchangeable, and 'a' class is a class-relation of some historically particular kind.

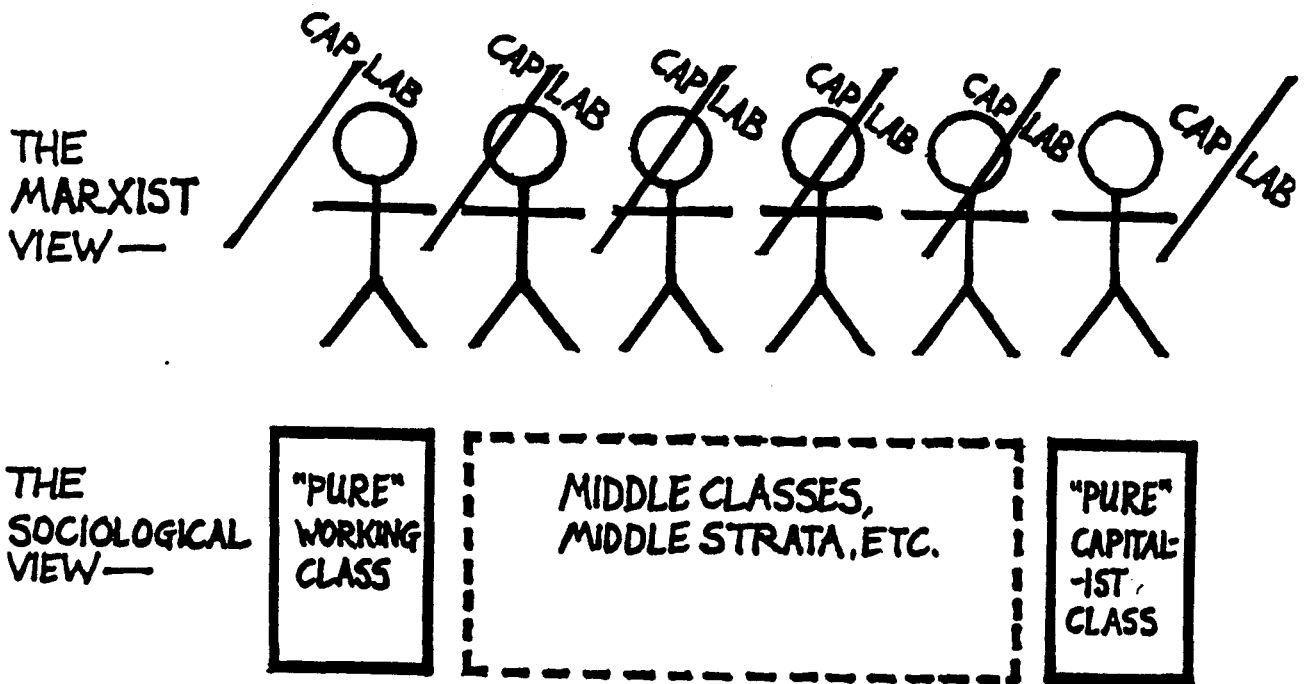
3. Class relations are production relations, but care is needful if this seemingly straightforward statement is to be understood. According to Marx - and in contradistinction to the "Marx" of the deterministic 1859 Preface - relations of production are not one species or subset of the social relations (e.g. the "economic" subset) but rather the social relations as such and as a whole. 'The relations of production in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and, specifically, a society at a definite stage of historical development' (Marx 1952 p. 28). This being so, it may seem tempting to construe class relations as one

species of the production relations. I propose that, on the contrary, class relations just are the social relations (i.e. the totality of the social relations) grasped as production relations: the stake in class struggle is the power - understanding "power", here, in something like the sense given to it by Foucault (cf. Foucault 1979) - inscribed within the social production process, and every aspect of every individual's social existence is of relevance to this struggle, is bound up within it and is affected by its outcome. As will become clearer later on, the concept of class throws the notion of society as a totality into relief.

4. So also does it throw the notion of society as a mediated articulation of agency and struggle into relief (cf. Gunn 1987). It is not that classes, as socially (or structurally) pre-given entities, enter into struggle. Rather - holding fast to the conception of class relations as relations of struggle - we should think of class struggle as the fundamental premise of class. Better still: class struggle is class itself. (This is how Marx himself introduces 'class' in the opening sentences of the Communist Manifesto: we learn first of all of history as the history of class struggles and only subsequently of the specific class relations of 'freeman and slave, patrician and plebian', etc. The order of presentation is all-important.) That 'class struggle' is intrinsic to 'class' is Marx's point when he stresses that existence 'for itself' - i.e. oppositional, struggling existence - is intrinsic to the existence of class (Marx 1969 p. 173). The primacy of class struggle in the definition of class corresponds to the primacy which Marx consistently accords to active over passive (institutional or structural) categories: for example private property is the 'consequence' of alienated labour rather than vice versa (Marx 1959 p. 76). This primacy of class struggle is Marx's rendition of the Hegelian thesis that a social world 'is not a dead essence, but is actual and alive' (Hegel 1977 p. 264).

5. I shall refer to the conception of class as a relation (a relation of struggle) as the 'Marxist' conception of class: here, more than convenience dictates the terminological choice. Notoriously, what I have called the sociological conception of class faces the embarrassment that not all individuals in bourgeois society can be fitted, tidily, into the groups which it labels 'capitalists' and 'proletarians'. This embarrassment is produced by the conception of classes as groups or places, and to escape the embarrassment sociological Marxism has recourse

to categories like 'the middle classes', the 'middle strata', etc.: such categories are residual or catch-all groups and, in short, theoretical figments generated by an impoverished conceptual scheme. The Marxist conception of class, on the contrary, faces no such difficulties: it regards the class relation (say, the capital-labour relation) as structuring the lives of different individuals in different ways. It allows the line of class division to fall through, and not merely between, the individuals concerned. The contrast in this regard between the Marxist and the sociological conceptions of class can be illustrated, very roughly, as follows:



Not least, this illustration is rough because the difference in the ways in which the capital-labour relation structures the lives of individuals in bourgeois society is as much qualitative as quantitative: a spatial diagram can only be "undialectical", abstracting not only from qualitative distinctions but also from the 'sheer unrest of life' (Hegel 1977 p. 27) - the unrest of struggle - which characterises the class-relation in any given case. (The model for such spatial diagrams is the Figurae of Joachim of Fiore, which become redundant once the spiritual intelligence they summon has come into its own: cf. Reeves 1976 p. 13.)

6. What qualitative forms can the structuring of our lives by the capital-labour relation (once again, a relation always of struggle) take? The

form to which Marx especially attends is that of expropriation/appropriation. Other forms include inclusion/exclusion (Foucault), identity/nonidentity and universality/particularity (Adorno), conservation/expenditure and homogeneity/heterogeneity (Bataille) and incorporation/refusal (Tronti, Marcuse):<sup>3</sup> the list is phenomenologically rich, and open-ended. At once praxis and process, class is both the structuring of our lives through struggle and the structuring of this same struggle by the patterns hitherto imposed - imposed through struggle - upon our lives. In this way, although class struggle is always "spontaneous" (in virtue of the primacy of action over structure), a sheerly immediate spontaneity is a contradiction in terms. What class struggle does is place at issue, in struggle, the mediations which give to that struggle its characteristic form or forms.

7. One difference between the Marxist and the sociological views, as illustrated in para. 5, above, is that on the Marxist view the 'pure' worker, situated on the extreme left-hand side of the diagram, whose social being falls entirely under the heading 'labour' and who is (unlike all the intermediate figures) in no way divided in and against himself or herself, is in no way methodologically privileged. Neither is the 'pure' capitalist. Both, rather, are merely limiting cases and, as such, they are seen only as figures commingled with others in a diversely-structured crowd. The sociological view, on the other hand, treats the 'pure' worker and the 'pure' capitalist as methodological pillars between which the web of intermediate classes is slung.

8. This difference is important because, according to Marx, the 'pure' worker does not exist. This is not at all because of a relative decline in the numbers of the "traditional working class" (however this theoretically suspect group may be defined). On the contrary, it is because the wage-relation itself is a bourgeois and mystifying form (Marx 1965 Part IV): whoever lives under its sign - even, and especially, the fully-employed producer of surplus-value - lives a life divided in and against itself. So to say, his or her feet remain mired in exploitation even while his or her head (which is thereby tempted to construe exploitation in terms not of surplus-value but of "low wages", i.e., in terms which are mystified) breathes in bourgeois ideological clouds.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly the line of class struggle runs not alongside, but through, the individual by whom surplus-value is produced (as with, say, the figure standing second-to-the-left in the diagram). Here, again, there is no embarrassment for the Marxist conception of class which is interested

in the specific ways in which the capital-labour relation structures, antagonistically and self-antagonistically, particular lives. But the non-existence of a proletariat in all its purity deprives sociological Marxism of a needful methodological pillar and so can only bring the sociological conception of class to the ground.

9. A further evident difference between the two schemes is that the Marxist one speaks of a single class-relation (the capital-labour relation) as obtaining in existing society whereas the sociological scheme acknowledges as many such relations as there are possible combinations of social places or groups. For this reason the 'sociologists' accuse the 'Marxists' of reductionism. In fact, it is against the sociologists themselves that the charge of reductionism may properly be brought. The sociologists want to situate each individual, unequivocally and without remainder, in one or other of the specified groups or places: a "cross-categorical" individual cannot be allowed to appear in the picture which the sociologists draw. The point of the sociological proliferation of middle classes, middle strata, new petty bourgeoisies, etc., is to find some pigeon-hole to which each individual may be unequivocally assigned. Hence precisely the ways in which, in class terms, individuals are divided in and against themselves - the numerous and complex ways in which the geological fracture-line of class struggle runs not merely between, but through, individuals - enters theoretical eclipse. In this fashion, the 'pigeon-holing process' of the non-dialectical understanding (Hegel 1977 p. 32) falsifies the experience and the praxis of struggle itself. The Marxist conception of class, by contrast, avoids any such reductionism and brings the experiential richness of individuals' (self-)contradictory life-texture into full theoretical and phenomenological light. The banal charge that Marxism reduces the lived experience of individual subjectivity to a play of impersonal and sheerly objective "class forces"<sup>5</sup> is least of all applicable when 'class' is understood in its authentically Marxist sense.

10. A related point is that the Marxist conception, unlike that of the sociologists, does not construe class in terms of the bearing of this or that social role. From his early essay 'On the Jewish Question' onwards, Marx castigates, as alienated and unfree, any society wherein role-definitions (or a "social division of labour") obtain. Far from taking on board role-definitions as a methodological principle, the Marxian view depicts the individual as the site of a struggle - of his

or her own struggle - which brings not merely the "universal" (role-bearing and socially homogeneous) but also the "particular" (unique and socially heterogeneous) dimensions of individuality into political and theoretical play. Neither in theory nor in practice do role-definitions such as "proletarian" or "bourgeois" (or indeed "man" or "woman" or "citizen") represent Marx's solution; on the contrary, they figure as one among the problems which 'class' in its Marxist designation is intended to resolve.

11. What form might such a resolution take? Here, only the briefest of indications can be given. Social roles are mediations of class struggle, i.e. they are modes of existence of class struggle (cf. Gunn 1987): as mediated in terms of roles, class struggle exists in the mode of being denied. This is so because, quite regardless of their character or content, role-definitions abstract from the class relation and from the struggle in which that relation consists. Even the role-definitions of "bourgeois" or "proletarian" or "capitalist" or "worker" make this abstraction inasmuch as they substitute 'sociological' for 'Marxist' views. In this sense, something quite like class in its sociological meaning does indeed exist in capitalist society, but only as "appearance" or in other words as an aspect of the fetishism to which Marxism stands opposed. Like vulgar political economy, sociological Marxism takes appearances at their face value and casts itself upon the mercy of the existing order of things.

12. Hence it is no surprise that, as between the Marxist and the sociological conceptions of class, yet another area of difference is political. The sociological view advertises a politics of alliances as between classes and class-freactions (or rather between their representatives, these representatives being located more or less hierarchical organisations since, without hierarchy and authoritative leadership, the notion of "alliances" makes little sense): moreover it ascribes to the 'pure' working class a privileged - a leading or hegemonic - political role. No question of such alliances arises on the Marxist view. Nor, on the Marxist view, does the 'pure' working class (e.g. the employed as opposed to the unemployed, the "direct" as opposed to the "indirect" producers of surplus-value, the proletariat as opposed to the lumpenproletariat, those whose labour produces value as opposed to those whose labour does not) have a politically any more than a methodologically privileged place. For no such "places" exist. Nor is there any question of ascribing to "rising"

as opposed to "declining" classes a monopoly of revolutionary interest of force: such specifications only make sense when classes are seen as places or as groups. Finally, the whole notion of a vanguard party (together with its diluted variants) is overturned since the distinction between "advanced" and "backward" class-elements disappears along with the sociological conception of class itself. In sum: what has traditionally passed as 'Marxist' politics is in fact sociological, and authentically Marxist politics amounts to politics in an anarchistic mode.

13. Inherently, the forms of such a politics cannot be determined in advance. If classes are not groups or places but relations of struggle, then insofar as revolutionary conflict takes the form of a conflict between groups (but it does this always imperfectly and impurely) this has to be understood as the result of class struggle itself. It is not to be understood sociologically as, for example, an emergence of pre-given classes - at last! - into their no-less pre-given theoretical and practical "truth". The question before the individual is not on whose side, but rather on which side (which side of the class-relation), he or she stands; and even this latter question is not to be understood in terms of a choice between socially pre-existing places or roles. Not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively, class struggle remains inherently unpredictable and "surprising". The Marxian conception of class focusses sharply the issue of choice with which class struggle confronts us, and in doing so it disallows appeal to any role or place or group in which (according to sociology) we already stand prior to whatever commitment we choose to make. It disallows this not least because it depicts us as torn by the force of the class struggle in which, in a class society, we are always-already consciously or unconsciously engaged.

14. A final area of difference as between the Marxist and the sociological conceptions of class can be indicated. The sociological conception, whenever it seeks to establish Marxist credentials, always becomes economic-determinist. This is so because the only "indicator" of class-membership (class, here, being viewed sociologically) which Marx's writings even remotely supply is that of a common relation to the means of production. Besides being related to the means of production, however, individuals who are class-members (or who are class-interpolated) find themselves related to the state and to "ideology" to say nothing of their local church or football team or pub. Hence, at

once, the sociological conception of class generates a schema of discrete social 'levels' or 'practices' or 'instances' (Althusser) and must address the question of how these levels are related. The answer is well-known: in the last instance 'the economic movement...asserts itself as necessary'.<sup>6</sup> In the last instance, in other words, sociological Marxism amounts to an economic determinism with, to be sure, long and complex rather than short and simple deterministic (i.e. causal) strings. To claim, as Althusser does, that such a theory is (because of its complexity) no longer deterministic is like claiming that a machine is no longer a machine in virtue of the number of cogwheels its motor drives.

15. With the Marxist conception of class, everything is different. Marx's distinction between class 'in itself' and 'for itself' is to be taken as distinguishing, not between societal 'levels' (cf. footnote 4, above) but between the sociological and the Marxist conceptions of class themselves: if a class only becomes such when it is 'for itself' then political struggle with all its unpredictable ramifications and developments and expenditures is already built into what sociological Marxism treats as the economic "base". Whereas sociological Marxism attempts to unite levels which it assumes to be discrete, and on the basis of this starting-point and problem can only fall back upon causalist and external relations of however 'structural' (Althusser) a kind, Marxist Marxism moves in the opposite direction and draws distinctions within a contradictory totality, i.e., within an internally and antagonistically related whole: 'The concrete is the concrete because it is the concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse' (Marx 1973 p. 101). As the diagram in para. 5 makes clear, the totality of the class-relation which is specific to, for example, bourgeois society (the capital-labour relation) is present - wholly present, though in qualitatively different ways - in each of the individuals who form that society's moments or parts. Conversely, inasmuch as class relations qua relations of production encompass all the social relations and not merely, for example, economic relations (supposing these latter to be capable of independent abstraction), all aspects of individual existence - and not for example merely the economic aspect - are class-relevant and class-concerned. The essential thing was said long ago by the early Lukács: 'It is not the primacy of economic motives in historical explanation that constitutes the decisive difference between Marxism and bourgeois thought, but the point of view of totality' (Lukács 1971 p. 27).



16. Along with 'the point of view of totality', and in accordance with the Marxist acknowledgement of all aspects of individual existence as class-relevant, a wholly novel conception of class politics is brought into play. Once "politics" is seen (as it is by the sociologists) as a discrete social level the litmus test of the existence of class 'for itself' becomes the formation of a political party of a more or less conventional - which means: a bourgeois - kind. Seen thus, even a vanguard party amounts to a variation on a bourgeois theme. However it is not Marx, but rather bourgeois society, which distinguishes (again as a mediation of class struggle) between the levels of political state and civil society - cf. 'On the Jewish Question' - and which prescribes the former as the arena wherein social groupings in their maturity (which is to say: in their conformity) may compete. The Marxist conception of class, or in other words 'the point of view of totality', rejects precisely the narrowness of the conception of politics which the sociological conception of class entails. On the Marxist view, the category of "politics" becomes co-extensive with individuals' experiential existence and as wide as the forms which class struggle unpredictably takes. Not merely is no issue excluded from the political agenda; the notion of political agendas is itself excluded since any such agenda (the stock-in-trade of alliance-forming hierarchical parties) excludes and marginalises whatever does not fall within some theoretically pre-established political domain.

17. All this said, it is to be conceded and indeed emphasised that whomsoever so wishes can derive 'sociological' wisdom from Marx's texts. Certainly, and especially in his so-called political writings, Marx was not always a Marxist. Nonetheless, unless the Marxist conception of class were in fact Marx's, the circumstance that Marx wrote Capital would be unintelligible. It was Marx himself who, long before his critics and revisionists, pointed out that as capitalism developed the numbers of the 'middle classes' could be expected to grow (Marx 1968 pp. 562, 573); and yet he writes a book, entitled Capital, in which a single class relation (the capital-labour relation) is the theoretical "object" addressed. This conundrum can be resolved only by taking his remark about the middle classes to be sociological, and by reading the main argument of Capital as Marxist in the above-specified sense.

18. The above notes claim neither to completeness nor to the provision of a defence at all points of the conception of class which they have

attempted, schematically, to restate. Their sole aim has been to make clear some of the issues which a Marxist understanding of class entails. As regards evaluation of this understanding: the suggestion may be hazarded that the line of critical questioning which seems most fertile is that which asks whether the class relation (in existing society, the capital-labour relation) is the sole relation of struggle which, in all its richness, structures our lives. And here there can be no question of supplanting Marx: other such relations - sexual and racial relations, for example - are mediated through the capital relation just as, for its part, it is mediated through them. (For brief comment, see Gunn 1987.) Inquiry as to which such relation is "dominant" remains scholastic if one tries to pursue it on a methodological and a priori conceptual terrain: rather, it can be pursued only in concretely political (which is also to say phenomenological) terms. Both politically and methodologically, the great superiority of the Marxist over the sociological view of class is that it frees Marxism from every taint of the determinism which Marx castigated as amongst the most murderous features of capitalism - the tyranny of 'dead' over 'living' labour, or in other words of the past (as in all determinist schemes) over the present and the future - and to which from start to finish his best thinking stands implacably opposed. This is so because the single theme of Marxian "class analysis" is the finely-textured and continually and unpredictably developing struggle which, for Marx, is the existence of class per se.

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### Notes

1. This much at least is clear from the final, fragmentary, chapter of Capital Vol. III (Marx 1971 pp. 885-6).
2. Cf. Althusser (1971) pp. 160-5.
3. See Foucault (1979) Part Four, ch. 2; Adorno (1973); Bataille (1985);

Marcuse (1968); Tronti (1979).

4. The view that the "ideological" mystification inherent in the wage-form leaves the class-purity of the worker uncontaminated depends on treating production and ideology as discrete social 'levels' or instances, as does the reading of the class in-itself/for-itself distinction criticized at paras. 15-16, below. On 'levels', see paras. 14-15. In passing, it is worth noting that the conception of ideology as a discrete level (however specified) remains wholly mysterious, if only because social existence without remainder - for example gender distinctions, architecture, work-discipline and scientific knowledge - carries with it an ideological charge.
5. For a refutation of this charge see Sartre (1963).
6. Engels to J Bloch, September 21-22 1890 (Marx/Engels n.d. p. 498). Althusser's distinction between 'determining' and 'dominant' instances amounts to a permutation of the same theme.

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## "Class" in Marx's thought and beyond

To define what class really is still remains the main problem of marxist political thought. If the problem was one of purely "academic" discussion there would not to be a problem at all, but on the contrary the "identification" of what class is reflects active political strategies and conflicts. This is so because, if we are able to define the concept then we will have a greater degree of successful implementation of active politics, a greater understanding of how the class struggle -in its own fruitful forms - develops, of how the state reacts -to the extent that is a class state- of how it gains legitimacy, of the role of the political parties, of why there is a need for class alliances -if there is one- of what "hegemony" is and why it is important and so on.

In short, we will be able to define the power relations which arise from the class divided society, and to explain the state power that is based on this division, because class relations are always power relations to the extent that the meaning of class shows the effects of the structure over the class practices and the meaning of power the results of the structure over the relations of the class practices of the classes in struggle.

We will start our discussion by giving some definitions of what class meant in Marx's thought and in structuralist marxism as well.

### Marx's identification of social class: the concept and its theoretical basis

The key words in Marx's own analysis of class are as follows:

- ownership of the means of production
- control over the means of production
- division of labour
- production of surplus value
- relations of production
- forces of production

and the three necessary elements of which class in its existence "for itself" consists:

- community
- national association
- political organization

and of course the unified essence of the concept is :the **class struggle** which shapes the class relations between the different classes and within the class.

"Class" has been defined objectively and subjectively by Marx. Objectively we have the "class in itself" (Klasse an sich), subjectively the "class for itself" (Klasse fur sich): the main difference is that the second concept brings into the discussion the notion of "class consciousness" (see Gyorgy Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness). That is the class is aware of its own interests and it has been organised into a political organisation in order to fight for its "immediate" or "fundamental" or "ultimate" interests .

The concept of class in Marx's thought is one of a single vertical relation between the ideal capitalist and the ideal worker only in abstract theoretical terms. In real terms the relation between the capitalist class and the working class shapes a whole spectrum of class relations including the intermediate classes which are either "remainders" of the simple commodity mode of production i.e, the old petite bourgeoisie, (small shopkeepers, artisans etc) and the peasantry. Or they are new fractions that arise within the capitalist mode of production and which, because of their position in the social and technical division of labour, are neither capitalists nor proletarians: i.e. the new petty bourgeoisie which consists of managerialial, professional workers etc -in short, unproductive labour-. The existence of all these "intermediate layers" is mediated by the dominant capital-labour relation.

According to Marx the capitalist mode of production is characterised by the polarisation of the two main classes: on the one hand, the bourgeoisie and on the other hand the new class which arises from the depths of industrial society that is, the proletariat.

But Marx's polarised notion of class does not exclude what he called "ideological classes" (Das Kapital, Vol.1, p.420) or the "middle classes"- in fact he talked about the expansion of them (Theories of Surplus Value) - which he believed played a distinctive role in the reproduction of domination (reproduction of the relations of production) especially the petty bourgeoisie. Which "...has been formed fluctuating between the proletariat and bourgeoisie and ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeois society", (Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1971, p.63). The bureaucracy and the reactionary peasantry. The latter does not constitute a class according to Marx (see, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte).

Marx used the word "class" as a term for structurally generated groups that engage in conflicts over existing arrangements of social structure. These classes are distinguished from each other by the difference of their respective **positions** in the economy. Since a social class is constituted

by the function which its members perform in the process of production, the question arises why the organization of production is the determinant of social class. Marx's answer is contained in the early writings on philosophy especially in his theory of **the division of labour**.

### **Who belongs to the "working class"? or What Marx meant by "proletariat"**

Objectively according to Marx we can define as "working class" the industrial proletariat, that is, the manual workers who are directly involved in the process of production and exploited by capital, those whose own property in their labour power which they sell as "free and equal individuals" in the labour market. Labour power is a peculiar commodity because it is the only one that produces more than its maintenance cost. That is, surplus value, which is the main theme of capitalist production, is being expropriated by the capitalists. We have to say that the production of surplus labour is not the specific characteristic of the capitalist mode of production: the specific one is that this (absolute or relative) surplus value which arises from surplus labour is being exploited for the sake of capital.

This is the economic definition of the working class or the proletariat: absence of private property, absence of control over the means of production, continuous pauperisation (see, Manifesto, 1971, p.79)

On the other hand the bourgeoisie has the ownership and control over the means of production, and private property as a result of the alienated labour. (see Manifesto, 1971, p.79)

Objectively those ideal types form the two antagonistic classes of capitalist society but what about the subjective definition?

A class becomes a class for itself when its members realise their different mode of existence (separate mode of life, interests and culture). But this is only the first step, and we should stress that this realisation comes through the process of class struggle which might not have the form of a general social upheaval but of some particular form of class conflict. The second step is the formation of a political organisation which represents its specific and particular class interests because for Marx the highest form of struggle was the political one, in his words: "..... the conquest of political power by the proletariat" (see, Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, The Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1971, p.50). This was one of his main disagreements with the anarchists like Bakunin who insisted on the primacy of the economic struggle, i.e. of struggle over wages. (see, Mikhail Bakunin, The Paris Commune of 1871 and

the Idea of the State, Anti-Authoritarian Socialism, Bakunin on Anarchy).

Of course in order for the class to be organised, first of all it should have a community of interests, a national association and a political organisation.

Marx stresses the importance of these elements in "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," with reference to the peasantry: "that is formed by simple addition of homologous magnitudes, **much as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes**". In so far as millions of families live under **economic conditions of existence** that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, **they form a class**. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants and the identity of their interests begets **no community, no national bond and no political organisation among them, they do not form a class**. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented...." (Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, in Marx/Engels, Selected Works, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1962, p. 335, emphasis added). This is an example of a **supporting class**.

There is no problem with the definition of the proletariat or with saying that the manual workers objectively belong to the working class. The problem arises with the "ideological" classes or the "intermediate layers" who stand between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat because of the different positions they occupy in the social and technical division of labour. Marx used different categories to define these different positions between and within the class(es). Marx referred to the lumpenproletariat as "social strata", he also used the term "fractions" to indicate the different sections within the bourgeoisie i.e., the financial, commercial capital etc. These fractions of course belong to the bourgeoisie and they do not constitute a distinct class. They only have different functions but operate within the capitalist class. In Marx's own words: "...The same conditions, the same antagonism, the same interests necessarily called forth on the whole similar customs everywhere. The bourgeoisie itself, with its conditions, develops only gradually, splits according to the **division of labour** into various **fractions....**" (Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, The German Ideology, Part I & III Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1938, p. 48). Marx also used the term social categories, i.e. for the bureaucracy, or the intellectuals.

Nicos Poulantzas in his book "Classes in Contemporary Capitalism" discusses the importance of these definitions. He refers to the marxist concept of "social formation" which comprises more than one mode of production so

we can define more than two classes involved although the main antagonism always lays between the two dominant classes which in the case of the capitalist mode of production are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. According to him : "The marxist theory of social classes further distinguishes **fractions** and **strata** of a class, according to the various classes, on the basis of differentiations in the economic sphere, and of the role, a quite particular one in these cases, of political and ideological relations. The theory also distinguishes social **categories**, defined principally by their place in the political and ideological relations: these include the state bureaucracy, defined by its relation to the state apparatuses, and the intellectuals, defined by their role in elaborating and deploying ideology. These differentiations, for which reference to political and ideological relations is always indispensable, are of great importance; **these fractions, strata and categories may often, in suitable concrete conjunctures, assume the rule of relatively autonomous social forces.**

" It is none the less the case that we are not confronted here with 'social groups' external, or above classes. The fractions are class fractions: the commercial bourgeoisie for example is a fraction of the bourgeoisie; similarly, the labour aristocracy is a fraction of the working class. Even social categories have a class membership, their agents generally belonging to several different social classes.

" This is one of the particular and basic points of difference between the Marxist theory and the various ideologies of social stratification that dominate present-day sociology." ( Nicos Poulantzas: *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, NLB, London, 1975, pp. 23-24)

Having these in mind we can proceed with the analysis of the "intermediate layers" which play an important role in the reproduction of the relations of production.

Which are these "intermediate layers"?



### NEW PETTY BOURGEOISIE

"It can never be sufficiently stressed that the distinction between structural class determination and class position is not a distinction between an economic determination and a political/ideological position. Class determination involves objective political and ideological places just as much as class position involves conjunctures of economic struggle".(ibid,p.208)

Poulantzas uses primarily two concepts to define class position. The first one is the distinction between productive and unproductive labour and the second one is the division between mental and manual labour (in the sense of who holds the knowledge as power, and who does not.

Also he uses the marxist term social and technical division of labour and supervised and unsupervised labour. So the key words in Poulantzas analysis are as follows:

mental/manual labour  
productive/unproductive labour  
direct/indirect producers  
supervised/unsupervised labour  
social division of labour  
technical division of labour  
social formation  
political scene  
relations of domination/exploitation  
structural determination  
conjuncture

According to him social classes are defined as in the lengthy quotation below - which also serves the purpose of a good summary of his views--:

" 1.They are groupings of social agents,defined,principally but not exclusively by their place in the production process,i.e. in the economic sphere. The economic place of the social agents has a principal role in determining social classes. But from that cannot conclude that this economic place is sufficient to determine social classes. Marxism states that the economic does indeed have the determinant role in a mode of production or a social formation;but the political and the ideological (the superstructure) also have a very important role.

" 2. For Marxism, social classes involve in one and the same process both

class contradictions and class struggle; social classes do not firstly exist as such and only then enter into a class struggle. Social classes coincide with class practices, i.e. the class struggle, and are only defined in their mutual opposition.

"3. The class determination, while it coincides with the practices (struggle) of classes and includes political and ideological relations, designates certain objective places occupied by the social agents in the social division of labour; places which are independent of the will of these agents.

"It may thus be said that a social class is defined by its place in the ensemble of social practices, i.e. by its place in the social division of labour as a whole. This includes political and ideological relations. Social class, in this sense, is a concept which denotes the effects of the structure within the social division of labour (social relations and social practices). This place thus corresponds to what I shall refer to as the structural determination of class, i.e. to the existence within class practices of determination by the structure - by the relations of production, and by the places of political and ideological domination/subordination.

**CLASSES EXIST ONLY IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE.**

"4. The structural determination of classes, which exists only as the class struggle, must however be distinguished from class position in each specific conjuncture - the focal point of the always unique historic individuality of a social formation, in other words the concrete situation of the class struggle. In stressing the importance of political and ideological relations in determining social classes, and the fact that social classes only exist in the form of class struggle and practices, class determination must not be reduced, in a voluntarist fashion, to class position. The importance of this lies in those cases in which a distance arises between the structural determination of classes and the class positions in the conjuncture." (Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, NLB, London, 1977, pp. 14-15)

Table

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PRACTICES/CLASS STRUGGLE

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STRUCTURAL DETERMINATION/  
CLASS PLACES

CONJUCTURE  
CLASS POSITIONS

IDEOLOGY

relations of ideological  
domination/subordination  
ideological struggle

Concepts of strategy  
social forces  
power bloc  
"people"

POLITICS

relations of political  
domination/subordination  
political struggle

ECONOMICS

relations of production  
relations of exploitation  
economic struggle

SOCIAL DIVISION OF LABOUR :  
social classes, fractions, strata,  
categories

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(ibid,p.15)

What does Poulantzas mean by "unproductive labour"?

Commercial employees are an example. He writes:"Of course,these wage -earners are themselves exploited,and their wages correspond to the reproduction of the labour-power... The commercial worker....adds to the capitalist's income by helping him to reduce the cost of realizing surplus value,inasmuch as he performs partly unpaid labor... Surplus labor is thus extorted from wage-earners in commerce,but these are not directly exploited in the form of the dominant capitalist relation of exploitation,the creation of surplus value."(ibid,p.212). E.O. Wright states Polantzas'views as follows:"The working class is defined by the fundamental antagonism within capitalism between direct producers,who are separated from the means of production and produce the social surplus product in the form of surplus value, and the

bourgeoisie, who own the means of production and who appropriates surplus value Unproductive wage earners ,while clearly not members of the bourgeoisie,do not contribute to the production of surplus product,and are thus not directly exploited." (Wright,Erik Olin,Varieties of Marxist Conceptions of Class Structure,Politics and Society,Vol.9,no 3,(1980): 323-370,p.345)

But Poulantzas also insists that class positions cannot be defined simply at the level of economic relations;political and ideological forms must be taken into account as well.

**"Political relations"** is a determinant of class position especially when these are concerned with **relations of supervision and authority**:"The work of management and supervision under capitalism is the direct reproduction, within the process of production itself, of the political relations between the capitalist class and the working class."(Poulantzas,ibid.,p.227). These individuals,or better,class members should be placed in the **new petty bourgeoisie** even if they engaged in productive labour in the production process.

**"Ideological relations"** are used by Poulantzas mainly to refer to the **status division between mental and manual labour**. To him the importance is not who is a white-collar or who is a blue -collar worker but who holds the knowledge and who is excluded from that. Thus,for example, a white collar technician occupies a position of ideological domination of the working class because of the ideological role of "expertise" within capitalist society. The important thing for the reproduction of the capitalist relations of production is that the working class should be persuaded that it is incapable of organizing the production process on its own and is always in need of the "experts",the "mental" labourers. So Poulantzas argues that even if these experts do not supervise anyone, and even if they are productive labourers, mental labourers should still be placed in the new petty bourgeoisie.

The distinction between the working class and the new petty bourgeoisie is defined primarily by the distinction between productive and unproductive labour and secondarily by the relations of political and ideological domination and subordination.The division between the petty bourgeoisie and the capitalist class is analyzed primarily in terms of the relations of ownership and the possession of the means of production. Here what is important is not legal ownership or possession but ownership and possession, that is,the capacity to exercise the rights arising from these relations.

The resemblance between the old petty bourgeoisie and the new petty bourgeoisie that makes both of them to constitute a class is the same "pertinent" effects that their economic relations have at the level of ideology: anti-capitalism of the status quo, belief in upward social mobility,

individualism, desire for power. As Poulantzas writes: "The **traditional petty bourgeoisie** has its economic basis in small-scale production and/or small-scale ownership but is not directly involved in exploiting wage-labour, in contrast the **new petty bourgeoisie** comprises non-productive salaried employees. The latter are not directly producers of capitalist commodities but they are involved in reproducing the conditions of surplus-value production in their capacities as circulation workers, engineers, civil servants, teachers, etc." (Nicos Poulantzas, *Fascism and Dictatorship*, NLB, London, 1974, pp, 279). But its (petty bourgeoisie as a whole) unity is expressed not at the level of the economic relations but "to the extent that the different economic entrances of its different functions produce the distinctive results at the political and ideological levels."

Poulantzas' analysis of social classes which are defined according to the marxist tradition primarily by their position in the relations of production, and most important through the "class relevant effects" of political and ideological practices as elements in a system of class domination, is very important because it does not leave space for the reductionist notion that everything depends on terms of revenue or distributional categories (i.e., the **wage-earners**), the wage-earning class on the one hand and the capitalist class on the other hand, a mystification because this "wage-earning" class is treated as being a homogeneous total which is equally exploited and shares the same ideological view of the world. (see, Bob Jessop, Nicos Poulantzas, *Marxist Theory and Political Strategy*, MacMillan, Hampshire, London, 1985)

It is also important because it helps us to understand the role of ideology and the way the coercive state apparatus gains legitimacy by using its ideological mechanisms (through real persons, i.e., the "experts" who execute this task by reproducing the ideological relations of domination at the point of production for example), and also the role of political struggle which for Marx himself was the important thing (see, *The Capital*, Vol 1, and his analysis of the **Factory Laws** and also his statement in the *Communist Manifesto* that "**Every class struggle is a political struggle**").

Poulantzas' analysis also explains the role of the party as the organisational form of a class. A class comes to the field of political struggle when it passes through the stage of trade-unionism into its political organisation stage: that is, the working class party puts forward the interests and demands of the class and organises it. Of course his notion of the party might be criticised from apostles of the "spontaneous organisation" but the important thing is not to be "nominalists", who merely consider words and names, but to look between the lines. The political party represents the

Machiavellian "Prince" in Gramsci's thought, the "vanguard" in Lenin's thought but we have to ask whether a non-hierarchically organised party would not be the real organisational form for this modern capitalist society. Beyond "spontaneity", organisation of some kind is still necessary because we still exist within an antagonistic society and a "non-party" party, non-hierarchically organised is still necessary.

The question of class alliances is stressed by Poulantzas. According to him class alliances are first of all different from the alliance within the power block; secondly they are necessary in the class struggle because they prevent the isolation of the working class from the other progressive forces in society especially under conditions of emergency (i.e. a dictatorship); last but not least the working class should always have the primacy (see his critique of the 5th Conference of Cominter in: "Fascism and Dictatorship" and his ideas for the United Front ).

There is no embarrassment in talking about class alliances and even more in adopting the idea as right; Marx himself was not against it. His only worry was who will have the primacy, or if the alliance was of the right kind in accordance with the partners involved, and how the working class could benefit from that partnership, "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement. In France the Communists ally themselves with the Social-Democrats.....reserving ...the right to take critical position in regard to phrases and illusions....(Manifesto, 1971, p73)..."..they (the Communists) labour everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries." (Manifesto, 1971, p.74. See also The Class Struggles in France, The Civil War in France, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte and Bakunin's accusation of the "authoritarian" communists who believed in the further development and organization of political power through an alliance of the proletariat in the towns with bourgeois radicalism: see, Bakunin, Anti-Authoritarian Socialism).

## CRITIQUE OF THE "AUTHENTIC" MARXISTS' VIEWS

Having in mind the above marxist analysis which does not claim the Pope's "infallibility" let's see the "authentic" marxists' interpretation which on the contrary regards itself as the only existing true "understanding" of Marx's own thought.

We will pick up few points from the ocean of its "true" knowledge, in order to show that does not hold any charismatic privilege at all.

It is much easier to say what, according to "authentic" Marxists', class **is not** than to say what class is because the former is their explanation which comes after an analysis based on individualistic anarchism illuminated with a Hegelian phenomenological light.

We will agree with them that a class is a relation of struggle which can take different conflictual forms but we have to stress that the important thing is the relational group which forms the material basis of the class.

We will disagree with their reductionist notion that a class is a relation itself because this seems to be a relation without a subject. Relations do not fight, concrete individuals are the ones who struggle, who make their own history in Marx's sense.

We will disagree with the notion that there are no pre-given structurally constructed places within the relation because as Marx said men make their own history but not as they like because they react within pre-given conditions. Of course there are not pre-given entities entering into struggle but on the contrary class members occupying different places in the social division of labour and different positions in the technical division of labour. Class members come, through the process of class struggle, to the realisation of their particular interests and through that to their particular class existence. Marx defines this notion in "The German Ideology": **"The separate individuals form a class only in so far as they have to carry on a common battle against another class; otherwise they are on hostile terms with each other as competitors. On the other hand, the class in its turn achieves an independent existence over against the individuals, so that the later find their conditions of existence predestined, and hence have their position in life and their personal developments assigned to them by their class, become subsumed under it. This is the same phenomenon as the subjectum of the separate individuals to the division of labour and can only be removed by the abolition of private property and of labour itself."** ( Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The German Ideology, p. 48-49) .

The capital-labour relation stresses the importance of the two main

antagonistic classes in the capitalist mode of production. This notion does not exclude other relations too. It is a real reductionism to try to underestimate the role of the "intermediate layers" and to try to fit them in as being "floating" atoms in one or another part of the capital -labour relation, as this relation is understood by the "authentic" marxists, indicating that these individuals are homogeneous because they are the wage-earners -used as a "blanket" term - as opposed to the capital in general.

The notion of **social role** is important because role indicates the specific place which a class member occupies within the social division of labour which is something pre-given as soon as he/she enters the production process (see Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, The German Ideology). Of course, we are not interested in the different roles that **particular** individuals play in the society because we do not believe that History depends on individual will. On the contrary, collective action makes History.

But on the other hand such notions as "universal" and "particular" dimensions of individuality are inadequate to explain the nature and the functions of this alienated society. If we insist in a two dimensional human being as opposed -I suspect- to one dimensional we again reproduce in our analysis the reflection of the social division of labour, which will only be overcome with the rise of the **human totality**- which will incorporate the "universal" and the "particular" -however, not in the sense "of his or her own struggle" which is highly individualistic, but in the sense of active participation in a collective action .

Of course Marx's solution is not a society defined its members by roles. He was the one who spoke about the different roles that a full personality , a human totality will perform in a classless communist society (hunter, a critical critic etc, see The German Ideology, p.22) .

As far as the question of alliances is concerned, we briefly discuss it above. One word only: the "authentic" marxists do not believe in class alliances and their argument is that because no "pure" working class exists, so there is no one to make alliances with. Of course, no "pure" working class exists, the term is used as an "ideal type" (Weber) and that is why we need alliances with the real classes which really exist in capitalist society. (see Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, The Class Struggles in France).

The question of which class has the revolutionary monopoly has been solved a long time ago by Marx himself. It was he who said that the rising classes as opposed to declining ones have the monopoly of revolutionary interest and/or force i.e. the bourgeoisie against the aristocracy, the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, in short, the ones who have the motivation for social change.



The notion of the "vanguard" party is very important and needs a separate discussion, especially after the experience of the "enlightened despotism" of the Stalinist Soviet Communist Party which is being used as a model by the Communist Parties elsewhere. If there is an end of the Party it will be because we do not need it any longer and a new form of organisation will arise from its ruins. But Marx himself was not against the notion of a Party. Why do we assume that? First of all because he wrote a manifesto - an aggressive one - and gave it a significant title: **"The Manifesto of the Communist Party"**. Secondly, because he insisted on the importance of a **political organization** which for him was one of the fundamental elements which constitute a "class for itself"; and thirdly because he believed in the necessity of political struggle and of the role of the party which will organise it. Of course one might argue that Marx was never a member of a Party and that the Communist League was not a party; but it was after all a political organisation which was more than a debating body of the organised working class. In addition it was trying to be a working class forum and more precisely to put forward the specific strategies and tactics of the working class struggle.

As for the issue of choice, just only two remarks. If we live - and we do live - in an alienated society our freedom of choice is alienated too. That means that there is no freedom at all, even if this sounds pessimistic. The only freedom comes after being involved in the class struggle, considering our position in the technical division of labour and our place in the social division of labour, being "class conscious" and as self-conscious members of a class participating in the class struggle on the side of our real interests which are always class interests.

The discussion about economic-determinism is not a problem because as Marx said material production shapes the whole spectrum of life and as Engels indicates in his letter to J. Bloch the economic is determining "in the last analysis".

Civil society (Bürgerliche Gesellschaft) and Political society (Politische Gesellschaft) are certainly bourgeois concepts (Hegel used the term Civil Society as opposed to the State). Again the terms have been used by Marx as an instrument of analysis.

The main disagreement with the "authentic" marxists is with their notion of a "knowledge"- torn Marx. The recipe is simple: in order to justify their arguments they pick up bits and pieces of Marx's work and label them as constituting a "marxist Marx" as opposed to a "sociological Marx", so that the "authentic" Marx - according to them - is those parts of "The Capital" and of his other works which justify - if it can ever be true - what they label "Marx's marxist views". As a result, they reject as "sociological" all his writings

which refer to the middle classes, to class alliances, to the role of the political organization, once and for all forgetting their theories of "totality" So now we get to know that Marx's work is a torn "totality" after all!!!!

These are only a few comments on the interpretation of "social class".

The main point, however, is to develop an analysis of society based not on Holy Works and Bibles but on those theories and arguments which could enable us to reach our aim, that is the interpretation of this world in order to change it.

The discussion should not be considered as ended at this point.

Finally, I hope my "Athenian Commonsense" to be a fruitful challenge to "Edinburgh Romanticism."

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## Performance or Bodily Rhetoric

Olga Taxidou

An attempt to approach theatre as performance and not literature posits certain theoretical and methodological problems. Traditional dramatic criticism has focused on theatre as literature applying a methodology and a discourse foreign to its object. For this type of criticism, which is essentially an evaluative process, theatre is worth analysing only if it is 'as good as literature'. After translating theatre into and interpreting it according to its own discourse, literary criticism, being a discourse of power, proceeds to pass on value judgements under the pretence of literary and aesthetic ones. Performance is seen as an embodiment of the written text. The written text is the deep structure which performance has to bring to the surface and enact. Performance itself is studied according to its degree of *faithfulness* to the written text. Realistic, non-realistic, naturalistic, absurdist are all borrowed terms and oppositions. Even when a performance is said to deconstruct the original text, being totally *unfaithful*, this act is either denounced as blasphemous or appraised as revolutionary. The basic opposition and power relation remains the same. The written text, through its presence or absence, is the determining factor of a performance while everything else on the stage is seen as merely facilitating or obscuring the transference of its meaning and intention. The *polyphony* (Barthes, 1976) of the theatre is ignored altogether. For the sake of neatness the whole stage is reduced to a mono-semantic signifying system by which the written text is transferred onto the stage. The stage is viewed as an innocent medium, there to serve the hierarchy of the written text. The

possibility of this *innocent medium* actually constituting and shaping signification itself is ignored. Movement, gesture, sound, light, the presence of the audience along with the written text and in no hierarchical order constitute the *performance text*. The written text is not the subject which is being expressed, presented, represented or deconstructed on stage. It is one of the voices in the polyphony of the stage. Logocentricity of course, is not given up automatically when the word becomes part of the performance text. The performance text rather, metaphorically enacts the struggle of the word to maintain its position as sole creator and carrier of meaning. The main tension is created between the word and the human body. Removed from the written page, where the word orders and presents, and placed on a stage the world of the theatre is conceptualized and presented through the body. This is not merely an expressivist body, carrying and clothing the meaning and the rhetoric of the word but it entails a rhetoric of its own. Through its movement, its gesture, its presence or absence the body forms a rhetoric and due to the very fleshness and physicality of its character this rhetoric can never be merely used as a medium for transference of meaning from one mode to another, as would be considered if the body were viewed as interpreting the written text. A study of the body as a creator of meaning in drama and not merely carrier of it would help shift the emphasis from literary modes to those indigenous to the theatre.

'The history of the theatre is the history of the transfiguration of the human form.'

This statement expressed by Oscar Shlemmer, the Bauhaus artist of the 1920s, posits the human form as organizer of scenic space and time, and in general the medium through which the scenic world is conceptualized and presented.

If theatre is considered to typify the very essence of semiosis, it is because through theatre the act of signification itself is displayed,

enunciated and eventually deconstructed. The spectator is always aware that what he is dealing with is not *areal world* nor one that claims to be. The scenic world removed from the reality versus representation opposition does not occupy a place a *locus* from which it can be interpreted, intergrated and mastered. It is an *absent reality*, a reality frozen in the act of becoming. This absence of a unified, constructed reality on stage is the main source of theatrical pleasure triggering an endless process of memory and desire on behalf of the spectator. The *absent reality* becomes a place where desire and utopia are located. Theatrical pleasure is always the pleasure of the sign. ( Ubersfeld, 1981)

Within this context the human form, being the central figure round which the dramatic world is created, defines the scenic, aesthetic and ideological parameters of a dramatic text. The human form in drama is the subject on display. Heidegger claims that 'the human body is something essentially other than an animal organism'. He goes on to explain that the body is not just one more object in the world but it defines, it sets our relationship with the world. In the *absent reality* of the theatre the human form ceases to act as subject/bridge to the world, fluctuating between a subject and an object status. Even in modes of 'realistic' drama where the human form is portrayed as a coherent subject, its subject status is being enacted, it is made conspicuous and estranged removing it more and more from any notion of realistic representation. The human form in the theatre enacts the death of the subject.

The categories used hereafter to describe the use of the human body in drama are not meant to be linear and historical . There are certainly instances where they overlap and the divisions themselves at time seem arbitrary. This derives as an inevitable consequence of the attempt to formulate clear cut distinctions.

### The Ritualistic Body

This is the holy body of the theatre. The actor partakes in a form of sacrifice redeeming the world. Gesture, movement and action are removed as far as possible from realistic and psychological representation. The body is used to imprint cosmological and collective archetypes. The ancient Greek theatre, the medieval religious plays and the popular religious theatres could be classified under this term. The modernist experimental theatres of the 1920s-30s and the whole avant-garde shared a fascination for ritualistic modes of artistic expression. The work and theories of Artaud in the 1930s, and of the more contemporaries Grotowski, Peter Brook and Robert Wilson portray a ritualistic conceptualization and presentation of the human body. On the one hand, as in ancient Greek theatre or Balinese dance, artificiality is stressed with the use of masks, specific make up and costumes and schematic gesture, on the other, as in modern laboratories like Grotowski's, the body is stripped down naked in an attempt to desemantize it. These two extreme states of the ritualistic body-grandeur and mystification on the one end and poverty and minimalisation on the other- both have a common source. They both view the body in flux, as a raw material that can be highly stylized and engraved with symbols or drastically deprived ready to be moulded. The ritualistic body moves across this axis between indulgent excess and extreme poverty in an attempt to escape psychological expressivism and historicity which will make it assume a subject status. Never actually achieving this the ritualistic body always remains a body of suffering, of ecstatic suffering though. From the literal and metaphorical dismemberment during the Dionysiac mysteries, through the medieval passion plays to Artaud's and Grotowski's notion of the *Holy Actor* the ritualistic body is a body of sacrifice. The classical notion of *Katharsis* linked with the idea of redemption and sacrifice. Artaud, influenced by Balinese dance talks of *exorcism* and the violence of the Theatre of Cruelty functions along the same lines- to exorcise history and psychology and

render the body free, in flux so that it can in turn be imprinted with archetypes.

### **The Grotesque Body**

Contrary to the ritualistic body, whose roots lie in religion, the grotesque body has a very different source of origin. It derives from the history of laughter. It is the body of travesty, mockery, parody, satire and carnival. Although it seems to differ from the ritualistic body both modes are two facets of the same notion, for it is in satire that the very roots of theatre lie. The grotesque body is the ritualistic body stripped naked. While the former strives at escaping its form and content so as to become a pure medium, the latter indulges into its very bodily nature. It is a body obsessed with itself and its functions. Eating, drinking, sweating, dismemberment as well as being swalled by another are all acts of the grotesque body. As one of the main grotesque figures of modern literature, Beckett's Malone, articulates this- 'What matters is to eat and excrete. Dish and pot, dish and pot, these are the poles.' (*The Beckett Trilogy*, 1959)

The reduction of the body to its physical qualities and its constant indulgence into them gradually break down the boundaries between itself and the world. Earth, water, fire and air are the elements of the grotesque body, the elements it shares with the rest of the world. At this stage the boundaries between bodies and objects become fussy, the limits separating the body from the world are blurred. As a result the body can no longer function as a subject handling and ordering the objects in the world. It is itself merely another object, part of the world and not mediating it. In that sense the grotesque body equates the two notions, subject and object, extinguishing their opposition. The subject as creator of meaning vanishes and like every other object in the world, it becomes a place, a locus, where meaning resides. As Micheal Holquist says if we 'do not make meaning we may at least rent meaning'. The grotesque body is such a body *rented* or *to let*. To borrow Bakhtin's term, it is dialogical in character, occupying that space



between the opposed views that meaning is the sole property of the subject, a product of intention, and that meaning is the tentative resident of language. The nature of the grotesque body allows it to eternally fluctuate between the two and never actually be realized in a specific configuration. For this reason life and death do not exist for the grotesque in binary opposition. After all the blows, the punches, the hangings, the decapitations the grotesque body literally bounces back into life. Harlequin's famous suicide attempts (from the *Commedia dell'Arte*), Vladimir and Estragon's hanging scene (from *Waiting For Godot*) and the slapstick and Vaudeville violence, all exemplify this aspect of the grotesque. The grotesque body cannot die because it has never actually lived as unified subject. As Bakhtin writes 'it is not a closed, completed unit; it outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits' (*Rabelais and His World*, 1941) The grotesque body lives in an atmosphere of fantastic gaiety and laughter. This laughter satanic and subversive, having its roots in carnival challenges the order of things.

Traditional forms of the grotesque appear in the *Commedia dell'Arte* of the Renaissance, the puppet theatres, Vaudeville and the Circus. In these modes of drama the human figure acquires special significance. Since the written form is basically scorned, the body becomes the main organizer/creator of the scenic world. Virtuoso improvisation instead of fixed dialogue, flexible plots round which the plays rotate instead of determined texts are all characteristics of the grotesque theatres. The emphasis is on the act of bodily acting-on what the body actually can or cannot do through its mechanisms-rather than on its ability to express and interpret the written text. This is why acrobatics and physical action are vital for the grotesque theatre. It is a body enacting its very nature, exposing its mechanisms, transgressing its limits and gradually being reduced to a raw material. These aspects of the grotesque, along with the sense of atemporality and the lack of expressivism appealed to the avant-garde theatres of the 20s and 30s. The work of Alfred Jarry and later of the Theatre of the Absurd (mainly Ionesco) seem to apply the use of the grotesque body. Samuel Beckett's earlier works are inhabited by grotesque forms-Vladimir and Estragon from *Waiting For Godot*, Krapp in *Krapp's Last Tape*, Winnie

in *Happy Days*. The work of Samuel Beckett on the whole can function as a paradigm for the transformation of the grotesque body into the mechanized body. From the characters (for lack of a better term) in the earlier works—Molloy, Malone, Vladimir, Estragon, Krapp and Winnie—who all are obsessed with their physicality and indulge into their bodily habits we move to a body that is highly abstract and stylized almost lacking physical qualities altogether, a body whose functions have been very meticulously outlined, which has been *cleaned* of all its *natural* operations. This is the mechanized body which is found in Beckett's later works (*Come and Go*, *Rockaby*, *Ohio Impromptu*, *Quad*, *Catastrophe*)

### The Mechanized Body

Once the body has been used in excess and almost exhausted its limits (as in the grotesque), its functions become automated and mechanized. The fluidity that the grotesque body results in is now given shape anew. Minimalized down to its raw materials the body can now assume the very strict and rigid form of the Mechanized body. This is the body of the Futurist, Constructivist and Bauhaus theatres. In these modes of drama the body is completely objectified, deprived of history and psychology. The very *thingness* and *emptiness* of it allows it to create a new discourse not dependent on language. It is characteristic that most avant-garde theatres do not use language as the determining factor in a performance. At the same time they are concerned with formulating a language for the theatre. Not merely a theory but a mode of writing that would be specific to the theatre as performance. The discursive/mechanized body is an attempt to articulate such a theory of theatricality—the specific aesthetic and signifying aspects of the stage.

The avant-garde, in general, is characterized by a dual movement. On the one extreme we have the tendency to reject language altogether, as we see it in the Futurist theatre and in the theatre of Artaud and to place the body as the main generator of discourse, and on the other, as

in the works of Beckett and Handke both language and body are objectified with no hierarchy between them creating thus a new language. Both modes share their distrust in language as a reproducing and governing instrument. The human body is the creator of space on stage and language gives the dimension of time. For the avant-garde the concept of theatre is epitomized by the idea of *man in space* and not the *word in time* which is what creates linearity, historicity and psychology. The *empty space* of the theatre is conceptualized and presented by the body which has itself been *emptied* of any sense of coherence and order, it has become a *desiring mechanism* (Deleuze - Guattari 1973). In this way the absence of the stage world is highlighted, reflected and the discourse of the body itself functions on the level of a meta-language. It is this semiotic process that triggers theatrical pleasure, but also *jouissance*- 'the fading which siezes the subject in the midst of *jouissance*, a text of *jouissance* imposes a state of loss. It is a text that discomforts, unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories brings to a crisis his relation with language' (Barthes, 1976).

According to Jacques Derrida, any theatrical event that applies the notion of text and language is theologically founded on a dominant logocentrism and therefore cannot escape representationalism which deprives it of any chance of creating its own language/semiotic system. The tension between the *somatic* and the logocentric on stage 'is never actually resolved, but the theatre as a genre and mode of presentation is more apt to creating its own discourse than other modes of writing. Always implying the notion of enactment, it posits the body against the word.

'All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music' (Pater), is a statement generally acknowledged, implying somehow that music the highest form of art. Hierarches aside, it is certainly the most autonomous and self-reliant of art forms mainly due to the fact that it

has its own language. It does not have to be translated or transferred into another code system in order to be 'understood'. The somatic element of the theatre is such an attempt to create a discourse indigenous to its genre. Theatre has always been appropriated by literary criticism as it is considered to be chiefly another aspect of literature. Such a reading, limiting drama to the embodiment of the written word, ignores and cannot account for the full potentialities of theatricality. A study of the bodily rhetoric is a step towards that direction.

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Nigel Gunn

DEMOCRACY OF A WHOLLY NEW TYPE?

I've never done this before but now I claim my right to stand up and shout from the back of the hall until I get a hearing. So, starting with a perverse faith in this journal's completely arbitrary editorial policy, I go straight to the point:

I am desperately keen on democracy and would dearly like to see it tried within my lifetime. I mean something like the Athenian variety, or that of the small St. Kilda community, where everybody met or was entitled to meet to decide affairs. I realise it is fashionable to criticise the Athenians for excluding slaves, immigrants and women from their assembly. In a way I would not spare them these criticisms because it is by extrapolating their own invention of rational political thought that we are now able to find fault with their system as it was in practice. Nevertheless perhaps it is too much to expect them to have become completely logical and egalitarian within just three or four generations, what with the hassle of confronting Xerxes, Sparta and a great plague in the meantime. On the other hand consider the following remark, not emphasised at all and almost lost in a late chapter of A.R. Burn's *Pelican History of Greece*: "Greeks never developed representative government, not because they were not clever enough but because they did not trust one another sufficiently" - in other words they viewed the problems of accountability and verification inherent in representative government as so insurmountable that only personal, individual representation could for them guarantee democracy in its original sense, rule by the people's will. I submit that they were absolutely right and that here it is our own system which is chronically flawed.

What, then, are the obstacles to establishing direct as opposed to representative democratic government in our own society? The objection that the people at large cannot be trusted with government is the same as the argument used against even limited or representative democracy in both modern and ancient times. It amounts at least to intellectual arrogance and at worst to the most cynical fascism. History from Pericles to the present day has proved that people rise to the occasion and become responsible as a result of sharing power, and that universal participation enriches the life of the individual as well as the state (in our case, ideally, the world).

This leaves the objection that the system would be unwieldy and impractical. To rebut this objection I call three expert witnesses: Statistics, Telecommunications and the Computer. First, Statistics: "Can you provide a reliable means of discovering the views of a very large number of persons by consulting a smaller number?"

**STATISTICS** Certainly. The technique of random sampling gives extremely accurate results if a large enough sample is used. An ideal number would be the square root of the total electorate. In a country such as the United Kingdom with, say, 25 million electors this would involve consulting 5,000 persons on each national issue. In a city or district with 160,000 electors the sample would be 400. For a global voting population of 10,000 million the sample size would

still be a manageable 100,000. In each case smaller samples could be trusted whenever a very clear majority emerged.

Good, now Telecommunications: "Can you handle the flow of information involved in thousands of individuals voting on thousands of separate questions every year from their homes or workplaces, without the need for physical attendance in an assembly chamber, at the same time transmitting details of the proceedings to all interested citizens?"

*TELECOMMUNICATIONS* No problem: it is as easy as providing a telephone and facsimile machine in every home.

Finally the Computer: "Can you record and store the continually changing views of a large voting population and sort them into a coherent public policy?"

*COMPUTER* Yes, including (within a few seconds) detection of contradictions or warning of unexpected consequences from any proposal plus fully accurate logging without bias of statements, motions, voting figures and resulting statutes, with instant access to all this at any terminal.

There is no doubt about the capacity of late twentieth century technology to perform these functions. The same technology is already exploited to the full by business and finance organisations, military establishments, weather forecasters, indeed scientists in every field, librarians, health authorities, airlines and travel agents, computer game enthusiasts, betting companies, market researchers and even opinion pollsters - yet the actual implementation of the people's will is still in the pencil and paper era, from the ballot box to Hansard. Why?

I believe it is for the age-old reason that we are in the hands of vested interests. Direct democracy would spell the end of career politics and political parties as we know them. There would be no organised and therefore oversimplified blocs parrying blows, only endless shifting sands of evolutionary change. We cannot expect many members of Parliament or of Congress or even of the Labour National Executive to vote for this. Far better for them to continue as the new aristocrats, favouring rule by the few and the wise. A ludicrously limited choice for most of us every five years is already too much for some of them to feel comfortable with; every five hours would be intolerable.

It is time to hijack information technology and use it to make every individual really count in society. Time is running out and we do not have the luxury of simply tolerating the status quo. The "status quo" is in fact continually advancing against freedom, with increasing sophistication. The indirect universal franchise, so recently achieved, is already becoming a hollow institution and elections a nostalgic charade. Voting must become a frequent (perhaps daily) event with the results immediately passing into effect, because this is the speed with which the non-democratic forces in the modern world are already able to act. As things stand the body politic is like a sluggish dinosaur being consumed by agile piranha fish. Perhaps you disagree. Then instead of telling us we don't really want all this extra choice, instead of trying to sell us something different that is already conveniently on the order paper or in the manifesto, why not just ask everyone and find out?

## A CONSIDERATION OF PERPETUAL MOTION

Keith Anderson

Visitors to Francis Bacon's 'New Atlantis' might have been intrigued to learn that they could there find 'divers curious clocks, and other like motions of return, and some perpetual motions'.

To get something for nothing seems to be one of Man's perennial desires. One of its more peculiar manifestations is in the notion of perpetual motions. Although our common sense clearly dictates that machines which run for free are not possible, this 'sense' has not always been so common.

The first attempts to construct machines that once set into motion would continue forever date from the 12th century. The earliest artificial automata and clocks also date from this period, the construction of which 'popular fancy ascribed to the machinations of the devil'. It was thought that the same technology might lead to the construction of perpetual motions, including devices that would do useful work. A belief in the possibility of perpetual motion was voiced by scientists and philosophers of the period alike. It was to be many centuries before this belief was seriously challenged; only as late as 1775 did the Paris Academy of Science resolve to consider no more claims for perpetual motions.

It now appears that there are three kinds of perpetual motions; ever-running mechanical devices, those that extract work from the heat in their environment and frictionless machines. The first two are of the kind that were thought capable of doing work. The third type would continue running forever but produce no work. It has been shown that perpetual motions of the first two kinds are not possible whereas, under certain conditions, those of the third kind can be constructed.

Devices of the first two kinds stand in intimate connection with the development of some of the laws of physics, those of dynamics and thermodynamics in particular. In both cases the laws can either be derived empirically and used to show the impossibility of perpetual motion, or this impossibility can be assumed axiomatically in the theoretical construction of the same laws. The latter approach was adopted in the case of dynamics by Stevinus and Galileo in the 16th century and thermodynamics by Helmholtz in the 19th century. They justified their assumption by appeal to the fact that no successful perpetual motion had ever been constructed.



The incompatibility of the laws of physics and the existence of such perpetual motions is most clearly seen in the case of thermodynamics. This branch of physics developed during the 19th century as both a theory of the phenomenon of heat and its relation to mechanical power. At the heart of the theory are three laws, the first of which states that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, the second that all systems tend to a state of stable equilibrium. The third law need not concern us here.

Perpetual motions of the first kind require the creation of energy, in order to overcome the frictional forces acting in the machine and to do work (in most schemes envisaged this appears to have been the grinding of corn). This stands in direct contradiction to the first law of thermodynamics; clearly one scheme must be untenable. Perpetual motions of the second kind operate on the basis of extracting work from heat that is evenly distributed in their environment. The second law of thermodynamics predicts that any system containing an uneven distribution of heat will tend to a state in which that heat is evenly distributed. An example of this process can be seen if one leaves a hot cup of coffee in a room to cool; the coffee loses heat to the room which in turn warms slightly. Eventually both end up at the same temperature. A consequence of the second law is that this process will not reverse itself - the cup of coffee will not spontaneously warm up by taking heat back from its surroundings. Any machine that extracts work from heat requires the heat to flow from a hotter to a cooler region; just as a hydroelectric generator requires water to flow from a higher to a lower region in order to power its turbines. Thus a perpetual motion of the second kind firstly needs to create an uneven distribution of heat before it can do any work, in violation of the second law of thermodynamics. We are hence faced with a choice of either accepting the validity of the laws of thermodynamics or the possibility of these kinds of perpetual motion.

It has been argued (Ernst Mach) that these machines are impossible for the more fundamental reason that they would violate causality in producing an effect without cause. He based his argument on the premise that a continuous effect can only be produced by a continuous cause, ie that cause and effect must be like in kind. Any perpetual motion of the above kinds needs only an initial impulse to get it started and will then run continuously. This is obviously at odds with Mach's notion of causality.

Perpetual motions of the third kind form closed systems - once set into motion they neither add to nor take from the energy of their surroundings. Such motions may be observed in certain conductors that lose all electrical resistance

and fluids that lose all friction at sufficiently low temperatures. If, for example, such a 'superconductor' is arranged in a ring it will carry a circulating electric charge indefinitely. This charge cannot, however, be used to do any work for it would firstly have to be removed from the superconductor and would then no longer present a perpetual motion. Another interesting example of this type of perpetual motion is given by one of the many current cosmological models - the 'oscillating universe' model. In this scheme the universe will expand from its inception in the 'big bang' to a certain point, and then collapse inwards again due to the gravitational attraction of its constituent matter. Once this collapse reaches a certain point another big bang will occur giving birth to a new universe. This cycle would repeat endlessly producing a latter day equivalent of the Aristotelian 'perfect motion of the heavens'.

Thus our visitors to New Atlantis, if they were permitted access to its perpetual motions, may well have seen devices of this third kind. They might, moreover, have noted how such devices reflect, in essence, the motion of the heavens. If indeed imitation is the purpose of these devices of New Atlantis, we are left with an open question as to the nature of the 'great number of other various motions, strange for equality, fineness, and subtilty'.

## MARXISM AND MEDIATION

Richard Gunn

In both Hegelian and Marxian thought, the concept of mediation figures as a central dialectical category. That the category does important theoretical, and revolutionary, work is clear. What is less clear, to myself at any rate, is what might be termed the conceptual geography of the category itself. It is this conceptual geography which, as a preliminary to further discussion, the present paper attempts to clarify. A more pretentious title for what follows might be 'Prolegomena to a Re-reading of Marx'.

To mediate is to bring about a relation by means of a relating (an "intermediate") term. A mediation is the relating term itself. To count as a mediation, a relating term must be more than a mere catalyst or external condition (however necessary) of the relation: rather, it must itself be the relation. It must constitute it, in the way that for example - and the example is offered merely heuristically - a rope linking two climbers is constitutive of the relation in which they stand.

If a mediation is, thus, the relation which it establishes, it does not follow that just any relation counts as a mediating term. A mediated relation is distinct from a relation for which, to render it intelligible or accurately to describe it, no reference to a relating term need be made - for example, a relation of juxtaposition. A relation of this latter kind is an immediate relation (which, for its part, may be catalysed or necessitated in this or that way).

Within the conceptual field of mediation, as so far outlined, various possibilities exist. Two (or more) terms may be related (mediated) by means of a third, or further, term; or a single term may be related (mediated) to itself by a second term. Where a single term is mediated to itself, the relation between it and its mediation may or may not be reciprocal. Where it is reciprocal, there exist two terms each of which is the other's mediation, and each of which is mediated by the other to itself. This gives an idea of the internal richness of mediation's conceptual field: either there may exist two (or more) terms plus their mediation; or there may exist a single term plus its mediation; or there may exist two terms each mediating, and mediated by, each other. The first of these three possibilities is, perhaps, the one with which the concept of mediation is most commonly associated. (It is closest, for example, to the dictionary definitions of 'to mediate'.) However, the third-mentioned possibility is quite explicitly invoked by Hegel when he envisages a situation in which each of two terms 'is for the other the middle /the mediating/ term, through which each mediates itself with itself and unites with itself' (Hegel 1977 p. 112). The example he gives is that of a mutually recognitive relation between individual self-conscious subjects.

A further, and all-important, step is taken in exploring the concept of mediation when it is noticed that the process of mediation may be such as to bring about not merely a relation, but an internal relation: it is exclusively such instances of mediation which concern Hegel and Marx. (In the case of a single term which is mediated to itself, the corresponding possibility is that the process of mediation "totalises" discrete attributes into an internally related whole.) Prior to the mediation, that which is mediated may or may not have been internally related (or self-related). But, even supposing that it was,

the mediation may establish a fresh internal-relatedness (or a fresh totalisation). If a (fresh) internal-relatedness or totalisation is established by the process of mediation, then the following is the consequence. Since (a) an internal relation is constitutive of the terms which it relates, and since (b) a mediation is itself - as already indicated - the relation of the term(s) concerned, we can say: in such cases, the mediation is the mode of existence of the related term(s). This can also be expressed - Marx and Hegel so express it - by saying that in such cases the mediation is the form or appearance of the term(s) which it internally relates.

Combining this notion of mediation as the mode of existence (form, appearance) of what is mediated with the third possible shape of mediation indicated earlier, a further possibility emerges: two terms may be the mode of existence of one another. And such is indeed the case, for Hegel, with two mutually recognitive self-consciousnesses: in Hegelian usage, the expression 'recognition' carries with it a quite specifically constitutive force. This being so, it follows that a recognitive relation between individuals in no way requires mediation through a discrete "third term" - for example social institutions (or as Hegel calls them 'spiritual masses') such as state and civil society (Hegel 1977 pp. 300-1) - separate from, and standing over against, the individuals concerned. The Hegel of the Phenomenology is in fact emphatic that the existence of 'spiritual masses' entails alienation, and that mutually recognitive (or non-alienated) social existence is possible only when no spiritual masses or social institutions exist: mutually recognitive self-consciousness 'no longer places its /social/ world and its ground outside of itself' (Hegel 1977 p. 265). Thus it is that being alive to the various possible shapes of mediation - i.e. the refusal to equate mediation as such with the first of the three possibilities above mentioned - allows us to discern what is in effect an anarchist stratum in Hegel's thought. And the emergence of Left Hegelianism out of Hegel becomes intelligible at the same stroke: for example, Marx's 'On the Jewish Question' appears as a restatement of the critique of 'spiritual masses' which the Phenomenology contains. In the Philosophy of Right, by contrast, Hegel reinstates spiritual masses - individuals are seen as mediated to one another via the discrete "third term" of social institutions - and, in doing so, opens himself to the criticisms which Marx delivers in his Hegel-critique of 1843. The Hegel of the Phenomenology, in short, emerges as the most trenchant critic of the Hegel of the Philosophy of Right.

The expressions "form" and "appearance", introduced earlier, require further elaboration. I should like what I have said to be taken as (in the sense which is relevant here) defining them: the form or appearance of something is its mode of existence. This definitional sense is not, of course, the sense which "form" and "appearance" receive in ordinary language: there, form is understood as opposed to content and appearance is understood as opposed to reality or essence, as though something's form or appearance might be removed or altered without thereby effecting an essential change in the nature of the "something" (the content or reality or essence) itself. In other words, the ordinary-language usage of "form" and of "appearance" is dualistic.

By contrast, their definitional sense (the sense which is relevant so far as mediation is concerned) is non-dualistic: what this involves is made clear by Hegel in his treatment of the relation between appearance and essence. According to Hegel 'essence must appear', i.e., the appearance is the essence's mode of existence: 'Essence...is not something beyond or behind appearance, but, just because it is the essence which exists, the existence is appearance' (Hegel 1892 para. 131). The relation between appearance and essence here envisaged is

non-dualistic inasmuch as it is in and through its appearance that the essence is. Essence stands ahead of itself as appearance, and it is as thus standing ahead of itself that it exists: "appearance", in other words, is to be understood not as a passive noun (an inert veil or cover) but as an "appearing", i.e., in a sense which alludes to the activity of the verb. This thought is one which Hegel derives from ancient philosophy. For Anaxagoras, similarly, and in contradiction to Parmenides' dualistic countposing of appearance to reality, 'Appearances are a glimpse of the obscure' (Kirk and Raven 1963 p. 394). Anaxagoras's saying is not to be understood as affirming that appearances comprise, so to say, a thin rather than a thick veil. Rather, his thought is that it is in the nature of what is not appearance - namely, being - to reveal/conceal itself or, in other words, to appear in the sense of standing (obscurely) forth. And, in fact, Marx's concepts of fetishism and of mystification register, so far as social being is concerned, an exactly parallel point.

I have dwelt on the non-dualistic meaning of the term "appearance" because its meaning is decisive for how Marx's Grundrisse and Capital are to be read. Famously, Marx speaks of penetrating through appearances to reality and urges that capitalist society appears to those who live in it in systematically misleading ways (e.g. Marx 1973 pp. 247, 674; 1976 p. 421; 1966 p. 817). Such passages are misunderstood if they are read - and of course they have been so read - as counterposing appearance to reality in a dualistic fashion, or as affirming that appearance is less real than the reality it fetishistic-ally reveals/conceals. From the Grundrisse, it is clear enough that capitalism's appearance in terms of freedom, equality, property, etc. is a real moment in capitalist production relations taken as a whole. Marx drives the point home when he contends that social relations which appear as 'material relations between persons and social relations between things' appear 'as what they are' (Marx 1976 p. 166): this passage is unintelligible - it must seem as though Marx is endorsing a fetishized perspective - unless appearance is understood as the mediation (the mode of existence) of the relation in which the producers of commodities stand.(1)

If, despite all this, a dualistic understanding of the appearance/reality relation is forced upon Marx then the consequence is either determinism (reality is seen as causally conditioning an appearance which is distinct from it) or reductionism (not the appearance, but only the reality, is supposed finally to exist). Once appearances are understood as mediations no such consequences are entailed. Regarding fetishism and mystification, Marx's point is not that we can be mystified about reality, or even that we can be mystified (misled) by reality, but that mystification - or "enchantment" - is the mode in which capitalist reality exists. So to say, capitalism exists as its own self-denial.

It may seem as though such a view inscribes mystification so deeply in capitalist social reality that the emergence, from capitalism, of revolutionary theory and practice becomes all but impossible. But in fact precisely the opposite is the consequence if, as we shall see, capitalist appearances are the modes of existence of relations which are antagonistic through and through. It is the non-dualism of the appearance/reality relation which allows antagonisms to be matters of experience - to be 'glimpsed', in Anaxagoras's meaning - in however self-contradictory and distorted a way. Once appearance is dualistically severed from antagonistic reality, however, antagonism is placed outwith the domain of experience and the basis for a politics of revolutionary

self-emancipation is undermined.

As with "appearance", so with "form". Marx's characteristic mode of questioning is always "Wy do these things take these forms?" (e.g. Marx 1976 pp. 173-4). The "things" concerned are production relations which are always, except in communist society, class relations, i.e., relations of struggle: in existing society it is the capital-labour relation which is "formed" - as well as reformed and deformed - in varying ways. Marx's project is 'to develop from the actual, given relations of life the forms in which these have been apotheosized' (Marx 1976 p. 494). The "forms" concerned are the commodity-form, the value-form, the money-form, the wage-form, the state-form, etc. If "form" is understood dualistically, i.e. as opposed to content which is distinct from it, then once again (for reasons parallel to those given as regards "appearance") either determinism or reductionism results. In the event, however, forms are to be understood as mediations (as modes of existence, or appearances) of the class relation - under capitalism, the capital-labour relation - and hence of the struggle in which that relation consists. (On the centrality of class struggle to all the categories of Capital, see Cleaver 1977: every single category in Marx's critique of political economy is designed to contribute to the description of the mediations - the modes of existence - of class struggle, and this is one reason why Capital must be seen as presenting a critique of political economy rather than a rival political economy on its own behalf.)

It is worth noticing that all of the mediations set forth by Marx stand to be mediated in their turn: for example, exchange-value is the mediation (the mode of existence or appearance) of value, and is for its part mediated by the money-form. For Marx, as for Hegel, no process of mediation is definitive: mediated terms may themselves call for remediation, and far from being static or merely "structural" the process of mediation and remediation is one in which the praxis of class struggle - and therefore capital's response to labour's insurgency - is inscribed. Better: mediation and remediation are at issue in class struggle, inasmuch as mediations are forms of class struggle. As usual, it is categories which thematize activity - here, the activity of struggle - which are given primacy by Marx. Understood thus, the concept of mediation explodes all deterministic readings and establishes 'revolutionary subjectivity' at the very centre of Marx's work.

This being so, there can be no question of revolutionaries having to intervene from outside (like Leninist vanguardists) in inert social structures in order to conjure struggle into existence or to generate praxis from process, since it is as mediations of struggle and as at issue in struggle that social "structures" and social "processes" exist. In this sense, for Marx as for Hegel (and in opposition to every variety of bourgeois and pseudo-Marxist sociology), a social world 'is not a dead essence, but is actual and alive' (Hegel 1977 p. 264). It follows that the politics entailed by a reading of Marx in the light of the category of mediation is, with Luxemburg, a politics of spontaneism: but in the Marxist tradition Luxemburg's category of spontaneism has been understood no less confusedly than the category of mediation itself. At the close of the present paper, I shall offer brief comment on what I take the category of spontaneism to involve.

An additional virtue of the concept of mediation is that it makes possible a theorising of the relation between class struggle and struggles of other kinds. For example, the relation of class oppression to sexual oppression has been a topic of notorious difficulty in both feminist and Marxist thought: sexual and class oppression are

intertwined, but of course sexual oppression is older than the capital-labour relation. The necessary insight here is to the effect that capitalist valorization is not a closed dynamic, i.e., not merely one which destroys, externally, all 'patriarchal and idyllic' pre-capitalist social forms (although just such a view seems to be implied in, for example, the opening pages of the Communist Manifesto). Rather, it is to be seen as an open process of totalisation which is always ready to incorporate - viciously, and voraciously - whatever in pre-capitalism can serve its purposes and lies ready to hand. It incorporates them as its own mediations, and in so doing re-"forms" them (understanding "form", here, in the definitional sense specified above). In this way, capital re-forms the family and transforms sexual relations within the family into a "form" of the capital-labour relation itself: the nuclear family comes into being contemporarily with industrial capitalism (cf. Shorter 1976). The sexual relation becomes a mediation of the class relation and vice versa. Women's unpaid labour in the nuclear family serves as a free subsidy to capital so far as the reproduction of labour-power is concerned.(2)

Thus, sexual emancipation presupposes, but is not reducible to, class emancipation (and vice versa). This analysis is the opposite of reductionist because it construes the process whereby capital re-forms sexual relations as one of struggle and implies neither that all of existing sexual oppression is a consequence of this re-formation - although it is all affected by it - nor that sexual oppression will be automatically terminated once the capital-labour relation has been destroyed.

In passing, it can be noted that capitalism's continuing employment of pre-capitalist relations is crucial not merely for any concrete understanding of the capital-labour relation's mediations but also for an understanding of the sources of legitimacy upon which capital can draw. (An example is racist legitimacy, bound up with a heritage of anti-semitism and slavery, so far as the capitalist state is concerned. Amongst other things, this heritage makes it possible for capital to organise a flow of "immigrant" labour-power to and fro across the state's boundaries and in accordance with valorization's needs.) To see capitalist valorization as a closed and sheerly self-sustaining dynamic, and capitalist legitimacy as stemming solely from the exchange relation, is to downplay its capacity for incorporating, as its own mediations, that which is or was non-capitalist and so to underestimate the strength (deriving from flexibility) of that to which revolutionary struggle is opposed. The sheer 'formalism' of the exchange relation would supply capital with only a weak legitimation, and the 'substantial' sources from which it can derive strong - but nonetheless always problematic - legitimation are both older and more "irrational" and mythic (cf. Horkheimer and Adorno 1969) than a Marxism impressed with the hegemony of liberal values would suppose. Sometimes, fascism is analysed as an archaic throwback to times before capitalist rationality prevailed; if this analysis is accepted, however, the conclusion must be that all capitalist states are fascist on precisely this score. The advantage of the category of mediation, here, is that it allows us to break away from the image of a "pure" capitalism overlain and sullied by what Stalinist Marxism terms 'survivals' from a pre-capitalist past. On the contrary: the strength of capital is its capacity to re-form pre-capitalist relations as its own mediations and thereby to translate them into modes of existence of itself.

What I have said about "form" sheds light on yet another contentious area of Marxist theorising, this time an area of a methodological kind. One of the central topics addressed in Marx's 1857 Introduction to the Grundrisse manuscripts is that of the relation between categories which

are abstract and categories which are concrete, and we learn that, instead of starting with the concrete and abstracting from it, we must start from the abstract and show how the concrete is composed out of it, the concrete, here, being understood as 'the concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse' (Marx 1973 p. 101). I shall not attempt to explore all the issues raised in this complex passage, but only to draw out a distinction between two ways in which the abstract/concrete relation can be understood.

Abstracting from the concrete involves abstraction in what may be termed an empiricist sense: the more I abstract, the further I move away from (concrete) reality and the less real - the more purely conceptual - my abstractions become. Marx is for his part willing to employ abstraction in this sense, as when he remarks that 'all epochs of production have certain common traits, common characteristics. Production in general is an abstraction, but a rational abstraction...' (Marx 1973 p. 86). But he adds at once that 'there is no production in general' (Marx 1973 p. 86), in the sense that production is always historically specific, and one of his objections to vulgar political economy is that the latter confuses abstraction in its empiricist meaning with abstraction in a sense which the notion of mediation brings to light. In this latter sense, that which is abstract can be a mode of existence (a form) of that which is historically specific and no less real than any other aspect of the concrete totality in which it inheres. Mediations, in short, may be either abstract or concrete or a (contradictory) unity of the two. The example which Marx gives of abstraction as mediation is that of labour, which 'achieves practical truth as an abstraction only as a category of the most modern society' (Marx 1973 p. 105) wherein value-production obtains. The 'dual character' of labour (Marx 1976 pp. 131ff.) as abstract and as concrete - as productive of value and of use-value - is one among the mediations of the capital-labour relation itself. Confusing abstraction in the empiricist sense and in the sense of mediation allows the political economists to construe that which is specific to capitalism (in this example: abstract labour) as intrinsic to production under all social formations whatever and, of course, this is one aspect of the fetishism of categories to which Marx is constantly opposed.

Once again, we arrive at a point which is decisive for how Marx's own critique of political economy is to be read. To be sure, the first volume of Capital discusses "capital in general" in abstraction (more or less) from the questions posed by the existence of "many capitals", and even at the end of Volume Three we still have to 'leave aside' the conjunctures of the world market, credit and so forth (Marx 1966 p. 831). But this in no way entails that the value-form, abstract labour, surplus-value, etc. - in short, all the central topics of Volume One - are less real than the topics approached as the arguments of Volume Three unfold. Value and labour precisely as abstractions, in the sense of mediations or modes of existence of the capital-labour relation, do real (and murderous) political and exploitative work. The mediations which Volumes Two and Three of Capital add to those of Volume One - the remediations, in other words, of these former mediations - in no way subtract from the importance (the importance of the capital-labour relation as a relation of class struggle) of the story which Volume One tells. Nor is it a matter of a "pure model" of capitalism - which exists no more than does 'production in general' or a Weberian 'ideal type' - being moved "closer to reality" by successive stages. To be sure, Volume Three approaches 'step by step the form which they /the 'various forms of capital'/ assume on the surface of society...and in the ordinary consciousness of the agents of production themselves' (Marx 1966 p. 25), but just here it is important to keep the sense of "forms" and of



and of "appearances" as mediations clearly in mind. For example, "many capitals" is the mode of existence of "capital in general", and minus the 'practical truth' - the real social existence - of "capital in general" the intelligibility of "many capitals" disappears. The point here is more than a textual one. If Volume One is treated as presenting a "pure model" of capitalism (an abstraction in the empiricist sense) then Marxism's emphasis on class struggle - the struggle inscribed in the capital-labour relation - evaporates and both in theory and in practice one finishes up endorsing the mystified 'ordinary consciousness' of capitalist social relations and the fetishism in which (as Volume Three demonstrates) that consciousness is steeped. To read Marx as an empiricist - as employing only an empiricist concept of abstraction - is to read him as a reformist, and both his political and his theoretical challenge are evaded at a single stroke.

One way of summing up what has been said concerning Marx is to see it as articulating further the various possible shapes of mediation discussed above. For it will be apparent that, for Marxism, one application of the concept of mediation as mode of existence (as form or appearance) is of key importance, namely, the application of this species of mediation to a situation wherein, prior to mediation, an antagonistic - or self-antagonistic - relation characterises the to-be-mediated terms. Indeed the antagonism may be one strong enough to destroy the terms, as in the Communist Manifesto's scenario of 'the common ruin of the contending classes'. Hegel tells us what a mediation of antagonistic terms can mean: it can mean that each antagonistically (or self-antagonistically) related term achieves the 'power to maintain itself in contradiction' (Hegel 1971 para. 382), or in other words in its antagonism (which is not at all to say that the antagonism is removed outright or destroyed). Suppose, now, that a mediation of this kind brings about an internal relation between, or within, the antagonistic term(s): in such a case, the mediation is the mode of existence not merely of the term(s) themselves but also of their antagonism. The antagonism concerned is not removed, but on the contrary is sustained and set on a new footing, inasmuch as (qua mediated) it no longer consumes and destroys or undermines itself. Thus, for Marx, mediations of the contradictions inherent in the commodity-form (the central contradiction is between use-value and exchange-value, and its mediation is money) 'does not abolish these contradictions, but rather provides the form /read: the mode of existence/ within which they have room to move' (Marx 1976 p. 198).

In this example, mediation allows not merely the antagonistic terms but their antagonism to remain in being. Money, as the mediation of the commodity, is not just superadded to the commodity but is the mode of existence of the commodity itself: 'The riddle of the money fetish is...the riddle of the commodity fetish, now become visible and dazzling to our eyes' (Marx 1976 p. 187). In the absence of this mediation, use-value and value would remain merely juxtaposed, in the sense that use-value production, as a condition of all social existence, is by no means necessarily value-production and indeed points beyond it. Not the least aspect of the fetishism of commodities is the circumstance that use-value production, as a universally imposed condition of human existence, is established, through mediation, as related internally to value. Thereby, fetishistically, the existence of capitalism becomes inscribed in the ineluctibly given order of things.

Antagonism, of course, returns us once again to class struggle: if the various moments of capital are mediations (forms, modes of existence) of class struggle, then they are mediations which sustain this struggle not merely within the (broad) limits of the avoidance of 'common ruin' but within the (narrow) limits of a capital-imposed order

of things. If this is so, then it seems that neither set of limits can become an issue for class struggle - social existence can involve risks neither per se nor for the powers that be - as long as these mediations are in play. And yet, since it is an antagonistic relation - the capital-labour relation - which they mediate, it is as forms of struggle that capital's mediations always-already exist. The "play" of mediation is thus the play (the risk-taking praxis) of struggle itself. Risk, that is, is intrinsic to social existence and remains so even when it exists in the mode of being denied.

And this in turn returns us to the topic of spontaneism, touched on above. The presence of antagonism in capital (and as capital) allows us to say that, in capitalist society, mediation always and only exists as the possibility of, so to say, going into reverse gear. Mediation exists as the possibility of demediation. Putting matters in this way allows us to avoid what would be a new form of reductionism, namely, a discovery (an uncovering) of class struggle as a level of authentic immediacy which lies under mediation's shell. Reductionism would be involved here inasmuch as immediacy would be counterposed to mediation, in dualistic fashion, as the latter's essence and truth. In fact, what lies under mediation's shell is nothing: or, rather, the whole metaphor of a "shell" (together with its famous "kernel") is inapplicable since the mode of existence of class struggle is the process of mediation and the possibility of demediation itself. This means that the antagonistic contradiction of mediation/demediation is intrinsic to class struggle, as Luxemburg lucidly sees: 'On the one hand, we have the mass; on the other, its historic goal, located outside of existing society. On the one hand, we have the day-to-day struggle; on the other, the social revolution. Such are the terms of the dialectical movement through which the socialist revolution makes its way' (Luxemburg 1970 pp. 128-9). This 'dialectical', or in other words contradictory and self-contradictory, movement is the movement which the term "spontaneism" connotes. In no way does spontaneism conjure, magically and romantically, a surging groundswell of immediacy which will eventually carry before it the web of mediations whose putative truth it is and to which it is externally juxtaposed. On the contrary, the contradiction inscribed in mediation is inscribed in the challenge to mediation as well, and there is no space of immediacy located outside of mediation which might supply a foothold or point of departure from which revolutionary challenge could spring. Spontaneism connotes demediation and not the conjuring of immediacy, as Luxemburg (unlike her critics) already so sharply sees.

These two things are true: mediation exists as the possibility of demediation; and there is no immediacy, not even in revolution's camp.

If this is so, then the project of revolution (the project of demediation) always contains something paradoxical and, as it were, ironic and playful (it is demediation "making its play"). What Adorno says of the dialectic of identity and nonidentity applies to the dialectic of mediation and demediation as well: 'I have no way but to break immanently, and in its own measure, through the appearance /read once again: the mode of existence/ of total identity' if nonidentity is to come to light (Adorno 1973 p. 5), since it is as modes of existence of one another that identity and nonidentity obtain. Indeed, more than analogy relates Adorno's defence of nonidentity to the theme of mediation/demediation, since a good part of revolutionary struggle turns on the articulation of that which is particular, nonidentical hence marginalised with respect to the conformism which any given social order entails. This is most evidently the case with sexual politics but the point holds equally for class politics as well. In Georges Bataille's terms: heterogeneity is to be rescued from the

homogeneity which, for example, in the bourgeois exchange relation is both presupposed and enshrined (cf. Bataille 1985 and, on this significance of the exchange relation, Adorno 1973). But rescuing particularity and heterogeneity and nonidentity must involve paradox since universality, homogeneity and identity are inscribed in the very conceptual ordering whereby any rescue-attempt must be thought through (to say nothing of the organisational forms which revolutionary practice may find itself driven to adopt). 'The concept of the particular is always its negation at the same time; it cuts short what the particular is and what nonetheless cannot be directly named, and replaces it with identity' (Adorno 1973 p. 173). As with the concept of particularity, so with the concept of demediation: in order to remain in play, it is called upon always to think against itself. And if there remains something opaque about the category of demediation, so be it. Transparency would announce it merely as a fresh mediation, and so close the conceptual space within which the figure of 'revolutionary subjectivity' finds itself able to appear.

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### Notes

1. Here, I speak of the mediation of a relation whereas, previously, I have spoken of the mediation of terms. What may seem like a confusion is only verbal, and may be resolved in one of two ways. Either the expression 'term' may be understood in a broad fashion, so as to include relations as one species of term (in this case, the relation between commodity producers is mediated to itself through the commodity-form); or the commodity-producers themselves may be understood as the 'terms' which the commodity-form mediates or relates. Nothing turns on which of these alternative resolutions is adopted, and the expression 'mediation of a relation' can be understood as shorthand for this either/or.
2. See Dalla Costa and James 1976. In her notes to the 1976 edition of this work, Dalla Costa mistakenly says that women's housework is productive not merely of use-value (the use-value of labour-power) but of value and surplus-value as well. If this were so, it would destroy her own argument: women's housework would increase (instead of holding down) the value of labour-power, and capital would have an interest in decreasing the amount of housework women do.

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Marxism and the Concept of Mediation  
Werner Bonefeld

Mediation is one of Marx's concepts which is very much neglected within the 'marxist' discourse. Nevertheless, I think it is one of the most important concepts within marxism. The concept 'mediation' challenges academic marxism and it provides a conceptual framework for the politics of marxism (see Bonefeld 1987).

Before I go into further detail on 'mediation', I want to concentrate briefly on the 'nature' of marxist concepts.

The marxist categories are abstractions of the concrete and complex reality of capitalism. These abstractions decode the "innermost secret, the hidden basis of the relations of sovereignty and dependence" (Marx 1966, p.791-2). 'The concrete is concrete because it unites diverse phenomena. The concrete is the unity of variety' (see Marx 1973, p.101). Marx's concept of abstract and concrete is thus the methodological metaphor for the continuity of the discontinuous development of the concrete within the abstract and vice versa (see Bonefeld 1987). The analytical abstraction from the concrete leads "towards the reproduction of the concrete by way of thought" (Marx 1973, p.101). This "is the only way in which thought appropriates the concrete, reproduces it as the concrete in mind" (Marx 1973, p.101). Thus, the idea of the world "is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought" (Marx 1983, p.29). Only after the development of the substantial abstraction of the innermost secret of the reality can the real movement of the material world be presented appropriately. These abstractions conceptualise the determining relation of capitalism in order to understand its 'perverted and enchanted world' (Marx 1966, p.830). The abstract categories are abstractions from the concrete in order to comprehend the concrete. The only existence of the abstract is within the concrete.

The marxist concepts contain the unifying dynamic of the process of antagonism, which in no case eliminates the antagonism of capitalism (see Negri 1984). This antagonism is the antagonism of labour and capital. The marxist categories contain the reciprocal recognition of labour and capital as an intrinsic relation of struggle. This applies for all the marxist categories. The marxist concepts have to be open to the changes in the composition of the social relations which occur during the process of transformation. This is ever more obvious, since it is marxism that analyses the permanent decomposition and re-composition of bourgeois society as a structurally given mediation of its social antagonism and thus as a means of its existence (see Bonefeld 1987). In this sense, the analysis of the hidden laws of capitalism leads inherently to the analysis of the mediation of class antagonism: the modus vivendi of the crisis-ridden development of the capital-labour relation.

The marxist concepts thus contain the analytical perception of the 'hidden laws' and the inherent possibilities of change, both within capitalism (re- and decomposition of form of social relations) and against capitalist mode of production. Thus, they contain the possibility of 'barbarism and socialism' (see

Luxemburg). Marxist conceptions thus contain the notion of the 'possibility' and 'unpredictability' of the development of the capital relation. Marxist categories conceptualise the variety of phenomena as implicit forms of the presence of labour within capital, and thus struggle. The concepts entail the capital labour relation as a relation of subject and object of historical development (see Lukács 1971 (1)). The categories therefore contain their own negation: they are forms of thought which seek to comprehend the development of the antagonistic social relation and thus to understand history as object and result of struggle.

## MEDIATION

The concept of mediation has to be seen within the above outline. The 'determinate abstraction' (see Negri 1984) promotes an analysis of what is mediated. Whereby the mediation itself is inherently contradictory due to its generation as a structurally necessary mode of existence of the organisational presence of labour within capital.

The term mediation inherently contains its own negation which I shall refer to as de-mediation. This term seeks to comprehend the constitution of class through struggle. The term de-mediation will be discussed later.

Concentrating on the term mediation, it contains the analytical penetration of the reality of capitalism as a complex diversity of phenomena. The term mediation is open to the structurally given crisis-ridden transformation of the mode of existence, although the basic pattern remains: the capital relation of necessary and surplus labour.

The recognition of class struggle as the motor of history is basic for the understanding of 'mediation', all the more because the social antagonism of the capital-labour relation is the relation which is mediated. Economic, social and political phenomena have thus to be seen as object and result of struggle. The historical materialisation of former struggle confines and conditions class struggle (see Marx 1943).

According to Marx, antagonistic relations express themselves always in forms (value-form, state form) (see Marx 1983, p.106). 'Form' is the 'modus vivendi' (Marx 1983, p.106) of antagonistic relations. The mediation of antagonistic relations in certain 'forms' does not 'sweep away' (Marx) the inconsistencies of antagonistic relations. Form, and thus mediation, "is generally the way in which real contradictions are reconciled" (Marx 1983, p.106). Thus, the term mediation refers to the form of existence which allows antagonistic relations "to exist side by side" (Marx 1983, p.106).

Thus, it is within 'form' that antagonistic relations can articulate themselves. For this reason I would follow Marx in speaking of the 'perverted and enchanted world' (Marx 1966, p.830) as a form of existence. Form mediates the existence of antagonisms as a condition of their own existence. As such, the existence of antagonism is a mediated existence, or, with reference to Marx, a fetishized reality. This reality is the material world of capitalism which is based upon class antagonism, which is reproduced by class struggle, which is shattered by crisis (itself also a form of capitalism) and which is dynamically and constantly transformed due to the presence of labour within capital. The mode of mediation is the sole existence of class antagonism.

The totality of phenomena is the material world of antagonism, that is its mode of existence. The relations of production as well as political power relations have thus to be seen as forms of existence of antagonistic relations. The historically changing mode of existence (or appearance, form) has to be grasped as the material world of the capital relation which bathes all social, normative and political phenomena in a certain colour (see Marx 1973, p.107).

Thus, the fetishized world of capitalism is no closed system precisely because it is the form of the capital-labour relation and because it has to be reproduced by class struggle. It is only through struggle that the form of mediation is reproduced and the fetishization of society perpetuated. Contrary to deterministic approaches, this fetishized reality is the reality of capitalism as a necessary form of mediation of antagonism. Thus, the enchanted world of capitalism cannot be dismissed as a cover of the veiled reality of truthful laws of capitalism. The only existence of abstract general laws is the cover itself. As such, capitalism exists as a 'totality' of social phenomena within which the antagonism is mediated, with which the antagonism is reproduced and without which capitalism wouldn't exist. The 'determinate abstraction' (Negri 1984) of the enchanted and perverted world of capitalism does not create a hidden reality of capitalism, which is separated from its cover, and from which the false reality of freedom and equality can be deduced as an 'appearance' which is (necessarily) 'wrong' as opposed to 'true' (the hidden laws). The determinate abstraction, conversely to structuralist approaches, depicts the so-called 'cover' as the material existence of class-antagonism.

The concepts of 'Das Kapital' and of the 'Grundrisse' compose the enchanted world in the process of thinking. These concepts thus categorise the mode of existence within which the class antagonism is inscribed and operating, and which is the material world of capitalism. The concept of surplus value, for example, does not exist as an abstract concept of Capital Volume I with which an understanding of the 'concealed' reality should be achieved. It is rather the existence of surplus value production which composes the reality of capitalist exploitation within and through the material world of capitalism, this latter being the mediated mode of existence of antagonism.

The continuity of capitalism resolves itself in the crisis-ridden development of the capital-labour relation. This dynamic development is mediated through the discontinuity of capital's mode of existence, that is, its form of control and its form of perversion. This permanence of change is mediated by crisis. The transformation of the mode of existence of surplus value production is the historical mediation of the capital-labour class antagonism. The crisis-ridden de- and re-composition of the mode of existence is thus the historical mediation of the achieved form of the material world of capitalism. History is a process of class struggle whose dialectical contradiction is inscribed in the relation of subject and object. Thus, history has to be conceptualised as a totality within which 'kernel and skin constitute the unity' (Labriola 1974, p.151).

Summing up the argument, the 'enchanted and perverted world' is the only existence of capitalism. The mode of existence is neither cover nor surface. The mode of existence is the mediation of class antagonism. It is the capital-labour relation which illuminates the colour of the social phenomena whose totality constitutes the "concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse" (Marx 1973, p.101).

## DE-MEDIATION

Due to the organisational existence of labour within capital, the mediation of the capital-labour relation is permanently driven into crisis-contradiction-de-mediation and further transcendence.

The mediation of antagonism is thus in a constant process of reproduction-contradiction-crisis and transformation. Fetishized reality does not exist as a closed system. The mediation of class antagonism does not sweep away antagonism and inconsistencies, precisely because it is the mode of existence of antagonisms. The existence of antagonism in a concealed form (see Marx 1966,p.817) has to be reproduced by the intercourse of capital and labour: that is struggle.

The fetishized reality has constantly to be reproduced by struggle. As such, it comes constantly into conflict with experience. Thus, it is not only the academical mind which understands the determining cause of the mode of existence. However, the existence of the abstract in the concrete unifies class conflict and promotes the perception of class antagonism and the understanding of the 'interrelated relation' 'to the popular mind' (see Marx 1966,p.817). As such, the fetishized reality of capitalism is far from being a closed system whose existence can only be grasped by an intellectually inspired vanguard party acting from 'outside' and administering the 'misled' masses.

The presence of labour within capital constantly de-mediate the mediation of capitalism. Struggle constitutes the de-fetishization of the enchanted and perverted world of capitalism. 'The dialectical relation between subject and object in the development of history' (see Lukács 1971,p.61) is explicitly elaborated within the marxist method of determinate abstraction and tendency (see Negri 1984,p.13). It is this dialectical relation between subject and object which provides the understanding of de-mediation as a form of demystification, denunciation and critique of capitalism. All of these forms of de-mediation are intrinsically bound to the practice of destabilisation, decomposition and destruction. Thus, the unity of theory and practice which is explicit for the politics of marxism dwells on the antagonistic class relation of capitalism.

De-mediation thus refers to the constitution of class through struggle. Struggle inherently contains both the reproduction of mediation and the destruction of mediation. Struggle possibly demystifies equality as a mediation of capitalist exploitation, it possibly denounces freedom as a mediation of domination and it possibly criticises 'rights' as a moment of exploitation and destruction (see Gunn 1987).

The activity of labour against its existence as proletarian labour entails the de-mediation of its own experience as wage-labour or, in other words, the recognition of itself as variable capital. Thus, the unifying dynamic of the process of surplus value production continually drives its mediation into contradiction and into de-mediation.

## DE-MEDIATION AND MEDIATION

"On the one hand, we have the mass, on the other, its historic goal, located outside the existing society. On the one hand, we have day-to-day struggle; on the other, the social revolution. Such are the terms of the dialectical contradiction through which the socialist movement makes its way" (Luxemburg



1970, p.128-129).

Mediation and de-mediation are consistent and permanent features of the course of class struggle. The constitution of class through struggle promotes tendencies of de-mediation which are explicitly part of the 'dialectical contradiction' articulated by Luxemburg: day-to-day struggle and socialist revolution. In this context the interwoven process of mediation and de-mediation refers to the possibility of emancipation and the possibility of defeat, that is, the possibilities of socialism and of the transformation of struggle into a new mode of mediation. Luxemburg seems to take this on board when she speaks about the inherent possibilities of socialism and barbarism (see Luxemburg 1970 p.268,327). The de-mediation of capitalism is a force inscribed in the dialectic relation of class antagonism. De-mediation thus includes its negation: mediation. The dialectic relation of struggle thus inherently involves the effort to reverse de-mediation by transforming the mode of existence of antagonism. Marx discusses this reciprocal action inherent in the dialectical relation of class antagonism on various occasions. This reciprocal action of antagonism is conditioned by the results of former struggle. Within marxist discourse the relation of mediation and de-mediation is discussed as the reciprocal action of subject and object within the development of history (see Lukács) or as determinate abstraction and tendency (see Negri 1984). The two following examples should clarify this argument: The constitution of class through struggle is seen as productive for the development of the state in the same way as strikes are for the implementation of new machinery (see Marx 1969). Against the 'revolts of the working-class' within production the implementation of new machinery is used as a 'weapon' (Marx 1983,p.411) to establish control over labour. Struggle thus reproduces capitalism and transforms its mode of existence. Thus, the constitution of class and the transformation of the mode of existence of the capital-labour relation are closely interwoven.

Mediation and de-mediation are concepts which seek to understand the course of struggle. They are dialectically interwoven concepts within which the development of class struggle is inscribed. Thus, they conceptualise the dialectical process of subject and object during history: de-mystification and de-composition, destabilisation and new order of control, practice and counter-practice. In this way, mediation and de-mediation refer to the reproduction of the enchanted world through struggle, which inherently involves the transformation of the capitalist mode of existence and the permanence of primitive accumulation (see Bonefeld 1987).

The permanent and dynamic effort of capital to restructure its control over labour is the precondition of the stability of the capitalist system and vice versa. As for labour, it is the action of destabilisation which immediately leads to the action of destruction (see Negri 1979). The historical form within which the transformation is promoted is crisis, so that the process of mediation is consistently the object and the result of struggle.

The capitalist modes of existence are constantly de-mediated and mediated by the hidden law of their determination: class antagonism and class struggle. Hence, the alternative of socialism and barbarism.

#### NOTES:

- 1.:I do not, however, share Lukács's messianic belief: in the proletariat as the historical executor of history's essence.

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Free University of Glasgow

THE FREE UNIVERSITY: A BACKGROUND

The most painful by-product of progress is the loss of community and neighbourhood. In a world of strangers, people retreat into private lives. What initiatives there are develop along parallel lines. Yet, a sense of community is a human necessity. We can only become full human beings when we belong to each other as citizens and neighbours.

Education does not begin and end with the 8% of the population that attend university between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three.

- \* Formal education fails to encourage enquiry unrelated to the quest for academic certificates.
- \* The Free University proposes to create an interdisciplinary approach not based on vocational skills.
- \* Employment classically provides status, contacts and activity. The Free University proposes that employment is by no means the only situation that provides these.
- \* It is necessary to create a situation where groups of people with a common interest can share their knowledge and skills

We aim to create the conditions for people from a wide range of backgrounds to come together.

- \* An area of the building will be a public sitting room. Everyone benefits from a place where they can drop in and meet others of a like mind; a place that is warm and comfortable which offers cheap meals.
- \* The building will be open beyond the standard 9.30am - 5.30pm model; people are in most need of comfort and activity outside these hours.
- \* The most important function is to bring people out of isolation and into a context of mutual support and self-help. For this, more is needed than is normally found in state-run centres with cold halls and fluorescent lighting.
- \* It is necessary that the building be situated in central Glasgow to offer the widest possible access to the widest range of people.

## A SHORT HISTORY

The decision to act arrived through conversations in pubs and homes, through a variety of arts activities including discussion which resulted in an informal network of dissatisfied individuals. To harness this energy seemed imperative.

The first official gathering of the existing group met on the first of January 1987. The objective of that meeting was to begin to define the unease felt in the present state of society and to start to construct a functional model of a better structure. Towards this aim, this group continued to meet monthly, while forming three sub-groups;

- Building: to find cheap or free temporary venues for meetings and activities until a permanent base is established.
- Funding : to seek finance from a combination of sources.
- Forum : which generates debate and action and overlaps with the other groups. The forum group regularly produce a newsletter for all members.

The main group consists of thirty-five people, ages ranging from twenty to sixty who have experience in education, social work, voluntary associations, the arts and a variety of administrative work. In particular:

- A gallery organiser from a Glasgow arts centre
- Two workers in adult education
- A lecturer in architecture
- Two architects
- Several unemployed people
- Several writers, including Alasdair Gray, James Kelman, Tom Leonard
- A primary school headmaster
- A social worker
- Several artists
- An arts worker for handicapped people
- A computer programmer
- A lecturer with the Open University
- An editor of a national literary magazine
- A welfare rights worker
- A lawyer
- A printer
- An administrator from a cultural institute
- A designer

THE FREE UNIVERSITY: A PROPOSAL

Our aim is to set up a resource centre where people can meet to exchange ideas, socialise, relax and become involved in an environment where the dissemination of knowledge is not only not frowned upon, but encouraged. a place where experience is shared and activities can be generated.

The activities and projects of the organisation will be based on the exploration of different forms of learning, not centred on a teacher/pupil relationship but rather on group activity, the defence of ideas and the value of individual knowledge and skills.

Projects will be largely determined by the interests of the membership and the space available. Areas of study and projects already planned include city walks; open debates; readings; discussion groups; the investigation of publishing, new technology, computing, housing and economics; basic literacy and form-filling; art in general; drama; writing groups; co-counselling; distribution methodology and the dissemination of information.

One of the chief resources which the building would provide would be an information base for other resource centres in the city. This would direct people to where advice and assistance is available. The building would also provide a library containing information on groups with similar aims, claimants unions, a members' register, study group reports, newsletters and a noticeboard for newspaper and magazine articles.

Other facilities would ideally include a large office space giving access to photocopying, typewriting and wordprocessing facilities; a gallery space for documentary and art exhibitions; rehearsal and recording space.

The Free University is planning its first year of events, socials and discussions. If you would like to do a presentation of a topic or just want to get in contact and receive further information, send a few stamped addressed envelopes to:

Free University (Glasgow)  
PH 9  
340 West Princes Street  
Glasgow G4 9HF

ON POLITICS: THE END OF TUTELAGE

[Extracts from an interview with Hans Magnus Enzensberger in *Der Spiegel*, 1987]

I abstain from the election campaign - which mustn't be confused with electoral abstention... For me, an election campaign is the worst period for making political declarations. At an election one has to struggle with nursery-school-level talk and computer grammar. It's staggering to see what nuances the West German electors can express in this mutilated language. Nevertheless, I wonder if society can still be mobilised by election campaigns: perhaps they only mobilise their promoters, the political class, and thus a minority.

- So where are political needs articulated? Does the political class still have contact with a base?

It's a matter of structures. I consider the relationship between State and society, or more precisely between government and society, to have changed fundamentally in recent years. The Federal Republic knew stability and relative success not because but despite being governed by the gents who smile from the stamps. Whatever the Minister for Posts did to wreck the Post, letters kept arriving. Even when the Chancellor behaved like a bull in a china shop, trade with the East continued. A firm run by a bunch like this would have failed long ago. There's only one explanation for this: the Federal Republic can afford an incompetent government because the people who count aren't the ones who bore us on the News. Society's real processes take place largely outside the control of Bonn.

...In old Europe, the human community was always described on the model of a human body. The government was the head. This metaphor definitely belongs to the past. There's no centre anticipating, directing and deciding everything. Such a social brain can no longer be located - and certainly not in innovations coming from Bonn. For a long time, the decisions concerning the future have not come from the political class. On the contrary: it's only when a new idea has become a commonplace that the parties and governments understand it. The true decision-taking is decentralised in a nervous system, whose ramifications cannot be controlled by any single point. As the theoreticians say, politics becomes a stochastic process, that is, dependant on chance. So the central powers lose their authority and weight. Their manoeuvring space retreats, but their dangerous nature diminishes equally. Government becomes a paper tiger.

Lamentations [...] about depoliticisation come from all sides. In the liberal press and the leftist milieu, everywhere young people are accused of having nothing in their heads but consumption those yuppies who think only of their private lives. It's like listening to priests, trying to explain why their churches are empty. Even the politicians are disturbed that people have less and less interest in them. They ask what that means. I consider the parties to be victims of an illusion, coming from a wrong definition of politics. Am I apolitical because I'm indifferent to these people's stutterings?

...The kernel of politics today is the capacity for self-organisation. It mustn't be thought that the individual is up against the State. In this, the thesis of privatisation isn't good enough. Every kind of interest, even the most private, is articulated on the political plane through organised groups. This starts from the most everyday things: questions of schools, problems with housing and transport.

You're thinking of citizen initiatives. But do they still exist?

Every day they come together on an *ad hoc* basis and then dissolve. ...Think only of those citizen initiatives called Siemens, Nixdorf or Hoechst. They've always existed: it's power organised outside the party system. Today this kind of exercise of social pressure isn't the privilege of capitalist interests. Today the State is faced by all kinds of groups, minorities of all kinds.

...The parties have also changed their structures. You can see it in the recruitment to the political class. Only a few years ago a politician would normally have had some experience of life. Today, the mean type is that of the ambitious bachelor who makes himself known in the School-Students' Union, then becomes prominent in student politics, then finally becomes a bureaucrat. His / her life experience is limited to the acquired ability to manipulate a party apparatus. That has various consequences. On the one hand, one no longer believes such people capable of doing anything else. A politician is someone who has learned nothing. Secondly his / her life has to be dedicated to the apparatus. Thirdly, he / she develops a temporal perspective which goes no further than the next regional elections. And finally, his / her social situation specifically leads to a loss of all contact with reality. The political class has no idea what goes on in society... One amusing consequence is that the political class considers society as bestial and insolent. Society has exactly the opposite opinion. One can respond relatively easily to the question of who's right. The idea that only the party apparatus knows the score and that everyone else is an idiot is a Soviet conception.

This society can no longer be deceived. It quickly notes what's happening in the capital. The parties' self-images contribute to this cynical conception. The politicians try to compensate for the depth of their authority, the erosion of power and confidence through a massive advertising campaign. But these material battles are anti-productive. Their messages are tautological and empty. They always say the same: *I am me* or *We are us*. The empty message is their preferred means of representing themselves. Naturally, that confirms people in the belief that no thought can be expected from these people.

# DANGER!

There isn't a  
**HAZARD  
CENTRE**  
anywhere  
in Scotland!

**YOU CAN  
HELP!**

# DANGER!

Every year thousands of people die from preventable diseases or accidents which stem from work, home or the outside environment. Many more suffer injuries or disabilities which could have been avoided.

As new materials and processes are introduced, so are new hazards. Health and safety concern us all, but often people are not well informed about the risks which they face and how they might be avoided or eliminated. The proposed *Scottish Hazards Centre* would help to satisfy this need.

## HAS IT BEEN DONE BEFORE?

Yes. There are already in existence two hazards centres: the Health and Safety Advice Centre in Birmingham and the London Hazards Centre. The centre in Birmingham is financed partly by the West Midlands County Council and the London Hazards Centre receives money from the Greater London Council.

These centres have been operating for several years and both have been very successful. For example, they have helped many safety representatives and tenants' associations as well as other organizations and individuals.

## WHAT WOULD THE SCOTTISH HAZARDS CENTRE DO?

### ● Provide information and advice.

The *Centre* would help people to find answers to questions on matters of health and safety. There is much technical literature available, from many sources and from different parts of the world. As with the Birmingham and London centres the *Scottish Hazards Centre* would offer information and advice to the public, both to individuals and to organizations.

● **Help people to interpret technical literature.**

The *Centre* would help to put technical literature into plain language.

● **Help people to carry out their own investigations.**

The *Centre* would provide resources (books, journals etc) which people would be able to refer to themselves. It should be able to help people to pursue their own investigations and advise on how to carry out a study for themselves. (For example, if people wished to carry out a survey of some kind.)

● **Initiate awareness of particular hazards.**

Hazards exist which people may not even realize are there. The *Centre* would promote awareness of particular hazards amongst members of the public. In the past, for example, the health hazards posed by asbestos or lead would have been suitable matters on which to have taken initiatives.

● **Provide speakers**

The *Centre* should be able to provide speakers on particular topics, to speak to organizations such as tenants' associations, trade union branches, community groups etc.

● **Provide equipment.**

It is expected that the *Centre* would acquire relatively simple equipment such as that necessary to measure noise levels or to test hearing. Instruments should be available either for loan or a member of the staff should be able to come out to operate equipment if necessary.

● **Carry out inspections.**

It is expected that eventually staff from the *Centre* would be able to conduct inspections or surveys for members of the public.

**WHERE WOULD THE MONEY COME FROM?**

A charity, the *Hazards Education Society*, was formed a few months ago with the aim of promoting awareness on health and safety matters. The proposal to establish a *Scottish Hazards Centre* is supported by, amongst others **Edinburgh Trades Council, the Association of Scottish Local Health Councils and the City of Edinburgh District Council**, which has sponsored the production of this leaflet. The District Council has indicated that if the

proposals receive support from other bodies it will consider ways of assisting the establishment of a *Scottish Hazards Centre* in Edinburgh.

It is expected to start the *Scottish Hazards Centre* as part of the Manpower Services Commission programme. However it is estimated that at least £8000 would be required in the first year from other sources. This is where you could help, and the *Hazards Education Society* would be pleased to send further information, or to send someone to speak to your organization, if you wished. Please raise this matter at one of your meetings and ask that a donation be sent. An annual commitment to a given sum would be particularly welcome; otherwise, a single sum would be gratefully received. Perhaps your organization would offer to buy a specific item (eg a book) for the *Scottish Hazards Centre*.

Of course you could always make a donation as an individual, instead of or in addition to that from an organization. To help, please fill in the form below.

Even if you are not able to offer financial support at this stage, a letter indicating support for the proposal would be very welcome and would help us to press our cause.



**HELP IS ON ITS WAY**

I/We would like to make a donation to the *Hazards Education Society* to help it to establish a *Scottish Hazards Centre*.

Name/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_ which represents the first of a series of annual payments/a single donation. (Please delete as appropriate).

Please make cheques payable to *Hazards Education Society* and forward to:

Alan Beard, 10 Fountainhall Road,  
Edinburgh EH9 2NN. Tel. 031-667 1081 ext 3613.

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