

May 19, 1987

Another Talking to Myself,

this time on what has happened since 'Not by Practice Alone', 1984-87.

The third part of the 1984-85 Perspectives, which this time was July, not September, pp. 12-32, leaving out only the tasks themselves--4 new pamphlets, plus Archives.

It began with a new sense of objectivity dealing with when subjectivity is actually objective. Secondly, questioning post-Marx Marxists on the whole question of dialectics of revolution. ^{(At a} ~~the~~ recent re-examination, however, Eugene recognized that we did not either ~~inwardize~~ inwardize or felt at much at home with, the movement from theory ~~as~~ as the structure of P&R as we do with the work M&F.

Perhaps the sub-section on the Absolute Method--^(made such a priority) The Unchaining of the Dialectic--was, ~~the~~ ~~fact~~ that the fact that it too is only the road to the Idea itself did not stand out as much as it should, especially because Gramsci was so great on Praxis and on using the actual word "Absolute Humanism" that the self-

10942

determination of the Idea did not stand put as it should have.

(Between July 7th, when the Perspectives was given, and before the end of that year, I fell sick ~~with~~ the ~~the~~ significant re-appearance was the summation of the year, Dec. 30, 1984. During that period, there was the collection by Olga of ~~my~~ my writings on WL, which I then reorganized into the form that it had for WLDOR, ~~my~~ AND saw what flowed from it was that the unifying thread should be done in an Overview and would reveal the dialectics of revolution, so that it isn't only the trilogy, but that each of the developments, whether on a single subject like Black or WLM, would show the same as the whole body of ideas, the dialectics of revolution.

Which is why the Overview in my mind ~~was~~ ^{gave} it an actual new form.)

The "outside" did respond, not of course as Marxist-Humanists, but it strikes so responsive a chord in their own lives on WL, that we did probably get more reviews of that, than anything except the 1970 'Lenin's Philsoophic Ambivalence'. Re W1, is of course Adrienne Rich, whereas in 1970 it was everything from as separate as HSA, Telos, Praxis, and of course all the 60s movement X on alienation.

10943

It's a very different situation in the 80s. First because of the great ~~1980~~ retrogression that Ronald Reagan drove in, second the politically changed world that again Reagan and Thatcher, with its extension imperialistically, be it the Falklands, Grenada, or Tripoli, and has continued on unabated in Latin America. Secondly, it's the pollution of thought itself within the Left, and I'm not referring only to turncoats and overly-tired radicals, but the illusion of technology as having reached some sort of post-industrial "information" world.

The 1985-86 Perspectives take up this polluted air ~~in the most concrete ways~~, as Hitler's ~~visage~~ ^{(take up not only} visage; and its in that third section that I ~~take~~ the question of the process of becoming practicing dialecticians, and call attention to the fact that it was a 30-year long march. Pages 18-23, in relationship to the new type of classes in theory and practice in transforming N&L into a biweekly, into a new type of collectivity, in chapter 12 of RLWLKM, BUT RETURN TO THE SUBJECT, and yet in a different form, as the executive session, where I deal with the self-thinking Idea and the Dialectics of Leadership, which are rooted in the final two paragraphs of the Encyclopedia,

10944

as well as in Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program where he speaks of labor, instead of being a "means", is a "prime necessity of life." This is 8 pps.

Perhaps, despite the fact that the Executive Session was called The Self-Thinking Idea, methodology came out as if it were the final word, rather than the Idea itself and that's ~~why~~ why I first referred to the new book to be as the Dialectic of the Party, which I was soon to change to the Dialectic of Organization, and then to Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy, with Party as well as forms of organization born out of spontaneity following the colon: Therein is the rub.

In Eugene's "Introduction/Overview" of his own introductory to the report at the 1986 N&L Conference, he calls attention to the fact that though we have used the words MHism for three decades "it is only in the mid-1980s that we have chosen to single out MH, N&LC, as this philosophic tendencies expression of Absolute Idea

10945

as New Beginning." (I questioned mid-1980s and used instead, 1981, as the year where I first used the expression, organizational responsibility for MH).

On the second page (actually p. 14) there is what I called the first big error, and that was when he used the expression: "We will want to look at the 12 page N&L in the 1980s as a pathway to the biweekly..." And I ask, why biweekly instead of MHism? The truth is that both the 12-pager and the biweekly--and for that matter, when we had to skip and when we didn't have to skip--were all organizational decisions of MHism. And, specifically, the reason for the 12-pager was, and this was a name applied for the whole year, and that was 1980, not 1982--and that was "The Book". The Book referred to then was RLWLKM. "The Year of the Book" that required a 12-pager was because by that time we wanted to become practicing dialecticians, which at that time didn't so much mean journalistic concretization, but the ability to write essays rather than either just reports or lengthy articles rather than making a category of a single philosophic-political-organizational topic. Look over and study the

10946

essays contributed to that period.

The other aspect of the ~~XX~~ truth of all other "Books" was that it did necessitate always my true "disappearance" for several months. Whereas the truth is that I do not disappear even for a single day, from organizational problems, even when I do go away.....That is because.....

The other Why I put on that page is to the sentence "certainly the last half decade has shown that it meant some very new pathways for the author" and I asked, Why only for the author? Wasn't it for the whole organization? And didn't that hold for ~~XX~~ everything from the beginning?
? ? ?
1953, 1955, 1957.

On the following p. 15 I am wondering why "seven dimensions that manifested the uniqueness of the paper" in the first period--Black and so forth, including TW-- where I write: Not Quite: TW is not one of seven, any more than MHism and founder is one of 7. The same thing occurs on p. 16, as if the fact that the pamphlets first appeared in N&L, was N&L's achievements rather than MH's.

There is no doubt that throughout the whole of the report, that N&L has been made into a Universal. ~~MYE~~ Not only that, but spelled out so concretely that we were already given all the issues and the schedule and I

10947

remember getting very upset on the fact that he announced or rather answered several questions about Theory/Practice columns, which definitely only I could have answered and I wouldn't do any such thing for a whole year in advance, which would include, as he put it, who else ~~he~~ I would want to write in that column when I wouldn't write it. And the result if you remember was that several got up to say that they're already so exhausted that they're ~~quite~~ glad they are not living in Chicago. And that was before either REB or I myself had known or would presume to answer.

and yet hold onto
Hegel tried to get rid of the concept ~~of~~ of history
as mere contingency by saying that when it is "philosophically
comprehended" (Begriffen) it then is Science. He then
slithers out ~~by~~ by subjecting
both ~~History~~ History and Science to the crucifixion.
In all of this, we are only in the phenomenal world,
Hegel has 1 million ways of not ending. So in the Science
of Logic, when he comes to the Absolute Idea, he stops
to tell you, well, he's not really finished, you first
have to wait for the Philosophy of Nature and Philosophy
of Mind before you can have a true totality, a system.
And when he ~~has~~ finished the system,
when he first ~~was~~ finished with system, with 1574, the
"Notion of Philosophy is the Self-Thinking Idea" and
we return to the beginning, but this time instead of
appearance, it is the "pure principle" itself. When he
adds the three new paragraphs, he is expanding this
question of appearance into syllogisms, so we get the
mere fact of the Encyclopedia, i.e., its structure--
Logic, Nature, Mind--~~and~~ and we find out that there is
a sundering of the various appearances and that the
mediation is really the key, so that ~~it~~ it isn't Logic,
it is Nature, which "presents itself as the course of
necessity..."

10949

In the next paragraph, ¶576, the second syllogism becomes Nature-Mind-Logic: "It is the syllogism where Mind reflects on itself in the Idea: Philosophy appears as a subjective ~~idea~~ cognition, of which Liberty is the aim, and which is itself the way to produce it."

Maurer is the one I accused of trying to appropriate this paragraph ~~for his own purposes~~ for ^Dphenomenology as a sort of history of philosophy. By now there is absolutely no way to avoid a conclusion. There is a unification of the two aspects (¶575, ¶576) and he defines it as "it is the nature of the fact and the Notion which causes the movement and development, yet this same movement is equally the action of cognition." This time it is not the crucifixion, this time everyone thinks they are going to Heaven and to God; as he writes his final sentence: "The Eternal Idea, in full fruition of its Essence, eternally ~~is~~ sets itself to work, engenders and enjoys^{it} itself as Absolute Mind."

Note to Myself

Use only this

Do I wish to make a separate category of or distinction about those who are not members of the REB, but are invited specially for this meeting by saying that I had wanted several times to talk with the PTC as a PTC, but somehow the chance never presented itself and that therefore I am glad that they are here now before any ideas being presented here as conclusions. In a word, it is all very informal and both they and the REB, as well as myself, want a raw ~~dialogue~~ dialogue. Much as I'm opposed to first negation, which is generally wrong ~~except for workers' instincts~~ ~~(at crucial moments)~~ that type of raw material is quintessential for the process of working out a conclusion, making a decision. Even should that turn out to be hardly different from your first reaction, it isn't any longer just a first reaction, but, what flows after the dialogue re- and after your thinking.

Now then, the question is first and foremost the book, not as a book, but as a walking on absolutely untrodden ground, and in a sense also untrodden by myself.

The only reason I'm ~~qualifying~~ qualifying it by saying that in a ~~certain~~ certain sense also by myself, is that I'm sure that I will now find elements of this new ~~new~~ perspective that I have touched on, but was ~~quite~~ quite unconscious about it, because the subject was the Party and its opposite, forms of organization born out of Spontaneity. I didn't come to the idea that I broached first last year that the ~~two~~ two are opposites but not absolute opposites until after digging in to the spontaneous forms of organization and reading of the many contributions that have been made by Eugene, ~~by Mike, by Peter, by Cyrus,~~ by Mike, by Peter, by Cyrus, that a whiff of the opposition as if it were absolute did still stick to us, especially because we were so in love with that phrase I've created about the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory that we hardly were total in our projection of ^(our) '53 breakthrough, which definitely specified that the movement from practice as well as the movement from theory needed a unification before they could be a philosophy, and therefore freedom itself. That is why I'm going to spend so much time on 1953.

10952

But first, I want to go into the historic points of never before trodden, beginning with the one who gave us all our ground and reason for being, Marx. We certainly couldn't have been without him, and not only in the fact that he created a whole new continent of thought and of revolution, but because, specifically, on organization ~~his~~ his ~~concept~~ concept is exactly what we have to concretize for our age. Nevertheless, it is likewise a fact that it was so only in general, and it had undergone many, many changes. Take the greatest two appearances in Marx-- the Communist Manifesto and the Critique of the Gotha Program. The Communist Manifesto has everything, not only against capitalism, but against all other contending tendencies. He lists four; bourgeois, feudal, petty-bourgeois, communist, ~~and~~ So clearly it isn't just movement from practice, but from theory, and he distinguished his philosophy from all others. And yet when he comes to distinguishing from the proletariat he chooses only one thing--internationalism. He does make a distinction of the ultimate goal and not just the immediate, and it is indeed in the 1860 Letter to Freiligrath, where it is expressed most succinctly and profoundly, when he says:

that when he asks for Freiligrath's signature, because they were both comrades of the same party, he knows there is no party; he's the one who made the motion to disband the Communist League, and he himself does not belong to any organized grouping. He did not mean it in the ephemeral sense that there is a party as the Communist League, but in the historic sense, and that it will remain as part of history, that you can't re-write history. No one can possibly re-write the history of that ~~document~~ Manifesto belonging to the League, the Communist Manifesto, EVER.

And of course, in the Critique of the Gotha Program, when he so sharply criticized the "unity" of the ~~document~~ Lassalleans and the supposed Marxists, he again re-iterated and this time not only concretized but also for the first time ever ventured to give an idea of ~~a~~ a new society, where it was clear that unless the organization, the historic Party, or whatever form it finally assumes, stands on principled ground; no unity can be possibly achieved except for a specific action. Now obviously all this unfortunately was merely taken for granted, whereupon "concretely" it got everything from reformism to anarchism to god knows what other tendency--all vanguardists. And that does include the Council Communists. But of course the outstanding

example; so there again we have Reform or Revolution,
not philosophy and self-development of human beings as
~~the~~ individualism which lets nothing interfere with its
 universalism.

The point is that of the years 1924-29, 1929-today,
 WW II, and all those national revolutions, the rise of a
 Third World and the endless continuing struggle, and nowhere
 in sight, not even telescopic sight, is there an answer
 to the questions, what happens after conquest of power?
 Why so many aborted revolutions? What type of party or
 organization? (have the various) what forms of spontaneity--councils, soviets,
 committees, associations, communes--achieved? And why
 when they did come close to power, it was the political
 organizations that didn't take them over so much, as that
 searched for them to be absorbed
 they themselves looked to be taken over.