

tion from past to future, *i.e.*, of history, depends on his doctrine of dialectical materialism. Our description of Marx's political philosophy will therefore have this outline: (1) Dialectical materialism, or Marx's theory of history and of the priority of the economic conditions; (2) the labor theory of value and Marx's account of the capitalistic present; (3) the convergence of dialectical materialism and the labor theory of value. In what follows we shall speak of "Marxism" and the doctrines of Marx. It should be understood that from 1844 on, Marx had as his collaborator Friedrich Engels, who gracefully and without doubt justly declared that Marx's was the genius of the movement, although he, Engels, had made his contributions to it. We shall not try in every case, even were it possible, to distinguish Engels' work from Marx's.

Marx repeatedly asserts that the study of man must concern itself with "real" men, not with men as imagined or hoped for or believed to be. Marx means by this that the foundation of social science is not a notion of some wished-for human good, or some reconstruction of primitive "natural" man, but rather empirical man as anyone could at any time observe him. Empirical man is primarily a living organism consuming food, clothing, shelter, fuel, and so on, and compelled to find or to produce those things. Men might once upon a time have survived by using materials which they simply found and gathered, but the increase in population at some point forced them to produce their necessities and thereby to become distinguished from the beasts. The singular sign of humanity is conscious production—not rationality, or political life, or the power of laughter, for example, as some have maintained. There is, to be sure, an element of unclarity in Marx's teaching on this point, since he concedes that human production differs from "production" by beasts in that the human being plans or conceives in advance the completed object of his labor while the bee or insect toils by mere instinct. In other words, only human production is characterized by rational intention, and human production could thus be said to be unique because it is the doing of the rational animal. Then, however, it would be more exact to assert that man's singular characteristic is rationality rather than productiveness; but Marx is prevented from saying so because the implications of that assertion would interfere with his materialism, which argues that man's rationality or rather "consciousness" is not fundamental but derivative. The Marxist doctrine of the primacy of production in human life rests upon the belief that it was the pressure of his needs that first forced man upward into his humanity and then continues to press him onward and upward; and

## KARL MARX

1818-1883

Marxism presents itself as a comprehensive account of human life, and not only of human life but of nature as well. It offers an account of man's present, and of his past and future, educating its teaching from the premise that a full and final account of things is impossible except as an account of the transitoriness or endless flux of things. The definitive description of the present is given in Marx's economic writings, *i.e.*, in his critical analysis of capitalism. The account of past and future, or of the evolution of society, is given in Marx's writings on the theory of history and the relation of history to a certain notion of metaphysics. Marx's political philosophy consists of his teaching on economics and his teaching on history and metaphysics—on the present society and on the coming into being and passing away of all societies including the present.

The reader might wonder whether an economic analysis of capitalism is the same as a full account of the modern time (ignoring for the present the existence of communist countries). It is Marx's contention that the economy is the living kernel of the society, and therefore to grasp the truth about the modern economy is to understand the most potent facts about modern society. But the reader might also wonder whether a full account of society is equivalent to a full account of human life. Marxism takes the two, if society is rightly understood, to be equivalent. Marxism can thus present itself as a comprehensive explanation of the past, present, and future of man. It claims to have discovered that the economy is the true ground of society and therewith of human life. Marx's analysis of the present, *i.e.*, of capitalistic economy, is based upon his labor theory of value. His account of the transi-

that the content of his reason must be determined by conditions external to his reason, conditions which are strictly material.

In what ways, more exactly, do the material conditions determine life and thought, according to Marx? He begins by observing that, in every epoch, men have access to certain productive forces, which they apply by making use of the objects—animals, tools, machines, and so on—in which those forces are embodied. But the forces of production—say, roughly, the bare technology—compel men to adapt themselves and their institutions to the requirements of the technology. Nomads, for example, who suddenly gained access to steam power and mechanically drawn agricultural implements would be forced to give up their nomadism and to adopt instead the sedentary habits, division of labor, trading practices, and property institutions which are determined by factory production, and also to take up the practices and institutions correlate to agriculture. That this is true in a general sense is self-evident; it surely was well understood in Greek antiquity. As stated above, however, it is insufficiently comprehensive to express Marx's meaning. Marx asserts repeatedly that to a given set of forces of production there corresponds a certain "mode of production," such as the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois or capitalist. According to the feudal mode of production, for example, the possessors of the means of production and the men who labored with or upon those means were connected by a personal relation of mutual responsibility; under the capitalist mode, employers and employees are, as the terms imply, users and used, free of duty to each other, with only the payment of money connecting them. With each such mode of production, there goes, as an effect, one form of social organization. A compact formulation of this view is given by Marx in his letter to P. V. Annenkov, December 28, 1846: "What is society, whatever its form may be? The product of men's reciprocal action. Are men free to choose this or that form of society for themselves? By no means. Assume a particular state of development in the productive forces of man and you will get a particular form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular stages of development in production, commerce and consumption and you will have a corresponding social structure, a corresponding organization of the family, of orders or of classes, in a word, a corresponding civil society. Presuppose a particular civil society and you will get particular political conditions which are only the official expression of civil society." This he compresses further, in *The Poverty of Philosophy* in the remark, "The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist."<sup>1</sup>

The conditions of production determine the prevailing property

relations, meaning by the latter not the abstract definition of property, but rather who in the particular situation has access to property and who is prevented from acquiring it. Under feudalism, there were lords who possessed land and had rights to other property, and serfs who could accumulate no property. Similarly under the other social circumstances: under capitalism, employers own and accumulate, employees struggle along on the verge of destitution, owning nothing, separated from the means of production. This doctrine is directly connected with the Marxian belief that the conditions of production control distribution of income and consumption of output. They also govern exchange: if production is organized around a commonly occupied arable, for example, there will not even be exchange of the produce of the soil, only sharing. It follows also that money will be in use or not depending on the mode of production: money is not, in its present meaning or use, intrinsic to every economic situation or to economic life as such.

Marx asserts, therefore, that it is a mistake to treat consumption, distribution, exchange, money, and so on as eternal categories having an abstract, permanent content, relevance, or validity. It is one of the defects of the science of political economy, "bourgeois" economics, that it views these purely historical phenomena as fixed categories, having an objective, essential, "natural" character—things that can be understood once and for all because they exist once and for all. Not only are the "categories" historical products, but the science of those categories, namely economics, proves itself to be merely historical or transitory by mistaking the transitory for the eternally true, *i.e.*, by believing itself to consist of laws founded in a changeless nature. Marx denounces Edmund Burke, but through Burke all economists, for his assertion that "the laws of commerce . . . are the laws of Nature, and consequently the laws of God."<sup>2</sup> Actually, according to Marx, the economic science of the capitalist period is given its "categories" (wages, interest, exchange, profit, and so on) by the practices prevalent under capitalistic production, and it takes up these categories without recognizing their genesis in the historical conditions. Failing to treat its material as historical and bound to pass away, it of course condemns itself to pass away when its material does so.

Marx's doctrine of the dependence of theories on the historic conditions of production takes in far more than economic theory. He asserts that all morality, philosophy, religion, and politics are the result of the conditioning of men by their environment—their manmade environment which is the expression of the mode of production. The opposite view, that man has an independent intelligence by the light of which he fashions his institutions and forms his convictions, is rejected as

ideology, the Marxist term for the doctrine that thought has an independent status.<sup>8</sup>

Marx's materialism has been presented thus far as asserting simply that the conditions of production determine the concrete character of the human life, which exists as a "superstructure" on the foundation of the more truly real material conditions. Nothing has been said, however, about the goodness or badness of the actual superstructures that have in fact arisen on the hitherto existing material foundations. Such a judgment is intrinsic to Marx's materialism, however, and to it we now turn.

All historic modes of production have had one feature in common, and that feature has in turn affected all the corresponding societies: control of the means of production has not been shared by all men, but in each age some have been owners or possessors while many more have had to give of themselves, *i.e.*, of their capacity for work (having nothing else to give), in order to have access to the instruments of production, to gain a livelihood. Thus in all previous history the act of production has brought many men into dependence upon the few. The masses have been deprived of the opportunity to become free and self-respecting men because they have always been forced into the position of cringing dependents—slaves, serfs, or proletarians—subject to men who, although private citizens or subjects like themselves, could yet arbitrarily deprive them of their living by cutting off their connection with the means of production. The dehumanization inevitably resulting from such servile dependence has been compounded by the poverty imposed upon the many by their exploiters.

Furthermore, the process of production, from its inception, had a character that Marx calls "natural" in the sense that certain natural differences among men (of physique, talent, and so on) determined the allotment of special tasks to individuals, and the relations of production were therefore determined, imposed, or involuntary, thus natural in the sense of not resulting from human choice. The prototype of all such allotments is the division of function between male and female in continuing the race. This grew into the more general form of division of labor incorporated in the family. As the forces of production were developed, the division of labor became increasingly elaborated, and the particular occupations became correspondingly restricted. As men are compelled by the conditions of production to become shepherds, plumbers, or violinists, they are deprived of the opportunity to develop to the full their human capacities by turning their minds freely in all directions. They are made into fragments of men, prevented by the stultifying division of labor from growing into whole men for whom labor would become a source of satisfaction rather than pain.

While this parcellation is going on within each man, the same process is being repeated among the men. The community comes to be composed of weavers who are set in opposition to bakers, farmers pitted against merchants, townfolk versus country people, hand workers against brain workers—a war of all against all, fought on the field of material interest, the terms of struggle dictated by the mode of production. Finally, the fracture of society is completed by the coalescence into a class or group of classes of the few who control the means of production, and the parallel coalescence of the many dispossessed into the class or classes that work at the means of production.

The fracturing of social life may be epitomized in the existence of civil society or bourgeois society. (The German term used by Marx is *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, which may be translated as either civil or bourgeois society.) The breakdown of the integrity of human life is symptomatized and presupposed by the split in our common existence between the political and the economic and social: "Where the political state has attained its true development, the individual leads not only in thought, in consciousness, but in reality, a double life, a heavenly and an earthly life, a life in the political community, wherein he counts as a member of the community, and a life in bourgeois society, wherein he is active as a private person, regarding other men as a means, degrading himself into a means and becoming a plaything of alien powers."<sup>9</sup> Civil society means for Marx an individualistic enclave in society, the realm of privacy as against community, with the understanding that community finds its corrupt expression in political society under now-prevailing conditions. Civil society, far from being synonymous with political society for Marx, is the infrapolitical cognate of political society that is an inevitable part of the capitalistic order. A simple equivalent of "civil society" in this sense is "the economy" of a capitalistic state, or even "the market." Civil society is the stratum of common life that is given its essential character by the self-assertiveness of men, one against the other, in the name of their inalienable, irreducible rights. The sanctity of those rights, thought by writers like Locke to be the ground for guaranteeing the freedom and thus the humanity of men, is rejected by Marx because he views the assertion of those rights as the source of, surely the expression of man's dehumanization. The war of Marxism against the ruling principles of Western constitutionalism must never be mistaken for a mere skirmish.

It is evident, according to Marx, that the many-sided factual negation of all community of interest under capitalism results from the private ownership of the productive resources. Production, a social act in the sense of being by and for all men, cannot be carried on humanely

and rationally if the institutions of production are private, particular, and hence antisocial.

The modes of production and institutions of property that have existed hitherto have caused fragmentation and conflict within and among men. What has kept the fragments of society from flying apart? Or, more pertinently, what has prevented the many from summarily ridding themselves of the impositions of the few? According to Marx, the state power is precisely the agency devised by the oppressive few to keep the many in order. The state is the organ of class coercion, made necessary by the dividedness of society that is engendered in turn by the private control of the means of production. It goes without saying that the government does not appear in this light to the multitude of men. Marx allows that all classes collaborate in sustaining government by respecting it and its power of coercion; but this means no more than that men, because of the imperfection of their material conditions, are prepared and compelled to erect over themselves their own tyrant, their own creature that must, as it does, assert itself against them.

It was Marx's belief that while men remain in the state of constraint, of subjection to want and to one another via the process of production, they will be unable to lead fully human lives: for full humanity would require perfect emancipation from bonds of every sort. If Marx had ever used the term "state of nature" in his own name, he would have meant by it the state of man's incomplete domination of nature, the alternative to the state of freedom. While men are in bonds, as they have been under government and "civil society," they experience as part of their bondage a constraint that compels them to contribute to their own dehumanization through institutions of their own devising.

We may conclude this summary of Marx's materialism by explaining the foregoing remark, and at the same time showing how Marx conceives the state of need and the state of political society to coexist as the state of human bondage or what he calls man's alienation. Without a grasp of this element of Marxism it would be impossible to form a sufficient judgment of Marx's political philosophy as a whole.

Returning to our point of departure, we note Marx's primary observation that man is a needing being. Each man is condemned to dependence upon external things, say nature, and upon other men to help supply his needs. But in addition to being essentially needy, man is what Marx calls a species being or a social being, which does not mean simply that man must live and act in common with other men, but that man cannot realize his human possibilities except by acting upon and being acted upon by other human beings. That man knows his fellow-men to constitute a whole of which he is a part, and that he therefore

associates himself with them in thought in a way which is ruled out for all subhuman animals, is part also of Marx's rather diffuse notion of man as a species-being. At any rate, it was Marx's belief that man's essential activity, production, has in all previous societies been carried on under institutions that compel men to look upon each other and upon nature itself as alien things, objects, mere means to the end of satisfying the individual's needs. Productive labor itself has always been regarded as a painful necessity because of the conditions under which it has been performed. Thus men's environment and their fellow-men have been objects of predation, and the acting men themselves, and their very own essential life-activities, have been merely instrumental, means to ends without the intrinsic worth they must have if man is to be fully human, to be at one with himself, or to overcome his "estrangement" from nature, from himself, and from the fruits of his labor. Marx's contention is no less sweeping than this: until every man simply merges himself in the whole of humanity, producing only because production is the release and cultivation of human energy, and not because production is a way of obtaining subsistence directly or through exchange by exploiting other men's neediness—not until then will men be perfectly free and the perfect, final articulation of man, society, and nature be achieved. Until that time, men will distort each other's natures by treating each other as objects, each being made thus to grow up as at odds with his species, even regarding nature itself, incidentally, not in its beauty and splendor but as a source of gain. The arrangement of the process of production within the institution of common ownership of productive resources, under the formula "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," is thought by Marx to be the condition for causing the absolute translation of human life onto a basis which is in the most literal sense unprecedented. Men have lived hitherto in civil society, *i.e.*, under institutions that have presupposed or positively cultivated self-interest as the principle of productive life and life itself. Marxian materialism leads up to the supersession of all civil society and its replacement by the human species as a universal brotherhood. Marxian materialism, which begins by insisting upon the need to consider empirical man, paradoxically ends in a social prescription with no empirical foundation or precedent.

It was stated above that, from the point of view of Marxism, economics or political economy is defective in that it gives an account of economic life in terms of prices, wages, costs, profit, capital, and so on as if these were transhistoric "categories," or eternal elements intrinsic

to economic life under all circumstances. The now common definition of economics as the science of the allocation of scarce resources among alternative uses is a better example of what Marx objected to than most economic notions that existed in his own day. This definition implies that there is something that can be called the economic problem for all men in all stages of civilization and technology, and that the rational solution of that problem requires either genuine or simulated markets to produce certain equilibria between commodity and discommodity—a universal law resembling the generalizations of physics. Marx's denial of the truth of political economy was not only a denial that the economists had given an accurate description of free enterprise. It was a denial that the description of a particular economic arrangement was a timelessly true description of the essence of economic life. This in turn is part of Marx's broad doctrine that in general there are no timeless essences and therefore no eternal truths which are not either trivial or purely formal. Marx's political philosophy is mingled with a theory about the nature of all things; indeed his political philosophy is to a certain extent governed by a universal scheme or "system," a doctrine that things neither have essences nor do they, as fixed things, have essences, but they have histories or careers. Becoming, according to the formula, takes the place of being.

Marx followed Hegel in fact, if not in expression, in rejecting as "metaphysical" the view that there are finished "things" or "objects" which have a fixed, given, straightforward constitution. He asserted on the contrary that everything is affected by both change and relation. Thus the various species are forever evolving and the individuals come into being, grow, and then decline. The inanimate things are thrown up by natural processes and then erode, oxidize, or otherwise decay, while internally, they are, like the living beings, constantly in motion. Moreover, each thing is affected, indeed constituted, by the relation in which it stands to other things. For example, a man who is a servant is a servant only in virtue of his relation to another being who is the opposite of a servant, namely a master. The nature of a servant is not intelligible by exclusive reference to the servant himself, just as one could not understand "employee" if there were not "employers." In addition, there is an element of contradictoriness that is introduced into the constitution of perfectly motionless, unchanging things independently of their relations with other things: a curved line, everywhere curved, is nevertheless straight between two points infinitesimally separated. The best example of this paradox is given not by Marx and Engels but by Democritus: "If a cone were cut by a plane parallel to the base,

what ought one to think of the surfaces resulting from the section: are they equal or unequal?"<sup>5</sup> The easy answer is "both."

Further, the lines of distinction between classes of things are not sharp, for there are individuals at the margins that are as much of one class as of another ("plant-animals" and "sensitive plants"); and even life itself is not simply distinguishable from nonlife. The transition from life to death is not instantaneous (*e.g.*, the nails and hair continue to grow after "death"), and life proper consists of a process by which the living thing continually dies and renews itself through excretion and nutrition, so that life is inseparable from a continuous dying. It goes without saying that if life and death were in no way distinguishable, it would be impossible to distinguish living from dead material, or to say of life that it implied or presupposed or even required death; yet the Marxist position is that life as a process is not simply life, but it is also necessarily and at the same time death. Life exists as a process in virtue of a contradiction: life is both life and death. And so it is with the other "things."

All things are in flux, as Marxism asserts following Heraclitus, and all flux is motion. To understand the character of all things, it is necessary to grasp the universal law of motion, the law governing nature, human history, and thought. That law is derived from the Marxist doctrine of the essential contradictoriness of motion itself. Since the time of Zeno the Eleatic, a "proof" has existed that motion is impossible: every moving body is at each instant in one and only one place—which is the definition of being at rest. To be in motion is thus to be at rest and also not to be at rest. Each thing is, therefore, by analogy with a body in motion, equally what it "is" instantaneously and what it "is" historically, not in spite of, but in virtue of the fact that the two are contradictory.

Contradiction is fundamental to development, *i.e.*, to historical change, when change is assimilated to physical motion. Change is generated by contradiction through the mutual opposition of the two contradictory elements present in the thing in question. Consider an example given by Engels: a grain of cereal is planted, and it is annihilated as a grain while the plant grows up. As the plant develops to its own extension, it produces many grains like the one from which it sprang. The grain is the affirmation (or "thesis"), the plant the negation (or "antithesis"), and the many grains the negation of the negation (or "synthesis"). Let us consider one more example: select any algebraic quantity, *a*, as the affirmation. Negate it by multiplying it by  $-1$ , to form  $-a$ . Negate the negation by multiplying it by itself, and the product is  $a^2$ , the affirmation on a higher level. The sequence of affirma-



tion, negation, and negation of the negation is called the dialectic, and it is this that Marxism believes to be the universal law of nature, history, and thought. All development occurs on this pattern.

In the special case of human history and thought, a cause is assigned to the unfolding of the dialectical process. That cause is the mode of production and its mutations. Because the primary phenomenon is the material conditions of production, the Marxist doctrine of history is called dialectical materialism, to distinguish it from the idealist dialectic of Hegel which asserted the primary phenomenon to be self-dependent reason as the source of historical change. As a theory of human life, dialectical materialism asserts that the ground of all development in society and understanding is contradiction in the order of production. The most massive of such contradictions is the conflict between classes in society. By subsuming the opposition of class interests under the apparatus of the dialectic, Marxism seeks to show that the conflict cannot be resolved through compromises or mutual accommodations but only by a "negation of the negation," *i.e.*, by revolutionary changes in which the existing classes are annihilated and replaced by a synthesis "on a higher level."

An important element of Marx's political philosophy is his reconstruction of history for the purpose of showing that history has in fact been governed by the materialist dialectic. According to that reconstruction, each epoch inherits a mode of production and a complex of relations among men that is peculiarly fitted to that mode of production. Eventually a change takes place in the mode of production, brought on perhaps by a change in needs that could have been engendered by that very mode of production, and, more immediately, brought on by a fundamental discovery or invention stimulated by those needs. The new mode of production comes into being while the relations among the human beings are still those generated by the previous mode of production. The contradiction between existent social relations and the emergent mode of production, *i.e.*, the clash between the established and the embryonic dominant classes, is the source of "all collisions in history."

Marx and Engels cite a number of historical developments as evidence of this hypothesis, the most amply treated being the transition from feudal to capitalistic society, and the evolution toward postcapitalism. The former is explained by recurring to the rise of machine manufacture in the Middle Ages, first in the textile industry and then more generally. The spread of machine production broke down the structure of guildmasters with journeyman and apprentice labor, replacing it by a relation of bourgeois employers and wage-earning em-

ployees between whom no ties existed but that of the wage payment. The manufacturing mode of production was the vehicle by which the most fortunate and most active escaped serfs rose to displace the guildmasters as the owners of the new means of production, and to become the progenitors of a new class, the bourgeoisie. Opposed to them, and at the same time indispensable to them, were the proletarian laborers having nothing to live by but the wages from the sale of their labor power. As industry and commerce expanded, the scale of production increased enormously, and as it did, the relations between the owning and nonowning classes underwent a further change, an aggravation. The clash of interests between capitalists and wage-earners inevitably sharpened, for the proletarians' condition had to deteriorate because of the contradictions that are intrinsic to capitalism, contradictions that will appear when we consider Marx's critique of capitalist production. For the present it suffices to say that, according to Marx, the full development of machine production (under private ownership) requires the absolute pauperization and dehumanization of the wage-earners because of the pressures of capitalist competition. At last the wretchedness of the masses will become unbearable, and the conflict of the classes will break forth into a decisive combat—decisive because the victory of the proletariat will usher in a new age of man.

The proletarians have neither the wealth nor the wish to become the owners of the means of production *as a class*. Unlike every other insurgent class in the past, their purpose is not to take the place of their oppressors but to put an end to oppression. The means of achieving this end is to abolish the private ownership of the means of production and thus to abolish the distinction between owners and nonowners thereof, the distinction which is the condition for the division of human society into classes. Upon the dissolution of classes will necessarily ensue the end of the class struggle and the beginning of strictly human history. When that has occurred, the relations among men will have caught up with the latest great development in the mode of production; the conditions of oppression disappearing, the need for coercion will disappear as well, and the state will wither away to be replaced by the universal brotherhood of man.

Marx was well aware that his prognosis for mankind was necessarily linked to a diagnosis of prevailing conditions. He realized that he must investigate the contemporary (European) world in its essentials, which is to say in its economic character, in order to satisfy himself and others that the dialectic of materialism is actually operative in the de-

cisive period, namely the present. It was necessary for him to demonstrate that the law of the nature of capitalism is the law of the transformation of capitalism into something radically different. His enterprise incidentally required him to show that no explanation of capitalism other than his own had grasped the essential character of capitalism, and therefore no other account, at least no other then known, could be made the basis of a prognosis for mankind. This means that ordinary political economy, which did not come to the conclusion that capitalism is self-vitiating, is in various respects unsatisfactory even as a description of how capitalism works. Marx's own economics is almost wholly "critical," devoted not to the explanation of how a socialist economy should or would be constituted but to a detailed representation of the self-contradictoriness and transitoriness of capitalist institutions, and to the inadequacy of political economy as known. The inseparability of the two criticisms is implicit in the subtitle of *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*.

Marx's general criticism of political economy has already been mentioned. We must take up here his critical analysis of capitalism proper, and with it his more specific reflections on political economy. The title of his major economic work, *Capital*, indicates what seemed to him to be the central economic problem. Capital, according to Marx, does not mean simply the artificial means of production—equally a stone axe in the hand of a primitive, a bow in the hand of a Grecian hunter, or a power loom in nineteenth-century England. Capital is productive wealth in the peculiar form that generates profit. The prevailing system is called capitalism because the means of production, privately owned, are a source of profit to their owners the capitalists. It is very important to understand the nature of profit with perfect precision, for profit is at the heart of the prevailing social and economic order. Profit is not simply any economic surplus, such as might arise in primitive or feudal economies, any more than capital is simply productive wealth. Profit and capital are uniquely, mutually complementary.

Profit appears directly as a part of the price of a commodity, a part which the owner of the means of production, the capitalist (as Marx was not the first to call him) is able to claim. What exactly does his share consist of? How does it originate and by what right does the capitalist lay claim to it? Classical political economy had provided a certain answer, which was the point of departure for Marx's own analysis. Classical political economy had begun with the assertion that labor is the source of value, that the amount of labor embodied in a good is thus related to the amount of value in the good, and that the relative values of two goods must be in proportion to the relative amounts of labor

embodied in them. The accompanying presumption is that the one who has created the value by pouring his labor into the object has the right to be the owner of his product. The classical economists agreed that, when production was carried on by individuals for themselves, using their own hands and the implements fashioned by them or owned by them, each man could claim for himself whatever he produced. But that condition ceased when, in order to carry on production, men required access to land and instruments belonging to others. Thereafter, those others had a right to share in the product. Evidently, profit (to leave aside the problem of rent) is coeval with the accumulation of productive property by some members of society.

There was, according to the classic view, a period of human life when every man could "produce" independently; and then there was—and still is—a period in which land was made subject to appropriation, and the accumulation of durable property was made feasible. In the earlier period of human life, the labor theory of value applied in its simple and direct form. In the latter period, the product of labor is shared with capitalists and landlords. Readers of the doctrines of Hobbes and Locke, but especially the latter, will be reminded of the division of all human history between a period in the state of nature and a period in the state of civil society. We are now prepared to understand more fully Marx's asseveration that classical political economy assigns to the institutions of capitalism the status of prospectively timeless, natural conditions. Classical political economy and the political philosophy to which it was linked regarded as absolutely epochal the progress of man from the prepolitical to the political condition. That same crucial change was perfected or consummated with the replacement of absolute monarchy by constitutional government, for between a subject and an arbitrary master there is only the law of nature. That crucial change in the human state was connected by classical political economy with the accumulation and protection of property in the means of production. The institutions of property thus come to parallel, and to have the same status as, civil society or civilization—political life—*itself*. Neither Hobbes and Locke nor the classical political economists looked beyond civil society for a further radical melioration of man's estate. It was left for Rousseau to raise the broad question of the goodness of both civil society and property, and thus to open the way for his successors to search for a horizon beyond that of civil society. Marx, in rejecting the view that property and civil society, or say political life, were the absolute condition for decent human existence in peace and prosperity, denied the natural and permanent status of "the laws of commerce." He rejected the implication of classical political economy that profit

and the private ownership of the means of production are here to stay, as much as and for the same reasons that political society is here to stay.

Surely Marx did not concede that the transition from the state of nature to the state of political society was the absolutely epochal change in human life. Neither did he concede that the parallel change from the pure to the diluted application of the labor theory of value was epochal or even that it provided a valid ground for understanding the prevailing economic institutions. That a difficulty indeed existed in that mode of explanation was noticed by Ricardo as he examined Adam Smith's theory of value and wages. Ricardo pointed out that if it were true in a simple sense that a commodity which required a day's labor for its production should be said to contain a day's-labor-worth of value, then when that commodity is exchanged for labor, it should purchase its equal in value, namely a day's labor. The brief formulation would be, labor embodied equals labor commanded, for any commodity.<sup>8</sup> In other words there would be no profit: a workman could be hired for a week only if his product for the week (or the full value of it) were paid him as his wage. The fact that the wage is not equal to the whole product compelled Ricardo (and Smith, incidentally) to find an alternative formulation, one that ascribed value-productivity to capital as congealed labor. Marx rejected the Ricardian and other classical explanations of profit, wages, and value because those explanations, in accounting for the difference between the labor embodied in and the labor commanded by a commodity, did not lead up to a condemnation of profit as resting upon exploitation, which Marx believed it to do. We must now consider his alternative explanation.

Marx begins by noting a problem that arises out of the exchange of goods: when one commodity is exchanged for another, a common ground is indicated between two things which appear to have nothing at all in common. Suppose a pair of shoes to be exchanged for three shirts. The shoes and the shirts are so perfectly unlike as to be incommensurable. How can the ratio of three for one, or any other ratio, ever be arrived at? To deal with the problem of commensurability, Marx recurs to, but modifies, a distinction which was traditional in political economy, the distinction between value in use and value in exchange. For the distinction use value-exchange value, regarded by political economy as fundamental, Marx substitutes use value-value. The reason for this is that he does not regard exchange as a permanent, natural institution but rather as a historic and transitory one. But exchange value is derivative from value proper, and in order to understand capitalism it is necessary to understand exchange value and therefore value simply. Returning now to the two commodities, we notice that they are abso-

lutely unlike so far as we consider their value in use or their qualitative character, each good being designed for a certain purpose that the other could not serve. Now a shoe comes to be a shoe in virtue of having been produced by the peculiar labor of a shoemaker. A shirt is a shirt because it is the product of shirtmaking labor. The difference between shoe-making and shirtmaking labor is the source of the qualitative difference between shoes and shirts. Marx goes on to assert that, just as the two commodities can, indeed must, be looked at as if they are not only dissimilar but also have commensurable values, so the labor that produced them must be capable of being looked at not only as qualitatively differentiated labor. It must also be seen as homogeneous or undifferentiated human labor, as the generation of a certain amount of motion in a certain mass by a certain expenditure of human energy. As skills, therefore, the kinds of human labor are simply different; but as toil, all labor is the same, and is measurable in units of time, according to the length of its duration. Upon this latter fact depends the measurability and commensurability of values. The summary formula would be, differentiated human labor produces use values and qualitative differences among commodities, while undifferentiated human labor produces value simply and quantitative commensurability among the commodities. Thus it is in their character as products of undifferentiated human labor, not as products of specific labor aimed at satisfying specific wants, that commodities have commensurable values and can enter into exchange.

It should be pointed out that the assignment of labor alone as the source of value is not demonstrated by Marx, but is asserted by him as something self-evident.<sup>9</sup>

The foregoing account of value provides support for Marx's definition and elaboration of the notion of a commodity. By a commodity Marx means a good which is privately produced for the sake of exchange (or sale, *i.e.*, exchange against money.) Capitalism could thus be described as a system of commodity production and, as such, based upon confusion and distortion. Rationally, the sum of all the individual labor-powers in the community is the aggregate of labor-power available to the society for the satisfaction of all its wants. If men were to live without distortion in their affairs, their labor-power would be directly applied to the satisfaction of their wants rather than to production for exchange. Because the means of production are privately owned, however, production is carried on not directly for its true purpose—the satisfaction of wants—but for the special advantage of the owners of the means of production. The social character of labor is thus mediated and distorted by the mode of production. What Adam Smith regarded as a peculiar virtue of private enterprise, namely, the voluntary performance



of a social function under the influence of a desire for private advance, is regarded by Marx as the ground of the iniquity and instability in the prevailing system. Why he did so conclude can be understood if we look further at the capitalistic mode of production as Marx interpreted it.

Indispensable to capitalism are the private ownership of the means of production and the existence of a body of men who both do not own any means of production and are perfectly free, in the sense of being unbound to the owners of the means of production by any personal ties of duty or rights. In order to live, the unpropertied must therefore engage themselves to labor at the machines and on the land of the propertied. The propertyless in effect sell to the propertied a commodity called labor-power—not labor. Labor-power means the ability to labor for a given period; labor means the actual duration of the labor. For Marx the distinction is crucial. Labor-power is a commodity, under capitalism, and that means that it is something produced for sale and having a value determined by the amount of labor congealed or incorporated in it. But what could be meant by the amount of labor incorporated in the capacity of a laborer to work for eight hours? The answer is, that amount of labor that was required to produce the necessities that must be available to the man furnishing the labor-power in question. Somewhat more broadly, the value of a day's labor-power is determined by the amount of labor necessary to produce the subsistence for the laborer and his family in order to maintain the supply of labor-power at its level, not only from day to day but from generation to generation. Let us suppose that in order to provide all the materials of subsistence necessary to support a labor-power of eight hours, six hours of labor must be performed. Then the value of a labor-power of eight hours would be equal to the value of six hours' output. One would then obtain the output of eight hours by giving for it the output of six hours. The value generated by the employed labor-power during the two hours of its application while it is "not paid for" is called by Marx "surplus value"; it is the basis of profit. Profit exists only because a portion of the workingman's labor-power results in an output for which he is not paid. Yet he is not being cheated, in a certain sense. Marx is at pains to point out that the labor-power is bought at its full value, its value understood as being rigidly subject to the labor theory of the value of all commodities including labor-power itself. Thus the man is paid in full for his labor-power but not for his labor. By this formulation Marx believed he had solved the problem that classical political economy had failed to clarify with consistency, the problem caused by the inequality of the labor embodied in a product and the labor commanded by it. His

solution depends on the distinction between labor and labor-power. By this radicalization of the labor theory of value that applies it to labor-power itself, Marx was enabled to argue that a serious hidden contradiction of capitalism was brought to light: the relation between employer and employee is at one and the same time both cheating and not cheating. In the sense that it is not cheating, no one can individually be blamed: the buying and selling of labor-power are done at full value according to the rules of the market. So far as it is cheating, however, it requires rectification. Marx's conclusion is that the abuse demands the abolition of the system rather than a change of the rules within the system: "reform" could never suffice, because no mere reform could terminate the buying and selling of labor-power.

This contradiction is but the ground for many more. For example, from the proposition that profit originates in the consumption of labor-power by the capitalist, it follows that profit can be made to increase either by consuming more labor-power or by increasing the amount of labor that is produced by a given labor-power (say, approximately, increasing the output per working day). But the increase in output per day (increase in productivity) is achieved by increasing the use of machinery. Increasing the use of machinery opposes the increase in consumption of labor-power. In order to prevent the introduction of machinery from suppressing the profitable consumption of labor-power, the working day must be lengthened. Marx thus arrives at the conclusion that the introduction of machinery leads and will lead to the lengthening of the working day and to the formation of a large population of the chronically, technologically unemployed.<sup>8</sup> Here and elsewhere, Marx's economic analysis led him to make certain grossly incorrect predictions as to conditions in a matured capitalistic economy. Not because his power of prediction is in itself of great interest, but because so much of his revolutionary animus is vindicated by the horrors he professes to foresee in the flowering of capitalism, his mistakes of prediction come to have a singular effect on the credibility of the analysis on which they rest.

To continue. The restless struggle for profit causes the capitalistic economy and society to be in a state of endless flux. Under the lash of competition, which tends to reduce profits, capitalists must constantly revolutionize the process of production in order to cheapen it. Old skills are rendered obsolete and the average level of skill required in the work force is reduced as the motions of the artisan's hands are analyzed and copied in machinery. Since the fundamental condition of capitalist economic life is a free, propertyless work force toward which the propertied have no duty, the whole burden of technological change falls

upon the wage-earners in the form of unemployment and poverty. But technological change as such is not peculiar to capitalism; only under capitalism does it become a source of misery. In a dialectical manner, Marx argues that in its abuses, capitalism serves to expose a transcendentalistic human problem that can be resolved only by the transcending of capitalism:

... Modern Industry . . . through its catastrophes imposes the necessity of recognizing, as a fundamental law of production, variation of work, consequently fitness of the labourer for varied work, consequently the greatest possible development of his varied aptitudes. It becomes a question of life and death for society to adapt the mode of production to the normal functioning of this law, Modern Industry, indeed, compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail-worker of to-day, crippled by lifelong repetition of one and the same trivial operation, and thus reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labours, ready to face any change of production, and to whom the different social functions he performs are but so many modes of giving free scope to his own natural and acquired powers.<sup>9</sup>

It must be pointed out that the tendency of technological change has not in fact been to reduce the average level of skill in the work force or to lead to falling real wages and a growing "industrial reserve army of the unemployed." Nor is there any evidence anywhere in the world that modern technology can be made compatible with institutionalized jack-of-all-tradesism.

Marx takes up many more aspects of capitalistic economic life than we can deal with here. His single-minded purpose throughout is to show that in virtue of what capitalism is, in virtue of its being intrinsically contradictory, its development must be its dissolution: the more it fulfills itself and approaches its peak, the more it destroys itself and approaches its fall. He provides a remarkable summary of his understanding of the case, late in Volume I of *Capital*:

We saw in Part IV, when analysing the production of relative surplus-value: within the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productivity of labour are brought about at the cost of the individual labourer; all means for the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over, and exploitation of, the producers; they mutilate the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil; they estrange him from the intellectual potentialities of the labour-process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power; they distort the conditions under which he works, subject him during the labour-process to a despotism the more hateful for its meanness; they transform

his life-time into working-time, and drag his wife and child beneath the wheels of the juggernaut of capital. But all methods for the production of surplus value are at the same time methods of accumulation; and every extension of accumulation becomes again a means for the development of those methods. It follows therefore that in proportion as capital accumulates, the lot of the labourer, be his payment high or low, must grow worse. The law, finally, that always equilibrates the relative surplus-population, or industrial reserve army, to the extent and energy of accumulation, this law rivets the labourer to capital more firmly than the wedges of Vulcan did Prometheus to the rock. It establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, *i.e.*, on the side of the class that produces its own product in the form of capital.<sup>10</sup>

Marx believed that when, at last, the bourgeoisie had been reduced for the most part to proletarianism by savage competition, and the proletariat had been reduced to stark poverty by the laws of accumulation and profiting, then the uprising would occur and mankind would stand on the eve of history.<sup>11</sup> It is not going too far to assert that Marx's economics consists of the attempt to show how that fateful transformation is implicit in the labor theory of value as concretized in the practices of capitalism.

Whether or how far these doctrines of Marx are sound is a question of more than ordinary interest to the world. It arises in two parts: whether what Marx regarded as inevitable is so; and whether the premises of his system are acceptable. These questions we must now take up.

Marx's predictions are on two subjects—the fate of capitalism and the character of socialist society. On the former he is at great length, as we have seen, and to a large extent he predicts incorrectly. A century after he came to his conclusions, it is fair to deny that the introduction of machinery must lead to lengthening of the working day, that there must be massive, growing, technological unemployment, that the bourgeoisie must be proletarianized and the proletariat pauperized, and that socialism is the culmination of capitalism. Marx's predictions were based upon the belief that an economic order has a life and being of its own, that it resembles the articulation of inert parts, and that when it is somehow or other launched on its way, it functions mechanically, as little subject to change of direction as a bullet shot from a gun. Marx had a certain loathing for utilitarianism, but he was as prone as any utilitarian doctrinaire to liken social life to a syllogism. Logic is supremely universal, everywhere and at all times the same. It is expressive of reason,

but it has nothing to learn from prudence. Marx made concessions, but absolutely insufficient ones, to such simple and undialectical influences as laws—laws to limit the length of the working day, laws to encourage or compel collective bargaining, to enact workmen's compensation, progressive income taxation, unemployment insurance, old-age benefits, laws to regulate securities exchanges, to promote full employment, to protect competition, to control the money supply, to support agriculture, to relieve the sick, to suppress the adulteration of food, to compel the young to submit to be educated, to insure savings, and a thousand other laws, not the least of which is the law that puts lawmaking under the influence of the reigning multitudes that he mistook for a pauperized proletariat. Marx was an astute journalistic observer of political things, but in his teaching he conceded nothing significant to politics, *ie.*, to discretion, which he discounted as mere "reform." He postulated the economic man with as much narrow assurance as any political economist, if with a more brilliant rhetoric.

Marx's predictions are not only of the baleful kind. Occasionally he alludes to the character of life in the postcapitalistic epoch and gives brief sketches of the communist world. There is no way to test empirically his visions of socialism, because all existing socialist societies claim to be in a state of transition toward communism proper, and every disparity between the expectation and the reality is explained as temporary. Whether all such disparities are in truth temporary, or how many could be temporary, depends upon the soundness of the ground upon which Marx's expectations rested. We turn to that question in conclusion.

The ruling principle of Marxian socialist society is, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." This is a maxim fit to serve as the fundamental law among loyal, wise, and incorruptible friends, devoted to one another with an absolutely unselfish benevolence. Among such friends, not only would no individual seek his advantage at the expense of others, but the thought of doing so would never occur to him. In this sense, duty as duty would be transcended: what the mere sense of duty dictates to a man capable of selfishness would be the most spontaneous desire of a man as member of the friendly society. His duty would not appear to him as duty. Marxian society would be a society of billions of friends warmly joined in the rarest and most sensitive union of amity.

It is imaginable that there would be a great concourse of men living together without any threat of coercion to restrain them from offending each other, but that their uncoerced sociality would reflect not goodness but utter indifference, the extinction of every animating impulse. Marx

emphatically does not have this in mind: his socialists would be alive at the peak of all their powers, each abundantly active. His vision of life for the generality of mankind is what the ancient thinkers conceived as the highest possibility open to the wisest and the best—the mutual love of a few noble spirits, elevated above every petty desire, free from every trace of envy or worldly ambition, willingly sharing that invaluable good which does not pass away from its possessor when he bestows it upon another and which is multiplied when it is divided, that good being wisdom. The notion of the quintessence of justice materializing among the wise is intelligible, for wisdom excites the admiration that generates love, and wisdom is a good for which men cannot contend invidiously but only harmoniously. The conditions for rational benevolence would be fully met among the few who desire a good the pursuit of which cannot corrupt. The perfect society is the society, then, in which philosophy as the rule of life would become indistinguishable from justice, which also is the rule of life. In the perfect society, justice would administer itself, and it would therefore be perfectly pure because untainted by the need to coerce, to punish, or to deceive. The disappearance of justice into philosophy might be said to be equivalent to the disappearance of the political in the philosophic.

The perfect society could not be described except on the premise that there is such a thing as philosophy, that a few men take it to be the greatest good, that more than a few never can or will take it to be so, and that therefore it is in the nature of things that justice and political society or government will not dissolve into philosophy. Marxism dreams of the disappearance of justice and political society—not in philosophy, it goes without saying, but in rational economics, and therefore for the mass of humanity, not merely for the infinitesimal few.

The economic system that would be approved as rational by Marx would of course not be the liberal economy in which the "economic man" finds free scope for his "rationality." That rationality, which is in fact only self-interested calculation, is thought by Marx to be infected with contradiction. A self-contradicting rationality would appropriately serve as the spring of action in a system that seeks prosperity through poverty, freedom through subordination, and the common good through the emancipation of self-preference.

Pre-Marxian, or at any rate pre-Hegelian, political philosophy, both ancient and modern, was characterized by a certain moderation that allowed it to approve regimes which achieve reason through myth, freedom through coercion, or sociality through selfishness. Wayward and unreflective as men are, they may still be made amenable to social life if they can be brought under the guidance either of well-disposed

men or of cunning institutions that play men's lower motives off against each other to a salutary outcome. In either case the end or outcome was conceived to be of utmost importance, apart from such considerations as whether the end is given by nature, or whether it justifies the means. How far Marx was affected by the tendency of Kant to depreciate the mere ends we cannot here consider; but it is certain that Marx repudiated the willingness of the ancient and the eagerness of the modern traditions to make peace with, though not to surrender to the weaknesses of human nature, and to be content with society consisting of men as they are. Marx dreamed of that human condition in which good ends would be sought by good men using only good means and responding to (because possessing) only good motives. The basis or presupposition of his dream was the generation of a new man, or the regeneration of man—and the instrument of regeneration would be the rational economy rightly understood.

Unexpectedly, we now see coming into view a ground of agreement between ancients and pre-Marxian moderns on this most important point: political life rests upon the imperfection of man and continues to exist because human nature rules out the elevation of all men to the level of excellence. The connection between civil government and man's imperfection is expressed by Rousseau, for example, in the form of the distinction between state and society: men can be social while uncorrupted, but in political community they prey and are preyed upon by one another.<sup>12</sup> At the beginning of *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine wrote, "Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively* by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively* by restraining our vices. . . . The first is a patron, the last a punisher."<sup>13</sup>

Rousseau may be said to have suggested, via the doctrine of the perfectibility of man, that government may be more and more replaced by society: in the perfect freedom of self-government, coercion loses most of its sting. But Rousseau did not at all suppose the utter collapse of government into society, for he did not suppose that all men would become philosophic, nor that there is any perfect substitute for the full rationality of men that would render coercion and rhetoric of all kinds, *i.e.*, political life, dispensable. He did not, in brief, expect ordinary selfishness simply to disappear from among the generality of men.

What in Rousseau was a limited suggestion, although an emphatic one, came to be the dogmatic core of a confident prognosis, a strident propaganda, and a revolutionary incitation in Marx: the state or political order will wholly wither away, and homogeneous mankind will live

socially under the rule of absolute benevolence—from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. No longer will duty be performed incidentally to the pursuit of selfish interest. The link between duty and interest, which is to say the subordination of duty to interest, will be broken for once and all by the abolition of the categories "duty" and "interest." They will be abolished by the revision of the property relations, by the inauguration of a new economics which will bring on the full perfection of human nature via the transcendence of production for exchange.

In barest outline, Marx's radicalization of Rousseau can be said to rest upon the supersession of philosophic reason by historic reason. Philosophic reason, the intelligence of individual human beings, being unequally present among men, political society with coercion and rhetoric cannot be dispensed with if calamity is to be avoided. So the philosophic tradition believed. Marx's teaching is that there is a reason inherent in the course of history: History abhors a contradiction as profoundly as nature was ever thought to abhor a vacuum. Whether a contradiction means more than a clash of interests, we are not told. In any case, the unviability of every individual contradiction is transformed by the philosophy of history into the unviability of contradiction simply. The philosophy of history tries to communicate its confidence that contradiction must wipe itself out, working through the discontents of men afflicted with the symptoms of the contradictions that exist in society. The progressive resolution of contradictions, and the movement of man toward the condition free of contradiction deserves to be called the expression of historic reason. It supersedes or overcomes the philosophic reason, or the intelligence of individual men, not only in the obvious sense that, through the historic evolution of human nature, the unequal distribution of intelligence will cease to have political relevance. When the new breed of man is generated by the common ownership of the means of production, all the old (natural) categories of right will fall before the logic of history, and subphilosophic men will live in uncoerced and myth-free (*i.e.*, perfectly rational) society, as only the rarest of men were thought to be able to do, but even more emancipately than the rarest, who never had the benefit of the perfect environment. The multitudes of men will be conditioned to reach the heights by abundance of goods produced and distributed without any opposition of interest. Marx appears to believe that, if men are divided by scarcity, they would be united by abundance. We would be readier to be convinced of this if there were reason to believe that men will some day be indistinguishable from the grazing herbivores.

Marxism is famous for looking forward to the end not only of political life but also of religion. Religion is the belief in the existence of a realm of the whole where there is a rectification for every defect in the terrestrial world. Here there is death, there life. Here iniquity goes unseen or unpunished, there it is recorded and retributed; or if it is beyond human punishment, it receives divine punishment even here below. The goodness that is ignored or mocked on earth is accounted and honored in heaven. The belief that the whole is or tends to be good can be maintained even if the visible part of the whole is imperfect, by arguing that the invisible part perfectly makes up the deficiencies present to our view. We would be led far out of our way if we attempted to compare the teachings of the theological and the philosophic traditions with respect to this question; but we may observe that the ancient philosophic tradition also taught that nature as a whole is good. Yet it is not so unequivocally good as to render superfluous the coercion and rhetoric that support political life; thus the goodness of nature as a whole does not permeate all of human life. On this fundamental point there is a ground of agreement between ancient philosophy and revealed religion: for all practical purposes, the goodness of the whole, whether the whole is the sum of the natural and the supernatural, or the complex of form and matter in nature itself, cannot be translated or transformed into the goodness of man's common life. In the case of modern political philosophy, the goodness of nature as a whole was characteristically not asserted; teleology was of course rejected, and the wretchedness of the state of nature strongly argued. Nature required to be rectified, or rather to be governed; and the clue to the government of nature was to be found in the laws of nature—the laws of science and the laws of politics and economics. The belief in the possibility of conquering or governing nature perhaps opened the way to the Marxian notion that the perfection of human life is possible, and not only possible but foreseeable, in the classless society. But as has been seen, that summation was not explicit in the teaching of pre-Marxian modern political philosophy. Not before Marx asserted the historicity of nature itself,<sup>28</sup> the absolute perfectibility of human nature under the influence of economic conditions, was it supposed that political life and religion must vanish and be replaced by uncoerced, rational society.

We are led, through the doctrines of Marxism, to reconsider some commonly held views. One is that there is a deep hostility between philosophy and political society because philosophy, by its unconfined questioning, eventually exposes the polity itself to the blasts of skepticism; while the body politic, suspicious of theories and prone to Philistinism, always threatens the thinking sort of men with contempt or worse.

But however well-founded the mutual suspicions might be, we observe that philosophy, certainly classical political philosophy, argues that man is by his nature political and that political society is the truly human society taking into view the characteristics of men generally. Philosophy has been thought to threaten politics; we see that in fact it defended politics, and that the anticipation of the end of political life had to await the supersession of philosophy by history—that is, by the doctrine of the emendation of Nature.

Another opinion brought under revision is that between philosophy and religion there is in principle war to the death, the one asserting the supremacy of reason, the other of faith. We have seen that philosophy can have, and did for ages have, a certain common ground with religion; both had views of nature that did not lead to the expectation of perfect society within the natural order. The theoretical discountenancing of religion in the name of an aspiration toward perfect society had to await the supersession of philosophy by history.

We might summarize by saying that the replacement of philosophy by history was the condition for the replacement of politics and religion by society and economics. This is the kernel of Marxism.

Marxism is not simply another political system, or one more ideology. It proposes nothing less than the end of the West—of political life, philosophy, and religion—as the foregoing summary indicates. Perhaps we should look forward with eager anticipation to the end of the West—but we cannot know whether we should without rationally examining the project for strangling philosophy. That rational examination is part of the philosophic quest itself. We cannot free ourselves of philosophy, if only because we must philosophize to pass judgment on philosophy. We begin to suspect the soundness of the anthropilosophic historicism of Marx. Observing its weakness prepares us to concede that history can make room for spiritually impoverished societies: the viability of Marxist nations is a sign not of the soundness of Marx's prophecy but of the unsoundness of the sanguine historicism on which he based it. We have every right to conclude that history is the opiate of the masses.

## NOTES

1. Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, ii. 1. 2nd observation.
2. *Capital* (New York: Modern Library, n.d.), I, 834, n.1. Copyright by the Modern Library. Pagination is the same in the edition published by Charles H. Kerr & Co. The reference is to Burke's "Thoughts and Details on Scarcity."
3. Cf. Engels' *Herr Eugen Dühr-*



- ing's Revolution in Science* [Anti-Dühring], x. 1: "... ideology, the deduction of reality not from itself but from its mental image." Also Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach*, iv. 7th par. From the end: "... ideology, that is, occupation with thoughts as with independent entities."
4. "On the Jewish Question," in *Selected Essays by Karl Marx*, trans. H. J. Stenning (New York: International Publishers, 1926), pp. 55-56.
5. From K. Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957).
6. David Ricardo, *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, i. 1.
7. See, for example, *Capital*, i (p. 45).
8. *Ibid.*, IV. xv. 3 (p. 445).
9. *Ibid.*, 9 (p. 534).
10. *Ibid.*, xv. 4 (pp. 708-9).
11. See *ibid.*, xxxii.
12. Cf. the sentence with which Montesquieu begins I. iii of *The Spirit of the Laws*.
13. See above, p. 811.

## READINGS

- A. Marx, Karl, and Engels, Friedrich. *The Communist Manifesto*. Marx, Karl, and Engels, Friedrich. *The German Ideology*. Ed. R. Pascal. New York: International Publishers, 1939. Part I.
- Marx, Karl. *Theses on Feuerbach*. Marx, Karl. *Capital*. New York: Modern Library, n. d. Bk I, part I, chap. i, secs 1, 2, 4.
- B. Engels, Friedrich. *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of German Classical Philosophy*. Ed. C. F. Dutt. New York: International Publishers, n. d. Chap. iv "Dialectical Materialism."
- Engels, Friedrich. *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* (*Anti-Dühring*). Trans. E. Burns. Ed. C. F. Dutt. New York: International Publishers, 1935. Part I "Philosophy."

## FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

1844-1900

The young Nietzsche thought of the philosopher as a physician of culture. His own philosophy is both a diagnosis of the sickness or crisis of his time, the nineteenth century, and the search for a cure. In his first published book, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), Nietzsche placed his hope in a revival of German culture through the music of Richard Wagner. His second book, *Untimely Considerations*, known in English as *Thoughts Out of Season*, consists of four essays published separately between 1873 and 1876. One of these is again a tribute to Wagner. Nietzsche soon ceased to believe in the cure he had suggested, repudiating Wagner and losing faith in the possibility of a German cultural revival. He thus entered into the second stage of his development, a stage characterized by disillusionment and a turning to Western positivism. Symbolic of this is the dedication of his third book, *Human, All-too-Human* (1879) to Voltaire.<sup>1</sup> Nietzsche's final position is articulated in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (its four parts were written and published between 1883 and 1885) and the books following it. Nietzsche, however, never repudiated but only deepened the view of his time as sick and critical, a view which is to be found in the writings of his first stage of development; and the problems he raised at this stage are problems with which he never ceased to wrestle. One is, therefore, justified in beginning an exposition of Nietzsche's political philosophy with a discussion of one of his earlier writings, the second essay of *Thoughts Out of Season*.

The title of the essay, which was published in 1874, may be translated as "Of the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life"; in English it is known as *The Use and Abuse of History*.<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche's