MARX, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND HUMANIZATION

by Donald Marvin Borchert

Men in many areas of the world are becoming increasingly concerned about building a more truly human society. This concern for humanization often implies an outright revolutionizing of social conditions. In these revolutionary times, a revisit to the thought of that paragon revolutionary, Karl Marx, might provide some insights germane to the present struggle to reconstruct society. It is with such a goal in mind that this brief survey of Karl Marx's views on social change has been undertaken. To achieve this task, Marx's views on social change in the *Manifesto* and post-*Manifesto* writings are first of all examined. Then his pre-*Manifesto* works are studied. Finally, on the basis of an evaluation of his perspective, a number of suggestions are offered relative to the contemporary task of humanization.

Marx's View concerning Social Change in the Manifesto and Post-Manifesto Writings

Perhaps the most accessible way "to get inside" the thought of Marx on this issue is to look at the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, first published in 1848.[1] In this document Marx makes clear that his goal for mankind is a Communist society which is to be inaugurated by a radical revolution executed by the proletariat. Marx is equally explicit in stating the theoretical foundation upon which he projects communism as the society of the future. In a vastly important passage of the *Manifesto* he observes: "The theoretical conclusions of the communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes."[2]

By these comments Marx is juxtaposing two different ways of making demands for social change. The first way, that of "the would-be universal reformer," may be called "critical idealism."[3] It is "idealism" in the sense that it involves a measuring of present social conditions by

Donald Marvin Borchert is assistant professor of philosophy at Ohio University. The analysis of Marx's thought in this article is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, which explores in detail Marx's writings.

means of a preconceived normative ideal. It is "critical" in that it involves a criticism (through words and/or action) of present conditions in order to bring them more in line with the preconceived ideal. The goal of the "critical idealist," then, is to realize or actualize the ideal. The "critical idealist" has a normative view of man, and he seeks to shape society according to that view. For him, the Communist society would be projected as the moral solution to a contemporary immoral society. This whole procedure of "critical idealism" functions with a type of moral necessity and is expressly rejected by Marx.

The second way may be called "scientific historico-economic analysis." This approach is "scientific" in that its analysis is precise and orderly, and its conclusions are generalizations, or laws, based on factual data. This method is "historico-economic analysis" in that it involves the discernment of the laws of historico-economic process, an analysis of present society in terms of those laws, and a prediction of the future conditions to which contemporary society is inexorably progressing. The "scientific historico-economic analyst" seeks to work with those laws in order to hasten, if possible, the realization of the inevitable. For him, the Communist society is projected not as a moral necessity, but as a historico-economic necessity: communism is not something that *ought* to be; it is something that *will* be. This point of view is explicitly adopted by Marx in the *Manifesto* and is reaffirmed in a number of important post-*Manifesto* works.[4]

Marx's laws of historico-economic process, which work with "iron necessity toward inevitable results,"[5] lend themselves to discussion under four major themes.

1. *The Class Struggle.* Marx looked at history from the standpoint of social production and discerned that the history of society is the history of class struggles.[6] Class struggles or antagonisms are, in essence, the "oppression" and "exploitation" of one class (usually the majority) by another class (usually the minority).[7] Class struggle means the existence of "oppressor and oppressed,"[8] and it is under such conditions that man has been related to man throughout the history of social production. These oppressor-oppressed relationships into which men enter in order to produce are given a variety of labels by Marx. For example, he calls them the "relations of production,"[9] the "conditions" of production,[10] the "mode of production," etc.[11] For purposes of this discussion, the latter term, "mode of production," has been adopted for the basic oppressor-oppressed relationship of social production.

In one sense the mode of production has never changed, and in another sense it has always been subject to change. The general charac-

ter of the mode of production has not changed: man has always related himself to man as exploiter to exploited. The specific character, however, has changed: who exploits, who is exploited, and how the exploitation is pursued—these have changed from age to age.[12]

Thus, when Marx writes at the beginning of the *Manifesto* that "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles,"[13] he means that society's history is the story of social production under the sign of oppression. That is, the mode of production which has hitherto been characteristic of man is one in which production has been "based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few."[14] This class struggle between oppressors and oppressed has been waged throughout history. It has issued at length either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society, by means of which new conditions of oppression were established, or in the ruin of the contending class, in which case the old conditions of oppression were consolidated.[15]

The class struggle, according to Marx, has reached a critical moment: the doom of the bourgeoisie is apparent, and with their fall the class war will be resolved.[16]

2. *The Primacy of the Economic Dimension of Society.* The second basic theme in Marx's theory is the notion that the economic substructure determines the entire social superstructure. In other words, the specific prevailing mode of production of a particular age determines all the other social structures and relations of that age.[17] All those structures and relations are reflections of the basic oppressor-oppressed relationship, and it is by means of them that the oppressing ruling class expresses and guarantees its interests.

Property relations, for example, are simply the prevailing mode of production expressed in legal terms—the legalization of the oppressor-oppressed relationship.[18]

Political power is simply the tool of the ruling class by means of which it keeps the oppressed masses in line.[19]

Man's consciousness (the very ideas he holds) is also simply a reflex of the prevailing mode of production. In other words, in jurisprudence, religion, and morality the ruling class projects its interests under such rubrics as universal human rights, civil rights, etc. But these universal human rights and ideas of morality, etc., are simply prejudices which cover up the interests of the ruling class.[20]

Thus, Marx would say that if you wish to understand a given society, then determine what is the basic economic oppressor-oppressed relationship, and immediately all other social structures will become crystal clear.

3. *The Dynamics of Social Change.* The review of Marx's theory under the two previous themes has shown that he regarded society's history as the history of class struggles (that is, the pursuit of social production under the sign of oppression), and society's social, political, and intellectual structures as reflections of the prevailing mode of production (which is the fundamental economic form that the oppressor-oppressed relationship, or class struggle, takes). Such, then, are the laws or principles which characterize the anatomy of any hitherto existing society.

What, now, are the principles which account for the replacement of one society by another? Why does one form of the class struggle yield to another? Marx found the answer not in the social superstructure (as would those who believed that a new religion would usher in a new society).[21] Instead, he discovered the reason in the economic substructure (of which the superstructure is a function). Marx discerned that the basis for a social revolution lies in the development of a conflict within the economic substructure: a conflict which can be resolved only by the adoption of a new mode of production. That conflict is the tension which arises between the developing productive forces and the prevailing mode of production.[22]

For example, the mode of production in feudal society was the guild system. This system, however, could not keep pace with the growing demands of the new markets ushered in by new productive forces (such as developments in transportation and communication which facilitated the growth of a world market). Accordingly, the guild system, which had been a means for the development of society's productive forces, became a fetter to the forces of production. The forces of production demanded a new mode of production within which to function. Therefore, the guild system had to yield to the manufacturing system: "division of labor between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labor in each single workshop."[23] Demands, however, continued to grow, and manufacturing in turn had to yield to giant, modern industry with its vast industrial armies of wage laborers ruled by the modern bourgeoisie.

Thus, an economic crisis involving the incompatibility of the forces of production and the mode of production is the precondition for social revolution. Such a situation is the sine qua non of social revolution, presumably because such a crisis marks the time when a challenging class has the economic foundation (that is, the reality, or certain possibility, of control of the forces of production) whereby it can transcend

the ruling class and inaugurate a new mode of production with a corresponding new social superstructure.

4. *The Doom of Bourgeois Society.* It is Marx's contention that within bourgeois, capitalistic society a radical conflict has been developing between the forces of production and the mode of production. That conflict spells the doom of bourgeois society.

It seems to have been one of Marx's primary intentions in the *Manifesto* and *Capital* to expose that contradiction within capitalism which necessitated its demise. Space does not permit a thorough statement of Marx's analysis of this contradiction. Only the following brief summary can be offered in this paper.[24]

According to Marx, the capitalistic mode of production consists of the wage laborers (those who own nothing save their labor power, which they are free to sell) vis-à-vis the capitalists (those who own the means of production and sustenance and are bent on increasing the sum of the values they possess through the purchase of other people's labor power). This mode of production, or oppressor-oppressed relationship, is selectively and *individually* rewarding: it is not society as a whole which gains from this mode of production but only a diminishing number of capitalists whose wealth is augmented while the number of persons who sink deeper into poverty and truncation increases.

Over against this selectively and *individually* rewarding mode of production stand the concentrated and *socialized* forces of production: scattered capitals have been concentrated through cutthroat competition among capitalists, which, in turn, has brought the workers into closer relation; the labor process has assumed a cooperative form; the instruments of labor have been transformed into those which are usable only in common; production has assumed international dimensions through the world market, which has brought men of widely scattered nations into contact. In short, the forces of production can now function only in so far as great armies of men work together. These socialized forces, however, are hampered by the individually rewarding mode of production. The capitalist, in his unrestrained desire to augment his wealth, not only overproduces, thereby leading to increasingly severe crises, but also progressively destroys the wage laborer upon whom his capital is founded. Accordingly, the concentrated and socialized forces of production are, so to speak, demanding a *socialized* or *communistic* mode of production within which to function. Such a mode of production will be established by the revolutionary proletariat. The capitalists have marshalled the proletariat into working armies, thereby schooling the working class concerning the power of united action. The capital-

ists have also exploited the proletariat to the point of extermination, thereby rendering it a revolutionary class. In short, the capitalists have produced their own "gravediggers."[25]

Such, then, are some of the basic features of Marx's laws of historico-economic process, according to which communism is the inevitable solution toward which the contradictions in contemporary bourgeois society are inexorably driving. When the proletarian revolution breaks with all its fury upon bourgeois society, the mode of production will become socialized, the class struggle will end with the once-for-all abolition of an exploiting class, and the social superstructure will be entirely reshaped in accordance with the socialized mode of production. This new society will be the Communist society. To hasten the arrival of this inevitable goal of human history, Marx summons the proletariat to unite, and this summons he issues as a "scientific historico-economic analyst."

Since "scientific historico-economic analysis" is Marx's explicitly assumed stance, it is rather disconcerting to find him making comments in the *Manifesto* and post-*Manifesto* writings, which seem to be radically out of place in scientific treatises. For example, he consistently talks about the class struggle in terms of a battle between "oppressors" and "oppressed."[26] He describes the condition of the proletariat in terms of "slavery."[27] He says that the workers are "abusively exploited" by the oppressing class.[28] He heaps terms of derogation upon the bourgeoisie: he calls them "selfish,"[29] "filthy,"[30] and "vile,"[31] and excoriates them as "vampires" and "werewolves."[32] In addition, he speaks of the Communist society as an environment in which every individual will achieve "personal fulfillment."[33]

These remarks are too tightly woven into the fabric of Marx's entire discussion to permit them to be dismissed as mere expletives. Yet, remarks such as these which employ concepts of oppression, slavery, abusive exploitation, etc., are alien to the universe of discourse proper to the scientist qua scientist. They are value judgments and presuppose some sort of a norm on the basis of which certain social conditions may be called slavish or abusive, etc. Such a norm does seem to exist in the *Manifesto* and post-*Manifesto* writings and can be pieced together on the basis of a number of important passages.[34] It would seem from these passages that Marx considers man to be "a social being whose life-activity is free, conscious labor." It would seem further that on the basis of that norm, Marx discerns and condemns those features of human existence which thwart and damage man's fulfillment as a social being and a free, conscious laborer. Also on the basis of that norm,

Marx apparently calls for the realization of a society which will promote universal human fulfillment. Such a demand for social change, however, is characteristic of "critical idealism."

It seems, therefore, that Marx's overall presentation contradicts his contention that his demand for social change is rooted solely in the laws of "scientific historico-economic analysis." In order to make sense out of Marx's entire presentation, it seems necessary, accordingly, to conclude that there are two perspectives evident in his thought. First, there is the *patent* perspective: "scientific historico-economic analysis" with its laws of social development, which Marx explicitly and overtly acknowledges. Second, there is the *latent* perspective: "critical idealism" with its normative view of man, which Marx explicitly rejects but covertly employs.

These two perspectives are closely interwoven by Marx and are presented as if they comprise a unified view of historical development which will necessarily culminate in the Communist society. The one perspective depicts historical development in terms of conflict between the forces of production and the mode of production, which increases in scope and intensity until a final resolution is forthcoming in the birth of communism. The other perspective presents historical development in terms of increasing dehumanization of man by man until this proletarianization reaches such an extremity that all conditions for such dehumanization are swept away and true humanity is born with the advent of the new Communist society. In the one perspective communism is projected as a scientific historico-economic necessity. In the other perspective communism is projected as a moral necessity. The proletariat is presented as the bearer of both these necessities: as the tool of historico-economic laws and as the conscious executor of moral judgment.

Marx's View concerning Social Change in the Pre-Manifesto Writings

The combination of patent "scientific historico-economic analysis" and latent "critical idealism" which is to be found in the writings of the mature Marx was not always characteristic of Marx's thought. In his youth, he seems to have passed through at least four stages on the way toward assuming his mature stance, which is represented in the *Manifesto* and subsequent writings.

1. The first stage may be called the "Seeds of Idealism" and refers to Marx's youthful thought prior to his matriculation at the University of Berlin in 1836. This stage of Marx's life developed in the shadow of

two men: his father, Heinrich Marx, and his future father-in-law, Ludwig von Westphalen. Both of these men cherished virile and optimistic views of human nature; and both of them seem to have nurtured a similar view of human nature in the young Karl.[35]

Accordingly, when Marx wrote the examination essays which permitted him to proceed to university in 1835, there is evident in his writing a normative view of man—aspects of which can be traced in most of his future major writings. In one of his essays, presented under the title "Consideration of a Youth on the Occasion of the Selection of a Career," Marx indicates that honor and dignity are essential dimensions of a worthy vocation. Such honor and dignity are incompatible, says Marx, with a person's career rendering him a servile tool, but they demand independent creativity and a personal self-fulfillment which is inextricably united with the fulfillment of the whole community.[36] Marx's other essays reveal a similar normative view of man.[37] It was this view of man that Marx carried with him to the University of Berlin in 1836; and it was there that his thought advanced to the second stage.

2. The second stage may be called the "Emergence of 'Critical Idealism.' " Marx went to the University of Berlin with an idealistic but not fully defined view of man. That view seems to have received shape and philosophical substance through an encounter with Hegelian philosophy. At the same time that Marx's youthful idealism received this shaping, it seems to have been set within the structure of the "critical idealism" of the Young Hegelians.[38]

According to Hegel, self-consciousness is, by definition, a basic aspect of God's (or Spirit's) nature. For God to be fully God, therefore, he must *know* himself to be God. To know himself as God, however, he must be external to himself; he must become the object of his own knowing process; he must assume concrete, objective form. In other words, God must create; and he creates the space-time world. Creation, then, is simply God projecting himself in order to become the object of his own knowing process. The story of the world's development is therefore the story of God's struggle within matter to come to self-consciousness, to come to the realization that he is God. Hegel's attention is directed particularly toward man because man in the development of his self-knowledge is on the brink of making the discovery that God has been striving to achieve for centuries. In the human knowing situation, man, the knowing subject, encounters the objective world. In effect, however, this subject-object encounter is really God encountering himself. Man, however, does not perceive this great truth. He looks at the world of objects as things which are foreign, alien, hostile,

and different from him; but he is, at least, conscious of himself and the world of objects—which is a step in the right direction. It is in the person of Hegel that the great truth has been finally discovered: the world of objects is really God; man is really God; in short, everything is God. In Hegel, God has finally achieved self-consciousness.

Hegel's philosophy constitutes, in effect, the deification of man and his environment. This deification, however, could be construed in at least two different ways. On the one hand, if man and his environment are regarded as divine, then the status quo must be the best of all possible situations. This was the point of view that Hegel himself seems to have followed, and the one which a group of his disciples espoused. On the other hand, Hegel's philosophy could be interpreted as a call to revolution. If man and his environment are regarded as inherently divine, and if present reality is seen to contradict that inherent divinity, then Hegelian philosophy becomes a call to make man's present situation more consonant with his inherent deity. This revolutionary bent was followed by the so-called Left-Wing or Young Hegelians. Their slogan was the call "to realize philosophy," that is, to make society conform to the pattern of man and society described in Hegelian philosophy. The perspective of these Young Hegelians was "critical idealism": they had a normative view of man which served as judge and goal of existence. Their method to achieve the desired transformation of society was rigorous intellectual criticism.

Marx became a convert of the Young Hegelians and adopted the posture of a "critical idealist."[39] Within this group Marx was particularly influenced by Ludwig Feuerbach. Feuerbach argued that Hegel had described reality correctly, but that he had mystified things by making God the agent of creation and production. Hegel said that God makes man. Actually, said Feuerbach, the reverse is the case: man makes God. Accordingly, if you invert Hegel's system you get a true picture of reality: man produces the gods, civilizations, etc. Man, not God, is the key producer and creator. Thus, whereas Hegel saw the subject-object relationship as God-in-man standing over against God-in-things, and thereby as God being alienated from himself, Feuerbach regarded God as the creative powers of man projected up into the sky and thereby standing over against man as something alien. In Hegel's thought God is alienated from himself in order to achieve self-knowledge. In Feuerbach's thought God is really a projection of man in which man is alienated from himself, and such alienation must be overcome.

Marx adopted Feuerbach's point of view, but, whereas Feuerbach

saw human alienation primarily in the religious dimension, Marx went on to see human alienation in all facets of life. Furthermore, whereas Feuerbach thought human alienation could be overcome by better thinking (that is, simply through the recognition that God is a projection of man), Marx argued that human alienation can be overcome only by a material revolution of social conditions (since Marx saw alienation in all realms of society, and not just in the religious dimension).[40]

Armed with what he had learned from the Young Hegelians and Feuerbach, Marx set about to reinterpret Hegel's philosophy on the basis of man rather than on the basis of God in order to expose the many facets of human alienation. That effort resulted eventually in the writing of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844,* which constitute the next stage in the development of Marx's thought.

3. This third stage may be called the "Emergence of Scientific Historico-Economic Analysis." In seeking to explore the various facets of human alienation, Marx eventually engaged in a study of the economic realm. It seems that he was immersing himself in such a study in 1844 when he reached a vastly important insight. Hegel had talked about production: God produced the world and man in order to achieve self-knowledge. Marx, following Feuerbach, had inverted Hegelianism so that divine production became human production. For Marx, it was man who produced his world and who made himself what he was. That production was, however, under the sign of alienation. Now, as Marx studied economics—which also talks about production—he reached the conclusion that Hegel was really an economist because he had analyzed the process of production. Hegel, however, had mystified the whole discussion through the priority he had given to the concept of God. Marx, therefore, concluded that the Hegelian view of the productive process under the sign of alienation is the clue for understanding economics.[41] Accordingly, Marx set about to interpret economics on the basis of the Hegelian category of alienation. His efforts resulted in the writing of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts.*

In those *Manuscripts,* "scientific historico-economic analysis" emerges as Marx's explicit point of view. For the first time he affirms the posture of a scientist. In the preface to the *Manuscripts* he writes: "It is hardly necessary to assure the reader who is familiar with political economy that my conclusions are the fruit of an entirely empirical analysis, based upon a careful critical study of political economy."[42] Having assumed this methodology, Marx proceeds in the first fifty pages of the *Manuscripts* to examine the data of economics in order to show that the

worker is becoming increasingly poorer as the power and extent of his production increases, and that society is gradually being polarized into two classes—the propertyless workers and the property-owning capitalists. Marx then launches into a discussion of alienated labor in order to demonstrate the necessary connections between the various factors of the economy.[43] He indicates that a basic fact is the economic impoverishment of the worker, implying that the worker is separated from his product, which stands over against him as something *alien,* as something foreign.[44] Having mentioned alienation, Marx feels at liberty to enter into a full-blown discussion of alienation in Hegelian categories; and he does so still assuming the role of a scientist. In so doing, he offers his fullest expression of "critical idealism."

As implicitly a "critical idealist" in the *Manuscripts,* Marx expounds a normative view of man and projects social revolution as the moral solution to an immoral society. The normative view of man by which he judges contemporary existence is presented under a number of categories, such as "natural being,"[45] "species-being,"[46] "producer,"[47] "social being,"[48] and "self-creator."[49] The unifying factor in all these various descriptions of man's essence is that element which makes man truly man: "free, conscious activity" or "labor." It is in his work that man expresses his distinctive humanity—multifaceted work ranging from the production of the means of subsistence to the production of poetry and symphonies. On the basis of this normative view of man, Marx condemns contemporary society as negating man's true essence. Man is alienated from his true essence. Two major themes run through Marx's discussion of alienation: (*a*) *domination:* the worker's alien products, his alien activity, and his alien fellow men stand over against him and dominate him, crushing out the "free, conscious activity" which is the essence of his humanity;[50] (*b*) *truncation:* alienation means that the worker is dehumanized and vitiated to the extent that his humanity all but disappears.[51] The solution to this disparity between man's essence and existence is communism. In a communistic society, conditions will be so ordered that *all* men will be able to achieve personal human fulfillment.[52] Communism will be reached because the entire movement of history is simply the real "development of nature into man," that is, "the *real* genesis of communism." In other words, "Communism as a fully-developed naturalism is humanism and as a fully-developed humanism is naturalism."[53] That is, natural development and human development coalesce in communism. That development is the expression of man as self-creator: man realizing his humanity, man building himself and his world, man producing.

4. The fourth and final stage in Marx's intellectual development may be called the "Development of Scientific Historico-Economic Analysis." In this stage, Marx seems to have become aware of the somewhat shaky scientific status of his discussion of alienation.[54] Accordingly, he begins to purge his writings of Hegelian terminology; but, try as he may, he is never able to purge his thought of the evidences of an underlying stratum of "critical idealism." The reason for this inability may be contained in the fact that in the *Manuscripts* Marx identifies the division of labor (an economic relationship) as "the economic expression of the social character of labor within alienation"[55] (a value judgment rooted in "critical idealism"). Accordingly, when Marx abandons the terminology of alienation, he continues, nevertheless, to think of the division of labor in terms of this value judgment. His treatment of the division of labor, therefore, is permeated by the notion that man is being truncated and dominated in this relationship. Since division of labor is, for Marx, simply an expression for the socioeconomic reality that he calls, on other occasions, the mode of production or the class struggle, it is apparent that in the *Manuscripts* Marx incorporates into the basic framework of his economic analysis an inextricable strand of "critical idealism."

Thus, throughout his mature writings, Marx continues to envisage communism as the solution to the dichotomy between man as he is (a dominated and truncated creature) and man as he should be (a free, conscious laborer). Marx might say in the *Manifesto* and *Capital* that he does not have a speck of morality in his writings: yet his writings themselves give the lie to his denials.

Marx's View Evaluated and Humanization Considered

It is suggested that in the *union* of patent "scientific historico-economic analysis" and latent "critical idealism" reside both the major abiding strength and also the major abiding weakness of Marx's view concerning social change.

The major abiding strength of his program seems to be derived from the combination of ethical imperative and doctrinal certainty which results from the union of the two perspectives. Marx's goal—the Communist society—is, on the one hand, the moral demand projected out of the painfully recognized dichotomy between man's essence and existence, and, on the other hand, the inevitable resolution toward which the scientifically discerned laws of history are driving inexorably. Similarly, the Communist revolution is, on the one hand, administration of prophetic judgment upon a guilty society, and, on the other

hand, the unavoidable conflagration by which historical process gives birth to the new society.

The historico-economic analysis which undergirds Marx's laws of historical development may be controverted, but that does not necessarily mean that his laws are incorrect and that the inevitability of the Communist revolution and Communist society is vitiated. Marx may have reached the truth concerning possible laws of history on the basis of fragmentary and/or faulty analysis. The ultimate truth or falsity of his findings may be seen as a question of future historical verification or falsification.

In the meantime, those laws of history grant to his program for social change an element of certainty which together with his ethical imperative invests that program with strong appeal for not a few modern men.[56]

The major abiding weakness of Marx's program is derived from the way in which he combines the two perspectives. To expose this weakness it is necessary to note, first of all, several features within the theory of Marx's program for social change which could facilitate the brutalization of man.

1. *A Perfect Goal.* The goal which his program seeks is not extensively defined. Marx did not indulge in his mature writings in the elaboration of the nature of the future Communist society. History would bring in that society, and extensive predictions concerning its nature were regarded by Marx as Utopian abstractions. In spite of this reticence, Marx referred to the future society in sufficient depth to indicate that he considered it to be a *perfect* society. A society where each individual achieves a multifaceted fulfillment is nothing short of perfection. The questions then emerge: If a perfect society is attainable, is any sacrifice too great for that realization? If no sacrifice is too great, is not brutalization facilitated?

2. *Historical Inevitability.* The Communist revolution and the Communist society are equally inevitable because the inexorable laws of process are moving in that direction. If history proceeds according to such laws, are not the classes of men simply tools of history? If they are simply tools, can they really be held responsible for their actions? Do not these responsibility-relieving laws of history tend to excuse the counterrevolutionary classes? Do not these laws thereby promote the amelioration of brutality against the enemies of the revolution? Do not those laws, however, tend to excuse the revolutionary class's actions as well? Do not those laws, at the same time, therefore, facilitate brutalization?

3. *Inescapable Conflict.* It is Marx's contention that the dynamic of historical process is the incompatibility between the forces of production and the mode of production. This conflict drives toward a solution in the establishment of a new mode of production. This conflict is fought out as a struggle between classes, as a struggle between oppressors and oppressed. Indeed, class antagonism is the law of historical progress. Does not this concept of progress through conflict contain an implicit justification of force and violence? Does not such justification facilitate the brutalization of man?

4. *Religious Humanism.* In a thorough study of secularity, a contemporary thinker indicates that secularization entails "the loosing of the world from religious and quasi-religious understandings of itself, the dispelling of all closed world views, the breaking of all supernatural myths and sacred symbols."[57] A secular humanism, therefore, is one in which loyalty to human reality is not connected with a closed philosophical system but is associated with relativized theories and interpretations. In contrast, religion appears to be characterized by adherence to a closed world view which is antipluralistic. A religious humanism, accordingly, is one in which loyalty to human reality is associated with an absolutized theoretical perspective.

Applying these categories to Marx's thought, it would seem that his latent (but real) humanism was religious. He believed that he had discovered the iron laws of historical development. He absolutized those laws and used them as the basis for projecting the more truly human society of the future. He chained his latent humanism to an absolutized theoretical perspective and thereby rendered his humanism religious rather than secular.

A basic danger seems to reside in a religious humanism. When loyalty to human reality is bound to a closed system, the possibility emerges that loyalty to human reality will become equated with loyalty to the absolutized theoretical perspective. When such an equation occurs, is not doctrine made more important than persons, and is not brutalization thereby facilitated?

(The ancillary question now emerges: Is the appeal of Marx's doctrinal certainty—which, together with his ethical imperative, was judged to be his major abiding strength—ultimately a strength relative to the task of humanization? The doctrinal certainty of a closed system may certainly be a strength relative to gaining conversions among security-seeking men; but relative to the accomplishment of humanization, such certainty would seem to subvert loyalty to human reality.)

It seems unlikely that Marx would have permitted his theory to facil-

itate brutalization in any of these ways. It is true that he did not shrink from advocating violence and force. Nevertheless, his revolutionary means fell far short of brutalization because his entire thought was informed by his latent perspective of "critical idealism" which, through its deep concern for individual human beings, provided a necessary corrective for the tendencies in his theory toward brutalization. The great weakness of his program for social change is that he relegated his perspective of "critical idealism" to a latent position and even denied having such a perspective. In so doing, Marx failed to make provision for the transmission of this vastly important check to his disciples.

The theoretical legacy which Marx offered to his disciples, therefore, was a program which (*a*) was strongly tainted with the evidences of "critical idealism," providing a certain moral appeal for would-be disciples; (*b*) was explicit in its negation of "critical idealism" to the end that the corrective function of that perspective was vitiated; (*c*) was explicit in its affirmation of "scientific historico-economic analysis"; and (*d*) contained the strong possibility that its inherent tendencies toward brutalization could develop into reality because the informative ethical depth which was characteristic of Marx had been obviated by none other than Marx himself.

Marx's failure to provide for the transmission of that depth means that he must share some of the responsibility for the brutalization which has in fact issued from the hands of his disciples. It is not at all unlikely that some of Marx's most ardent followers have run aground on brutalization because, although they have had a general aura of being on the side of humanity, nevertheless they have been reshaping society solely on the basis of Marx's scientific laws in which persons have figured simply as the manipulatable ciphers in mathematical equations. They have had no normative view of man by which to guide and judge their own revolutionary activity.[58]

What, now, are some of the implications which this study of Marx has for the current task of humanization? First, although "critical idealism" is almost synonymous with the pursuit of humanization, it seems apparent that *latent* "critical idealism" is potentially noxious to the accomplishment of humanization. Latent "critical idealism" permits one the luxury of condemning with prophetic outrage the evils of society but does not facilitate the development of radical self-criticism. When one admits explicitly the norm by which he is judging society, then he himself stands under the judgment of that same norm. Explicit "critical idealism" would seem to foster humanization because

it facilitates radical self-criticism and the exposure of the beguiling power of self-interest.

Second, it seems apparent that religious humanism is also potentially injurious to the cause of humanization. At the heart of a religious humanism is a rigid orthodoxy. Such orthodoxies inhibit humanization by frustrating the development of community. They sever from the "believers" the "heretics" who are to be converted, or isolated, or destroyed. The irony of religious humanism is revealed in that such vivisectioning of humanity is presumably prosecuted for the sake of building a more truly human society. Accordingly, humanization would seem to be facilitated by secular humanisms which enshrine a humble, relativistic orientation toward their philosophical doctrines.

Third, it becomes evident that the theoretical task which stands ahead of exponents of humanization is the formulation of an explicit normative view of man which will guide and judge revolutionary activity, and which will be formulated in such a way that it will not become frozen into another absolutism that will subvert human reality. Can such a relativized norm be projected? It is the task of humanists to find out.

In conclusion, lest I be found guilty of indulging in latent "critical idealism" in this paper, it is necessary for me to indicate briefly the direction in which I think that a viable relativized normative view of man can be found. Perhaps such a norm exists in the picture of Jesus Christ portrayed in the New Testament. If this picture is taken as a paradigm of human reality, and if his experiences and teachings are taken for what they are—culturally conditioned experiences and ad hoc pronouncements—then it is possible that this picture may both guide and judge the pursuit of humanization without running amuck on an absolutized orthodoxy. This picture of Christ may be seen as an illustration of how a human being is true to human reality in given situations. Creative and humble imagination is then required to translate this illustration into the terms of the contemporary situation. If this picture of Christ can afford a relativized norm for humanization, then perhaps the exponents of the Judaeo-Christian tradition who have contributed no small amount to the sum total of dehumanization may make a worthy contribution to the building of a more truly human world.

NOTES

1. Since the status and significance of Marx's early writings are occasioning considerable debate among contemporary scholars of Marxism, it seems advisable to

begin an analysis of Marx with the *Manifesto,* which remains undisputed as an authentic representation of Marx's mature thought. For an introduction to some of the current debate, note L. Labedz, ed., *Revisionism* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1962), chaps. 13, 14, 24.

2. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy,* ed. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1959), p. 20. Hereafter, this work will be cited as *Manifesto,* and this anthology, as *Basic Writings.*

3. The term "critical idealism" as used in this paper should not be confused with Immanuel Kant's designation of his theory of knowledge as "critical idealism."

4. See Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* trans. N. I. Stone (New York: International Library, 1904), pp. 12, 14, 15. Hereafter, the preface to this work will be referred to as *Preface to Critique.* Karl Marx, "On Proudhon," *Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955), 1:392–96. Karl Marx, *Capital,* trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling, ed. F. Engels (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961), 1:7–11, 19–20.

5. Marx, *Capital,* 1:8.

6. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* p. 7.

7. See ibid., pp. 7, 8, 19, 21.

8. Ibid., p. 7.

9. Ibid., pp. 10, 12.

10. Ibid., pp. 12, 13, 29.

11. Ibid., pp. 10, 11, 24, 28. In the *Manifesto* Marx also uses such terms as "the modes of production and exchange" (p. 9), the "conditions of appropriation" (p. 18), the "mode of appropriation" (p. 18), and the "mode of producing and appropriating" (pp. 23–24).

12. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* p. 27; Marx, *Capital,* 1:217.

13. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* p. 7.

14. Ibid., p. 21.

15. See ibid., p. 7.

16. See ibid., p. 29.

17. See ibid., p. 10; Marx, *Preface to Critique,* pp. 11–12.

18. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* pp. 21–23.

19. See ibid., pp. 9, 29.

20. See ibid., pp. 18, 24, 26.

21. Note Karl Marx, "Review of G. Fr. Daumer's *The Religion of the New Age,*" *On Religion* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955), pp. 90–96.

22. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* pp. 8–9, 10, 12–13; Marx, *Selected Works,* 1:231, 360; Marx, *Preface to Critique,* pp. 12–13.

23. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* p. 8.

24. Note esp. the following passages: Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* pt. 1; Marx, *Capital,* 1:612–45, 713–16, 761–64.

25. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* p. 20.

26. See ibid., pp. 7, 8, 9, 19, 29.

27. See ibid., pp. 14, 19, 41; Marx, *Selected Works,* 1:80, 92, 98, 105, 162, 163, 338, 359, 360, 389, 522, 535, 537, 538; Marx, *Capital,* 1:396, 490, 506, 618, 645, 763.

28. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* pp. 9–10, 15, 21, 24–25, 26, 27; Marx, *Selected Works,* 1:103, 141, 142, 161, 217; Marx, *Capital,* 1:243, 331, 397, 399, 418, 422, 462, 471, 484, 490, 506, 510, 645, 715.

29. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* pp. 9, 24; Marx, *Capital,* 1:153, 592, 593.

30. See Marx, *On Religion,* p. 129.

31. See Marx, *Selected Works,* 1:351.

32. See ibid., 1:338, 382; Marx, *Capital,* 1:233, 243, 256, 264–65, 302. For a classic example of Marx's vilification of the bourgeoisie, note esp. *Selected Works,* 1:529, 535–36.

33. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* pp. 22, 29; Marx, *Capital,* 1:592.

34. See Marx and Engels, *Manifesto,* pp. 14, 22; Marx, *Selected Works,* 1:82, 102, 350–51, 439; Marx, *Capital,* 1:71 ff., 177–79, 184, 264, 310, 326, 329, 645.

35. See Isaiah Berlin, *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment,* 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 29–30; Franz Mehring, *Karl Marx: The Story of His Life,* trans. E. Fitzgerald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 8; C. J. S. Sprigge, *Karl Marx* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 18.

36. See Karl Marx, "Betrachtung eines Jünglings bei der Wahl eines Berufes," in *Marx/Engels Gesamtausgabe,* ed. D. Rjazanov (Berlin: Marx-Engels-Verlag, 1929), pt. 1, Band 1, zweiter Halbband, pp. 164–67. Hereafter this anthology will be cited as *MEGA.*

37. Note esp. Marx's religious essay in *MEGA,* pt. 1, Band 1, zweiter Halbband, pp. 171–74.

38. In the discussion which follows strong dependence upon the analysis of Robert C. Tucker relative to the philosophical roots of Marx in Hegel and Feuerbach is gratefully acknowledged. See Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), esp. pts. 1, 2.

39. For Marx's works which reflect this conversion to "critical idealism," note esp. "Karl Marx an den Vater; Berlin (1837) November 10," in *MEGA,* pt. 1, Band 1, zweiter Halbband, pp. 213–21; "Aus der Doktordissertation," in *Die Frühschriften,* ed. S. Landshut (Stuttgart: Alfred Droner, 1953), pp. 12–19; *On Religion,* pp. 13–40.

40. For Marx's criticism of Feuerbach, note "Theses on Feuerbach," in Marx and Engels, *Basic Writings,* pp. 243–45. For Marx's works reflecting his thought at this stage, note "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction," *On Religion,* pp. 41–58; *A World without Jews,* trans. Dagobert D. Runes, 4th ed. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1960).

41. See Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844," trans. T. B. Bottomore, in Erich Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961), pp. 176–77. Hereafter this work will be cited as *Manuscripts.* See also Tucker, p. 120.

42. Marx, *Manuscripts,* pp. 90–91.

43. Ibid., pp. 93–94.

44. Ibid., p. 95.

45. Ibid., pp. 181–83.

46. Ibid., pp. 100–103, 183.

47. Ibid., pp. 95 ff.

48. Ibid., pp. 126–35.

49. Ibid., pp. 132–40.

50. Ibid., pp. 95–99, 104.

51. Ibid., pp. 98–99, 111.

52. Ibid., pp. 127–38.

53. Ibid., p. 127.

54. For Marx's works which reflect this stage, note *The Holy Family; or Critique of Critical Critique,* trans. R. Dixon (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956); *The German Ideology,* ed. R. Pascal (New York: International Publishers, 1947); *The Poverty of Philosophy* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, n.d.).

55. Marx, *Manuscripts,* p. 155.

56. Gabriel A. Almond (*The Appeals of Communism* [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1954]) analyzes 221 former Communists and the case histories of thirty-five Communists who required psychoanalytic treatment. His study reveals *inter alia* the important part that the need for psychological security and the desire to express ethical imperatives play in susceptibility to communism. See Morris L. Ernst and David Loth, *Report on the American Communist* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1952). Ernst and Loth examine several hundred case histories of former Communists

and stress psychological factors in conversions to communism, but they also note the importance of the ethical factor. Accordingly, the appeal of communism to some persons may be related to the doctrinal certainty and ethical imperative enshrined in Marxist theory.

57. Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1965), p. 2.

58. Contemporary communism professes to be the champion of humanization. See "The New Communist Manifesto," in *The New Communist Manifesto and Related Documents,* ed. Dan N. Jacobs, 2d ed. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1962), p. 42; Communist Party of the Soviet Union, *The Road to Communism: Documents of the Twenty-second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961), p. 509; Liu Shao-chi, *How to Be a Good Communist,* 2d ed. rev. (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1952), pp. 37–38. Nevertheless, these same Communists indicate that their revolutionary activity is guided not by a normative view of man but by the laws of "scientific historico-economic analysis." See "The New Communist Manifesto," p. 19; O. V. Kuusinen, ed., *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism,* 2d ed. rev. (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1963), pp. 16–17; Liu Shao-chi, pp. 5, 38–40.