

This essay is the most eclectic piece of work, passing itself off for a new dialectic, a new subject, a new philosophy that does, and does not, follow Marxism and does, and does not, present HM's other works from Eros and Civilization and One-Dimensional Man (but not one word on Reason and Revolution!), which has supposedly been verified in life and even on the higher level of "concrete political practice" (pix).

In fact, it is a return to Kant and even Nietzsche as against Hegel and Marx; and a jump into "guerrilla warfare" a la Mao, Castro, Vietnam -- or the May demonstrations by the youth in Paris. And this doesn't take into consideration HM's big discovery of "a biological (sic!) foundation for socialism" by way, of all things, "the category of obscenity".

Here are some gems: p. 16: By virtue of its basic position in the production process, by virtue of its numerical weight and the weight of exploitation, the working class is still the historical agent of revolution; by virtue of its sharing the stabilizing needs of the system, it has become a conservative, even counterrevolutionary force. Objectively, "in itself", labor still is the potentially revolutionary class; subjectively, "for itself", it is not. This theoretical conception has concrete significance in the prevailing situation, in which the working class may help to circumscribe the scope and the targets of political practice."

HM has just described "the objective" as irreplaceable, it now turns out that although what he calls "the new sensibility" is treated itself as if it were an objective force even as (p. 24) all sorts of abstractions like "the instincts" "a new Reality Principle" and an aesthetic ethos suddenly become the "very token of praxis" (p. 25). Indeed as this very point, he also introduces the question of Form (with a capital F and italicized) as the "Form of society itself." Since, when Form is used by Hegel, either in contrast to content or as a transcendental form (which contains both form and content, the impression is given that he is using it in the Hegelian-Marxian sense, instead of where he introduces the question of Kant, Nietzsche without the benefit, moreover, of separating himself from Nietzsche's concept of super-man. Here is what he says: Living form

p. 27: "Kant asks whether there is not a hidden connection between Beauty and Perfection (Vollkommenheit), and Nietzsche notes: "the Beautiful as the mirror (Spiegelung) of the Logical, i.e., the laws of logic are the object of the laws of the Beautiful." For the artist, the beautiful is mastery of the opposites "without tension, so that violence is no longer needed" The beautiful has the "biological value" of that which is "useful, beneficial, enhancing life" (Lebensteigernd)."

The only way a philosopher, who is a dialectician, and a Marxist, can explain away the return to the image, the visceral, the illogical, is to say that there is a logic to it. Thus, on p. 29: "The most daring imagines of a new world, of new ways of life, are still guided by concepts, and by a logic elaborated in the development of thought, transmitted from generation to generation. On both sides, that of the sensibility and that of reason, history enters into the projects of the imagination, for the world of the senses is a historical world, and reason is the conceptual mastery and interpretation of the historical world."

Everything gets twisted upside down and nowhere more so than the question of a new Subject that ~~humanism~~ is neither human nor material but becomes "enlightenment". Thus, on p. 53, appears this idiotic statement:

"Under total capitalist administration and introjection, the social deterioration of consciousness is all but complete and immediate: direct implantation of the latter into the former. Under these circumstances, radical change in consciousness is the beginning, the first step in changing social existence: emergence of the new Subject. Historically, it is again the period of enlightenment prior to material change - a period of education, but education which turns into praxis: demonstration, confrontation, rebellion."

EM's vanguardism does not stop at consciousness but proceeds to "the traditional role of the Marxist-Leninist party" (p. 54) adding that since "the requirements of 'peaceful co-existence' forced this party to 'parliamentarize' itself" it "thereby inhibiting rather than promoting the growth of political consciousness." EM's conclusion is that this makes necessary "outside forces" but these outside forces turn out to be "mainly from among the intelligensia" -- this flies in face of everything historically true, not only since the East German revolt in 1953, but since the 1930's, if not 1920's when the whole intelligensia, not only followed Stalinism and bitterly fought Trotskyism but became the actual exploiters.

He has become aware of Black Revolutionaries but he considers the "ghetto population" "still largely unpolitical character ~~and~~ facilitates suppression and diversion." (p. 57), so, on the one hand "class conflicts are being superseded or blotted out by race conflicts" (p. 58) but, on the other hand, the race conflicts are non-political and they are "distance from the young, middle-class opposition" hampers it, etcetra etcetra.

His animosity to Marxist-Humanism is every bit as solid as that of Communists thus on pp. 81 to 82: "More than the "socialist humanism" of the early Marx, this violent solidarity in defense, this elemental socialism in action, has given form and substance to the radicalism of the New Left; in this ideological respect too, the external revolution has become an essential part of the opposition within the capitalist metropolises."

And again, p. 86: "The actual may considerably deviate from the ideal, the fact remains that, for a whole generation, "freedom," "socialism," and "liberation" are inseparable from Fidel and Che and the guerrillas -- not because their revolutionary struggle could furnish the model for the struggle in the metropolises, but because they have recaptured the truth of these ideas, in the day-to-day fight of men and women for a life as human beings: for a new life."

And, finally, p. 88: "It is the image of this solidarity as elemental, instinctual, creative force which the young radicals see in Cuba, in the guerrillas, in the Chinese cultural revolution."