

OUTLINE OF MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION

Marx, in ~~the~~ Preface to ^{C.P.E.} "The Critique of Political Economy" dates his new philosophy from 1843 when he both broke from bourgeois society and criticised Hegel's Philosophy of Right. What stands out more sharply now is that while he was still a student and began working on his PhD, he already had ~~the~~ a dialectical totally new a concept of what/philosophy "should" become, now that we have reached that high stage of Hegelian dialectics ~~and~~ and still were nowhere near "knowing" what to do next since all the contradictions, alienations, wars, if anything, more extreme than in Hegel's time. The doctoral thesis is critical of Hegel, although he was still a Hegelian, ^{he} chooses to disagree with him in the very field that Hegel is strongest in -- ~~the~~ evaluation of Greek philosophers -- and therefore proposes to take from history a new direction: Just as ~~the~~ said to ~~the~~ leave Athens and build a new city, so we.....

By the time ~~he~~ he breaks with bourgeois society -- categorically 1843 -- and ~~he~~ breaks with Hegel "as teacher", as someone to follow, you can see that already there is no distinction between theory and practice. That is (in peasants who committed the to say, the defense of the "theft" of wood, he is questioning not just the injustice of a specific law; he is bringing out not only the class distinctions between those who make laws and those who do not have the barest minimum of heat; but, what is law? Considering that he ~~had~~ had just got his law degree, ~~it~~ it shows how total the man was in everything he approached, we will see at the end of his life when Marx is both learning from the latest anthropological studies and criticizing the authors of these discoveries, Maine and Lubbock especially, ~~just~~ just how total the criticism of lawyers is, when he accuses them of not only presenting a capitalist class point of view but being so dominated by it as to eliminate a total culture.)

The next stage is the now famous Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts where ~~he~~ holds the Man/Woman relationship as so fundamental as to be the measure of development of the entire society. To reduce that to Fourierism displays a greater blindness to what Marx's philosophy of revolution and a new society is than those who read ~~Marx's~~ Marx's Theses on Feuerbach, and consider Marx still a Feuerbachian. ~~It is true they give him credit for not limiting himself, as did Feuerbach, to Man as individual, but insisting that it is social Man that is the subject. If that is all it was to it, no wonder it took us 100 years to grasp at the Critique of materialism, all materialism, not merely because the greatest, Feuerbach, limited himself to the individual, but because none could develop what Hegel developed.~~

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Indeed, to leave that criticism of materialism out -- and everybody, including Lenin, until the outbreak of WWI, did leave that out, makes of the most famous of all of the Theses, the one that is repeated endlessly, especially by activists -- "the philosophers have interpreted the world, the point is to change it" -- a matter of will, rather than what Marx held it to be, the unity of theory and practice, will and class consciousness and a total uprooting.

Now, even if we disregarded ^{that} in that same 1844 year, the weavers' strike ^{was witnessed} occurred, and we ~~are~~ ^{had} the first sharp division between Lassalle and Marx, ^{when? though} ~~neither~~ had attained political-philosophic maturity, you could already see the distinction between reform and revolution, -- and let us not forget that even a Mahring dismissed Marx's analysis of the greatness of the weavers' strike as "romantic" -- the real truth is that that was the beginning, the middle and the end of Marx's ^{vision} ~~analysis~~ of a philosophy of revolution, not just as theory or strategy but as the subject recreating history totally. It is this vision which made Marx assign to a single, isolated strike a stage higher than the French revolution itself, because it was not only challenging the specific regime of exploitation but the whole concept of private property.

Take the Communist Manifesto. What is that challenge to the entire system and what is the daring of that spectre that's haunting Europe? And at a time when the objective situation is quiet. Well, take a ~~second~~ second look at that challenge, and at once you will see that he is challenging (not just) private property but ^{demanding} an entirely new ~~human~~ human relationship, for the individual is the social entity, and yet the development will be into a new, higher individual self-development. Or take a look at the question of the family, and see what it's not only the system that is being uprooted but the monogamous bourgeois family structure. Or see how he is not only challenging the bourgeois rule, both in the economy and in the state, but challenging all other tendencies in the socialist movement, utopian, petty-bourgeois socialism, etc... ~~Marx is~~ ~~limiting~~ Marx is limiting the distinction of Communism from all other tendencies, ~~to~~ to only two principles -- internationalism, and the independence of the class.

Then comes the revolution. They participate with the bourgeois parties fighting feudalism and are at once betrayed. It is true he says never again, and that remains the principle of all revolutionaries but it does not stop there. What we get in the 1850 Address is: "the revolution in permanence". If the 3rd Int'l, even in its good old days never remembered that part, and the old and new left preferred ~~acting~~ acting as if globalism is their invention, and quoting, instead, just what ~~the~~ prolonged period will be necessary to create a totally new society, it isn't because any of that nonsense is in Marx's vision of world revolution.

The ~~work~~ ^{nearly} two decades between that Address and the publication of Vol. I of Capital witness a great deal more, if it's at all possible to conceive a great deal more than that work of genius, than the economic law of motion of capitalist society to its collapse. ~~It isn't only~~ It isn't only that the plan of his work also called for a volume on the world market and another one on the state. Nor is it ^{the} fact that he was first then beginning the study of Russian agriculture, of new American developments in the proletarian movement, and as we finally know of anthropology. We will never be able to ~~measure~~ ^{on his level} do what Marx didn't have to do. But he certainly left us plenty of ground and challenges. The first, luckily, was written out -- the Grundrisse. If you carefully study that, and see what totally new avenues were opened both in relationship to the "backward" Asiatic mode of production, and to ^{the} automation, you will see that, far from it being only a question of uniting ~~the~~ politics and economics, it was one of uniting philosophy and revolution, deepening each, and both as a unit to this "absolute movement of becoming", with the emphasis on absolute, that is never-ending, always becoming.

The 1860s do for action, that is to say, our action, what the 1850s did for philosophy and economics and early modes of production and yet more economics. From the moment of John Brown's attack on Harper's Ferry, a new epoch objectively and subjectively opened on every new dimension be it Black, civil war, women, peasantry, proletariat, organization, spontaneity, theory, practice, praxis, that is to say, all human activity of a wholly new, total human being. And the 60s end in the greatest revolution of his day, the Paris Commune. And what "thinking, bleeding Paris" will leave us as ground for new revolutions is everything from "digging lower and deeper" to new strata of unskilled proletariat, peasant newly come to the city, exploited minorities from London's East End Jews to Africans and American Indians and Asians and youth -- the "children" who will ~~finish~~ first complete what those who were pre-occupied with just overthrowing the old, could not.

The most slanderous of all things against Marx -- and in this case Marxists are as guilty as the bourgeois writers -- is to present the last years of his life as if Marx ^{was ailing and} did nothing. About the most that is ever said is the Critique of the Gotha Program, 1875, which is acknowledged as one of the great works, but is left in the state of just a critique of what is wrong, rather than a direction to what is next.

Now what happened from 1875 to 1883? Well, there was a new wave of strikes in America, railroads, mines, climaxing in the first General Strike in the country, St. Louis, that led Marx to ~~also~~ stress that it was after the death of the First International that so great a new stage of class struggle was started, that certainly, instead of being considered a post mortum, it was the opening of so new a world that he couldn't really finish capital until the old world of Russia and the new world of the U.S. had had their say. He began studying Russian agriculture

with eyes so new that instead of dismissing "the archaic mode of production" he saw it as possible ground for starting revolutions, not where he predicted, in the advanced capitalist countries, but in "backward" Russia, provided it related itself and thus extended itself beyond national boundaries.

And, it was the period when he was ~~writing~~ writing his Notebooks on anthropology, which unfortunately Engels narrowed to The Origin of the Family... State. The truth of the matter, however, was that it was precisely those studies that had created a problem for him of such a simple matter as answering a question from Vera Zasulich on the Russian commune. What is great is not the letter he actually sent, ~~but what it inspired~~ but what ~~it inspired~~ it inspired in writing a new Preface for the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto. It is this ~~integration~~ integration of both the anthropological studies and the Asiatic mode of production to once again create room for Marx to raise a new banner of revolution -- world rev'n -- ~~and~~ and new human relations which is not just legacy but the challenge for our day.