Presentation by Raya Dunayevskaya: "Hegel, Marx, Lenin, Fanon and the Dialectics of Liberation Today" -- December 5, 1976

Good evening.

We want to begin immediately with both masses in motion and the self-determination of the Idea, in order to stress that there is a single dialectical process in both thought and activity. And that single dialectical process is the Absolute Method, that is, the dialectical method of revolution -- whether in thought, or in fact -- and in both is what we're after.

And in order to stress that fact, it is important to see that even though Hegel was what he was -- a bourgeois philosopher, and the greatest that ever lived -- he was not as abstract as his great philosophic works make him appear, if you follow only various stages of consciousness, or if you follow only the philosophic categories. In fact, every philosophic category stands for a strict period in history, all of which covers the vast amount of 2,500 years of history. (In other words, so far as Hegel is concerned, it all began 500 B.C. with Greek philosophy, and through the French Revolution, which is the period in which he lived.)

Now, because this single dialectical process is historic, and because I want you to see that it isn't something that Marx "added on" to what Hegel said, but is in Hegel, I want to begin with a quotation which explains, why, that is, a document, Hegel's statement that no idea is worth being called an idea unless it's an idea of freedom: "When individuals and nations have once got in their heads the concept of full-blown liberty, there is nothing like it in its uncontrollable strength, just because it is the very essence of mind, and that as its very actuality. The Greeks and Romans, Plato and Aristotle, even the Stoics, did not have it .... If to be aware of the idea -- to be aware, i.e., that men are aware of freedom as their essence, aim, and object -- is a matter of speculation, still this very idea itself is the actuality of men -- not something which they have, as men, but which they are." And this appears not in an inconsequential essay, but directly in his highest book, Philosophy of Mind.

Now: there has to be a reason for our study a lot more urgent than what is encompassed by the word "relevance" -- "Hegel's relevance for our day" -- and that is the TODAYNESS of the Hegelian dialectic, and of Marx's new continent of thought, that emerges out of two elements: both the movement from practice to theory and the movement from theory to practice. And in order to get it, to grasp it, not only at its roots, but its ramifications for our day, we have to grasp Marxism in its original state, in its original philosophy, which by no accident Marx called "a new Humanism". We must grasp this free from all distortions of Marxists, whether it's post WWI, or post WWII, or post Marx, (in other words, post Commune) -- and along with that we also have to get the origin and specificity of Hegelian dialectics, because again, it is no "accident" that Marxism is based on Hegelian dialectics, and that Marx considered that the source of all dialectics, his own included.

And for us, Marx's Humanism is on the basis of our day, which began in the '50's, with the upsurge for the first time ever from under totalitarian Communism -- the East German Revolution -- and this spread all through the globe, Latin America, Africa, and so forth. And the concrete specific form for our day of the Hegelian dialectic, and our original contribution, is Absolute as new beginnings.

Those three little

words -- as new beginnings -- tell you that it's our day and no other day, and we will have to come through and understand this -- not only because it's our original theoretic contribution, but because this is the reality of what happened in life, the momentous world historic events of the last two decades.

"Absolute as new beginnings"happened in life, when the Hungarian revolutionaries, and first the East Germans, brought Marx's Humanist essays from the dusty library shelves on to the historic stage of new freedom, and they were also so in thought -- maybe not quite the way we are saying it, though you will see that it's not too far removed -- "Absolute as new beginnings" was clear to those who recognized this passion for freedom and operated as revolutionaries. And I'm referring specifically to Franz Fanon.

There were two stages in Franz Fanon's development that concern us, and these are exactly in the two periods we are concerned with, the 1950's and the 1960's (and our own contribution is of course in the 1970's, even though we lived a great deal before then).

Now, something had emerged from below,with all these events occurring throughout East Europe, and the beginnings of the new African revolutions, and in thought what occurred was that Franz Fanon, in Black Skins, White Masks,had challenged Satre (even though he himself considered himself an Existentialist) on two grounds.

One is the section of BSWM where Fanon takes up "Hegel and the Negro Question". Now, you know that Hegel didn't take up the Negro question -- and that is exactly what Fanon said was wrong. What Hegel took up in the Phenomenology of Mind is the relationship of labor to the master. Hegel's great theory of alienation was that precisely because the slave was "nothing", and had to do everything the master said, had to do all the labor-- precisely through his labor, the slave got a mind of his own, an attitude to objectivity of his own -- a challenge to the person who was everything but who really had nothing. But Fanon said, nevertheless, these two opposites were not as totally Absolute as they would have been had Hegel considered the Black Dimension. Involved in this dialectic of the relationship of master to slave, as Hegel postulates it, was still the essence of some reciprocity -- somewhere on the way to a mind of your own, you would be able to force some recognition of yourself, as man, as woman, and not just as slave, from the master -- BUT, says Fanon, Hegel didn't consider the Black -- and it isn't the least bit true that the master is interested in the Black at all. The really Absolute, where there is no reciprocity, is this slave who in addition to being a slave, in addition to being the exploited labor, is Black, and is not at all recognized by the Other. Therefore, the dialectic would have to be much sharper, and see a certain transformation of reality which was deeper, than that of Hegel.

For example: In my age -- (I'm talking as if I were Franz Fanon) -- there is Satre, and he is Left, and he is a good friend, and he is trying to establish a new philosophy for our age, which he calls Existentialism. But look what he does with those three major categories of all of philosophy, Individual, Particular, and Universal. Now: there is a movement from the abstract Universal, through the Particular, supposedly to the concrete, the Individual,who would be absolutely free, and the only proof that the Universal was a reality and not just a thought. But what does Satre tell me in Black Orpheus? He tells me that Black is only a Particular, a minor term in these three terms.

So then Fanon does two things in this particular section("The Fact of Blackness"). One is that he quotes the other West Indian, Aimé Césaire, in which he tries to show the difference of the dialectic when it comes not from knowledge but from anguish: "Those who

invented neither gunpowder nor the compass/ Those who never learned to conquer steam or electricity/ Those who never explored the seas of the skies/ But they know the farthest corners of the land of anguish." And he goes on to explain that that is what makes them the revolutionaries, and what makes them strive for this philosophic expression as one of revolution. Whereupon he then quotes Satre, on Black being only a minor, particular term, and he says: "Satre was reminding me that my Blackness was only a minor term. In all truth, in all truth I tell you, my shoulders slipped out of the framework of the world, my feet could no longer feel the touch of the ground."

Now after this very beautiful thing, do you think Satre changed his mind? We will see what he became . But the point is the fact that at momentous historic moments what we call a passion for philosophy is actually the passion for freedom, which strives to acquire, to find, a philosophic expression that would not separate it from the transformation of reality. And when we look globally at something, we realize that it's no "accident" that here is '52, Franz Fanon writing this, and here is '53, the East German Revolution, and here is '53, Hegel's Absolute Idea being interpreted as the unity of theory and practice, the movement from practice to theory, on the part of those who were discovering Marxist-Humanism.

So what is the dialectic but the movement of both ideas and of masses in motion towards the transformation of reality? And this is in contrast to the lack of all method, which is reactionary, and what Hegel called the third attitude to objectivity.

We always speak -- and it's easy, because it's so nice to speak of revolutions, right? -- of how, under the impact of the French Revolution, Hegel had put to method the actual activity of masses in motion, the sans culottes in France, and so forth, and called it the dialectic. But in this period there was not only revolution, but counter-revolution, and we had not the millenium, but Napoleon. So why do we only talk of the response to the French Revolution, the discovery and development of the dialectical method in Hegel, and not speak about what happened on the question of counter-revolution, on the question of what Hegel himself called reactionary moves? And as the philosophic expression of this tendency, this specifically concerns Jacobi.

Now, in 1807, when he wrote the Phenomenology of Mind, he had, so to speak, laughed at Jacobi, but he didn't take him very seriously, or deal with him at great length. He mentions Jacobi in passing, as part of the culture of what's called the Beautiful Soul, where the people had already gained minds of their own, and they have civilization, and they have the Enlightenment, and they have culture -- and nobody's happy anyway. And instead of trying to find out where there was the rift between actuality and philosophy, the people began to say, My soul (the cultured ones) is beautiful, but these backward masses, they do not understand. So it is in passing that Hegel talks about Jacobi, as part of the Beautiful Soul, part of the Romantics he's denying, if you're really going to transform reality.

By 1812, when he writes Science of Logic, Hegel doesn't any longer just talk of Jacobi as the Beautiful Soul, (cause at that time that also included Schelling, he was just breaking with him/and all the Romantics up to his time). Now he does say, Perhaps you have already forgotten Jacobi, he was just a minor philosopher, nevertheless it's important to recognize what he represented. And there are two movements in Science of Logic: the historic and dialectical movement of the self-determination of the Idea, from Being to Essence to Notion, and there is the polemical movement -- in other words, he no sooner says something, like the first two paragraphs on Being and Nothingness, than he

is off for twenty long pages on every philosopher who had ever said something on these two categories that was quite different. So that in the polemical movement, you already see that even though he's denying any importance, he stopped.

Now: in the final year of his life, 1831 -- 1830 was the last thing we have from him, the final three syllogisms -- at this late point, Jacobi gets an entire section, the Third Attitude to Objectivity. What had happened in those 14 years that made Hegel change his mind? What prompted Hegel to devote an entire section to someone who was supposed to be so minor that he may have already been forgotten?

Well, you not only didn't have the millenium, you also had the first capitalist crisis, 1825. This was quite a revelation for classical political economy, which was always saying that the reason for the crisis is feudalism, our little crises are just feudal blemishes, as soon as we get rid of feudalism all will be happy. But now -- it isn't quite so. And Hegel sees that the movement isn't always upward and onward -- there is a retrogression. You come to a certain point, and instead of really transforming reality, and giving your life for it, suddenly you begin to say, It's really Faith, and go back. So that idea, that this late in life, after the Enlightenment, after the French Revolution, you can still say, Not philosophy, but Faith, God, let's go back to that -- that is the reactionary movement. And Hegel recognized this, and in 1914, in a much sharper way, Lenin recognized the same thing also, with the breakdown of the Second International -- Counter-revolution is within the revolution, something is crazy, and we really have to transform all this through revolutionary movement. So that we have to therefore keep in mind that in this single dialectical process , that revolutionary process, the lack of method, the lack of trying to see what you should actually do -- suddenly you're giving it back to Faith -- that is the reactionary movement.

So all of these beautiful syntheses that are supposed to be in Hegel -- the Absolute Knowledge of the Phenomenology of Mind as the unity of Science and History, the Absolute Idea in Science of Logic as the unity of Theory and Practice, and the Absolute Mind in Philosophy of Mind as the unity of the Objective . and the Subjective -- and yet, what happens, if there is really also retrogression? What is going to be done to stop it, to overcome it, to transcend it? And thus even before Marx had brought in a whole new continent of thought, and showed that it's all diremptions, and not syntheses at all, and spoke in clear language -- instead of just "contradictions", he spoke of class struggles, and so forth -- still there was an element of this in thought, in Hegel, and Hegel had recognized this by just saying, So-and-so thought so-and-so, and hitting on Jacobi as the person and the attitude that is shown when the revolution has not been transformed into a new society.

So we have, therefore, in this introductory presentation: the masses in motion, the self-determination of the Idea, to hear itself speak, and how it develops; we have the single dialectical process of both of them. And let us see where we actually get when we come to todayness, and try to recapture not only Marx, but also Hegel, and within Hegel capture what was just an element, just implicit, not quite clear -- because this Absolute Idea as new beginnings means we have seen something in Hegel that none others have seen, because they didn't live in our age, and each age brings out something new, in what the people from below have done, what has happened in the world historic events.

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Okay.

Naturally we won't be able to cover all of Hegel's works: and we will be emphasizing the Phenomenology of Mind, the Science of Logic, and the Philosophy of Mind -- and all these with Marx's original contributions, the Humanist essays and Capital. And we will look at each one of our age who has tried a new philosophy -- whether it's Satre, whether it's Lukacs, whether it's Adorno, whether it's Althusser -- and Althusser really goes backward! Compared to him, Bernstein was practically a revolutionary, Althusser wants to "drive Hegel back into the night", he really wants to do more than just get rid of the "dialectical scaffolding".

Let us now then see what is involved in the movement of Hegel's works.

You have the Phenomenology of Mind as different stages of consciousness: Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason. Then you go into Spirit, which is supposedly the new society, but you find out that Spirit too is in Self-Estrangement, and culture really transforms into opposite the relationship of reality to thought. And when you therefore rearise into Absolute Knowledge, there is something that is really abstract -- and Hegel thought so too, but he wanted to come to a certain conclusion.

Now, even though everyone, Marxists and non-Marxists,and people who don't believe in anything Hegel wrote, recognize that the Phenomenology is Hegel's greatest work, nevertheless, the truth is, that according to a mechanical view of things, the work is very chaotic. Hegel originally thought he was only writing on Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, that's all he had outlined, he had planned this as a little introduction to what he would write in Science of Logic, where he would write in actual scientific ie. philosophic categories -- but what happened is that the Phenomenology stretched for 800 pages! The point, however, is that the Phenomenology reflects both the movement in life -- in this case, the French Revolution -- and Hegel's disgust with his colleages, the philosopers, who were using all of the same old categories. Hegel was saying: For heaven's sake, look how the world has changed! We Germans just keep talking, but the French have really done everything: they've abolished the monarchy, they've abolished the republic -- or at least part-way -- they've gone through things and done it, and what have we done except talk? And so at this point -- loving the French and hating the Germans -- Hegel was even welcoming Napoleon, thinking, Well, at least he'll get rid of feudalism in Germany -- (he changed his mind later on). So that Hegel wasn't the least bit sad as Phenomenology of Mind went to press, and, as editor of a daily paper, he was also witnessing Napoleon ride into Germany.

Now: there is nothing that so excites Existentialists as Phenomenology of Mind;they have built their Existentialism on it -- or at least so they think. And they've tried to apply it. BUT: it is impossible, it is wrong -- (in addition to being impossible!) -- to try to apply Hegel. You have to see: if it is true what he describes, that there is a dual rhythm of revolution and counter-revolution, that there is a dual rhythm of thought and activity, if it emerges from below -- you have to work out the dialectic for your age, you can't "apply" it.

But everyone has tried to apply it. Marcuse, for example, has written on "The Conquest of the Unhappy Consciousness": you get very unhappy when feudalism falls, and you can't find a new place for yourself in the new society. And this is what he does, instead of following, what were the stages of the dialectic, which made Hegel go from the relationship of master and servant, through the Unhappy Consciousness.* And so Marcuse has a section in One-Dimensional Man, (which actually shows his one-dimensional thought),

*Change of tape here, and some material missed. - a few sentences on Stoicism and slavery

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and it's beautiful -- you can laugh your head off. It's about the Rand Corporation, and how they have a big map showing who would be overthrown, who would be destroyed, if there was an A-Bomb, and an H-Bomb, and so forth, and everyone's supposed to be so unhappy, here we are in a society that could just destroy mankind altogether; and then after they get through with the lecture, they all sit down and have coffee , in this beautiful room, and discuss beautiful things. But is that the conquest of the Unhappy Consciousness? That is certainly not what Hegel meant, nor can you see any dialectical development. Because if you're opposed to that -- and certainly Marcuse was opposed to that -- you can only get to the Great Refusal -- and that is not Hegelian.

Take Marleau-Ponty, and he said that the greatest work since the Phenomenology of Mind is Capital. But Capital is not the application, so to speak, of the Phenomenology . Satre says that the fetishism of commodities, in Chapter 1 of Capital, is the greatest thing, but it just begins our trouble. Each one -- even Engels -- by trying to apply the relationship of Hegel to Marx, instead of seeing how each arose in its time, on the basis of the dialectic, and what you have to do is recreate the dialectic for your age -- said that Being and Essence and Notion are equivalent to the sections in Capital: commodity and exchange value, the market (Being); the production process, the actual exploitation (Essence); and the overthrow, the objective-subjective movement(Notion).

The point however is, when we will look at Chapter 1, that Marx had to create an entirely new continent of thought to develop all of those categories, plus other material that is very originally Marx and only Marx. Now the idea of trying to "apply" means that supposedly you are so unhappy with just abstract categories that you want to go immediately to the concrete; in fact, however, you haven't yet grasped the Hegelian dialectic.

Look at what Hegel does after he even reaches Absolute Knowledge! First of all there is the Golgotha of the Spirit -- so much for synthesis! He says it's so beautiful he makes you think you're up in Heaven, but it turns out that you've just been crucified. So he says, Don't worry about being crucified, this is just phenomenon, wait till you get to the real science, in the Science of Logic.

Now after 800 pages of the Phenomenology of Mind, and Spirit in Self-Estrangement, and so forth, he begins Science of Logic with the question, With what should one begin? as if he's just brought up this question.

He decides to begin with the abstract, Being, whether you think of it as God, the human being -- something quite abstract, and we won't develop that here.

But now let's look at a person who is a revolutionary, who isn't trying to "apply" Hegel, but is trying to figure out, what is his age, what is happening: Lenin.

Lenin reads the Science of Logic and gets very excited -- Oh my heavens! That Prussian philosopher, everything is self-transcendence, self-activity, self-development; what is this? This is real revolution. How come we never saw it before, or at least I didn't see it before? But when he comes to the end of the very first section , (in other words, being has Quality, Quantity, Measure), he gets to Measure and he gets even more excited, now he writes not just "self-development", but "Leaps! LEAPS! LEAPS!. So let's see for just a moment, what is the particular

section that Lenin was so crazy about.

(Incidentally, people are always mistaking "Quality", saying the transformation of Quantity into Quality. Quality is the first term, and that's, you're something, as against just nothing. Quantity is the bigger thing, 'cause now you're a lot of people, and the movement is to Measure, you now have so many Quantities that it becomes the Measure of man, the Measure of woman.)

Okay. The particular section that got Lenin so excited is where Hegel says: "The gradualness of arising is based upon the ideas that that which arises is already, sensibly or otherwise, actually there, and is imperceptible only on account of its smallness ... Understanding prefers to fancy identity and change to be of that indifferent and external kind which applies to the quantitative." In other words, Hegel is saying, If you think that gradual change is the same thing, so to speak, as a Revolution, you're crazy! It isn't true that if you only waited two more days, or if you had 1000 people instead of 100, you would really have a new quantity. The Measure will bring about such a Revolution that you will be on the threshold of an entirely new world, the world of Essence.

So Lenin, when he writes, "Leaps! LEAPS! LEAPS!" here, is thinking of something very concrete: This world is crazy! It's 1914, it's going to pieces, the world war has happened, and what the hell do my comrades in the Second International do about it? That original discussion with Bernstein, on "Evolution or Revolution", was poppycock, compared to what we're seeing now! So that when Lenin is ready to see Measure as the threshold of Essence and of the Revolution, he will break from within, and not only against something else, or think that it really was there and he didn't see it; and Lenin said, I had no right not to see it.

Now when you get to Essence, you can again be very abstract if you want to; you can take contradiction and strip it of both its objectivity, and what Marx said it was, the class struggle, and make it contradiction in the Maoist sense of -- anything -- that you will decide what is contradicted with something else. And when you get to the top of that book, you have the first appearance of the Absolute, but as Substance, in other words, it's God. So you've seen the actuality, and you've seen what was behind the phenomenal appearance, but Hegel says, Well, if you think you've got there, you're wrong. It's as high as Spinoza got. But so long as you don't see it developing and emerging from itself, and how it develops and transforms itself, you're not going to get there.

And now Lenin for the first time said, The opposition is not appearance and reality, because reality too must appear -- and this is the reality I face, this horrible world, with all my comrades capitulating. And he gained a new appreciation for the ideal as real, for the subjective and not just objective, for a new relationship of theory and practice, for the Doctrine of the Notion, which he decides is really the objective and subjective way of overcoming the old and establishing the new classless society.

Now: just as Hegel said, if he had to put all his philosophy in one single sentence, he would say that what distinguishes him from all others, is that the search for truth, the attempt to get to the Ultimate, is not just Substance, that is, a static thing, but Subject, self-creative and developing; so Marx had said that no matter what you do, there is only one thing that matters -- labor! that has produced everything. It is Subject, and not only an activity that produces, but the laborer, it is going to be the gravedigger of this

society. And therefore, we have to see, how could we, revolutionaries, use bourgeois terms -- commodity -- as if that's really it?-- Why don't we see that it's a fetish? And Marx had something to say on this, at the end of Chapter 1 of Capital.

But first I want to break down this idea of "application"; why was Engels wrong, or at least *not* fully appreciative of all that Marx had done in that chapter?

Okay. Take that Commodity chapter. The first three pages say every commodity is a use value -- you wear it, or you sleep in it, etc. -- and an exchange value. But, if you think that that's it, you're crazy! Marx is saying, It's true I won't be able to explain to you in full the nature of exploitation till we get to production processes, but what is it that creates the two-fold character of commodities, use-value and exchange-value? It is the two-fold character of labor -- and that is so important, that is my original contribution, so I must immediately in section 2 of this chapter talk about this.

Well. What is this two-fold character of labor that Marx is so proud of having discovered, that he insisted is his original contribution, what he did and no one else did? Labor, too, is a use-value -- concrete, specific -- you're a tailor, or a miner, or whatever, and you create something that you're able to create, and whoever buys what you create will buy it because it's useful to him. But how do you create value? How could all these different laborers just produce congealed labor? You say you never saw an abstract laborer? The capitalist did: it's his factory clock that pounds you all -- no matter what your specific ability is -- into so much socially necessary labor time. That's what makes this exchange of one thing for another possible, how much labor you put into this thing, and how much labor you put into that. Now: isn't that fantastic that you suddenly become an abstract laborer? So if it is the capitalist, if it is factory clock that pounds you down, and makes of your congealed labor, value -- could he have made of you a thing too? What are you selling? Your ability to labor. Can you take your hands out of your body? They wouldn't be any good then, they wouldn't be able to create anything. The point is, that of all the millions of commodities that are exchanged, there is only one that is alive, the living laborer, and when he or she gets into the factory, and that factory clock tells him what to produce -- yes! he becomes nothing but an appendage to a machine; that's what capitalism has done to you. So: the capitalist has transformed you into that appendage to a machine, and made you into abstract labor -- and gotten from you much more than you have been paid for! because you definitely are producing more than he pays you, you're going to produce as long as he tells you.

Now, incidentally: Hegel takes up 2,500 years?! In Chapter 1 of Capital, on commodities and the various forms of exchange value, Marx takes up 6000 years! He takes up every society that has ever existed, and what has been its measure -- what did they exchange, and how much labor went into it? And he brings it up to this final machine age, where the machine makes it so easy for you to be "abstract labor".

And Marx contrasts Aristotle, the greatest thinker of ancient society, to an ordinary worker, who, so to speak, knows "nothing". Marx says, Look at this Aristotle; he kept asking questions: How in the heck can a table get exchanged for a dress, get exchanged for a book -- what is the common denominator? And Marx says, Because this was a slave society -- and the free laborer didn't produce anything -- Aristotle couldn't think of the fact that what makes them all exchangeable is labor. So because you the laborer are producing -- even though you don't have all of Aristotle's great knowledge -- look how quickly you know the answer to those questions. And now the capitalist, with the machine, also knows.

And then at the end of this Chapter 1, he brings in the fetishism of commodities. He asks the simple

little question: How in the heck has everything got a commodity form? What is this fetish? Look! that table is made of wood, it s made as a table -- but it becomes a commodity to be exchanged-- suddenly it's a measure, suddenly it's something else -- this has more grotesque ideas than anything! And Marx even has a footnote, where he contrasts the difference between the wood and the table when it becomes a commodity and gets exchanged for something else -- to the Chinese Revolution, the Taiping Rebellion.

He says: Look at that. After the 1848 revolutions, we in Europe lost, and so now we're doing nothing, this is the quiescent '50's -- but what did the Chinese, who we think are "barbarians", do? The Taiping Rebellion. It's to encourage us not to be so dumb in the '60's, and to actually do something.

So we see that he brings in, first, Being -- the commodity as use-value and exchange-value; then we have Essence -- production, labor; and now we come to the Doctrine of the Notion -- all in one chapter! this first chapter on the "Fetishism of Commodities". And in Notion he says, What is the stupid form? I know what capitalism is, I know it's exploitation, so why do I use the form? And it turns out, that even when he finished the chapter, he didn't answer that single question -- What is the fetish? -- as simply as he did after the Paris Commune, saying, It's in the form itself. In other words, he was saying, Until you're free laborers, until you have a non-state like the Paris Commune, until you make your own decisions and say, so much I earn, and so much I do,such-and-such should be our labor, and no division between mental and manual labor and so forth -- until then, he couldn't answer that question, What makes it a fetish? And after the Paris Commune he could answer, The commodity form itself, the specificity of the capitalist system -- and it will be like this until we can rip this system up.

So here we have this tremendous Chapter 1 of Capital. And it is not an "application" of Hegel; Marx had found a whole new continent of thought. And in finding this new continent of thought, Marx found not only that labor is the source of all value, but that it is the Subject which will be the gravedigger of society -- and with labor as Subject, there will be a new classless society, where Humanism is its own end and its own form. And thus what Marx had said in 1844 as a young man, "just being enthusiastic", he is now saying at the end of Chapter 1.

Okay. Let's look at what Satre, Lukacs, and the others did; how they failed to recreate the dialectic for their age.

Let's first take Lukacs. Lukacs had made a quite great contribution in 1919, in "What is Orthodox Marxism?", by stating that it is just fantastic to disregard the origins in Hegel, to dismiss Hegel as a mystic and all that sort of thing. Marx couldn't have been without Hegel; and the dialectic means development through contradiction, not only at first negation -- that is, when you say no! and overthrow what is -- but on through second negativity, the establishment of something new.

However! Intellectuals are very funny, they get so in love with their own thought that they meanwhile forget all about the mass movement. And now the Second International has been destroyed, and you've shown that any kind of reformism that tries to pass as revolutionary but doesn't have the dialectic method is wrong, and you've shown the connection between economics and dialectics -- beautiful! But what does Lukacs do now? Well, Marx talked about the reification of labor -- the fetishism of commodities, and the fact that you become an appendage to a machine -- and now Lukacs wants to show that it's not only reification of labor, but reification of thought! So he doesn't want to use Marx's idea of false ideology -- what Marx says, that the capitalist

false ideology because he cannot see through these things, this is the Spirit still in Self-Estrongement, (and incidentally, those two last paragraphs, the footnotes, in Chapter 1, is the Spirit in Self-Estrongement) -- and Lukacs develops the reification of thought to such an extent, as if that is as important as reification of labor. But how could that change the world? In that case, what will you do? Belong to the Third International instead of the Second, in other words a political answer? What is it that you're arguing with? HOW WILL THAT CHANGE THE LIFE OF THE WORKER?

Well, Lukacs doesn't bother with that. And the tragedy is, not only did he capitulate to Stalinism, but for that one moment in his life when he broke from Stalinism -- in '56, in the Hungarian Revolution -- what he talked about was Democratic Socialism, and not a change in the actual conditions of labor. And when he comes to his greatest work, Social Ontology (we don't have it yet, but some of the sections were published in Telos), he comes back to the fact that once you supposedly have a workers' state, you don't have to worry anymore about the socially necessary labor time. That is, you have to produce, and it's okay, and once again you have absolutely no right, or no form of intercourse, or institutions or anything to count on.

Now. Satre comes to Poland and attacks the "frozen Marxism" of Lukacs. He's mad at Lukacs, (choses the wrong day to be mad at him, incidentally), because Lukacs had attacked Existentialism, and tried to rate Satre's Existentialism as if it's no different than Heidigger's. So here he comes to Eastern Europe, that has just made revolutions against Russian totalitarianism! and he says, "that frozen Marxism ..." and so forth. He says, I, Satre, have brought in the human element, and showed the greatness of the Individual, the Existential and not the Essential; and now this has to be reconquered by Marxism. And how does he reconquer it? It is in the fetishism of commodities, he says -- and he makes more mistakes here than you could wave a stick at. (Read my chapter on Satre in Philosophy and Revolution; I can't go into it all here.)

You see, everybody comes back to the fact that the workers are "backward", and they, the intellectuals, are so great. And Satre comes back to a new category that is even worse than the "backwardness of the workers" -- the "practico-inert": You're all really dumb, and you better do what the Party tells you, or what the State tells you, and so forth.

Now how does it happen that they all return to that one little thing: where is labor? and, where is the laborer? and, what is my role as the intellectual? I will quote from the end of the Satre chapter in P&R: " One would have thought that Satre, who returned to a work of philosophic rigor after he had become, or at least was in the process of bedoming, an adherent of Marx's Historical Materialism, would at least in theory attempt to end the bifurcation between subject and object, would concretize his project of 'going beyond' as the Subject appropriating objectivity, not vice versa. Instead, having laid a foundation for a metaphysic of Stalinism, Satre seems totally unconscious of the fact that his methodology is at the opposite pole, not from Communism, but from the Marxism of Marx. Despite all rhetoric about praxis, Satre's methodology does not emanate from praxis. Far from being any 'algebra of revolution', Satrean methodology is the abstraction which reduces history to illustrations and analogy .... The anti-Stalinist, anti-capitalist, revolutionary petty-bourgeois intellectual, himself the victim of the absolute division between mental and manual labor, the climax of centuries of division between philosophers and workers, seemed always ready to hand over the role of workers' self-emancipation to 'the Party', even though its 'philosophy' amounted to ordering the workers to work hard and harder .... The philosophy of existence

fails 'to merge' with Marxism because it has remained Subjectivity without a Subject, desire for revolution without the 'new forces, new passions' for revolution ..."

Now, it's these new forces and new passions for revolution that makes us return to Hegel's Absolute Idea as new beginnings. Even though we aren't, now, as active as we were, say, in the '60's, what is so great in our age is that we have reached a stage where we are trying to work out a new relationship of theory and practice, a new relationship of philosophy and revolution.

What are the new beginnings? For over twenty years now we have stressed the four forces of revolution -- workers, Blacks, youth, and women -- and not just as Force, but as Reason of revolution, but now, as against stressing a human force as Reason, we want to stress Reason as a force for revolution. You cannot subdivide, or divide in any way, the theory and the practice, and say it's only in the practice; there has to be a new unity of the two. So the "new beginning" means, What has happened in our lifetime? We want to take up, therefore, what happened in the last two decades, and see at which stage I was, so to speak, forced to rethink.

We have taken up Phenomenology of Mind and Science of Logic; now we're going to go into Philosophy of Mind, but I want to first say one concrete thing as to how I happened to go to those abstractions.

Lenin finished his work on the Science of Logic, and he was very happy that in the first half of the last paragraph, Hegel had said, We now go to Nature. Lenin says, Nature is Practice, and, Hoorah! Hegel is stretching a hand to Historical Materialism, he was a precursor of Historical Materialism. Now, that is true, but we have to look at where Lenin stopped; in other words, what was in the last half paragraph?

Okay.

Now, in '53, I was rereading this for different purposes -- and, you know, '53 was a lovely time for me, right? Stalin died! What could make me happier than that? So I'm in heaven, and thinking, Well, that must be a new stage of something or other, what will the masses do now? and all that sort of thing. So I come to where Lenin stopped; he says the last half paragraph is unimportant, after Hegel stretches his hand to Nature. I read the last half paragraph, and I write a letter about it; this is what I say: "But, my dear Vladimir Ilyitch, it is not true; the end of that page is important; we of 1953, we who have lived three decades after you and tried to absorb all you have left us, we can tell you that. Listen to the very next sentence from Hegel: 'But this determination is not a perfected becoming or a transition ...'. (In other words, Hegel is saying Nature is not a transition.) Remember how transition was everything to you in the days of Monopoly, the eve of socialism. Well, Hegel has passed beyond transition, he says this last determination 'the pure Idea, in which the determinateness or reality of the Notion is itself raised to the level of Notion, is an absolute liberation, having no further immediate determination which is not equally posited and equally Notion. Consequently there is no transition in this freedom .... The transition here therefore must rather be taken to mean that the Idea freely releases itself in absolute self-activity.' Where Lenin stressed the objectivity, we add the emphasis, 'personal and free'. (In other words, a quotation from the next sentence of Hegel.) Where Lenin had next emphasized materialism, we stress the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality. And where Lenin stopped a paragraph short of the end of the Logic, we proceed to show that Hegel's anticipation of Volumes 2 and 3 of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences was similar to Marx's anticipation in the General

Law of Capitalist Accumulation in Volume 1 of Capital. (Those of you who know Capital: In the last chapter, on the General Law of Capitalist Accumulation, he gives you very nearly everything in Volumes 2 and 3, right there, because he ventures to show that these new passions and new forces for the reconstruction of a new society will be human power as its own end.) We concluded that what Hegel is showing in the movement from Logic to Nature to Mind was this: the movement is from logical principle or theory, to Nature, or practice, and from practice not alone to theory, but to the new society which is its essence." Now, that was written in '53, and I then said, I must go to Philosophy of Mind. (In other words, after the Science of Logic, after Hegel finished the Doctrine of the Notion, he had the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, where he had first the Logic, then the Philosophy of Nature, then the Philosophy of Mind.)

Now, in the last year of his life, Hegel decided that something wasn't kosher, ending with Paragraph 574, So he said: We have three syllogisms; Logic-Nature-Mind is the first. Okay -- that sounds like he's merely repeating the titles of his books, doesn't it? That's what they are, the Logic, the Philosophy of Nature, and the Philosophy of Mind. BUT, what is more important, and shows the new here, is that Nature is the mediation, the middle term; it's therefore not Logic that's the most important, it's Nature, because mediation, dialectically, is both objective and subjective. Nature turns to Mind, and it looks back at Logic, but disregards it, because it's now turning to something else.

So I read this and say, Well! Hegel is not only stretching a hand to Nature, which is practice (and I'm willing to accept that from Lenin, and think it's great), but this syllogism shows that there is a movement from practice -- that's what I was trying to point out in '53 -- that is itself a form of theory. What is it that the East Germans, the Hungarians -- the whole of East Europe -- had been showing? They not only took Marx's Humanism from the archives and put that on the historic stage, but they made something new with Worker's Councils and decentralization of the State, and so forth. So this syllogism is showing that so far as Hegel was concerned, Nature is the central thing, and there is a movement from practice which is itself a form of theory.

But it simply isn't true that Hegel stops at this point, as we see immediately when we get to the second syllogism. The second syllogism is Nature -- Mind becomes the central thing, the mediation -- Logic. (And that shows he's not just mentioning his books, because now he's turning around their order.) Okay; what is important about making it that way?

Now, I'll tell you something fantastic. None of the Marxists had bothered with these three categories in the Philosophy of Mind -- because we already had a new continent of thought, Marxism, right? So there didn't seem to be any use to go back to abstraction, when Marx was so great in explaining exactly what the abstractions mean. But there is one advantage to an abstraction: if you meet a new epoch and a new crisis, a new transformation into opposite -- if it's too concrete, it just doesn't hold anymore. (You've now met Stalinism and not just the Second International; you're now meeting something else, and not just whatever it was before.) So therefore the absraction makes it easier to try and see what is new in your age, what does your age think about.

Now, the scholars also didn't pay any attention to these three syllogisms. I was quite shocked to find out that it was only in the mid-'60's that one of the finest, Maurer, takes these up. And here's what he's trying to do with that second syllogism: He says, Well, actually it shows that this is the syllogism for the Phenomenology of Mind (you see, that becomes Nature), and after all, Phenomenology of Mind isn't just phenomena, but a whole philosophy of history, it takes in 2,500 years of

history. Now: there's only one trouble in trying to appropriate this second syllogism for the Phenomenology of Mind: Why did Hegel make this great work of his so inconsequential by the time he wrote the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences? He only gives it one single section -- and under psychology, of all places! Consciousness, Self-Consciousness-- Reason only get two paragraphs! Hegel would have failed anyone who dared to say that that second syllogism was really the Phenomenology of Mind.

But let's look at what Hegel did before this. He took all the attitudes to objectivity: in other words, your thought, your relationship to the world, your trying to say -- Gee, I'm a Subject, this is an object, why in the hell is there all this fighting between us, or why don't I conquer it? I'm smarter than these things. And the first attitude to objectivity is Faith -- everything that was pre-Kantian or pre-empirical. Then the second attitude to objectivity is when you reach the Industrial Revolution in England, and the revolutionary philosophy of Kant, his introduction of dialectics. Now, if you were believing only in synthesis, your third attitude should be your dialectic, right? No! The third attitude to objectivity is the retrogression, once you have met a new crisis within that great big new beautiful civilized world of the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution and the Kantian dialectic.

So you see, Hegel is not wanting to give to Mind -- as great as it is, and as the mediation -- what Maurer now is saying. In other words, Hegel is now saying that by itself, as great as Mind is -- and it certainly is great -- it's like ordering somebody suddenly to walk on his head. So what is the use of trying to tell you to walk on your head? It isn't going to help, unless it is united with something -- and what is it going to be united with? If he was going to follow through by constantly turning the three categories around, then Logic would now become the mediation. And he spent all that time on the Science of Logic! but now he wants to throw Logic out altogether! That was just, so to speak, the extra part, for you to know the categories which would help you explain reality: now you really have to do something! So he throws all of it out, and he says, Well, it's really the Self-Thinking Idea, "the self-determination of the Idea, in which it alone is, is to hear itself speak."

Now, if we listen to what the Idea is, and we know that there is no difference between Idea and freedom, then it will be equally the nature of the fact, and the nature of cognition itself, and that is the form of getting to the transformation of reality, what Marx called the realization of philosophy, the realization of freedom. That's why Marx stuck so much to the dialectic. We're not going to throw philosophy out, we have to realize it; that is, instead of an idea of freedom, it has to become the reality. And this reality means that when the self-thinking Idea and the self-movement of masses unite, then and only then, will we have a new way to transform reality, a new philosophy, a new society.

We must begin, however, with Absolute Idea as new beginnings, and I want to end with that in the following way.

These three little words -- as new beginnings -- let's go through all of these Marxists that I was speaking about before, and see why they didn't get there.

Lukacs tried to say, Well, since we don't believe in Absolutes, let's see what Hegel meant; he meant the unity of theory and practice; so then the key is totality. Okay. Totality is very much superior to empiricism, it's very much superior to taking only one single question; totality means you look at the world as a whole, you look at the relationship between the Third World and the First World and the Second World, you look at the relationship of various ideas. But -- it isn't good enough. It's just totality as the opposite of single ideas,

single actions -- you know, a strike instead of a revolution. That's great, but it isn't going to give you any new ideas. We're living in a world that has seen the counter-revolution within the revolution, has seen the transformation of the first workers' state into its opposite, a state capitalist society, has seen the new that was brought with Mao, become its opposite -- because abstract idealism,(as, just the Chairman's Thought, and so forth), like abstract materialism, is vulgar, and can only help the bourgeoisie, it cannot possibly help the revolution or a new society. So, it is not that totality.

What did Satre say? The totalization -- he wants to make everything totalization. Okay; what did it bring him to, this totalization? It meant you are just a serial -- just a number, like waiting for a bus at a bus station, and you're 1 and you're 10, and so forth -- but you will get nowhere, because there's no difference between the two. So someone has to come in from the outside -- the Party -- to order you about -- and the Party is better than the State, or something. So it isn't totalization.

What did Adorno say? Now, Adorno was the greatest of the dialecticians -- so to speak, "pure dialectics". And he made a real mess of it! You know, I was never looking forward to anything so greatly as his Negative Dialectics. I was dumb enough to think that that meant dialectics of negativity! Hegel says there are two negations, and the second negation is the really positive, and Marx says that that's the new society; I thought that's what he would talk about. No. He is talking about negative dialectics because the fetishism is not just the commodity; he makes it now the fetishism of the concept. Conceptual fetishism: you've got to throw it out. What are you going to do next?

I talked to the Hegel Society of America, and there were quite a few Adorno-ites and Frankfurt School people, and they were trying to prove some of the better parts of Adorno. So I said, I'll quote you the good parts of Adorno.(from Aspects of the Hegelian Dialectic): "Subject-object cannot be dismissed as mere extravagance of logical absolutism ... in seeing through the latter as mere subjectivity, we have already passed beyond the speculative idealism ... cognition, if it is genuine, and more than simple duplication of the subjective -- (in other words, the photocopy theory of reality) -- must be the subject's objectivity." In other words, you have to believe, because you're living in this world and you want to transform it, that your subjectivity is really a reflection of this objectivity that you want to overcome and destroy, the other world. You don't think the other world is something opposite, except opposite to you in the sense of, that's what you have to transform; but this represents somebody's subjectivity, the subjectivity of the capitalist. Okay, good, that he said that? Why then, I add, the vulgar reduction of absolute negativity? Therein is the real tragedy of Adorno (and the Frankfurt School): the inescapable one-dimensionality of thought once you 'give up' subject; once you do not listen to the voices from below -- and they certainly were loud and clear and demanding in that decade of the mid-1950's to the mid-1960's; once you return to the ivory tower and reduce to your purpose what all this means, "the purpose (this is Adorno) of discussing key concepts of philosophic disciplines and centrally intervening in those disciplines ..."(What does that mean? You're going to just see that you decategorize all of these categories, and instead of having philosophy separate, and sociology separate, and economics separate, you'll make them all into one?) Irrestibly came the next step, the substitution of a permanent critique not alone for "absolute negativity", but for what is a lot more important, absolute, "permanent revolution".

Now, therefore: whether it's the totality as Lukacs saw it, the totalization as Satre explained it, the conceptual fetishism that Adorno developed -- we really have to begin the Absolute not only as a totality, but as a new beginning on the basis of what comes from the movement from below, as well as from the Idea, and it's that unity which will finally realize the Idea of Freedom as its Reality.

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