FROM OPIUM TO OIKOS:

THE LIMITS AND PROMISES OF MARX'S CRITIQUE OF RELIGION

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THE LIMITS AND PROMISES OF MARX'S CRITIQUE OF RELIGION

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A B S T R A C T

        This study fundamentally departs from conventional approaches

to the "communist-religious" problematic. On the one hand, we reject

the orthodox historical materialist denial that communism involves

the positive germination of religious practices of any form whatsoever.

On the other hand, we also dismiss the "utopian" attempt to convert

Marx's theory of this era into a secular extension of Judeo-Christian

eschatological principles. Thus, though our central thesis is that

Marx's theory of communism logically contains a religious moment,

we radically redefine the salient terms of this proposition.

        This revision stems from our excavation and evaluation of Marx's

critique of religion. We limit our purview to Marx and to the sources

that influenced him in this area. In Chapter I, we uncover the thematic

roots of Marx's critique and trace the rationalist assumptions that

were held by his source influences and that were reproduced, mostly

unconsciously, in his writings on religion. In Chapter II, we examine

the evolution and significance of this thematic legacy in Marx's

texts. In particular, we detail the effect of Marx's rationalist

premises on his implicit construction of a true/false universality

semantic frame. In this context, we demonstrate that Marx's critique

consists of two logically distinct, yet historically intertwined,

layers, or the substantive and the methodological critiques, respectively.

In Chapter III, we evaluate Marx's critique and argue that its substantive side is invalid on both methodological and empirical grounds. This verdict turns on our contention that the Western rationalist tradition is one-sided. We also maintain, however, that the methodological side of Marx's critique is valid. We argue that the excision of the substantive critique does not injure the core of Marx's contribution to religious science, but rather makes possible its reclamation. In Chapter IV, we substantiate this point by using Marx's methodological approach as the requisite "ground floor" of a new theoretical framework for conceptualizing the "communist-religious" problematic, and, by extension, for constructing a new religious science. In the course of this exposition, we redefine religion in oikic terms, delineate why it is useful to attribute a religious dimension to communism, sketch the contemporary political implications of our thesis, and outline a model of religious science that synthesizes the fundamental claims of the historical materialist and the "holistic" traditions.

ABBREVIATIONS

Subsequent to their first reference in the body of this study, the following primary sources and major secondary sources will be referred to by their corresponding abbreviations. See bibliography for complete references.

"Letter to Annenkov"	A.
Capital	C.
Collected Works	C.W.
Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy	C.O.P.E.
The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx, Krader	E.N.
The Essence of Christianity, Feuerbach	E.C.
The First International and After	F.I.
Grundrisse	G.
Necessity for a Reform of Philosophy, Feuerbach	N.R.P.
On Religion	O.R.
Preliminary Theses for a Reform of Philosophy, Feuerbach	P.T.
Principles for a Philosophy of the Future, Feuerbach	P.P.F.
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Introduction

Approximately one hundred and forty years ago, Karl Marx described religion as the "opium of the people". Since that point, for both scholars and laymen alike, this metaphor--along with its theoretical underpinnings--has circumscribed the characterization of his approach--as well as that of his namesake tradition--to religion. Rarely, however, has this phrase been analyzed in its full textual and thematic context. In this latter framework, a quite different picture of the opium phrase emerges. It now appears as a bridge by which Marx buries an old critique of religion within the bosom of a radically new one.[1] The implications of this theoretical transposition have seldom elicited extended critical attention. Consequently, after a century and a half, in more ways than one, "Marxism" and "religion" remain as estranged from each other as ever and their so-called "dialogue" has rarely advanced beyond the level of formalities.[2]

In recent years, however, volume after volume has appeared on this same "dialogue", particularly as it is developing within contemporary Latin America. Thus, it seems that the "Marxist-religious" exchange has entered a new and critically significant phase. Without for a moment questioning the value of these studies per se, though, we must note the relative paucity of references to Marx himself in

these works. In virtually any major text on this subject, as a rule

Marx appears to merit, at best, prefacatory treatment.[3] The reason is

straightforward enough: the authors view Marx as a brilliant social

theorist, who dissected the social roots of religious practices,[4] but

who otherwise has very little to contribute to current deliberations

on religion. As a result, they prefer the greener theoretical pastures

of Marx's successors (e.g., the later Engels, Kautsky, Bloch, Althusser,

to name but a few) to the rather sterile terrain of Marx himself.

On the surface, there is a good deal of support for this

negative verdict. There is little doubt, for instance, that Marx

tended to be somewhat one-sided in his evaluation of religious questions

(due in part to the influence of ambient religious forms as well as to

his battles with the "utopian socialists") and that he underestimated

the role of such quasi-religious motifs as hope, the future and trans-

cendence in a revolutionary struggle. It is also true that what Marx

overtly wrote on religion could--without undue distortion--be condensed

into one paragraph. Except for a brief period (1842) Marx never

devoted much energy to the study of religion per se: he found the

topic "boring" and such is obvious to anyone who surveys his writings

as a whole.

So why not treat Marx solely in a preface to a work on the

"Marxist-religious dialogue"? Quite simply, because there is more to

Marx "on religion" than meets the eye. To tap this "hidden vein" of

insights, though, it is necessary to penetrate the husk of ambient

religious forms and the assumptions of conventional philosophical

discourse, tasks which, up until now, mainstream examinations of

"Marxism and religion" have failed to execute.[5]

A) Focus

We began research for the present study a number of years ago precisely because of our dissatisfaction with the contemporary state of the "Marxist-religious dialogue". Specifically, we believed that it was necessary to "get back to basics" if this domain was to progress. During this period, three relevant propositions have guided our work. First, we have always maintained that Marx's fundamental methodological (and, to a lesser extent, substantive) arguments concerning historical development in general and the bourgeois epoch in particular constitute the nucleus of historical (and, by extension, social) science in the contemporary era. Thus, our object was to place religious practices-- and hence the possibility of a religious science[6]--within the theoretical limits of historical materialism. Second, we have always considered the religious dimension of human history to be both fundamental and highly significant for a proper understanding of this history and consequently for the contemporary project of "human liberation" as concretely embedded in the communist movement.[7] Finally, we have always believed that the orthodox historical materialist approach to the irrational (or non-rational) side of human practice in general and religious activity in particular has been, to say the least, woefully inadequate and that this failure has contributed, in no small way, to its lack of success, specifically within "advanced" bourgeois democracies.

In the course of our research, our concrete understanding of each of the above propositions underwent profound modifications. Two shifts, in particular, are worth noting at this point. First, we radicalized our rejection of the mainstream framework of "Marxist-religious" studies. The theoretical pillar of this latter approach consists of viewing the presence of religion as an indication that there is something wrong with human relations as they are constituted in a particular social context. To be sure, mainstream investigators have approached this thesis from diverse angles and often developed it far beyond the orthodox perspective.[8] Only rarely, however, have politically sympathetic observers (i.e., on the left) questioned the assumptions that lie behind it. Indeed, when we began work on this dissertation we, too, accepted the "alienation motif" as the thematic axis of our approach, particularly in relation to the problem posed by primitive religion to the orthodox tradition.[9] As we intensified our investigation, however, we became increasingly convinced that the "alienation" premise was highly dubious, if not outrightly false.

This insight occurred in tandem with the second major modification in our thinking during this period. Quite simply, our appreciation for and understanding of Marx's method--in particular his elaboration of what Karl Korsch has called the principle of historical specification[10]--has increased enormously. At a certain point, therefore, the focus of our research shifted to the theoretical terrain suggested by the seeming contradiction of these two positions.

In this context, it became clear that a major source of our dilemma was a fundamental misreading of Marx's critique of religion

both on our part and that of the mainstream "Marxist-religious"
tradition. More precisely, we had misinterpreted the significance
of his incorporation of this critique within the critique of determinate
social conditions. Consequently, up until that point we had been posing
the whole question of a "Marxist-religious dialogue" improperly and
decided that we would have to plunge to the <u>roots</u> of Marx's critique
and become more radical in our approach, if the theoretical <u>cul-de-sac</u>
of the "opium hypothesis" was to be avoided.

On the foregoing basis, we selected two foci for our study.
First, we decided to <u>excavate</u> Marx's critique. This task involves
answering three basic questions in this regard: "What are its salient
thematic roots?"; "How does Marx thematically develop it in his
writings?";, and finally, "What is its significance for Marx's theory of
communism?". Second, we elected to <u>evaluate</u> this critique, a process
which involves answering two queries: "What is valid and what is
invalid about it?"; "What is the significance of these determinations
for a contemporary struggle to establish a "new religious science", and
in particular, for the advance of the communist movement in this period?".

B) Method

Up until now the predominant approach of mainstream "Marxist-
religious" investigators has been to take Marx "on religion" at face
value and to confine their examinations principally to the surface layer
of his writings on this subject. We reject this procedure and contend
that Marx's critique must be thematically reconstructed before its
assessment--from both positive and negative angles--may begin.

We divide this reconstruction into two chapters. First, we conduct a preliminary elucidation of the theoretical foundations of Marx's critique (Chapter I). Second, we excavate Marx's writings themselves (Chapter II).

In these labours, we attempt to avoid two types of errors. The first mistake is to deduce the effect of a given idea—and its implications—from the internal qualities of the idea itself or of the theoretical system in which it was originally embedded. "Ideological penetration"— in regards to Marx or anyone else—must be assessed in the concrete, not in the abstract. A given idea may mean one thing at one point, and quite another in a different context. Consequently, to understand the significance of a person's adoption of an idea, it is absolutely crucial to locate this process within the framework of the totality of that person's practices at a particular point. In the present study, our focus is on the theoretical dimension of Marx's reception of his source material, thus this contextualization can only be considered selectively; nevertheless, at all points, we attempt to develop our arguments with the above methodological considerations in mind. The second—and opposite— error is to concentrate solely on Marx's reading of his source material in the mistaken belief that one can safely ignore the internal thematic dimension of the source texts themselves. The problem here is that to read sources through the eyes of Marx alone is also to reproduce his prejudices in this regard. A large part of his critique of religion— and in particular that concerning his understanding of what religion means—is <u>unconscious</u>, in the sense that his inherited premises are

simply taken for granted and as such constitute fundamental touchstones of his world-view. We term this world-view the "rationalist paradigm" (Chapter I) and to a large degree Marx registers his religious critique within its parameters, even though he rarely makes explicit reference to its assumptions. As a result, we contend that a scientific excavation and assessment of Marx's critique must, in part, involve the elucidation of its underlying roots, and the delineation of the thematic steps that lead up to Marx's views in this area.

In Chapter I, where we examine the five source tributaries that flow into Marx's critique (i.e., the Enlightenment/rationalist tradition, the classical German idealists, the "Young Hegelians", the "utopian socialists", and the ethnological source-writers), the above considerations compel us, at times, to analyze some texts and traditions more deeply than Marx either would have or could have in his own lifetime. They also require us to limit our focus in this regard. We do not strive to dissect, in a rigorous critical fashion, the textual subtleties of the source works per se. We concentrate on the thematic and therefore logical structure of the relevant sections of given sourcebooks (and of a given author's work generally) insofar as they have a bearing on the formation of Marx's critique. This task, of course, demands a particular method of exposition. Thus, for each of the source tributaries, as far as possible, we have chosen to draw out (logically) the arguments advanced by various authors within these traditions and to delineate (theoretically) their evolutionary interconnections. In this way, by the time we turn to Marx's critique proper, we hope to have sketched a

skeletal thematic portrait of the sedimentary layers that, when combined,

constitute the theoretical summit from which Marx delivers his arguments

in this area.

Different, albeit related, methodological considerations come

into play when we examine Marx's texts proper (i.e., Chapter II). As in

the previous Chapter, here our task resembles an archeological dig, with

our object being the thematic reconstruction of Marx's critique, and,

by extension, the evocation of his occluded premises. In Chapter II,

though, our focus shifts to the study of the evolution of this critique,

the significance of the same, and the relevance of Marx's conclusions

in regards to religion to other theoretical fields. With this transition,

therefore, we train our attention much more closely on the concrete

processes that shaped Marx's intellectual development.

Marx's writings on religion, as indeed on any subject, must

be placed in the context of his concrete social practices as a whole at

the time of their composition. Shifts in this context are expressed in

his works, for example, by changes in terminology, emphasis and method at

different historical points. Consequently, as a rule, we eschew

generalizations concerning Marx's views on religion, or at least defer

such comments until we have completed our periodic study.

In Chapter II, our principal reference points consist of Marx's

texts themselves.[11] Though due attention must be paid to the circumstances

surrounding their composition (e.g., economic conditions, political

events), obviously in the present study no more than a cursory survey of

these factors is possible. As well, due to the nature of our subject

matter, we are frequently obliged to examine, often in some depth,

Marx's positions on ostensibly non-religious issues (e.g., economics,

anthropology, politics). In this regard, we follow two general

methodological guidelines. First, we restrict our discussion to those

matters which are directly or indirectly relevant to Marx's critique and

the evaluation of the same. Second, we must assume, on the part of the

reader, a general acquaintance with both the texts in question and

Marx's general positions on "peripheral" questions (i.e., vis-à-vis

the purposes of this study).[12] For instance, when we discuss "commodity

fetishism" we assume a broad familiarity with Marx's theory of value:

to do otherwise would condemn our dissertation to an even more

unconscionable length than it already possesses.

In our exposition of Marx's critique, we concentrate on the

thematic dimension of his religious statements. Thus, we focus on the

inner, logical connection of his comments in this regard. Frequently,

however, these thematic "bridges" are occluded by the language Marx

employs in specific situations. This tendency is particularly evident

in his 1845-48 texts, where he eschews the language of "species-

existence" in favour of the language of historical specification. Unlike

some commentators, however, we deny that this terminological shift

implies that he also abandons his previous espousal of the concept of

"human essence"[13] and elaborate our case through the thematic reconstruc-

tion of the relevant texts. In so doing, we attribute to Marx's

arguments such concepts as "true universality", "truly social", "false

practice" and the like, phrases which, strictly speaking, Marx did not

use and yet which we maintain are implicit in his works and are absolutely

indispensable to their logical coherence. Of course, our propositions

in this respect are subject to critical assessment and debate.[14]

With the conclusion of this excavation process, we turn to an

evaluation of Marx's critique from both negative (Chapter III) and

positive (Chapter IV) angles. In both these cases, though, no more than

a skeletal outline is possible in the present study.

In Chapter III, to determine the limits of Marx's critique, we

rely upon two types of criteria. First, we ascertain whether or not

Marx's propositions vis-à-vis religion conform to the methodological

principles that he applies to the examination of other theoretical

domains (i.e., internal tests). Second, we assess whether or not

Marx's implicit or explicit assumptions concerning religion or related

matters (e.g., nature of materiality, anthropological premises) stand up

in the light of the most recent empirical studies that have been conducted

in a variety of relevant disciplines (e.g., physics, psychology, life

sciences, comparative religions). In this latter labour, our purpose

is not to advance definitive conclusions in these areas. It is simply

to suggest that evidence gathered within the above fields, particularly

since the turn of the century, renders certain premises that Marx took

for granted on the basis of the science of his time--and which profoundly

affected his understanding of both religion and communism--highly suspect,

if not outrightly false, and, on these grounds, we argue that it is most

useful at this point to leave these matters open.

In Chapter IV, we move into new theoretical territory and employ

the "positive" kernel of Marx's critique as the nucleus of a "new religious

science". In the course of this exposition, we define the term religion,

lay down some ^methodological guidelines for its study, and discuss the

relationship between communism and religion both logically and historically

(i.e., in the contemporary era). Our object is to sketch, in outline

fashion, certain proposals in these areas. In so doing, we rely in part

on Marx's writings. However, we must also go considerably beyond

Marx's views per se and synthesize them with "external" research fields.

We entertain no illusions concerning the scientific status of our

suggestions in these respects. They constitute tentative hypotheses

and no more. Thus, if they succeed in stimulating creative debate along

novel theoretical lines, we will have achieved our purpose in this section.

Finally, owing to the relatively unexplored character of the

issues that we touch on in this dissertation--particularly in Chapter IV--

we attach to our text three appendices. The first consists of a glossary

of terms that we employ in a somewhat idiosyncratic fashion in the text

itself. Appendex B is a summary guide to our periodization of religious

forms in Chapter IV. Appendix C concerns our tentative attempt to

delineate a theoretical model for a "new religious science".

C) Substance

The present study fundamentally departs from conventional

approaches to the communist-religious problematic.[15] On the one hand,

we reject the "orthodox" historical materialist denial that communism

involves the positive germination of religious practices of any form

whatsoever. On the other hand, we also dismiss the "utopian" attempt

to convert Marx's theory of this era into a secular extension of Judaeo-

Christian eschatological principles. In our view, any valid proposal

concerning the reconciliation of religion and communism must be
scientific, and, at the very least, this proviso means that the
specificity of Marx's theory of communism--and in particular the
theoretical axis of his dispute with the "utopian socialists"--must be
preserved.

Consequently, though our central thesis is that Marx's theory of
communism logically contains a religious moment,[16] we fundamentally
redefine the salient terms of this proposition (i.e., communism and
religion). This revision rests on two interconnected theoretical
pillars. First, there are the results of our excavation and evaluation of
Marx's critique. Second, there is our attempt to integrate these
conclusions within a new model of religious science.

With respect to the first pillar, one conclusion in particular
is especially significant. In brief, we contend that Marx's critique of
religion consists of not one, but two logically distinct, yet historically
intertwined, layers. The first layer we term the substantive side and
refers to Marx's semantic assumptions concerning religions' content. The
second layer we term the methodological side and refers to Marx's
resolution of this content into determinate social relations (i.e., its
historical specification). Historically speaking, from the Fall of 1842
on, both of these layers co-exist in Marx's writings on religion and
play an indispensable role therein, not only with respect to religious
issues per se, but also in helping to frame his understanding of
communism and of the transitional practices that lead up to it. Logically
speaking, however, (i.e., from the vantage point of the contemporary era),
we maintain that these critiques are incompatible. To simplify somewhat,

we view the substantive critique as invalid, and the methodological

critique as valid. It is precisely in the theoretical space formed by

this disjuncture that we advance our primary thesis concerning the

logical utility of attributing to communism a religious dimension.

At the heart of our dissection and evaluation of these two

critical layers is our response to what we shall term the "rationalist

paradigm".[17] In one way or another, all the source tributaries that

flow into the substantive side of Marx's critique reproduce this

world-view. We contend that this paradigm corresponds to the prevalence

of civil--and perhaps, more precisely, capitalist--one-sidedness in

social relations, rather than viewing it as an index of "truth" or

"reality " per se, as is conventionally the case.[18] Consequently, insofar

as Marx implicitly or explicitly relies on the premises of this

world-view to conceptualize the "communist problematic", we hold that

he draws a one-sided logical portrait of the same. In this process,

part of what is lost is what we consider to be most usefully described

as the religious dimension of human self-making.

We recognize that the above suggestions are bound to elicit

extensive controversy and opposition. There is little doubt that a

challenge to the "rationalist paradigm" often strikes a nerve that is

even more deeply embedded in the psychic constitution of contemporary

"Western man" than that which is pricked by theoretical assaults on

the sanctity of private property. Marx himself, for instance, would

vigorously oppose our proposals in this regard. In this enterprise,

however, we are not alone. The present study constitutes a modest

contribution to the so-called "holistic paradigm" that has emerged

in recent years in a variety of disciplines and areas.[19] With a few

significant exceptions, though, the implications of this new world-

view have yet barely dented the theoretical and strategic assumptions of

the socialist tradition in general and the historical materialist

tendency in particular. Of course, there are several excellent historical

reasons for this cleavage, some of which we shall discuss in Chapter IV.

From the historical materialist standpoint, however, one concern

probably outweighs the rest, i.e., the fear that the adoption of "holistic"

ideas will eviscerate the scientific integrity of the communist movement.

　　We share this last concern. Indeed, what distinguishes our

work from that of the "holistic movement" in general is precisely our

attempt to integrate the latter's insights with the _fundamental_ propositions

of historical materialism. This project, though, entails not simply a

revised definition of the terms "communism" and "religion", it also

requires a basic shift in the conceptualization of "science".[20] Quite

simply, it is necessary to sketch a model of scientific knowledge that

simultaneously extends conditional validity, for instance, to the type of

criticisms that Marx directed at the "German Ideologists" in the mid-1840's

on the one hand, and to the "holistic" affirmation of an epistemic

subject-object unity on the other. We argue that the core propositions

of historical materialism and "holism" respectively do not conflict,

for the simple reason that they apply to different types of phenomena

or enjoy distinct ranges of applicability. We term these regional

specificities, "theoretical territories", and consider the growth of

precision in this regard basic to the development of scientific knowledge in general. The paradigmatic example of this process is the case of Newtonian physics, where Newton's mechanical "laws" have not so much been falsified as dramatically restricted in "theoretical territory" by the advances made in the relativity and the quantum domains.[21] In all research fields--in the social sciences no less that physics--theoretically speaking, a large part of the confusion and conflict that arises within a particular area has its roots in the failure to specify properly these regional demarcations.

In our view, a parallel may be drawn between Newton on the one hand, and Marx on the other. Notwithstanding scientific developments that have narrowed the range of applicability of their respective arguments, the conclusions of each of these outstanding theorists continue to command conditional validity. Thus, their propositions comprise an indispensable part of science in their respective fields to this day. In the case of Newton, however, his limits are known--at least in outline--and his promises are today being realized. The same cannot be said of Marx "on religion". Neither the limits, nor the promises of his work in this regard have occasioned intensive, critical investigation-- until now, perhaps. Though the present study attempts to rectify this situation, we entertain no illusions that our conclusions represent the last word on this subject. We do insist, however, that explorers, now or in the future, must probe well beneath the surface layer of Marx's words on religion per se, and uncover the assumptions on which they rest, if the theoretical vein that contains the "buried treasure" of Marx's contributions to a "new religious science" is ever to be tapped.

Chapter   I

THE SOURCES OF MARX'S CRITIQUE

Throughout his life, Marx was never particularly enthralled with the study of religion. The subject bored him, and, with the partial exception of his brief collaborative effort with Bruno Bauer in 1842, he never devoted much effort to its theoretical appropriation. In large measure, therefore, Marx relied on the works of others to construct his critique of religion. This dependence does not mean that Marx's critique contains no original elements. Indeed, as we shall see in Chapter II below, it constitutes a significant departure from previous approaches to this issue. Nevertheless, it stakes out this novel theoretical territory on foundations laid by previous generations, and of which Marx was, at best, cursorily aware in his own lifetime. These foundations comprise a network of assumptions concerning the meaning of religion and the semantic context of its critique. They form the "ground floor" of Marx's critique. For this reason, a thematic dissection of Marx's approach to religion is best begun by an examination of the sources that played a critical role in the framing of his perception in this area.

In this study, we are principally concerned with the elucidation of the roots of Marx's critique. In brief, we intend to unveil the theoretical core of the interpretive framework within which Marx developed his approach to religious questions. As a result, though we shall note

most of the major texts that Marx studied pertaining to religion, we

consider it much more germane to treat this direct source material in

the framework of those materials that Marx imbibed as part of his

intellectual training, but of which he was for the most part, <u>unconscious</u>.

For our purposes, we shall trace the stream of sources that

"enter" Marx's critique in one way or another to five tributaries.

These are: (A) The Rationalist Tradition (the ancient Greek, modern

scientific and Enlightenment heritages; (B) Classical German Idealism;

(C) The "Young Hegelians"; (D) The "Utopian Socialists"; and, (E) The

Nineteenth Century Ethnological Tradition. At every point in our discussion

of these sources, we shall confine our discussion to those materials

and writers that exerted a significant thematic, influence on the

development of Marx's critique, and shall omit consideration of all

extraneous matters. Our purpose is not to examine the source works

<u>per se</u>, whether in terms of historical contextualization or in terms of

intellectual coherence. We intend simply to highlight their thematic

relevance for assessing the limits and promises of Marx's approach to

religion.

A) The Rationalist Tradition

Few scholars would dispute the characterization of Marx's

critique as a qualified rationalist response to the "problem" of

human religiosity. Precisely what this description means or its

significance, however, remains in dispute. In part, this unclarity

stems from the narrow scope of the source references that these students

investigate to explore the roots of Marx's critique. By and large,

they limit their purview to the study of selected "Young Hegelian"
and Hegel texts, with an occasional nod in the direction of certain
Enlightenment writers as well. This type of investigation does not go
far or deep enough, because the roots of the rationalist interpretive
framework that Marx employed to develop his religious critique lie
considerably beyond the compass of even the Enlightenment. Indeed, as
we will come to see when we assess the limits of Marx's critique in
Chapter III, the very depth of these roots presents considerable problems
for the criticism of Marx's approach in our period precisely because
they penetrate to the core of the psycho-social constitution of Western
man.

The importance of this rationalist interpretive framework for
Marx's critique cannot be overstated. The assumptions embedded in this
paradigm not only shaped his approach to religious issues per se, they also
profoundly coloured his conceptions of communism, science, and political
strategy. Essentially, Marx viewed communism as a qualified historical
completion of bourgeois rationalization, and conceived the communist
movement as a lineal descendant of eighteenth century French/English
materialism.[1] Moreover, throughout his life he fought to maintain
this materialist/rationalist purity against all religious/"utopian
socialist" inroads. Even more important, from a contemporary perspective,
though many aspects of Marx's theoretical legacy have undergone
significant modifications at the hands of his successors, to this day
this rationalist prejudice has remained by and large unscarred and
its potency undiminished.

To criticize the "rationalist paradigm" is to place it in a historical context, or, more exactly, to specify the historical conditions that gave birth to Western man, and to his distinctive conceptions of religion, history, and man's relation to nature.[2] Clearly, in a thesis of this type, it is impossible to discuss this process in any depth. Therefore, in this section we shall simply delineate, briefly, the salient thematic elements of the rationalist tradition insofar as they are relevant for our evaluation of Marx's critique. We shall subdivide this tradition into three sections, corresponding to its major historical layers. These are: 1. The Ancient Greek Heritage; 2. The Modern Scientific Revolution; and, 3. The Enlightenment.

1. The Ancient Greek Heritage

The recovery of the ancient heritage comprised a central component of the European cultural renaissance that culminated in the Enlightenment. From the beginning of this reclamation, the classical Greek experience in particular served as a paradigm for their early modern European successors' endeavours in a variety of fields. With the gradual eclipse of Greek achievements, particularly in the scientific and technical domains, however, the classical model tended to give way to its early modern counterpart. As a result, in much of Western Europe, classical culture became assimilated to the critiques of "paganism" and of non-European societies in general, with an enclave of admiration perpetuated principally in the sphere of the humanities. In Germany, though, this Hellenic disenchantment proceeded at a different pace that it did in the rest of Europe, for a number of reasons.

Hellenophilia continued to play a pivotal paradigmatic role in the
development of German philosophy long after the Greek sun had set in
the rest of the continent. To a limited degree, this tendency continues
today.[3]

This somewhat nationally idiosyncratic Hellenophilic legacy
played a major role, both directly and indirectly, in the formation of
Marx's critique in particular and his theory of communism in general.
The principal direct source media of this influence were Fichte, Hegel,
and Marx's "Young Hegelian" confrères. Marx, however, was himself
highly familiar with extant source materials. He not only studied this
material in his youth and wrote a doctorate on a classical Greek
subject, he also retained a keen interest in classical literature
throughout his life and returned to an exploration of classical history
near the close of his career in the 1870's.[4]

From these various channels Marx acquired a perception
of the classical heritage that remained substantially unaltered during
his lifetime. In simple terms, we may characterize this image as one in
which, in a qualifed way, classical Greece served as model of the
Vernünftstadt. True, particularly as he deepened his materialist
education, Marx came to realize that Greek rationality arose on a definite
class foundation, and that these social conditions constituted a definite
break on the development of Hellenic rationalist impulses. Moreover,
like Hegel before him, Marx viewed a return to the idyllic world of
Plato and Aristotle as neither possible nor even desirable. He enter-
tained no illusions concerning the historical specificity of the communist
era. Nevertheless, the semantic co-ordinates that fleshed out his

vision of communism as a rationalist society were principally drawn from

the classical tradition. In a word, to Marx communism represented a

qualified recovery of the classical Greek heritage. He considered the

Greeks to be the "normal children" of humanity.[5] Implicit in Marx's

fight for a rational society, at every point in his life, was his

determination to reclaim this "lost" legacy, or to complete the Greek

rationalist enterprise, albeit under radically different historical

conditions. Consequently, to assess the rationalist core of Marx's

critique of religion, we must clarify the character of this Hellenic

heritage.

Ancient Greek rationalism[6] stemmed from the unique class conditions

that began to emerge in the archaic social formations of the Aegean

region in the eighth to the seventh centuries B.C.E.[7] For our purposes,

from this point on ancient Greek intellectual discourse featured the

tendential elaboration of three distinctive themes. First, in

contemporary terms the spheres of the human and the divine (politics and

religion, the natural and supernatural, the rational and the mystical)

were dichotomized. This bifurcation occurred on both the socio-political

and the cosmic levels. The notion of a politico-religious power

continuum--such as it existed in Mycenean palace economy--gave way to

a theoretical parcellization of sovereignty, materially underwritten

by a new social division of labour. This process laid the intellectual

foundations for the subsequent association of religion with the non-

human or the alien, as well as the corollary thesis of a zero-sum

relationship between the divine and the human spheres. Both of these

propositions played a crucial role in the semantic sedimentation of
Marx's critique of religion.

The second general Greek rationalist theme concerns the
specifically philosophical dimension of the above schism, or what we
shall term the bifurcation of logos and mythos. Historically, we may
trace this dichotomy to the rise of the polis circa the beginning of
the seventh century B.C.E.[8] To simplify somewhat, in this context
logos and mythos referred to two different types of decision or law
making. With the decline of the Mycenean palace economy, the affairs
of state were gradually shorn of all personal characteristics, that is
to say, a genuine public-private split began to emerge. The public realm
became the domain of the agora.   In this arena speech or open, public
discussion based, not on ritual rules, but on abstract criteria of
verifiability, predominated. Personal qualities appeared to count for
little. All that seemed to matter was one's formal communal membership--
and thus, by extension, one's formal ability to participate in rational
deliberations--and within this framework, one's ability to present rational
arguments.[9] The autonomy of this logos sphere was secured only at
the price of an on-going struggle with the mythos sphere. In this
priestly domain, knowledge and authority appeared to be personal attributes,
only mythopoeic and ritual criteria seemed to count, and the law was
spoken.[10] Thus, the struggle to diminish mythic jurisdiction coincided
with the battle to publicize the law, to bring it into the agora and to
subject decision making to public, rational scrutiny. The principal
form of this publicization was the establishment of a literate culture,

a culture that in many ways stood in mortal antagonism to its oral
predecessor.[11]

For our purposes, this development is principally of interest
because it set the semantic contours for the perception of religion
for later generations, including Marx. In this semantic frame, rationality
basically came to connote abstract calculation, or a form of delibera-
tion that was necessarily "emancipated" from all concrete, personal
links. Henceforth, in the Western tradition, rationality became
indelibly tied to the public (formal, sphere of abstract universality)
side of social existence.[12] Moreover, in this frame, rationality was
placed in a position of seemingly permanent polar antagonism to mythic
sensibility i.e., to psychic processes that principally relied on
intuitive (concrete, personal, internal, emotional) sources to make
decisions. In this sense, the Greek version of the reason/religion
dyad constituted a dress rehearsal for all later Western conflicts
between the analytical and the intuitive sides of "human nature",
science and religion, and so on. Indeed, the Greek example serves
as the paradigm for what we may term the bourgeois democratic "solution"
to the social tensions that gave rise to the logos/mythos schism in the
first place.[13]

Finally, the third theme concerns the definition of justice that
arose in Greece in the period in question in the wake of the redrawing
of the boundaries of cosmic/social sovereignty. This latter process,
reflecting the gradual predominance of abstract criteria in the determin-
ation of communal membership, featured the eclipse of genetic legitima-

tions of authority in both the cosmic and the social domains by public

accounts that emphasized the abstract equality of the constituents in

both these areas.[14] In particular, the _polis_ came to be viewed--much

like the _agora_ itself--as an institutionalized battlefield of contending

interests. In this framework, no one interest or party was granted a

privileged position: all were formally subject to the same impersonal

dictates of _dike_ or justice. Justice denoted the balancing of conflicting

forces, an equilibrium that was attributed to the successful corralling of

these forces in their "proper place", or, in philosophical terms, to

the victorious mastery of the appetitive proclivities by reason.[15]

This theme played a significant role not only in the development

of the Western philosophical tradition's linkage of reason, virtue

(justice) and abstract or geometrical proportionality, but more particularly

in the semantic framing of Marx's conception of communist society as a

rational association.[16] Although Marx fundamentally recast the socio-

historical co-ordinates of the classical Greek vision of the

"good (=rational=balanced) society", he retained many of its implicit

assumptions, including the idea that "truly human" characteristics

only flourish when the appetitive or egoistic impulses are checked by

rational restraints, which in Marx's formulation must have an autonomous

social foundation. By extension, he also maintained the Greek view that

while nature neither could nor should be suppressed altogether, it must

be controlled if man is to be authentically free.

In addition to the above themes, three philosophical schools,

corresponding to distinct ancient phases, developed the thrust of Greek

rationalism in ways that significantly shaped the texture of later Western religious criticism, and in particular that of Marx. First, the Platonic tradition exerted a lasting influence on the Western tradition through its reformulation of the logos/mythos bifurcation. To the Pre-Socratics this split corresponded to the two languages of man: the language of true being, i.e., logos, and the language of dreams, i.e., mythos. Moreover, they placed this dichotomy in a philosophical picture that assigned priority to abstract reasoning, posited a mind/body schism, and delineated a hierarchical model of mental functioning. Plato incorporated these theses into his tripartite conception of the psyche, with the highest realm being the sphere of abstraction and true know- ledge, and the lowest realm being the sphere of pictorial thinking, the imagination and opinion (doxa). In this Platonic framework, disease, whether in the individual or the state, corresponded to the disharmony (conflict) that arose from the bodily appetites getting "out of place" (i.e., role confusion). In turn, health corresponded to the equilibrium that resulted from the various psychic/social constituents functioning in their "proper" place, a condition that stemmed principally from the application of the "countercharm" of philosophy.[17] In Plato's framework, rational interrogation nullified the confusion of poetry, and disrupted the "dream" of mythic consciousness, by isolating the object from its narrative setting, fracturing the multiplicity of an event, and thus, condensing sensuous reality into one analytical or logical aspect. In this way, according to Plato, the attention of the witness could be concentrated on the object per se (i.e., its essence or being) and would

thereby ascend from the level of the shadows to the level of the Forms,

or in more Platonic terms, through this process the individual would be

compelled to remember.[18]

Notwithstanding Marx's well known theoretical hostility to

Plato, three basic components of the former's religious critique can be

traced either directly or indirectly to the influence of the latter.

First, there is the debt owed by modern science in general to Plato.[19]

Of particular note in this regard is Plato's geometrization of the cosmos,

of man's relationship to it, and thus, of the scientific enterprise as

a whole. The recovery of this mathematical framework constituted the

cornerstone of the modern scientific revolution and insofar as Marx

viewed his socio-historical explorations as an extension of this revolution,

he inherited many of Plato's rationalist assumptions. Second, there is

the indirect role played by Plato's denigration of pictorial thinking

(and the imagination) and his converse elevation in status of abstract

reasoning, particularly in the religious domain. Quite simply, Plato

inaugurated the Western traditions' theme of rational religion, i.e.,

its tendency to classify religious practices as higher or lower, rational

or irrational, according to the epistemological sources employed the

the given practitioners. In general, lower or irrational religion denotes

pictorially (or imaginatively) inspired religious practices, and corres-

ponded to the sphere of mythos. In contrast, higher or rational religion

denotes religious practices that are informed by abstract reasoning or

that arise within the sphere of logos. In other words, the god of

irrational religion is a sensuous deity. On the other hand, the god of

rational religion is an abstract deity, or the "god of the geometers"
in the modern scientific parlance. This religious dichotomy, along with
its attendant premises, recurs constantly in the tradition of Western
religious criticism. Most significantly for us, via its German philoso-
phical restatement (particularly in the works of Kant, Hegel and the
"Young Hegelians", but even going back as far as Leibniz), it
semantically structured Marx's conception of religion.[20] Finally, the
third component of Marx's religious critique that can be traced to
Plato consists of what may be termed a common "healing paradigm".
To be sure, in their respective approaches to "human liberation" Plato
and Marx employed radically divergent socio-historical co-ordinates.
However, both viewed the "diseased" condition as a state in which
humans are subject to the play of the imagination, entranced by the
theatre of appearance, and both thinkers conceived emancipation as the
construction of a "rational society" in which mythic consciousness
is ushered to the wings (or banished altogether), and open discourse,
based ultimately on the rational arbitration of interests, assumes
centre stage.

The second ancient philosophical school that significantly
shaped the contours of Marx's critique was that founded by Aristotle.
Aristotle retained the bulk of Plato's rationalist premises although he
dramatically altered their interpretive framework. In his psychology,
he preserved Plato's tripartite psychic model, and identified the
"animal" soul as the seat of the imagination and the source of error.
In his ethics, he equated "the good" with what is proper for a particular
being and posited the human telos as reason, or more precisely, as that

which is actualized in rational activity. Moreover, in line with the

Greek rationalist tradition he linked the conditions of this actualization

with the establishment of a balanced life, and, in the political sphere,

with the constitution of a polity (i.e., a political order socially based

on To meson and which allows maximum scope for free public discussion).

Aristotle, however, placed his rationalist assumptions within the

bounds of a teleological practical framework. Therein, reason comprised

an activity and as such formed an integral part of the material process

of human self-realization.[21]

Aristotle inaugurated that wing of Western philosophy that has

insisted that reason must exist materially (historically) if it is to

mean anything. This practical rationalism, or the theme of the histori-

cization of reason, played a pivotal role in the theoretical formation of

both Marx and Hegel, notwithstanding their differences with Aristotle on

many points.[22] In part, Aristotle's influence reflects the degree to

which his debate with Plato has framed the semantic contours of Western

philosophical discourse, not least in the field of religion. Insofar

as Western philosophy has followed the tracks of these two thinkers, it

has engaged in an intra-rationalist discussion. Within this framework,

of course, Aristotle's reputation has been severely hampered by his

espousal of a "pre-scientific" cosmology/physics and by his concomitant

association with the standpoint of the Medieval Church.[23] For instance,

in delineating a teleological view of cosmic interaction not only did

Aristotle underwrite the Medieval Catholic portrayal of a qualitatively

differentiated universe, he also let the pictorial god in the back door,

so to speak.[24] Hegel and Marx, however, in part, based their respective

religious approaches on the "rock" of rational religion (i.e., on the

assumption that the more abstract religion is, the "higher" it is,

developmentally speaking). Therefore, in this regard, they both disowned

Aristotle. At the same time, however, Marx, Hegel, and the Western

philosophical tradition generally had no difficulty at all in consciously

or unconsciously adopting Artistotle's view of the human sensual

constitution, or what we shall term "the five senses paradigm".[25]

The third and final school that we shall discuss is the Greek

materialist movement and the Epicurean tradition in particular. This

current exerted the most influence, both directly and indirectly, on

the formation of Marx's critique. Indeed, in many ways, this school's

response to the "metaphysical" proclivities of their forebears fore-

shadowed later European developments that led up to Marx as well as the

positivist and utilitarian traditions.[26] For our purposes, three themes

emerged during the brief incandescence of Hellenistic materialism that

are worthy of note. First, there was a tendency to reduce reality to

the interplay of basic material elements (atoms) and to derive the

operations of subjectivity from the laws that governed this process.

In short, repulsion and attraction were converted into fundamental

psychic drives. Second, there was a tendency to reject all ideological

items that could not be measured, such as values and teleological claims.

In some instances this bias gave rise to the espousal of an "ethics of

calculation" or an explicitly utilitarian approach to "how to live"

based on a pleasure/pain calculus. Finally, there was a tendency to

carry the _logos/mythos_ dichotomy to its logical conclusion, to

banish "the gods" completely from human affairs and to adopt a rigorously

anti-pictorial posture. The Greek materialists tended to posit pictorial

religious sentiments as secondary inclinations and to root their genesis

in a natural dependence that gave rise to pain (terror) and, by extension,

to imaginative melioration (e.g., dreams). Henceforth, we shall term

this thesis the "terror theory". In addition, the materialists often

traced the _content_ of pictorial religious beliefs to the _projection_ of

human qualities onto an _alien_ being. Hereafter, we shall refer to this

position as the "projection theory". They also portrayed pictorial

religion as involving a zero-sum relationship between the gods and

humans i.e., what is given to a god must be taken away from man and vice

versa. From this point on we shall refer to this position as the

"zero-sum argument".

Marx's debt to the Greek materialists falls into two categories.

First, with qualifications, throughout his life Marx viewed his work as

an extension of the aims of this tradition. Initially he articulated

this position in Bauerian terms, reflecting the influence of Bruno

Bauer, his mentor in his formative period. Later, however, the language

of self-consciousness gave way to a more materialist terminology, and

Marx acknowledged at least an indirect theoretical connection between the

modern socialist and the Hellenistic materialist movements.[27] Second,

and more importantly, was the influence of Greek materialism in the religious

sphere proper. Without question, the "terror theory" of religion, along

with its corollory theses (e.g., "projection theory", "zero-sum argument")

became the dominant theoretical frame for the criticism of religion in

the history of Western rationalism. The rise of modern science, for

instance, coincided with the recovery of Epicureanism, a reclamation

that reached its zenith during the French Enlightenment.[28] Bayle,

Fontanelle, and most importantly d'Holbach and Bauer, were all "children

of Epicurus" in the field of religion. Marx explicitly identified

himself with this tradition of religious criticism and his writings in

this area, throughout his life, bear the indelible imprint of its

semantic assumptions.

2. The Modern Scientific Revolution

Though the ancient Greek tradition laid the theoretical

foundations of the paradigm within which Marx elaborated his critique

of religion, it took the modern scientific revolution to complete its

frame.   The limits of the slave component of the "ancient

economy" materially underwrote the incapacity of Greek rationalism to

surmount the theoretical barrier that divided the human and the natural

realms and precluded the extension to the latter of a critical rigour

comparable to that developed in the former. With the disintegration of

the feudal system in Europe, these material underpinnings gradually

disappeared, a process that found its theoretical reflection in the

birth of modern science.[29]

In large measure, the scientific revolution theoretically

turned on the displacement of the Aristotelian by the Platonic/Pythagorean

world-views.[30] In simple terms, the Aristotelian portrait of a qualitatively

differentiated universe, predominantly constituted by an ensemble of

logical, "sympathetic" connections which ultimately converged at the

point of the divine will, gave way to a Platonically inspired vision

of a qualitatively homogeneous universe, ultimately mathematical in

character, in which only measurable (and thus, abstract) connections

"counted" as valid.[31]

With this supercession, the principal theoretical backdrop to

the mainline of Western philosophical inquiry (and dispute) in the suc-

ceeding centuries was established, from both negative and positive angles.

From this point on, insofar as Western philosophers claimed to be

scientific, they adopted, implicitly or explicitly, the assumptions

that were embedded in a Platonically derived scientific paradigm.

In particular, they conducted their inquiries in relief against the

"shadow" of the Aristotelian tradition, and specifically its scholastic

incarnation. Teleological "cosmic threads" and more generally any

"sympathetic" cosmic linkages, along with their concomitant practices,

became the bêtes noires of Western rationalists. This opposition, of

course, simply extended and elaborated the Greek rationalist theme of

the logos/mythos schism.

In the Western tradition, the "Aristotelian current", as

specifically embedded in the constellation of Medieval Christian

practices, became the paradigm for the rationalist definition of

"myth" or non-science.[32] This assimilation of "Aristotle"[33] to the

sphere of mythos, however, disguised the specificity of "his" restatement

of primitive or mythic themes. To the extent that this tradition

employed primitive beliefs, it recast them in a metaphysical framework;

thus, for instance, the sensuous "sympathetic" threads of the primitive

cosmos became logical fibres that linked the cosmic constituents in a

"great chain of being" that reached its summit at the throne of the

Christian God. In a word, "Aristotle" let the pictorial god in the back

door (and by extension, provided both space and primacy to the domain

of revelation or faith), but only at the price of turning him into a

logician. In short, the "Aristotelian" tradition constituted a caricature

of the mythopoeic world-view. Nevertheless, Western rationalists almost

invariably equated the two terms, a slippage that profoundly shaped the

contours of Marx's critique, as we shall discuss below.

The "positive" side of the theoretical shift expressed in the

scientific revolution, though, exerted an even more decisive influence on

Marx's religious views than did its "negative" counterpart. This

"positive" side encompassed a network of interlocking propositions concerning

reality, man and religion, which, combined have constituted the dominant

theoretical paradigm within the Western philosophical tradition,

particularly since the seventeenth century. Hereafter, we shall refer

to this world-view as the "rationalist paradigm".[34] The disparate source

tributaries that fed into Marx's critique, as well as his critique per se,

operated within the parameters of this perspective; thus, it is imperative

that we clarify its principal theoretical co-ordinates. To this end,

we shall summarize the responses given to the questions, "What is

reality (and by extension, science)?", "What is man?", and, "What is

religion?", by the major figures of the scientific revolution, roughly

covering the period from Copernicus to Newton, taken as an abstract

collective. We shall not discuss the positions of these figures

individually. We shall simply isolate the salient components of their
common world-view, at a fairly general and abstract level, and shall
then attempt to assess their importance for Marx's critique.

(a) What is reality (and by extension, science)?

The core of the scientific metaphysical picture consisted of
the Platonically derived thesis that the universe is <u>fundamentally</u>
mathematical in character.[35] This fundamental stratem corresponded
to the realm of "deep structure" that lay beneath the realm of
appearances, a contrast that frequently took the form of a distinction
between primary and secondary qualities. Primary nature was nature as
abstract and quantitative, i.e., the realm of the <u>measurable</u>.
Secondary nature was nature as invisible and <u>subjective</u>, i.e., the realm
of the <u>non-measurable</u>. Consequently, in this framework "reality" was
<u>thing-like</u> or dead, and "unreality" was <u>human-like</u> and living.

Newton delineated the classic version of this perspective through
his synthesis of the mathematical and the empirical (corpuscular)
approaches. He defined the "book of nature" as corpuscular in content
and mathematical in syntax. In so doing, he demonstrated that the conflict
that had previously existed between these two schools of thought was
more apparent than real. Newton revealed that underlying both view-
points was the same passion to admit only <u>abstract</u> cosmic connections as
legitimate. For instance, Newton accepted as valid the "atomic"
assumption that the material universe could be reduced to hard,
indivisible, <u>homogeneous</u> units that could be qualified only <u>mathematically</u>,
and that existed separate both from each other and from space and time.

Two conclusions followed from these premises, one obvious and the other less so. The less obvious conclusion concerns Newton's--and by extension, the bulk of the modern scientific tradition's[36]--conception of empirical verification. Newton insisted on empirical criteria serving as the final arbiters of truth. Implicit in this position, however, was his identification of empirical with the "five senses paradigm". He rigorously excluded, for example, sensory evidence gathered through intuitive channels or other "sympathetic" media (e.g., dreams).[37] The second, and more obvious conclusion, concerns Newton's understanding of how atomic units were interconnected. Quite simply, he defined these linkages as law-like, and, in particular, as mathematical in character. He saw these abstractly universal threads as governing all cosmic phenomena uniformly, and thus as constituting a homogeneous mechanical edifice, in which all natural events were traced to the operation of precise cause-effect relations.[38]

This metaphysical picture converged with an instrumentalist notion of scientific practice.[39] In sum, this notion hinged on the concept of objective description, or the sharp segregation of the observer from the observed. The philosophical roots of this position lay in the Platonically derived assumption that as the "real world" was mathematical in nature so was "true knowledge" (i.e., mathematics=the only valid epistemic bridge linking man to the cosmos). Moreover, since ordinary consciousness was non-mathematical, and hence deceiving, it had to be "suspended" in some way. This goal was (formally) achieved through the internal dichotomization of the human condition and in particular,

through the exile of subjectivity (values, feeling) from the realm of

scientific practice. The "real man" was abstract, mathematical man,

or a man who was able to restrict his contact with nature to mathematical

channels and hence relate to it as an inert, passive mass suitable only

to his instrumental ends.[40]

Within this practical framework, science obtained a new meaning

and "Plato's children" turned on their father with a vengeance.

Specifically, the new scientists adopted as their aim the Platonic

goal of the realization of wisdom or "Formal" knowledge, but reframed

it to mean the revelation of the inner mathematical structure of the

universe. This mathematical pursuit converted "science" into the

breakdown of a given phenomenal field into abstract, quantifiable units

(i.e., analysis) and the reassembly of these units into precise

logical relations (i.e., synthesis). The new science, in short,

restricted its purview to the terrain of exact measurement (calculation).

All non-quantifiable items were classified as non-science. Accordingly,

for a scientific movement whose raison d'être was prediction and control

in the service of capital,[41] how not why, became the order of the day.

Positivism was simply the theoretical expression of this process come to

fruition.

Marx was no positivist, and he took exception to numerous

elements in the modern scientific portraits of "reality" and science.

In particular, he opposed any metaphysical inquiry into these matters

that was abstracted from the domain of historically specific social

practices. He viewed the goal of "objective description" as, at best,

an illusion, and at worst, a theoretical apology for the class divisions

it mirrored. To Marx, the starting point of science consisted of

human sensuousness as a determinate social ensemble, that is, humans

as both subjective and objective social beings, and not of any "deep"

mathematical structure. "Reality" and science begin with the human,

not the thing-like. Consequently, a considerable distance separated

Marx from a mechanical world-view, in the classical scientific sense

of that word.

Nevertheless, in a number of areas, the positions of Marx and

modern science overlap in a way that has a significant import for our

study. First, there is little doubt that Marx endorsed the fundamenta

of the scientific paradigm, excepting the points noted above. In general,

he saw the bourgeois accomplishments in the natural sciences as paradigmatic

for his own work, and, in this sense, viewed "scientific socialism" as

an extension rather than an overturn of the Western scientific tradition.

For instance, his conception of his mature investigations as probes

beneath the surface unity of appearances to reconstruct (logically)

the dialectical interplay of form and content, his aversion to teleology

in whatever form, his use of mechanical imagery (e.g., base and super-

structure), and finally, his tendency (especially in certain of his

mature writings) to colour historical development with a pronounced

"productivist" hue, all testify to the influence exerted by the

scientific revolution on Marx's thought.[42] Thus, insofar as this

metaphysical picture framed religious interpretation, Marx inherited

these assumptions as well. Second, there is also little doubt that

Marx viscerally embraced the modern scientific conception of "reality".

In particular, he implicitly limited valid cosmic interconnections to

contiguous causal chains, and accepted the evidence of only the

"five senses" in this regard. As a result, he implicitly equated

materialism with its Western incarnation, a slippage that affected not

only his critical approach to religion _per se_, but also his overall

understanding of human self-making.[43]

    (b) What is man?

    As we noted above, in the scientific metaphysical picture

the "real world" appeared as a lifeless mathematical/mechanical structure.

Accordingly, in the scientific cosmos, man occupied a decidedly secondary

position, or was seen as an _effect_ of this mathematical structure.

Mathematics comprised the only legitimate bridge man had to link up

with nature. Only by crossing this span could he secure "true knowledge",

or, what amounted to the same thing, control, whether in the natural or

the social domains. Therefore, in this framework, "self-knowledge"

amounted to man's _self-objectification_, which concretely meant his

mathematical reconstruction through the methods of analysis (i.e.,

reducing man to his basic "stuff") and synthesis. Obviously, reason

rather than revelation assumed primacy in this process.

    Not surprisingly, the image of man that emerged from this recon-

struction equated the real (=primary) man with _homo mathematicus_, or

what became its equivalent, man as a machine. This picture, however,

conflicted somewhat with the reality of human subjectivity. Thus, up

to the time of Newton, it was necessary to posit man as internally

divided (i.e., mind/body, values/facts schisms). The most famous

exponent of this position, of course, was Descartes. With his mathematical-

empirical synthesis, though, Newton put the lie to this dualism, or, more precisely, redefined this division as internal to the constitution of mechanical man. To paraphrase his restatement of Galileo, in the world of Newton the "book of man" had an atomic content but a mathematical syntax. In this "text", man appeared as a mechanical atomic aggregate and as organized monadically. This monadic picture psychologically took the form of "sensationalism", or the reduction of human psychic operations to the mechanical interplay of the sensations of pleasure and pain, with ideas derived therefrom. In the life sciences or medicine this picture ultimately found expression in the "bio-medical" or "molecular" disease theory. In the domain of political theory, "monadism" appeared in the guise of liberalism, and in economics it theoretically underlay the doctrine of laissez-faire. One common thread pervaded all these instances: the "basic stuff" of some aspect of human life was indentified with abstract, homogeneous (and therefore, quantifiable) units, separable both from each other and from their field of practice. In short, the leitmotif of scientific social reductionism was bourgeois individualism.

The flip side of this materialist reduction, of course, was a mathematical construction of monadic interconnections, i.e., only abstract links were admitted as valid. In this perspective, humans could hook up both with each other and with nature only via abstract media, not "sympathetic" channels. The reason for this restriction was familiar: only abstract links were measurable. Moreover, as in the physical realm proper, in the human sphere only contiguous connections

empirically validated via the "five senses" counted in this regard.

After Newton, these "abstract threads" appeared in various theoretical

guises, depending upon the context. In the interchange with nature,

for instance, the valid links with nature were limited to mechanical

bridges and nature was viewed simply as a theatre for the real or

potential exercise of domination. In the social realm, abstract connections

were termed morals and productive associations were attributed to the glue

of exchange relations. In politics, abstract links appeared in the

form of the rights and obligations of citizenship. Whatever their name,

their substance was identical, and the social reality they reflected

(i.e., in general, the consolidation of bourgeois society), the same.

This scientific picture of man involved the implicit and explicit

demarcation of identity boundaries, encompassing both inter- and intra-

species relations. Notwithstanding later qualifications, this identity

frame has predominated in Western culture to this day. Because Newton

effected the theoretical synthesis that was necessary to weld together

the various facets of the scientific world-view in this area into a

coherent whole, we shall henceforth refer to the fundamental co-ordinates

of the above portrait of man as "Newtonian". By fundamental co-ordinates,

we include the following: (a) the identification of the "basic stuff" of

the social/political/economic universe with individual human organisms

whose identity limits reach to the ends of their fingertips, so to

speak, and no further, unless extended by valid cosmic connections;

(b) the restriction of valid cosmic connections to abstract channels,

in the sense discussed above (e.g., concrete or material links are

equated with contiguous bridges that can be verified via the "five senses");
(c) on the negative side, no "sympathetic" connections are admitted as
valid identity constituents.

Marx registered his most strenuous objections to the scientific
paradigm in the social domain. Hence, there is no simple overlap of
their positions in the area. For instance, in addition to the points
noted above--which have evident social implications--Marx took profound
exception to the monadic framework of bourgeois social theorists. To
Marx, in adopting this standpoint, these theorists simply reflected the
bourgeois character of their societies, and in particular the ascendency
of this productive mode and their positions in it. As his central
category of social inquiry, Marx replaced the monad with the ensemble
of historically specific social relations, and insisted that to interpret
properly abstract connections, these links must be resolved into this
social nexus. In so doing, he obviously distanced himself considerably
from the orthodox scientific perspective.

However, no less clearly Marx understood his innovations
(corrections) in this area as an extension of previous scientific
investigations, i.e., he viewed his work as a continuation of earlier
researches that had been arrested because of ideological blockages.
Consequently, not only did Marx endorse the natural sciences as the
qualified model for his own studies, he also adopted the "Newtonian"
paradigm as his interpretive framework in this regard. This inheritance
fundamentally coloured his notions of communism, religion and political
strategy.[44] Two effects are of particular note at this point. First,

in relation of inter/intra generational and natural interchanges, Marx

admitted only material connections as valid and equated the same with

contiguous links that could be verified by the "five senses". He

resolutely opposed the notion of "sympathetic" connections and implicitly

adopted concomitant restrictions on the conceptualization of human

needs, the texture of communal life, the content of communist association,

and the ecological implications of communism. Second, notwithstanding

his rejection of methodological "monadism", throughout his life Marx

remained an individualist in the double sense that he embraced the

"Newtonian" conception of the constitution of social aggregates, and

that he invoked the concept of "individuality" as his premier evolutionary

referent. As a result, though Marx evidently viewed his version of

social atomism as bereft of all bourgeois encumbrances, it is by no

means clear that this is the case.[45] True, Marx did not mathematically

or mechanically reduce social phenomena. However, he did offer a

historical restatement of the scientific assumption that the "real"

human being is both rational and individual. In so doing, he merely re-

phrased a linkage whose theoretical roots lie in the reflections of Greek

materialism.

(c) What is religion?

In a world-view in which reality appeared as an essentially

mathematical or mechanical structure, and in which man seemed essentially

to be an effect of this structure, it was only appropriate that God was

portrayed as essentially a mathematician or mechanic (e.g., a clockmaker).

In advancing this perspective, modern science simply restated the

classical Greek theme of rational religion. The "true god" inhabited the province of _logos_: his everyday or false counterpart lived in the realm of _mythos_. Accordingly, just as "true knowledge" of the cosmos in general was mathematical in character, so was "true knowledge" of God. In turn, false knowledge (_doxa_) stemmed from _pictorial_ channels, or, in later Christian terms, _revelation_. Where modern science stepped beyond the threshold of Greek religious criticism, however, was the theoretical point at which they surmounted the breach between the human and the natural realms, an accomplishment that eluded their Greek forebears. With this triumph--again at best encapsulated in the Newtonian synthesis-- all cosmic phenomena were subjected to the same general laws. As a result, the teleological moment of God--along with miracles--vanished from the sphere of rational religion and was exiled to the domain of pictorial thinking.[46] The rational god was recast as an _efficient_ deity, known principally via the abstract media of his creation (i.e., the chains of cause and effect relations). These cosmic laws constituted the _how_ of god's providence, whose social correlates were _morals_. In short, as in the physical sphere proper, in the religious sphere the scientific revolution tended to restrict the valid channels of interchange to _abstract_ connections. However, since the fundamental thrust of this movement was to limit inquiry to _how_ questions, and to exclude _why_ questions from the purview of rational investigation, its logical tendency was to render god, and by extension religious practices in general, superfluous. In other words, when "Plato's children" began to eat their father, they had little choice but to continue until they had consumed his god as well.

Marx participated in this feast and as such qualifies as a "child of Plato", at least in the province of religion. He clearly rejected the modern scientific attempt to rationalize god (and religion), but did so in the name of modern science. In so doing, he consciously and unconsciously accepted the semantic frame of religion that this tradition had erected. As a result, he equated religion with its Western incarnation and felt that once he had removed the supports from this particular edifice, theoretically speaking religion per se would recede into the mists of "pre-history".[47]

3. The Enlightenment

In retrospect, the remainder of the sources that contributed to Marx's critique appear as footnotes to the Greek and scientific traditions. Accordingly, we shall shift our focus somewhat and explore the significance of the various source tributaries' "reading" of their rationalist forebears for the thematic evolution of Marx's critique. Likewise, our expository method will also change and we shall concentrate on briefly summarizing the impact on Marx of the constellation of thematic modifications effected by a given source current in general, rather than on elucidating their internal intellectual structure.

In the Enlightenment, assorted theorists took the rationalist "raw material" and refined or radicalized it and consolidated its diverse thematic tendencies into coherent edifices. This "processing" was indispensible for Marx's theory of communism, from both positive and negative angles, including, of course, his critique of religion. To examine this era, we shall first explore the "non-German" wing of

this movement, meaning in particular its French, English, and to a much
lesser extent, Italian branches. For the sake of simplicity, we shall
refer to the theorists of this wing as Enlighteners. Second, we shall
then survey the German branch of the Enlightenment movement, whose
representative thinkers we shall term Aufklärers.

(a) Non-German Enlightenment

Though this current did feature a significant "rational religious"
movement (e.g., Deism), its predominant tendency was to undermine the
concept of rational religion. The Enlighteners followed this concept to
its logical terminus, and concluded that all religion has its seat in the
sphere of the irrational. Of course, this conclusion logically led to
a debate on the status of human irrationality, especially in the wake
of the Enlightenment proper, between those who on the one hand affirmed
the validity if not the primacy of the irrational in human life, and
those who on the other hand denied its validity altogether. The latter
we shall term rationalists, and the former, "mystics".[48] Though this
debate had its roots in the Enlightenment (e.g., Rousseau) we shall
not discuss it here. Marx inherited the rationalist mantle, and thus it
is their influence that we shall discuss in this section. Nevertheless,
it is important to keep in mind that Marx did not simply respond to the
"positive" pole of the Enlightenment inheritance, he was also fundamentally
affected by its "negative" side as well. The Enlightenment spawned a
theoretical polarization or a semantic frame that directly and indirectly
"constructed" Marx's perception of religious questions, albeit as mediated
by his determinate social location at any given point. Thus, for instance,

in the intellectual divide that appeared in the wake of the French
Revolution, politically speaking, rationalists tended to stand in the
"progressive" camp, and "mystics" tended to cluster in the "reactionary"
one. In various ways, "mysticism" became associated with reaction. This
identification could not help but frame Marx's interpretation of religion
and, in particular, its relation to communism.

The Enlighteners' influence on Marx may be summarized in the
form of three propositions. First, they argued that religion per se
is a legitimate object of critique. Second, they maintained that religion
is alien. Third, they contended that religion is developmental in
nature. We shall discuss these propositions sequentially.

i. Religion is a legitimate object of critique

This position theoretically stemmed from the confluence of three
streams of thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries:
(a) continental rationalism, along with advances in the scientific
revolution in general; (b) the Protestant Reformation; and finally,
(c) the "revival of paganism" as an intellectual concern, due both to a
heightened awareness and appreciation for the classical tradition and
to colonial reports of primitive peoples. These factors combined to
undermine the Genesis monopoly on historical consciousness, and the
need to replace, or at least to supplement, the Genesis account
of social arrangements appeared increasingly necessary. The general
trend in the conceptualization of this alternative framework was to
attempt to ground social relations in human nature and in particular
in its rational side (e.g., natural law theory). In so doing, the

relevant theorists simply applied the lessons of the natural sciences to the social realm. In the area of religion, however, this type of critique was triggered by the developing Protestant assault on Catholicism. With the marriage of this line of criticism to the tradition of rational religious inquiry, as particularly expounded by Newton and as devastatingly extended by Spinoza, the foundations of religious criticism were laid. However, it took Pierre Bayle's definitive dissociation of the notion of critique from its religious moorings before religion per se could become its target.[49] From this point on, the general rationalist tendency was to view religion simply as a social phenomenon like any other, and thus, as, in principle, subject to the same type of criticism. This line of argument underlay Marx's later historical restatement of this thesis, namely that the critique of religion must be assimilated to the critique of the social conditions that make it necessary.

ii. Religion is alien

Although this proposition theoretically arose from the "rational religious" claim that pictorial religion involved the cultivation of inhuman or "lower" sentiments, in the course of the Enlightenment this charge came to be applied to rational religious practices as well. The roots of the alienation theme lie in the revival of Epicureanism that accompanied the growth of the scientific revolution in the early seventeenth century.[50] The Epicurean "terror theory" of religion was adopted by Hobbes, and probably influenced Spinoza's specification of the "passive emotions" (e.g., fear) as the seats of the imagination

and thus as the sources of error and pictorial religious proclivities.
Again, however, it took the figure of Bayle to knit these intellectual
impulses into a coherent and explicit pattern, a configuration that
definitively set the tone for later Enlightenment explorations in this
area. For instance, Bayle contended that religion and science were
irreconcilable, a theme that was later pursued by d'Holbach and Diderot,
among others. He also maintained that religion and morality were
incompatible, again a position elaborated with relish by d'Holbach,
for example. In addition, Bayle inaugurated the classic Enlightener
anti-Deist argument that there was no innate religion, as well as the
theme that a religious person was in some way diseased or mad or in some
way inhuman.[51]

The equation of religion and inhuman, however, took a decisive
new turn with Fontenelle. Drawing upon the work of Locke, Fontenelle
traced the rise of religion to the psychological tendency to attempt to
explain (and thus, control) nature through alien projection. He rooted
this propensity in the power of the imagination. Both Vico and Hume
elaborated, in diverse ways, these seminal insights. Vico, for instance,
causally linked the genesis of religion with the fear of death and
Hume attributed the same phenomenon to unscientific mental habits
that spawned both terror and a "projectionist" inclination.

As the French Enlighteners, in particular, developed the
"alienation theme", their critique tended to become increasingly radical.
This process converged with the emergence of a "developmentalist"
approach to religion, and specifically with the proliferation of studies

of primitive cultures. In general, this convergence resulted in a tendency to link religious and social disfigurement and the extension of this linkage to ambient conditions (e.g., in the case of Rousseau, the development of a critique of civilization). For instance, Diderot attributed the origin of religion to the misanthropic character of society. Even more decisively, Charles de Brosses recast the contours of subsequent "alienation" investigations by fusing the psychologistic critique of religion with the theme of bestiality. Henceforth, we term the position that human religiosity serves as an inverted index of the degree to which man is de-humanized or turned into an animal, the "animal argument".

While Voltaire adopted this "animal" theme, Baron d'Holbach integrated it into a systematic portrait of religious alienation.[52] The latter drew this picture on a "sensationalist" canvas, and thus traced the source of religion to the psychic consequences of human helplessness in the face of overwhelming natural forces. He viewed religion as the consecration of error, psychologically operating through the alien projection of man's most negative traits and the inculcation of a submissive posture vis-à-vis this "animal" entity, and socially manipulated by priests (i.e., the "impostor argument"). This composite restatement of Greek materialist themes included such venerable rationalist chestnuts as the "zero-sum thesis" and the postulation of an antipodal relationship between religion and science, as well as a paralleling of divine and human tyranny and a characterization of religious believers as "fanatical".[53]

Throughout his lifetime, Marx adhered to the "alienation thesis".
However, in the course of his theoretical development, he radically recast
its conventional framing. In particular, though he affirmed, in general,
the substance of the psychological claims of the Enlighteners (e.g., the
"terror theory"), he shifted the site of their resolution away from
the terrain of the individual psyche and onto the domain of historically
specific social relations. Notwithstanding this methodological qualifica-
tion, however, his texts are littered with explicit endorsations of
the "terror theory", the "zero-sum thesis", the "animal argument",
d'Holbach's view of religious imagery as a compendium of negative
projections, the linkage of social and religious disfigurement, the
"misanthrope thesis", the incompatibility of religion with either
science or morality, as well as frequent derogatory references to the
roles of the imagination and the "passive emotions".[54] In adopting
these positions, Marx was particularly influenced by his direct contact
with the works of de Brosses and d'Holbach. Though this semantic
connection was initially acquired under the tutelage of Bruno Bauer,
it was to outlast him by far.[55]

iii. Religion must be placed in a developmental context

The theoretical roots of this position lay in the struggle for
bourgeois self-definition that emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth
centuries against the backdrop of: (a) the decline of the "Medieval
order" and the ascendancy of its capitalist counterpart; (b) the "classical"
revival and comparisons thus invited with the developing bourgeois regime;
and finally, (c) the "discovery" of primitive cultures in colonial lands

and the attendant effect this knowledge had on civil self-understanding.
In general, the seventeenth century marked a turning point in the evolution
of bourgeois self-identification in these respects.[56] The modern sense
of inferiority vis-à-vis the Greeks gave way to a feeling of superiority
accompanied by rising hopes in the future and the meliorative effects
of science and education. The world, it appeared, was maturing,
becoming more educated and acquiring more control over the natural
environment, and its Western component clearly stood at the apex of
this developmental continuum.

In the sphere of religion, of course, the Judeo-Christian-Islamic
traditions each fostered their own versions of this "developmentalist"
perspective, as each viewed itself as superior to the religious cultures
from which it emerged and by which it was still surrounded. In a
special sense, the Protestant Reformation also encouraged this tendency,
even though its ostensible ideological direction was "back to the basics"
of the Christian tradition. However, again it was not until Pierre
Bayle took aim at "paganism" that "developmentalism" entered the vocabulary
of religious criticism in a coherent, modern form.[57]

Bayle's contributions, however, pale in comparison to the seminal
labours of Fontenelle. The latter articulated all the major themes
of "developmentalism" in regards to religion, and in so doing recast
the classical Greek theme of "rational religion". In particular, he
advanced four theses. First, he argued that religion and language
evolve together, with myth corresponding to a "lower" stage of
development in which man predominantly employs concrete, pictorial

language, and higher forms corresponding to the ascendency of abstract

language. Henceforth, we shall term this position the "corporeal

argument". Second, he maintained that primitives possess a distinct

type of mentality, or what would later come to be called a "pre-logical"

or a mythopoeic consciousness. Third, he paralleled the stages of

psychic/linguistic/religious evolution and the stages of individual

growth. In this picture primitives appeared as children. From this

point onward, we shall term this thesis the "ontogenetic argument".

Fourth, he revised the Epicurean "impostor theory" (i.e., the view

that religion is basically an instrument of social control exercised

in the interests of the dominant minority) by rooting it psychologically

or tying it to the developmental state of the "masses", i.e., though

religion was necessary as long as the "masses" were childlike, when they

"matured" it would no longer be required.[58] In adopting the "corporeal

thesis", both Vico and Hume added nuances that would later affect

Marx's work greatly. Vico, for instance, insisted that the stages

of linguistic evolution had to be interpreted both as part of a cyclic

process and as components of historically specific cultural complexes.

Hume, in turn, viewed religious development as an oscillatory reflex

between polytheism and monotheism, with "theism" in general associated

with the emergence of civilization and the concomitant psychic phenomenon

of subject/object dichotomization. This latter theme rapidly became a

key component of the Western interpretation of the primitive-civil

psychic divide.

"Developmentalism" received a nudge in a radically different

theoretical direction, however, with the publication of de Brosses's

work on fetishism.[59] De Brosses preserved all the salient elements of the "developmentalist" tradition, but he now gave them an empirical foundation. As a result, he tendentially married "developmentalism" to the nascent discipline of ethnology. In so doing, he also argued that: (a) fetishism constituted the earliest form of religion and that, at one time, it was universal; (b) primitives were childlike with a mental state similar to that of the insane; (c) religious evolution featured the increasing hominization of the object of veneration (henceforth we shall term this argument the "hominization thesis"); and (d) fetishism was present in all ages as an indelible expression of the human psyche at a particular developmental point, and thus, was extremely difficult to eradicate. In addition, as we noted earlier, de Brosses added the "animal argument" to the arsenal of the "alienation school" of religious criticism.

The Enlightenment espousal of "developmentalism", however, was by no means unanimous. Two camps in particular voiced their dissent. First, there was the "Natural Religion" current, who, while they readily accepted that man had a tendency to "fall" into pictorial religion, nevertheless maintained that the impulse towards rational religion was an innate human trait.[60] Second, and more important for our purposes, there was the radical atheist tendency, best exemplified by d'Holbach, who denied that religion ever evolved but rather always indicates that mankind has failed to mature.

Though Marx did not believe in "progress" and was highly critical of Eurocentric assumptions masquarading as science in the field of ethnology, he adopted almost unquestioningly all of the major

"developmentalist" tenets noted above with respect to religion
(e.g., the "ontogenetic", "corporeal", "animal", and "hominization"
arguments, as well as de Brosses' theses concerning fetishism).[61]
Of course, Marx reframed this inheritance, locating, for instance, the
Enlightenment claim of a distinct primitive mentality within a particular
socio-historical context. To this end, in part Marx relied on the
methodological prescriptions of Vico, uniting the Enlightenment
"developmentalist" assumptions with the principle of historical
specification. For example, while Marx referred to de Brosses'
work at quite different periods in his life, his reception of the
latter's substantive contentions was not thereby affected. Marx
simply folded the same assumptions into diverse theoretical frameworks.[62]
In so doing, he inadvertently exposed the fundamental contradiction that
lay at the heart of this endeavour, a contradiction that was perhaps
honestly addressed only by d'Holbach, who implicitly recognized that
the historicization of religion conflicted at root with the "alienaation
thesis", and thus excluded religion from the sphere of historical
development altogether.[63]

(b) The Aufklärung

While in the main Marx followed the thematic lead of the
Enlightenment tradition in developing his critique of religion, he also
adopted several assumptions or theoretical proclivities that were
refined in the course of the Aufklärung. We may classify these influences
into three groups: i. the theme of rational religion; ii. "organicist
mysticism"; and, iii. the method of studying religion.

i. Rational religion

The thematic axis of the Aufklärung, as opposed to the

Enlightenment, was rational religion, or the attempt to preserve

spirit (=freedom) as an autonomous realm (i.e., as independent of the

causal mechanism of nature). The dominant Aufklärer approach to this

problem was to ground spirit historically.[64] Contradictions in this

perspective, however, led Kant in particular to abandon this terrain and

instead to situate the actualization of universality (=reason) within

the framework of a community constituted by bifurcated rational

individuals.[65] In this context, religion was assimilated to the province

of practical reason and rational religion was identified with the

a priori apprehension of ethical obligations and counterposed to

irrational religion (=fetishism) or the attempt to derive religious

duties empirically.

The significance of the rational religion theme is threefold.

First, Marx accepted the Aufklärer equation of rational religion and

Christian morality.[66] This equation also informed the "utopian socialists'"

vision of religious communism as well as their strategic perspective.[67]

Marx's rejection of these views, as well as his denial that religion

could even be rational or serve as a basis for authentic moral action,

combined with his implicit endorsation of the above Aufklärer semantic

frame concerning religion, reinforced his position that religion and

communism stood in an antipodal relation to each other. Second,

following Hegel, Marx developmentally contextualized rational religion

although he rejected the former's conclusions in this regard. Consequently,

while Marx agreed that Protestant Christianity comprised the highest

religion, he restricted religion to the developmental continuum of

"pre-history"[68] and correlated the accession of Protestant Christianity

with the general social phenomenon of the rise of bourgeois democracies.

This developmental subsumption spared Marx the bother of criticizing

(or attending to) "lower" religious forms, as their criticism was

encompassed in the theoretical assault on the "Absolute Religion"

itself. Third, though Marx fundamentally rejected Kant's theoretical

framework, he implicitly employed the latter's notion of a rational

community constituted by rational individuals to underwrite his vision

of communist society.[69] In so doing, he not only restated, in Kantian

inspired terms, the ancient Greek association of reason and individuality,

he also denied religion a place in "history".

ii. "Organicist mysticism"

The Aufklärer struggle to preserve the autonomy of spirit

through its historicization ultimately led to a debate over whether

spirit should be socially viewed as primarily individual or collective

in nature. The collectivist tendency converged with the growing movement

to define German cultural specificity, a movement that gradually spawned

a fundamental challenge to several rationalist premises, including the

assumption that abstract thought is inherently superior to its pictorial

counterpart.[70] The synthesis of these two theoretical trends gave birth

to what we shall term "organicist mysticism", or a theoretical stance

that combined a rejection of rationalism with a "sympathetic" delineation

of communal identity lines.[71] Especially in the wake of the French

Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, however, this perspective assumed a

decidedly reactionary hue. Accordingly, Marx tended to equate

"organicist mysticism" with its ambient (reactionary) incarnation and

to opt for a "rational individual" perspective to delineate the social

contours of communism. In his day, at least, the latter had somewhat

superior political credentials.[72]

iii. Method

Leibniz's notion of a pre-establised cosmic harmony, historically

situated within the framework of monadic "becoming" and disclosed

thereby, thematically framed all subsequent Aufklärer investigations

into the preservation of autonomy or spirit.[73] In particular, from

Leibniz the Aufklärers derived the view that the meaning of religion

could only be appropriated when located in the context of the historical

"totality" as concretely embodied in "particular histories" (whether of

individuals or societies) at a given point (=the dialectic of universal

and particular). Both Hegel and Marx inherited this methodological

framework, although they developed it somewhat differently. Specifically,

notwithstanding their divergent interpretations of such questions as

historical specification, historical "totalization" (i.e., the dialectic

of universal and particular), and individuality (i.e., as a social

medium of universal disclosure), both thinkers could trace their shared

paradigmatic understanding of these matters, in part, to the Aufklärer

revision of Leibniz.[74]

B)   Classical German Idealism

The Kantian "resolution" which gave birth to classical German idealism simultaneously authored its own disintegration. This dual movement expressed the profound social contradictions underlying the development of German liberalism. The convulsions of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era, which both accompanied and hastened the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Germany, albeit at an uneven and gradual pace, forced German philosophers to redefine their theoretical frameworks. The Aufklärers drew the thematic contours of this process by connecting the search for unity in history (=universality) with the postulation of spirit as the basis of freedom. Kant's assimilation of spirit to the noumenal region placed the axis of the universal within the province of reason. The subsequent rejection of the Kantian dichotomy of the phenomenal and the noumenal by German idealists accelerated this rationalist transposition.

Basing themselves on the premise of the rational nature of the universal, the German idealists attempted to elucidate how this whole operated, and, in particular, how the apparent disjunctions of the universal and particular could be overcome. Whatever their differences in approach to these matters, in the final analysis, they strove to posit rational religion as the basis for the restoration of social, and indeed, cosmic, harmony or wholeness.

This theme comprised the axis of the classical German idealist tradition's influence on Marx's critique. In redefining how the universal and particular moments of history interpenetrate, Fichte, Schelling, and

especially Hegel fundamentally reframed the "rationalist paradigm" and,

by extension, the contours of religious criticism. In this subsection, we

shall concentrate on the significance of this process, by briefly summari-

zing the thematic impact of the above authors on Marx's work.

1. Fichte

Fichte's notion of self-activity profoundly shaped Marx's

critique.[75] In this regard, two effects in particular are worthy of note.

First, in a qualified sense, Marx accepted Fichte's extension of autonomy

to the phenomenal realm. Though Marx rejected the latter's idealist

reading of this theme, he adopted both its premise (i.e., the idea that

self-determination, or the transition from necessity to freedom, depends

upon the conquest of the objective world, or labour) and its socio-political

corollary (i.e., the notion that human maturation is a social, developmental

process, in which humanity passes through various ontogenetically modelled

growth stages--each associated with particular socio-political structures--

before it "comes of age" and achieves true freedom). In the context of

his assent to this developmental framework, Marx inherited a number of

Fichtean positions (terms) that significantly affected the texture of

his conception of communism. These include: the notion of the realm of

freedom; the view that communism involves the "withering away" of the

state; the implicit conception of communist society as a Vernünftstadt

(i.e., as a non-coercive moral association of rational individuals) and

finally, a developmental linkage of religion with "pre-history". Second,

although Marx disputed Fichte's idealist phenomenology, he concurred with

the latter's identification of human maturation with the growth of reason

and his concomitant proposition that human passivity originates in the

susceptibility of the species to the "passive emotions" and the _imagination_.
In brief, Fichte reinforced Marx's rationalist interpretation of anthro-
pogenesis.

2. Schelling

Although Schelling was never a major contributor to Marx's
religious views, he did serve as a minor source for the latter's disserta-
tion.[76] Therein, Marx employed excerpts from Schelling's "Philosophical
Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism" (1795) to attack the later, and
decidedly more reactionary, Schelling of 1841. The thematic thrust of
these early Schelling essays was to radicalize Kantian religious criticism
by counterposing human self-determination and divine providence. The
early Schelling argued that man could be fully human only when he is fully
free, and that this condition can only issue from the ground of rationality.
Furthermore, he denied that religion could ever be rational and argued that
religious practice is always heteronomous, or the activity of a non-being.
On this basis, he paralleled divine and human tyranny. In his dissertation,
Marx enthusiastically endorsed this updated "zero-sum thesis", and the
conviction that religious activity is _always_ heteronomous (i.e., there can be
no rational religion), and thus, by extension, is always anti-human,
formed a cornerstone of his approach to religion throughout his life.

3. Hegel

The Hegelian tributary of the rationalist tradition exerted a
decisive influence on the formation of Marx's critique. In particular,
Hegel elaborated three themes that were destined to play a highly signifi-
cant role in the semantic structuring of Marx's perception of religious

issues. These themes are: (a) the historicization of reason; (b) a rationalist metastasis of the content of religion; (c) a Hellenophilic historical perspective.

(a) The Historicization of Reason

At root, Hegel's central concern consisted of the search for "reason in history". Though he accepted the salient components of the "rationalist paradigm", he insisted on a recasting of their interpretive contours. Specifically, he rejected the abstract psychological response of conventional rationalists to the problem of the constitution of reason (=universality). Hegel preferred to turn to history to solve this conundrum. He asserted that the truth is concrete and that the process of rationalization/universalization must be abstractly located in the labyrinth of becoming (i.e., of determinate historical processes). In short, he saw history as a rational totality that unfolds determinately, i.e., as a dialectical interpenetration of the moments of universality and particularity. To Hegel, reason was at once the historical subject and the telos of history. Accordingly, its actualization took the form of the reclamation of objectivity per se for self-consciousness, a process that Hegel believed took the social form of (bourgeois) individuality in his own era. He argued that this reclamation constitutes the substance of science, and in this sense viewed the method and content of historical appropriation as coincident. Consequently, to him the theoretical apprehension of the dialectic of universal and particular involved the fusion of historical specification (i.e., the grounding of the possibility of historical change-- as well as the general evaluation of the status of the unfolding of reason

at any one point--in determinate conditions) with the salient precepts of the "rationalist paradigm".

Although Marx rejected Hegel's idealist reading of the historicization of reason (e.g., the latter's notions of teleology and historical agency), he adopted this framework, in all its essentials, as the lynchpin of his theoretical approach, an intellectual pirouette that was not without its tensions.[77] In particular, as we shall discuss in Chapter II below, this theme underlay his conceptions of alienation, science, and communism, from both negative and positive angles.

(b) A Rationalist Religious Metastasis

Hegel's theoretical approach to religion turned on his assimilation of its content to the thematic framework of the historicization of reason. This incorporation represented his specific contribution to the tradition of "rational religious" interpretation. In simple terms, to Hegel the logical core or the notion of religion was reason (=spirit's self-consciousness) i.e., retrospectively the proper method of theoretically appropriating the historical forms of religion was to locate them <u>vis-à-vis</u> the general movement of spirit to realize itself and thus come to self-consciousness (=supercession of estrangement=supercession of objectivity). In this theoretical context, Hegel maintained, religion appeared as a distinct and imperfect phase in the evolution of spirit, characterized by a <u>pictorial</u> form whereby a bridge was erected linking ordinary human consciousness with the "notion of religion" (i.e., the truth of the historical process). Concretely, this linkage "worked" through the progressive elaboration of the "dialectic of otherness". According to

Hegel, ultimately this dialectic spawns an annullment in the religious form of this historical drama, and the role of religion is increasingly assumed by philosophy and the state. In sum, philosophy and the state complete the content of religion. This supercession, combined with the rationalization of the substance of religion, we shall henceforth term Hegel's religious metastasis.[78]

In advancing this perspective, Hegel posited a number of interconnected assertions regarding the content of religion, most of which comprised modifications of conventional rationalist arguments. The relevant propositions are as follows:

(i)   by definition, religious practices are alienated, because without an other (e.g., in "magic") no religion is possible ("alienation argument");[79]

(ii)   religious representation is pictorial and therefore flawed ("corporeal thesis");

(iii)   pictorial thinking is perfected or completed by abstract reasoning, therefore "true religion" is realized when the pictorial skin is fully shed, i.e., religion becomes fully abstract ("rational religion thesis");

(iv)   the forms of religion comprise a developmental continuum that may be compared to the growth stages of an individual ("ontogenetic argument");

(v)   the evolution of religion corresponds to both the increasing hominization of the object of religious worship ("hominization argument"), and the increasing rationalization (=moralization) of religious subjectivity ("rational religion thesis");

(vi)   the "lowest" form of religion is "natural religion", and it

         corresponds to the childhood of humanity and is characterized

         by the subjectivity of _fear_ and the domination of the

         imagination ("terror argument");

(vii)   the "highest" form of religion (or "Absolute Religion")

         is Protestant Christianity, and henceforth we shall refer to

         this position as the "Absolute Religion thesis". This

         proposition involves the reclamation of individual (bourgeois)

         subjectivity as the content of the "Notion of religion" and

         thus as the most developed pictorial version of the "dialectic

         of otherness" (Greek materialist tradition). Christ serves

         as the paradigm for the social reconciliation that is made

         possible with the accession of bourgeois society. The bourgeois

         individual becomes the universal made flesh (i.e., the nexus

         of universal-particular interpenetration), the bourgeois

         state assumes the content of religion, and formal religion

         is exiled to the private sphere.

         At root, Marx accepted Hegel's metastatic framework and its

component propositions, as listed above. For instance, he concurred

with Hegel's version of the "alienation thesis" and in particular with

the latter's assimilation of religion to the historical project of

the supercession of objectivity. For Marx, as for Hegel, the truth of

religion is best revealed when religion is at its most _abstract_. A

substantial part of Marx's polemical assaults on speculative philosophy

and the like relied upon his assumption, derived from Hegel, that

theology and its characteristic forms of argument (e.g., hypostatization)
stand at the apex of the developmental continuum of man's religious
history. Moreover, he accepted, without question, Hegel's assertion
that Protestant Christianity represents the "Absolute Religion", and
drew a number of parallels between religion and economics on this basis.
In addition, he drew upon Hegel's work to advance a variety of substantive
allegations concerning historical religious forms (e.g., "Oriental
Religions").

Notwithstanding these points of continuity, however, Marx
rejected Hegel's idealist framing of the religious metastasis. This
recasting significantly altered the meaning of its principal co-ordinates.
Thus, for example, while both thinkers agreed that the truth of religion
is more adequately conveyed the more abstract its practices, for
Hegel this truth is the truth about man (i.e., that, in reality, man
is an abstract being), whereas for Marx it is an index of the degree
of human disfigurement.

At bottom, though, Marx's dissent on the above count constituted
an attempt to preserve the rationalist core of Hegel's religious
critique, i.e., for a variety of reasons he felt Hegel could not go
far enough and locate the historicization of reason on the terrain of
man's sensual-social existence. This rationalist continuity constitutes
a key link in unveiling Marx's critique, because it is on the Hegelian
theoretical foundation that Marx developed his notion of "false universality"
and employed religion as the paradigmatic term to elucidate this region.
In sum, the semantic complex that Marx inherited from Hegel comprised

a central theoretical pillar in the former's decision to exclude religion
from the logical orbit of communism in any positive sense.[80] For this
reason, many of the limits of Marx's religious critique may be traced
to Hegel's doorstep.[81]

(c) Hellenophilia

As we noted earlier, long after the classical period had
ceased to serve a paradigmatic cultural role for most of Western
society, it retained an inordinate influence in Germany. In Hegel's
early writings, especially, this Hellenophilic proclivity received a
novel inflection. Here the investigation into the classical condition
became a means to root historically the genesis of a rational/free
culture. In this period, for Hegel, classical Greece served as a
paradigm of the Vernünftstadt, and hence as a historical vehicle for the
criticism of ambient conditions and in particular, Judeo-Christian
culture.[82] Although Hegel's evaluation of Greece shifted somewhat in
his later works, he maintained his fascination with and attraction to
the classical era, and, in a qualified sense, this period continued to
serve as his paradigmatic model for the historicization of reason.

These sentiments profoundly influenced the course of Marx's
development, particularly insofar as they were filtered through the medium
of Bruno Bauer.[83] This influence ranged from Marx's generally negative
evaluation of the Christian supplantation of Hellenic culture in the
ancient world to his logical delineation of the communist era. In a
qualified sense, throughtout his life Marx viewed classical Greece as
the paradigmatic Vernünftstadt and the Greeks as the "normal children

of humanity" whose developmental maturation would issue in communism.[84]

In part, this historical prejudice underlay his rationalist conception of the communist transition.

C)   "The Young Hegelians"

Hegel's religious metastasis constituted the leitmotif of the "Young Hegelian" movement.[85] At every point, however, specific material and ideological factors shaped the concrete contours of this current's debate over the meaning and implications of this theme. These factors included: the post-Napoleonic German political structure; the pattern of German capitalist development after 1815;[86] the social background of the "Young Hegelians";[87] the general post-1815 association of Christianity with reaction, and in Prussia in particular, an indelible linkage of an assault on Christianity with an attack on a repressive political regime; finally, the gradual dissemination of French socialist themes within German intellectual circles in the 1830's, and specifically the emergence in the language of the latter of the distinction between true and false religion.[88]

Theoretically speaking, the "Young Hegelians" filtered these conditions through the prism of the Hegelian religious metastasis. They interpreted the Prussian socio-political crisis of this period as the climax of the Hegelian system, with the Master's death symbolically marking the birth of a new era--the epoch of the completion of the realization of reason, signified by the supercession of religion by both politics (state) and philosophy. In their eyes, the apprehension of the meaning of history--its _telos_--simultaneously imposed an obliga-

tion to act in harmony with it.[89] Though they generally agreed on the

character of the period (i.e., pre-apocalyptic[90]), their task (i.e., "to

free the world"[91]), and the thematic contours of this liberation (i.e.,

"the immanence of spirit"[92]), political events rapidly established the

limits of this consensus. State persecution forced the "Young Hegelians"

to clarify how they thought the caesura between "is" and "ought " would

be bridged. This debate turned on their attitude towards the state

itself. Because at every point this strategic question intersected

with their interpretation of Hegel, the political differentiation of

the "Young Hegelian" movement coincided with their disparate interpreta-

tions of what "doing philosophy" was all about. The "Young Hegelian"

formulations of this linkage decisively moulded Marx's understanding

of religion, and indeed, communism.

In this subsection, we shall examine the impact of the "Young

Hegelian" elaboration of this linkage on Marx through a brief examina-

tion of the salient themes contained in the writings of Bruno Bauer

and Ludwig Feuerbach. Given the nature of our study, we shall omit

consideration of irrelevant material.

1. Bruno Bauer

From 1838 until the beginning of 1843, Bruno Bauer was the

most important contemporary influence on Marx.[93] Marx was not only

Bauer's student at Berlin and his companion in the Doktorklub, he was

also recognized as Bauer's theoretical confrère and planned to write

the second part of Die Posaune des letzten Gerichts über Hegel den

Atheisten und Antichristen.[94] For our purposes, we shall discuss

Bauer's impact on Marx under three headings: (a) interpretation of

Hegel; (b) conception of religion; (c) socio-political perspectives.

(a) Interpretation of Hegel

Bauer's move from the "Old" to the "Young Hegelian" camp

turned on his evolving understanding of Hegel's concept of self-conscious-

ness and, by extension, the latter's world historical significance. In

this new framework, Hegel's leitmotif of the reclamation of objectivity

for free subjectivity appeared as the culmination of the classical Greek

and modern European Enlightenment traditions. Bauer now saw Hegel as

an atheist theorist who had taken the thrust of Spinoza's pantheism to

its logical conclusion (i.e., to the point where substance itself was

negated and absorbed by subjectivity) and who had thereby raised self-

consciousness to the position of true universality. In Bauer's eyes,

this triumph of subjectivity, when the universal is recognized as

nothing but (human) thought, constituted nothing less than the triumph

of freedom (reason) over religion. Accordingly, he interpreted Hegel's

theoretical exposition as the climactic event of the modern era signifying

the end of pre-history and the beginning of history.[95]

Bauer's notion of the nature and role of theory in the pre-

apocalyptic period followed his interpretation of Hegel. In simple

terms, to Bauer the universalization of self-consciousness made scientific

criticism possible, because the truly universal character of the modern

movement of self-consciousness (represented by the "Young Hegelians")

guaranteed its bearers an undistorted apprehension of the total meaning

of history. This capacity invested the critical theorists with the

obligation to facilitate the historicization of reason through the criticism of both the objective world situation and the consciousness which lay behind it. In particular, Bauer maintained, "criticism" must train its sights on the ideological correlate of dead objectivity, i.e., religion. Only through this "terrorism of theory", he argued, could the way be cleared for the liberation of humanity and the establishment of a truly free state.[96]

Although there is no evidence that Marx subscribed to Bauer's description of Hegel as an atheist, his early writings (i.e., up to 1843) bear witness to the weight to Bauer's influence at this time.[97] On most major theoretical points during this period, Marx clearly adhered to Bauer's general historical framework. While in due course Marx came to jettison this self-consciousness perspective of his former tutor, he retained many of its underlying assumptions. In particular, throughout his life, Marx upheld a Bauerian inflected view of historical progress, i.e., the notion that, in part, the degree of rational self-consciousness exhibited by a given social group serves as an index of their developmental level. In short, Marx retained the rationalist premises of Bauer's historical outlook, but he dramatically redrew the methodological contours in favour of a more materialist terrain. By extension, within the limits allowed by his new materialist outlook, Marx also perpetuated the Bauerian position on the nature and role of theory in the present "pre-apocalyptic" era. Specifically, he retained elements of Bauer's understanding of ideology as well as Bauer's argument concerning the antipodal relation of science and religion.[98]

(b) Conception of Religion

Without question, Bauer's most enduring legacy, in relation to Marx's theoretical development, was in the area of religious criticism.[99] Drawing mainly on d'Holbach, but also on the other major tendencies in the tradition of Western religious criticism, Bauer articulated a synthetic, negative portrait of the substance of religion that Marx not only inherited but also retained throughout his lifetime. Given the detailing of these influences elsewhere,[100] here we shall simply list in point-form the principal ingredients of this picture that "entered" Marx's critique, either explicitly or implicitly, and were never repudiated nor even questioned by him. Bauer described religion as follows:

(i)   the paradigmatic form of alienation;

(ii)   a distorted mirror of a distorted (inverted) world;

(iii)   a self-negating projection of human qualities onto an other and thus as a catalogue of the flaws of humanity whose paradigmatic symbolic form was "animal worship";

(iv)   the paradigmatic form of ideology (false consciousness) and thus as antipodal to science;

(v)   a pathology that renders humans not only sick but insane, because it incapacitates them in the face of real problems, contorts them with fear of the truth, and haunts them with self-created phantoms (i.e., the terrors of the imagination);

(vi)   an expression of the rupture of the individual self with the real universal self thus as a form of false or "murderous

universality" that stands opposed to the historicization of

reason;

(vii)   a form of protest against oppressive conditions that simultaneously

sanctifies these conditions (i.e., an "opium intoxification");[101]

(viii)   "...a hell composed of hatred for humanity...and God is the

bailiff of this hell";[102]

(ix)   a phenomenon with definite material underpinnings (i.e., human

helplessness) yet, which , psychologically speaking, may

be traced to the <u>fear</u> of being human;[103]

(x)   a developmental continuum whose phases correspond to the

stages of human evolution insofar as the species remains at

the level of pre-history. This continuum constitutes an

ontogenetically modelled hierarchy. At the "low" end of this

gradient is "natural religion", corresponding to the social

era of the <u>Volksgemeinschaft</u>. The natural character of this

community inhibits the emergence of true universality (i.e.,

individual self-consciousness).[104] However, the chains of this

era are not onorous, but rather "decorated with flowers".[105]

The decline of this communal form and its religious correlate

gave rise to the principles of individuality and subjectivity,

which were initially expressed in the post-Aristotelian philoso-

phical movements of the classical period. In this era though

the principle of internality could only be realized in an

<u>alien</u> (religious) form. This form was Christianity, the

"Absolute Religion." Christianity sanctifies the abstract

egoist individual or man cut off from himself and as such perfectly expresses and legitimates the unreal universal or the false community.[106]

(c) Socio-political Perspectives

Notwithstanding his antagonism to the particularist restrictions of the egoistic individualism of Christianity, Bauer posited (bourgeois) individuality as the social base of true universality. In his writings, he consistently converts the reclamation of objectivity into the individual's reabsorption of all collective, and, therefore, alien, products. The universal self consists of the individual self and any form of communality stands opposed to true universality.[107] Bauer's political framework turned on this social premise. To Bauer, true universality arises only from the individual acquisition of universal consciousness. As a result, he invested theory (and theorists) with a central revolutionary role in the "pre-apocalyptic" period. Although Bauer believed that a bourgeois democratic revolution was necessary to establish a free state, he maintained that the ground must first be cleared by the "terrorism of theory". However, there was no social specificity in his vision of a revolutionary movement--just the "people" led by "criticism"--and he ultimately withdrew from all "party" involvement and concentrated his energies on theoretical battles from an elitist perspective.[108]

Although up to the spring/summer of 1843 Marx generally concurred with Bauer's bourgeois democratic framework, he broke with Bauer over precisely this issue and the related matter of his interpreta-

tion of Hegel.[109] In the context of this dispute, Marx turned in

the direction of Feuerbach, at least for a short period. Thus Bauer's

socio-political positions are principally of interest to us for what

they negatively reveal about Marx's subsequent attempts to flesh out the

socio-political content of the historicization of reason (="true univer-

sality"), and, in particular, the implications of the same for his

critique of religion. Before we can assess this question in any depth,

however, we must first examine the source influence of Feuerbach.

2. Feuerbach

The significance of Feuerbach for Marx's theoretical development

lies precisely in the former's differences with Bauer.[110] Though both

Bauer and Feuerbach strove to complete Hegel's religious metastasis,

they interpreted this process in profoundly distinct ways. Bauer

perfected the Hegelian project through the secular extension of the

Master's theoretical co-ordinates. Feuerbach perfected the Hegelian

project through the negation of these co-ordinates. To Bauer, Hegel

the atheist marked the beginning of the new post-Christian era. To

Feuerbach, Hegel the theologian marked the end of the Christian era:

the new epoch would commence with the overthrow of his speculative

premises.

We shall examine Feuerbach's influence on Marx under four

headings: (a) the new versus the old philosophy; (b) the "whole man";

(c) religion; (d) socio-political framework.

(a) The New versus the Old Philosophy

Feuerbach's impact on Marx turned on his critique of old or speculative philosophy.[111] The _differentia specifica_ of this tradition was the collapse of thought and being as a means of halting the decline of Christianity as an ideological force. Feuerbach dated the beginning of this tendency to Spinoza, and considered Hegel's philosophy the culmination of its idealist wing, although his critique also encompassed such post-Hegelians as Bauer for instance. To Feuerbach, in essence, speculative philosophy consisted of theology, because it was based on the negation of finitude and the conversion of material (human) attributes into predicates of the infinite. This standpoint condemned the old philosophy to the circularity of speculation: its investigation began and ended with thought, and never knew the fertile embrace of sensuous being. As a result, Feuerbach argued, speculative philosophers in general and Hegel in particular were unscientific, i.e., they were unable to apprehend phenomena historically. They saw natural and human history only through the lens of their preconceived developmental paradigm: empirical reality had nothing to tell Hegel, for instance, because its story had already been told.[112]

Against the old philosophy, Feuerbach advanced the standpoint of the new philosophy, or the genetico-critical method. He conceived this perspective as the realization of the truth of Christianity (i.e., man).[113] Feuerbach maintained that philosophy must begin with non-science (i.e., nature) and to appropriate this field the philosopher must rigorously distinguish between the objective and the subjective sides of existence.

Truth flows from the former to the latter, not vice versa. The infinite

emerges from the finite and consciousness--as the transcendence of finite

limitations--must follow this path. Accordingly, the scientist must begin

with the determinate, or the concrete. Therefore, Feuerbach maintained,

the new philosopher reverses the truth of speculative philosophy: the

Hegelian subject becomes the new philosopher's predicate (and vice

versa).[114]

Save the matter of Feuerbach's religious interpretation of the

mission of the new philosophy, on all essentials Marx agreed with Feuer-

bach's critique of speculative philosophy, from both negative and

positive angles.[115] This concurrence underlay Marx's break with Bauer

and his evolution in the direction of communism.

(b) The "Whole Man"

Feuerbach posited "the real and whole being of man" as the

practical object of the new philosophy. This task coincided with the

dissolution of theology into anthropology, and, by extension, the laying

of the foundations of a truly universal science. The "whole man"

encompasses more than just thought: he is also a sensuous being that

feels and loves. To address the needs of this being in the "pre-

apocalyptic" era, Feuerbach said, the new philosopher must draw upon a

Franco-German heritage and speak to both the head and the heart. This

inheritance compelled the new philosopher to pierce the mystic husk of

religion (i.e., to uncover its anthropological essence) and, in so doing,

to unveil the specificity of _homo sapiens_. Feuerbach distinguished

man from other species on the basis of humanity's capacity to ascend

from the finite to the infinite. He maintained that though man shares

a sensual constitution with other beings--a constitution that limits him

and requires objective satisfaction--only man has himself (i.e., as a

species) as an object. Feuerbach located this ability, however, on the

terrain of man's mode of being, i.e., he argued that man could only

ascend to universal self-consciousness if his way of living was corres-

pondingly universal. Accordingly, he maintained that the rise to

infinity in thought constituted an evolutionary progression which

ultimately reflected the level of man's material organization.[116]

Though eventually Marx came to reject Feuerbach's abstract, and

somewhat ahistorical conception of the "whole man" theme in favour of the

historical specification of its principal co-ordinates, he retained its

truly universalist thrust throughout his life. This inheritance found

expression, for instance, in Marx's view of communism as an era in

which the disfiguring legacy of onesidedness would end, and an "all-rounded"

cultivation of man's variegated capacities and inclinations would begin.

In addition, it underlay his anthropogenetic conception of science,

i.e., his refusal to abstract scientific progress from the social

dimension of human self-making.[117]

(c) Religion

The core of Feuerbach's religious critique consisted of

the resolution of theology into anthropology or more exactly, the

situation of religion within the developmental continuum of the human

ascent to self-consciousness. Feuerbach viewed "traditional" religion[118]

as a transitional phenomenological stage in which humans groped towards

the infinite (i.e., their own species being) through the imaginative
projection of an other to mediate their self-awareness. He argued that
religion arose in response to practical needs that could not be materially
satisfied given the underdeveloped state of the human condition.
Accordingly, man had to resort to <u>fantasy</u> to satiate his desires, and
this imaginative exercise took the form of a projection of man's hidden
treasures onto an alien entity. In brief, because Feuerbach considered
religion a vehicle for man's vicarious universalization, he correlated it
with the childhood stage of humanity.

Feuerbach combined this synthesis of the "ontogenetic", "terror"
and "projection" arguments with an adaptation of the "hominization thesis".
Thus, he assigned "natural religion" to the "low" end of the religious
evolutionary gradient, and, in keeping with his premise that religious
progress is indexed by the degree of moral evolution as well as by the
extent to which the objects of worship are personalized and hominized,
posited Christianity as the "Absolute Religion". To Feuerbach, Christ
embodied the noblest traits of humanity (e.g., love). Accordingly, he
argued that faith in this man in a qualified way inspired humans to
turn in on themselves and by extension towards the infinite. This
qualification, however,was crucial for Feuerbach, because counterbalancing
the "positive" side of Christianity was its intrinsic theological
commitment to distance man from God (i.e., true universality, the infinite).
Feuerbach maintained that this latter practice involved, at root, a
zero-sum construction of the divine-human relation, and a denial of the
human capacity to ascend to infinity save through an <u>imaginative</u> doorway

that converts the Christian's turn inward into a desire to be liberated _from_ his species being (e.g., to wish for personal immortality).[119]

Although Marx adopted and employed several Feuerbachian themes in his critique (e.g., the latter's critiques of religion as mediation, a zero-sum relation, and as characterized by an escape from sensuous reality),[120] in general he favoured Bauer's approach over Feuerbach's in this area.[121] To Marx, Feuerbach was simply too positive towards religion, a proclivity that led to dangerous political positions, in Marx's eyes. Thus, for our purposes, the significance of Feuerbach's religious critique lies not so much in its internal thematic content, as in the apparent incongruity of Marx's agreement with Feuerbach and disagreement with Bauer on most major questions in the years 1843-44 save that of religion.

(d) Socio-political Framework

Along with most "Young Hegelians", Feuerbach viewed his period as a "pre-apocalyptic" era. In general he saw major religious shifts as religious changes. Accordingly, he asserted that the principal task of the new philosopher was to realize the truth of religion by becoming truly religious. Feuerbach defined this practice, however, in political terms, a notion that directly stemmed from his conception of the truth of religion as the truth of man. Feuerbach argued that the actualization of this truth required the establishment of a truly universal mode of being (i.e., a true community), a condition that could only result from the political abolition of the false community that was the contemporary socio-political order. In articulating this position, though, Feuerbach

radically redefined the meaning of "political". He insisted that the

new philosopher's "political" principle must be anthropotheism, a

perspective that assigned the task of addressing the needs of the

"whole man" to "politics". Feuerbach located "politics" in the variegated

constitution of man's species being. Accordingly, he insisted that

"political" practice must dissolve the barriers that had been fraudulently

erected between heaven and earth, head and heart, theory and practice,

in the past. Concomitantly, he defined the strategic axis of the

"new politics" as the actualization of an authentic community (=true

universality) that transforms the relation of the individual to the

social totality by simultaneously preserving the autonomy of the

individual and infusing him with the powers of infinity as an integral

"part of the whole". Given his general theoretical perspective, Feuerbach

viewed this universal-particular redefinition in <u>religious terms</u> and saw

in Christian love its paradigmatic form.[122]

Feuerbach's redefinition of "politics" profoundly shaped Marx's

turn towards communism in the years 1843-44. His writings of this

period are saturated with Feuerbachian inspired themes that are used

to contest the political framework of bourgeois democracy and conventional

"radical" political approaches. At no point, however, did Marx agree

with Feuerbach on the religious character of this "new politics".

Indeed, their differences on this point contributed in no small way

to their eventual political rupture, and by extension, to Marx's

evolution towards "scientific socialism". Notwithstanding a major

terminological shift that took place at this point, though, Marx

continued to adhere to a fundamentally Feuerbachian vision of the

character of the communist era (as a "true universality" involving the

actualization of the "whole man" and thus a radical redrawing of the

contours of individual/communal relations). The ambiguity of this

approach is no more evident than in the area of his religious

critique.[123]

3. Summary

The disintegration of the "Young Hegelians" in the early to

mid-1840's exposed the contradictory character of their theoretical

paradigm. What appeared as unity on the surface only masked a far

greater difference underneath. Bauer and Feuerbach seemed to share

a common project: the completion of the Hegelian religious metastasis.

They agreed on the "pre-apocalyptic" nature of the period and on the

attendant obligation to act in harmony with it. From Hegel, they both

inherited a number of rationalist assumptions about religion, including

the contentions that religion inhibits man's truly universal realization

(i.e., religion is alien), that it expresses man's childhood and

passivity, and that Christianity is the "Absolute Religion".[124]

Bauer and Feuerbach also both defined the task of philosophy as the

delineation of the way to achieve true universality. They identified this

project with the unity of subject and object and the realization of

science. Finally, both thinkers agreed that the historical precondition

of the accession of true universality was the formation of a true state

which, of necessity, would be atheist.

Their theoretical differences, however, clearly reveal the specious character of this consensus. At the heart of these disputes lay their divergent perspectives on the nature of the universal. To Bauer, true universality culminated in the reclamation of objectivity by free subjectivity. In delineating the triumph of the individual self-consciousness (=science=abstract reasoning), he linked together the themes of rationality and individuality. His politics and his religious critique flowed from this notion of the universal. At every point, his conclusions were homologous with the main lines of liberal theory.

Feuerbach's assertion that true universality only emerges with the passage of man from the finite to the infinite stood directly counterposed to Bauer's view. Feuerbach' politics and his epistemology flowed from his materialistic understanding of _how_ this universality is constituted. In this way, he simultaneously annulled and preserved the truth of Hegel.

Feuerbach's transmutation of science expressed his partial rejection of the theoretical and social co-ordinates of liberal rationalism. The realization of true communality constituted the social premise of the triumph of the whole practical man over the fragmented theoretical man. Feuerbach's linkage of the themes of wholeness and communality underlay his theory of religion[125] and his conception of the religious character of communism.

Marx dissented from Feuerbach on precisely these grounds. Though Marx concurred with the latter's critique of Bauer's conception of

true universality, he agreed with the substance of Bauer's theory of

religion. The roots of this apparent paradox lie in the concrete

political debates of the mid-1840's.[126] In these circumstances,

Feuerbach articulated the practice of "true socialism". Therefore,

his was a voice which Marx felt he had to reject.

D)   The "Utopian Socialists"

The influx of French socialist ideas directly infused the

"Young Hegelian" debate over how to concretize Hegel's religious

metastasis with social content. The material base of this fertilization

was the accelerated pace of German industrial capitalist development

in the 1830's, particularly in the Rhineland. As a consequence of the

accentuated mobility of skilled labourers, and specifically as a result

of the formation of a German workers' expatriate community in Paris

in the early 1830's, French socialist ideas gradually penetrated "Young

Hegelian" discourse. This infiltration formed the fault lines of the

Bauer-Feuerbach fission.

No sooner had the adherents of the "Feuerbachian tendency"[127]

lined up on the one side, however, than cracks appeared in their ranks.

Underlying these fractures were the accumulating socio-political

tensions that eventually erupted in the revolutions of 1848. In these

conditions, the call to unite the French and German traditions, the

heart with the head, theory with practice, rapidly became the call to

specify how this would be done and what this union meant. In short,

it became necessary to define the content of socialism.

The disparate perspectives that issued from this process are

conventionally designated as "utopian" and "scientific" socialism,[128]

respectively. Although there are numerous difficulties with this

denotative schema, henceforth we shall employ it for the sake of

simplicity.[129]

Marx's critique of religion, and specifically his antipathy to

the association of religion and socialism, was crucially shaped by his

response to "utopian socialism". He did not react to "utopian socialism"

in general, however. He responded to its concrete manifestations in

the Europe of the mid-1840's. From this experience, though, he did

draw certain conclusions about "utopian socialism", and in so doing,

about the nature of communism.

In this subsection we shall examine the thematic impact on

Marx's critique of the French and German wings of the "utopian socialist"

movement in the first half of the nineteenth century. In particular,

we shall dissect the moral and religious dimensions of their respective

outlooks to elucidate their strategic frameworks.

1. French "utopian socialism"

For our purposes, we shall simply isolate and list in point-

form several general features of French "utopian socialism" that are

relevant to Marx's critique.[130] We omit consideration of such matters

as its diverse tendencies and periodization. With these considerations

in mind, we characterize French "utopian socialism" as follows:

(a)   Especially prior to 1830 it reflected the tensions of a specific

        layer of the bourgeois or petty bourgeois intelligensia who found

themselves "sandwiched" between a rapidly ascending capitalist

order on the one hand, and a vanishing quasi-feudal order on

the other hand. After 1830, although the social base of French

"utopian socialism" was gradually proletarianized, the role

played by this intelligensia remained disproportionate.

(b)   The theoretical expression of this structurally ambivalent

social foundation was the tendency in "utopian socialism" both

to look forward to a new "organic" society and to look back on

the Medieval world as the paradigmatic harmonic society. In

short, they oscillated between rationalism on the one hand, and

romanticism on the other, and their theoretical productions

embodied an uneasy synthesis of these two traditions. The

"utopian socialists" did not simply follow in the footsteps of

their eighteenth century rationalist/materialist forebears,

Marx to the contrary.[131]

(c)   The axis of French "utopian socilaist" practice consisted of

criticizing laissez-faire and its social correlate, the

(bourgeois) rational individual. While the orthodox rationalists

pictured man primarily as an egoistic "bundle of sensations",[132]

the "utopian socialists" saw him as a "whole being" that combined

cognitive and affective proclivities. Accordingly, the latter

sought to harmonize these divergent inclinations in part through

the establishment of a new "organic" social order that would

ultimately suppress egoism and cultivate altruism.[133] This

new communal vision involved the radical redrawing of the

relationship between the individual and the social whole, with

the "atomic" character of this interchange in bourgeois

society replaced by a conception of the direct interpenetra-

tion of individual/communal interests, typically modelled on a

primitive Christian paradigm.[134]

(d)   The evolution of French "utopian socialism" featured an inter-

weaving of its constituent currents' strategic frameworks with

their respective conceptions of how the proposed "new organic

society" would be united. In the main, the "utopian socialists"

portrayed the bonds of "organic" communal unity as <u>ethical</u>

links and the predominant tendency was to posit these links as

<u>divine</u> in origin. Accordingly, they tended to view their

political objectives as <u>religious</u> in character. The struggle

to realize a "new organic society", in other words, converged

with the fight to establish a true religion, a goal that in

most cases simply amounted to a reformation of Christianity.

This religious-political perspective neatly dove-tailed with

a strategic approach that advocated pedagogy and moral suasion

as the principal avenues of social change.[135]

In the mid-1840s', Marx concluded that French "utopian

socialism" had reached a point of strategic paralysis. Concretely, he

contrasted this condition unfavourably with the relative superiority of

the materialist-communist current represented by such figures as Blanqui

and Dézamy,[136] a difference he ultimately traced to their disparate

social bases. Accordingly, he exiled "utopian socialism" to the region

of non-science, as being incapable of grasping the dynamics of historical

change in this period, and saw in the increasingly religious hue of

French "utopian socialist" propaganda the perfect symptomatic

confirmation of this diagnosis.

2. "True Socialism"

The vehemence of Marx's antipathy to "utopian socialism"

reflected not so much his experience with the French tributary of this

tradition as with its German counterpart in the mid-1840's (i.e., "true

socialism"). Again, we shall discuss the significance of this current

by first listing its principal relevant characteristics and then briefly

summarizing its importance for Marx's critique. These traits include:

(a)   Although initially fertilized by its Gallic cousin, "true socialism"

owed its character much more to the specific conditions of

German capitalist development and to the retention in Germany as

a whole of absolutist political structures. In this context,

in Marx's view[137] "true socialism" expressed the practice of a

"marginal" layer of petty bourgeois intellectuals.

(b)   Theoretically speaking, the roots of "true socialism" lay in

the convergence, in the late 1830's-early 1840's, of French

"utopian socialism" and the "Young Hegelians". Of particular

importance in this regard was Ciezkowski's Fichteanized re-reading

of Hegel and his concomitant elaboration of the notion of

praxis. Ciezkowski insisted that the world could be transformed

(i.e., reason historicized) only through will, not through thought,

and he situated this metamorphic project within the framework of

a triadic subdivision of world history, whose principal co-

ordinates were drawn from the Judeo-Christian tradition.[138]

He portrayed his own era as a "pre-apocalyptic" period that
would terminate human alienation of all kind.

(c)   "True socialism" proper, however, theoreticaly originated in

the conversion of the above historical framework into a socialist

eschatology (i.e., the unification of the third stage of history

with the accession of a pure egalitarian society).

(d)   The "true socialist" eschatology turned on a qualified rationalist

conception of alienation. The "true socialists" identified the

principal problem posed by their era with "man's" estrangement

from his essence. They defined this condition as man losing

control over or true consciousness of products or attributes

that originated with him but now either appeared in an alien guise

or were in fact under the sway of external domination.

Accordingly, they posited their central objective as the

transformation of "all external determinations into self-

determinations" or man's self-reclamation.[139]

(e)   To flesh out this view of alienation the "true socialists"

adapted Judeo-Christian co-ordinates to frame (paradigmatically)

both the content of the epochal "problem" and the path to be

followed to realize its supercession.[140] Consequently, they

tended to convert the specific historical conditions of mid-

1840's Germany into modern replays of biblical dramas, with,

for instance, the contemporary struggle against domination of

"man" by money modelled on the ancient Judaic redemptive

contestation of the worship of "false gods".

(f)   This Judeo-Christian inheritance shaped the "true socialist"

conception of the interpenetration of religious and the secular

moments of estrangement. Negatively, the "true socialists"

identified the egoistic fragmentation of "man" that characterized

their ambient social order as the secular analogue of religious

alienation, as delineated by Feuerbach. Positively, they

modelled the secular reclamation of the products of labour

on the religious recovery of "divine" treasures, again as

portrayed by Feuerbach. In both instances, the "true socialists"

traced the source of human estrangement to an ideological bondage

to "false gods". Similarly, they defined emancipation as the

triumph of the "true gods" and, in both the religious and the

secular domains, identified the "true god" with man's essence.

Again, to define this abstract generic quality, as well as its

social correlate, the "true socialists" relied on a Judeo-

Christian interpretive framework, and, in particular, on

Feuerbach's version of the same. Accordingly, in the "true

socialist" schema, man's essence consisted of love and a

truly "organic society" was bound together by threads of love.

By extension, they viewed the movement to realize this society as

a movement to realize the truth of religion (i.e., to establish

a true religion). Consequently, they tended to see communism

fundamentally as a "religion of love and humanity",[141] and to

envisage the future communist society as a return to the

conditions of primitive Christianity.[142]

(g)   As with the French "utopian socialists" the strategic framework

of the "true socialists" intersected with their conception of

how the "new organic society" would be cemented together. In

simple terms, because the "true socialists" defined the problem

of their era as egoism (i.e., as an ideological attachment

to the "false god" of money) and saw its solution as love

(i.e., an ideological conversion to the "true god" of man's

essence) their strategic debates turned on the question of how

to convert the populace morally (i.e., how to win them over to

the "true god" of love). This strategic approach took several

forms including a messianic casting of the "communist gospel",[143]

but it generally involved a ferocious hostility to any political

alliance between the proletariat and the "egoistic" bourgeoisie,

as well as an emphasis on appealing to man's "spiritual"

side, rather than concentrating on the "bread and butter"

issues of wages and working conditions.[144]

Marx's response to "true socialism" and its attendant

practices turned on his negative evaluation of their strategic conclusions

in the context of mid-1840's Germany. Like its French counterpart,

Marx argued, "true socialism" had reached a strategic impass, ultimately

traceable to its "marginal" social roots. He maintained, however, that,

if anything, the backwardness of German society imbued "true socialism"

with an even more retarded character than its Gallic cousin, a trait

whose principal ideological symptom was an accentuated tendency to

eviscerate ambient conditions of their historical specificity and in

particular to reduce the struggle of unique social forces to a
recurrent cosmic battle between abstract moral principles.

3. Summary

In the final analysis both branches of "utopian socialism"
exerted a similar influence on Marx's critique. Consequently, here we
shall refer to them as one. We can subdivide this impact into three
interrelated parts. First, "utopian socialism" solidified Marx's
equation of religion with abstract morality. This semantic legacy
reflected the "utopian socialist" tendency to marry socialism and
true religion by extending Judeo-Christian soteriological co-ordinates,
an inclination that involved not simply an ingestion of ambient religious
practices, but also a basic theoretical concurrence with the tradition of
"rational religious" criticism, i.e., the tendency to equate true
religion with abstract morality. Marx's rejection of this tradition
and in particular its thematic counterposition of "is" and "ought",
meant not only that he was bound to oppose its "utopian socialist"
restatement, but that he would inevitably convert this antipathy into
a generalized hostility to any association of communism with religion,
given a concrete political context that precluded his experiencing
any non-moralistic religious alternative. Second, and linked with the
above, although Marx's assumptions concerning the meaning of religion
were solidified prior to his exposure to "utopian socialism", his
later experiences with the various currents of this tradition reinforced
his prejudice in this regard to such an extent that he never modified
them for the rest of his life.[145] Third, and most important in connection

with the above semantic solidification, the strategic bankruptcy of

"utopian socialism" convinced Marx once and for all that religion

and science, and by extension, religion and communism, stand in an

antipodal relation to each other. Consequently, he concluded that

the communist movement must eschew all spiritual/"holistic" appeals and

must root its strategic approach in the terra firma of the "Newtonian"

universe and its concomitant "bread and butter" issues.[146]

E)   Ethnological Sources

Especially after 1848, the methodological axis of Marx's

critique consisted of locating religion within a historically specific

cultural matrix. To Marx, culture expressed man's mediate relationship

to nature, i.e., analytically speaking, it was the terrain of anthro-

pogenesis.[147] As a result, in resolving the study (and criticism)

of religion into the critique of culture, Marx placed religion within

the framework of his anthropogenetic premises. Although his anthropo-

logical investigations were always, to a degree, empirically grounded in

a historical comparison of different periods and cultures, there is

little doubt that up to 1848 his writings in this area exhibit a

somewhat more abstract philosophical bent than his more empirical

post-1848 studies. This methodological shift intersected with Marx's

increasing interest in his contemporaries' ethnological researches, a

focus that reflected his interdependent desires, fundamentally

motivated by specific political concerns at every point, both to explain

the specificity of contemporary capitalist formations and to situate

historically capitalist development within the framework of human

history as a whole.[148]

In general, the following themes, articulated by nineteenth century ethnologists,[149] directly or indirectly influenced the evolution of Marx's critique:

(a)   They insisted that human history follows its own autonomous lines of development, i.e., in making his own history, man is not subject to external direction.[150] They were divided, however, over whether or not this historical process conformed to an immanent purpose. The predominant tendency viewed the autonomy of human society as an expression of its <u>natural</u> origin, and, in the wake of Darwin, interpreted social rules and conventions as ultimately reflecting the laws of natural selection.

(b)   They generally rejected the individualist approach of earlier anthropological studies in favour of a social, and, in particular, a collectivist genesis. Concomitantly, they refused to grant bourgeois social forms an eternal status and instead elected to locate the rise of these phenomena in the specific social conditions that occasioned the ascent of modern Europe to global pre-eminence. In so doing, though, they did not generally question the superiority of bourgeois forms. They simply modified the basis for their legitimation, i.e., by assimilating them to an evolutionary developmental schema that assigned hierarchical status to bourgeois values.

(c)   The thematic heart of their studies was the premise of the analytical value of understanding human history as a <u>develop-mental</u> continuum, composed of a series of distinct phases, the

most significant of which being the transition of primitive to

civil society. In expounding this position, the relevant

ethnologists married conventional rationalist assumptions to

a biologicist subsumption of culture, giving birth, for

instance, to a phylogenetic picture abstractly modelled on

ambient ontogenesis (i.e., bourgeois Victorian maturation).

In this labour, they were driven by a desire to explain (and

justify) the specificity (superiority) of European civilization,

a position that neatly intersected with the pre-Darwinian

rationalist historical paradigm that delineated human history

as a progressive ascent from darkness to light. In articulating

their biologicist perspectives, Spencer and others reframed

the Enlightenment emphasis on the centrality of the civil

transition by identifying the social relations of civil

society with the advanced development of evolutionary processes

as a whole.[151] This search for the "origins of civilization"

branched into diverse research fields, including political and

legal history, sociology and political economy. While most

investigators into these areas accepted a biologically grounded

developmental outlook, however, they did not all necessarily

accept a unilinear interpretation of the same. Some, like

Morgan, advocated a multilinear approach to human history, and

criticized civilization.[152]

(d)   They tended to place religion within the above developmental

context . This subsumption resulted in a restatement, in

evolutionary terms, of all the old rationalist chestnuts

concerning religion. Rationalist assumptions in the area

of religion, in other words, were modified, not abandoned.

For example, in Sir John Lubbock's work <u>The Origin of Civilization</u>

(a text which Marx read near the end of his life)[153] the

author simply reproduced, with a Darwinian hue, the "ontogenetic",

"hominization", "rational religious", and "terror" arguments,

along with a denial, reminiscent of Hegel, that primitives are

religious at all because they have no sense of numinal <u>other-

ness.</u>[154] Moreover, though Lubbock appeared to part with d'Holbach

and company by tracing the genesis of religion to naming

rather than to fear, he was in fact simply modifying the position

of Hume in this regard.[155]

(e)   Within this general ethnological framework, however, the study

of religion branched into two competing wings. On the one

hand, the "psychological school" traced its lineage to de

Brosses and periodized religion according to the characteristic

mentalities associated with each stage.[156] On the other hand,

the "sociological school" approached religious data as elements

of a specific cultural matrix abstractly related to a given

developmental phase. Each of these currents followed a

distinct methodological path, with the "psychologists" using

ideological material as the primary vehicles of exploring

religious transitions,[157] and the "sociologists" examining

religious customs and laws as expressions of particular modes

of subsistence. Notwithstanding these methodological

divarigations, however, a considerable substantive overlap

existed between the two schools, with the language of mentalities, for instance, frequently appearing in "sociological" investigations.[158] The two approaches were by no means mutually exclusive, given that they shared the same basic premises.

Although the methodological caesura that divided Marx from his ethnological contemporaries, and which found expression in a variety of issues,[159] forced Marx to re-read religious data as part of his general re-interpretation of ethnological information, it did not compel him to revise his rationalist premises concerning religion. Marx's ethnological sources simply shifted the grounds of justification for maintaining these premises, i.e., from an a priori to an apparently a posteriori foundation. In part, this continuity reflected the invariable adherence of these source writers to these rationalist assumptions--with slight modifications from author to author--notwithstanding any major differences among them over method or periodization. Marx was no exception to this general trend. He attacked every one of his source writers' Eurocentric biases save those regarding religion. Marx's methodological disputes with these authors clearly impacted on their approaches to religion, yet about their comments in this area, Marx was either silent (because he took what they said for granted),[160] or he attacked them for not being critical enough of religion.[161] In short, Marx was willing to assimilate empirical data concerning religion to enrich his historical understanding,[162] but at no point was he willing to jettison their underlying hermeneutic frame--a curious posture, we might add, for one who more than once declared that there would be no need for science, if there were no distinction between essence and appearance.

F)   Conclusion

Although a complete assessment of the impact of Marx's sources on his critique of religion must await our excavation of this critique *per se*, a few relevant comments are in order at this point. First, without question, the outstanding feature of the thematic source tributaries discussed above is their common acceptance of the same basic rationalist premises concerning religion, man and reality. While few in number, combined these assumptions comprise a hermeneutic frame that semantically structured the exploration of religious issues for centuries. So profound and so pervasive was the dissemination of these assumptions that later participants in the rationalist tradition, Marx included, simply took their validity for granted and never questioned whether what they and their rationalist forebears believed about the meaning of religion was in fact true. Of course, the adherents to these premises disputed amongst themselves the implications of the same, but to a large extent these battles were intra-rationalist contests. To a significant degree, Marx's critique qualifies on this count as well.

Second, the roots of the "rationalist paradigm" run far deeper than do those of ordinary theoretical models. The reason for this difference is not hard to discern: historically speaking, the "rationalist paradigm" spans centuries, and, in modified form, millenia. To uncover the sources of this durability, we must lay bare its material under-pinnings, i.e., the forms of productive intercourse that gave rise to a rationalist psycho-social orientation, and, ultimately, a rationalist theoretical codification. As the example of Greek rationalism amply

testifies, these material conditions are not exclusive to capitalism, although this latter mode of production clearly accentuates rationalist tendencies and perhaps completes them. As we shall detail in Chapter III below, however, they are exclusive to class societies and as such cannot be assigned eternal status. In other words, the "rationalist paradigm" enjoys a determinate historical genesis.

Finally, as a critic of these class conditions, Marx stood part-way outside of the "rationalist paradigm". However, he never broke with its fundamental tenets in the area of religion. Fundamentally, this ambivalence reflected his ambient political culture, in which reaction and "mysticism" were practically synonymous terms. The thematic implications of this blockage were and continue to be, profound. To elucidate them, though, we must first excavate the evolution of Marx's critique itself. Only in this context can we determine whether or not Marx was radical enough.

C h a p t e r   II

MARX'S CRITIQUE

Marx's critique of religion comprises a subsidiary part of his

overall theoretical legacy. Accordingly, to excavate this critique,

one must not abstract its salient features from the constellation of

factors that conditioned Marx's general theoretical evolution. Viewed

abstractly, these conditions carved out the thematic channels into which

Marx's religious source tributaries fed and whose contours determined his

response to these materials. In particular, Marx's elaboration of his

unconscious and conscious religious premises and positions reflect their

concrete socio-political meaning at any one point, and the limits and

promises of his critique stem from this theoretical imbrication.

In general, Marx's theoretical development can be given rough

periodic classification. These subdivisions reflect the disparate

socio-political pressures to which he was subject at different points

in his life. These pressures often resulted in a shift in thematic

emphasis, and concomitantly, a change in terminology, from one period to

the next. In studying Marx's work, it is imperative to appropriate

first this contextual specificity before drawing conclusions about

continuities and discontinuities in his theoretical legacy. Although

Marx's comments on religion probably exhibit more thematic continuity

than any other area, it is nevertheless crucial to locate them in their

periodic context, because it is only thereby that the significance of his

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religious critique vis-à-vis his theory of communism is unveiled.
For our purposes, we shall subdivide Marx's writings on religion into
four thematic periods: A) Early Writings (1835-early 1843); B) "Feuer-
bachian Period" (1843-44); C) "New Materialism" (1845-48); D) Mature
Works (1848-83).

In this chapter, we shall concentrate on the thematic excavation
of Marx's critique of religion. In particular, we shall identify the
salient elements of this critique in the context of his overall theoretical
evolution, and evaluate the significance of the same for his theory of
communism. Ours is not a biographical study, nor a psychological
profile, nor shall we attempt a detailed examination of either the
ambient conditions that shaped Marx's critique or his texts per se.
In part, these limits reflect the treatment of these matters elsewhere.
However, our decision to summarize the thematic highlights of Marx's
critique also allows us to focus on an aspect that, hitherto, has been
relatively neglected by previous researchers in this field, namely,
its unconscious dimension.[1]

A)   Early Writings (1835-early 1843)

We separate these years off from Marx's subsequent theoretical
evolution for a number of reasons. First, this period featured the
crystallization of Marx's semantic understanding of the term "religion".
As a result of his experience in these years, a network of assumptions
concerning the content of religion became indelibly impressed in his
mind, to such an extent that he modified them only slightly in the
course of his life. Theoretically speaking, this semantic sedimentation
gave birth to what we shall term Marx's substantive critique of religion

(or the substantive side of his critique).[2] This critique refers to that logical aspect of his critique that depends upon his understanding of the _meaning_ of religion, and, specifically, his rationalist inter-pretation of the same. In brief, Marx's substantive critique consists of his elaboration of a hermeneutic frame whose principal co-ordinates arose both from his critical assimilation of rationalist source materials and from his observations of ambient religious practices in mid-nineteenth century Western European societies.

Second, during this period, Marx's principal theoretical mentor was Bruno Bauer. Until the end of 1842 Marx was Bauer's disciple and co-worker and his writings of these years exhibit the unmistakeable impress of this influence. The winter and spring of 1843 roughly marked Marx's transition to the camp of Feuerbach and a concomitant shift in emphasis and language.[3]

Third, and closely linked with the last point, up to his cross-over to the "Feuerbachian camp", politically speaking, Marx may be characterized as a radical bourgeois democrat, and his writings on religion, composed during these years, betray the assumptions of this perspective. In the spring and summer of 1843, however, Marx changed his attitude towards the state, and, by extension, fundamentally shifted the political site of his critique.[4]

A pivotal aspect of the evolution of Marx's critique in the "early period" is his theoretical starting point. The vast majority of the influences shaping the views of the young Marx--from the general historical background of the Rhineland-Westphalia area where he grew up,

to his father and high school teacher, Pastor Josef Küpper--helped
to forge in him a <u>Kantian</u> approach to religion.[5] Initially (i.e., prior
to 1836) this legacy took the form of Marx's adherence to the "rational
religious" tradition, i.e., the association of true religion with
abstract (Christian) morality, the view that the historical function of
religion is to aid humanity's moral evolution, and the position that
true religion does not conflict with the claims of natural science.
In the course of his traumatic conversion to Hegelianism in 1836-37,
however, these Kantian positions underwent a significant reformation.

Though the details of this conversion need not concern us, its
theoretical origins and thematic importance do. In brief, Marx grew
increasingly dissatisfied with the Kantian dichotomy of "is" and "ought",
phenomenal and noumenal. Under the influence of Gans, his fellows at
the <u>Doktorklub</u> and his own studies of natural science and history,
Marx "arrived at the point of seeking the idea in reality itself" and
concluded that "the rational character of the object itself must
develop as something imbued with contradictions in itself and finds
its unity in itself".[6] This turn led to Marx's decision to install
new gods at the centre of the earth, i.e., to locate the emergence of
spirit (i.e., reason and true morality) not on a transcendental terrain,
but on the ground of concrete history (i.e., the human).[7] In so doing,
however, Marx did not reject his Kantian assumptions regarding religion,
he merely altered their theoretical frame.

In <u>historicizing</u> this Kantian Legacy, Marx laid the groundwork
for his subsequent assimilation of other source influences during this

period. The key to understanding this process is perhaps best encapsulated in his "confession" of his most detested vice: servility.[8] Marx's hostility to the subjugation of humans to the "other", the non-human, and by extension to the conditions that cause this debasement, recurs in diverse forms in every phase of his writings and underpins the substantive continuity of his critique of religion throughout his life. In his early period, this sentiment bridged his marriage of the "radical Kantian" identification of religion with heteronomy (=inhuman) to a Bauerian inflected reading of Hegel's philosophy of religion, and, in this context, determined his response to the subsidiary source tributaries that were implicitly embedded in this union (e.g., the sensationalist critique of religion). Of necessity, this "negative" delineation had a "positive" counterpart. To flesh out the "inhuman", in other words, Marx was compelled to spell out his notion of the "human". In both instances, to fulfill these tasks Marx drew, in part, upon his religious source materials. The fruit of these labours was the construction of a semantic frame that turned on the parallel counterposition of the concepts of science and religion as the paradigmatic indices of the categories of the "human" and the "inhuman" respectively. In this frame, science and religion stood to each other as true to false, and in particular as "true universal" to "false universal".[9] Before we list the principal terms of this frame, however we shall first summarize the steps that led up to its composition, placing the relevant source tributaries in brackets at the end of a given point:

(a)   When Marx entered the "Young Hegelian" camp in 1836-37, he

        retained the Kantian insistence on the moral (=freedom)

        foundation of human specificity and on the abstract ethical

        content of rational religion. However, he now argued that

        rational religion belonged to a phase of human history that

        had been superceded by philosophy (Hegel, "Young Hegelians").[10]

        Accordingly, he turned the rational/irrational religious bi-

        furcation into a distinction between "true" and "false"

        morality (non-German Enlightenment, "radical Kantians").[11]

        Marx assigned all religion to the sphere of the _irrational_, by

        which he meant that, by definition, it embodied the practice

        of "false" morality. "True" morality, he maintained, must

        emerge from the laboratory of concrete historical processes,

        because it is only there that man becomes a self-determining,

        and by extension, a moral, rational being. Religion, however,

        is _always_ a heteronomous product whose laws are "other-derived"[12]

        ("radical Kantian" tradition). This heteronomous character

        appears, for instance, in the religious sanctioning of rules

        of conduct that are abstracted from the actual texture of human

        existence--and which thus theoretically rest on the counter-

        position of "is" and "ought"--by the "gods above". In this

        sense, Marx contended, religious belief not only connotes

        servility and self-debasement, it also indicates that the

        humans who practice it are not full _historical_ beings.[13]

(b)   From this theoretical point, it was but a short step--via the

        requisite tutelage of Bauer--to Marx's assignment of religion

to the sphere of <u>zoology</u>, a categorization that he retained
for the rest of his life, notwithstanding his rupture with
the "Bauerian camp" in 1843. In the immediate sense, the
ground for the zoological assimilation of religion was cleared
by Marx's "radical Kantian" roots, i.e., his identification of
religion with the province of the non-human or heteronomy.
However, his decision to employ the "animal" as the pre-
eminent religious emblem and "animal worship" as the paradigmatic
form of religion in general tapped a well-spring whose waters
originated well beyond the boundaries of the Kantian
tributary <u>per se</u>.[14] Indeed, Marx's development of the zoological
thematic axis in his early writings not only serves as an
instructive--albeit unvarnished-- distillation of his substantive
critique in his corpus taken as a whole, but is also inadvertently
illustrative of the logical interpenetration of the divers currents
of the Western rationalist tradition <u>vis-à-vis</u> religion.
In particular, in advancing his "zoological theme", Marx drew
upon the following source lines:

(i)   the "animal argument" (d'Holbach, Bauer);[15]

(ii)   the "terror theory",[16] as well as its constituent
equations of religion with the "imagination",[17] "madness",[18]
"illusion"[19] (Epicurus, d'Holbach);

(iii)   the "zero-sum argument"[20] (Epicurus);

(iv)   the "alienation argument" (French Enlightenment), its
"positive" counterpart (i.e., the "human essence" as this-worldly,
rational, free, and moral)[21] and specifically its component

references to religion as "other-worldly",[22] anti-science,

anti-self-consciousness and anti-philosophy,[23] anti-art,[24]

anti-freedom,[25] and anti-morality;[26]

(v)   assorted rationalist developmental theses, including the

"ontogenetic" and "hominization" theses,[27] de Brosses' arguments

concerning fetishism,[28] the "animal argument",[29] as well as

the contentions that religious evolution ascends from sensuality

to abstraction,[30] and the related "Absolute Religion thesis".[31]

(c)   At first glance, Marx's restatement of these rationalist themes

simply reproduced, or at best elaborated, the arguments already

advanced by his mentor, Bauer. The same applies to the political

conclusions Marx drew from this semantic frame in this period.

The politics of Marx and Bauer appear identical, as both

centrally link the critique of religion with the critique of the

existing Prussian state, and, on the positive side, advocate

the establishment of a bourgeois democracy. Indeed, at this

point, Marx was drawn to Bauer and repelled from Feuerbach

precisely because of the former's activism and the latter's

passivity.[32] This political alignment, nurturing as it did

the solidification of Marx's substantive critique along

"Bauerian" lines, at least partially explains Marx's recurrent

hostility to Feuerbach's religious positions, even when they

concurred on most other questions.[33] The following "Bauerian"

inflected political positions are contained in Marx's "early

writings":

(i)   a description of his era as "titanic";[34]

(ii)   a characterization of the central task of philosophy

as becoming <u>worldly</u>[35] i.e., to reconcile in practice self-

consciousness and substance or to historicize <u>reason</u>;[36]

(iii)   an identification of the content of this practical

mission with the establishment of the historical conditions

that will permit the germination of the "human essence"

(i.e., reason and freedom)[37] and its socio-political correlates,

rational individuality[38] and bourgeois democracy;[39]

(iv)   a specification of the "public task" of philosophy in

Germany in the early 1840's as the practical criticism of the

Absolutist state and its socio-ideological correlates (e.g.,

religion);[40]

(v)   a resolution of both Absolutism and religion into the

domain of the "inhuman". In this sense, both religion and

Absolutism embody/legitimate the natural/animal constitution of

human relations (=the actual dualism of self-consciousness and

substance) and thus stand as heteronomous impediments to the

cultivation of "true universality" (=reason, freedom, morality);[41]

(vi)   an equation of the truly religious state and the

<u>theocratic</u> state.[42]

(d)   This conjunctural political consensus of Bauer and Marx, however,

camouflaged their profound methodological differences, differences

that, in the context of a political dispute over <u>Die Freien</u>

(political associates of Bauer in Berlin) in the fall of

1842,[43] eventuated in both their social/political rupture and their evolution in markedly disparate theoretical directions. Although these differences only surfaced in the fall of 1842 and crystallized in the spring/summer of 1843, a close textual reading of his early writings reveals that, after writing his dissertation in 1841, Marx moved further and further away from the theoretical orbit of Bauer. The thematic axes of this distantiation were Marx's deepening critique of Hegel and his attempt to specify, in _social_ terms, the derivation of truth from the finite, and, by extension, the historicization of reason.[44]

These theoretical shifts were particularly significant in the area of religious criticism. Both Bauer and Marx identified Absolutism and religion as sister forms of inhumanity, and thus, logically speaking, as sub-species of the category of the "inhuman" (animal). Unlike his mentor, though, Marx increasingly viewed this category as a _historical_ continuum and, accordingly, incorporated the critiques of religion and the "unfree state" into a historical critique. In other words, he argued that man is animal-like only in specific socio-political _conditions_ and further, that these conditions do not always obtain.[45] Where and when they do obtain, though, he contended that a "pre-historical" continuum exists, linking humans in different countries or historical periods, whose phenomenological reflex is religion (i.e., animal-like consciousness and behaviour).[46] This resolution of the critique of religion into the critique of determinate social conditions, first

articulated in political terms in a letter to Ruge (Nov. 30, 1842), we shall henceforth refer to as Marx's methodological critique of religion.[47]

We argue that the methodological critique is logically distinct from its substantive counterpart.[48] Historically, however, they coincide. Marx simply folded his substantive premises into his newly evolving framework. He never amended or repudiated them. As a result, for instance, the "radical Kantian" dichotomization of the human and the inhuman spheres became the thematic axis of Marx's differentiation of historical conditions (e.g., between "truly universal" and "falsely universal" socio-political orders).

This methodological subsumption not only preserved Marx's substantive premises, in both their positive and negative sides, it buried them. This subterranean or unconscious exile marks Marx's subsequent writings on religion and related topics, but its genesis is apparent from a close reading of Marx's letter to Ruge, noted above. Therein, Marx concludes from the methodological incorporation of the critique of religion that "religion itself is without content". However, even a cursory examination of Marx's writings themselves reveals that this claim is without logical foundation. Quite simply, if religion has no content, Marx cannot cogently argue that it constitutes an expression of historical conditions, let alone attempt to limit this causal relation to distorted conditions alone. Moreover, if religion is without substance, then how can two or more acts/beliefs be compared-- especially cross-culturally--as to their religious character? Yet this is precisely what Marx does in both his early and mature writings.[49]

Leaving aside intellectual incompetence, there is really only one way

to explain this lacuna, and that is by placing Marx's assertion in its

socio-political context. In Germany of the 1840's, Marx's associates

took his substantive premises for granted. The validity of these

premises was not in question, but their socio-political location was.

Thus, when Marx argued that religion is without content, he was simply

contending that religious issues qua religious issues are marginal to the

process of historical change in that period. In short, he elaborated a

science of politics in which the substantive criticism of religion

occupies a decidedly secondary position.[50]

Accordingly, though Marx's substantive premises--in both

their positive and negative aspects--"live on" in his post-1842 writings

and indeed sustain many of his theoretical innovations and polemical

formulations, they receive little or no critical attention. As a result,

after 1842, a certain unevenness marks Marx's treatment of religious

questions, with his theoretical advances in other areas standing in

marked contrast to the stasis of his religious criticism. Stasis is

unquestionably the critical term herein, because by the spring of 1843 the

substantive pillars of Marx's religious outlook had already solidified

into a semantic frame that--in its essentials--remained intact for the

rest of Marx's life.

This semantic frame consists of a parallel, qualitative

elaboration of two polar terms, science and religion. Respectively,

these terms paradigmatically denote the positive and negative regions

of Marx's hermeneutical universe in the bulk of his writings. For our

purposes here, the historical specification of Marx's usage of the
terms below is irrelevant. At this point, what concerns us is the
semantic Gestalt of the science/religion polarity, for it is this
subterranean network of interlocking $^{\text{substantive}}/$ assumptions that allows
Marx, throughout his career, on the one hand to exclude a priori
religion from the sphere of "true universality" (=communism), and, on
the other, to use religious language to map the boundaries of "false
universality", often in the context of acute polemical battles. In
part, this semantic frame includes the following elements:

SCIENCE	RELIGION
human	inhuman (animal, alien)
autonomy (freedom, morality)	heteronomy (slavery, immorality)
"true practice" ("true universality")	"false practice" ("false universality")
reason	"passive emotions"
self-consciousness	consciousness of sin
sensuous (finite)	abstract (infinite)
social	natural
real	unreal (imagination, fantasy)
"history"	"pre-history"

Even a cursory inspection of this table reveals an apparent
inconsistency: natural and sensuous are placed in polar categories.
However, given Marx's rationalist developmental inheritance, there is
really no inconsistency at all. Marx counterposes these two terms
because he accepts the orthodox rationalist tenet that primitives, like
children, cannot be said to possess "truly human" sensuous capacities,

because they are too crippled by their unreasoning terror of natural
forces they neither understand nor control. As a result, they practice
"natural religion". Whether or not these developmental premises are
valid or not is a matter we shall defer until Chapter III below.
For now, our point is simply that to contest Marx's semantic frame is
ultimately to challenge his rationalist developmental assumptions,
because it is on them that it rests.

B)   "Feuerbachian Period" (1843-44)

Though Marx continued to differ with Feuerbach on a number of
questions during these years, for the sake of simplicity, we shall
term this period Marx's "Feuerbachian" phase. The pre-eminent feature
of this conjuncture was Marx's break with Bauer and his entry into the
"Feuerbachian camp", a shift that politically took the form of a
conversion from a radical bourgeois democratic orientation to a
communist one. As a result of this turn, Marx now trained his theoretical
guns on a host of inter-related bourgeois democratic targets, including
the character of the state and the nature of politics. In this
context, Marx's methodological critique evolved considerably, even
though he remained wedded to "Bauerian" inflected substantive premises.
The thematic axis of this growth consisted of his critical engagement
with Hegel's religious metastasis. To explore this encounter, we
shall subdivide it into four thematic headings: 1. Hegel's Religious
Metastasis; 2. Effects of Metastatic Preservation; 3. The Evolution of
Marx's Methodological Critique; 4. Religious Language (Usage).

1. Hegel's Religious Metastasis[51]

In simple terms, the leitmotif of Marx's writings in this period is his "Feuerbachian" inspired annullment of the _form_ of Hegel's religious metastasis, combined with his preservation of its _content._ To understand the significance of this dialectical engagement, a brief overview of Marx's theoretical evolution, from his dissertation on, is in order. In his thesis, Marx responded positively to Hegel because the latter appeared to offer a way out of the _cul-de-sac_ of the Kantian dichotomy of "is" and "ought". To Marx, Hegel's theoretical reclamation of finitude (=the resolution of the antinomy of self-consciousness and substance) made genuine science possible (i.e., as both theory and practice in the world): science was no longer a series of dogmas received "from above" by humans, but rather something that _becomes_ as an expression of human self-becoming.[52] An ambiguity, however, pervades the dissertation: the "human" is associated with both self-consciousness and sensuousness and is set against the "consciousness of sin" and abstraction, respectively.[53] From the dissertation onwards, Marx removed this ambiguity by gradually collapsing self-consciousness into sensuousness, or, more exactly, by making the attributes connoted by self-consciousness (e.g., freedom and reason), dependent upon the realization of particular historical conditions. For Marx, this shift had profound practical repercussions, because it placed the historical constitution of man's species-being--and not consciousness-- at the centre of the science of politics.

This practical re-orientation underlay Marx's "Feuerbachian" turn in 1843, a conversion initially signalled by his sympathetic

response to Feuerbach's critique of Hegel.[54] Marx employed Feuerbach's

transformative method to negate Hegel's derivation of historical develop-

ment from its "esoteric" side.[55] The core of his argument was not to

dispute Hegel's description of the socio-political relations of civil

society,[56] but rather to question Hegel's explanation of these relations

and the practical conclusions the latter drew from the same. To Marx,

because Hegel collapses form and content by deducing "empirical existence"

from the evolution of logical categories, he is unable to criticize

"what is", i.e., he is unable to bring "empirical existence" to its

truth through the historical specification of its particular features.[57]

In particular, Marx contended that Hegel confuses formal existence and

human existence, a one-sidedness that leads him to forget the social

basis of political structures[58] and to drain human existence of all

substance save abstraction.[59] As a result, Marx posited, Hegel ends

up negating the positive goal that underlies his religious metastasis,

i.e., the actualization of true universality. In brief, Marx argued

that Hegel is unscientific because, in affirming the identity of the

abstract human being and the species itself, Hegel is forced to deny

man's sensuous reality and to derive the ground of human freedom

not from the terrain of their historical self-making, but from the domain

of conceptual evolution.[60] Consequently, Marx contended, Hegel allows

to man only abstract practices (i.e., not real)[61] and condemns the species

to a perpetual prison in which philosophy cannot become worldly and the

species can never ascend to "true generality".[62]

   To preserve the positive core of Hegel's metastatic project,

Marx reformulated its salient co-ordinates. In particular, he converted

the reclamation of finitude into the reclamation of the sensual human

being (i.e., as social subject-object) and posited the latter as the

premise of the actualization of "true universality" (=science).[63]

In so doing, Marx argued that human emancipation necessarily involves

both the theoretical appropriation of the social dialectic of form

and content (=the application of the principle of historical specifica-

tion and through such the generation of a composite abstraction of "human

essence")[64] and the practical (=material) abolition of the historical

fetters that impede the fruition of "true universality" (i.e., the unity

of theory and practice). This revision, Marx believed, rescued

Hegel's notion of science from the penitentiary of abstraction (= the

antinomy of theory and practice, the "is-ought" dichotomy) and opened

the window of possibility to the prospect of genuine historical change.

To advance this perspective, Marx altered the terms (form)

of Hegel's metastatic framework, but not its content. This approach

surfaced in a least three areas relevant to the evolution of his religious

criticism. First, to criticize existing conditions (and, by extension,

to develop his views concerning "what needed to be done"), Marx

employed, paradigmatically, Hegel's outline of the spirit's accession to

self-consciousness (although, of course, he disputed Hegel's inter-

pretation of the same and, specifically, socialized and historicized

its co-ordinates).[65] Thus, for instance, he retained the Hegelian

inspired notion of the emergence of "true universality" (=the historici-

zation of reason) from determinate conditions (i.e., a "whole" finite),[66]

extended a Hegelian inflected social content to this concept (i.e., rational

individuality),[67] and elucidated the concrete meaning of the "truly

universal" condition by counterposing it to the category of "false

universality".[68] Second, to criticize religion, Marx adopted Hegel's

anthropogenetic framework (i.e., treating religion as a species of

labour or man's self-making), although again he negated Hegel's inter-

pretation of this assimilation (i.e., Hegel's resolution of religion

into man's self-creation as an abstract being).[69] In so doing, however,

he preserved the developmental assumptions that were embedded in this

paradigm, including the following:

(a)   religion is a species of alienation, a necessary phase in human

        evolution, and its various forms comprise a "falsely universal"

        developmental continuum (="pre-history");[70]

(b)   man progresses in his self-making insofar as he cultivates his

        rational capacities, and, in particular, his rational control

        over both himself and his environment (i.e., "true universality"=

        historicization of reason);[71]

(c)   the "pre-historical" continuum comprises a developmental

        gradient that ascends from the "natural" to the abstract.

        Accordingly, the apex of estrangement coincides with the

        fullest development of abstraction (i.e., abstract hominization),[72]

        Christianity is the "Absolute Religion",[73] and the stage of

        "natural religion" corresponds to the "childhood of humanity".[74]

        Third, to criticize existing socio-political practices/institu-

tions, Marx retained Hegel's thesis that the content of religion is

completed (i.e., made actual) in the state and philosophy, although, of

course, he disputed Hegel's interpretation of this content (i.e., to

Hegel, the content of religion was spirit and represented the essence

of the human being, whereas to Marx it was abstraction and represented

the abstract or formal side of the human being).[75]

2. Effects of Metastatic Preservation

Marx's preservation of the content of Hegel's religious

metastasis formed a theoretical bridge that united the substantive and

methodological sides of his critique. It allowed Marx to generalize

the substance of religion and apply it to all socio-political forms

in which the husk (=other world, form) is taken for the kernel (=sensuous

human content), or the part for the whole (e.g., the abstract, formal

side of the human being is represented as the whole human being). In

brief, Hegel's metastasis permitted Marx to posit religion as the para-

digmatic form of "false universality" (="illusory community"), and, by

extension, false consciousness or ideology. This paradigmatic design-

ation, in turn, gave Marx the perfect polemical vehicle to flesh out

his counterposition of "true" and "false" universality and thus to

extend his criticism of existing socio-political structures. In part,

this process took the form of the analytical construction of a "pre-

historical" developmental continuum, each phase of which was abstractly

connected by the category of the "not truly social" (i.e., "inhuman"),

a linkage expressed by their common _religious_ character.[76] It also

resulted, however, in the elaboration of Marx's conception of "true

universality" (i.e., the "truly social" condition), and, in particular,

the rigorous theoretical exclusion of religion of _any_ form from its

logical domain.[77]

Though this dual theoretical movement fundamentally secured

the dominance of the methodological critique in the development of

Marx's approach to religion from this point onwards, the price of

this victory was the preservation and burial of his substantive premises,

both in their negative (e.g., through the transposition of the critique

of religion to the state and "false universality" in civil society)

and positive (e.g., through the construction of a rationalist vision of

communism, based, in part on a "Newtonian" conception of "human

essence")[78] aspects. The methodological sublation of the substantive

critique did not simply alter the site of Marx's religious criticism,

it also embedded his substantive assumptions in the basement of his

theoretical abode. In this way, Marx not only made his substantive

prejudices accessible for subsequent use, as a sort of fluid all-purpose

polemical tool, he also removed them from the window of scrutiny and

thus extended to them a "taken for granted" status.

3. The Evolution of Marx's Methodological Critique

In Marx's initial formulation of the methodological critique,

he assimilated the critique of religion to the critique of the political

conditions of "inhumanity" and, in particular, to the critique of the

"bestial" world of "actual dualism". In this context, he identified

the perfect Christian state with the theocratic state.[79] When he shifted

his attention to the theoretical ground of Hegel's metastasis, however,

he also altered the site of his methodological critique. Specifically,

he now incorporated the critique of religion into the critique of the

conditions that give rise to the political world of "abstract dualism".[80]

In this framework, using the substance of Hegel's metastatic argument
(i.e., that the state completes the content of religion), as well as
Hegel's methodological premise that the historical realization of
the apogean form of a given developmental phenomenon constitutes the
pre-condition for its criticism and supercession,[81] combined with the
cluster of assumptions that underlay the "Absolute Religion thesis"
(e.g., the evolutionary ascent from sensual to abstract poles, the
"hominization thesis"), Marx argued that the "abstractly dualistic"
state materialized the notion of religion (i.e., makes flesh the dis-
figurement that is religion) by formally segregating species and material
life.[82] As a result, he modified his previous methodological argument
and now contended that bourgeois democracy is the perfect Christian
state,[83] and that the "truth of religion" is realized when it is
constituted as a moment of private concern.[84]

At every point in his articulation of the methodological critique,
Marx drew the same general practical conclusion, i.e., to view the
"problem" of religion as an expression of the underlying historical
conditions that produce it in the first place, and thus as a difficulty
that is best dealt with in the context or as a by-product of an assault
on these conditions per se. When he resolved the content of religion
into the atomic organization of civil society,[85] however, his concrete
understanding of the significance of this position evolved considerably.
Specifically, he now assimilated the critique of religion to the critique
of the secular pre-suppositions of bourgeois democracy.[86] Thereby, he
not only laid the foundations for an increasingly empirical approach to

religion (i.e., within the context of a historically specific cultural

matrix), albeit within the parameters of the "rationalist paradigm",

he also located the axis of the "true"/"false" universality polarity in

the civil, not the political, domain.[87] In this way, he folded the

critiques of both politics and religion into the practical struggle

to realize communism (i.e., human emancipation).[88]

In effecting this theoretical shift, Marx transposed the language

of his "true"/"false" universal counterposition to the civil realm.

In so doing, though he altered the "target area" of his rationalist

semantic frame, he left its underlying substantive premises unchanged.

This terminological mutation, however, significantly restated the

science/religion polarity, as these two terms now became the paradigmatic

denotations for different types of activity, or "true" and "false"

practice, respectively.[89] This reformulation culminated in Marx's anthro-

pogenetic sublation of the critique of religion, in which religion

became the paradigmatic phenomenological index of all conditions in

which humans are either unwilling or unable to "make themselves" in

a "truly human" manner (="pre-history"), and as such was set against

the science of human self-making, or communism.[90]

To defend the scientific integrity of communism, though, Marx

was obliged to concretize this practical counterposition by resolving

his critique of religion into a critique of historically specific class

practices. In so doing, he traced the "false" practices of his

political/theoretical opponents to their "marginal" social roots, and

opposed to them a materialistic version of communism whose scientific

character allegedly stemmed from its roots in the proletariat.[91] In this

way, he both preserved his substantive premises, and moulded them

into a fluid, yet determinate, polemical weapon that would serve his

purposes, again and again, for the rest of his life.[92]

4. Religious Language (Usage)

Marx employed religion as the paradigmatic form of "false

universality" to concretize the "true"/"false" universal polarity and

thereby to elucidate the validity of his particular solutions to the

socio-political problems of Germany in the early to mid-1840's. This

usage took both negative and positive forms, i.e., Marx wielded religious

language in this period both to attack examples of "false universality"

in various forms, and, through exclusion, to flesh out his positive

alternative (e.g., his theory of communism). To illustrate these

different approaches, we shall briefly outline the major types of

religious analogies that Marx constructed, beginning first with their

negative usage and then moving on to their positive applications.

(a) Negative Usage

Marx employed religious analogies for four principal ends:

(i)   to elucidate the substance of political false universality, including:

    (1)   the direct transposition of the content of religion
to political forms;[93]

    (2)   the paralleling of natural/social mystification in
political/religious realms;[94]

    (3)   animal/zoological paralleling;[95]

(4)   zero-sum constructions;[96]

(5)   the paralleling of church/political bureaucratic practices;[97]

(6)   the paralleling of the "abstract dualism" of bourgeois democracy and Christianity, respectively;[98]

(ii)   to posit a "pre-historical" continuum[99] with rationalist developmental characteristics;[100]

(iii)   to concretize civil "false universality"--the nexus of these analogies was Marx's construction of religion as the paradigmatic form of "false practice",[101] and through this frame, Marx was able to flesh out the various moments of alienated labour, using, in each case, religious metaphors;[102]

(iv)   to polemicize against political/theoretical opponents, and, in particular:

(1)   to attack their false methods;[103]

(2)   to locate developmentally/socially their theories;[104]

(3)   to contest alternative theories of socialism.[105]

(b) Positive Usage

In addition to employing religious language to delineate what "true universality" is not, Marx also invoked it to serve two main positive ends:

(i)   to substantiate the scientific character of his conception of the communist movement--in particular, he used religious analogies to support his contentions that his version of this movement was scientific in its:

(1)   strategic framework;[106]

(2)   method;[107]

(3)   practice;[108]

(4)   social base;[109]

(ii)   to outline the content of communist society,[110] including its

characteristics as a:

(1)   rationalist reclamation/appropriation of natural

and social resources;[111]

(2)   "truly social" order;[112]

(3)   "true" unity of universal and particular;[113]

(4)   "true" community.[114]

C)   "New Materialism" (1845-48)

Between the years 1845 and (early) 1848 Marx and Engels were

preoccupied with the theoretical and practical battle to lay a scientific

foundation for socialism. Arrayed against them in this struggle were

the disparate currents of "utopian socialism".[115] Though these currents

parted company on many questions, they all employed a priori moral

premises as the axes of their respective political programmes.[116]

Marx traced the "utopian socialist" reproduction of the "is-

ought" dichotomy back to the contemporary practices of the petty

bourgeoisie.[117] He attributed their "false practices" to their "marginal"

social location.[118] In contrast, Marx rooted science in the social

existence of the proletariat and denied the possibility of any dissolution

of the "is-ought" antinomy outside of the actual practices of this class.

Marx defined socialism as the theory and practice of human self-formation as concretely mediated by the self-emancipation of the proletariat. To him, socialism either evolves out of the life practices of human beings or it grows out of the human imagination. It either expresses the development of _real_ historical forces or it expresses wishful thinking. In short, socialism is either scientific or religious.

Marx elaborated his conception of socialism in the 1845-48 period in a concrete political context and in opposition to "utopian socialist" language.[119] He suspended his use of "Feuerbachian" language and concentrated his theoretical energies on the concretization of the social existence of the proletariat. In so doing, he attempted to specify the historical conditions that would make change possible. In the course of this exploration he came to accept the labour theory of value[120] and set out the salient propositions of historical materialism.[121]

Marx's 1845-48 writings do not constitute an "epistemological break" from his previous works. They simply address a different set of problems and, to this end, though Marx extends and develops his prior insights, he does not repudiate them.[122] An illustration of this tendency is his treatment of religion in this period. Though little of substance is added to his critique--indeed his substantive premises were preserved and his methodological critique was simply extended to new areas--the altered political context reshaped its terrain. In particular, three thematic innovations characterized his approach to religion in these years: 1. he abandoned the language of species existence in favour of the language of historical specification; 2. he concretized

his _developmental_ assimilation of the critique of religion and thereby

honed his usage of religious terminology as a polemical weapon;

3. although he retained his "true"/"false" universality substantive

premises, he increasingly transposed them to the economic realm

(i.e., to the critique of political economy) as the paradigmatic approaches

to the constitution of a productive totality. We shall now briefly

examine each of these thematic shifts.

1. The Language of Historical Specification

In displacing the language of generic abstraction (Feuerbach)

with the language of historical specification, Marx resolved religion

(and its critique) into the concrete metabolism of historical change,

and, by extension, into specific class practices. In so doing, he

opposed the standpoint of the "old materialists", including Feuerbach,

who limited their critique of religion to a contemplative assault on

religion in the abstract[123] in the name of man in the abstract.[124]

Marx contended that, methodologically speaking, the "old materialists"

abstracted their theoretical categories from ambient conditions in an

uncritical, ahistorical fashion.[125] As a result, they reduced history

to the "sacred" movement of hypostases[126] that gave the appearance of

change,[127] but in fact ended in a _sanctification_ of the existing

(bourgeois) order, a sleight of hand that found paradigmatic expression

in the religious character of their ideal societies.[128] In addition,

he held that, strategically speaking, the premise of "abstract man"

implicitly denied the sensuous, social reality of "living individuals"

and thus admitted only _theoretical_ practice that attempted to alter

the <u>consciousness</u> of an abstract audience,[129] and opposed any actions/ movements that aimed at effecting <u>real</u> historical change.[130]

Against the "old materialists", Marx advanced the perspective of the "new materialism" (i.e., "scientific socialism").[131] He contended that this new standpoint, being socially rooted in the proletarian self-emancipatory movement (and thus in the concrete conditions of historical change in the contemporary era),[132] methodologically began not from religious (i.e., abstract) premises but rather from a theoretical appropriation of the variable constitution of historical existence.[133] This approach, he added, made the "new materialism" the only genuine critique of religion, because it directed its fire not at ideological phantoms (e.g., religion) <u>per se</u>, but rather at the conditions that spawned them.[134] As a result, it was only the contemporary communist movement that embodied the capacity to precipitate authentic historical change.[135]

2. Developmental Assimilation and Concretion

Marx's resolution of religion into the determinate conditions of historical change transposed the critique of religion to the critique of the ideological effluents of "marginal" social classes or layers. Thereby, he traced the defects of his theoretical/political opponents to their social base and used religious analogies to underline their errors, and, conversely, to accentuate the scientific character of his alternative approach.[136] This critique involved both the historical specification of religious forms (i.e., the association of particular religious types with particular modes of productive intercourse)[137]

and the assimilation of religion _per se_ to the continuum of "pre-history"[138] as the principal phenomenological index (mirror)[139] of the absence of "truly social" control over natural and social resources.[140] In advancing this construction, Marx implicitly distinguished between accurate and true ideas,[141] a specification that provided him with a potent polemical weapon to wield against his opponents. In particular, it allowed him to apply Hegel's metastatic propositions (e.g., the thesis concerning the secular completion of the content of religion) to situate his opponents developmentally within the continuum of "pre-history" (i.e., as "advanced", secular expressions of a distorted social reality, who are unable actually to change the conditions that produce this distortion).[142]

To cement this developmental framework, Marx's anthropological investigations began to take a somewhat more empirical turn. Though he distinguished between primitive[143] and civil mystification (a demarcation that was based on his subdivision of "pre-history" into primitive and civil society, respectively)[144] concrete socio-political pressures dictated that he concentrate his energies on the latter.[145] In this regard, he invoked civil religion as the paradigmatic form of civil mystification[146] and rooted the false practices of the "German Ideologists" and their ilk in both the general characteristics of the civil era (e.g., the division of social classes, the mental/manual schism)[147] and the specific attributes of his contemporary period as an age of "ruling class" decay and proletarian ascendancy.[148]

3. Substantive Continuity

In concretizing the emergence and supercession of religion, Marx retained the opposition of "true" and false" universality, and, by extension, his substantive critique of religion. This substantive continuity, in both its negative and positive aspects, surfaced in his re-affirmation of the following themes:

(a)   a "Newtonian" conception of human/natural reality;[149]

(b)   a rationalist understanding of the content of religion;[150]

(c)   a "productivist" interpretation of historical development;[151]

(d)   a rationalist delineation of both the communist movement[152] and communist society.[153]

Increasingly, however, Marx counterposed two different modes of constituting a productive totality (i.e., directly social control by the associated producers[154] versus spontaneous organization of productive intercourse)[155] as his theoretical framework for preserving these substantive premises. In this context, human evolution--and communism--appeared as a function of social control over the productive forces, and the presence or absence of this control served as the divide between "true" and "false" consciousness, and science from religion. The historical specification of the conditions in which these respective phenomenological stages arise formed a bridge which led to his later theory of commodity fetishism. But is also led back to his rationalist predecessors.

D) _Mature Works (1848-83)_

In Marx's mature period, religion occupied a decidedly
secondary position. Religion _per se_ held no interest for him--he
considered the topic "boring"[156]--and in his writings serves mainly to
highlight specific aspects of his other reasearch interests. As a
result, his discussions of it contained few theoretical innovations or
modifications of his pre-1848 positions. He maintained the thematic
trends we noted in the previous subsection, and in accordance with
his general theoretical evolution, folded his religious critique into
his critique of political economy. This theoretical stasis stood in
marked contrast to his developments in other areas. The only exception
to this general trend was his use of religious language to elucidate
his theory of value.

To examine Marx's approach to religion in these years, we shall
subdivide it into five themes:1. method; 2. substance; 3. social ontology;
4. politics; 5. fetishism. Given the importance of the last heading,
we shall consider it in some analytical depth. The others we shall
address in highlight form.

1. Method

In Marx's post-1848 period the sublation of his religious
critique by his critique of political economy arbitrated his specifica-
tion of the proper method for studying religious phenomena. This
scientific framework preserved the two sides of his religious critique
and rested on their corresponding premises. In this perspective, the

scientific critic of religion must proceed from "earth to heaven",

i.e., from the dissection of the particular social relations that corres-

pond to the different stages and varieties of religious forms to the

forms themselves.[157] The variation in these forms is thus explained by

the variation in their respective material bases.[158]

By periodizing the phases and forms of man's productive

intercourse Marx established the historical limits of religion. The

historical specification of religious forms theoretically determines

the conditions for the supercession of religion per se. Along this theo-

retical axis, the critiques of religion and political economy intersect.

In both cases, Marx based his assault on the ahistorical status of their

respective theoretical categories and their corresponding social

premises.[159] The apologists of religion and political economy, he

asserted, are unable to explain historical changes because they remain

immobilized at the level of form and are blind to the concrete social

processes that underlie the dialectic of form and content.

Marx agreed that the theoretical excavation of economic

history and the classification of the general stages of this history must

logically precede the dissection of religious variation. The principal

tool he presented to aid this analysis was the theory of value. Though

in Marx's writings of this period the sequence,[160] mutability,[161] and

characteristics[162] of these stages vary, as does his assessment of the

significance of the same, certain relevant premises remain intact,

and shape his assessment of both non-European social formations and

their religious traditions.

For example, though it is fairly clear, especially in his later texts (1870's to early 1880's) that Marx eschewed any unilinear conception of historical development or any faith in "progress" as an invariable feature of human history, he retained a "productivist" criterion for the categorization of social formations and economic stages as more or less advanced.[163] By this ledger capitalism embodies the most developed features of "pre-historical" modes of production.[164] At the other end of the scale, Marx's "productivist" bias resulted in the exclusion of hunting and gathering societies from his theoretical purview, an omission only partially rectified by his later ethnological researches.[165] Though this restriction of the "pre-historical" continuum to post-neolithic cultures obviously reflected the lack of available data in Marx's time, it also expressed his rationalist assumption that the ascent to "true humanity" only begins when men gain some degree of technical control over their environmental conditions (=domestication). This premise underlay his late-1850's designation of the classical Greeks as the "normal children" of humanity.[166]

Though Marx maintained the _logical_ precedence of the critique of political economy over the critique of religion, he also employed the latter as the paradigm for the former. This paradigmatic role for the critique of religion reflected its _historical_ precedence vis-à-vis the critique of political economy in Germany, and in particular, the scientific value of Hegel's method for the study of historical variation.[167]

Marx's outline for the proper method of studying political economy followed three aspects of Hegel's critique of religion. First,

he accepted Hegel's position that at the theoretical level science proceeds

through the resolution of the forms in which reality appears into their

determinate simpler concepts (Begriffe). In this way the "surface

unity" of phenomena gives way to the "whole as contradiction".[168]

This theoretical practice constitutes a specific form of "world appropria-

tion", a "way different from the artistic, religious, practical, and

mental appropriations of the world."[169]

Second, following Hegel, Marx conditioned the emergence of

this science with the fulfilment of the historical premise of its

"most developed" generic form, whether their genus be the economy or

religion. In the first case, the anatomy of capitalism contains

the key to previous economic forms: in the second, the internal

structure of Christianity unlocks the door to the mysteries of "earlier

mythologies".[170]

In both these examples two salient points must be kept in

mind. First, though similar categories may be found in both the less

and more advanced religious or economic forms, there is an essential

difference in their articulation within their respective historical

stages, an articulation which discloses the specificity of each society's

religious or economic relations. Second, the "most developed" religious

or economic form only aids the dissection of its antecedents when its

own self-criticism has "potentially begun" and the apologists of

Christianity or capitalism advance their respective causes by unfurling

the banner of their differentia specifica.[171]

Third, like Hegel, Marx insisted that the scientific arrangement

of the theoretical categories elucidating economic or religious forms

must follow their logical, rather than their historical order.[172]

The decisive factor in determining the scientific method, therefore,

is the categories' interrelationship in capitalism or Christianity

respectively.

Unlike Hegel, however, Marx did not confuse the theoretical

appropriation of the concrete with the way the concrete comes into

being.[173] Hegel made this error because he resolved the historical

process itself into an abstraction and the movement of abstract categories.

In this way he ended up not resolving religion into man , but vice

versa, his critique of religion ended as its celebration, and his

science ended up as mysticism.

To Marx the only (theoretical) insurance against this fate was

the perpetual employment of society as the presupposition for the

development of abstract categories in general.[174] Theorists who stray

from this premise find themselves, along with Hegel, exiled from the

terrain of science, and confined to the world of phenomenal representa-

tion.[175]

Marx conducted his empirical investigations of religion in

his 1848 to 1883 writings within this methodological framework. The

axis of his research was thus the dialectic of form and content. In

approaching religious practices, Marx asked: What are the internal

dynamics affecting the organization of a particular culture which result

in the effluence of these specific religious forms?[176] Therefore, he

examined these forms only in their concrete economic and cultural

context.[177] The only exceptions occur when these contexts are

inaccessable to study, and mythology, for example, is the only record of cultural transition.[178] Marx excluded this ideal historiography, however, from the ranks of true science.[179]

To Marx, a <u>differentia specifica</u> of the proletarian revolution as opposed to previous ones was its degree of consciousness. The proletariat requires no phantasmal forms to mediate its struggles:[180] "pre-historical" social forces do.[181] In "pre-history", therefore, in large measure the scientific study of religion consists of exposing the raw social nerves that lie beneath the layers of ideological illusion with which social forces have cloaked their material interests, whether consciously or unconsciously.[182]

2. Substance

In the 1848-83 period, Marx commented substantively on religion to elucidate his methodological premise that the forms or phases of religion correspond to specific developmental stages. As we have seen, three assumptions underlay this perspective. First, in general human evolution coincides with the growth of the productive forces and the degree of social control over the given "life conditions". Religion phenomenologically reflects the absence of "truly social" production relations.[183] Second, capitalism represents the most advanced "pre-historical" mode of production, and Protestant Christianity embodies its corresponding religious form.[184] Third, socialism and religion are antipodes.[185] Consequently, almost without exception, Marx's comments on religion were negative.

In the main, these comments followed his theoretical subdivision of human history into three phases: social forms characterized by relations of personal dependence; thosecharacterized by relations of personal independence founded on objective dependence; and finally, those characterized by relations of free individuality.[186] The first and second correspond to the continuum of "pre-history" and the transition to the third marks the termination of religion and all forms of false consciousness.

On the substantive as opposed to the methodological level, Marx did not apply the criterion of class relations to distinguish religions which arise in the first historical stage (=religions of personal dependence, or Type 1 religions) from those which arise in the second (=religions of personal independence, or Type 2 religions).[187] He employed the standard of the specificity of the bourgeois stage of class society and the attendant substantive metastasis of religion (i.e., its exile to the private sphere, and the ascendant secularization of "false universality"). This position not only reflected his relative disinterest in religion, it also expressed the preservation of his substantive premises.

Marx simply was not concerned with the elucidation of the substantive specificity of non-Christian or even non-Protestant religious forms. Thus, he tended to lump them all into the category of "religions of personal dependence" regardless of their particular social articulation. In this tendency he reproduces in religion what he does to pre-capitalist economic forms. At least up until the late 1870's

his main focus was capitalism and how to move from the material conditions
established by that mode of production to socialism. With respect to
religious forms, therefore, a disjuncture appeared between his methodological
and substantive positions. Pre-class and class religious forms,
Hinduism, Islam, Chinese religions, primitive religions, and even
Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Judaism all fell within the theoretical
category of "religions of personal dependence".[188] Conversely, only
Protestant Christianity functioned as a "religion of personal independence".

In his later ethnological writings, Marx appears to turn away
from this classification scheme to a more rigoriously empirically
grounding of religious phenomena. The undeveloped state of the extant
manuscripts, however, leaves this issue inconclusive. Nevertheless,
Marx's brief references to religion in these notes do not contain
any substantial modifications in his outlook on this subject. The
general tenor of his criticisms of the ethnologists he reviews in
this regard is that they are insufficiently negative towards religion.[189]

In this period, Marx addressed substantive comments to three
empirical areas: "mythology",[190] "oriental religions" (Hinduism, Islam,
Chinese religions), and Christianity. In all cases, his substantive
premises remained intact,[191] and the principal focus of his notes
was to illustrate, concretely, the validity of his methodological
critique and in particular the sublation of the critique of religion
by the critique of political economy.[192]

3. Social Ontology

Marx's transposition of the "true"/"false" universality polarity--and thus, by extension, his critique of religion--into his critique of political economy intersected with the development of his social ontology. Marx methodologically used "individuality" as his principal social index for measuring social evolution.[193] His substantive definition of this developmental process had its roots in both normative assumptions and historical analysis, with the former stemming from his substantive critique, on both its positive and negative sides. The result was the a priori exclusion of religion from the apogean phase of social evolution, i.e., the phase of "free, social individuality" (="true universality", communism).[194]

4. Politics

In the vast majority of cases, Marx addressed the subject of religion in this period only insofar as it impacted on a particular political issue. Although his comments in this regard at every point exhibit the diverse markings of their concrete context, it is possible to summarize his politico-religious notes as follows:

(a)   Following his general methodological framework for the study of "pre-historical" social struggles,[195] Marx often distinguished between form and content to elucidate socio-political conflicts, and in particular to resolve the religious forms these struggles periodically assumed into their constituent social bases.[196]

(b)   Almost without exception, Marx associated religion with the consolidation of political reaction.[197]

(c)   As a general rule, to Marx atheism advances in tandem with the
       rise of the political fortunes of the bourgeoisie.[198]

(d)   At various points Marx reaffirmed his position concerning the
       incompatibility of religion and socialism, _regardless_ of the
       form of religion.[199]

(e)   Marx sporadically invoked religious (particularly Judeo-
       Christian) analogies to contemporary political events.[200]

5. Fetishism

Without question, Marx's most significant theoretical innova-
tion in his mature period was his theory of value.[201] His theory of
fetishism comprised a specific aspect of this work, namely, that part
relating to the mystification inherent in the form of value and insep-
arably connected with the production of commodities. As such, fetishism[202]
does not refer to phenomenological effects _per se_. Marx did not develop
the theory of fetishism to explain how people think, but rather to
explain how production relations in a commodity economy are organized.[203]
Thus, fetishism belongs to the logical rather/to the historical side
of science and the axis of the religious analogies he used in his con-
struction of this theory is _social_ not psychological.

In his theory of fetishism, Marx connected together the
mystification internal to commodity exchange, and the mystification
internal to religious practice for a precise purpose: to unveil the
false practices that underlie a commodity economy. To this end, he
used religion as the paradigmatic form of "false universality", a
method he employs in all his major post-1842 writings. This operation

relied upon the methodological subsumption of substantive premises.
With Marx's development of the theory of value, this subsumption acquired
a particular form, namely, the sublation of the critique of religion
by the critique of political economy. As a result, though Marx
retained the phenomenological terminology of religion, he used it as
a logical rather than a historical tool. To be precise, he transposed
the psychologistic hypotheses of de Brosses concerning primitive
mentality and human evolution[204] onto the terrain of a "productivist"
developmental paradigm.

In Capital, when Marx draws an analogy between fetishism and
religion,[205] he reaches back to his early (1842) reading of de Brosses'
Du Culte des Dieux Fétiches, and in particular to the four themes
that he culled from this work and which shaped his use of religious
fetishism in his pre-1845 texts. In brief, these themes are as follows:
first, that fetishism is a form of mystification in which humans
attribute special powers to items in their immediate sensual environment;
second, that fetishism issues from a psyche dominated by fear and
ignorance, a condition that Marx, even in his earliest references, roots
in particular social relations (=absence of "truly social" conditions);
third, that though fetishism represents a distinct evolutionary stage
(=childhood of humanity), it recurs in all societies, including modern
Europe; fourth, that while fetishism embodies the sensuous pole of
man's religious history, abstraction and divinization of man lie at the
other pole, corresponding to the advance of civilization.

Though all these themes resurface in Chapter 1 of Capital, they
emerge in a qualitatively altered form. For example, compare Marx's

references to economic fetishism in the 1844 <u>Manuscripts</u> with his

comments on the same in <u>Capital</u>. In the former, he links together

religious and economic fetishism along the theoretical axis of "back-

wardness", with economic fetishism representing an almost pre-capitalist

outlook, the economic counterpart of Catholicism compared to the

"advanced" Protestant insights of political economy. In <u>Capital</u>,

however, fetishism represents an altogether bourgeois phenomenon

and, if anything, reflects a Protestant outlook on economic life.

This theoretical shift results from Marx's redefinition of

the problem of economic inversion, i.e., within the problematic of

the theory of value. The axis of the link between religious and

economic mystification now becomes the internal structure of the

commodity economy and, in particular, the type of <u>representation</u>

required to form a productive totality in a given society.

The lynch-pin in Marx's construction of this link is money.

Beginning with <u>On The Jewish Question</u> and continuing in <u>Comments on</u>

<u>James Mill</u> and <u>Manuscripts</u>, Marx, influenced by Hess in particular,

transferred the site of false universality from the political to the

civil realms, with money becoming the economic analogue of God. At

this point, Marx posited that the crucial difference between religious

and economic false universals is that the former is wholly illusory

and the latter is real but nevertheless false. Unlike the religious

gods, money holds real power, which is why all the old gods bow down

before it.[206] This power arises from the role of money as a <u>medium</u>

whereby men are connected to each other. In short, in his early

writings the theoretical site of the analogy that Marx draws between money and God is exchange.

When Marx adopted the labour theory of value and relegated exchange to an ancillary position, he initially posited money as a mere symbol, the material embodiment of labour time in general, and thus, both the abstraction and materialization of man's species-capacities.[207] As such, it performs different roles: as a medium of circulation, it is the servant of the "ancient community";[208] "as money" (i.e., in its third role) money throws off its servile robes and "changes into the Lord and God of the world of commodities",[209] which both dissolves and replaces its former master (i.e., the ancient community). As a result, money becomes the "real community" whose abstract yet material threads gradually tether man together in a planetary culture "since it is the general substance of survival for all and at the same time the social product of all."[210]

In the course of writing the Grundrisse, however, Marx came to reject his previous conception of money as a symbol[211] and resolved the "peculiarities" of the "money form"[212]--including its contradictory character[213]--into the internal exigencies of the commodity economy as a historically specific economic form.[214] Thus, he shifted the problem of money from its functions to its substance, i.e., away from its role as a medium to its roots in a particular form of economic organization.[215] Consequently, he brought the "god of commodities" down to earth and linked its dethronement to the abolition of its corresponding production relations.

In so doing, Marx posited the analogy he drew between money and God as but a special instance of the analogous relation between the value form and religion. Therefore, the axis of the relationship between economic and religious mystification became the theatre in which the particular economic or religious actors play their parts, and the type of representation it sponsors. In this framework, it is irrelevant what mask is worn, i.e., whether it is the "sensuous glitter" of metal or the shiny plastic of a credit card. The analogical bridge is the "form itself".

Accordingly, when Marx first applied the term fetishism to the mystification inherent in commodity exchange--and in particular to its reflection in the theories of various bourgeois economists-- in his economic notebooks of 1861-63,[216] and again in his polished exposition of the same in the second German edition of Capital , he selected this specific term for its logical worth.[217] Religion serves this pedagogical purpose because it is the paradigmatic form of "false universality" and Marx chose fetishism as its representational form because (according to de Brosses and Marx) historically it is the earliest type of religion.

There are five logically distinct aspects of the fetishism/ religion analogy. First, in both fetishism and religion the form is "fantastic". The tale told on the stage is false by virtue of the way in which it is presented. Whether or not the theatre of appearance is economic or religious, within its confines humans see or think themselves through the interaction of masked actors,[218] i.e., actors standing in

for human subjects, yet intrinsically concealing, in various ways

(natural for social, part for whole, direct for indirect, form for

content, effect for cause, object for subject),[219] the social

and thus the historically specific basis of this "play". As a result,

its historical genesis and limits are extinguished from view.

Second, the social foundation of both fetishism and religion

is "the alienation of man from his own labour."[220] Consequently, man

is ruled by his own products, be they the products of his own brain

(as with religion) or his hand (as with capitalism). The difference

is simply one of form.[221]

Third, both fetishism and religion represent historically

necessary evolutionary stages.[222] Thus, the supercession or lifting

of the mystical veil from "the countenance of the social life process"

(=demystification)[223] results only from the maturation of the requisite

material conditions that render it superfluous and present to man his

"practical relations of everyday life between man and man, and man and

nature...in a transparent and rational form."[224] Only the ripening of

these conditions gives birth to the "true" science necessary--in both

its theoretical[225] and practical sides[226]--to achieve this end, an end

whose social form is the society of associated producers.[227]

Fourth, both fetishism and the various forms of religion

occupy definite positions on the "pre-historical" continuum, and this

position underlies any similarities or differences that obtain between

them. Religious fetishism and other "religions of personal dependence"[228]

correspond to the prevalence of production relations in which commodity

production is either absent or subordinate. In these circumstances,

there is no need for labour to assume a "fantastic form", although

such a requirement does apply to man's relations both with his fellow

men and with nature.[229] With the gradual extension of commodity

production, and the increase in the influence it exerts over the economic

life of a particular society, the religious forms also change.

Specifically, religious life becomes the cult of abstract universality.

This cult, however, has two complementary modes of practice: pro forma

and de facto.

The pro forma religion of capitalism is Christianity "particularly

in its bourgeois development, i.e., in Protestantism, in Deism, etc."[230]

The theatre of commodity exchange presents a play in which concrete

labour forms part of the social aggregate of labour time through the

social mediation of the exchange of a product against a universal

equivalent (and thus, its transformation into a position of formal

equality as an alliquot portion of abstract labour). The form of

manifestation of universality is the body of the commodity (i.e., an

individual), and it appears that its social capacities belong to it as

one of its natural properties. In Christianity, we find an exact

parallel: Christ is the God/man, the universal made flesh as an

individual. Through faith in Christ, Christians secure their connection

to God, and thereby become abstract and formally equal citizens in

the City of God. Christ performs this social role by virtue of his

nature.[231] With the drawing of the mystic veil, however, his visage

loses its divine countenance and adopts a "human, all too human"

complexion. Christ becomes the incarnation not of God, but of man, but man ripped from the ancient community or abstract man. The abstract man is man divided within himself: formal against informal; subjective against objective; public against private; spirit against flesh. Christ is the form become content--the representation of the part human as the "whole human being"--and Christianity--as his worship-- is the sanctification of this lie, and the celebration of the disfigurement that underlies it.

The material processes that give rise to and sustain Christianity, however, also metastize it and complete its content in secular form. As a result, religious practice becomes de facto, and is performed on the "vulgar" stage of commodity exchange (=fetishism). In the "religion of everyday life",[232] the material mediation of exchange replaces the phantasmal mediation of Christ. Though illusory, the story told in the theatre of commodity relations accurately reflects the inverted character of its social foundation in a manner that disposes of even the abstract human masks that are worn pro forma in Christian worship. Therefore, in donning "natural" masks, the actors of bourgeois society form a continuum with the enchanted objects that graced the world of earliest man, a union signified by the common denotation of their worship as fetishism and the use of religious language to describe the similarities in their practice.[233]

The fifth logical aspect of the fetishism/religion analogy is their common need for theoretical apologists (i.e., "theologians"). In both cases the errors of the "theologians" result from their location in the sphere of social production and their consequent theoretical

"addiction" to the forms social relations assume on the phenomenal

stage. In particular, in their attitudes towards pre-bourgeois economic

forms, political economists reproduce the outlook of the Christian

Church fathers and view bourgeois institutions as natural and all others

as artificial.[234] Their degenerate successors (i.e., "vulgar" economists)

also mimic the hypostatic convolutions of later Christian theology by

attributing juridicial equality to the three factors that, combined,

allegedly constitute the value of a product (=trinity theory).[235]

E)   Conclusion

Upon thematic excavation, Marx's critique of religion surfaces

as Janus-faced. One face, the substantive critique, looks backward

at his rationalist predecessors, and embodies the preservation and

indeed the radicalization of this legacy. The other, the methodological

critique, looks forward, beyond the horizon of the "old" ways of approaching

religion, to the assimilation of religion, and its critique, to the

determinate conditions of historical change and embodies his break with

the Western philosophical tradition.

Historically speaking, both countenances belong together.

As we have seen, Marx developed his critique against a socio-political

backdrop that gave him no cause to question, let alone reject, his

substantive premises. Consequently, though concrete pressures resulted

in periodic shifts of emphasis and language in the construction of his

synthesis of the two sides of his critique, they never fractured their

conjunctural symbiosis, and throughout his life Marx retained a

fundamentally static hermeneutic frame vis-à-vis religion.

Of course, this pattern of approach was not confined to religion. It also appears in Marx's treatment of imperialism and ecological issues, for instance. This continuity is not coincidental, it reflects the fact that, at every stage of his career, Marx fought a two-front war, so to speak, with his fire directed simultaneously at the forward predations of the bourgeoisie on the one hand, and at the rearguard assaults on the "feudal" remnants on the other. This strategic placement was a source of both strength and weakness. It was crucial to the cultivation of his dialectical grasp of contemporary developments--and in regards to religion in particular, to the forging of a potent, all-purpose polemical weapon--but it also occasioned an uneven theoretical constellation in which certain areas received more critical attention than others. In the domain of religious criticism, for example, it resulted in the mostly unconscious perpetuation and transposition of his substantive assumptions.

This Janus-faced edifice constitutes Marx's legacy in the field of religion. Historically, its impact was profound, (theoretically) resulting in the permanent exile of religion from the province of "scientific socialism", whether with respect to its ultimate goal (i.e., the content of communism) or in regards to its strategic framework. The validity of this conclusion rests on how one evaluates its premise, i.e., Marx's critique, an assessment that, in the final analysis comes down to a test of the <u>ambivalent</u> character of Marx's work in this area. Thus, it is to this task that we now must turn.

Chapter   III

THE LIMITS OF MARX'S CRITIQUE

In elucidating and testing Marx's critique two considerations should be kept in mind. First, Marx had no interest in religion per se. He addressed religious questions within a specific socio-political context (i.e., mid-nineteenth century Western Europe) and was concerned with the concrete role played by particular religious beliefs, institutions and activities vis-à-vis the proletarian self-emancipatory struggle. In this regard, almost without exception, Marx's verdict "on religion" was negative, a judgement, we might add, from which few contemporary politically sympathetic commentators would dissent.[1]

Second, as a consequence of the above, religion as a theoretical object held little attraction for Marx. His theoretical energies were directed elsewhere. He conducted most of his research into religion in his early years, and even then used mostly secondary sources. With his adoption of the methodological critique, religion receded in status to the position of a phenomenological barometer of alienation, with no content of its own. Accordingly, within the corpus of Marx's work as a whole, religion occupies a decidedly secondary place.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude either that Marx's critique is limited to a particular form of religiosity (i.e., that practiced in nineteenth century Western Europe),[2] or that Marx has no

critique of religion <u>per se</u>, but only of the social conditions that require it. As we have detailed in Chapter II above, Marx's resolution of specific religious forms into their corresponding modes of social intercourse is based upon a set of intertwined premises concerning what religion means in the first place. These premises inform his construction of a "pre-historical" continuum and his theoretical transposition of the content of religion to all forms of "false universality". On these grounds, Marx explicitly generalizes his critique of the "Absolute Religion" to <u>all</u> religious forms.

We also reject the viewpoint of most commentators on "Marxism and religion", who, while they may accept the relevance of a critical engagement with Engels or other post-Marx historical materialist writers in Europe or Latin America on the subject of religion, deny that what Marx wrote in this area holds much theoretical or practical relevance today.[3] We maintain that Marx's writings on religion are crucial, both theoretically and practically, for the communist movement in this period as well as for what we shall term a "new religious science". This importance, though, is lost if the investigation of the relationship between "Marxism and religion" remains within theoretical parameters that either take Marx's substantive premises for granted (e.g., examining religion within the framework of alienation or ideology) or contests these assumptions only within the narrow confines of contemporary religious forms (e.g., the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition, or, at best, the traditions of all the major world religions).

In this Chapter, we examine the significance of Marx's critique

by testing and evaluating its roots. In so doing, though we reaffirm
our adherence to the _essential_ propositions of Marx's conception of
communism, we also redefine, quite radically, the terms "religion"
and "communism". This revision turns on our contention that Marx's
substantive premises are invalid, and as such, serve to vitiate much
of his critique, or at least to diminish its potential scientific
impact. To posit limits to Marx's critique, however, is not to judge
it in a historical vacuum, in the sense of saying Marx should have
seen X and Y. Marx's assumptions were and are profoundly embedded in the
material organization of bourgeois society and were particularly pre-
valent in his era. Thus, we simply attempt to assess them from the
contemporary vantage point.

To this end, unless specification of Marx's writings or the
particular phase of his theoretical development is required by the
context, we treat Marx's ideas on religion as a totality. We choose
this route not only for the sake of simplicity, but also because
due attention was paid to this periodization in Chapter II above
and repetition is unnecessary here. We subdivide our discussion into
two sections: methodology, and, testing Marx's premises.

A)   Methodology

In considering the proper method to test Marx's premises,
we eschew three conventional approaches. The first option, and, since
Marx's death, the predominant route followed by Occidental theorists
in this area,[4] is to frame the evaluation of the validity and/or

implications of Marx's religious hypotheses within the soteriological
co-ordinates of ambient religious forms. Most often, of course, these
co-ordinates have been drawn from the Judeo-Christian tradition, a
theoretical bias that reflects the location of most "Marxist-religious"
discussants within cultural milieux in which these forms predominate.[5]

The problem with this framework is that it predefines what
it attempts to explain. Both Marx and the Judeo-Christian-Islamic
tradition (and indeed world religions in general) assume that religion
reflects the existence of alienated conditions of some kind. Consequently,
in this approach, the focus of exploration is <u>not</u> "Is Marx correct when
he says that religion fundamentally represents a record of man's
estrangement?", but rather an attempt to ascertain the implications
of this premise (e.g., "Are there point of convergence between the
Marxist and Christian conceptions of history?"). In other words, the
study of "Marx on religion" becomes a subsection of the examination
of "Marx on alienation". Moreover, what alienation connotes is
frequently defined in terms specific to a particular religious con-
vention.[6]

Theorists who operate within this framework accept, implicitly
or explicitly, Marx's premises as valid (in whole or in part) before
their investigations have even begun. This approach blunts the critical
edge of Marx's method, and, in particular, his insistence on the
historical specification of cultural forms, including religious practices.
All too often, however, writers in the area of "Marxism and religion"
violate this injunction,[7] and uncritically extrapolate religious

forms from their specific contexts and generalize from them to draw

conclusions about religion "in general". At first, the import of this

conceptual slippage may appear to be slight. It balloons in significance,

however, once we attempt to account for differences in religious practices

in classless as against class societies and the vista of human history

is expanded to encompass the former. From this vantage point, at a

conservative estimate, that part of mankind's religious life covered

by the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition, or even by the contemporary

world religions as a whole, probably amount to no more (and indeed

probably much less)than five per cent.[8]

The second route that we reject is that of the "interpretive

test". We include in this category any contestation of Marx's "reading"

of particular religious practices that is based upon an alternative

hermeneutic framework. An example would be a Jungian challenge to

Marx's response to "animal worship".[9] Though we sympathize with

challenges of this type, as tests of Marx's premises, "interpretive

tests" suffer from at least two drawbacks. First, although it is not

difficult to demonstrate the paucity of Marx's interpretations of

primitive myths, for instance, it must be remembered that Marx is not

a mythologist. He employs ethnological data not to construct a

science of myth, but to concretize his understanding of anthropogenesis.

Thus, it is at the theoretical level of his developmental assumptions

that Marx is vulnerable, though, given the proper controls, interpretive

evidence could supplement this criticism. Second, there exist

multiple competing schools of myth interpretation, most of which rely

upon speculative models of man and reality. At this point, therefore,
there is no definitive criterion for evaluating their respective
claims and thus they hold limited value for assessing the validity
of Marx's premises.

The third approach which we reject is "the simple empirical
test". These types of tests include any experiment that is designed
to provide definitive results through the control of initial conditions.
An example would be a historical study to determine the accuracy of
Marx's claim that religion only exists under alienated conditions.
Here again the problems with this route are two-fold. First, no test
of this kind could be conducted anywhere on this planet under present
day conditions. The only conceivable terrain of experimentation would
be "full communism". Even here, however, it could be argued by
defenders of Marx's premises that religion (assuming it exists)
reflects the persistence of relations of "primary alienation" (i.e.,
death, birth, social mediation of the relationship with nature in
general), at least for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, though a
"simple empirical test" is possible in principle, in practice it is
useful only to help explain religious transformations and not the
nature of religion per se, without, of course, becoming a psychological
experiment. In this latter case, however, Marx's premises could not be
placed in question, because Marx clearly treats religion as a social
and not as a psychological phenomenon.

Second, as was the case with the first methodological option,
the "simple empirical test" (as described above) predefines what it
attempts to explain. As such, its utility as a test of Marx's premises
is decidedly limited.

In developing a method to evaluate Marx's substantive assumptions,
we prefer to select a procedure congruent with the basic framework of
his thought as a whole. Marx's religious propositions form part of
his general developmental paradigm, whose salient elements are elaborated
logically at a highly abstract level (e.g., his notion of "human essence").[10]
It is principally at this theoretical level that Marx excludes religion
from the sphere of "true universality" and counterposes it to the
"truly human" and the "truly social" conditions.

Marx advances abstractions of this type (i.e., logical rather
than historical propositions) to extend coherence and direction to a
given area of study and to use these insights both to explain historical
changes in this area (e.g., to delineate the historical limits of
capitalism) and to forge a revolutionary tool.[11] Although his purpose
in this regard is not to predict historical events, his conclusions
frequently involve the sketching of developmental tendencies.[12]

In our view, the logical propositions that Marx posits to
criticize political economy are both testable, and, at present,
valid.[13] For example, in Capital, the hypotheses that comprise the
logical side of his delineation of the specificity of the capitalist
mode of production (e.g., his selection of the commodity as the
"economic cell form" of bourgeois society) are based on historical
evidence and both they and the developmental tendencies that logically
issue from them are subject to empirical control. Thus, the scientific
status of Marx's arguments in this domain follow from the interdependence
of their logical and historical sides.[14]

We argue that Marx's substantive premises, to qualify as valid, must exhibit the same degree of logical utility as the abstractions he advances in his critique of political economy. This requirement means that they must possess a similar degree of explanatory power vis-à-vis religious data (i.e., provide a comparable capacity to account for both variation and continuity in a given society's /or societies'/ religious life) and, on these grounds, to extend to the communist movement a comparable degree of coherence and direction (i.e., insofar as its engagement with religious issues is concerned). In this regard, we obviously do not demand that Marx predict accurately the course of future religious events. We do, however, insist that to the extent that Marx abstractly delineates certain features of communism, for instance, insofar as they relate to religion they must be subject to the above requirements.

Within this framework, we suggest two types of controls that are applicable to Marx's premises. First, there is the elemental requirement that Marx distinguish between the essence of religion and its appearance in such a way that does not prejudge "what religion is all about" in terms of its ambient forms, but rather grounds this question on the terrain of comparative historical evidence. Only on this latter foundation is sufficient space provided for the testing of the relevant propositions and thus for the growth of knowledge. Second, there is the test of practice, i.e., whether or not, given contemporary information in a number of relevant theoretical areas, Marx's premises provide a useful guide to the interpretation of religious phenomena and to political action on this basis.

These empirical controls, however, are of a different order than those that are relevant for the testing of Marx's economic hypotheses, a difference that reflects the relatively higher level of abstraction of his religious arguments. Marx's economic propositions, particularly those which describe the fundamental "laws of motion" of capitalism, are subject to fairly direct, albeit long range, falsification.[15] His substantive critique, however, is not accessible to this type of testing. Accordingly, we suggest that empirical evidence in this realm mainly assists the postulation of what we may call "reasonable judgements" concerning the theoretical and practical suitability of Marx's assumptions. Though these verdicts constitute less definite assessments than those advanced in the economic realm, they are crucial for the establishment of a religious science.

The principal object of these "reasonable judgements" is to elucidate the appropriate "theoretical territory" of Marx's propositions, from both negative and positive angles.[16] This demarcation always constitutes a fluid enterprise that shifts with advances that are made on a variety of empirical frontiers; indeed, without this paradigmatic flexibility the growth of scientific knowledge in any domain would be impossible.

Two examples will suffice to illustrate this last point. First, within the historical materialist tradition itself--and in particular its Western Marxist" wing--it has been generally acknowledged that Marx's economic hypotheses, while exhibiting a broad resiliency in the face of unanticipated changes in the economic realm proper, have also proved

inadequate to explain, for instance, the subjective response of the working class to crises. Consequently, there has emerged a consensus, with which we concur, that the "theoretical territory" of these hypotheses must be restricted to the region of "objective economic processes", and to deny, or at least to limit, the validity of their generalization to the domain of the "subjective factor".

The second example comes from the field of physics. A hundred and fifty years ago, the laws of Newtonian mechanics were considered applicable to all physical phenomena. Since then, again by general consensus, their "theoretical territory" has narrowed considerably; for instance, they are no longer held to be valid in the subatomic and astro-physical realms.

In both of these cases, the propositions of Marx and Newton respectively have not been falsified so much as limited in applicability. In each of these areas, scientific knowledge has grown through the specification of this range and the incorporation of this region within a broader and more comprehensive theoretical paradigm. We suggest that a "Chinese box" constitutes the most appropriate metaphor in this regard. We must caution, however, against hypostatizing this model: it should be viewed as a variable constellation of logical pictures, and not as an ensemble of distinct ontological levels.

In testing Marx's premises, we follow this "Chinese box" model. Our aim is simply to advance "reasonable judgements" concerning the utility of these assumptions and, on these grounds, to suggest the proper "theoretical territory" for Marx's critique. Clearly, in a disser-

tation of this type, an exhaustive empirical review of all relevant
data for this determination is impossible. All that we attempt to do,
therefore, is to point in the direction of certain theoretical "black
holes"--whose description, at present, is available only in the murkiest
outline--and to countenance further exploration.

B)   Testing Marx's Premises

Though many of the implicit or explicit assumptions that inform
the substantive side of Marx's critique have their theoretical provenance
in the diverse tributaries of the "rationalist paradigm" discussed in
Chapter I, here we do not evaluate this paradigm per se, but only
Marx's specific engagement with it. We have already examined both
these theoretical roots and how they permeated Marx's critique at
different. points in his life. We now must try to gauge their effect
on its scientific status. To this end, we classify Marx's religious
premises into two logically distinct, although historically inter-
dependent, categories: "human essence" and religion.

1.   "Human Essence"

From his early writings on, when Marx examines a concrete
social issue, he draws upon philosophical abstractions that share
both normative and historical characteristics. To generate his
conception of the "truly human", in other words, Marx employs both
comparative historical analysis and a reservoir of assumptions concerning
the features that distinguish humans from other species, for instance.
As Marx matures, though these assumptions acquire an increasingly

historically specific contextualization, they also retain a certain

a priori status. He does not, however, thereby set "is" against "ought".

He simply uses the abstraction of "human essence"[17] to illuminate the

course of human history and thus to provide theoretical and practical

guidance to the proletarian movement. The concept of "human essence",

in short, serves a logical and not a historical function.

This logical context is the proper framework for interpreting

Marx's occasional resort to teleological language. To Marx, the

connections linking successive generations in a given society (or

societies) are always concrete. Understood abstractly, however, these

material bridges comprise a developmental gradient, each step of which

represents a specific articulation of the "human essence". The theoretical

synthesis of this totality permits the postulation of this essence as

the "goal of history", properly understood (i.e., as a logical construct

and not as a transcendental or immanent purpose implying historical

necessity), and thus as a theoretical and practical object.

The principal theoretical source of Marx's assumptions concerning

"human essence" is the classical German idealist tradition. Marx frames

this heritage, however, with three distinctive assertions. First, he

contends that humans always exist concretely and in a particular

social ensemble. Therefore, anthropogenesis is the record of social

maturation and the expression of the concrete processes that constitute

social existence at any one time. Thus, the abstraction of "human essence"

can only possess meaning insofar as it captures man's historicity. In

this sense, Marx is able to articulate the concept of "human essence"

in the way he does because of the state of historical development itself. Second, Marx argues that the synthetic picture of "human essence" should not be extrapolated from ambient conditions, but must constitute a composite abstraction drawn from comparative historical study that takes into account the variable display of human capacities and traits in different situations. Implicit in this injunction is the demand that the theoretical net that draws together these characteristics into a coherent order be cast as widely as possible, encompassing as many diverse social forms as empirically accessible. Third, Marx concretely embeds his concept of "human essence" in the theory and practice of proletarian self-emancipation. In this context, the abstraction achieves a practical resonance in that class's acquisition of "radical needs" in the course of its formation,[18] with the concept of "human essence" extending coherence to the communist project by elucidating the historical conditions necessary to reconcile man's "essence" and existence. Within this framework, it then becomes possible to sketch in advance, in a scientific fashion (albeit at a fairly general level), certain salient features of communism.

Before we assess the underlying assumptions of Marx's conception of "human essence" (i.e., insofar as these premises affect his critique of religion), however, we must first clarify the theoretical site of these assumptions. Marx inherits the Kantian couplet of human and inhuman and, in the main, accepts their conventional connotations: human connoting conditions of rationality and freedom; inhuman connoting conditions of irrationality and slavery. In his pre-1843 works, this

a priori bifurcation underlies Marx's exile of religion to the sphere

of zoology. His subsequent reinterpretation of the religious metastasis,

however, erodes the legitimacy of any abstract criteria being invoked

to determine the content of rationality. Accordingly, he redefines

rationality to refer to a type of practice and assimilates it to the

sphere of anthropogenesis (i.e., to the science of human self-becoming

in both its subjective and objective moments).

Notwithstanding this revision, however, Marx retains his

assumption that religion represents a "not truly human" mode of self-

making (="false practice"). In part, this verdict reflects his notion

of the content of anthropogenesis. To fill this content, he relies on

historical evidence, or, more precisely, on the developmental premises

that inform his logical picture of human evolution. Consequently, we

must examine this theoretical terrain to test the "human essence" side

of Marx's religious critique.

In our view, these substantive premises do not stand up under

scrutiny, at least, not without severe qualification. In particular,

we would list three groups of errors committed by Marx: (a) periodization;

(b) notion of progress; and, (c) social ontology.

(a) Periodization

In the latter part of the twentieth century, it is somewhat

of a commonplace observation to note a certain Eurocentric bias in

Marx's writings. Rarely, however, are the implications of this point

applied to his critiqe of religion. Before we take up this challenge,

though, we must stress that any Eurocentric biases in Marx's texts are

partially offset by several passages in his late 1870's notebooks,

wherein he adopts a multi-linear perspective on historical development,

rejects the position that all roads lead to either capitalism or

Europe, and frequently indicts other ethnological writers for their

racist or culturally-bound prejudices. In any case, it is fairly

evident that any such Eurocentric proclivities that Marx did possess

conflict at root with the principle of historical specification, and

reflect both the influence of his ambient cultural milieu and the

limitations of his source material, and can be excised without undue

damage to the scientific integrity of his writings.

These later revisions, however, do not affect the logical

structure of his periodization paradigm vis-à-vis religion. Specifically,

three difficulties beset Marx's evolutionary framework in this regard:

(a) it omits "hunting and gathering" peoples from consideration on

the assumption that human history begins with domestication; (b) it maps

phylogeny onto a hierarchical ontogenetic model; (c) it elevates

classical Greece to a pivotal role in human history as a whole as the

paradigmatic expression of the "childhood stage" of the species

(e.g., "the normal children of humanity").

We reject these propositions on both empirical and methodological

grounds. First, by general consensus, most modern anthropologists

classify from 95% to 99% of human history--at a very minimum-- as

belonging to the "hunting and gathering" era.[19] To omit this massive

chunk of history from consideration simply tips the balance of perspective

towards the civil end of the historical continuum, and, for our purposes,

accentuates religious practices specific to class societies. Second,

the hierarchical ontogenetic model that Marx implicitly employs violates

his own principle of historical specification, because it extrapolates

the criteria used to gauge the degree of advance from ambient conditions

without applying adequate controls to this process. Third, aside from

the transparent Eurocentrism of Marx's Hellenophilism, the salient

element of Marx's adulation of the classical Greeks is his assertion

that the Greeks are "normal" because their society, whatever its

limitations, exhibited a capacity to grow or was relatively <u>productive</u>

<u>vis-à-vis</u> those traits that receive Marx's normative stamp of approval

(i.e., those which foster rational individuality, technical development

and so on). The essential contrast that Marx posits in this regard is

to set the Greek example against its "Asiatic" counterparts. Again,

the criteria that Marx invokes to register "what counts" in determining

growth or normality are predetermined. Any characteristics external

to this theoretical compass simply do not show up on Marx's scale.

Hence, he consigns them to the dustbin of "vegetative" existence.

(b) Notion of Progress

To begin, we must clarify the "terrain" of our dispute with

Marx on this subject, an elucidation made necessary by its overlap

with the question of the same's alleged teleological proclivities.

First, for our purposes, we are not alleging that Marx "reads" into

historical processes any transcendental or immanent guarantee of

advances in any given direction. Especially in his later texts,

he clearly rejects this idea and throughout his works affirms the

thesis that only humans "make history" and respond to their circumstances

both concretely and variably. Second, we are not arguing that Marx

employs a rationalist model of technical growth that stresses the

growth of the productive forces (in the narrow, technical sense of

the term) at the expense of the cultivation of human capacities and

powers. Three points are relevant here: (i) Marx always responds to

concrete events or tendencies and he roots his evaluation of these

phenomena in a specific political context and not abstract moral

homilies or romanticism in any form; (ii) he reacts dialectically to

such economic developments as the incorporation of pre-capitalist

societies into the capitalist world system, emphasizing both the

barbarities of this process, and its interpenetration with the

establishment of a material base for socialism; (iii) in the main, Marx

uses the term productive forces to refer to both technical and human

resources, and is concerned with technical growth only insofar as it

assists social development, as defined by his social ontology.[20]

Where we do contest Marx is on the grounds of his assumption

that anthropogenetic progress is a function of rational control--

however the terms of this proposition are socially or historically

specified--and his corollary premise that the conditions that facilitate

man's true self-making are necessarily also conditions that inhibit

the growth of religious practices. We might note, at this point, that

the validity of his last proposition would not be affected one whit

were Marx to admit that even under "full communism" religious activities

of some form might persist, given the perpetuation of man's "primary

alienation" from nature, because the crux of Marx's case is that religion

essentially represents a negative form of man's self-making (="false

practice").

Leaving aside, for the moment, the issue of the validity of

Marx's substantive claims vis-à-vis religion, the problem with the

above framework is that it one-sidedly predetermines the content

of freedom (i.e., the substance of man's self-making). In the main,

Marx explores the question of "rational social control" concretely

and for practical ends. Thus, he uses the constituent terms of this

phrase, as well as their corresponding antonymns, not to counterpose

"is" and "ought", but to contrast the productive regime of capitalism

to that of the "society of associated producers". In this context,

"rational", for instance, means something quite concrete, and Marx

uses this term within the bounds of definite, historically specific

controls. We have no problems whatsoever with this usage.

We object to the occasional instances when Marx generalizes

the above contrast to define the substance of anthropogenesis per se.

At these points, Marx tends to extrapolate from the specific conditions

of the proletarian struggle in mid-nineteenth century Europe and to

map these features onto a developmental curve encompassing the life of

the species as a whole (=a hierarchical ontogenetic model of phylogeny).

These historically specific features then become the indices Marx

employs to register "growth" in general.

For example, Marx links the maturation of the German workers'

movement in the mid-1840's with its acquisition of self-confidence,

and its corresponding rejection of contemporary Christian teachings

concerning mankind's eternal debasement and the virtue of servility

(especially for the "lower" social orders). In this context, the

concepts of self-determination and dependency respectively acquire

eminently concrete referents. Marx also uses these referents, however,

to "flesh out" (logically) the content of communism. In so doing,

he assimilates the communist project to the "rationalist paradigm"

perspective of what "growing up" is all about. Consequently, Marx

not only identifies communism with the maturation of humanity (i.e., when

"history" begins), he also assigns a _rationalist_ content to this process.

He then implicitly invokes this content as a partial justification of

his position that religion and communism are logically incompatible.

Here again, our objection principally rests on methodological

grounds. Marx may quite legitimately employ hierarchical developmental

criteria (e.g., industrial output) to compare the United States and a

given primitive culture to conclude the relative superiority of the

former. He can generalize this criterion to serve as the standard of

evolutionary progress, however, only by arbitrarily extrapolating a

particular trait from a given social context. This procedure, though,

leaves no room to test the cultural relativity of the selected character-

istic. Thus, Marx, for instance, simply assumes the "evolutionary

neutrality" of the "rationalist paradigm" and exposes himself to

charges of bourgeois bias.

This prejudice is particularly serious when it comes to

conceptualizing the content of communism. The terms "_self_-determination",

"_self_-making", and "_self_-confidence", for example, appear unproblematic

at first glance. One outstanding result of historical materialist

research, however, has been to demarcate, in broad terms, the historical limits of forms of subjectivity, and hence to reveal just how problematic the notion of "self" really is. When Marx invokes his rationalist concept of progress, though, he implicitly confines the horizon of human self-making to the parameters of bourgeois subjectivity. This predetermination not only violates the principle of historical specification, it also conflicts at root with the notion that the qualitative expansion of the "realm of freedom" that accompanies the dawn of the communist era involves the transcendence of all previous developmental limits.[21]

(c) Social Ontology

Marx uses individuality as an evolutionary referent to gauge the degree of social evolution. Implicit in this scheme is his acceptance of the validity of a rationalist mapping of ontogeny onto phylogeny. In this framework, the different forms of individuality that correspond to the various productive modes are analogous to the growth stages of an individual, and "free, social individuality" serves as the logical referent that denotes the developmental apex of this process and thus the point when humanity "outgrows" its "childish" or "pre-historical" traits (e.g., religion).

Aside from his substantive premises proper, the core of Marx's argument for excluding religion from the communist era (i.e., in any positive sense) rests on his conception of the content of "free, social individuality". Essentially, Marx's "free, social individual" is a qualified version of Kant's "rational individual". Whereas Kant, however, posits this concept a priori, from which he then deduces the

constitution of a rational social universe, Marx locates it historically,

as the logical culmination of the historical process. Thus, the latter

socially roots the "rational individual" in a way that Kant (or even

Fichte) does not. This method allows Marx to strip the "rational"

subject of its most transparent bourgeois trademarks (e.g., the

dichotomies of public and private, subjective and objective, formal

and informal). In many respects, though, Marx's treatment of the

historical mutability of individuality is shot through with ambiguities.

In one area, however, he is crystal clear: "free, social individuals"

are rational subjects in the sense denoted by the "rationalist paradigm".

As such, these individuals bear the torch of Prometheus and maintain

the legacy of classical Greece. Accordingly, to Marx it is logically

inconceivable that the "normal" adults of humanity would ever stoop

to engage in such "childish" games as religious practices, except, perhaps,

as an expression of the condition of "primary alienation".

We fundamentally dispute this social ontology. First, Marx's

selection of certain criteria to serve as general anthropogenetic

criteria conflicts with the principle of historical specification.

For instance, in his treatment of the classical Greek heritage, Marx

betrays a selective blindness. He sees the class limits of everything

except rationality (i.e., other than to place it within a distinct

historical context). Thus, while he is able to trace Aristotle's

inability to pierce the mystery of the value-form to the class conditions

of classical Greece, he implicitly adopts the latter's concept of reason

as a standard of evolutionary advance. In so doing, he ignores (or

denies) the class specificity and hence the one-sidedness of the Greek

rationalist enterprise as a whole, a one-sidedness that numerous

recent studies have confirmed in detail.[22] At a broader level, of

course, this selective blindness characterizes Marx's general theoretical

approach to the modern scientific revolution.[23]

Second, in his social ontology, Marx makes a number of assump-

tions concerning the paramenters of social identity that profoundly

shape his interpretation of communism, and yet are highly questionable

in the light of contemporary empirical evidence. These assumptions

fall into four categories: (i) notion of inter-generational connections;

(ii) notion of "radical needs"; (iii) notion of sensual being; and,

(iv) notion of consciousness.

i. Notion of Inter-generational Connections

When Marx sketches a theoretical map of the connections that

link the members of several generations together in a given society,

he assumes that the terms "concrete" and "material" adequately

demarcate the scientific from the mystical specifications of these

bridges. They do not. True, in the main, Marx employs these terms to

contrast specific practical alternatives in the context of his battles

with the "German ideologists" and cognate formations: we have no

quarrel whatsoever with this usage. What we contest is Marx's

extension of the counterposition, beyond this specific "theoretical

territory", to predetermine what qualifies as a "material" connection.[24]

For instance, when Marx attacks the historiography of the

"German ideologists" (i.e., their tendency to view inter-generational

connections as bridges of ideas) he occasionally shifts terrain, and,

in effect, collapses ideas in the above sense and mental phenomena in

general and denies to the latter status as part of material culture.

To Marx, psychic links per se can only serve as inter-generational

bridges when they constitute the efflux of material cultural transmission

proper. Further, to define material culture, he invokes "Newtonian"

criteria. According to these criteria, "acceptable" media for the

transmission of material culture include the bridge established by

sexual reproduction as well as the connections secured by the "handing

down" of particular forces and relations of production.

With the advance of empirical research into, for example,

the bridge of sexual reproduction, the validity of "Newtonian" criteria

in general and the Cartesian mind-body dichotomy hypothesis in particular

have been placed increasingly into question.[25] Our purpose here,

however, is not to detail this process and still less to offer an

alternative model of inter-generational continuity. We simply wish

to caution against substantive pre-judgements that do not leave room

for the growth of knowledge and to indicate how empirical discoveries

unanticipated by Marx could affect his "map" of social identity and

his assumptions concerning the range of variability of human subjectivity.

To illustrate this last point, for the sake of argument, let

us assume that Jung and his followers are correct in their hypothesis

that all humans possess a collective unconscious. This psychic domain

could then only be considered part of the material substratum of inter-

generational contact (i.e., regardless of how the precise mechanism

of its transmission may be specified): it could not be consigned to the region of efflux. Of course, the "entry" of the collective unconscious would be subject to the same rules as the other aspects of the human biological inheritance, i.e., it must pass through the medium of a historically specific social constellation. Through this process, the collective unconscious would assume a specific ideational content.

Given the above premise, two conclusions would result. First, Marx's strictures regarding the need for the historical specification of inter-generational connections would not be affected one whit. The bridges established at the level of the collective unconscious would be eminently concrete and historically specific (and hence variable in their articulation). Second, it would compel a radical revision in how both the boundaries of subjectivity and the content of human association in different historical circumstances are conceptualized. For example, it would no longer be possible to restrict theorization about the "self" to the "territory" of the individual human organism. Identity would become a much more variable "field" than it was when defined through "Newtonian" blinkers. As well, the notion of cultural variability would have to be broadened to encompass the mutable display of the contents of the collective unconscious. In brief, it would no longer be legitimate to limit the contents of the human cultural heritage to the record of "man the tool-maker" (i.e., in the narrow, "Newtonian" sense of the phrase). Thus, it may become necessary to redraw the "map" of human historical continuity to include elements that were previously dismissed as mystical.

ii. Notion of "Radical Needs"

A related issue concerns Marx's interpretation of the "radical needs" of the proletariat. By this term, Marx refers to those wants that are catalyzed by the advance of capitalist development, yet which this mode of production is structurally incapable of satisfying. Linked to this concept are his assertions that the abolition of capitalism involves the "re-winning of man" and that the proletariat--as the "abstraction of humanity"--is uniquely positioned to serve as the social gravitational centre of this project.

Here, our interest is strictly confined to how Marx's rationalist social ontology affects his definition of these needs and thus, indirectly, his strategic horizon. For instance, although Marx's references to "radical needs" and related concerns are sporadic, and even then oblique--in part because of his desire to avoid a "humanist" evisceration of the communist project--it is fairly clear that their "theoretical territory" includes what, for want of a better term, we may call the "need for community". By this term, we denote the specifically social dimension of those historical impulses that are logically summarized in Marx's concept of "free, social individuality". In other words, when workers, in the context of their mutual association, acquire the "need for community" they are reacting to the concrete strictures that have been imposed on their social development by the conditions that have given rise to the "straitjacket" of bourgeois individuality. Consequently, the heart of the debate over the content of this need coincides with the question of the content of the alienation

that produces it, i.e., what is the significance of the above "strait-jacket" <u>vis-à-vis</u> the logical postulation of the place of the inter-penetration of "communality" and "individuality" in the construction of the abstraction of "human essence"?

In this regard, although, for the most part, Marx confines his arguments to the "theoretical territory" of specific practical counterpositions, he also implicitly or explicitly advances generalizations concerning the limits of the dialectic of social individuality (i.e., he uses "Newtonian" criteria to set the boundaries of social identity). This latter tendency, for example, partially underlies his <u>permanent</u> exclusion of religious needs from the sphere of "radical needs" (obviously his substantive premises proper are also involved in this decision), and hence his denial that religion can ever play any positive role in the maturation of the communist movement.

The context of these contentions, of course, is Marx's opposition to the attempts by the "true socialists" and others to convert the "need for community" into a <u>holy</u> impulse to establish an ethical association (=a community constituted by <u>abstract</u> threads). To repeat, we endorse this specific practical criticism. At times, however, Marx writes as if he equates the "non-Newtonian" definition of the dialectic of "communality" and "individuality" with the "true socialist" version of the same. In so doing, he not only violates the principle of historical specification, he also prematurely forecloses the logical parameters of subjective variability. This foreclosure allows Marx to link the "need for community" with the narrowing of the strategic

horizon of the communist movement to the struggle for a _rational_ community

(i.e., a historical union of the "heart and head" that stays within

"Newtonian" limits). It also places in jeopardy, however, the credibility

of his conception of communism as the "historical" point when man's

capacity for self-making becomes truly _open_.

iii. Notion of Sensual Being

When Marx conceptualizes the sensual metamorphosis that

results from the accession of "historical" conditions, he implicitly

assumes that the range of variability of this sensibility coincides

with the "five senses paradigm".[26] In so doing, he extrapolates from

the ambient sensual constitution of Western man to pre-define the limits

of the human sensual condition. True, Marx allows that the human sen-

sibility blossoms and becomes more "truly human" with its liberation

from the horizon of "crude, practical need"; yet, he plots this advance

on a rationalist developmental gradient. This bias is most apparent

in his approach to primitive sensuality, which he dismisses as "bestial"

simply because of its non-conformity with rationalist standards (i.e., it

is not a sensuality that is based upon man's _control_ of the natural

environment).

Although we stress that the question remains open, at this

point it appears that the Aristotelian model of man's sensual being

that Marx employs conflicts with most recent psychological findings.

These empirical studies _suggest_ that the most useful way to look at

the human sensory apparatus is as a filter that works to screen out

discordant or "useless" impressions yet whose range is much wider than

has been conventionally believed.[27] In this paradigm, it is no longer

valid, for instance, to distinguish between so called "extra-sensory"

perceptions and "sensory" perceptions except vis-à-vis an explicitly

recognized culturally relative reference grid (i.e., that denotes what

is normal in X culture). These perceptual differences simply indicate

the variable sensual articulation of diverse social formations

(i.e., in certain societies particular senses may be suppressed or

marginalized, while in others these same senses may be enhanced or

valorized).[28]

Of course, most contemporary psychological researchers who

employ the above paradigm take the constancy of the pattern of perceptual

selectivity for granted. They remain oblivious both to the historical

variability of this pattern and to the operative social (e.g., class)

conditions that shape its articulation. In this regard, it does not

take a great leap of imagination to grasp the implications of Marx's

methodological insights, particularly in relation to a theoretical

recasting of the significance of marginal social movements that involve

a "paranormal" practical dimension.[29]

In any case, our purpose is not to determine whether or not

"paranormal" senses exist. They may or they may not: there certainly

exists a substantial body of evidence that suggests that they do, but

much of it is contested and the domain in general is plagued by

perpetual methodological debates.   In a dissertation of this type,

however, it is impossible to assess this question in any depth. Thus,

we simply wish to emphasize the danger inherent in any attempt to

predetermine the range of human sensibility--whether on the grounds of

rationalist developmental criteria or on whatever other grounds--because

thereby one eliminates the possibility of testing whether or not these

criteria themselves reflect a certain class bias, for example. As a

result, one may both misconceive the nature of the sensual emancipation

that follows the onset of "full communism" and prejudge its religious

implications.

iv. Notion of Consciousness

Marx was not a psychologist. Insofar as his comments touched

upon psychological issues, his focus was clearly on the social conditions

or the _practical_ foundations of such matters. Nevertheless, a number

of his references to psychology do betray his adherence to a set of

rationalist assumptions that profoundly influence his conception of

anthropogenesis and that require re-consideration in the light of

contemporary evidence.

First, Marx explicitly identifies language and consciousness.

In so doing, he obscures the specificity of language as a communicative

form. It is one thing to describe language as a component of a web

of historically specific _practices_: it is quite another to equate it

with consciousness _per se_. Recent psychological and historical studies

have demonstrated the diversity of human communicative forms and have

suggested--in outline fashion--the evolutionary pressures that operate--

both phylogenetically and ontogenetically in bourgeois culture--to favour

the predominance of a particular modality (associated, of course, with

a specific "mentality").[30] For instance, it is _possible_ that the

pre-eminent communicative position of "analytic" or linear language in

civil social forms generally is simply one dimension of civil one-sided-

ness.[31] Again, however, our purpose here is not to render a definitive

verdict in this regard. We simply caution against prejudging the

developmental status of language, and in particular against assuming

that the bourgeois communicative form is also necessarily the "highest".

Second, underlying Marx's identification of language and

consciousness is his implicit acceptance of a rationalist model of

consciousness. He views "true consciousness" in "reflectionist" terms

(i.e., to denote a psychic state that accurately and truly records

"what is") and contends that this condition can only result from the

maturation of transparent social relations. It follows that language

becomes "perfected" in tandem with this process.

Again, we have no quarrel with this argument on the terrain of

the specific practical counterposition (e.g., to contrast the relative

lucidity of the relations of the "society of associated producers"

with the opacity of their bourgeois counterparts). Marx, however, does

not stick to this terrain: he occasionally uses the term consciousness

normatively. In this latter sense, he implicitly relies upon a hier-

archical model of psychological functioning. Therein, borrowing from the

(bourgeois) ontogenetic paradigm, he plots the diverse cognitive opera-

tions of a developmental gradient that assigns "sensori-motor" skills

(to use the modern Piagetian equivalent) to the "low" end of the sacle

and "operatory" capacities to the apex. In this framework, "growing up"

coincides with the cultivation of abstract reasoning and intelligence

is measured accordingly. The implications of these premises for Marx's

theory of communism are apparent. As a mode of intercourse that

spawns in humans a "transparent awareness" of both their social and

natural relations, "full communism" connotes the triumph of an "operatory"

cognitive regime. Thus, with the dawn of "history", humanity at last

crosses the threshold of the "age of enlightenment" and dispenses

forever with its assorted "pre-operatory" proclivities (e.g., blurring

the distinction between subject and object).

Marx shares his normative bias in favour of the "analytic mode"

with most bourgeois intellectuals.[32] Nevertheless, on both methodological

and empirical grounds, this prejudice is under increasing attack.

For instance, studies of "alternate states of consciousness" not only

suggest that these states exist--possibly in rough correspondence to

the localization of discrete brain functions in different brain hemi-

spheres--but that they correspond to the operationalization of distinct

practical modalities which encompass the psycho-physical organism as a

whole and thus, by extension, enjoy discrete social articulations.[33]

We suggest that this psychological specialization should also be "read"

historically, i.e., in relation to the type of one-sidedness that

prevails in a given mode of productive/social intercourse. In this regard,

we hypothesize that the selective advantage conferred on the "analytic

mode" is peculiar to the civil era and reflects what we may call the

"instrumental" bias of this period.[34]

In any case, our purpose is not to advance definitive substantive

conclusions on these questions. We simply wish to underline the dangers

involved in any predetermined elevation of one particular mode of

consciousness to a normative role. The effect on religion of Marx's application of a rationalist model of consciousness is transparently prejudicial, given that religious practice is almost invariably associated with the cultivation of "alternate states of consciousness" in some form. In the rationalist schema, either the existence of these states is denied or their worth is questioned (i.e., according to "instrumental" criteria, they are "unproductive"). Hence, it is not really surprising that Marx assigns manifestations of "alternate" religious activity to the "low" end of the scale of religious development, and posits the abstract or analytical side of religious history at the "high" end. This prejudice partially explains why the paradigmatic examples of religious practies that appear in his writings are overwhelmingly drawn from theological history, and, of course, Christian theology to boot. Marx simply takes the evolutionary superiority of the "analytic mode" for granted, an assumption that comprises an integral part of his substantive position that Protestant Christianity is the "Absolute Religion".

2. Religion

At this point, all of the previous criticisms that we have levelled at Marx's concept of "human essence" could be absorbed with relative ease by defenders of his religious critique and the latter could still legitimately counterpose religion and communism. They could argue, for instance, that however one broadens the parameters of anthropogenesis it would not affect the question of religion proper because man and religion would still exist in an antipodal relation to each other. Therefore, our challenge to Marx's critique really hinges on whether or not we can demonstrate the invalidity of his substantive premises proper.

In our view, Marx's substantive premises must be rejected. On the other hand, with qualifications, his methodological critique retains an immense utility, from both theoretical and practical angles. Here, however, we concentrate on Marx's errors and subdivide their discussion into three interconnected categories: (a) periodization; (b) substance; and, (c) materialism.

(a) Periodization

Our objections to Marx's religious periodization are three-fold. First, Marx is relatively uncritical of his religious sources. The empirical evidence he uses to draw conclusions about religious traditions, especially non-Western religions, is, in the main, second or third hand, and his sources were often highly selective in what they defined as religious and in how they interpreted their observations. Often, for example, various primitive practices were not accepted as religious unless they had a Judeo-Christian parallel (e.g., if they did not posit a condition of alienation as a premise of worship, they did not qualify as religious). Conversely, primitive activities that appeared to have a Western analogue were selectively incorporated into the latter's hermeneutic (e.g., "fetishism" was assimilated to anti-Catholic polemics because of superficial resemblance to the Catholic Mass). Clearly, our objection applies, to some degree, to all comparative religion commentators in Marx's period. Our principal point, however, is specific to Marx, i.e., he fails to employ the same degree of rigour in his assessment of religious data as he does in his evaluation of data in the area of political economy.

Second, by mapping disparate religious forms onto a hierarchical developmental model, Marx violates the principle of historical specification. Here our objections converge and overlap with those we raised against Marx's rationalist predetermination of "human essence" in the previous subsection, and thus need not be repeated. We must emphasize, however, how this error specifically affects his critique of religion. When Marx extrapolates traits from ambient religious forms to gauge the degree of (religious) evolutionary advance, he is unable to provide any controls for this process. Consequently, the specificity of these traits (e.g., the class conditions that produce X practice) recedes from view and Marx is left with characteristics peculiar to the "Absolute Religion" (e.g., hypostatization, moralism, speculative method, "negative" anthropology, to name but a few)[35] that become paradigmatic for religion as a whole. Accordingly, at times Marx writes as if he can quite safely extend his critique of Christianity to religion per se. Again, we have no quarrel with the specific practical complaints that Marx raises against ambient religious forms; indeed, in many cases his insights into Christianity are quite profound. We reject, however, the generalization of these criticisms beyond their proper territory.

Third, Marx's religious periodization cuts across class criteria and, to a degree, is formulated at variance with his critique of political economy. While it is possible to synthesize Marx's scattered references to what we have termed "primitive" and "civil religion" to underline his recognition of the specificities of pre-class and class religious forms respectively, it is also apparent--even in the context

of his post-1848 religious references--that any distinctions which Marx

makes in this regard pale when set against their common situation

within the continuum of "pre-history". In his texts of the 1850's and

1860's, for example, aside from Protestant Christianity, all religious

forms qualify as "religions of personal dependence" regardless of the

presence or absence of social classes in the societies that produce them.

The effect of this slippage is expecially graphic when we

examine "primitive religion". Obviously, Marx cannot invoke the criterion

of social class to justify his assertion that communism and religion

stand in an antipodal relation to each other. Aside from his rationalist

developmental premises, therefore, he must rely upon his substantive

assumptions proper. At this point, however, he runs into yet more

difficulties.

(b) Substance

Notwithstanding their historical inter-dependence, close

inspection reveals that Marx's methodological and substantive critiques

do not logically cohere. In the former, Marx resolves religion into

a matrix of historically specific practices and correlates the different

forms of religion with definite forms of productive intercourse. We

concur with this procedure and consider it fundamental to a religious

science. But Marx goes considerably beyond this position. He also

defines religion as a form of "false practice" and employs it paradig-

matically to denote the nature of "false practice" in general. The

equation of religion and "false practice", however, contains two

logically distinct operations. First, there is the determination of

what is "false practice"--which we will address shortly--and second, there
is the algebraic use of the term religion to stand for (at least in the
paradigmatic sense) whatever may be included under the rubric of
"false practice".

We suggest that the definitional exclusion of religion from the
sphere of "true practice" holds rather limited theoretical and practical
utility. To illustrate this point, compare the substantive use of
the term "religion" by Marx (and the historical materialist tradition
generally) with that of the analogous term "state" by the same. In both
cases, the relevant concepts refer to superstructural phenomena that
express the prevalence of alienated conditions of some type and which
are therefore logically excluded from the sphere of "history". The
abstraction of the "state", however, exhibits greater historical precision
than does the term "religion", at least in the way Marx et al. use
it. For instance, Marx employs the concept of the state to elucidate
the specificity of a mode of productive intercourse (i.e., civil
society) that arises under definite historical conditions and that
spawns the necessity for the simultaneous alienation (from the
community at large) and concentration (in public institutions) of the
means of coercion and any other instruments that ensure the consolidation
and reproduction of the rule of a particular class over a given territory.
Used in this way, the term "state" describes a broad range of institutions
that emerge in a wide variety of societies and productive modes, and
aids the explanation of the changes that occur at the broad historical
level (e.g., the displacement of one productive mode by another).

In particular, it is exceptionally useful for clarifying the nature of communism as the negation of a specific form of social division and thus, to use the language of the early Marx, as the historical fusion of species and material life.

In the way Marx uses it, however, the abstraction "religion" does not exhibit a similar degree of explanatory power. This difference reflects a fundamental discrepancy in the construction of the terms "religion" and "state". In the latter case, Marx uses definitional criteria that are falsifiable (e.g., if a classless primitive society is ever discovered which concentrates the power of "legitimate" coercion in a public sphere) and which involve the controlled employment of culturally relative referents (e.g., by being explicitly recognized as such and thus simply serving as gauges of change). With "religion", on the other hand, Marx invokes non-falsifiable criteria to define the term (e.g., religion as alien). He attributes content to religion on a priori grounds and then simply applies the term to delineate a theoretical continuum that encompasses a diversity of practices in a wide variety of societies (i.e., "pre-history"). In short, he selects what activities qualify as religious on the basis of their conformity (or non-conformity) with his arbitrarily chosen substantive standards. In this framework, religion corresponds to no definite conditions and thus knows no precise historical limits. It is thus hardly surprising that the logical conclusion of Marx's line of argument is in fact an arguement for the permanence of religion (i.e., the "primary alienation" thesis).

Furthermore, to the extent that Marx attempts to shift ground away from the definitional circle of religion per se by invoking comparative historical evidence to adjudicate the substance of religion, he employs general developmental assumptions that cannot be tested for cultural bias. Following Hegel, for instance, Marx deduces the "notion of religion" from the ambient social articulation of the "most developed" historical form (i.e., Protestant Christianity). While this method works in his critique of political economy, it does not in his critique of religion. In the former case, Marx uses controlled variables tied to definite historical conditions (e.g., that give rise to civil relations). In the latter instance, on the other hand, he selects ambient variables on the assumption that they represent the relevant developmental apex. Consequently, the term "religion" in Marx's texts (i.e., when used substantively) is not particularly useful for generating a logical picture of cross-cultural religious variation, but simply serves to elucidate his developmental premises proper. For this reason, of course, "religion" simply becomes a subsection of his concept of alienation.

To illustrate this last point, we may note the difficulties that attend the interpretation of what "religion" means in non-Western historical contexts. The term "religion" itself is imbued with connotations that are linked to the historically specific pattern of Western development. Thus, for example, primitive cultures proper do not distinguish between the "spiritual" and the "material" sides of their life practices. This distinction, however, is crucial to the Western understanding of "religion". Therefore, how do Western investigators

investigators attempt to grasp the meaning of "primitive religion"?
We suggest that there are three basic options: (i) they can look for
"religious" traits by using a Western substantive model as a hermeneutic
guide--this procedure, however, violates the principle of historical
specification; (ii) they can take the route of "radical historical
specification" (i.e., the resolution of "religion" into its determinate
social context), an option that denudes the term "religion" of any
substance whatsoever, and thus precludes cross-cultural religious
reference; or, (iii) they can attempt to combine (i) and (ii) in a
scientifically satisfactory way (i.e., that both allows for cross-cultural
religious referencing and yet also conforms to the requirements
of the principle of historical specification).

Marx's substantive critique clearly falls into category (i) above.
We suggest, however, that he implicitly recognizes the limits of this
approach with his transposition of the question of the content of religion
onto the terrain of anthropogenesis (i.e., the variable ways in which
humans "make themselves" in diverse historical situations). It is
principally within the framework of this methodological subsumption that
Marx employs "religion" as the paradigmatic form of "false practice".
Therein, "religion" denotes definite activities that (theoretically)
can be assigned a precise lifespan (i.e., when the determinate circumstances
that produce X practice vanish, so will X practice).

Insofar as Marx restricts his substantive comments to the
"theoretical territory" of definite practices, he is using the term
"religion" in a useful manner (e.g., to elucidate, through negation,

the content of communism). This realm may encompass types of activities that are spawned within a wide variety of productive modes and social formations; in this sense, "religion" could serve as a valid cross-cultural index. For instance, one could argue that the tendency to dichotomize the "soul" and the "body" reflects the consolidation of particular civil relations. In principle, this proposition is empirically testable, and--assuming its conditional validity--one could quite legitimately drawn the logical picture of communism to exclude this specific belief.

As usual, however, problems arise when Marx strays beyond this region to predetermine the content of religion (i.e., to assert that in all conditions religion="false practice"). When Marx resolves religion into anthropogenesis, he can no more predefine the substance of religion than he can the parameters of anthropogenesis itself. The meaning of religion may only be determined in the concrete context of human "self-making" and not a priori. In principle, therefore, the range of variability of religion is as wide as that of man himself. Accordingly, insofar as communism represents a definite anthropogenetic stage, only definite practices can be excluded from its (logical) content, and not religion per se. Thus, for the moment, we must leave the question of the relationship between communism and religion open.

There is no doubt, however, that Marx does not leave it open. The degree to which this prejudice rests on purely definitional grounds is manifest in his contrasting approaches to religion, on the one hand, and art, on the other. He implicitly identifies three elements that

both religion and art share: (i) they are both forms of "spiritual production"; (ii) they both emerged in the "childhood of humanity";[36] (iii) they are both conditioned by the state of material production in general, and thus, to a limited extent, undergo similar developmental modifications in form (e.g., with the advance of capitalism, they both become abstractly dualistic).[37] At this point, however, the similarities cease.

Marx fully recognizes the uneven character of historical "progress", i.e., that under definite conditions certain human capacities may "ripen" disproportionately or one-sidedly in relation to other traits.[38] The paradigmatic example of this tendency that he offers is that of classical Greece, whose level of aesthetic development stands in marked contrast to its state of technical sophistication. The opposite condition appears in modern capitalism, whose material advances occur in tandem with the growth of its hostility to genuine aesthetic production. For this reason, Marx logically views communism as the historical stage where these contradictory tendencies are reconciled in an all-rounded sensual renaissance. Therefore, in a sense, as Mikhail Lifshitz rightly stresses, Marx's theme of the emancipation of art under communist conditions parallels Hegel's motif of the return of "youth" at a higher level at a given historical stage.[39]

Not so, however, with that other "childish" trait, religion. Whereas abstract dualism debases art, it completes religion. Whereas art reappears in full glory in communism, religion makes a permanent exit stage right (i.e., except for its possible persistence as an expression

of man's "primary alienation" from nature). In short, Marx's "romantic"

qualifications of rationalism are highly selective: yes, to aesthetic

sensuousness, no to religious sensuousness. The reason for this

discrepancy is both simple and contained in his earliestextant notes on

religion and art (1842): religion and art are antipodes.[40] Why?

Because religion is inhuman (=projection of human qualities onto objects,

a process that is based upon the proclivities of greed, lust, fear,

crude practicality and egoism). Consequently, art that is inspired by

religious principles is bad art. Indeed, Marx formulates a historical

"law" to this effect: the more primitive, distorted and downright

ugly the artwork, the more religious it is.[41]

Once Marx adopts his specific variant of the resolution of

religion into anthropology, however, the substantive "chestnuts" that

he culls from the pages of de Brosses, d'Holbach et al. to justify this

assertion lose their vitality. He can predefine religion as the "bad

side" of human practice with no more validity than Proudhon, for instance,

can arbitrarily separate the good and the bad sides of bourgeois

production. They stand as equally "metaphysical" procedures.

(c) Materialism

When Marx prescribes the proper theoretical pathway to be

followed by the scientific critic of religion as the ascent from "earth

to heaven", he appears to overlook the problematic character of this

"journey". The pathway from "earth to heaven" contains a number of

ambiguities that may threaten the validity of any materialist approach

to the study of religion unless they are clarified. Hence, we consider

this elucidation crucial. We subdivide our discussion of these lacunae

into two areas: base and superstructure; and, "true" and "false"

practice.

i. Base and Superstructure

Though our comments on this "minefield" of historical materialism

will be brief and confined to the terrain of religion, a few general

preliminary notes are in order. One of the principal reasons why debate

on this subject has occasioned a disproportionate amount of heat to

to light stems from an elemental confusion concerning the logical and

historical sides of Marx's comments on this topic. The base-superstructure

metaphor is a tool that Marx employs in his mature works to elucidate

logically the dynamics of general social change. At this general

theoretical level, he assigns causal primacy to the development of the

productive forces and, by extension, to the production relations that

arise on this foundation. His main purpose in advancing this specification

is to posit (abstractly) general limits or "permutation frontiers" to

the organization of social relations within a given society (and hence to

the generation of ideas, laws and so on). In so doing, Marx hopes to

establish the basis for a genuine historical science (both theoretically

and practically) and thus to avoid the nightmare world that extends

equal causal status to all social phenomena (i.e., at the general

historical level), because, in a "night that colours all cows black",

the possibility of a historical science vanishes.[42]

Notwithstanding a number of difficulties connected with Marx's

formulation of the base-superstructure metaphor per se (e.g., mechanical

imagery), we consider that its underlying methodological animus retains an immense validity given two provisos. First, the elementary distinction between the relevant logical pictures and the phenomena they purportedly explain must be upheld. Second, the "theoretical territory" of the propositions that derive from this metaphor must be restricted to that of general historical developments (i.e., medium to long term social trends or changes). The first point is relatively obvious and hence need not detain us further. The second, however, is crucial to our argument and thus requires further elaboration.

In our view, the methodological principles underlying the base-superstructure metaphor are chiefly useful for mapping out the broad contours of historical change and, on this basis, for illuminating the tendential correspondence of selected items of a given social landscape (e.g., to help explain why certain ideas gain widespread currency among a specific social layer at a particular point and not at others). Propositions that are advanced from within this region are only applicable to (and hence testable at) this general social level. They are not particularly useful for explaining why specific historical agents act (or acted) in a certain way.[43]

To invoke, once again, our "Chinese box" model of science, we suggest that this latter type of explanation logically belongs to what we may term the "theoretical territory" of the "cultural totality" (i.e., how a given group of humans "make themselves" as a social whole or as a distinct cultural unit).[44] In this region, the purpose of theoretical investigation is to elucidate the specificity of "social wholeness making" at the general historical level (i.e., to facilitate

cross-cultural comparisons, the study of epochal transitions and so on).

Thus, the range of applicable propositions is considerably wider than

the terrain covered by the base-superstructure metaphor (or what we

shall call the region of the "productive totality"). It is necessary,

for instance, to include the so-called "subjective factor" in deliberations

concerning "cultural totalization". Accordingly, we contend that the

appropriate method for the study of the latter region is the concrete

appropriation of the interplay of the constituent "moments" of the

target social unit, a procedure that necessarily involves the rejection

of any a priori hierarchical causal model.[45] We emphasize, however, that

"cultural totalization" occurs within the limits revealed through

investigations conducted at the level of the "productive totality".

Logically speaking, therefore, the region of the "cultural totality"

constitutes a "higher" box relative to its "productive" counterpart.

Hence, as a general rule, its conclusions are enclosed or constrained

by the conclusions that are reached within the "productive" region

proper (assuming, of course, the latter's conditional validity). The

same, we might add, applies to hypotheses that are advanced within

regions that are similarly enclosed within the logical parameters set

by studies conducted at the level of the "cultural totality" (e.g.,

micro-psychological reseach).

At this point, we can assess the implications of the base-

superstructure metaphor for religious criticism. First, we have no

quarrel with Marx's logical determination of religion as a superstructural

phenomenon. In general, this explanatory model elucidates broad

patterns of religious transformation in a manner which is immeasurably

superior to that of any contemporary "idealist" model that operates

at the same theoretical level (e.g., Toynbee's recurrent cycles).

An example will suffice to illustrate this point. The methodological

principles underlying the base-superstructure metaphor involve the

historical specification of different religious practices (forms) by

their correspondence with distinct productive modes, using this causal

link to posit definite probabilistic limits to religious changes

(e.g., political attitudes), and assigning causal primacy to developments

in the "productive" sphere proper. In contrast, comparable "idealist"

approaches attribute at least causal equality (i.e., at the level of

broad historical trends) to the internal dynamics of ideological production

per se (e.g., the mechanics of transhistorical cycles). In the case

of the relatively recent emergence of "liberation theology" in Latin

America, we witness an example of a group of people who, while formally

adhering to the same faith/institution as their forebears for centuries

past, nevertheless interpret this commitment in a radically different

way, i.e., whereas the latter invoked these beliefs to legitimate the

bourgeois order, "liberation theology" activists use their religious

faith to sanction their opposition to the same. To account for this shift,

the "idealist" school may, for instance, refer to the cyclic oscillation

of the contemplative and the active modalities in Christian theology.

Why, however, these ideas should "unfold" in this particular tendential

manner and in this particular epoch remains a mystery. They are not

mysteries, though, to investigators who use the searchlight of the base-

superstructure metaphor. In this latter framework, broad ideological

shifts of the type mentioned above do not just happen, nor do they

reflect the evolution of any transhistorical principle: they express

modifications that occur in the way in which humans produce their

material means of subsistence.

Second, the base-superstructure metaphor and the logical

propositions it inspires may not, however, be employed to predetermine

the role of any single element in the constitution of historical agency

in any given situation. This type of determination belongs to the

region of the "cultural totality" (i.e., the specification of "cultural

totalization" must logically precede conclusions reached at "higher"

hierarchical levels). The base-superstructure metaphor may (and we

argue must) be used to sketch the broad limits of this specification,

but if may not be substituted for this process proper. Thus, for

instance, we contend that Marx errs when he prejudges the role of

religion and myth in the proletarian revolution, a lapse integrally

related to his negative evaluation of irrational motivations in general.[46]

To the extent to which it is possible to elucidate (and hence, to a

degree, tendentially predict) the importance of religion, for example,

in a given cultural unit within a particular period, we suggest that

the appropriate theoretical framework is one which combines an apprecia-

tion for the "permutation frontiers" imposed by the organization of

productive life with a perspective that places all relevant variables on

an a priori equal causal footing, and thus, by extension, eschews any

prejudgement concerning the ontological status of any facet of social

existence (i.e., by declaring religion, for instance, to be only

epiphenomenally real). In this light, what does or does not constitute

"false consciousness", for example, can only be ascertained in context,

and not on the basis of a priori criteria.[47]

ii. "True" and "False" Practice

Our major source of concern with the base-superstructure metaphor, however, is not so much its implications for the interpretation of broad social changes, but rather the materialist world-view which it expresses. Of course, charges of "dogmatic materialism" have been a standard ingredient of anti-Marx polemics for decades. We believe, though, that much of the confusion that has surrounded this issue in the past has stemmed from an elemental blurring of the proper "theoretical territory" of Marx's materialist propositions, on the part of Marx's followers and his "idealist" critics.

Marx receives the principal influences shaping his materialist approach through the filter of Hegel's method, and, in particular, his acceptance of the latter's insistence on historical specification. Accordingly, in his writings of the mid-1840's Marx does not construct a materialist system: he concretely applies materialist principles to assist the theoretical and practical clarification of specific political questions. Foremost among these principles are, of course, those of historical specification and radical historical change. Thus, in the majority of his investigations, Marx never asks the question "Is it materialist?" to determine the proper approach to a given issue. He asks: "Does a specific practice explain historical variation or otherwise advance the project of communism?". In short, the principal criterion he employs to decide "what is to be done" is "Does X practice work?".

In Marx's religious critique, however, a certain theoretical slippage appears. Aside from the definitional exclusion of religion

from the sphere of "true" practice--a matter we discussed above--this
slippage consists of the introduction of "essentialist" criteria for
the arbitration of the distinction between "true" and "false" practice.
He shifts from asking "Does X practice work?" to asking "From where
does X practice originate?" in his evaluation of religious practice.
In particular, he invokes a specific notion of materiality to adjudicate
"what counts" as science.

To illustrate this last point, we need look no further than
Marx's prescription for the scientific criticism of religion (i.e., the
ascent from "earth to heaven") or his related counterpositions of rational
mystical and real and ideal. To Marx, whereas science relies on empirical
evidence gathered through conventional "Newtonian" channels, mysticism
is based on information collected from the sources of fantasy, the
imagination or speculation. He then employs this epistemic distinction
to characterize scientific and utopian (i.e., religious) socialism
respectively. The former, with its roots in eighteenth century
materialism, represents man's self-making (concretely mediated, of
course, by the self-emancipation of the proletariat) as a finite, sensual
being (i.e., a "whole man") through material practice. The latter, in
contrast embodies "man's" self-making as an abstract being through
spiritual practice (i.e., criticism, theology, moral action). Accordingly,
he views the scientific socialist community as arising on a real
foundation (="true" universality) that is constituted by sensuous material
connections, rather than the abstract moral homilies that connect
together the constitutents of the imagined communities of utopian
socialism.

Aside from the methodological problems that attend the rather obvious Judeo-Christian-Islamic framing of the above theoretical bifurcation, we object to Marx's materialist schema principally on three grounds. First, on the basis of empirical evidence alone, what is meant by "on earth" is highly problematic. Recent studies in a variety of areas (e.g., physics, life sciences, psychology to name but a few) have dramatically called into question many of the "common sense" "Newtonian" assumptions held by Marx and others of his generation concerning the nature of materiality.[48] For instance, these findings suggest that the classical "Newtonian" positions in the areas of causality, the demarcation of boundary lines between objects (including between man and nature), and epistemology (e.g., subject-object dichotomy, notion of "impersonal" scientific laws), must be either rejected altogether of at least severely restricted in their applicable "theoretical territory". These types of modifications affect a multitude of theoretical realms that Marx implicitly or explicitly touches upon, including the a priori "Newtonian" limits that he places on the efficacy of mental practice,[49] his overt hostility to any form of teleological interpretation of evolution,[50] and his designation of the consciousness of primitive peoples as "bestial" for what today would be called their "mythopoeic" approach to the cosmos.[51]

Second, methodologically speaking, Marx's invocation of genetic criteria to distinguish between "true" and "false" practice violates the principle of historical specification. Quite simply, what is or is not accepted as real or material at one particular point reflects not only

the state of contemporary scientific development but also the ambient

biases concerning what counts as evidence in this regard. With changes

in these conditions, the criteria used to determine "reality" also

change. Nowhere is this proposition more evident than in the field

of physics, where until recently the idea of non-local causality was

dismissed by most conventional physicists as belonging to the realm of

the fantastic. Lately, however, experiments have confirmed precisely

that principle, and physicists are now compelled to adjust their

definitions of "reality" accordingly.[52] The only way to avoid this

theoretical cul-de-sac—and at the same time affirm the validity of

some kind of cross-cultural standard for the adjudication of what is

and what is not to be included under the rubric of science—is to

jettison genetic criteria altogether from the determination of reality

or "true" practice and to accept as evidence in this regard only specific

tests of practice.[53] While this framework is certainly not without

cultural bias (e.g., always implicit in the question "Does it work?"

are the questions "Works for whom?" and "To what end?"), we suggest

that, properly formulated, it at least casts the net of science wide

enough to encompass a broad range of culturally specific "reality maps",

and, on this basis, can be employed to elucidate historical variations

in this domain without assigning one interpretation normative status.

Furthermore, we suggest that in his second thesis on Feuerbach, Marx

at least implicitly recognizes the invalidity of "essentialist" or

genetic criteria to ascertain what counts as science. At the same time,

however, it is also fairly evident that in Marx's corpurs as a whole,

he generally equates the "Newtonian" paradigm and natural science.

Finally, we contend that Marx's substantive prejudgement of the distinction between "true" and "false" practice tends to blur the specificity of his approach to the questions of subjectivity and historical agency (i.e., to stress their variability). These types of queries lie at the heart of the issue of science itself, because it is impossible to determine if X practice passes Y test of practice without also addressing the questions "Who is doing the testing (and under what conditions)?" and "Who (or what) is doing the acting (i.e., what constitutes the field of practice?"). Marx's acceptance of the general validity of the "Newtonian" paradigm radically restricts his capacity to transcend or to criticize the bourgeois categories of social identity which this paradigm expresses. This incapacity profoundly influences his conceptualization of transitional communist agency (i.e., in general, he views the self-emancipation of the proletariat as, in part, the product of the collective interpellation of the members of that class as rational subjects, and correspondingly he minimizes or rejects altogether the role of the "irrational" in this process.)

We do not advance any definitive counterproposals against Marx's materialist assumptions. The question of what is or is not "on earth" must remain open. To repeat, for the most part Marx eschews any substantive prejudgement concerning the nature of "reality" in general. He attacks definite practices and judges them to be false on the basis of specific tests of practice (e.g., the "German ideologists"). He follows a similar procedure to adjudicate the content of "true" practice or

science (i.e., "true" practice is what--tendentially speaking--works).

In our view, the vast majority of the conclusions that Marx drew in the

context of his mid-1840's battles with the "German ideologists"

et al. not only were contextually valid but retain an immense utility

today. Thus, within this specific "theoretical territory" we endorse

the use of the terms "material" and "materialist" to describe "true"

practice and Marx's method respectively. All that we wish to caution

against is the slippage that occurs whenever Marx or his followers violate

this "territorial" boundary and employ these conclusions to predetermine

the content of science. As we have seen, all such attempts are ultimately

doomed to failure. The boundary line that separates science from non-

science or that abstractly demarcates the proper "theoretical territory"

of propositions is and always will be a variable margin whose parameters

are decided by the shifting conditions that arbitrate the test of practice.

C)   Conclusion

In assigning limits to Marx's critique, we necessarily enter

the "What is orthodox Marxism?" debate, a territory seminally

explored by Georg Lukács in the 1920's.[54] In this area, many argue

that rejecting the substantive side of Marx's critique eviscerates the

scientific core of Marx's theoretical corpus in this area. We disagree.

In any period of the civil era, Marx's legacy retains its validity only

to the degree that it continues to serve as a useful guide to the

problem of "human emancipation" as determinately constituted.[55] To qualify

on this count, it must exhibit an adaptive flexibility or a capacity for

the paradigmatic growth of knowledge in the face of changing conditions.

This developmental tendency invariably involves an on-going process of theoretical _pruning_, consisting of the falsification of certain elements of a theorist's legacy and the retention of others as provisionally valid. The form we have selected to record our conclusions in this regard is our "Chinese box" model of scientific growth.[56]

In this framework, using the criteria we have outlined in this Chapter, we conclude that Marx's substantive premises, including the rationalist assumptions that underlie his logical delineation of "human essence" and that combine to legitimate his counterposition of religion and communism, are theoretically barren. Though historically this rationalist heritage was indispensable to Marx's intellectual formation, logically it conflicts with his methodological principles, particularly in light of recent empirical advances on a number of fronts. Accordingly, we believe that it can be jettisoned without harming the core of historical materialism.

On the same grounds, however, we also find Marx's methodological critique provisionally valid. This critique embodies his distinctive contributions both to the "problem" of religion and to the question of the contemporary articulation of the dialectic of universal and particular. It continues to constitute the most useful guide presently available not only to explain religious changes _per se_, but also to elucidate the current planetary crisis.[57]

Our affirmation of Marx's methodological approach necessarily involves the implicit endorsation of elements of his theoretical legacy that extend well beyond the religious domain proper. Though a justifica-

tion of this position--beyond the cursory comments we have included

in this chapter--lies beyond the scope of this dissertation, given the

unorthodox character of our approach it may be useful to list briefly

and in part the salient historical materialist theses with which we

concur and on which we erect the "new theoretical framework" that we

shall outline in the next Chapter. These points of agreement include

the contentions that:

(a)   Science may not be abstracted from anthropogenesis, with the

latter concept being understood as a subjective/objective, active/

passive process and as a determinately constituted interchange

with nature. Accordingly, in the main and broadly speaking,

scientific development corresponds to the general conditions

of human self-making, and it advances as these conditions "ripen".

Thus, we ground our suggestions for a "new religious science"

in contemporary planetary developments and, in particular, in

shifts in the structure of capitalism--and, by extension, the

composition of the proletariat--that have occurred since

Marx's day.[58]

(b)   The human interchange with nature is <u>always</u> socially mediated.

In principle, no individual or immediate contacts with nature

are possible. Humans <u>qua</u> humans are social animals and no

"human emancipation", however conceived, may by-pass the

social moment of the existence of this species.

(c)   This social mediation, in turn, is <u>variable</u>. Science, as a theory

and practice whose object, in part, involves rendering man

conscious of his self-making, necessarily entails the determinate

attempt to explain (criticize) ambient conditions and practices

vis-à-vis the reality of historical change. Consequently, the

principles of historical specification and change (i.e., the

theoretical appropriation of the dialectic of form and content)

comprise an integral part of the theoretical side of religious

science.[59]

(d)   In part, the determinate application of the above methodological

stance necessarily involves, where useful, the controlled

generation of composite logical abstractions that flesh out

the dialectic of universal and particular.[60] Valid examples of

this process advanced by Marx, include his portrait of "human

essence" (minus his rationalist predetermination of this content,

although including rational/technical capacities as one side of

this picture), as well as his delineation of the characteristic

features of communism (again, minus the rationalist pre-

determination of this content, save as one "pathway" of

anthropogenesis in this era).

(e)   In the bourgeois epoch, the determinate theoretical struggle

to unveil the anatomy of this age makes possible, and, at times,

necessary, the controlled postulation of general "laws" of

historical change that usefully guide the investigation of

all societies in all periods at a broad, long range level of

analytic validity.[61] Valid instances of these "laws" include

the "law of value" and its corollary thesis that broad social

changes occur within the "permutation frontiers" set by the

constitution of the relevant "productive totality". Metaphorically

speaking, this causal nexus may be expressed by the proposition

that, "in the last instance", the "superstructure" (inculding

religion) is determined by the "base" (i.e., man's "material"

life organization). What is explained thereby, however, is

not the ontological status of ideas as against matter, for

instance, but rather the provisional utility of distinguishing

between these two concepts for the purposes of elucidating

the mechanics of historical change in the concrete context of

contemporary bourgeois conditions. In this context, "in the

ordinary run of things", the test of practice testifies to

the superior causal efficacy of "weapons" over "ideas"

(to use shorthand paradigmatic denotations) to adjudicate

radical historical change. In this sense, a "materialist"

approach to the problem of "human emancipation", when

determinately contrasted with "idealist" alternatives, remains

provisionally valid. What is invalid is any extrapolation of

this contrast from this determinate context to denote basic

ontological differences. Other invalid extrapolations from

the "base-superstructure" framework include a technological

determinist reading of historical development and the direct

collapse of the mechanics of historical change into the region

of the "productive totality".[62]

(f)   It is logically useful to enlist the theory of value to

subdivide human history into three eras--primitive society,

civil society, and communism--and to advance controlled

generalizations concerning the pattern of practices that

correspond thereto. This classification scheme implies no
immanent or transcendental purpose, no necessary developmental
curve, and no unilinear sequence of productive stages.[63]
It does permit, however, the generalization that, since the
primitive era, human history has been the history of class
struggle.

(g)   Notwithstanding the structural changes of the last century,
Western societies are still most usefully described as
capitalist formations, and Marx's identification of the
fundamental "laws of motion" of capitalism remains valid
today.[64] Valid corollary theses include: his specification of
the capital/labour conflict as the basic, determinant antagonism
of the bourgeois epoch; his designation of the proletariat as
the social gravitational centre of radical change in this
epoch; his argument that only the victory of the proletariat
(necessarily politically mediated in the form of a class
dictatorship)[65] can in potentia lead not only to the overturn
of capitalist relations, but also to the termination of all
class and political relations in general.

Despite our concurrence with the above theses, we maintain
that they do not go far enough (i.e., they comprise necessary but not
sufficient components of the theoretical side of the contemporary
struggle for "human emancipation"). We base this conclusion on the
manifest failure of the communist movement, particularly in the West,
to this date. As we shall detail in the next Chapter, we consider
that the inability of "orthodox" historical materialists to appropriate,

theoretically or practically, the significance of religion in human history constitutes a key element of this strategic impasse. Quite simply, "orthodox" Marxism must "expand its horizons" to encompass the religious moment of the human experience. In so doing, it need not abandon its _scientific_ core. Indeed, it may be the only way it can save it.

Chapter IV

TOWARDS A NEW THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As we turn from the limits to the promises of Marx's critique
of religion, we enter uncharted theoretical territory. Though the
methodological side of this critique guides our initial steps, we
soon find ourselves pretty much on our own. Accordingly, at this
point we can sketch only the potential utility of Marx's critique for
the development of a religious science. A detailed examination of
its implications for any particular society will have to wait
until a later point.

This journey is not without its pitfalls, and thus even before
we begin, it is necessary to clear away some of the overgrowth that
overlays our initial pathway by clarifying our objectives in this
Chapter. In particular, we attach three provisos to our discussion.
First, we situate our exposition within a theoretical framework that
synthesizes the fundamental propositions of historical materialism
(e.g., the principles of historical specification and change) and an
amalgamation of a number of empirical studies that have been conducted
recently in a variety of relevant disciplines (e.g., comparative
religions, anthropology). Necessarily, we present this synthesis at
a highly general level and in an open-ended manner. Our purpose is
not to present a complete picture. It is to suggest what Marx's
methodological critique can contribute to what, for the sake of simplicity,

we term the "holistic" theoretical paradigm that appears to be

emerging in a number of formally disparate areas (e.g., physics,

psychology, life sciences, medicine).[1] Therefore, in this Chapter,

we attempt to situate Marx's critique as a distinct and necessary

"hierarchical level" within the "Chinese box" of religious science.

Many Marxists, both past and present, would, and undoubtably

will, raise strenuous objections to this procedure.[2] There is little

doubt, for instance, that Marx, himself, would reject our proposed

revisions. These protests principally rest on two grounds: (a) the

relationship that allegedly obtains between science and its social

base; (b) a rationalist conception of the content of the proletarian

self-emancipatory struggle. With respect to (a), it is often proposed

that any social or historical science, to qualify as genuine, must

express the practice of the proletariat. In general, we agree with

this requirement, provided it is formulated in a manner that avoids the

dangers of mechanical "sociological reductionism" and allows for the

asymmetry of theory and practice at particular historical points, if

not at the broad epochal level.[3] We deny, however, that this

stipulation holds any special significance for a religious science

per se, because the question of the social base of a specific religious

movement can only be addressed concretely and not a priori. We will

take up this issue in subsection C below.

With respect to (b) above, it is often alleged that the terrain

of any historical materialist study must be restricted to the social

domain proper (=the specification of the dynamics of historical change),

and that any attempt to extend the scope of investigation to encompass
external fields (e.g., biology, physics) is illegitimate. We have no
quibble with the fundamental thrust of this objection, i.e., to limit
the "theoretical territory" of Marx's propositions to the terrain of
the social mediation of the human interchange with nature. Obviously,
Marx's methodological critique lies on this ground. Problems arise,
however, when the content of this social mediation is predetermined.
In recent years, especially with the rise of the women's, ecology and
black movements, it has become fairly evident that the parameters
of the "social" are not static, but rather fluid.[4] Thus, the legitimacy
of any particular proposal to integrate the propositions of historical
materialism with the results gathered in a given "external" research
field in a religious science cannot be evaluated abstractly but only
in the concrete. This challenge we briefly take up in subsection C
below as well.

The second proviso which we attach to our present study concerns
the vantage point from which we submit our proposals for a logical
modification of the relationship between religion and Marx's theory of
communism. We advance our suggestions from our position within the
conditions of a late twentieth century "advanced" bourgeois democracy.
Thus, our logical redefinitions of the content of the communist project
reflect our interpretation of recent historical events within this
context (e.g., the experience of European fascism).

Finally, we suggest that the most fruitful way to examine
Marx's contributions to a new religious science is to reduce to a

minimum references to bourgeois theorizations in the area of religious

studies (although not to empirical data proper).[5] We adopt this position

because our aim is to outline a scientific approach that is integrated

with both the theoretical and practical sides of the proletarian

self-emancipatory project.

In light of the above caveats, we may now proceed to delineate

our proposals for a new theoretical framework that both resituates the

problematics of religion and Marx's theory of communism and points

the way forward for the establishment of a new religious science.

We subdivide our discussion into three subsections: religion;

commumism; and, science.

A)   Religion

Foremost among the difficulties confronting the intrepid explorer

of the territory of "religion and communism" is the problem of defining

the concept of religion in the most useful fashion. Most probes into

this terrain fail by virtue of their prejudgement of the object of

investigation (e.g., through improper extrapolation from ambient

forms). In our view, Marx's methodological critique provides a skeletal

framework that limits the range of applicability of propositions

concerning religious phenomena and thereby permits the generation of

scientifically useful abstractions, including the definition of

religion, and, following from this specification, the periodization of

religious forms.

In particular, we can sift three principles from Marx's

methodological critique to govern the initial steps in the formation

of a new religious science:

(a)   Any valid theoretical investigation of religion must proceed

        from the recognition that, in the first instance, religion

        is a social phenomenon and thus can be approached only as

        part of a given cultural matrix. In principle, neither

        individual religion nor immediate contact with nature or

        any other "ultimate" grounds of existence are possible. At this

        "hierarchical level", therefore, "ontological questions"

        (i.e., those relating to the existence or non-existence of

        particular beings or reality planes) enter consideration

        only as social items.

(b)   Any religious science must accept the variable character of

        the social mediation of the interchange with nature. All

        religious forms correspond to definite social relations and

        (logically) mutate within the limits prescribed by the organiza-

        tion of productive life (i.e., the economic moment of the

        "cultural totality"). This functional congruence, however,

        only operates as the point of departure for the study of religious

        phenomena: beyond this region the focus of investigation

        shifts onto the terrain of the constitution of historical

        agency within the "cultural totality" as a whole.[6]

(c)   Finally, any genuine religious science must be critical

        towards its subject matter, critical, however, not in the

        sense of abstract value judgements, but rather in the sense of

        a theoretical resolution of religious forms into their constituent

social relations and their assessment within this context.

This activity ultimately forms part of the _practical_ movement to abolish the social fetters which have been placed on human self-determination (i.e., communism). Accordingly, the referents employed to evaluate specific religious practices are the logical propositions that inform the (scientific) theory of communism. In this light, "pre-historical" religious forms appear as expressions of different types of one-sided social ensembles, without necessarily implying any developmental hierarchy with respect to the assorted traits themselves. Thus, in principle, religious claims that are abstracted from the social cleavages that characterize a particular social formation (e.g., the claim that alienation can be overcome independently of the abolition of class divisions) are invalid. No genuine universality or emancipation may be either conceived or established except on a foundation of social wholeness.

In our view, the foregoing principles constitute an indispensable foundation for the establishment of a religious science. Further explorations, operating at "higher" "hierarchical levels", may qualify these conclusions, but they must proceed within the limits set by the resolution of religious forms into historically specific social relations.[7] This stipulation does not mean that all religious investigations are reduced to their social contextualization; but is does indicate that it is not possible for a religious scientist to do an "end run" around social mediation--a practice all too common in religious studies

in the last century--or to cede an obligatory passing nod to "society"

without this recognition affecting in an on-going way his explorations at

"higher" theoretical levels.

At the initial theoretical point described by Marx's methodological

principles, religion, like any other social phenomenon, falls within the

province of the logical propositions that explain general historical

variations. At this "hierarchical level" valid conclusions concerning

religion must operate within the rules that govern social scientific

statements of this type, i.e., the theorist can only abstract from his

ambient culture to advance statements concerning general social

developments (e.g., cross-cultural comparisons) or about particular

features of these processes (e.g., religion), provided these propositions

are limited to the explanation of historical changes and adequate

controls are placed on these extrapolations (e.g., ambient traits are

simply used as gauges to measure deviations).[8]

For instance, to demarcate its theoretical and practical

field, religious science must adopt a provisional or working definition

of religion. In so doing, the scientist[9] must move beyond the dissolution

of religion into an undifferentiated cultural matrix[10] and _critically_

employ the ambient social articulation of religious practices (specified

through comparative historical analysis) to delineate, at a broad

historical level (i.e., encompassing all known variable displays of

religious life), a theoretical framework for situating religious

variation. The specific theoretical aim that informs this procedure

(i.e., to elucidate religious change) limits the range of the conclusions

that are drawn thereby. Thus, at this "hierarchical level" the only

valid generalizations are those that describe the "permutation frontiers"

of religious practices in a significant fashion, and are testable on

these grounds.

A definition of religion that issues from this framework may

usefully employ three substantive qualifications from Marx's methodolo-

gical critique. First, in different ways religious practices in all

societies involve the establishment, demolition, or maintenance of

boundary lines (e.g., transition points, birth, death, maturity, man

and nature, intrasocial and intrahuman differentiation). This identity

determination is always socially mediated, and thus subject to the

qualifications noted above. Further, going beyond Marx, we deny that

these boundaries have any a priori limits.[11] These limits may be

ascertained only in context. For instance, what is defined as dead

or natural in one era, may in another appear as living or as subject to

social modification.[12]

Second, in all societies, again in different ways, religious

practices comprise part of the general social metabolism, i.e., they

embody an expenditure of social energy and may be abstractly specified

as a particular labour form or a distinctive way in which humans

make themselves. Against Marx's a priori definition of this type of

activity as false, however, we leave this substantive determination

(i.e., how man makes himself religiously and to what extent it is

successful) open, and adopt instead what we consider to be a more

useful abstraction at the relevant "hierarchical level", i.e., the

notion of a reference point. To elucidate historical changes at this
level, a reference point must be both general enough to encompass all
known religious practices and specific enough to exclude the secular
realm.[13]

Third, in all societies religious practices presuppose religious
subjects, i.e., in some way religious agency must be constituted.
Bourgeois theorists, by and large, view this process as an historical
invariant, with bourgeois individuality as the predictable subjective
referent. In contrast, Marx widens the historical parameters of the
constitution of subjectivity and thus treats agency as a culturally
variable phenomenon. However, he does posit definite rationalist
a priori substantive limits to this variability. We reject this
restriction and insist that no a priori limits may be applied in the
determination of social identity. What may appear to belong to "God"
in one era, may appear as one of man's "essential treasures" in another,
and this shift in identity boundaries may well serve as a significant
gauge of religious change.

With these qualifications in mind, we advance, as a working
hypothesis, the following definition of religion: a particular group
of humans believe or act religiously when they attempt to make themselves
through the purposeful hook up of their practices with a "transcendental"
point of reference. To elucidate the theoretical import of this definition,
we shall first briefly dissect its components and then assess its
significance and testability as a whole. Our definition subdivides
as follows:

"a particular group of humans" - This phrase underlines the need to resolve religious practices into variable cultural matrices and hence the requirement that the explanation of religious transformations comprise part of the explanation of general historical shifts.

"believe or act" - At the present "hierarchical level" religious practices must be defined sufficiently broadly to encompass a wide variety of social articulations. In part, the gauging of religious changes involves the assessment of this differential articulation.

"attempt" - Implicit or explicit in any religious system is the possibility of failure, regardless of the "action framework". The explanation of broad religious changes must include the elaboration of criteria to assess success or failure, (i.e., tests of practice). This synthesis, though, operates at a "higher" "hierarchical level" than the one at which we construct the definition of religion per se.[14]

"to make themselves" - Although this phrase qualifies religion as a form of labour, it leaves the substantive determination of this activity open. In particular, we assert that, at this "hierarchical level", self-making must be broad enough to encompass both practices that are directed towards the establishment of a given desired condition (e.g., to heal in some way an alienated state or some sort) and practices that simply seek to maintain this condition.[15] This breadth permits subsequent investigation to focus on the variable ways in which humans make themselves

(religiously) without predefining its content or the boundaries
of social identity.[16] Accordingly, the question of historical
agency (i.e., who or what is the "self") is left indeterminate.

"purposeful" - In some sense, religious practice is goal-directed, i.e.,
it is not random and exhibits coherent characteristics. Wide
latitude, however, must be given to: (a) the source of this
direction (i.e., it need not refer to "ego control" in the
psychoanalytic sense of the term, nor even to a human authority
in the conventional sense); (b) the form of this coherence
(i.e., involving implicit or explicit rules of some sort);[17]
(c) the nature of the object of intention (i.e., both the
"transcendental" referent and its relationship to the agents
in question are variable in the extreme, thus the "action
framework" need not follow the "Aristotelian" teleological
model).[18]

"hook up" - All religious practices aim to connect a particular
group of humans either directly or indirectly to a "transcendental"
referent or to maintain an established connection with the same.
The nature of this linkage, as well as its social articulation,
though, varies widely and a central focus of religious science
is to account for this variation.

"transcendental" - The distinctive feature of religious, as opposed to
secular practice[19] is the former's reference axis, which may
be described in various ways.[20] To qualify as "transcendental",
a reference point must satisfy two criteria: (a) it must

"stand"[21] outside the boundaries of ordinary reality, as
conventionally defined in contemporary bourgeois society;[22]
(b) metaphorically speaking, it must lie at the centre of a
given culture's (or subculture's) "reality map" (i.e., it must
constitute its mythic ontological axis).

Within this framework, the qualification of a referent as
"transcendental" does not depend either on whether or not an investigator
accepts the claims of a given group of believers regarding a particular
referent, or on whether or not the believers themselves concur with the
conventional (bourgeois) reality standards.[23] All that matters is
whether or not given practices in a particular culture are "tied back"
(mythically) to an ontological point that--from the standpoint of the
dominant metaphysical paradigm of this culture (i.e., the "Newtonian"
world-view)--transcends "ordinary" reality.

In advancing this substantive qualification of religious
practice,[24] we distinguish between valid and invalid substantive
extrapolations. By the latter, we refer to those attempts to determine
the meaning of religion that are based on particular cultural articulations
of religious practices, and which use this evidence in a way which does
not allow for the assessment of genuine religious changes (e.g., employs
a given religious trait normatively). We include in this category all
definitions of transcendence that rely upon internal reference to the
practices (i.e., beliefs and/or acts) of a given culture.

For instance, an investigator of comparative religions may
classify the early Taoist belief in the Tao as (to use the Westernterms)

the ultimate ground of reality as a transcendental attitude on the
grounds that it involves a supernatural or a superhuman orientation.
Close inspection of the "Chinese" Taoist "reality map" of the fourth
and fifth centuries B.C.E., however, reveals the profoundly alien
character of these categories or any other similar conventional
denotations of a transcendental attitude (e.g., belief in divine
beings). The researcher is then confronted with three basic options.
First, he may refuse to qualify early Taoism (or, indeed, any traditions
that operate outside a "Newtonian" framework) as religious. For various
reasons, though,--not least of which is the exclusion of at least
95% of human history from the religious domain--this approach has proven
rather unsatisfying. Second, he may elect to ignore early Taoist views
on reality boundaries--on the grounds, for example, that they employed non-
scientific criteria in drawing their "reality maps"--and argue that
because the referent Tao stands outside the bounds of nature and
denotes a superhuman realm, belief in its existence and ontic centrality
constitutes a transcendental attitude. The premise of this approach,
of course, is the equation of the "Newtonian" paradigm and reality, and,
for the reasons that we presented in the last Chapter, it too must be
rejected.

Finally, our investigator may opt to employ ambient reality
standards (in the contemporary case, of course, this means the
"Newtonian" paradigm) and existing religious articulations (e.g., Judeo-
Christian tradition in its "late" bourgeois phase) simply as gauges of
cross-cultural fluctuations in mythic reality/identity constitution.

In our view, this approach is valid because it involves substantive

extrapolation to measure religious changes, not to adjudicate the

truth (e.g., what is real, human and natural under all historical

conditions). As a result, strict controls are placed on the use of

one culture's "reality map" to decode another, controls that allow,

for instance, for the criticism of the reference "map" and of the

society it reflects.

To return to our early Taoist example for instance, our

investigator would use the "Newtonian" definition of "ordinary" reality

as his methodological base-line, would doubtless posit the concept of

the Tao beyond the bounds of this realm (i.e., as a "supernatural"

phenomenon), and would combine this discovery with his observations

concerning the ontological centrality of this concept in the Taoist

"reality map" to conclude that the Taoist belief in this regard is

indeed "transcendental" and hence religious in nature. In no sense,

however, would this verdict imply that early Taoists accepted "Newtonian"

reality standards or that these standards in any way serve as indices

of cross-cultural "truth".

Therefore, in this thesis, to qualify as "transcendental"

a mythic referent need not be otherworldly (e.g., supernatural, super-

human, divine) in any absolute substantive sense. We leave the issue of

"What is on earth?" open. A "transcendental" referent, however, must

be "otherworldly" in the relative substantive sense (i.e., relative to

"ordinary" "Newtonian" reality). Thus, to give an example from contempo-

rary North American society, we do not consider the "Superbowl" to be

a religious activity. For our purposes, though, a quest for a deeper

level of the "self" or an attempt to secure an intra- or inter-species

connection may qualify as religious practices provided that the relevant

referents both mythically supercede the limits of the "ordinary"

"Newtonian" domain and occupy a central position within the "reality

maps" of their devotees. Within this framework, a principal focus of

religious science becomes the correlation of "transcendental" variability

and cultural difference. This periodization, however, operates at a

different "hierarchical level" than that required for the definition

of religion per se.

The above definition of religion simply provides a grid to

register broad religious mutations and is testable only on this basis.

Definitions are not falsifiable in the same way as empirical propositions

are. They are retained, modified or rejected on the grounds of

utility alone.[25] In this instance, the only relevant criterion is

whether or not the components of our definition either singly or collectively

elucidate religious variation at a broad cross-cultural level. Although,

our provisional answer is "yes", we stress that the range of applicability

of the propositions formulated at this definitional "hierarchical level"

must be clearly recognized. All that our definition does is place religion

under the general law of social change (i.e., locate it within the

framework of social mediation) and narrow its terrain down to a

sufficient degree to demarcate religious from secular practice in

general. In this context, it is quite possible for all or part of our

definition to be either amended or rejected. For instance, to stray in

the territory of science fiction, if, at some future point, humans

contact an extra-terrestial intelligence that, further research reveals,

engages in what most usefully may be termed religious activities, then,

at the very least, the "particular group of humans" section of our

definition will have to be modified, as well as perhaps the criteria

we have used to define "transcendence".[26]

Valid propositions elaborated at the definitional "hierarchical

level", however, simply map the frontiers of religious variation.

Accordingly, they must be somewhat vague and possess limited explanatory

value. In the abstract, one cannot say whether or not X practice is

or is not religious. One must place the practice in its precise

social context. In so doing, though, one shifts theoretical sights and

"enters" the next "hierarchical level" of religious science, i.e., the

region of religious periodization.

Here we can determine the relationship between religion and

Marx's theory of communism with increased precision. First, however, we

must specify the "theoretical territory" of the propositions that are

formulated at this level. To repeat, periodization propositions operate

within the limits set by conclusions reached at "lower" "hierarchical

levels" (i.e., for our purposes, the "general social" and the definitional

domains). Periodization investigations describe the functional correla-

tion of religious practices with definite forms of productive and social

intercourse in a manner that elucidates the mutative limits of particular

religious forms and thus helps to establish a religious typology at a

broad cross-cultural level. For instance, typical periodization

researches would involve conclusions regarding the types of religious

practice that can or cannot flourish in Y type of social formation
(or Z mode of production) or the postulation of certain "laws of
transformation" governing the religious effects of particular types
of historical changes. In both cases, both the range of applicability
and the testability of the relevant propositions would be a function
of their capacities to explain religious variation.

For our purposes, this explanatory activity consists of
elucidating the variable life practices of different cultures[27] at
an epochal level by their correlation with distinct "reality maps".
This specification means that the scientist must locate the social
constitution of identity in a given culture in terms of that culture's
"cosmic framework" and cross-reference these co-ordinates (e.g.,
subjectivity/identity and "transcendental" referent) epochally before
he can begin to assess the significance and the mutative limits of specific
religious practices and their correspondence with disparate modes of
social and productive existence.

At this point, we can add some flesh to the skeletal picture
of religion which we drew earlier. In various ways, religious systems
locate the moment of social interchange as a distinct region of a
"transcendental" totality (i.e., a cosmic matrix that supercedes
the bounds of "ordinary" reality). In this context, social organization,
regardless of its particularities, logically appears as both a whole
in its own right (i.e., with its own hierarchical rules and own "action
framework") and as part of a larger unit. Any culture is both continuous
and discontinuous with its environment and a religious system sketches

this dialectic on a canvas that has a "transcendental" centre. In

this sense, we can invoke Arthur Koestler's term and refer to a

religious portrait as a <u>holarchic</u> vision.[28]

What must be stressed--and this point is frequently either

ignored or obscured by Koestler and others--is that the boundaries

humans use to subdivide their universe into an "organismic hierarchy"

(whether religious or not) are simply conveniences and are both variable

and socially mediated. For instance, religious "reality maps" differ

dramatically on precisely where to draw identity lines (e.g., where an

individual begins and ends, the bounds of kinship networks, what belongs

to God and what belongs to man). As we noted above, at the periodization

"hierarchical level", the principal focus of the religious scientist is

to chart these fluctuations and to correlate them with definite productive

and social forms. The scientist may not posit <u>a priori</u> substantive

limits to this boundary constitution without violating the principale

of historical specification. Thus, the question of religious agency

at each holonic level of a particular culture's "reality map" (i.e., who

or what is doing the "self"-organizing) must be left open and is

relevant only insofar as it reflects a particular mode of productive/

social intercourse.

We suggest that the most useful way to periodize religious

forms is to begin by picturing religious systems as different strategies

humans in various societies use for cosmic "house" construction (maintenance,

renovation or demolition).[29] For this metaphoric role, however, we

prefer the Greek word for house, <u>oikos</u>, the root of such English words

as economy and ecology. The fundamental function of religion is to bridge (i.e., hook up) the various regions that constitute the "reality" or a particular culture. At root, this practical synthesis involves the "weaving together" (i.e., in myth and ritual) of different energy forms (including human labour) or the situation of human metabolic interchange as a distinct holon of an ecosystem. As a result, we posit that the implicit or explicit aim of every type of religious practice is either to establish or to maintain eco-harmonics (i.e., the health of a particular "cosmic house").[30]

Within this oikic framework, a religious system need not reflect the presence of a defect or gap of some sort that its practices are designed to repair. A religion may simply express the sense of "participation mystique" felt by the members of a particular society. To invoke mystic terminology, religion may be the way a culture joins the "cosmic dance" and signals its joy at this communion. In all cases, however, religious systems bear the impress of the historically specific forms of productive/social intercourse that mediates their construction (maintenance, renovation or demolition).

This social mediation provides the scientist with a gauge to measure religious changes and thus the means to periodize this variation and to launch a critique of particular religious practices or types. The forms of religion represent the diverse ways in which humans, at different historical points, attempt to make themselves. Accordingly, we suggest that the most useful way of proceeding along the route of religious periodization is to "enter" the "cosmic houses" (=forms of universality)

that humans construct via their "ground floors" (=the specific manner
in which social wholeness is constituted as a moment of this totality).
At this point, of course, the science of religion converges with the
theory and practice of communism.

B)   Communism

Marx provides a scientific foundation for religious periodization
by logically classifying social forms along the theoretical axis of
the historically specific manner in which the human interchange with
nature forms a productive totality. This principle of investigation
guides the empirical study of comparative historical conditions and
permits the composition of a logical picture of their moment of continuity
(=the abstraction of "human essence"), a portrait that simultaneously
evades the "is-ought" cul-de-sac and informs the struggle for communism.
In this way, Marx both preserves the salient content of the notion of
universality (="truly human" or "true community") and resituates it
on the terrain of the historical. In so doing, he fundamentally redefines
the conceptualization of the dialectic of the universal and particular
moments of human existence.

In part, Marx classifies social formations and eras according
to their articulation of the abstraction of "human essence", and,
in this labour, employs elements of his logical portrait of communism
(in particular, its social constituent, the "free, social individual")
as evolutionary referents. These referents serve as explanatory, not
predictive, tools and are testable on the grounds of their capacity to
extend coherence and direction to the process of historical change.

Marx counterposes religion and communism at this theoretical level

and thus it is here that we conduct our exploration of this matter.

Therefore, we emphasize that any conclusions that we draw with respect

to the relationship between communism and religion stand as logical

propositions and must be evaluated in this light.

As a result, in our discussion of this issue, we do not ask:

"Is religious flowering a necessary feature of the historical accession

of communist conditions?"; but rather: "Is it useful to propose that

we include a religious dimension in our conceptualization of communism?".

To begin with, we re-emphasize that--once we have disposed of Marx's

rationalist substantive premises--the solution to this problem lies on

the terrain of anthropogenesis.

Here, "pre-historical" social formations and eras, along with

their corresponding religious forms, appear as types of one-sidedness

(= specific social restrictions on the human capacity for self-making),

rather than as phases in a hierarchical developmental process. For

our purposes, it is only relevant to underline a few features that

distinguish the primitive from the civil eras, and thus we pitch our

discussion at a fairly general or "ideal typical" level to serve the

logical, not historical purpose of elucidating what communism "corrects",

with the understanding that our description is subject to empirical

modification and elaboration at "higher" "hierarchical levels" (e.g.,

the psychology of religion).

In particular, on the basis of the theory of value, we subdivide

human history into three eras (i.e., primitive society, civil society,

and communism) to clarify the "ideal typical" traits of the religious

forms that correspond to these productive modes. To this end, we

classify these periodic characteristics into seven categories as follows:

instance of productive unity; "landscape"; agency; practical bias;

"mentality"; myth and ritual; and, quality. We summarize our hypotheses

in this regard in Appendix B.[31] We subdivide our discussion into two

areas: 1. "Pre-historical" Religions; and, 2. "Communist" Religion.

1. "Pre-historical" Religions

(a) Instance of Productive Unity

In primitive society, the units of production and consumption

coincide, there are no class or political relations, and social relations

are predominantly confined to the territorial parameters of the particular

community. The productive life of the members of the community, as well

as social intercourse in general, are arbitrated in a directly social

manner, within the constraints imposed by a low degree of technical

development (or "instrumental" mastery of both human and natural

resources), relative to the other eras.

In contrast, civil society features the divergence of the

units of production and consumption, the presence of class and political

relations, and, to different degrees and in various forms, a greater

extent of inter-communal contact and thus a qualitatively expanded

social terrain than was possible in the primitive era. Accordingly,

unlike the primitive community, which contains no opposed social interests,

civil productive intercourse is organized along the fracture lines of

class divisions. Thus, the instance of civil productive unity is

also the moment of its disjunction. Insofar as civil productive inter-
course involves the production of commodities the form of this disjunction
is the constitution of an indirect productive totality.[32]

(b) "Landscape"

The instance of productive unity, however, comprises only one
aspect of the constitution of a cultural unit as an ecospheric holon.
This holonic self-making encompasses more than simply productive
activities proper: it includes the totality of practices of a given
culture whereby the members of that culture are "located" as a social
whole within a particular ecospheric context.[33] Consequently, as we
noted in the last Chapter, the periodization of "cultural totalization"
requires a shift to a "higher" "hierarchical level" than that applicable
to the study of productive life proper.

We term the interface that is formed at the point of the
insertion of a culture into a particular ecosphere a "field of practice"
or the "landscape" of a culture. This "field" comprises a bridge
that connects the members of a community to each other, to other humans
(past, present, and future), and to nature (internal and external).
Through the construction of this bridge, a culture metabolically
interacts with its surroundings[34] and links its practices to the
"eco-metabolism" as a whole.[35] We term this energy continuum a "power
grid". The religious life of a culture logically forms a distinct part
of its "landscape" topography. As this "landscape" changes, so does
the pattern of a culture's religious practices.

Primitive and civil societies each feature a distinct type

of "landscape". Primitive topography follows the contours of the

particular community. Primitives appropriate resources from their

natural surroundings to satisfy their wants as members of an undivided

social unit. Their practices comprise a continuum which prohibits any

subdivision into their "material" and "spiritual" sides, at the present

"hierarchical level".[36] This continuum, however, is not simply social

in character. It involves the total ecosystem, or, more exactly, the

insertion of the community within a qualitatively undivided "power grid".

This last characteristic constitutes the differentia specifica

of primitive communal self-making, as opposed to that of their civil

counterparts. In the primitive community, social and ecospheric

wholeness are practically indivisible.[37] Primitives make themselves

by hooking their life practices up to a energy field (e.g., mana),

within which distinct zones denoting disparate "power" gradations

(or identity boundaries generally) may be recognized, but whose

"essence" is unitary. Perhaps the most useful analogy we can draw

in this regard is a human body, in which the various organs and organ

systems function simultaneously as semi-autonomous units and as parts of

a larger whole (i.e., they are holons). In the primitive universe,

a culture also exists in a holonic relationship to its environment

(i.e., it constitutes a "floor" in a "house"). Unlike its civil

counterpart, however, the primitive holon taps into a unitary "power"

source to satisfy its wants, a process that implies that primitives

must conform to the metabolic "laws" that govern the reproduction of the

ecosystem as a whole to succeed. Therefore, we may say that primitives live in an undivided "house". They are not set against their natural surroundings (i.e., their "housemates"); rather, their activities comprise part of a unified "field of practice" that is differentiated, so to speak, as the rungs on a ladder. In this sense, we term the primitive universe a vertical "landscape" of practice.

In civil society, socio-ecospheric congruence (=constitution of a holonic relationship) also operates, only to reverse effect. The "society of the divided whole" gives rise to a fractured "landscape". Its constituents appropriate resources from their natural surroundings to satisfy their wants across the fence of social division. The civil interchange with nature, therefore, follows the fault lines of the particular culture's social fractures. In this way, the moment of communal insertion into the ecosphere--and thus the connection of human energies to the "eco-metabolism"--plays a decisive role in the constitution of the given social formation's "divided universality".

The web of practices of civil society not only forms a socially divided continuum riven by class antagonism, it also comprises a "floor" in a divided "house". Mythically, this cosmic insertion appears as a hook up to a fractured "power grid", because unlike its primitive counterpart, the civil "field of practice" splits into qualitatively distinct zones. Typically, in myth and ritual, this cleavage materializes through the positing of a particular "transcendental" referent that is set apart from the rest of the environment. From the perspective of the "field of practice" taken as a whole, this referent "sits" side by

side with its "opposition". For this reason, we term the civil "land-
scape" horizontal.

(c) Agency

This "field of practice" both constitutes and is constituted
by the on-going activities of determinate associated individuals.
As a result, both these agents and their "landscape" assume historically
specific and congruent forms.[38] This correspondence makes for distinct
types of subjects in each of the major historical subdivisions.[39] In this
study, of course, we are principally concerned with the "ideal typical"
religious bearers. To this end, and for the sake of symmetry, we
follow Marx's terminology (i.e., for primitive society, the objective
individual; for civil society, the class individual; and for communism,
the "free, social individual").[40] In this section, we shall confine
our comments to the first two.

Within the "landscape" of the primitive community, whatever
the diverse practices of the constituent objective individuals, they
comprise a unitary terrain which is confined to the parameters of the
particular culture. Neither these individuals nor their society at large
is internally divided, and the various facets of their life activities
(e.g., their "material" and "spiritual" lives) know no divide. Any
specialization of functions or stratification reflects a communal
distribution of tasks and not a social division of labour based on
opposed social interests. Though conflicts contain the potential of
forming social fracture lines, in the main they follow purely personal
channels. Accordingly, differential access to "power" nodal points

serves, either directly or indirectly, the common interest, and is
not set against this interest to foster a particular social end.[41]

In contrast, the fault lines of the social division of labour
that blemish the civil "landscape" symmetrically disfigure the civil
constituents. Class individuals, formed by the antagonism of opposed
social interests, wage this civil war with every step and breath that
they take (e.g., dichotomization of subjective and objective, informal
and formal sides). Nowhere is this tendency more manifest than in
civil religious agency. The religious class individual serves a
"divided universal" and thus his practice revolves around the setting
apart of one region of the "field of practice" (or one side of the
"human essence") against another. Typically, this process involves the
channelling of practices that are designed to satisfy spiritual wants in
the direction of a praticularized "transcendental" referent. Whatever the
form this operation assumes, its net effect is to solidify the regime
of the "divided universal" and, thereby, to further a particular social
interest.[42]

(d) Practical Bias

The two "pre-historical" eras each evince a particular form of
one-sidedness, or, as we shall call it, a specific practical bias.
These biases reflect the predominant "material" imperatives that shape
the contours of social life generally in each of these eras. For our
purposes here, these biases may be viewed as mirror images of each other.

In particular, three conditions determine the practical
biases of the primitive and civil eras respectively, each of which

stands in an inverted relation to each other. First, whereas the "landscape" of primitive society comprises a continuum uniting the activities of all "housemates", in civil society the "field of practice" is divided. Second, whereas the boundaries of the primitive "field" typically extend to the reaches of the particular community and no farther, the civil "field" typically encompasses the terrain of inter-communal relations. Finally, whereas primitive activities tend to involve a relatively low level of technical sophistication, civil practices tend to accent technical development and generally exhibit a higher degree of technical expertise.

As a result of these interconnected conditions, primitive and civil relations tend to confer selective advantage on opposite traits. This bias has ramifications both for the type of agent sponsored in each of these eras and for the type of "mentality" these agents exhibit.

Generally speaking, primitives satisfy their wants by establishing an "expressive" relationship with their natural surroundings.[43] This tendency does not mean that they do not employ tool-making to capture game, for instance. It means that their technical practices are subordinated to the requirements of a mythopoeic "action framework".[44] The cultivation of this modality, however, often occurs at the expense of man's technical development (i.e., what we shall term the "instrumental" mastery of social and natural resources).[45] Accordingly, under certain conditions, the primitive "path" proves maladaptive and gives way to its civil negation.

In contrast, again generally speaking, civil constituents satisfy their wants through the medium of "instrumental" control. In the main, this bias conforms to the imperatives established by the dominant mode of social surplus product extraction within the social formation as a whole.[46] In this context, advantage is granted to those traits or capacities that further, in one way or another, the hegemonic particular interest. As a rule, this bias means that those practices (as well as their social/psychological correlates) that are associated with an "expressive" orientation to the social/natural environment are either suppressed altogether or, more commonly, subordinated to the reproduction of the conditions of "instrumental" control, as socially defined in specific situations.[47]

(e) "Mentality"

The conditions that produce a specific practical bias in the different "pre-historical" eras, also occasion a corresponding "mode of thought", or, as we prefer to call it, a particular type of "mentality".[48] In modern anthropological/psychological circles, the classification and evaluation of "mentalities" generates extensive and heated debate. For our purposes, however, we believe that a comparative portrait of primitive and civil "mentalities" is both necessary and possible.

Specifically, we argue for the synthesis of the empirical and theoretical conclusions of the Piagetian school of cognitive development[49] and the "bi-modal" researches into brain evolution and functioning.[50] Obviously, in this thesis extensive comment on this

question is impossible and here we can only advance a few general hypotheses and add two qualifications to our endorsation of the above synthesis. First, most discussion of "mentality" periodization has proceeded either in ignorance of or opposition to the principles of historical materialism, resulting in extensive confusion and error in this regard. This defect requires correction.[51] Second, in general the two research schools noted above have adopted the "rationalist paradigm" as their common frame of reference. Accordingly, the various "mentality" types to which they refer come to connote distinct hierarchical developmental stages (i.e., whether at the ontogenetic or the phylogenetic levels or both), with "Newtonian" reality standards almost invariably accepted as the criteria of scientific competence.[52] Of course, we reject this position.

We subdivide our "mentality" periodization into three categories: (i) cognitive processes; (ii) hemispheric dominance; and, (iii) identity parameters (i.e., where the subjects in question posit the boundaries of their world-view). In so doing, we employ the terminology of the above psychological schools metaphorically, and not as a literal subscription to their categorization.[53]

Within this framework, we classify the primitive "mentality" as: (i) "pre-operatory"; (ii) right hemispheric (=intuitive mode); and, (iii) "non-Newtonian" (e.g., no subject-object duality, animation of whole cosmos). In contrast, we view civil "mentality" as: (i) "operatory"; (ii) left hemispheric (=analytic mode); and, (iii) "Newtonian" (e.g., subject-object duality, mortification of part of cosmos).[54]

(f) Myth and Ritual

Where the object of theoretical investigation is the epochal

cross-referencing of "landscapes" with respect to their corresponding

types of representations and enactments of the hook up of the practices

of a particular cultural group with a "transcendental" referent, we may

speak of a specifically religious region.[55] The epochal periodization

of religious types, however, cannot be based solely on a description of

the relevant "landscape". It must also incorporate conclusions

reached at the levels of agency, practical bias, and "mentality",

as well as the results of empirical surveys of comparative religious

practices. From this study, religion logically subdivides into two

inter-linked categories: (i) the representation of the "landscape"

(=the mythic moment); (ii) the enactment of the mythic portrayal of the

"transcendental" hook up (=the ritual moment).

Primitive and civil religions address qualitatively distinct

types of "problems".[56] Under conditions that spawn an "expressive"

practical bias, primitives face the dilemma of the insertion of an

undivided community within a particular ecosphere. The primitive

religious need system answers the question "Where do we fit in?"

not "How do we heal X wounds?". Further, at the centre of this system

are what we shall term "primary" questions, which concern such matters

as existential transition points (e.g., birth, death, maturation,

sexuality) and the interchange with nature (e.g., boundary lines between

humans and other organisms). Though the posing and exploration of these

types of queries involve socially mediated identity determinations, they

do not necessarily imply that a condition of "primary alienation" obtains.[57]

In contrast, in the civil era, under conditions that foster an "instrumental" practical bias, in their religious practices class individuals wrestle with the difficulties that attend the constitution of a divided social whole. The gravitational centre of the civil religious need system consists of the "divided universal". This system addresses the question "How do we heal the 'wounded land'?" and incorporates "primary" concerns within this framework (i.e., in the civil religious systems the posing and exploration of "primary" questions take place along the fault lines of social division).

Consequently, though both primitive and civil religions represent attempts to solve "problems", the qualitative divide that separates the two eras—both with respect to the types of problems their respective constituents face and to the different types of need systems these disparate conditions give rise to—means that their corresponding religious forms portray and enact their "solutions" in qualitatively distinct ways, notwithstanding any formal similarities.[58] What follows is a brief delineation of some of these typical differences, logically subdivided into the areas of myth on the one hand, and ritual on the other.

i. Myth

Primitive and civil myths (="reality maps") each exhibit radically distinct traits. The primitive "reality map" depicts a unitary ecosphere with a homogeneous "power grid".[59] This "map" demarcates distinct topographical features as well as qualitatively uneven "power" zones within the relevant "landscape". This internal differentiation of the "eco-metabolism" underlies the metabolic "laws" that (formally)

govern the primitives' "house". These "laws" determine how primitives

can "tap into" the primal ecospheric "power" source (="transcendental"

referent) to satisfy their specific wants by shaping the contours of

"house" inter-action, within both the human and non-human spheres

(e.g., to hunt successfully most primitives must obey the "law" of

ecospheric equilibrium). The premise of this need system is that no

qualitative divide separates the various "housemates". As a result,

primitive myths typically draw identity boundaries using "non-Newtonian"

points of reference (e.g., no subject-object duality).[60]

While civil religious "reality maps" represent the insertion

of the "community" within a particular ecospheric context as if the

conditions of the primitive community obtain in the civil era as well

(i.e., the community is undivided), the way in which this social/

ecospheric unity is mythically constituted betrays the illusory

character of this portrayal.[61] In civil myths, though a moment of

cosmic continuity is usually posited (e.g., cosmogonically or ontologically),

this moment is either downplayed (i.e., placed in the background) or

reserved as an esoteric privilege (i.e., distanced from everyday

religious practice) and the moment of discontinuity is accented.[62]

Through this process, the cleavages of the particular civil social

formation are "read into" the cosmos as ontological fractures.

The paradigmatic mythic form of these rifts is the bifurcation

of the cosmos into sacred and profane regions. The fault lines that

appear along this divide mark qualitative ruptures in the "power grid",

and not quantitative gradations as in the primitive case. Civil "reality

maps" feature discrete "power" centres or "transcendental" referents of various forms (e.g., gods, principles, forces, planes) that are set apart both from each other and from the environment at large on a horizontal "landscape". In the broad sense of the term, the boundary lines that demarcate these regional subdivisions serve as <u>territorial</u> insignia that denote the ownership of a particular area by a specific deity, for instance.[63]

The precise character of these civil mythic dichotomies varies with the historical context and the stage of civil society in general. The periodization of this diversity and its social correlation could form a fascinating study in its own right. Here, however, we confine our comments to a listing of the major types of oppositions in this regard. It should be understood, though, that historically a single religious tradition can (and usually does) encompass all of these bifurcations at the same or different points in its evolution. We suggest that the major civil mythic dichotomies included the oppositions of:

- one god (or principle) and another[64]
- god and man, and/or god and nature[65]
- spirit (soul, mind) and flesh (body, matter)
- freedom (good, knowledge) and slavery (evil, ignorance)
- esoteric (inner, private) and exoteric (outer, public).[66]

What is absolutely crucial to grasp, however, if one is to understand the specificity of civil myth-making, is that the above mythic fractures are precisely the way in which the moment of "communal"

unity is ideologically constituted in the civil era. In short,

mythic clefts comprise bridges to the "illusory community".

Accordingly, any shifts that necessitate a reconstitution of "communal"

unity (i.e., as a divided whole) are reflected in the dialectical

interplay of mythic oppositions (e.g., the incorporation of "alien"

gods into a pantheon, a divine incarnation that violates conventional

boundaries, the theological metamorphosis of evil into an instrument

of god, the transformation of esoteric norms into exoteric injunctions).

In all civil religions, however, the reconstituted universality

that issues from this mythic dialectic remains a <u>particularlity</u> that

is set apart from a now similarly reconstituted "opposition". The unity

remains false, and the accent continues to be placed on <u>discontinuity</u>.

Thus, regardless of the mythic topography, "excursions" into the civil

mythic realm always operate on the premise of a qualitative divide that

separates the agent from all or part of the "landscape" (e.g., in episte-

mological terms, a subject-object duality). In this sense, civil myths

chart the contours of religious practice using "Newtonian" reference

points to draw the relevant identity boundaries.

ii. Ritual

Similar types of discrepancies appear on the ritual side of

civil religious practices as well. These differences logically fall into

two categories: the "ritual field" (=the framework of enactment); and,

the content of ritual activity (=what is done on this "field").

The contours of the primitive "ritual field" coincide with the

boundaries of the "landscape". The unitary character of this terrain

obviates any practice that is designed to heal social/ecospheric fractures.

Therefore, the context of ritual activity is an "eco-continuum". The

interface of communal insertion within the ecosphere comprises the axis

of unification for all the assorted activities of the communal constituents

as well as the moment of continuity that "ties" communal life in general

back to the "power grid". Through this channel the practical energies

of the communal members become <u>mobile</u> components of the "eco-metabolic"

system as mythically defined within a particular culture.[67] This

"release" of activity from its particularistic confines within the

framework of a vertical "landscape" we term the transformation of labour

into "play". When primitives "play" they attempt to satisfy their

wants by "hunting" for "power" along the "power grid". This mode of

practice involves both the flexibile arbitration of identity boundaries

on "non-Newtonian" lines and the harmonization of "hunting" activities

with the underlying "house" rules that govern a particular "eco-metabolism".

As this process closely resembles melodic counterpoint in a musical score,

we refer to it as a "dance".[68]

How primitives "dance" comprises the <u>content</u> of their ritual

practice, i.e., <u>where</u> primitives plot their identity boundaries and thus how

they comprehend the metabolic "laws" that govern their "house" interactions.

In general, the contours of this interchange reflect the determinate

articulation of the primitives' "expressive" bias. As a rule, this

inflection tends to accent the passive moment of the relationship with

nature at the expense of the active side,[69] with the constituent objective

individuals interpellated as subordinate actors within a more or less

fixed mythical landscape. Within this framework, human activity per se

is assigned to the lower "floor" of the relevant cosmic "house" and

the principal cosmic subjects (i.e., higher up on the "power grid") are

non-human agents of some form or another.[70]

In civil religions, the "ritual field" and the "landscape" also

coincide. Civil rituals represent attempts to heal social/ecospheric

wounds within the framework of a heterogenous "power grid". The "eco-

metabolic" cleavage means that the direction of ritual practice--and thus

the civil religious "need system" in general--is lateral (i.e., healing

is possible only on the basis of a shift in condition). The civil religious

"patient" must "move" from the profane to the sacred region. This meta-

morphosis (=salvation, liberation)[71] corresponds to the "successful"

link up, either directly or indirectly, with a particularized "transcendental"

referent. This connection then becomes the form in which social/ecospheric

divisions are "healed", and thus the axis of the "illusory community",

however it is understood.

The interface of civil communal insertion within an ecosphere

simultaneously comprises its moments of unity and social/ecospheric

fission. The enactment of salvation is similarly constituted. Both

the "transcendental" referent and the practices that are directed towards

it are set apart from their profane surroundings. To effect a "successful"

salvational link-up, the civil devotee must be able to distinguish

between these regions and to adapt his practice accordingly.[72] He must

be able to recognize both "where he is coming from" and "where he is

going to". Paradigmatically, this process is articulated in propertarian

terms, i.e., the devotee must know who (or what) he does and does not

belong to, in the broad sense of the term. Concretely, this practical

discrimination intersects with the differential allocation of resources

within the society at large, a phenomenon that occurs at a wide variety

of interpenetrating levels (e.g., economic, political, psychological).[73]

The salvational "pipeline" (="power grid"), in short, confirms

the internal schisms that underlie the civil condition by opposing one

side of practice (or one social/ecospheric region) to another. Thus,

we term the channelling of energies into the salvational "sluice"

(=civil ritual practice) to satisfy the wants of particular civil consti-

tuents a species of "alienated labour". The paradigmatic form of this type

of labour is the ritual of purification, whereby the "cleansing"--

whether directly or indirectly--of the everyday "self" of the civil

devotee comprises the fundamental precondition for the "transcendental"

connection. To satisfy their religious wants, in other words, civil

constituents must ready themselves for ownership by self-laceration

and the substitution of a part of themselves for the "whole human being"

and its field of practice.

Therefore, whatever the form of civil salvational practice, it

turns on the antagonism of two different regions of the "landscape",

a cleavage that is "materially" rooted in the division of social classes.

The "unity" posited in civil religions, of course, is abstracted from

this "material" rift. As a result, a typical feature of the civil "ritual

field" is the expulsion from the sphere of "material life" of the zone of

"liberation". Emancipation is located in an "other" worldly community of

some form that is distanced from the "material" realm in some critical

respect.[74] In this sense, we term the framework of civil ritual <u>ethical</u>,

because civil salvational activity is premised on the dichotomy of "is"

and "ought". This ethical dimension is reflected in both "what is to

be done in civil rituals" and "who is to do it", although the concrete

translation of these questions varies historically.[75]

This variation expresses the circumstances that determine the

<u>content</u> of civil ritual at any one point. This substantive dimension

involves the demarcation of the boundary lines of the "illusory community"

(in the broad sense of the term) and hence the contours of salvational

practice in general. In the main, this delineation reflects the

"instrumental" bias of the civil condition as determinately constituted

in a particular social formation.

This relation may be summarized as follows. Civil religious

"solutions" (i.e., in the form of specific beliefs and acts) must satisfy

"instrumental" criteria to survive and flourish. They must <u>heal</u> the

prevalent social/ecospheric wounds to the satisfaction of the afflicted

population.[76] The character of these solvents, their concrete relationship

to the dominant social order, and their efficacy in the eyes of different

social groups or individuals (i.e., their social articulation) varies.[77]

For instance, they need not always legitimate the sway of the existing

ruling class.

For our purposes, the qualification of this variation is less

significant than the general historical pattern of civil religious

evolution. In this latter regard, as a rule, the parameters of civil

ritual practice fluctuate with the mutable requirements of the hegemonic

particular interest within the society at large. Thus, for example,

as social changes precipitate tensions in the exercise of this class'

rule (e.g., resulting in the progressive de-legitimization of the ruling

class' pretensions to represent the common interest), a reconstitution

of the "illusory community" becomes necessary.[78] Under certain

circumstances (e.g., those that occasioned the development of bourgeois

democracies in Europe in the last few centuries), this reconstitution

assumes the form of the segmentation of the "illusory community" into

political and religious regions, a division of labour--which is neces-

sarily "read through" the filter of the division of labour within the

society at large--which exists _in potentia_ in all phases of civil society.

In any case, as long as civil conditions persist, the reconstitution of

civil universality simply amounts to a change in _form_, with the various

subdivisions of the "illusory community" "satisfying" different types

of wants in assorted ways, but with the same net effect (i.e., the

reproduction of civil relations). Accordingly, we suggest that it is

valid to assign the religious form of the "illusory community" paradig-

matic status, both logically and historically.[79]

    (g) Quality

    Both primitive and civil religions arise on a "pre-historical"

social foundation. Consequently, they both represent and enact the

insertion of "communal" life into a particular ecosphere in a false

manner (i.e., they both confirm a condition of "false universality"

and, in this sense, may both be convicted of helping to reproduce false

consciousness). Each of these religious forms, however, commits its

malfeasance in this respect in qualitatively distinct ways.

For example, primitive "reality maps" portray an undivided ecosystem. In so doing, they accurately express the unitary character of their society. If and when these "maps" err, more than likely, they do so as a function of identity boundary demarcation. These errors fall into two groups: the representation of universality; and the attribution of powers and capacities. In the first case, primitives typically place their particular community and its surroundings at the centre of the cosmos. From the modern standpoint, therefore, their universal horizons appear somewhat limited and unbalanced. In the second case, primitives typically assign qualities to non-human entities that do not properly belong to them.[80] At times, this improper attribution proceeds at the expense of the "human" sphere, and, in general, primitives tend to accent the passive moment of the human interchange with nature. The above defects stem from the conditions that combine-- in historically specific ways--to foster an "expressive" bias in primitive self-making, and a corresponding "instrumental" retardation of individual growth. Thus, there is no question that primitive practices are one-sided and unbalanced and that, in this respect, many of the negative comments concerning the qualities of primitive religion by Marx and other rationalists contain at least a grain of truth and must be incorporated into a scientific periodization of this religious form.

Civil "reality maps" also portray an undivided ecosystem (i.e., they contain a moment of continuity). In this picture, it appears as if the conditions of the primitive world still obtain in the civil era as well.

This misrepresentation constitutes the <u>differentia specifica</u> of civil mystification, and is advanced by the substitution of one part (side, trait) of society ("human essense") for the whole community ("whole human being"). The thematic axis of the identity errors committed in the civil era, in other words, is the "illusory community" (for which, as we have noted above, the religious form is the paradigm). Therefore, when civil constituents err in their portrayal and enactment of the dialectic of universal and particular, they do so on the side of the instance of "communal" unity <u>per se</u>, and not, as is the case with their primitive cousins, on the side of the <u>internal</u> demarcation of boundary lines within the framework of an undivided community.

These civil prevarications reflect the prevalence of circumstances that combine--in historically specific ways--to produce an "instrumental" bias in civil self-making and a corresponding "expressive" retardation of individual growth. In this way, civil self-making stands as the obverse of its primitive counterpart: equally one-sided and unbalanced.

This judgement fundamentally conflicts with that of the rationalist tradition. In our view, all the various modes of practice that are developed only one-sidedly in "pre-historical" social formations represent <u>equally</u> legitimate forms of human self-making. We reject any hierarchical developmental scheme that implicitly or explicitly equates the cultivation of human capacities in the "instrumental" mode (e.g., "tool-making" as conventionally understood) with human maturation. That is not to say that these different "paths" are equally effective at every task. Where the object is to dig a trench, on average (i.e., under normal bourgeois conditions) a front-end loader does the trick better than a mythopoeic

invocation. However, not all historical conditions give rise to "instrumental" needs of this type. Different social circumstances occasion different types of needs (and hence extend selective advantage to disparate types of strategies for "need satisfaction"). It is this typical discrepancy that is expressed in the practical biases of the primitive and civil eras respectively.

These biases confer advantage on opposite traits. To simplify somewhat, we may say that the primitive era educates man's "intuitive" side, while the civil era cultivates his "analytic" side.[81] At the general evolutionary level, neither modality is "higher" than the other. They are both indispensable to human self-making, athough in "pre-history" this compatibility tends to become somewhat lost in the veil of one-sidedness.

2. "Communist" Religion

At this point, we can begin to address the question of the relationship between Marx's theory of communism and religion.[82] Although it is possible to restrict the logical picture of communism to the narrow limits of precise social modifications effected in a determinate historical context (e.g., the establishment of a directly social mode of resource appropriation on an "advanced" technical foundation), we believe that this approach is inadequate. From both theoretical and practical standpoints, it is useful to attribute a religious dimension to communism. This attribution need not--indeed, must not--violate the scientific integrity of the communist project as fundamentally formulated by Marx (i.e., once cleared of the underbrush of invalid substantive

premises). In advancing this argument, however, we clearly move beyond

Marx's conceptualization of the communist problematic per se. Neverthe-

less, we intend to supplement Marx's insights, not to bury them.

Our defense and elaboration of this thesis logically subdivides

into two areas, which, for simplicity's sake, we pose in the form of two

questions: (a) "Why are communist relations, as a historically specific

mode of productive intercourse, most usefully described as logically

involving a purposeful attempt, by a particular group of humans, to

hook up their practices with a "transcendental" referent?; and, (b)"What

is the nature of this religious system (i.e., what are the typical features

of "communist" religion)?".[83]

(a) Why is it useful to attribute to communism a religious dimension?

In the discussion that follows two points must be kept in mind.

First, we reiterate that our propositions pertaining to this question are

logical, not historical, in nature. Thus, for instance, we readily

acknowledge that in certain historical circumstances the term religion

may hinder rather than facilitate the communist project. The word

religion, especially in contemporary Western societies, has come to

connote almost exclusively negative traits and, in practice, is often

indistinguishable from its conventional civil forms. Accordingly, an

alternative word may well become necessary. The same condition, however,

may also apply to the term communism.

Second, we restrict the theoretical territory of our conclusions

to the rough area covered by Marx's concept of "human essence" and to

the logical picture of communism he draws from these abstractions.[84]
Particularly in his later writings, Marx eschews any detailed description
of communist conditions, for the excellent reason that he believes that
communism is not the product of any predetermined plan, but rather the issue
of associated human action, made in response to determinate circumstances.
For the most part, therefore, Marx leaves the question of what blossoms
when humans, for the first time in history, take control of their own
lives to be answered by these people themselves if and when communism
ever comes to pass. As we have seen, though, Marx does not strictly
adhere to this "open book" position. He delineates several "topographical"
features of the "historical" landscape, including the exclusion of religion
in any positive sense. On these grounds, we contest elements of Marx's
portrayal of communism and add a few landmarks of our own to his rough
sketches.

There are basically two reasons why it is useful to attribute a
religious dimension to communism. First, the most satisfactory way of
picturing the aperture of anthropogenesis that "history" offers is to
conceive it as the termination of all (socially imposed) one-sidedness
and the fruition of "all-rounded" self-making at the general social level.
This anthropogenetic equilibration logically implies a qualified reclama-
tion of primitive religious elements in the communist era (=the "all-
roundedness" argument). Second, the evolutionary flexibility that the
construct of "history" necessarily connotes logically implies that its
concomitant social relations contain a religious moment (=the nature of
"history" argument).

i. The "All-roundedness" Argument

Marx draws his logical portrait of communism within the parameters of the "rationalist paradigm". The various features of this era that he sketches--a sensual metamorphosis, subjective-objective unity, the reclamation of nature, the satisfaction of "radical needs", to name but a few--have as their social medium a rational community of directly associated producers. In this framework, the accession of communist relations appears as the maturation of the human species along an "instrumental" axis or the "growing up" of those paradigmatic "normal children of humanity", the classical Greeks.

There is an alternative view of communism, however, that sustains the core of Marx's insights into this era, and yet rearticulates them in a more logically satisfying manner. This alternative vision pictures communism as the abolition of all forms of one-sidedness in human self-making. In this new portrait, the dawn of "history" appears not so much as the "growing up" of the species as the equilibration, in the society as a whole, of all the developmental tributaries of "pre-history".[85] Consequently, the social constituents of communism (i.e., "free, social individuals") should not be conceived as rational adults who have dispensed with their "childish" toys, but rather as "whole, human beings" who, in the ensemble of their practices, unite previously opposed traits (e.g., "analytic" and "intuitive" capacities).[86]

This "all-rounded" perspective is more logically satisfying for two interrelated reasons. First, it avoids the methodological errors, which we discussed in the previous Chapter, that attend the developmental privileging of one anthropogenetic vector. Second, it permits a more

comprehensive and pliable delineation of the communist instantiation of the dialectic of universal and particular. As a result, it allows for the "correction" of any one-sided substantive restrictions that Marx and others have placed on communism, based on their determinate imbrication within one "shoot" of the "tree" of humanity. The sexual and ecological moments of communism are simply the most obvious areas where these "corrections" are required.

Less obvious, perhaps, but no less significant, are the theoretical modifications necessitated by the inclusion of the vast, mostly uncharted, territory of the primitive era in the vista of human history. Logically, an "all-rounded" historical epoch, abstractly constituted by the divers "paths" of "pre-historical" self-making, must encompass the primitive anthropogenetic "trail" as well.

This inclusion does not mean that the "free, social individual" is simply a "returned native". The communist and primitive eras represent distinct anthropogenetic stages. For instance, unlike his distant primitive cousin, the "free, social individual" arises on an "advanced" technical foundation and a "materially" underwritten planetary culture. Hence, insofar as primitive anthropogenetic traits re-emerge in a communist incarnation, like all "pre-historical" characteristics, they do so in a qualitatively altered form.

In the historical materialist tradition, this qualified primitive reclamation is often termed, following Hegel, the "return of youth on a higher level".[87] Implicit in this characterization is not simply a recognition that humanity has lost certain capacities (e.g., sensuousness)

with the passage from the primitive to the civil eras, but also that an intrinsic feature of the superiority of communism is its recovery of the adaptive strengths of childhood. Extending these insights, we contend that, today, the significance of communism as an evolutionary stage must be fundamentally recast. Communism does not simply represent a "leap forward" along the road of "instrumental" progress. It also represents a step back, or a qualified return to an earlier condition. In short, communism logically embodies a historically specific social variant of the biological adaptive strategy of paedomorphosis.[88] Through this strategic route, a species retreats a few rungs and renews--albeit in a qualitatively altered sense--elements of its "childhood". In this way, it avoids the cul-de-sac of specialization and enhances its capacity for a flexible response to the flux of environmental circumstances. Communism represents just such an escape hatch for a human species that, at present, stands imperilled by, among other things, the nightmare reality of "instrumental" particularism.[89]

Until now, to the degree to which Marx and his followers have allowed for the qualified recovery of the primitive "trail" in their logical portraits of communism, they have done so within strict rationalist limits. Typically, they have admitted the primitive tendency to unify "art" and "life" and rejected primitive religion.

For several reasons, we dispute this rejection and conclude that, notwithstanding the differences that separate the communist from the primitive eras, to include a qualified primitive mode of self-making in one's vision of "all-rounded" individuality, logically one must make

room for a qualified version of the religious side of this "trail" as

well. First, empirical evidence, gathered by anthropological studies,

by recent "trans-personal" psychological researches, and by cross-cultural

surveys of different mystical traditions, suggests (a) that primitive

conditions strongly accent the "intuitive" mode of practice, relative to

their civil counterparts,[90] and (b) that an intrinsic feature of this

"intuitive" modality is the cultivation of a mystic sensibility.[91] As this

type of consciousness involves a transcendence of conventional reality

standards, and thus--given its referential ontological centrality--is

religious by our definition, it logically follows that the "all-rounded"

reclamation of this mode of self-making extends a religious moment to

"free, social individual" practice.

Second, methodologically speaking, at the relevant "hierarchical

level", it is impermissible to distinguish between the religious and

the "material" moments of primitive self-making.[92] Though this type of

distinction is useful and indeed necessary to explain broad historical

changes, insofar as the object of investigation is to elucidate the

specificity of the primitive constitution of communal unity relative to

their civil counterparts, it is downright misleading. Anthropological

evidence overwhelmingly indicates that it is precisely the continuity of

the "spiritual" and the "material" sides of existence that sets

primitives apart from civil constituents.[93] In our terms, an integral

element of primitive "social wholeness making" is the insertion of

communal practices within a vertical "landscape" in which communal and

ecospheric wholeness comprise an indivisible unity.[94]

We suggest that it is this type of "landscape" (i.e., classlessness per se, plus ecospheric unity) that occasions the superior identity boundary plasticity of primitives, relative to their civil successors. Quite simply, in civil society, anthropogenesis proceeds along the glacial fault lines of social division. Social/natural interchange tends to be frozen along points of discontinuity. Thus, the exploration of the boundary lines that connect civil constituents both to each other (including other generations) and to the rest of the ecosphere becomes correspondingly fractured. In particular, identity investigations (e.g., searches for "meaning"), necessarily conducted by individuals at war with themselves (i.e., class individuals whose "selves" are defined by their opposition to an other), are abstracted from the sphere of "material life" and are "read through" the filter of existing social cleavages. In contrast, primitives arbitrate their social/natural interchange in a directly social manner through practices that are indivisibly interwoven with "material life". Logically, the absence of internal "landscape" divisions facilitates a greater fluidity in the constitution of identity boundaries than when these fissures are present.

In advancing this position, we draw upon the distinction between the "field" and the content of primitive myth and ritual that we made in the previous subsection. The condition of social/ecospheric unity, not the precise location of primitive identity markers, logically accounts for the superior identity boundary flexibility of primitives, relative to civil constituents.

On this basis, we can begin to locate, logically, the communist "landscape". Without question, communist practices differ significantly

in content from their primitive counterparts. These differences reflect,
for instance, the "advanced" technical foundation and the planetary
scope of the communist as against the primitive eras. They do not
logically relate to the form of productive/social intercourse per se.
In this last respect, the communist and the primitive eras are as one
(i.e., they are both directly social, unitary, classless modes of inter-
course). Accordingly, we suggest that the most useful way of logically
understanding the communist "landscape" is by cross-reference with
primitive society. When communism reclaims the primitive "path" of
self-making, it also "purchases" the primitive "landscape". An indelible
feature of this "field", though, is the indivisibility of the "spiritual"
and the "material" sides of social/ecospheric wholeness (i.e., at the
relevant "hierarchical level"). In short, the baby and the bathwater
constitute a non-negotiable "package deal" in this case. Thus, with their
"landscape", "free, social individuals" also "get religion".

This theoretical approach has a least two advantages over the
"orthodox" conception of communism. First, it provides a much more
satisfying introduction to the ecological implications of the communist
era than has previously been the case. Until recently, the ecological
moment of this era has been a relatively neglected aspect of its periodi-
zation in historical materialist literature.[95] This weakness urgently
requires correction, particularly in a historical context in which the
economic and the ecospheric crises are so tightly interwoven. Second, it
helps to explain how the dawn of "history" results in a qualitative
"leap forward" in anthropogenetic openness.

ii. The Nature of "History" Argument

The conventional historical materialist view of "history" properly

stresses the aperture of self-making that is made possible by the communist

extinction of "pre-historical" social and "material" fetters. "History"

only commences with the triumph of communism because only then does a

form of productive association arise that places "man himself" as the

end, rather than the means, of social intercourse. For this reason,

communism enables the "rewinning of man".

From Marx on, this reclamation has been linked with the concept of

the "realm of freedom". The qualitative and quantitative expansion of

"free time"--and, thus, by extension, the emancipation of a significant

proportion of human activity from the imperatives of necessity--constitutes

the principal measure of the anthropogenetic advance that communism

makes possible, an index whose social correlate is the degree of individual

development.

This "orthodox" portrait of what is spawned with the dawn of

"history" constitutes a necessary but insufficient picture at the

present point. It is too narrow in scope and a fleshing out is both

useful and possible now. This further delineation necessarily involves

the attribution of a religious dimension to communism.

In brief, our argument is as follows. It is simply contradictory

for "orthodox" adherents to posit the aperture of possibilities for

man's self-becoming as central to the evolutionary superiority

(necessity) of the communist era, and, simultaneously, to place a priori

rationalist straitjackets on anthropogenesis. If the "realm of freedom"

is to be truly such, all <u>a priori</u> limits—including those of the "rationalist paradigm"—must be jettisoned. When "history" begins, <u>all</u> the "paths" of self-making embodied (however one-sided) in the tributaries of "pre-history" are reclaimed as practical possibilities and the limits of this recovery may not be predetermined. "Man" makes both himself and his surroundings <u>anew</u>, and what this process involves (substantively) can be ascertained only in the concrete.

Logically, however, we can draw a number of conclusions from this condition of radical historical openness. If we posit the "re-winning of man" as the thematic gravitational centre of "history", the obvious question is: "What (or who) is 'man'?". Within the "rationalist paradigm", of course, this query presents no special difficulties, because "Newtonian" boundary lines are assumed to be more or less <u>natural</u>. Once we reject this assumption, though, the statement "man makes himself", for instance, becomes radically problematic, for the simple reason that both the subject and object must now be assigned indefinite limits. This indeterminancy not only logically coheres with the conception of "history" as <u>open</u>, but it also provides the best available interpretation of this condition.[96] Quite simply, if the accession of communist relations is really to loose the gates of self-becoming, it must render the <u>boundary lines</u> that connect man to and divide him from both his surroundings and his human fellows (including other generations) radically malleable. This flexibility implies that an intrinsic—albeit perhaps only <u>in potentia</u>—feature of self-making in the communist era is the capacity to transcend concentional identity boundaries.

This capacity, plus the thematic centrality of "man" as the subject-
object of history in the communist period, adds up to our thesis concer-
ning the utility of conceiving this era as containing a religious
moment. We suggest that a pervasive aspect of what humans "do" at the
dawn of "history" is purposefully attempt (by virtue of their mode of
association) to explore (=hook up with) the mystery (by virtue of the
indeterminacy of "reality" boundary lines) of "man himself". In the
communist era, in short, "man" becomes the "transcendental" referent.
Thus, in this period, when "man" makes both himself and his environment
anew, he is implicitly crossing over into the territory of what, on
conventional "reality maps", is usually marked as the province of "God".

(b) What are the ideal typical features of "Communist" Religion?

Obviously, it is impossible to predict what "communist" religion
will look like or even if it will develop at all. A variety of factors
will affect this process, including the precise conjunction of internal
and external forces that both precipitate insurrections and shape the
course of the revolutionary process in different social formations, the
cultural backgrounds of these societies (especially the class articulation
of religious practices), and, of course, the political orientations of
the indigenous religious organizations (and/or their various fractions).
In addition, the evolution of religious practices in "post-capitalist"
societies depends in no small measure on the general character of the
regimes in question. In this regard, we have no hesitation in asserting
that "communist" religion cannot emerge in the absence of a genuine
socialist democracy, a political formation that necessarily inaugurates

its own eventual "withering away".[97]   In other words, just as communism

in general cannot emerge except as the product of human self-emancipation,

its corresponding religious form cannot arise unless it is planted in the

soil of self-determination.

Notwithstanding these historical limits to what we can say about

"communist" religion, we believe that it is both possible and useful

to sketch several "topographical" features that logically distinguish it

from other religious forms. To this end, we employ the same typology that

we used in our analysis of the "pre-historical" religions.

i. Instance of Productive Unity

In the communist era, productive intercourse is arbitrated in

a directly social manner, on an advanced technical foundation that

spans the expanse of the planet. Though at this global level the units

of consumption and production do not coincide (i.e., a social economy

prevails), as is the case in primitive society, a unitary "common interest"

obtains and consequently no class and political relations are possible.

ii. "Landscape"

On all essentials, save one, the primitive and communist

"landscapes" are identical. They are both vertical (=comprise a unitary

"power grid"), they both feature a practical continuum that admits no

dualism,[98] and are both constituted by the practical indivisibility of

social and ecospheric wholeness. In both eras, their respective constituents

satisfy their wants in a context in which they stand opposed neither to

each other nor to nature as a whole. Thus, both primitive and communist

communities comprise "floors" in an undivided "house". The sole exception

to this symmetrical relationship is that whereas the particular

community stands at the centre of the primitive "field", the communist

"landscape" encompasses the planet and beyond.

iii. Agency

"Free, social individuals" constitute the social region of the

communist "landscape". Within the society as a whole, these subjects

engage in an "all-rounded" mode of social/productive intercourse whose

practices, however diverse, comprise a continuum. As a result, both the

community at large and its constituents are similarly "whole". Thus, no

divide separates one sphere of activity from another and whatever conflicts

may emerge (or differential distribution of tasks or capacities arise), do

not do so on the basis of opposed social interests.

In the religious region proper (i.e., myth and ritual) a number

of traits may be logically inferred. First, "communist" religion is an

integral part of the self-making of "free, social individuals" (i.e., it

is interwoven with their everyday life practices). In the communist era,

all communal members are religious, although they may express this

religiosity in various ways. Therefore, "communist" religion does not

represent an atomic option: it is a communal practice that is neither

set against other forms of activity nor conducted by one part of society

on behalf of another (e.g., there will be no priests or religious

specialists in the civil sense of these terms).

Second, insofar as one logically restricts communist religious

practice to a specific type of labour, it is both possible and probable

that, within the society as a whole, differential capacities (as well as different levels of commitment) will emerge in this regard. This process, however, does not reflect a social division of labour and any "numinal hierarchy" that may arise, will do so on a qualitatively different foundation than that which operated in the civil era.

Third, the religious unity of "free, social individuals" consists of their freedom "as individuals" to select their own paths of religious self-making. In this sense, communist religious practice may be described as comprising a "harmonic tapestry", whose symmetry issues not from any preordained or heteronomous plan, but from the spontaneous interweaving of "steps" by authentically autonomous "dancers".[99]

iv. Practical Bias

Unlike their "pre-historical" counterparts, communist relations sponsor no one-sidedness or practical bias within the society as a whole. Accordingly, in this era, the "instrumental" and "expressive" "paths" co-exist in a complementary relationship. This "all-rounded" mode of intercourse confers no selective advantage on any particular traits or type of practices overall, but rather favours a comprehensive practical facility with definite social and psychological correlates within the society at large.

v. "Mentality"

The communist "mentality" is perhaps best captured by the Jungian concept of "individuation". In this framework, no one "mode of thought" is accorded overall pre-eminence. Communist relations afford "free, social individuals" an unprecedented degree of flexibility to

determine the appropriate psychic modality in a particular situation.
At one point, for instance, a communist constituent may direct his attention
towards the task of building a bridge; in this case, it is probable that
he will "focus" his analytical skills and bring them to the fore. At
another point, however, this same individual may wish to compose a lyric
poem, in which case, in all probability, his intuitive faculties would
be summoned to assume "centre stage". Within the individual, though,
it is likely that this capacity to effect a psychic shift of this type
will remain somewhat limited for some time to come (although it will,
on average, be superior to that enjoyed in "pre-history"); consequently,
for the most part, psychic equilibration takes place at the general social
level. Following our discussion of "pre-historical" "mentalities",
therefore, we may classify the communist "mentality" as a synthesis of
"pre-operatory" and "operatory" processes at the cognitive level,
"right and left" hemispheric faculties (i.e., "intuitive" and "analytic"
modes) at the hemispheric level, and "non-Newtonian" and "Newtonian"
boundary criteria at the identity level.

vi. Myth and Ritual

Strictly speaking, "communist" religion refers to the way in
which "free, social individuals" both represent and enact their "trans-
cendental" hook up. Both primitive and communist religious need
systems have identical thematic axes, i.e., they both respond to the
question: "Where do we (as an undivided community) fit into Y (unitary)
ecosphere?". "Communist" religion does not represent an attempt to heal
"the wounded land". Consequently, the focus of the religious practice of

"free, social individuals" (like that of their primitive cousins) is the exploration of "primary" matters. They investigate the boundary lines that separate them from and connect them to both their fellow humans (of both contemporary and past and future generations) and their non-human "housemates". In so doing, they "engage" the questions of biological transition points (birth, death, sexuality), inter- and intra-generational connections, the interpenetration of phenomena, and so on.[100]

In all major respects (except for the aspect of "scope" as discussed in point ii. above) the primitive and communist "fields" are as one. Thus, their respective "reality maps" both depict a unitary ecosphere a homogeneous "power grid" with distinct "zones", and a "system" of "house rules" (="eco-metabolic laws").[101] Moreover, as with its primitive counterpart, the communist need system is premised upon the <u>qualitative</u> continuity of the assorted "housemates" (both human and non-human). Consequently, we may infer that communist myths also use "non-Newtonian" reference points in their portrayal of identity boundaries.

The same overlap appears in the region of primitive and communist "ritual fields". The aim of communist ritual practice is not to heal social/ecospheric wounds. Rather, its object (to use "instrumental" terminology) is to "tie back" communal life in general to the unitary "power grid". In so doing, communist ritual activity constitutes the moment of ecospheric continuity. At this logical point, as is the case with their primitive cousins, communist practices in general are meta-morphized into "play". Like their primitive counterparts, "free, social

individuals" "play" by "hunting" along the "power grid". This process

involves both the pliable arbitration of identity boundaries on "non-

Newtonian" lines and the harmonization of these practices with the under-

lying "house rules". In short, when both objective and "free, social

individuals" enact their "transcendental" hook up, they do so in the form

of a "dance".

Substantively, however, these "dances" diverge sharply. "Free,

social individuals" "dance" on a "materially" underwritten planetary

culture as part of an "all-rounded" mode of social/productive inter-

course. Unlike their primitive cousins, they do so within the "realm of

freedom". As a result, communist constituents employ substantially

different criteria to determine the location (i.e., on the vertical

"field of practice") of their identity markers than those used by their

primitive counterparts, a difference that is expressed, for instance,

in the profoundly distinct ways in which these respective subjects

interpret (and/or posit) the metabolic "laws" that "govern" their given

"house" relations.

The key to specifying the substantive features that distinguish

the communist from the primitive "dance" is the former's superior flex-

ibility in identity arbitration. We may summarize these differences as

follows. First, whereas the primitive "dance" occurs under conditions that

accent the passive at the expense of the active moment of the interchange

with nature, the circumstances that foster the communist "dance" equilibrate

these moments in the "dance" as a whole. Second, whereas primitives

operate within a more or less fixed mythic "field" (whose parameters are

set, for instance, by tradition, or--formally speaking--by a non-human

entity), the communist mythic "field" is relatively pliable and subject
to a qualitatively greater degree of human intervention. "Free, social
individuals" enjoy a flexibility in boundary determination (i.e., a
capacity for criticism if you will) that secures them--relative to their
primitive and civil cousins at any rate--against the pitfalls of
(a) attributing to "non-human" entities powers that do not properly
belong to them at all, and (b) accepting the fiction of permanent boundary
lines. Finally, whereas primitives usually posit human activity _per se_
on a lower "floor" of the ecosphere and assign the principal centres
of cosmic agency to non-human entities located on higher "floors", when
"free, social individuals" "hunt" for "power", they _expressly_ search for
"man". Precisely who or what "man" is, however, remains an open question.[102]

vii. Quality

"Communist" religion can only emerge with the triumph of a
truly universal mode of social/productive intercourse. Thus, it represents
and enacts a _true_ condition (i.e., the insertion of particular humans
into a given ecosphere in a "truly" human manner) by "tying back"
practices to the "transcendental" referent of "man himself". Consequently,
unlike their primitive and civil counterparts, when "free, social
individuals" act religiously, they also act scientifically;[103] hence,
their practice in this regard does not engender illusions or "false
consciousness" in any form.[104]

C)   Science

Marx's methodological critique fundamentally reframes the question

of the relationship between science and religion. It shifts this issue

from the substantive terrain to that of the concrete conditions of human

self-making. Within this framework, the different forms of religion

embody diverse strategies of "house" building (demolition, maintenance),

and are evaluated in this light, an assessment, of course, that is

rooted in the context of the theory and practice of communism.

Consequently, there is no more a general test to determine the

validity of religion per se than there is a means to ascertain whether

or not man "in general" is scientific. As in all other areas, in religion

the question of science is resolved into--but not reduced to--the deter-

minate social relations that mediate both the posing and answering of

relevant "problems".[105]

This resolution--specifically involving the generation of a

composite logical picture of "human essence"--underlay our critical

periodization of religious forms in the previous subsection. In particular,

we determined whether or not a given complex of religious practices--

tied, of course, to definite historical conditions--represent a "true"

solution to the "problem" of "house" building (and thus, of self-making)

by employing the abstraction of "social wholeness" (or "all-rounded"

self-making) as a referential index and correlating the diverse

stages of human history with specific "reality maps" (e.g., classlessness

with a vertical "landscape"). In this context, the criticism of religion

becomes the criticism of the conditions that produce a definite represen-

tation and enactment of the instance of communal unity as an ecospheric

holon (=the "dialectic of universal and particular"). Religious practices

that reflect the prevalence of "inhuman" relations are "false":

conversely, those that express the sway of "human" relations are "true".

In this sense, we suggest that when "free, social individuals" act religiously,

they also act scientifically.

Thus, the scientific basis of "communist" religion does not

stem from the intrinsic features of its practice per se, but rather from

the "truly universal" character of the mode of social/productive inter-

course that spawns it. It is these social relations that are "transparent"

and secure for communist constituents a superior capacity for flexibility

in the arbitration of communal "problems" relative to their "pre-historical"

counterparts, an "historical" aperture that is coincident with the

communist religious moment, as we have seen above. In short, in the

communist era, human self-making and religious practice are identical

terms.

This equation, however, does not mean that particular religious

practices (i.e., in the logically restricted sense of the term) in this

period enjoy an automatic validity, any more than the directly social form

of decision-making precludes the commission of errors in the planning

of resources. Regardless of their modality, all the practices of "free,

social individuals" are (to invoke "instrumental" terminology) subject to

the same general test: "Does it work?" (i.e., "Does X activity satisfy

Y want?"). Of course, this rule applies in all historical eras, and

in each case, and for every type of activity, the appropriate tests are

variable and cannot be predetermined. At the relevant "hierarchical level",

all that we can ascertain are the general social conditions of this

testing, and, on this basis, we affirm both the general evolutionary

superiority of the communist mode of production and the corollary thesis

that science can only emerge from the laboratory of self-determination.

To Marx, the communist movement possesses a scientific character

because it reflects the practice of the proletariat and, because, in

the bourgeois epoch, the interests of this class and those of humanity at

large _actually_ coincide, a coincidence that extends to the proletariat

a unique capacity to resolve the antinomies of universal and particular,

"is" and "ought", essence and existence, and so on, that have plagued

generations of Western philosophers from Plato on. Though we accept this

thesis, and believe that any new religious science must be based on it,

we must immediately add that its concrete translation has always been

a point of contention, both within and without the workers' movement.

Obviously, the nature of our present study precludes any extensive comment

in this area. Two brief observations, however, are in order in this

regard.

First, though we theoretically situate the present work within the

broad framework of the proletarian self-emancipatory struggle, we believe

that the "combined and uneven" character of capitalist development--and,

by extension, proletarian class formation--precludes any mechanical equation

of a theory's validity and its direct social _genesis_. The history of the

international workers' movement is rife with examples of the entry at

specific points of "alien" (i.e., usually petty bourgeois) ideas, or

the appropriation by a particular fraction of the proletariat of the theoretical products of "extra-proletarian" classes in correspondence with the former's conjunctural interests.[106] Of course, the precise effect of this penetration varies; it is by no means always toxic as Marx and others often assume. Indeed Marx himself, as well as Lukács, constitute outstanding examples to the contrary.[107] Consequently, though we agree that any test of the substance of our thesis concerning the logical utility of attributing to communism a religious dimension must include an evaluation of its capacity (now or in the future) to acquire a working class social base and to accelerate the advance of this class (i.e., to become a class "for itself"), this assessment may not be based on genetic criteria, but solely on the grounds of a concrete examination of the conjunctural particulars.

Thus, though we freely admit that our thesis broadly reflects the defeats that have been inflicted on the Western proletariat since 1917, and specifically incorporates ideas that have been instantiated in the practices of intermediate social layers since the 1960's (e.g., in the so-called "New Age" movements of various stripes), we do not consider it invalidated on this account. [108] To begin with, "holistic" ideas do not originate with their contemporary social bearers: their genesis lies in the various forms of the primitive community and vestigal practices (e.g., folk healing) that reproduce its relations (albeit in a qualitatively altered sense) in the civil era. Especially since the onset of the industrial capitalist phase of this era, these "holistic" traditions have been progressively appropriated by "middle-class" fractions; the post-

1960's "New Age" current is simply a specific instance of this general

historical phenomenon. The political effect of this process has been

unambiguous, however. Notwithstanding a number of significant exceptions,

the predominant political orientation of the "holistic" eruptions has

been reactionary and fully merits the odium of historical materialists.[109]

However, we caution against generalizing this verdict on specific

practices to condemn "holistic" ideas and acts per se. There is no doubt

that the articulation of "holistic" practices has been one-sided up

until now; there is no guarantee, though, that altered circumstances

could not qualitatively modify this tendency and allow for the conver-

gence of the "holistic" and the communist movements. Indeed, we argue

that this is precisely what is beginning to occur.

Second, the reason that we argue that "holistic" practices

should be viewed simply as one-sided phenomena and not rejected outright

stems, in part, from our assessment of the impasse of the communist

movement itself, and, in particular, its Western branch.[110]

Obviously, here we are tackling an enormously complex historical phenomenon,

involving a plethora of diverse factors. Thus, in what follows, it

should be undersood that we deliberately limit our focus to one aspect

of this problem--and even at that do so incompletely--with the intent

of sketching an hypothesis, rather than delineating either the problem

or its solution in any definitive manner.

Moreover, of necessity, we address this issue within the context

of our overall political framework. In particular, we deny that a

transition to communism is possible without passing through the inter-

mediary historical stage of a socialist democracy (=dictatorship of the

proletariat). Concretely, this means that state institutions that instantiate minority class rule over a given territory, regardless of their form (i.e., bourgeois democratic or authoritarian), must be demolished and replaced by organs of "workers' power" (i.e., institutions which actually instantiate working class self-determination, regardless of their form).[111] Accordingly, we assign general strategic priority to an assault on the state apparatus (and, in the first instance, to its repressive arm) and hence, place premier emphasis on the political unification of all "oppressed" social layers--with the working class as the social gravitational centre of this alliance--to achieve this end. Further, precisely because capitalism develops unevenly, we argue that this political unification requires the formation of a revolutionary organization (or organizations) and dispute the contention that this process necessarily conflicts with either the principle or the practice of proletarian self-emancipation.[112] Thus, we abstractly view the maturation of the communist movement as the dialectical synthesis of the moments of combination or totality (=interventional practice targeted at a precise political objective) and unevenness or particularity (=the situational practices of specific groups of workers et al.). Our comments in this section represent a modest contribution to this process.[113]

Within the above framework, and on empirical grounds, we suggest that one aspect of the failure of the communist movement stems from the general incapacity of communists to grasp the enigma of religion and related issues. In this regard, our purpose is not

to speculate on the effect of this disability historically. It is simply to illustrate how a revised conception of religion may possibly assist the progress of the communist movement at this point in time, particularly within the "advanced" bourgeois democracies.

As we have detailed in previous sections, one of the theoretical roots of the orientation of communists towards religion may be traced to Marx's adherence to the "rationalist paradigm". The effect of this heritage has been felt not simply in the practical response of communists to the ambient religious forms—indeed, given the general tendency towards secularization in the bourgeois democracies, this problem is really of secondary concern for us—but also in their understanding of transitional practices.[114] Of course, this latter issue overlaps with the same's interpretation of the epochal crisis that inaugurates the passage to the "historical" era.[115]

Confining our comments strictly to the "subjective side" of this question—and even at that greatly simplifying it—we submit that the "orthodox" historical materialist[116] approach to "the crisis" has been to combine a quite proper desire for its resolution into determinate conditions on the one hand, with a rationalist pre-determination of its content on the other. There is no doubt that this "materialist" approach was and is necessary in the face of recurrent "humanist" attempts to eviscerate the communist project by, for instance, replacing the proletariat as the central agent of socialist transformation with "man" or by shifting the terrain of interventional practice off that of the "immediate life situation" and onto that of

abstract ethical appeals.[117] As usual, however, "orthodox" adherents

do not limit their conclusions to this specific practical domain.

They generalize these arguments to apply to the transitional period

in toto. Specifically, they tend to equate the concept of the

"immediate life situation" with the "Newtonian" definition of materiality

and, concomitantly, to view the proletariat's emergence as a class

that acts and thinks "for itself" almost exclusively in rational

terms. As a result, they conceive their interventional practice as

principally an appeal to the rational interests of rational subjects.[118]

Numerous commentators have noted the inadequacy of this

perspective before.[119] Almost invariably, this verdict has accompanied

an attempt to introduce "holistic" elements (e.g., quasi-religious

themes, ecological appeals) into the communist movement; unfortunately,

all too frequently the net effect of this "match-making" has been

the reproduction of the errors of the "utopian socialists".[120]

To avoid these errors and yet, at the same time, to preserve

the thrust of the "holistic critique", we suggest an alternative

interpretation of the "making of the working class" as a revolutionary

subject. We view the "orthodox" and "utopian" currents respectively

as specific reflections of the incompleteness of what we may call

"capitalist totalization" and, by extension, of the immaturity of

proletarian formation. In simple terms, in the nineteenth century

capitalism was just entering its global "childhood", so to speak.

Correspondingly, the Western European proletariat of that time only

tendentially embodied the "abstraction of humanity". Both literally

and metaphorically, therefore, it tended to be a class of only one

colour, representing, as it were, one shoot of the tree of humanity.

Marx brilliantly intuited that capitalism, for the first

time in history, creates the "material" foundations for the unifica-

tion of humanity (=a planetary culture). In other words, as capitalism

develops, it progressively incorporates the expanse of the planet,

until, in its mature phase, it condenses the divers shoots of human

history into a concrete, albeit one-sided, totality. Until the comple-

tion of this process, however--or at least until its broad outlines

become visible--the communist movement itself evolves in a correspondingly

uneven fashion, its branches, so to speak, ripening in a deformed

manner. In particular, in diverse ways and at different points,

communists of various stripes have struggled to grasp the significance

of this "planetization" (=the dialectic of universal and particular)

by using selected features from their ambient--and, in the above

sense, partial--landscape to map out the universal conditions of

transitional practice (and, by extension, to paint a logical portrait

of the subject of historical change in the bourgeois epoch).[121]

As a result, they have substituted form for content, and, in one

way or another, made their peace with bourgeois society. In general,

this tendency has meant that all communist currents, whether of the

"orthodox" or "utopian" persuasion, have narrowed their interventional

orientations to the horizon of the bourgeois universe, and thus have

become reconciled to its thematic lynchpins, i.e., the bourgeois

individual and the political "house" which he inhabits (=bourgeois

democracy).[122]

In our view, on an epochal time scale, the present era (i.e., the next fifty to one hundred years) marks the passage of capitalism into its mature phase, or at least, its development to a point where a more "all-rounded" or comprehensive portrait of the implications of this process can now be drawn than was previously possible.[123] In particular, in recent decades capitalism has enfolded most, if not all, of the shoots of humanity around a single, if deformed, trunk, and, in so doing, has gradually and unevenly produced a proletariat with both a measurably altered "complexion" and a correspondingly more "abstractly universal" practice. The potential revolutionary subject of radical change in the bourgeois epoch now more clearly than ever embodies in its practice the condensation of human history[124] and, correspondingly, capitalist crises have become qualitatively more complex in their effects (e.g., the contemporary global interpenetration of the economic and the ecological crises).[125] Consequently, communists must now fundamentally re-think the "communist problematic" (=the dialectic of universal and particular) and re-draw their strategic parameters accordingly. In a word, they must "expand their horizons" and condense in their interventional practice both the implications of the theory of value and the lessons of the primitive era.

The thematic centre of this new strategic framework is the "community".[126] When communists intervene in a given context, the axis of their practice is the contestation of political territory. They dispute the nature of the "community" and which class rules it.

As every single "successful" "socialist revolution" in this century

demonstrates, a victorious communist struggle contains two ideological

moments.[127]   First, in the eyes of the majority of the "oppressed"

social layers the existing political framework must be exposed as an

"illusory community", and this same constituency must also accept an

alternative "communal" framework. Second, the existing ruling class'

claim to represent the "common interest" must be delegitimated in the

eyes of these same masses, and this ideological authority must be

transferred to "organs of power" (e.g., workers' councils, guerrilla

armies) that are organized independently of the existing regime and

which "materially" contest the latter's authority over a give terrain.

We submit that if there is a "key" to the enigma of ideology

(i.e., what is required to precipitate a rupture in the subjectivity

of a given "oppressed" social layer, such that it no longer accepts

its "life conditions" as natural and eternal) it lies in the realm of

the constitution of the interface of communal-individual identity

(=the "identity web"). Obviously, social psychological studies must

play a central role in this research area, something which we clearly

cannot entertain to any depth in this work. Thus, all we can do is

advance a few tentative hypotheses relevant to our primary concern.

Specifically, we suggest that communists, in pushing back the historical

frontiers that inform their understanding of the "communist problematic",

must incorporate the region of the unconscious--particularly at the

collective level--into their practices. In so doing, we do not endorse

any specific theory of this region (e.g., Jungian), we simply propose

to trace one of the missing pieces of ideology back to the ontogenetic

recapitulation of psychic dynamics historically rooted in the primitive

community.

This hypothesis relies on the evolutionary premise that the vast

majority of the species-species "biogrammatical wiring" of humans took

place in the primitive era.[128] We suggest that one of these primitive

"morphemes" consists of the imprinting of a symmetrical relation between

individual psychic homeostasis and the "wholeness" of the ambient com-

munity.[129] Consequently, any threat to the integrity of the community

in this era ipso facto constituted an assault on the individual's

identity structure, eliciting anxiety, for instance. In this way, the

individual psyche was "tied back" to the communal network and the

groundwork for the formation of an ontogenetic developmental pattern

cementing this "bridge" was laid, affecting generations to come in

both active and passive ways. With the passage to the civil era, this

psychic inheritance was typically appropriated--whether consciously or

unconsciously, or directly or indirectly--by the dominant order in the

service of its particular interest.[130]

In the long run, however, this civil "solution" is only pratically

successful, because it channels the appropriation of the primitive

psychic heritage along a one-sided axis and thus fails to satisfy completely

the wants it imprints (and which are "released" in historically

specific ways). This partial satisfaction coincides with the civil

negation of the "whole human being", a condition that finds a least

partial recognition in Marx's concept of the "radical needs" which

capitalism spawns, but which it is structurally incapable of satisfying.

The implications of these wants, though, go far beyond what Marx himself envisaged. When communists incorporate the primitive "identity web" into their strategic horizons, they implicitly re-define the social co-ordinates of their interventional practices. They cease to "hail" rational individuals, and instead begin to address social agents with a _ruptured_ subjectivity (i.e., whose identity parameters at least partially transcend conventional boundaries, or, in our terms, "communal individuals").[131] In short, their interventions now form _bridges_ to an occluded "whole human being", a "true universality" that has not yet come into being. In this sense, they connect the life activities of a particular group of human to a referent that at once transforms the latter's "reality" orientation (i.e., _vis-à-vis_ conventional co-ordinates) and functions as the ontological axis of these agents' new world-view. For this reason, we contend that transitional communist practices contain a religious moment.[132]

In this light, a fundamentally different picture of the _political_ dimension of these same practices emerges. Concretely, the efficacy of communists' political interventions depends, in part, upon the historically prior precipitation of at least a partial psychic rupture with bourgeois identity co-ordinates (i.e., bourgeois individuality, the bourgeois "community") within the ranks of their "oppressed" constituents, a process that necessarily must be _practically_ embedded in "alternative" social organs (e.g., workers' or neighbourhood committees that are organized independently of or parallel to "official" society)

which contest bourgeois society over the control of a given "territory".
In other words, successful communist political practice issues from
its subsumption within the framework of a "communal" redefinition that
is most usefully described as religious. Consequently, just as
(logically) civil religion serves as the paradigm of civil mystification
(in which the state, of course, participates) and (historically)
the initial form of the state was religious, so now we must (logically)
view the political moment of communist interventional activity as a
subsection of its religious dimension, without, we might add, in any
way negating the specificity--and the necessity--of this political
moment per se.[133]

Although the above strategic conceptualization holds for all
phases of the bourgeois epoch, it is only when capitalism reaches maturity
that it can be expressed scientifically. Until this point, it is
principally articulated in "utopian" terms. As capitalism "ripens",
the necessity for this "mystic" veil vanishes. By complexifying and
globalizing the terrain of "problem solving", the bourgeois mode of
production qualitatively modifies the parameters of the "community"
and condenses previously disparate issues (e.g., economy and ecology)
within the same "house". This process does not signify that communists
must cast out all their old theoretical furniture. It just means that
they must move these items into a new "house". In particular, they
must now locate their interventions within a strategic framework
whose thematic axis constitutes a fundamental challenge to how the
bourgeois "house" is put together, ultimately on a planetary level.

Communists must <u>radicalize</u> their politics, and force the discussion of

political and economic matters back to their <u>oikic</u> roots.[134]   Here

the economic and political moments merge with the issue of <u>health</u>,

and the communist movement becomes a "healing" practice designed to

excise the biospheric cancer that is capitalism today.

The implications of this strategic re-orientation are immense

and cannot be considered in any depth here. For our purposes in the

present study, however, two clarifications are essential. First, we

emphasize the distinction between the religious dimension of transitional

communist practices on the one hand, and that of communism <u>per. se</u>

on the other. They should not be confused. "Communist" religion

corresponds to a mode of social/productive intercourse in which a "true

community" (="true universality", "truly human") has been established.

It does not denote a practice whose principal object is the healing of

social/ecospheric wounds. "Transitional communist" religion, on

the other hand, denotes a practice that points towards a true universality

that has not yet come into being. Thus, it portrays a <u>fractured</u>

mythic "landscape" and contains <u>civil</u> religious elements. This civil

dimension is what most other commentators have referred to when they

have spoken of communism as possessing a religious aspect (e.g., Bloch

and Garaudy on the roles of hope, the future and so on). "Transitional

communist" religion, though, is Janus-faced and the civil angle tells

only one side of its reality. This religious type not only bears the

scars of its civil heritage, it also looks beyond this realm to a form

of religiosity that, in some respects, closely approximates "communist"

religion. This "other" face is worn by subjects who, in part, stand
apart from bourgeois society in their identity constitutions. Hence,
while communists may _appear_ to reproduce in their practices Judeo-
Christian-Islamic themes (e.g., utopia, horizon, hope), for instance, a
qualitative divide separates the two traditions. This fissure does not
mean that "transitional communist" religion cannot assume a civil form
(e.g., Judeo-Christian). Indeed, in certain historical contexts, it
is probable that it will (e.g., Nicaragua). But in this case, the divide
the demarcates "transitional communist" religion from its civil counter-
part is simply introduced into the "body" of the relevant civil religious
institution itself (e.g., the Christian church). We suggest that this
type of schism is precisely what is occurring today in many regions of
the planet, and, in particular in Latin America.[135]

Second, as we have emphasized throughout this work, we remain
acutely conscious of the dangers that attend any proposal that asks
communists to "expand their horizons" beyond conventional "material"
frontiers. We acknowledge that a humanist evisceration of the scientific
content of the communist enterprise constitutes a real and potent
possibility in this period. For this reason, we have adopted a
"Chinese box" model of scientific growth and located our thesis within
this framework. Thus, when we delineate the limits and promises of
Marx's insights in regards to transitional communist practices in
particular, we do so to _preserve_ the salient contents of his work in
this respect. Specifically, _nothing_ we have written concerning the
necessity to posit a religious dimension to these practices negates in
any way Marx's insistence on the resolution of the dialectic of

universal and particular into historically specific social relations.
Nor does it affect the validity of Marx's identification of the
proletariat as the principal agent of radical historical change in the
bourgeois epoch or qualify the methodological merit of the theory of
value. All that we have done is re-interpret what these propositions
mean in the light of evidence, gathered in a number of areas, over
the last one hundred and fifty years.

D)   Conclusion

Marx inadvertently laid the groundwork for a "new religious
science". In particular, he _fundamentally_ redefined how the universal
and particular moments of human history interpenetrate in the bourgeois
epoch and firmly situated the study and practice of religion on a
determinate _social_ foundation. In this way, he enfolded religious
science within the theory and practice of communism. Thus, the
principles of historical specificity and change constitute the reference
points for future practice in this discipline. Without the theoretical
compass provided by Marx, in other words, the study and practice of
religion becomes an exercise in circumambulation.

Marx himself, however, was too weighed down by rationalist
"baggage" to travel very far along the road to a "new religious science".
Consequently, where Marx leaves off, the path ahead becomes tangled and
unclear. Any explorer who ventures into this territory, therefore,
braves manifold pitfalls. Foremost of these dangers is the temptation
of _imbalance_. This lure is a constant threat, conditioned as it is
by the pressures that compel even the most cautious investigator to

stress one side of the communist enterprise (or one aspect of the "whole human being") at the expense of another. Clearly we can never know for certain when we are at a point in our journey which will afford us the scope to equilibrate (theoretically, at least) the various tendencies that have, in the past, usually been developed only in a one-sided manner. Nevertheless, we believe that this holistic perspective (i.e., in the best sense of the term) should guide the evolution of a "new religious science". Only by following this course can we take Marx's fertile insights and nourish them to germination.

We realize that the oikic framework that we have outlined in this Chapter points in the direction of numerous unexplored "rooms". Indeed, a major test of our work will be its capacity to generate prolific "research programmes" in various areas. From our perspective, though, relevant evaluative criteria in this regard must include the questions "Who is doing the research and in what social context?" and "To what end is this research being conducted?". In short, the principal test of the validity of our theoretical framework is whether or not at some future point its central propositions are appropriated by a fraction of the workers' movement and employed by it to advance the struggle for communism.[136] If so, we will judge our work a success. If not, the opposite judgement will apply.

We also accept, though, that much fruitful research can be undertaken in a purely academic context--provided the social limits of this work are recognized. In particular, we suggest that three areas hold a certain promise for future study within this arena. First, there is the area of transitional religions in general, both past and

present. We have barely touched on this issue and past researchers have
virtually ignored it altogether. Second, there is the subject of
the "theology of play" and specifically any connection that exists
between the play motifs that emerge at specific points in the evolution
of civil religious traditions and the religious practices of the
primitive and communist eras. Finally, there is the enormously thorny
issue of the primitive "identity web" itself and, in particular, the
question of how communists can "tap into" this psychic reservoir in
a way which does not simply loose the floodgates of the irrational
(i.e., the repressed "shadows" of Western civilization, so to speak),
but channels this release along a sluice that leads to a truly emancipatory
planetary culture.

Doubtless, Marx would be appalled at the thought that he was
the unwitting progenitor of a "new religious science". This fact,
though, should not deter us from proceeding along this road--cautiously.
It should simply remind us that we only extend to Marx's inheritance its
due when we keep its promises and build, starting from its foundation,
in whatever direction the "test of practice" arbitrates.

Conclusion

A unique and pivotal historical intersection, formed by the incorporation of the "old Germany" into the mainstream of the bourgeois universe, gave birth to Marx's critique of religion. What made this crossroads a "titanic era"--as the young Marx put it--however, was not simply the process of "bourgeoisification" _per se_: it was the rate at which it occurred and its timing vis-à-vis concurrent developments, both in other European states and globally. These factors afforded Marx and his confrères unique insights into the changes then re-shaping the contours of their social formation in particular and the planet in general. Specifically, they allowed these critics an overview of both the world they were leaving and the world they were about to enter. In a word, the "combined and uneven" character of German capitalist development condensed their critiques of both the "old" and the "new" Germany, so to speak, a heritage that Marx retained for the duration of his life. Consequently, though Marx grew increasingly disinterested in the problems of the "old Germany" as he theoretically matured, he always kept one foot on the battlefield of the (bourgeois) war against the relics of feudalism. To be sure, he sustained this struggle in alloyed form (e.g., as part of the critique of political economy), but it remained, all the same, a significant component of his world-view, and, in part, provided the theoretical underpinning for

his dialectical approach to the global extension of the capitalist mode of production.

All transitional eras, however, not only engender--in a highly selective and uneven fashion--a "long view" of history, with its attendant "positive" side-effects (e.g., cognizance of the historical limits of the ascendant productive mode), they also occasion their own particular version of tunnel vision. Therefore, irrespective of their specific fields of endeavour, the "titanic thinkers" that are produced therein-- Marx, Darwin, Freud and Einstein are probably the most outstanding examples in recent history--often combine in their work a truly seminal grasp of their subject matter--typically pointing in the direction of a new theoretical paradigm--with a no less fundamental conservatism vis-à-vis selected aspects of their theoretical ambience. In a sense, they all stand at the edge of tomorrow, struggling to delineate a radically new vision of "how things are", yet simultaneously both unconscious of and highly resistant to its far-reaching implications.[1] Almost invariably, in the context in which these theorists developed their insights, these reservations made eminently "good sense". The modification of circumstances, however, frequently converts "good sense" into prejudice, and what was at one point a necessary carapace to nurture a theory to maturity, becomes, in time, a fetter to its fruition.

In short, it is inevitable that every "titanic thinker" will bequeath to future generations a "mixed" legacy, consisting of both a valid kernel and an invalid husk. It is equally inevitable that the trustees of this inheritance will refuse to accept it carte blanche

for all time, but will instead proceed to adapt it to conform to the imperatives of altered conditions and to separate the wheat from the chaff, so to speak.

With respect to the legacies of the four modern "titanic thinkers" mentioned above, a recurrent pattern characterizes the way in which their respective legatees have conducted their critical enterprises. Especially in the cases of Einstein, Freud and Darwin, and increasingly so in the example of Marx as well, the kernel-husk distinction has revolved around the gradual recognition that their common rationalist assumptions are simply no longer valid, or at least must be assigned a radically circumscribed "territory". This shared tunnel vision is, of course, not really surprising, given their common historical production during the apogee of the bourgeois epoch and in the wake of an enlightenment that consolidated the ideological preconditions for their various investigations.

In many respects, the historical materialist tradition has proven relatively immune to assaults on its rationalist premises. True, especially in the last century, there have been repeated challenges to Marx's Eurocentrism, his alledged fetishism of industrial growth, and to his relative inattention to the ecological and sexual implications of the struggle against capitalism, to give just two examples. In addition, there have certainly been extended contestations of Marx's neglect of the irrational (or non-rational) dimension of social inter- change, by Reich, among others.[2] In our view, however, by and large these challenges have missed the mark, i.e., they have involved secondary matters, or symptoms of a much deeper disease, the key to which lies

in the theoretical vault of religion.

As we have seen, there are manifold complex historical reasons that could be invoked to explain why this region has remained, until now, relatively unexplored by the members of the above tradition. Obviously, one possible explanation involves the semantic connotations of the word religion itself (and religious issues generally), particularly in "advanced" bourgeois social formations. To a large degree, to this day, the "educated" layers of these societies share Marx's prejudices in this regard, and moreover, like Marx do so as a matter of the most profound existential habit. Another reason, though, relates more directly to the thrust of the present study. Although it is both possible and legitimate to discriminate logically between the methodological and the substantive sides of Marx's critique, it is impermissible to posit this distinction historically. Historically, they belong together, and for most of the members of the "orthodox" tradition, this association has provided more than enough reason to preclude any critical examination into whether or not the conditions that justified it one hundred and forty years ago, still obtain today.

The unique circumstances that spawned the fusion of the methodological and substantive critiques were just that: unique circumstances, or an outstanding instance of the "law of combined and uneven development" in history. On the basis of the test of practice, we contend that Marx's critique mirrors its historical genesis, i.e., that it embodies the historical confluence of two profoundly asymmetrical logical components. While Marx was able to establish a scientific

"beach-head" of sorts with his methodological insights, he was never able to surmount the deadweight of his substantive prejudices. He continually moulded his discoveries to conform to the Procrustean dimensions of the "rationalist paradigm". As a result, he left a legacy in this area that was somewhat chalky, if not, at times, downright harmful.

Even some of Marx's closest political associates noted this unevenness. Indeed, it is possible to date the beginning of the "Marxist-religious dialogue" to the writings of Engels. A similar tendency may be observed in the notebooks of the later Marx himself. In both cases, however, the suggested "corrections" concern the application of rationalist premises at different historical points, rather than any rejection of the premises per se.

This reluctance has become a trademark of the "Marxist-religious dialogue" in the last century. By and large, participants in this exchange have issued their challenges to Marx's "negative" approach to religion without radically contesting his substantive assumptions or embracing the fertile implications of his methodological insights. As a result, their "engagements" with this problematic have remained confined to the parameters of the bourgeois social universe (e.g., acceptance of the bourgeois individual as the agent of social change) and their objections to Marx "on religion" have become echoes of ambient conditions.

Drawing upon his Hegelian-Aufklärer inheritance, Marx advanced a unique interpretation of the interpenetration of the universal and the particular moments of human history in the bourgeois epoch. He refused

to view this dialectic as an interaction of distinct ontological levels

and instead saw its terms as logical signifiers which denote the

different aspects of history as a conceptual totality on the one hand,

and as a determinate constellation of practices on the other. The

concrete expression of this perspective in his texts was his espousal

of the principles of historical specification and radical change.

These methodological guidelines constitute the core of his theory of

communism. To abandon them is to sacrifice the specificity of Marx's

work and, moreover, to eviscerate the possibility of establishing a

theoretical foundation for a science of religion.

Marx "on religion" belongs not in the dustbin of the nineteenth

century, but to the contemporary era. To recover his insights, however,

it is necessary to remove the cobwebs that have obscured and sidetracked

the "Marxist-religious dialogue" up until this point. In particular,

we must sever the rationalist umbilical cords that have imprisoned the

"orthodox" understanding of anthropogenesis within the horizon afforded

by the bourgeois landscape.

Within this new framework, communism no longer appears as

simply the apogean evolutionary step of _homo faber_ and, correspondingly,

religion no longer serves simply as the principal phenomenological index

of human immaturity in this regard. Both of these terms undergo a

profound semantic revision. Communism now denotes the historical

stage in which all the various tributaries of human self-making

converge in an "all-rounded" mode of social/productive intercourse.

Religion, in turn, becomes a cross-cultural logical referent that is used

to compare the historically specific ways in which humans make them-
selves by "house" building. In both instances, the end product is a
more comprehensive and logically satisfying view of what communism is
all about, an effect that can only add greater coherence and direction
to the communist project and thus contribute to its scientific
development.

In short, the theoretical shift from "opium to oikos" revolves
around our fundamental challenge to the rationalist conception of
human history that has, for far too long, constituted the ideological
touchstone of "orthodox" theory and practice. Combined, these
rationalist biases have profoundly stained the "orthodox" vision of the
"communist problematic" with a decidedly Eurocentric complexion, a
hue that bears the unmistakable impress of its civil (and in particualr,
its bourgeois) genesis on a host of crucial questions (e.g., technology,
ecology, sexuality, identity/individuality). To reject this one-sidedness
is, for instance, to expel classical Greece from its privileged
paradigmatic position and to enlarge the conceptual boundaries of
"free, social individuality" to embrace the variegated ensemble of
traits embodied in all the diverse trails of the human past; to allow,
in other words, a primitive shaman to form a circle with an Einstein, or
even a Marx.

At this point, our thesis converges with the contemporary
debate within the communist movement of "What is to be done?". The
theoretical assumptions of this movement and its conventional strategic
orientation (i.e., a rationalist interpellation of class subjectivity)
comprise flip sides of each other. To venture onto this terrain,

however, is also to invite misunderstanding, especially when the
proposed strategic revision involves the synthesis of historical materiaism
with a "holistic" world-view. Consequently, several additional comments
and caveats concerning the strategic implications of the present study
are in order here.

First, we re-iterate that our comments do not represent
precise programmatic guidelines, but rather logical suggestions
addressed to the general strategic imperatives of the communist
movement at this time in "advanced" bourgeois formations. We are not
concerned with the concrete historical processes that may be necessary to
generate the social carriers of these ideas, except in the broad sense
of affirming the centrality of the working class in this regard.

Second, though we advocate the equilibration of "holistic"
and "orthodox" practical approaches, we recognize the "materially"
underwritten and thus structural bias of "pre-historical" societies in
general in favour of one-sidedness or practical imbalance. "All-roundedness"
emerges only with the transition of "history" and until this point
one-sidedness is bound to prevail. It is precisely this unevenness,
of course, that occasions the need for mediation in the evolution of the
communist movement.

In the final analysis, therefore, the constraints that limit
the practicality of our strategic suggestions are those which condition
working class formation in the contemporary era. Obviously, in this
type of study, we cannot hazard predictions in this respect. In
general terms, however, we can identify the two principal, if opposite,
mediational errors that may tempt persons concerned with the reconciliation

of the various moments of "human emancipation" in this period. The
first mistake is to empty this project of its "orthodox" contents in toto.
Paradigmatically, this path assumes the form of an attempt to establish
the conditions of personal or group "liberation" prior to the accession
of the social relations that would make this process genuinely possible.
As Russell Jacoby has noted in relation to the "Marxist-Freudian dialogue",
as long as class society persists, there will always be a certain tension
between the various constituent regions of the emancipatory enterprise
(e.g., psychic, social, "spiritual").[3] For this reason, it is crucial
to specify the "theoretical territories" of these various domains and
to construct a mediational practice that embodies this synthesis. The
second mistake is to equate "holism" with its concrete social carriers
in this era (e.g., in response to their manifest practical imbalance)
and, by extension, to limit the horizon of the emancipatory project to
narrow "materialist" confines.

To reject these alternative errors is not to dismiss the
difficulties of equilibration, but rather to accept the challenge of
their transcendence. Presently, the road ahead along this path appears
uncertain and promises only "sweat, toil and tears". The communist
movement, however, is no stranger to seemingly impassable strategic
chasms. Indeed, today it faces just such a blockage in its struggle to
unify politically the labour movement with its women's counterpart.
In this latter case, as well as the instance of the "Marxist-religious
dialogue" per se, the decision whether or not to press on to forge a
strategic solution is not ultimately a function of its difficulty,
but rather of how badly the various participants want to win.[4]

The reconstruction of the "Marxist-religious dialogue" revolves around the subsumption of the political moment of communist transitional practices within an oikic framework, a process that fundamentally reframes how communists approach a host of "secular" issues (e.g., nationalism, sexuality, ecology). In the present era, this subsumption requires, in the first instance, the elaboration of a modern "communist mythology" that can communicate a radically new awareness of how the proletarian self-emancipatory project "fits" within a "holistic" historical framework. To be successful, this mythic vision must be able to evoke the repressed "shadowland" of the civil psyche and to channel these forces in an emancipatory direction. For it is only after the communist movement acquires the "communal resonance" established by this mythic pipeline that it can then proceed to construct the political alliances that will make the transition to communism possible.

Of course, we cannot predict the precise historical contours of this "communist mythologization". We suggest, however, that interested parties not look for the initial "shoots" of this process in the domain of official, pro forma exchanges (e.g., between representatives of "the Church" on the one hand, and "the Party" on the other). It is far more likely that "transitional communist" religions in "advanced" bourgeois democracies will emerge at the margins of conventional contacts.[5] These "occluded dialogues" will appear along variegated trails (e.g., literary, "popular" culture, fringe social movements),[6] and will doubtless evolve at profoundly uneven rates and with all the telling scars of one-sidedness. Therefore, as always, the

problem of <u>political</u> synthesis or mediation will remain and even increase in importance as these marginal encounters gradually penetrate the discourse of mainstream class struggle.

We must leave the exploration of these matters, however, to future works or to others as the case may be. In so doing, we re-emphasize the debt that future investigators who follow our theoretical framework owe to Marx. Marx's critique of religion constitutes a "titanic" legacy. As such, it does not come <u>gratis</u>. It is not a gift, but rather a challenge. To accept this inheritance is to exit the world of religion as opium and to reject the prejudices of the "rationalist paradigm". But it is also to grasp the kernel of his insights and to use it to plant the beginnings of a "new religious science". In this way, we not only re-new our fidelity to the goals for which Marx fought, but also construct a new "house" in which to store them.

FOOTNOTES

Unless otherwise indicated, all footnote references are to Marx's works. After the initial reference these works are denoted by an abbreviation, as summarized in the List of Abbreviations in the prefatorial material to our dissertation. Secondary source references are initially given in full, with subsequent references denoted by the author's or the editor's surname alone, unless two or more works by the same are cited.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[1] The opium metaphor appears in Marx's"Introduction to a Contribution to Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law", in his Collected Works, ed. Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, various translators, (New York: International Publishers, 1976), III, 175. Hereafter this series cited as C.W. Henceforth, unless otherwise specified, critique refers to Marx's critique of religion.

[2] Hereafter, for the sake of simplicity, and given the nature of our study, we assume a unitary Marxist tradition, generally denoted by the term historical materialist. On "dialogue", see Appendix A.

[3] For instance, see James Bentley, Between Marx and Christ, (London: NLB, 1982), where the author discusses Marx's views in less than one paragraph.

[4] In this study, we do not distinguish between religious acts and religious beliefs in any ultimate ontological sense. We refer to them both as practices.

[5] On "mainstream", see Appendix A.

[6] On religious science, see Appendix A.

[7] On communist movement, see Appendix A.

[8] On "orthodox", see Appendix A.

[9] In simple terms, we may state this problem as follows. In the main, when Marx condemns the conditions that make religion necessary, he refers to class conditions. Here, religion as an index of estrangement presents no special difficulties. The vast majority of human history, however, has been spent in classless societies (i.e., primitive cultures), and anthropological evidence overwhelmingly testifies to the fundamentally religious character of these formations. A possible solution to this dilemma involves distinguishing between "primary alienation" on the one hand (i.e., the culture/nature cleavage

that characterizes every social form), and "secondary alienation" on
the other (i.e., the human/human cleavage that is specific to the
civil condition). Within this framework, communism may be viewed
as a historical stage in which "secondary alienation" is superceded,
but "primary alienation" is left intact. In this way, a theoretical
aperture is provided for the hypothesization of the religious character
of communism, or at least for leaving the question open. For reasons
given in Chapter III below, we now reject the assumptions of this
framework.

      Henceforth, unless otherwise stated, communism refers to the
historical era in which all class and political relations have
"withered away". Throughout this study, for the sake of simplicity,
we sub-divide human history into three main eras, on the basis of the
theory of value: (i) primitive society; (ii) civil society; (iii)com-
munism. Unless otherwise stated, these terms denote these eras.
See Lawrence Krader, The Dialectic of Civil Society, (Assen: Van
Gorcum, 1976).

[10] Karl Korsch, Karl Marx, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963).

[11] In the main, we refer to English translations of Marx's works. All
significant passages dealing with religious issues, however, have
been checked for accuracy with the corresponding sections in the
Marx-Engels Werke, (Berlin: Dietz-Verlag, 1956-68). This approach
reflects the thematic character of our study, as opposed to a textual
dissection per se. In a similar vein, we attempt to avoid translation
controversies concerning the precise English equivalents of specific
German words used by Marx and employ the various terms favoured by
particular translators interchangeably. Thus, for instance, we
translate Bedürfnisse as either "wants" or "needs".

[12] Henceforth, "peripheral" means marginal to our purposes.

[13] On "human essence", see Appendix A.

[14] Idiosyncratic phrases are listed in Appendix A.

[15] On "communist-religious problematic" and "communist problematic",
see Appendix A. Henceforth, unless otherwise noted, communism refers
to Marx's theory of the same.

[16] The logical/historical distinction is crucial to understanding Marx's
arguments in a number of areas. In simple terms, historical proposi-
tions concern the nature and order of events as they occurred (are
occurring, will occur) in a particular space-time continuum, as
conventionally understood (i.e., according to "Newtonian" criteria).
Within this theoretical frame, historians attempt to answer: "What
happened (is happening, will happen) in history?" Accordingly, the
principal scientific controls that govern propositions of this type
relate to the recovery of (and/or extrapolation from) empirical data
per se. In contrast, logical propositions concern the "inner
workings" of spatio-temporal conditions or the theoretical re-
construction of given empirical processes(events) into a "meaningful"

whole of some form. In this case, the relevant scientific controls concern whether or not the propositions in question adequately explain (or interpret) the target phenomena.

[17] See Chapters I and III below for a full discussion of this matter.

[18] See Chapter I below for our arguments in support of this position.

[19] For instance, see Fritjof Capra, The Turning Point, (New York: Bantam, 1983).

[20] See Appendix C.

[21] See Capra, op. cit., and Lawrence Leshan and Henry Margenau, Einstein's Space and Van Gogh's Sky, (New York: Collier, 1983), for two attempts to grapple with this problem in a similar way.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1] C.W., IV, 130-131. Given the thematic nature of this study, we shall not ordinarily indicate the precise text.

[2] For the sake of simplicity, we shall use the terms "Western" and "Western man" in their conventional senses, although, strictly speaking, they are somewhat inaccurate and misleading. For the same reason, combined with academic requirements, henceforth, despite our personal misgivings, we shall use masculine pronouns and substantives for generic denotations.

[3] The works of Martin Heidegger and Hans-George Gadamer, for instance, testify to this point.

[4] On Marx's classical training and interest, see, for example, G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World, (London: Duckworth, 1981), pp. 23-5.

[5] Grundrisse, trans. Martin Nicolaus, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 110. Hereafter cited as G.

[6] For our purposes, "ancient world" encompasses the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, though we shall frequently use "ancient" and "classical" interchangeably.

[7] The precise characterization of these archaic economies and their relationship to the development of ancient Greek rationalism is a subject of some controversy. A number of works have linked the growth of rationalism in this period with the proliferation of commodity production (i.e., a form of merchant capitalism, albeit in an overall economic context in which bound labour predominated in the production of the social surplus product). These texts include: Jean-Pierre Vernant, The Origins of Greek Thought, trans. Cornell University Press, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982); George Thomson, The First Philosophers, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1955). A similar line

of argument, applied particularly to the development of modern science, is elaborated by Alfred-Sohn Rethel, _Intellectual and Manual Labour_, (Thatford: MacMillan Press, 1978). A number of classical scholars, including de Ste. Croix, p. 41, have challenged the Vernant and Thomson claims regarding the merchant character of the archaic ruling classes. Though we are not in a position to assess the merits of these rival empirical assertions, we do not consider the question of the class character of the archaic ruling classes crucial to the Vernant-Thomson thesis. At present, in a variety of disciplines, a considerable body of evidence has been amassed that indicates that, in the era in question, a fairly significant mental shift occurred, at least in so far as the intellectual layers of these societies are concerned. These studies include: E.A. Havelock, _Preface to Plato_, (Oxford: Basil Blackmore, 1963); Julian Jaynes, _The Origins of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind_, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976); Mircea Eliade, _The Myth of the Eternal Return_, trans. Willard Trask, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); the current researches of the Marshall McLuhan Institute, under the direction of Derrick de Kerckhove. All of these investigations tend to support the basic thrust of the Vernant-Thomson thesis. Although, as we indicate in n. 16 below, it appears that the growth of ancient rationalism was connected, to some degree, with the proliferation of commodity productions (within the limits noted above), at present we must leave the question of the precise weight of this factor open.

[8] Vernant, p. 4.

[9] _Ibid._, p. 50.

[10] _Ibid._, p. 52.

[11] Havelock, p. 142.

[12] On the historically specific character of Western rationality in this regard, see Stanley Diamond, _In Search of the Primitive_, (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 1974), p. 146.

[13] Vernant, pp. 56-59.

[14] _Ibid._, pp. 78-82. Obviously, abstract equality did not encompass slaves, for instance.

[15] _Ibid._, pp. 83-96.

[16] Vernant, p. 96, quotes Archytas, a Pythagorean statesman, as follows: "Once discovered...rational calculation (_logismos_)puts an end to stasis and introduces _homonoia_; for there is truly no more _pleonexia_ and _isotes_ is achieved; and it is equality that permits business to be carried on in matters of contractual exchange". A clearer confirmation of the connection between ancient Greek rationalism and commodity production probably could not be found.

[17] For instance, see Bennett Simon, _Mind and Madness in Ancient Greece_, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 158-194.

[18] Havelock, p. 230.

[19] See E.A. Burtt, The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science, (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1932), pp. 41-43.

[20] See Chapter II below.

[21] This practical framework includes contemplative study (i.e., involving non-contingent, non-useful objects), a form of activity that Aristotle considered the highest human endeavour.

[22] For our purposes, the parallels that exist between the socio-political analyzes of Aristotle and Marx are not particularly relevant, although they do reflect a certain theoretical congruity. See de Ste. Croix, pp. 69-80.

[23] Burtt, pp. 12, 42.

[24] For instance, the "unmoved mover" thesis of Aristotle permitted the reintroduction of subjective qualities into the portrait of God. As a result, a purely mathematical or mechanical conception of cosmic motion was undermined.

[25] Aristotle, De Anima, III, 424b 1.22-429a 1.9.

[26] For our purposes, we disregard the differences separating these various schools.

[27] See n. 1 above.

[28] For instance, in 1626 Gassendi proclaimed the revival of Epicureanism as part of the new scientific revolution. See Herbert Butterfield, The Origins of Modern Science, (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, and Co., 1968), p. 121.

[29] On the relationship between the rise of capitalism and the emergence of modern science, see, for instance: E. Zilsel, "The Sociological Roots of Science", in Hugh Kearney, ed., The Origins of the Scientific Revolution, (London: Langman's, 1964), pp. 86-99; Boris M. Hessen, "The Social and Economic Roots of Newton's 'Principia'", in George Basella, ed., The Rise of Modern Science, (Lexington: D.C. Heath & Co., 1968), pp. 31-38; Morris Berman, The Re-enchantment of the World, (New York: Bantam, 1984), chapter 2. Henceforth, we use the terms science, modern science, Western science, and scientific revolution interchangeably, and, for the sake of simplicity, leave to one side the various phases of the evolution of this phenomenon.

[30] For instance, see: n. 19 above; Alexandre Koyré, "The Significance of the Newtonian Synthesis", in Basella, ed., p. 99; Berman, p. 60; Butterfield, pp. 30-31.

[31] On "sympathetic" connections, see Appendix A.

[32] On myth, see Appendix A.

[33] On "Aristotle", see Appendix A.

[34]For a concise summary of the main elements of this paradigm, see Appendix A.

[35]For example, see Burtt, pp. 40-42.

[36]Excluding Popper and his followers, however.

[37]Recently Newton's clandestine occultist researches have become the subject of intensive scrutiny. Berman, pp. 107-125, examines the implications of Newton's conformity within the conventional scientific paradigm and views this tension in Newton as a microscopic paradigm of bourgeois repression as a whole, a position with which we whole-heartedly concur.

[38]In Aristotelian terms, only efficient and material causes were accepted as valid lines of inquiry.

[39]Here, instrumentalist relates to Weber's concept of Zweckrationalität (i.e., instrumental or technical reason). As such, it overlaps, but is not identical with, our use of "instrumental". See Appendix A.

[40]Berman, pp. 13-35.

[41]See n. 29 above.

[42]Among others, Jürgen Habermas has detailed this influence in several of his recent writings. For instance, see his essay "Towards a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism", in his Communication and the Evolution of Society, trans. Thomas McCarthy, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979). We should note,however, that we fundamentally dispute Habermas' framework on several grounds. For example, in line with the Frankfurt tradition, Habermas restricts his critique of rationalism to instrumental rationality and privileges the vector of communicative reason in human history. In our view, this position amounts to an attempt to salvage the (bourgeois) public sphere from the predations of private interests and their technocratic golems. Habermas either rejects or does not perceive the historical and logical connections that, at root, make the two sides of Western rationalism (i.e., communicative and instrumental reason) one.

[43]See Chapter II below for a detailing of this influence.

[44]Ibid.   .

[45]See Chapter III for our critique of Marx on this point.

[46]Of course, the Protestant Reformation contributed decisively to this tendency.

[47]See Chapter III for our critique of Marx on this point.

[48]We subdivide "mystics" into two groups: individualist and collectivist mystics. "Organicist mysticism" falls into the latter category. On "mystics" and "organicist mysticism", see Appendix A.

[49]Frank Manuel, The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods,(New York: Atheneum Press, 1967), p. 26.

[50] See n. 28 above. On the importance of Greek materialist themes in Enlightener critiques of religion, see also Manuel, pp. 46, 87-88, 156, 143-145.

[51] Manuel, p. 37.

[52] See especially Baron d'Holbach, The System of Nature, trans. H.P. Robinson, (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970).

[53] The epithet "fanatical" became a staple feature of later Western studies of Islamic societies in particular. Marx reproduced this prejudice. See, for example, C.W.,XII, p. 7.

[54] See Chapter II below.

[55] Ibid.

[56] This shift appeared, for instance, in the studies of Locke and Hobbes into the specificity of the civil condition.

[57] Although obviously the ancient Greek theme of the logos/mythos schism implicitly contained a "developmentalist" thrust.

[58] Manuel, p. 51.

[59] Charles de Brosses, Du Culte des Dieux Fétiches, (Westmead: Gregg International, 1972). Marx first read this work as part of his research into religion and art in 1842, and consulted it again later in his life. See Lawrence Krader, The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972), p. 89. Hereafter cited as E.N.

[60] Here "Natural Religion" is used synonymously with rational religion. It should not be confused with the usage of the same term by Hegel, Bauer and Marx. The last individuals use the term essentially to refer to primitive religion. To distinguish the two usages, we shall capitalize the first usage (i.e., where natural religion=rational religion).

[61] See Chapter II below.

[62] Ibid. This conclusion applies to other Enlightener sources as well. For instance, via Bauer, Marx adapted d'Holbach's version to the "impostor theory" to elucidate the degenerate character of ideologists in a period of ruling class decay.

[63] See Chapter III below for an elaboration of this argument.

[64] See Peter Reill, The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

[65] Essentially, Kant's noumenal/phenomenal dichotomy corresponds to the liberal distinction between citoyen and bourgeois.

[66] See Chapter II below.

[67] See section D below.

[68] On "pre-history", see Appendix A.

[69]See Chapter II below.

[70]See Reill, p. 193.

[71]On "organicist mysticism", see Appendix A.

[72]See Marx's essay "The Philosophical Manifesto of the Historical School of Law", in C.W. I, pp. 203-210, for an example of his attack on this tradition.

[73]Reill, p. 215.

[74]On the dialectic of universal and particular, see Appendix A.

[75]For an extended treatment of this issue, see Tom Rockmore, Fichte, Marx and the German Philosophical Tradition,(Corbondore: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980).

[76]C.W., I, pp. 103, 105.

[77]See Chapter II below.

[78]See Appendix A.

[79]On Hegel's exclusion of "magic" from the sphere of genuine religion, see G.W.F. Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, trans. E.B. Speirs and J. Sanderson, (New York: Humanities Press, 1962), I, p. 298. By "magic" Hegel refers to primitive practices in which the shaman or sorceror views "power" as residing in himself and not in an "other". This distinction is crucial for Hegel, because he denies that a given practice qualifies as religious unless it involves a sense of otherness. Ibid., p. 290.

[80]See Chapter II below for details of this Hegelian influence.

[81]See Chapter III below.

[82]G.W.F. Hegel, "The Positivity of the Christian Religion", in G.W.F. Hegel: Early Theological Writings, ed. and trans. T.M. Knox, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1948).

[83]See section C below.

[84]See n. 5 above.

[85]See section D below for a discussion of "utopian socialist" figures.

[86]For further discussion of this matter, see David McLellan, Marx Before Marxism, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), pp. 13-14.

[87]Most of the "Young Hegelians" were of middle class origin and from Prussia.

[88]True and false religion are our terms.

[89]Particularly influential in this regard was August Ciezkowski's Prologemena zur Historiosophie (1838). See section D below.

[90]Bauer's letter to Marx, April 5, 1840, cited in William J. Brazill, The Young Hegelians, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 199.

[91] Brazill, p. 237.

[92] That is, the distinction between the esoteric and the exoteric Hegel.

[93] For further discussion of Marx's reliance on Bauer, see Zvi Rosen, Bruno Bauer and Karl Marx, (The Hague: Martinus Nighoff, 1977). Henceforth, Bauer refers to Bruno Bauer.

[94] Rosen, p. 130.

[95] Ibid., p. 108.

[96] See Bauer's letter to Marx, March 28, 1841, quoted in Brazill, p. 199.

[97] Rosen discusses this influence at length and thus we need not detail it here.

[98] On Bauer's theory of ideology and its impact on Marx, see Rosen, p. 181.

[99] See Rosen, pp. 90-95, 181, 199.

[100] Ibid.

[101] In developing this opium theme, Bauer simply reworked Hegel's original treatment of it.

[102] Bauer to Fröbel, August 2, 1843, cited in Brazill, p. 197.

[103] Although, in contrast to Marx, Bauer assigned equal causal status to subjective and objective factors, his version of the "terror theory" influenced Marx's religious interpretation. See Chapter II below.

[104] Or, in Marx's words, "free, social individuality".

[105] This "flower theme" underlies the later Marx's description of the bonds of the primitive community as comfortable.

[106] To Bauer, this "unreal universal" was the "unfree state". To Marx, the "unreal" or "false" universal included the state per se.

[107] Rosen, pp. 76, 91, 229.

[108] These conclusions were chiefly inscribed in the Allgemeine-Literatur Zeitung and were targeted by Marx and Engels in The Holy Family.

[109] See Chapter II below.

[110] We concur with David McLellan's view, expressed in his work The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 102, that Feuerbach's The Necessity for a Reform of Philosophy (July, 1843, and hereafter cited as N.R.P.) and his Preliminary Theses on the Reform of Philosophy (Feb. 1843, and hereafter cited as P.T.), and not his The Essence of Christianity (1841, and hereafter cited as E.C.), were the pivotal texts cementing Feuerbach's influence on Marx. Henceforth, all references to N.R.P. and P.T. are to the editions contained in The Fiery Brook, ed. and trans. Zawar Hanfi, (New York: Anchor, 1972).

[111] Feuerbach, N.R.P., p. 146.

[112] Feuerbach, _P.T._, pp. 153-155.

[113] To Feuerbach, all major historical transitions were essentially religious transitions.

[114] Feuerbach, "On the Beginning of History", in Hanfi, ed., p. 136.

[115] See Chapter II below.

[116] Feuerbach, _E.C._, in Hanfi, ed., p. 97.

[117] See Chapter II below.

[118] On "traditional religion", see Appendix A.

[119] Feuerbach, _E.C._, trans. George Eliot, (2nd ed.;New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 189.

[120] See Chapter II below.

[121] McLellan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, p. 102.

[122] For instance, see Feuerbach's: _N.R.P._,pp. 144, 150-151; _P.T._, pp. 166, 172; Principles for a Philosophy of the Future, (hereafter cited as _P.P.F._), in Hanfi, ed., pp. 244-245.

[123] See Chapter II below.

[124] Feuerbach tended to collapse theology, God, Christianity and religion together, and viewed God and heaven as synonymous.

[125] Feuerbach, _P.P.F._, p. 195. By no means, however, did Feuerbach break with the rationalist tradition. He continued, for instance, to subscribe to the rationalist view of historical development.

[126] See Chapter II below.

[127] Our term. Included in this category are Hess, Engels, Marx and Grün.

[128] See Appendix A.

[129] These difficulties include: a blurring of the specificities of the various movements grouped under the "utopian socialist" label; a tendency to equate religion and abstract or Christian moralism; a rationalist classification of "utopian socialism" as the childhood stage of socialism. A useful, if flawed, corrective to these deficiencies, developed from a feminist perspective, is Barbara Taylor's Eve and the New Jerusalem, (London: Virago, 1983).

[130] For more detail on these trends, see Shirley Gruner, Economic Materialism and Social Moralism, (The Hague: Mouton Press, 1973).

[131] See n. 1 above.

[132] Gruner, p. 64.

[133] Ibid., pp. 123, 134, 137, 141.

[134] Ibid., p. 156.

[135] Ibid., p. 124.

[136] The theoretical roots of this current may be traced back to the Babouvist, Sylvan Maréchal, who edited Le Dictionnaire Athée (1802).

[137] See Chapter II below.

[138] McLellan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, p. 11.

[139] See George Lichtheim, The Origins of Socialism, (New York: Praeger, 1969), p. 181, for a discussion of the Fichtean roots of this concept.

[140] Hans Mülhestein, "Marx and the Utopian Wilhelm Weitling", Science and Society, XII, No. 1 (1948), p. 118.

[141] August Cornu, "German Utopianism: 'True' Socialism", Science and Society, XII, No. 1 (1948), p. 108.

[142] Mülhestein, p. 118.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Mary Schulman, Moses Hess, (New York: Thomas Yoselhoff, 1963), p. 70.

[145] For example, in the late 1870's Marx waged a ferocious struggle against various petty bourgeois currents then infiltrating the ranks of German socialism in largely the same terms as his wars against the "true socialists" in the mid-1840's.

[146] See Chapter II below.

[147] Ibid.

[148] For instance, Marx's studies of "Asiatic" formations in the 1850's were framed by British imperial expansion during this period.

[149] This category includes, for instance, Henry Sumner Maine, Lewis Henry Morgan, and Sir John Lubbock.

[150] E.N., p. 2

[151] Herbert Spencer's Principles of Sociology (1877) is probably the best known example of this approach. Therein, Spencer equates evolutionary progress with increasing complexification (i.e., division of labour).

[152] E.N., p. 18.

[153] Ibid., p. 89.

[154] Sir John Lubbock, The Origin of Civilization, (New York: Appleton and Co., 1898), p. 333. The example Lubbock gives of a non-religion is the ancestor worship of Austrailian aborigines.

[155] Ibid., p. 264.

[156] See E.E. Pritchard, Theories of Primitive Religion, (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1965), p. 20.

[157] J.J. Bachofen's Das Mutterrecht (1860) is probably the best example of this tendency in this period.

[158] For example, in Lubbock's work.

[159] For instance, Marx charged his contemporary ethnologist with: biologicism; cultural boundedness; racism; a mystical belief in "progress"; a one-sided conception of human capacities (e.g., the denial or the subsumption of the subjective side of man).

[160] See Chapter II below for further discussion.

[161] E.N., p. 349.

[162] Ibid., p. 202.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1] Here, unconscious refers not to psychological processes, but rather to the theoretical substructure of Marx's writings in particular.

[2] See Appendix A. Henceforth, "substantive critique" and "substantive side" refer to Marx's critique of religion.

[3] We follow Rosen, p. 207, in excluding the essay "Luther as Arbiter between Feuerbach and Strauss" from the corpus of Marx's writings.

[4] During this period, the content of Bauer's politics became increasingly clear to Marx. Correspondingly, the political significance of Feuerbach's writings rose in Marx's estimation.

[5] David McLellan, Karl Marx, (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 11.

[6] C.W., I, p. 12.

[7] Ibid., p. 18.

[8] From a manuscript by Marx's daughter, Laura, reprinted in McLellan, Karl Marx, pp. 456-457.

[9] On "true" and "false", see Appendix A.

[10] C.W., I, p. 18.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Probably, this identification of religion with heteronomy underlay Marx's book (no longer extant), which he wrote in 1840 to attack the thesis of Hermes that religion and Kant are compatible. See McLellan, Karl Marx, p. 39.

[13] That is, vis-à-vis the contemporary historical phase.

[14] For instance, see C.W., I, p. 144. Hereafter, given the thematic character of this study, we shall supply only one reference to a particular thematic point, although usually multiple references are possible.

[15] Ibid., p. 189.

[16] _Ibid._, p. 452.

[17] _Ibid._, p. 104.

[18] _Ibid._, p. 86.

[19] _Ibid._, p. 152.

[20] _Ibid._, p. 73.

[21] _Ibid._, pp. 152, 191.

[22] _Ibid._, p. 152.

[23] _Ibid._, pp. 200-201, 496.

[24] See our discussion and references in Chapter III below.

[25] _C.W._, I, pp. 73, 103.

[26] _Ibid._, pp. 119, 452.

[27] _Ibid._, p. 230.

[28] _Ibid._, p. 189.

[29] _Ibid._, p. 384.

[30] _Ibid._, p. 230.

[31] _Ibid._, p. 496.

[32] _Ibid._, p. 400.

[33] _Ibid._, p. 386.

[34] _Ibid._, p. 492.

[35] _Ibid._, p. 85.

[36] _Ibid._, p. 491.

[37] _Ibid._, p. 152.

[38] _Ibid._, pp. 30, 85, 439.

[39] _Ibid._, pp. 193, 200.

[40] _Ibid._, pp. 195-196, 384.

[41] _Ibid._, pp. 151, 199-200, 205-206, 209, 230.

[42] _Ibid._, p. 199.

[43] _Ibid._, pp. 393-395.

[44] _Ibid._, p. 395.

[45] _Ibid._, p. 230.

[46] _Ibid._, p. 384. Although Marx did not use the term "pre-history" until 1859, we contend that the concept is implicit in his works before then.

[47] _Ibid._, pp. 394-395.

[48] See Chapter III below for an elaboration of this position.

[49] C.W., I, p. 263. On his mature usage, see section D below.

[50] Marx's critique of the "Free Ones" parallels his later critique of the the "true socialists". In both instances, Marx objected to radicalism abstracted from its determinate context. In this sense, he considered both currents unscientific in their politics.

[51] The pivotal text in this regard is A Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law.

[52] C.W., I, p. 84.

[53] See the previous section.

[54] See Chapter I, n. 110, above.

[55] C.W., III, p. 8.

[56] Ibid., p. 72.

[57] Ibid., pp. 39, 81.

[58] In particular, it led Hegel to confuse the natural and the social. See C.W., III, pp. 21, 33.

[59] Ibid., p. 14.

[60] Ibid., p. 27.

[61] Ibid., p. 81.

[62] Ibid., p. 40.

[63] Ibid., p. 91. On "true" and "false" universality, see Appendix A.

[64] Ibid., pp. 39-40. On "human essence", see Appendix A.

[65] Ibid., p. 64

[66] Ibid., p. 30.

[67] Ibid., p. 117.

[68] Ibid., p. 30.

[69] Ibid., pp. 332-333.

[70] Ibid., pp. 148, 151, 174, 183, 274.

[71] Ibid., pp. 143, 302, 305.

[72] Ibid., pp. 32, 81, 158-159, 343.

[73] Ibid., p. 30.

[74] Ibid., p. 312.

[75] Ibid., pp. 89, 159.

[76] Ibid., pp. 31-32.

[77] Ibid., pp. 157, 168, 204, 227-228. 296, 342.

[78] Ibid., pp. 143-144, 301-302.

[79] See n. 42 above.

[80] C.W., III, pp. 31-32.

[81] Ibid., p. 151.

[82] Ibid., pp. 153-154.

[83] Ibid., p. 156.

[84] Ibid., p. 152.

[85] Ibid., pp. 153-159.

[86] Ibid., p. 151.

[87] Ibid., pp. 53-54.

[88] Ibid., pp. 176, 182.

[89] On religion as the paradigmatic form of false practice, see ibid., pp. 274, 304-305, 333. On religion as mediate or unsocial activity, see ibid., p. 152. On religious practice as "fantastic", see ibid., pp. 212, 159, 174, 324-325, and C.W., IV, p. 82. On religion as alien or as constituting a "false universality", see C.W., III, pp. 174, 217. On the rationalist developmental situation of religion, see ibid., p. 148.

[90] C.W., IV, pp. 125, 130.

[91] C.W., III, p. 186.

[92] On the importance of religion as a polemical weapon, see Marx's letter to Feuerbach (August 11, 1844) concerning proletarian study of Das Wesen des Christenthums, ibid., p. 357.

[93] Ibid., p. 31.

[94] Ibid., p. 101.

[95] Ibid., p. 81.

[96] Ibid., pp. 28, 212.

[97] Ibid., p. 46.

[98] Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[99] Ibid., pp. 304, 333.

[100] Ibid., p. 312.

[101] See n. 89 above.

[102] On alienation from "productive life", see C.W., III, p. 274. On alienation from "species life", see ibid., p. 297. On alienation from "the product of labour", see ibid., p. 278. On alienation from "other humans", see ibid., p. 279.

[103] Ibid., pp. 15, 271.

[104] Ibid., p. 290; C.W., IV, p. 143.

[105] C.W., III, p. 305.

[106] Ibid., pp. 176, 296.

[107] Ibid., p. 297.

[108] Ibid., p. 182.

[109] Ibid., p. 186; C.W., IV, p. 36.

[110] In this period, Marx viewed communism as a means, not as an end in itself. See C.W. III, p. 306.

[111] Ibid., pp. 144, 301-302.

[112] Ibid., pp. 297, 301.

[113] Ibid., pp. 227-228, 341-342.

[114] Ibid., pp. 204-205, 217.

[115] For the sake of simplicity, here we include Proudhon in the "utopian socialist"category, although, strictly speaking, he does not belong there. Marx's critique of him, however, is essentially the same as his critique of "utopian socialism" proper. On "utopian socialism" proper, see Appendix A.

[116] See Chapter I, section D, above.

[117] This characterization was applied by Marx to the "true socialists". Although many commentators have questioned the empirical accuracy of Marx's position in this regard, this question is not at issue here.

[118] On "marginal", see Appendix A.

[119] See Cornu for details on this context.

[120] Ernest Mandel, The Formation of the Economic Thought of Karl Marx, (London: NLB, 1971), p. 46.

[121] It should be noted that Marx never described his approach as "historical materialist". Thus, we use the term advisedly and for the sake of simplicity.

[122] On the "epistemological break" thesis, see Louis Althusser, For Marx, (New York: Vintage Books, 1970).

[123] C.W., V, p. 154.

[124] Ibid., p. 4.

[125] Ibid., pp. 40, 89.

[126] For instance, see:"Letter to Annenkov" (Dec. 28, 1846), in Marx-Engels, Selected Correspondence, ed. S. Ryazanskaya, trans. I Lasker, (Moscow: Progress, 1975), p. 34. Hereafter, this text cited as S.C. and this letter as A; C.W., VI, p. 174.

[127] Ibid., p. 170.

[128] Ibid., p. 46.

[129] C.W., V, pp. 532-533.

[130] A., p. 37.

[131] C.W., V, p. 5. On "scientific socialism", see Appendix A.

[132] Ibid., p. 49.

[133] Ibid., p. 438; C.W., VI, p. 177.

[134] C.W., V, p. 56.

[135] Ibid., p. 48.

[136] Ibid., p. 24; C.W., VI, p. 174.

[137] C.W., V, p. 154.

[138] Ibid., p. 48.

[139] Ibid., pp. 36, 93, 159-169, 245.

[140] Ibid., pp. 44-45.

[141] Ibid., p. 36. "Distorted" and "true" are our terms. A "distorted" idea accurately reflects a "false" situation. A "true" idea accurately reflects a "true" situation.

[142] C.W., V, p. 189.

[143] Ibid., p. 44.

[144] Though Marx distinguishes between primitive and civil society in The German Ideology (ibid., p. 342), he does not systematically elaborate this distinction, particularly in regards to religion, because his focus, here as elsewhere, is on the continuity of these "pre-historical" stages vis-à-vis a "truly social" mode of existence. For example, Marx does not use the term primitive society in this text. We use this term for the sake of simplicity and in accordance with our definition in Appendix A.

[145] For instance, in The Communist Manifesto, Marx omitted primitive society altogether from his historical review and posited class as the material constant underlying religious practice throughout the ages. See C.W., VI, p. 504.

[146] On "civil religion", see Appendix A. Marx did not use this term. In general, civil mystification is characterized by the false representation of a part (or one side) of society or the "human essence" as the whole. This type of mystification is materially centred in the institutions of the "illusory community" or the state. See C.W., V, pp. 78, 180, 184, 190, 209.

[147] Ibid., p. 45.

[148] The Bauerian inspired thesis concerning the two phases of ideology (See Rosen, p. 186) underlies Marx's characterization of the "German Ideologists" as caricatures. Ibid., p. 293.

[149] On "Newtonian" inter-generational ties, see: A, p. 31; C.W., V, pp. 43, 82, 438. On "real individuals" (i.e., in the "Newtonian" sense of the same), see ibid., p. 31. On "reality", see ibid., pp. 49, 51, 82, 86. On consciousness as ontologically distinct from matter, see ibid., p. 36.

[150] For instance, Marx repeats: the "alienation thesis" (C.W., VI, pp. 46, 49); the "terror argument" (C.W., V, p. 44); his position concerning the inherently reactionary and heteronomous character of Christianity in particular (C.W., VI, p. 231); the various component propositions of Hegel's religious metastasis, including the "natural religion" thesis (C.W., V, p. 44) and the effective collapse of Christianity and religion (C.W., VI, p. 631).

[151] C.W., V, p. 82.

[152] Ibid., pp. 56, 73.

[153] As a real union of the universal and particular (ibid., p. 49), and thus as a "true" community (ibid., p. 78), involving conscious control of natural and social resources (ibid., pp. 80-81) by rational individuals (ibid., p. 88), communism features neither alienation (ibid., pp. 47-48) nor false consciousness (ibid., pp. 48, 438-439). Accordingly, as defined by Marx, religion may not be considered a feature of communism.

[154] Ibid., pp. 49, 438.

[155] Ibid., pp. 47-48, 245, 396.

[156] On Religion, ed. and trans. Saul Padover, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), p. 239. Hereafter cited as O.R.

[157] Capital, trans. Ben Fowkes, (New York: Vintage, 1977), I, p. 493, n. 4. Hereafter cited as C. See also Marx's "Preface" to his A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy, ed. M. Dobb, trans. S. Ryazanskaya, (Moscow: Progress, 1970), pp. 20-21, on social being and consciousness. Hereafter cited as C.O.P.E.

[158] For example, see: O.R., p. 101; G., p. 109; C, I, p. 175, n. 35.

[159] G., pp. 85-87.

[160] For example, family and clan. See C,,I, p. 471, and cf. E.N. p. 339.

[161] For instance, cf. C.O.P.E., p. 21, and C., I, p. 90, with his opposition to a unilinear historical perspective in E.N., p. 11, and S.C.. pp. 319, 291-294.

[162] The variation in Marx's characterizations of particular historical stages applies especially to primitive and "oriental" societies. See Krader's comments, in E.N., p. 4.

[163] On "productivist", see Appendix A.

[164] This position hold true especially for Marx's 1850's writings on China and India. For example, see G., p. 105.

[165] For instance, see G., pp. 107, 472, where Marx explicitly excludes hunting and gathering societies from his discussion of pre-capitalist economic forms. On p. 472 he begins with pastoral societies. In E.N., the bulk of his notes are taken from societies that have passed the threshold of domestication (e.g., the Iroquois).

[166] G., p. 111.

[167] S.C., p. 115, and C., I , p. 103.

[168] G., p. 100.

[169] G., p. 101. Marx does not elaborate on the distinctive features of these various forms of world appropriation.

[170] G., pp. 105-106.

[171] Ibid., p. 106.

[172] Ibid., p. 107.

[173] Ibid., p. 101.

[174] Ibid., p. 102.

[175] Hence the fate of the "Young Hegelians" and (later) the "vulgar" economists.

[176] O.R.,p. 240.

[177] G., p. 109.

[178] For example, Marx's interpretation of the myths of Juno and Minerva, in E.N., p. 121.

[179] C., I, p. 494, n.4.

[180] "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon", in Surveys from Exile, ed. David Fernbach, various trans., (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 149. Hereafter, this volume cited as S.E. Also see O.R., p. 103.

[181] S.E., pp. 146-148.

[182] C.O.P.E., p. 21. Examples of this tendency include: O.R., pp. 112, 116, 149-166; S.E., pp. 146-148; E.N., p. 202.

[183] S.E., pp. 243, 325; C.,I,pp. 173-177; G., p. 110.

[184] Theories of Surplus Value, ed. S. Ryazanskaya, trans. E. Burns, (Moscow: Progress, 1971), III, p. 448. Hereafter cited as T.O.S.V. Also see C.,I, p. 172.

[185] See Marx's personal affirmation of his atheism in The First International and After, ed. D. Fernbach, various trans., (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), p. 399. Hereafter cited as F.I.

[186] G., pp. 157-158.

[187] Although Marx did not use the terms "religions of personal dependence" and "religions of personal independence", we employ them for the sake of simplicity.

[188] O.R., p. 249. Marx followed Bauer in classifying Judaism as a "natural religion". Note that Catholicism and Orthodoxy are treated as "religions of personal dependence", although, since Marx usually approached these religions concretely, there is no hard and fast rule in this regard.

[189] E.N., p. 346. Here, Marx does not dispute Lubbock's restatement of the "hominization argument". In addition, on p. 345 of the same text he does not challenge Lubbock's contention that idolatry is "higher" than animal worship. As well, in the same work, p. 326, he satirically jibes Calloway's pity for the "irreligious" Zulus.

[190] "Mythology" refers to the religious traditions of ancient Greece, Rome and Germany. As these were class societies, we prefer the term to primitive.

[191] For instance, he restated the "terror argument" (G., p. 110), the "Absolute Religion thesis" (O.R., p. 103), and assimilated "Oriental" religious forms to a rationalist developmental schema (S.E., pp. 301, 306, 325-326, as well as C., I, p. 173).

[192] C., I, 172-173; G., pp. 473, 540.

[193] G., p. 706.

[194] Ibid., pp. 158, 488, 612, 832; C., I, p. 172.

[195] See section on "method" above.

[196] S.E., pp. 146-149, 326; O.R., pp. 113-114; C.W., X, p. 513.

[197] S.E., pp. 240, 243, 151; O.R., pp. 109,118, 253; C.W., X, p. 118.

[198] This tendency reflects Marx's use of the French revolution as the paradigmatic bourgeois revolution in this period. See O.R., pp. 116-118.

[199] O.R., pp. 103, 104; F.I., pp. 286, 358; S.C., p. 290.

[200] F.I., pp. 79, 271, 324, 328, 332; O.R.,p. 256.

[201] Unfortunately, space does not permit a discussion of either the history or the theory of value.

[202] Unless placed in inverted commas, fetishism refers to commodity fetishism.

[203] See James Bell, "Marx's Theory of Commodity Fetishism"(M.A. thesis, McMaster University, 1978).

[204] Ibid., p. 65.

[205] C., I, p. 165.

[206] C., I, p. 917; C.O.P.E., p. 217.

[207] G., pp. 144, 221.

[208] Ibid., pp. 221-223.

[209] *Ibid.*, p. 221.

[210] *Ibid.*, pp. 225-226.

[211] *C.O.P.E.*, p. 49.

[212] *G.*, p. 239.

[213] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

[214] That is, as a *necessary* illusion. See *G.*, pp. 509-510, 831.

[215] Marx advanced this argument, in particular, in response to the Proudhonists' proposals for money substitutes.

[216] *T.O.S.V.*, I, p. 389. The other notebooks are, as yet, unpublished, and presumably contain Marx's earliest formulations on fetishism.

[217] Two possible influences are worthy of note: Boisguillebert (See *C.O.P.E.*, p. 125, n. 3); Hodgskin's references to capital's "cabalistic signs" (See *T.O.S.V.*, III, p. 268).

[218] See Marx's mirror (*C.*, I, p. 144, n.) and king (*ibid.*, p. 149, n.) metaphors.

[219] *T.O.S.V.*, III, p. 494; *C.*, I, pp. 165, 990.

[220] *C.*, I, p. 990.

[221] *C.*, I, pp. 165, 772, 990; *T.O.S.V.*, III, p. 276.

[222] *C.*, I, p. 990; *T.O.S.V.*, III, p. 496.

[223] In German, de-mystification is *Entgötterung*. See G., p. 469.

[224] *C.*,,.I, p. 173.

[225] On the theoretical side of science, particularly of note is the essence/appearance distinction. See *C.*, ed. by F. Engels, various trans., (Moscow: Progress, 1959), III, p. 817. Also note Marx's method in his analysis of other modes of production and the historical genesis of the form of value (*C.*, I, p. 169)

[226] *C.*, I, p. 168.

[227] *Ibid.*, pp. 171-173.

[228] See "substance" above.

[229] *C.*, I, pp. 170, 173..

[230] *C.*, I, p. 172; *T.O.S.V.*, III, p. 448.

[231] *C.*, I, p. 907, n.

[232] *C.*, III, p. 830; *T.O.S.V.*, III, p. 453.

[233] Examples abound. They fall into two main categories. First, to describe the apparent inherent power of capital for self-valorization, Marx mainly uses primitive or magical metaphors. See: *C.*, I, pp. 651, 163, 255, 999,n.,195, 723, n.; *C.*, III, pp. 392, 609. Second,

to describe the metamorphoses of value, he uses mainly Judeo-Christian
or Near East metaphors. See: <u>G.</u>, pp. 156, 308; <u>T.O.S.V.</u>, III, p. 494;
<u>C.O.P.E.</u>, p. 125; <u>C.</u>, I, pp. 161, n. 26, 167, 256, 314, 229, 917;
<u>C.</u>, III, p. 609.

[234] <u>C.</u>, I, p. 175; <u>T.O.S.V.</u>, III, p. 453.

[235] <u>C.</u>, III, pp. 814-831; <u>T.O.S.V.</u>, III, p. 453.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1] For example, see Philippe Warnier, <u>Marx pour un Chrétien</u>, (Paris:
Fayard-Mame, 1977), p. 78.

[2] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 86. Henceforth, when we discuss Marx we refer to his extant
texts and the contemporary significance of his views. Thus, for the
sake of simplicity, in general we shall use the present tense to
refer to his positions.

[3] See Introduction, n. 3, above.

[4] We confess little knowledge of "Marxist-religious" studies outside of
the West.

[5] In this category we include such writers as Engels, Kautsky, Christoph
Blumhardt, Ernst Bloch, Dorothee Sölle, Jan Lochman, Roger Garaudy,
Vladimir Gardavsky and virtually all "liberation theologians" in
North and Latin America.

[6] We term this world-view horizontal because it posits a linear space-
time continuum and a corresponding historical sense (e.g., the Judeo-
Christian tradition). See Mircea Eliade, <u>The Myth of the Eternal
Return</u>.

[7] For instance, see Herbert Aptheker, <u>The Urgency of Marxist-Christian
Dialogue</u>, (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

[8] Mircea Eliade, <u>The History of Religious Ideas</u>, (Chicago: University
of Chicago Press, 1978), I, ch. 1. Of course, to some degree the
proportion of human religious history one assigns to the primitive
form of the same depends upon when one considers human history to
begin.   At present, most scholars agree that "Cro-Magnon man"
engaged in religious practices of some type and date "him" to
at least 50,000 years ago. See Jeffrey Goodman, <u>The Genesis Mystery</u>,
(New York: Times Books, 1983), pp. 184-223.

[9] For example, see Lauretta Sejourné, <u>Burning Water: Thought and Religion
in Ancient Mexico</u>, (Berkeley: Shambala, 1976), for an alternative
interpretation of animal symbolism from a Jungian perspective.

[10] See György Markus, <u>Marxism and Anthropology</u>, trans. E. de Laczay
and G. Markus, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1978), p. 39.

[11] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 117.

[12]These developmental "laws" do not embody any immanent or transcendental purpose, nor do they operate independently of human agency. Any allegation to the contrary conflicts at root with Marx's conception of capital as a social relation and his view of capitalism as a specific form of social organization.

[13]Obviously, we reject Popper's contention that one may not formulate scientific historical laws. See Ernest Mandel's response to Popper on this point in his introduction to C., I, p. 24.

[14]Ibid., pp. 81-84.

[15]Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[16]See Appendix C.

[17]Markus, p. 39.

[18]Heller, p. 88; Markus, p. 65, n. 37.

[19]Sherwood Washburn and C.S. Lancaster, "The Evolution of Hunting", in R.B. Lee and I. Devore, eds., Man the Hunter,(Chicago: Aldine Press, 1968), p. 293.

[20]See Korsch, pp. 198-213, and T.O.S.V., II, pp. 117-118.

[21]See Chapter IV, section B, below.

[22]See Chapter I, n. 7, above.

[23]See Chapter I, n. 29, above.

[24]On "material", see Appendix A.

[25]For an overview of this phenomenon, see Capra, The Turning Point.

[26]See Chapter I, n. 25, above.

[27]For example, see: Barbara Brown, Supermind, (New York: Bantam, 1983); Marilyn Ferguson, The Brain Revolution, (New York: Taplinger Press, 1973); Lyall Watson, Lifetide, (London: Coronet, 1980).

[28]On the enhanced "paranormal" sensibility of primitives,see, for instance, Robert L. Van de Castle, "Anthropology and Psychic Research", in Edgar O. Mitchell, ed., Psychic Exploration, (New York: Parapsychology Foundation, 1979).

[29]The early modern European phenomenon of the suppression of "folk healers" and the related anti-witchcraft campaigns would fall into this category. On the political significance of these "paranormal" movements, see Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, (New York: Viking, 1972).

[30]For instance, see the following: C.R. Hallpike, Foundations of Primitive Thought, (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1979); Charles Muses and Arthur Young, eds., Consciousness and Reality, (New York: Outerbridge and Lazard, 1972); Michael Cole and Sylvia Scribner, Culture and Thought, (New York: John Wiley, 1974); Allan Stanford, Culture and Cosmology, Talahasee: Florida State University Press, 1981).

[31] See chapter I, n. 7, above. In the linguistic field, these investigations have taken the form of theories concerning specific language types for primitive and civil cultures, respectively. The classic work in this area is Benjamin L. Whorf, Language, Thought and Reality, ed., John B. Carroll, (New York: John Wiley, 1956). See also Stanford, pp. 50-53.

[32] On the prevalence of this bias in academia generally today, see Capra, The Turning Point, chapter 1.

[33] For instance, see the following: Robert Ornstein, The Psychology of Consciousness, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972); Charles H. Tart, States of Consciousness, (New York: Dutton, 1975); Brown, op. cit.; R.S. Valle and Rolf van Eckartsberg, eds., The Metaphors of Consciousness, (New York: Plenum Press, 1981).

One must be careful, however, not to reify hemispheric functions. A considerable body of evidence indicates that brain functions may be spatially localized in highly variable ways. See, for example, Steven Rose, The Conscious Brain, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975). Thus, in our text we use hemispheric terminology metaphorically and for the sake of simplicity alone.

[34] On "instrumental" and "expressive", see Chapter IV below and Appendix A.

[35] For an interesting illustration of how primitives do not engage in the civil form of hypostatization, see Stanford, pp. 50-53.

[36] Mikhail Lifshitz, The Philosophy of Art of Karl Marx, trans. Ralph B. Winn, (London: Pluto Press, 1973), p. 109.

[37] Ibid., p. 77.

[38] G., p. 111, and T.O.S.V., I, p. 285.

[39] Lifshitz, p. 109.

[40] Ibid., pp. 34-38.

[41] Ibid., p. 36.

[42] See Perry Anderson, Arguments within English Marxism, (London: NLB, 1980), pp. 59-99.

[43] Two English writers in particular have recently emphasized this point. See: Edward P. Thompson, The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978); Raymond Williams, Problems of Materialism and Culture, (London: NLB, 1979).

[44] See chapter IV below and Appendix C. Note that culture unit includes sub-cultural formation as well. However, for the sake of simplicity, we shall refer only to the former. In no sense does the notion of "cultural totalization" imply the absence of social contradictions. Indeed, the differentia specifica of civil cultural units is precisely the coincidence of contradiction and unity. For the sake of simplicity, though, we shall leave the destabilizing effects of these contradictions to one side for the purposes of this study.

[45] See n, 43 above.

[46] Thompson, p. 165, taxes Marx for just this weakness.

[47] An excellent example of how Marxist prejudices on this score can weaken historical analysis, see Fred Halliday's otherwise penetrating study, Iran: Dictatorship and Development, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), where the author fundamentally misjudges the role of Islam and Islamic clerical organizations in the Iranian revolution.

[48] A plethora of recent works detail the limits of the "Newtonian" version of material reality, as revealed by contemporary advances in experimental physics. These include: Fritjof Capra, The Tao of Physics, (2nd ed.; New York: Bantam, 1983); Capra, The Turning Point; Gary Zukav, The Dancing Wu Li Masters, (New York: Bantam, 1980); David Bohm, Wholeness and the Implicate Order, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980); John. P. Briggs and David F. Peat, Looking Glass Universe: The Emerging Science of Wholeness, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984); Werner Heisenberg, Physics and Philosophy, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962); Bernard d'Espanat, "The Quantam Theory and Reality", Scientific American, No. 241 (Nov. 1979), pp. 158-181; David Finkelstein, "The Space-time Code", Physical Review, No. 184 (Aug. 25, 1969), pp. 1261-1270; Berman, op. cit.

[49] For instance, see Kenneth Pelletier's survey of the capacity of the mind to heal such physical maladies as cancer, in his Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, (New York: Delta, 1977). Until recently, most "educated" people would have automatically classified this phenomenon as false practice. On other aspects of "non-Newtonian" mental abilities, see H. Forward, Mind, Matter and Gravitation, (New York: Parapsychology Foundation, 1969).

[50] The "Aristotelian" teleological framework relies upon the ontological premise of a linear space-time continuum, a perspective not shared by primitives, for instance. Thus, primitive views of causality are not subject to the same types of critiques that "Aristotelian" positions are. For modern critiques of the "Aristotelian" teleological framework and its deleterious effects on the theorization of evolution, see Arthur Koestler, Janus, (New York: Random House, 1978), pp. 205-228, and Erich Jantsch, The Self-Organizing Universe, (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1979). The latter builds upon the work of Nobel laureate Ilya Prigogine in the area of dissipative structures.

[51] The parallels between the primitive and "new physics" world-views are becoming increasingly obvious even to conventional researchers in physics and biology. See Berman, pp. 127-146, and J.E. Lovelock, Gaia, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

[52] For example, see: Capra, The Tao of Physics, "Afterword"; Zukav, pp. 285-317; testimony of physicist Amico Swan in the documentary "Changing Our Minds", broadcast as part of the C.B.C. program Ideas (April, 1984).

[53] In our view, Marx's second thesis on Feuerbach and Popper's falsifiability

principle are not only compatible but similar in intent i.e., they both reject the validity of genetic criteria to determine the truth or falsity of a scientific proposition.

[54] Georg Lukács, "What is Orthodox Marxism?", in his <u>History and Class Consciousness</u>, trans, R. Livingstone, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971), pp. 1-24.

[55] In no sense does this proviso preclude the use of Marx's principles to investigate past societies.

[56] See Appendix C.

[57] See chapter IV, section C, below.

[58] <u>Ibid.</u>

[59] See Appendix C.

[60] Lukács, p. 8.

[61] See Appendix C.

[62] In general, we endorse the critique of G. Cohen by Andrew Levine and Erik Olin Wright in their article "Rationality and Class Struggle", <u>New Left Review</u>, No. 123 (1980), pp. 47-68.

[63] In general, we concur with the positions advanced by Ellen Meiksins Wood in her article "Marxism and the Course of History", <u>New Left Review</u>, No. 147 (1984), pp. 95-107.

[64] See notes 13 to 15 above.

[65] See chapter IV, n. 97, below.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1] See Capra, <u>The Turning Point</u>. We stress, however, that we have <u>major</u> criticisms of both this work and other contemporary expositions of "holism".

[2] For instance, see Korsch, p. 219.

[3] See Michael Löwy's discussion of this issue in his <u>The Politics of Combined and Uneven Development</u>, (London: Verso, 1981), pp. 207-211.

[4] In a sense, this condensation of what were previously regarded as separate issues constitutes part of the general epochal tendency often referred to as the "law of combined and uneven development". See section C below.

[5] That is not to say that we reject all bourgeois theorists of religion outright by any means, it is just that their hypotheses generally belong to a higher "hierarchical level" than that which is relevant for our purposes here.

[6] See discussion of "base and superstructure" in chapter III above.

[7] See Appendix C.

[8] See Korsch, pp. 73-82.

[9] Henceforth, unless otherwise stated, scientist refers to a religious researcher.

[10] The following operates on the assumption that Marx's substantive premises are accepted as invalid.

[11] Hence, we reject, for example, Sebastiano Timpanero's contention that man and nature exist in a state of permanent tension. See his On Materialism, (London: NLB, 1976) and our discussion in section B below.

[12] For instance, see Lyall Watson, The Romeo Error, (London: Coronet, 1976).

[13] The sacred/profane distinction is a logical classification valid only at the definitional "hierarchical level". Historically, distinct sacred and profane regions may not exist, as in primitive cultures.

[14] See section C below.

[15] See section B below.

[16] In this study, self-making and identity constitution overlap. An immense distance, however, separates our approach from that of the "identity school" of religious science. On the latter, see Hans Mol, Identity and the Sacred,(Agincourt: The Book Society of Canada, 1976).

[17] We include here religious practices that overtly rely upon spontaneous generation (e.g., the Taoist concept of wu-wei).

[18] See chapter III, n. 50, above.

[19] See n. 13 above.

[20] For example, as a source of "ultimate concern", a "ground of being", "axis mundi", to name but a few.

[21] We place stand in inverted commas due to the radically variable character of the mode of existence of the referent.

[22] On "conventional", see Appendix A. Hereafter, ordinary reality and "Newtonian" identity bounds are used synonymously and "transcendental" means "beyond conventional reality standards".

[23] See the discussion on "Chinese" Taoism below.

[24] Functionalist explanations are applicable to subsume religion under general social "laws", to elaborate the valid substantive definition of religion at a broad cross-cultural level, and to periodize religious practices and developmental patterns.

[25] We leave to one side the question of "useful to whom?" until our general discussion of science in section C below.

[26] In this hypothetical case, it is quite possible that all alien practices would transcend ordinary reality standards, and thus further specification would be necessary.

[27] Henceforth, for the sake of simplicity, we confine our discussion to cultural variation and bracket sub-cultural variation.

[28] See Koestler, pp. 23-57.

[29] Henceforth, we shall denote this special function by placing house and its derivatives in inverted commas. See Appendix A.

[30] Negative (evil) forces seek to disrupt or destroy an established harmonic pattern in order to construct a new one. "Evil", in other words, is very much a matter of perspective. See James Bell, "Sorcery and the Problem of Evil", (B.A. dissertation, Queen's University, 1976).

[31] We emphasize that this table by no means constitutes a complete scientific account. It simply serves as a hypothetical sketch to guide future research. All constituent assertions, therefore, are subject to falsification, modification and elaboration. If, for instance, a genuinely primitive culture is discovered to possess a horizontal "landscape", then our arguments in this regard are false. We must stress, however, that bourgeois literature on primitive religion frequently fails to correlate religious practices with definite forms of productive organization and thus "primitive religion" can often encompass both "hunting and gathering" cultures and "post-Neolithic" cultures that verge on being civil formations (e.g., the Iroquois nations in the immediate pre-colonial period in North America). We reject this conflation. We are also sceptical about attempts to extrapolate conclusions regarding the nature of Paleolithic life/religion from the study of contemporary primitive cultures. There is no simple equation between the two periods. The obvious difficulties that this caesura poses for researchers does not excuse those who proceed as if it does not exist.

[32] For a more comprehensive survey of these differences, see Krader, Dialectic of Civil Society.

[33] See Appendix C. For a similar critique of the "orthodox" approach -- albeit from a markedly different perspective -- see Stanley Aronowitz, The Crisis in Historical Materialism, (South Hadley: J. F. Bergin, 1981).

[34] We use the term "metabolic" without the "Newtonian" assumptions of its conventional usage. Hence, in employing this term here we make a number of assumptions. First, we leave open what is substantively involved in a metabolic interchange. We do not restrict this exchange to "material" contours. Second, at the relevant "hierarchical level", we deny the validity of any distinction between material and mental practices. Third, again at the relevant "hierarchical level", we reject the distinction between the "labour of the hands" and the "labour of the body". This opposition reflects a civil delineation of identity lines. However, where the theoretical object is to specify the social dimension of metabolic intercourse, this distinction is crucial and we reserve the term productive to denote this specific

social dimension. See Appendix A.

[35] Therefore, at the relevant "hierarchical level" the "law of value"
comprises a subsidary component of the reproduction (establishment,
demolition) of a given cultural totality. This proposition does
not conflict with our simultaneous affirmation of the determinant
status (in the sense of "setting limits to") of the economic infra-
structure vis-à-vis broad cultural transformations, for the simple
reason that the two propositions have distinct theoretical objects
and, by extension, "territories". The theory of value concerns the
objective constitution of the productive life of a given society.
Propositions relating to the specification of "cultural totalization",
in contrast, concern the constitution of social agency in the same.
The two regions overlap, but are not coincident. See Appendix C.

[36] For instance, see the following works: William Duprès, Religion in
Primitive Cultures, (The Hague: Mouton Press, 1977), p. 305;
Lyall Watson, Lightning Bird, (Kent: Coronet, 1983), p. 78; Stanley
Diamond, op. cit.; R. Clarke and G. Hindley, The Challenge of the
Primitives, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975), p. 170; Jaime Highwater,
The Primal Mind, (New York: Harper and Row, 1981); Joseph Brown,
The Spiritual Legacy of the American Indian, (New York: Crossroads,
1982).

[37] This connection, for instance, surfaces in the totemic articulation
of kinship relations.

[38] For the sake of simplicity, in what follows we bracket consideration
of any contradictions that may exist between the forces and relations
of production, for example, as well as of transitional periods in
general.

[39] For our purposes here, we omit consideration of gradations internal
to this typology.

[40] We take particular exception to Marx's designation of the primitive
subject as an "objective individual". The premises of this description
(derived from Hegel) are that primitives do not possess any subjectivity
-- a patent falsity -- and that only a certain type of "mentality"
counts in the determination of subjectivity.

[41] Even sorcerors or witches, for example, who engage in ostensibly
anti-social practices fall under this general rule.

[42] This solidification does not necessarily involve the legitimation of
the existing hegemonic version of the "divided universal". See "Myth
and Ritual" below.

[43] It should be noted that primitive societies, in general, enjoy a
fairly affluent existence, with a good deal of spare time for the
population at large. See Richard B. Lee, "What Hunters do for a
Living, or, How to Make Out on Scarce Resources", in Lee and Devore,
eds., pp. 30-43.

[44] See Appendix A.

[45] This tendency means that the "instrumental" dimension of primitive
practice is corralled within "expressive" limits (i.e., is one side of a

multi-faceted mythopoeic interchange with the cosmos), generally
speaking. Logically, however, this "instrumental" moment is distinct
and exists in potentia in conflict with "expressive" aims in the
primitive era. In the civil period this conflict becomes manifest.
The paradigmatic example of this tradition is the development of the
"occult sciences" and, in particular, alchemy. See Berman, pp. 57-103.

[46] See n. 38 above.

[47] For instance, the peripheralization of female "folk healers" in early
modern Europe.

[48] On "mentality", see Appendix A.

[49] See Hallpike, pp. 1-40.

[50] See Ornstein and Jaynes, op. cit.

[51] For instance, see Robin Horton and Ruth Finnegan, eds., Modes of
Thought, (London: Faber and Faber, 1973).

[52] Hallpike, pp. 474-479, is a partial exception to this trend , because
he is relatively open towards "paranormal" phenomena.

[53] This qualification applies especially, but not exclusively, to
propositions concerning hemispheric specialization.

[54] On this contrast, see: Diamond, pp. 145-146; Clarke and Hindley,
pp. 70, 214.

[55] See section A above.

[56] On "problem" see Appendix A. On our use of "instrumental" language,
see Appendix C.

[57] See chapter III above. On death as a function of variable identity
boundaries, see Lyall Watson, The Romeo Error, and Lewis Thomas,
The Lives of a Cell, New York: Bantam, 1975), pp. 113-116.

[58] Obviously, we reject the conventional periodization of religious
stages according to phenomenal criteria (e.g., animism, polytheism,
monotheism). In part, the reason for the formal overlap of religious
types in our periodization lies in the nature of civil mystification.

[59] The paradigmatic form of this unified "power grid" in the religious
sciences is mana.

[60] For instance, see Henri Frankfurt et al., Before Philosophy,
(Baltimore: Penguin, 1971), pp. 11-38.

[61] Various forms of civil religions (e.g. apocalyptic traditions)
recognize the fractured state of the existing communal framework and
embody a struggle to realize the conditions of the primitive community
on earth. Typically, however, these civil "solutions" involve the
mythic substitution of one part or one side of humanity for the whole,
a tendency that is paradigmatically expressed in the millenial
division of the sheep and the goats and the permanent exile of the
latter from the "New Jerusalem". In short, membership in the

"healed" community continues to be constituted on a <u>particularistic</u> basis. Insofar as a religious form that evolves under civil conditions transcends this particularism and struggles towards an authentic liberation (i.e., in communist terms) it merges with the communist movement and becomes a species of "transitional communist religion". See section C below.

[62] This emphasis thematically underlies the "ideal typical" civil problem of "evil".

[63] The Near East in the fourth and third millenia B.C.E. provides the paradigmatic examples of this tendency.

[64] The opposition of deities, of course, is linked with the division of peoples; particular ethnic groups or cities, for example, are "bound" by contract or whatever to a specific god and thereby set apart from other groups.

[65] The division is frequently paralleled by a similar dichotomy within man himself.

[66] On the privatization of religious belief, see Thomas Luckmann, <u>The Invisible Religion</u>, (New York: MacMillan, 1967).

[67] This transformation applies to both the "labour of the body" and the "labour of the hands".

[68] Henceforth, we occasionally employ musical metaphors to denote the distinctive harmonic quality of primitive and communist self-making. This metaphoric choice reflects our hypothesis that the practical fusion of music, sexuality, religion and communal life in general in the primitive era constitutes one of the fundamental keys to the "riddle of history".

[69] For instance, ordinarily, shamanic practices in primitive cultures operate within a more or less fixed mystical geography, handed down from the "outside" (e.g., tradition) in one way or another. See Mircea Eliade, <u>Shamanism</u>, trans. Willard R. Trask, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 20.

[70] For instance, <u>certain</u> "Voodoo" practitioners believe that the the power of a pin-pricked doll, made in the image of a person, to harm the latter resides in the doll <u>per se</u> rather than a deeper (i.e., "non-Newtonian") level of the "self". We consider this belief to be an error of this sort.

[71] The prevalence of propertarian terms in civil soteriological systems (e.g., "release", "redemption") underlines the fundamental divide that separates the "fertility regimes" of early civil societies (e.g., Early Dynastic Sumer) from hunting "magic" in primitive cultures, although <u>formally</u> the differences may appear slight. Civil "salvation" essentially means "coming under the dome" (=territory) of a particular deity. Accordingly, social/ecospheric fractures lies at the heart of the Sumerian need system, for example. In contrast, in the primitive universe, hunting "success" is a

function of the mythopoeic relationship that obtains between the hunter and his prey (i.e., they are both "housemates"). The caesura that divides these two systems from each other is graphically displayed by their respective evolutionary patterns. The Near Eastern civil "fertility regimes" gave rise (circa the first millenium B.C.E.) to the pervasive phenomenon of "world rejection", whereby nature, the axis of the "fertility regime", became negativized. In contrast, there is not a single example of a similar process occurring in primitive cultures proper.

[72] This rule applies to Eastern traditions as well, monistic claims notwithstanding. In this regard, three points are worth noting. First, on the civil developmental scale, Eastern religions arose in relatively "backward" social formations, and hence it stands to reason that they would exhibit closer formal links with primitive religions than their more "advanced" Occidental counterparts would. Second, insofar as Eastern traditions evince a "non-dualistic" focus (which is by no means as much as is popularly believed), this tendency is developed as an esoteric practice or an activity that, in practice, is set aside as a privileged reserve. Third, Eastern "non-dualistic" systems (e.g., Advaita Vedanta) co-exist with the practical distinction between distinct "landscape" regions (e.g., between maya and Brahman).

[73] The correlation of specific religious forms with particular sexual regimes (e.g., Puritanism with sexual repression) falls within the parameters of this process.

[74] This tendency does not mean that civil religions cannot have "this worldly" targets (i.e., to transform a given society or political constitution to conform with "transcendental" principles, as is the case in contemporary Iran, for instance). It means that the axis of universality is opposed to the actual social dynamics of this society (i.e., it is an "ought" set against an "is"). This cleavage explains why the social forces that seek to reshape the "community" in the imago dei almost always must resort to repression to effect and sustain this metamorphosis. The schism between the "spiritual" and "material" realms exists in potentia in all stages of civil society, a fracture that provides civil religious practitioners with the space to "criticize" (in the broad sense of the term) existing social and political institutions and thus to adopt an oppositional stance to the prevailing order.

[75] A periodization of this variation would take us too far afield in this study, although we may note that historical examples of this tendency include both the classical "Asiatic" tradition, where one section of society--typically uncontaminated by manual labour-- mediates "transcendental" contact for the masses, and the Puritan tradition, where the subjective side of the "atomic" individual is set part from its objective counterpart, with the former serving as the axis of "transcendental" communion.

[76] Historically, of course, these wounds include "primary" lacerations, or, more precisely, "primary" questions that become lacerations when articulated within a civil context. Here, however, we concentrate solely on the "ideal typical" civil afflictions.

[77] For instance, in Weber's terms, both "world affirming" and "world rejecting" orientations are possible in this respect.

[78] The paradigmatic form of this process was the Protestant Reformation, the concomitant gradual exile of religion to the private sphere, and the rise of bourgeois democratic states in early modern Europe.

[79] Historically, the concatenation of political, economic and religious institutions in the service of the hegemonic particular social interest almost universally characterizes the early stages of the "Asiatic mode of production". Typically, in these societies, the temple functions as the central collection point for the alienation of the social surplus product from the immediate producers in the form of tribute or votary offering.

[80] See n. 70 above. We insist, however, that only pragmatic criteria can arbitrate error in these instances, and not any pre-determined conception of what is and is not real, or what are or are not the limits of man.

[81] See Ornstein, pp. 161-199.

[82] On communism, see Appendix A.

[83] On "communist religion", see Appendix A.

[84] See Chapter III above.

[85] Though the theme of "all-roundedness" as a central feature of communism recurs in Marx's writings at various points (e.g., C.W.,V, p. 47), here we develop it much farther than Marx would.

[86] See discussion of "Mentality" above.

[87] For example, see Lifshitz, pp. 109-110.

[88] See Koestler, p. 216.

[89] In general, this "nightmare" reality corresponds to the one-sided mechanization of human practices, or the flattening of human capacities to fit the Procrustean dimensions of linear efficiency. In the present capitalist phase, this tendency assumes the form of the micro-computer/robotic/bio-technological "revolution" or "Third Wave" culture.

[90] On the link between "Newtonian" boundary transcendence and creativity from a psychoanalytical standpoint, see D.W. Winnicott, Playing and Reality, (New York: Basic Books, 1971). On the general intuitive superiority of primitives, see:Diamond, pp. 170, 197, 312; Clarke and Hindley, pp. 67, 203, 208.

[91] See Ornstein, pp. 65-88.

[92]Here, our methodological guidelines correspond to the distinction we drew earlier between the instance of productive unity and "landscape".

[93]See n. 36 above.

[94]See our discussion of "landscape" above.

[95]Recently, however, a number of "left" theorists have undertaken serious efforts to integrate traditional socialist concerns with ecological and feminist themes. These works include: Rudolph Bahro, Socialism and Survival, ed. and trans. David Fernbach, (London: Heretic Books, 1982); André Gorz, Ecology as Politics, (Boston: South End Press, 1980); Murray Bookchin, Towards an Ecological Society, (Montreal: Black Rose, 1980). We must note, however, that we strongly disagree with many aspects of each of these works.

[96]For a similar line of argument, see Jeremy Schapiro, "The Slime of History: Embeddedness in Nature and Critical Theory", in John O'Neill, ed., On Critical Theory, (London: Heinemann, 1976), pp. 145-163.

[97]In general, we subscribe to the positions contained in the draft resolution of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, entitled Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1977).

[98]In short, "communist religion" does not embody moral imperatives that are set against what is, it expresses what is.

[99]See n. 68 above.

[100]Though this engagement is obviously socially mediated and thus involves an indirect relation to nature, in neither the primitive nor the communist cases does it involve ontological cleavages that divide man from the rest of the natural world. At the relevant "hierarchical level", the only valid approach to culture is to view it as a species specific natural process. In no way does this perspective negate the specificity of the social internalization of the interchange with nature in the case of homo sapiens, it just argues that this social region must be located within the framework of man's continuity with other organisms. For this reason,we refuse to term man's "primary" state an alienated condition. To term it such would be to convert those features of the man-nature interchange that are peculiar to the civil/bourgeois era into eternal traits of the "human condition".

[101]We use the terms "laws" and "govern" as logical descriptions. Although "free, social individuals" are relatively immune from the fallacy of hypostatization, this fact does not mean that they do not have to obey "laws" in the above sense.

[102]Notwithstanding serious reservations concerning both his methodology and his socio-political premises, we generally subscribe to Colin Wilson's thesis of a "ladder of selves". See his work Mysteries, (London: Panther, 1979). We believe that this thesis could quite easily be integrated with the fundamental propositions of historical materialism.

[103] See section C below for further discussion.

[104] On the possibility of "non-ideological" religion, see Michèle Bertrand, Le statut de la religion chez Marx et Engels, (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1979), p. 172.

[105] Thought this resolution is not a sufficient criterion for the demarcation of science from non-science, it indicates that the social contextualization of "problem solving" cannot be ignored and indeed constitutes the initial reference point for religious science. See Appendix C.

[106] See the discussion of our general political framework below.

[107] See Michael Löwy, Georg Lukács: From Romanticism to Boshevism, trans, P. Camiller, (London: NLB, 1979), p. 19.

[108] On the general question of the "positive" side effects of this defeat, see Russell Jacoby, The Dialectic of Defeat, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981). On "holistic", see Appendix A. Of course, the precise character of "holistic" totalities varies. Since the sixties, most "holistic" movements have consciously or unconsciously posited the bourgeois individual as their thematic axis, notwithstanding any formal "transpersonal" guises. In this context, the desire for "holism" amounts to the eminently conventional proclivity towards monadic wholeness, which is precisely why we place the term in inverted commas. By and large, contemporary "New Age" currents not only fail to transcend bourgeois identity categories, they end up celebrating them.

[109] For instance, see Michael Rossman, New Age Blues, (New York: Dutton, 1979). Although the contemporary "holistic" movement definitely has its "left wing" (e.g., Fritjof Capra, Morris Berman), the latter tends to be highly confused politically and frequently ends up simply regurgitating all the old "utopian socialist" errors.

[110] On communist movement, see Appendix A. Unless otherwise indicated, communist movement refers to the Western branch of the same.

[111] See n. 97 above. Henceforth, unless otherwise specified, the term "working class" and its derivatives should not be understood in its strict economic sense, but as metaphors for all "oppressed" social layers/classes generally in the bourgeois epoch. On "oppressed", see Appendix A. Our political focus on the wider category of the "oppressed", rather than the narrower category of workers proper, reflects our distinction between the regions of the "cultural totality" on the one hand, and the "productive totality" on the other.

[112] Lest there be no misunderstanding, in a socialist democracy of the type that we advocate, the organs of "workers' power" are both de jure and de facto separate from any political parties that may exist.

[113] In this sense, our study constitutes a specific re-definition of the theory of mediation as initially translated into concrete terms by Lenin and philosophically recast by Georg Lukács in his Lenin, (London: NLB, 1970). We emphasize, however, that we neither endorse Lenin's organizational principles as generally applicable rules, nor do subscribe to Lukács's interpretation of the same carte blanche. We definitely reject the codification of these principles by Stalin and his heirs or by the myriad of left sects that have proliferated in the last sixty years or so. In our view, it is possible to sift out from Lenin's writings three propositions that command universal validity in the bourgeois epoch. First, there is Lenin's stress on the specificity of the political moment in the socialist transition. Second, there is his recognition that the "material" condition of the working class in its immediate "life situation" is insufficient to effect a theoretical or practical appropriation of this specificity. Third, there is his conclusion from the above that an organizational mediation is required as one aspect of generating the appropriate and sufficient consciousness and practice to effect a "socialist revolution". We consider it quite incorrect to reduce Lenin's strategic contribution to the sterile (and later abandoned) 1902 formulation--borrowed from Kautsky--concerning the need to import socialist consciousness into the ranks of the proletariat from "the outside". This tenet represents only one variant of an interventional strategic approach, and an impoverished one at that, because it obscures the dialectical character of historical movements i.e., the reciprocal interpenetration of disparately constituted social layers that are conjuncturally united in a common struggle and which enter the revolutionary process at different points. No "successful" "socialist revolution" has ever featured a vanguard layer set apart from the society at large and which "critically" educates the ignorant masses. It was certainly not the case in Russia in 1917. On this last point, see Marcel Liebmann, Leninism under Lenin, trans. B. Pearce, (London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, 1975).

[114] Hereafter,unless otherwise indicated, transition and its derivatives refer to the communist transition.

[115] Hereafter, unless otherwise indicated, crisis refers to the epochal capitalist crisis that (logically) makes a "socialist revolution" possible. Every crisis of this type contains economic, social, ecological and political moments, although it is impossible to discuss them separately in this study.

[116] See Introduction, n. 8, above. Henceforth, when referring to the communist movement, unless otherwise noted, we assume an "orthodox" adherence.

[117] See Bahro, op. cit.

[118] Although "orthodox" activists do not ignore the role of passion altogether, they do limit it to "Newtonian" bounds, and, in the main, view it as subsidiary to the play of rational interests.

[119]The classic example of this perspective is Wilhelm Reich's The Mass
Psychology of Fascism,trans. Vincent R. Carfagno, (New York: Simon
and Schuster, 1970).

[120]For the sake of simplicity, we shall label all socialist currents
with a pronounced "holistic" bias, "utopian".

[121]This proclivity is evident in Marx's writings of the 1850's and
1860's, wherein he tends to view the process of "capitalist totali-
zation" as an extended reproduction of nineteenth century conditions
and consequently tends to conceive the subject of the communist
transition per se in terms of the classical proletarian of that time.
Within the historical materialist tradition generally, this position
has theoretically underwritten the pronounced "productivist" bias of
virtually all currents and has profounded affected their various
conceptions of socialism (e.g., Lenin's formula that communism=
soviets + electrification).

For a useful summary of the fundamental, as opposed to formal,
traits of the capitalist mode of production, see Ernest Mandel's
introduction to C., I, p. 82.

[122]Both the "orthodox" and the "utopian" currents are guilty of empiri-
cism. On the one hand the "utopian" current effectively equates
"holism" with "moralism" and converts the universal moment of human
history into an abstraction pure and simple. Thus, the particular
becomes lost in the shuffle. On the other hand, "orthodox" adherents
implicitly accept the premises of the Kantian political universe, with
the "society of associated producers" viewed as a rational commonwealth
of rational individuals. Of course, Marx and the historical material-
ist tradition fundamentally modify the historical co-ordinates of this
framework. Theoretically speaking, though, we suggest that there is
a lineal connection between Marx's ambiguity on these liberal premises,
his ambivalence on the bourgeois democratic state--and his related
misreading of the problem of working class reformism--and, at the
turn of the century, Bernstein's overtly Kantian espousal of "citizen
socialism" and his visceral embrace of bourgeois democracy. In short,
we believe that the theoretical roots of the "orthodox" incapacity
to solve the riddle of bourgeois democracy run very deep indeed,
notwithstanding Marx's seminal insights in this area in his early
writings. The point is that these insights were never carried to
fruition, in part because his rationalist prejudices--in the concrete
context of his battles with the "utopian socialists"--convinced him
of the inherently mystical--and therefore dangerous-- character of
this theoretical terrain.

[123]Reference to "capitalist totalization" does not imply that prior to
the transition to capitalism there was no "world system" at any point.
We assert, however, that the capitalist mode of production, particu-
larly in its "mature" phase, represents a qualitatively advanced
step in the construction of a planetary culture. In simple terms,
in the "mature" bourgeois phase, the global interpenetration of social

practices reaches the point where a qualitatively new level of systemic integration is realized. A pre-condition of this process is the emergence of a global technical infrastructure that permits a virtually simultaneous programming and diffusion of information on a planetary scale. A related phenomenon is a radically enhanced capacity for the international migration of capital.

These processes have resulted in the condensation and the complexification of capitalist crises. Very simply, the systemic effects of the irrationality of capitalism have become so tightly interwoven globally that previously isolated domains of concern (e.g., the economy and ecology) have become fused on a unitary terrain, and this terrain has become increasingly less susceptiblbe to local modification, pure and simple. In brief, the space for "problem solving" have become increasingly planetized and the "problem" has become increasingly biospheric in nature.

In referring to the "mature" phase of capitalism, we stress that we are advancing logical and not historical conclusions. In no way do we prejudge the ultimate duration of this mode of production or indeed of the species as a whole.

[124] Here we refer to the structural recompositon of the workforce that has occurred in the post-war period and particularly since the emergence of the "new international division of labour" in the mid-1960's. Tendentially speaking, this process has not only internationalized the proletariat (objectively, at any rate) to a degree that qualitatively surpasses that achieved in previous periods, it has also produced--or is the process of producing-- a different kind of proletariat. Metaphorically speaking, we suggest that capital is presently "throwing together" on a global "factory floor" (or perhaps "computer terminal" would be more apt) a workforce that much more closely than ever before resembles an "abstraction of humanity". This means that the "new working class" (i.e., in the above sense, and not as used by Serge Mallet et al.) is more heterogenous: it is less white, less male and less European. We suggest that one effect of this recomposition is the one-sided condensation, at the historically specific site of capitalist production relations, of diverse spatio-temporal sensibilities in the constitution of proletarian subjectivity. In simple terms, the "new working class" no longer understands its oppression solely in "Newtonian" terms, but interprets its experience using a much broader range of "voices" than was previously possible. See: Aronowitz, pp. 116-117; Ernst Bloch, "Nonsynchronism and the Obligation to its Dialectic", New German Critique, XI (Spring, 1977), pp. 22-38.

[125] The symptoms of this biospheric cancer are ubiquitous. On the inter-penetration of the economic and the ecological crises, see, for instance, Barry Commoner, The Closing Circle, (New York: Bantam, 1972).

[126] On "community", see Appendix A. The thematic axis of a "communal" politics, in the sense that we are using the term, would principally

consist of a struggle over the content of "communal" life and the related issue of "communal" boundaries. In other words, a "community" based strategic framework would have as its interventional axis the construction of a political alliance to reshape the parameters of "communal"/"inter-communal" relations at various levels. In our terms, we refer to it as "house" building.

[127] On our criteria for a "successful" "socialist revolution", see Appendix A. In our view, Russia (1917), Yugoslavia (1944), China (1949), Cuba (1959), Vietnam (1975), and Nicaragua (1979), all qualify in this regard.

These ideological conditions, however, are not exclusive to "socialist revolutions". They were satisfied in the Iranian revolution of 1979, and one could argue that Solidarnosc at least partially fulfilled them in 1980.

[128] Although we are fully aware of the mechanistic as well as the ideological connotations of this term, we use it for the sake of simplicity.

[129] In psychoanalytic literature, this process is termed the stage of "secondary identification" and follows the (successful) resolution of the Oedipus complex. In the school of "ego psychology" this concept, along with its "primary" parallels, became the basis for investigations into the "conflict free zone" in the psyche. The classic work in this area is Heinz Hartmann's Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation, trans. David Rapaport, (New York: International Universities Press, 1958).

[130] The principal passive form of this ideological subscription is the acquiesence, on the part of the "oppressed", to the hegemonic definition of "communality" and the concomitant obligations that issue therefrom (e.g., "Don't rock the boat!"). Frequently, the form of this passivity is the acceptance of the existing "communal" parameters as natural and unchangeable. The active mode of this subscription ranges from explicit consent to active participation in a "communal" mobilization of some type (e.g., war).

[131] On "communal individuals", see Appendix A. Though we believe that our reference to their ruptured psyches conforms with the spirit of Marx's description of the proletariat as a "class of civil society which is not a class of civil society" (C.W., III, p. 186), in our version this disjunction at least partially involves the transcendence of "Newtonian" identity bounds.

[132] See Appendix B.

[133] See n. 97 above. In conventional political terms, the distinction that we draw between the "communal" and the political moments corresponds to the necessary separation of the "organs of power" on the one hand, from political parties on the other, at all stages of the revolutionary process.

[134] Obviously, here we are not advocating a psychic resolution of economic and political questions. We are simply proposing a re-definition of the framework in which they are asked, a shift that is suggested by the historical roots of the relevant terms.

[135] For instance, see Margarat Randall's work, Christians in the Nicaraguan Revolution, trans. M. Valverde, (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1983).

[136] Of course, whether or not this appropriation occurs depends, in large measure, upon the "material" recomposition of the working class and whether this process allows our "seeds" to germinate.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

[1] Einstein's resistance to the implications of quantum mechanics is probably the most famous example of this conservatism. See Zukav, pp. 18-41.

[2] In Reich's case, however, his questioning of Marx's rationalism did ultimately lead him into overtly religious terrain.

[3] Russell Jacoby, Social Amnesia, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), pp. 119-151.

[4] The construction of a socialist political alliance necessarily entails that the resolution of the "materially" underwritten differences (i.e., those which are structurally linked to the reproduction of capitalist relations), which may divide the diverse "oppressed" layers/classes from each other, must be historically postponed until the establishment of a socialist democracy.

[5] Archetypally, fertility initially springs from the margins of social interchange. See Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970).

[6] In Latin America, for instance, the literary tradition of "magical realism" has functioned as a vehicle for this sort of interchange.

Appendix   A

<u>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</u>

"Absolute Religion thesis" - An evolutionary interpretation of religious
         history that posits Christianity, and particularly, Protestant
         Christianity, as the apex of religious development and thus
         as embodying the fullest historical expression of the essence
         of religion.

"advanced" ("backward", "lower", "higher") - Conventional developmental
         judgments, but without subscription thereto.

"alienation thesis" - In the broad sense, any religious study that
         assumes that the presence of religion reflects the existence of
         a defect of some sort. In the narrow sense, the denial that
         a given set of practices is religious unless it involves the
         worship of an other.

"animal argument" - The contention that religiosity serves as an inverted
         index of dehumanization (i.e., bestialization), and thus is
         paradigmatically expressed by the worship of animals.

anthropogenesis - human self-making as an active/passive, subjective/
         objective movement, encompassing both the interchange with
         nature (external and internal), and interchange with other
         humans.

"Aristotelian action framework" - Linear space-time goal realization.

"capitalist totalization" - The historical process whereby, in a one-
         sided fashion, capitalism planetizes social/natural interchange
         and thereby simultaneously lays the "material" foundations for
         a planetary culture and complexifies and condenses the terrain
         of crisis resolution.

"Chinese box" - A metaphor for our proposed "new religious science",
         in which the constituent propositions are sub-divided into
         distinct "theoretical territories", hierarchically ordered
         according to their degree of causal determinativeness.

civil (society, religion) - Civil society ordinarily denotes the era
         of human history that is characterized by the presence of
         political and class relations (i.e., a "society of the divided
         whole"). Civil religion is that era's typical religious form.

communism (society, religion) - Marx's theory of that era in human
       history which is characterized by both the absence of class
       and political relations and an "advanced" degree of technical
       development, constituted at a planetary level. "Communist
       religion" is this era's typical religious form.

communist movement - The ensemble of activists (whether institutionally
       organized or not) who claim Marx's theoretical legacy as a
       pivotal component of their interventional practices. For our
       purposes, we bracket consideration of the validity of these
       claims.

communist problematic - How the universal and particular moments of
       human history interpenetrate in the bourgeois epoch.

communist-religious problematic - The logical relation that obtains
       between communism on the one hand and religion on the other.

"communal individuals" - The typical agents of "transitional communist
       religion", characterized by a ruptured psyche/practice.

"community" - Any geographic zone, of variable size, that serves as a
       site for the "cultural totalization" of a particular group of
       humans, to some degree.

conventional - Western norms, particularly in the areas of reality
       standards and identity boundaries.

"corporeal argument" - The association of the "lower" stage of religious
       development, and, in some instances, religion per se, with the
       use of pictorial or concrete language. Conversely, the "higher"
       stages of religion, and, in some cases, the transcendence of
       religion per se, is linked with the cultivation of abstract
       language.

crisis - The bourgeois instance of this phenomenon, with the political,
       social, economic and ecological moments thereof implicit therein.

critique - Marx's critique of religion.

"cultural totality" - The web of subjective-objective/active-passive
       practices whereby a given group of humans form a relatively
       comprehensive social nexus that extends a significant degree
       of identity coherence to their productive/reproductive existence.
       In the main, the boundaries of this region coincide with those
       of the "community".

"dance" - The logically specific aspect of "play" whereby the practices
       of given primitive/ "free, social" individuals are harmonized
       with the "laws" of the "eco-metabolism".

dialectic of universal and particular - How the moments of totality and
       determinate existence interpenetrate at a particular point.

"dialogue" - The exchanges, of diverse forms, that take place between the adherents of overtly religious traditions on the one hand, and adherents of historical materialism on the other.

"eco-metabolism" - Conventional usage, without its "Newtonian" assumptions, and as specifically applied to the sum of interchanges within a given ecosphere, encompassing both human and non-human occupants.

"expressive" - The form of practical bias, typically accentuated in the primitive era, in which, in the normal course of events, the system of communal want satisfaction grants selective advantage to the preservation/extension of the traditional mythopeoic bridges (i.e., "house" rules) that connect the members of the community to a given eco-continuum, as against efficiency per se.

"false" (universality, human, social, practice) - Marx's assessments (or derived therefrom), embodying both normative and historical conclusions. "False universality" applies to human aggregates that are one-sided or in some sense misrepresent the "human essence" or impede its actualization. "Falsely human" applies to practices or conceptions that distort the "human essence". "Falsely social" generally refers either to a non-commodity economy in which humans do not consciously and/or directly control the "material" presuppositions of their existence, or to a commodity economy in which labour becomes social through the exchange of things. "False practice" denotes unscientific activity, both in the sense that it does not work and in the sense that it embodies anthropogenetic disfigurement.

"five senses paradigm" - The traditional Western rationalist view of human sensuality, originating (at least in written form) with Aristotle, which limits the valid media of human interchange with nature to the organs of taste, sight, smell, touch and hearing.

"hierarchical levels" - Logical denotations for the different regions of theory in which propositions with distinct ranges of applicability obtain. In particular "problem solving" conditions, when synthesized, these regions necessarily exhibit differential degrees of explanatory weight.

"history" - The era when man's capacity for self-making "truly" begins. For our purposes, it is synonymous with communism.

historical - Propositions that concern the nature and order of events in a particular space-time continuum, as conventionally understood.

historical materialism - A short-hand denotation for the tradition of
        inquiry inaugurated by Marx.

"holism" - Theory/practice that accents the inter-relation of the
        constituent parts of a given "field", and in particular the
        semi-autonomous properties of this totality, and that views
        the constitution of this totality as involving the transcendence
        of conventional "Newtonian" boundaries.

holon - A functioning system, with semi-autonomous properties, that is
        both a whole in its own right and part of a larger operating
        unit. As such, it points both "downward", towards inclusive
        sub-holons, and "upwards", towards more comprehensive aggregates.

"hominization thesis" - The argument that as one progresses "up" the
        ladder of religious evolution, the more anthropomorphic the
        object of religious worship becomes.

horizontal - The direction of religious practice that issues from the
        characteristic tendency of the civil "landscape" to fracture
        into qualitatively distinct "power" zones, typically religiously
        expressed by the setting apart of a "transcendental" referent
        from its surroundings and the lateral channelling of salvational
        energies.

"house" - The functional tendency of all religious systems to serve as
        vehicles whereby humans in various societies, using a
        "transcendental" hook-up, locate themselves as a social whole
        within a given ecosphere.

"human essence" - Marx's composite logical portrait of the species-
        specific capacities/traits of <u>homo sapiens</u>.

"hunt for power" - See vertical.

"identity web" - The interface of communal-individual identity, and
        specifically, the historical consolidation of a symmetrical
        relationship between individual psychic homeostasis and
        communal wholeness.

"impostor theory" - The thesis that the presence of religion is func-
        tionally linked with the preservation of social (economic,
        political) privilege.

"instrumental" - The form of practical bias, typically accentuated
        in the civil era, in which, in the normal course of events,
        the system of social want satisfaction grants selective
        advantage to the cultivation of a manipulative approach to
        the social/natural environment as against tradition and
        mythopoeic values in general, albeit usually within the limits

set by the dominant mode of social surplus product extraction
and the socio-political constellation it sustains. Manipulation
involves the reshaping of an object into a more efficient form,
and takes two forms: communicative and technical. Communicative
reason corresponds to the tradition of public, analytical
inquiry, in which efficiency essentially equals abstract
clarification. Technical reason corresponds to Weber's
concept of Zweckrationalität, in which efficiency essentially
equals predictive control.

"landscape" - A practical continuum, formed at the point of the insertion
of a culture into a particular ecosphere, that connects the
members of a community to each other, to other humans (past,
present and future), and to nature.

logical - Propositions that concern the "inner workings" of spatio-
temporal conditions or their theoretical reconstruction into
a "meaningful" whole of some kind.

"mainstream" - Communist-religious problematic investigations that
identify religion with ambient religious forms and that accept
the "alienation thesis".

"man" - Used in two senses: negatively, to qualify the "utopian"/liberal
evisceration of historical specificity through the positing
of this term as a trans-historical subject; positively, in the
context of our theoretical framework, to qualify the conven-
tional "Newtonian" demarcation of human identity boundary lines.

"marginal" - Social classes or layers that are causally peripheral to
the process of radical historical change in a given period.

"material" ("materialism") - Conventional usage, but posited in a
determinate, practical context, in which the controlled
counterposition of alternative types of activities is judged
provisionally useful, but without entailing any "ultimate"
ontological conclusions, particularly along conventional lines.
"Materialism" denotes the theoretical stance that operates
within the above framework.

"mentality" - A historically specific composite of cognitive processes,
hemispheric orientation, and identity delineation, employed
as a typical referent.

metastasis (religious) - The contentions, originating with Hegel, that
the content of religion is reason and that this content is
(formally) completed in the state and philosophy.

methodological critique - The logically distinct side of Marx's
critique of religion in which he resolves religion and its

critique into a historically specific ensemble of social relations
and his criticism of the same.

"mystical" ("idealist", "organicist mysticism") - "Mystical" is a
provisionally useful denotation, with negative connotations,
constructed on conventional lines, but without subscription
to conventional "ultimate" ontological conclusions in this
regard. "Idealist" is used in a similar sense, but referring
specifically to theoretical approaches that assign causal
primacy to subjective labour and its products as conventionally
conceived (i.e., abstract ideas). "Organicist mysticism" also
follows the above framework, but specifically denotes theoretical
stances that combine a rejection of rationalism with a "sym-
pathetic" delineation of communal identity lines.

myth - Not a "false story" or "bad science", but rather any narrative
representation of how a given community "fits" within a
particular ecosphere (i.e., what constitutes reality). Myths
map "reality". In inverted commas, myth denotes "false story".

"Newtonian" - A human identity frame, historically associated with the
rise of modern science, in which: (a) individual human
organisms, whose "selves" extend to the end of their fingertips,
so to speak, constitute the "basic stuff" of the social
universe; (b) only abstract (i.e., measurable) intra and inter-
species connections are admitted as valid; (c) all "sympathetic"
identity linkages are rejected.

"non-Newtonian" - Any identity frame that violates "Newtonian" criteria
in setting the boundary lines that connect humans to and divide
them from both other humans and non-humans. Generally involves
the positing of "sympathetic" linkages.

oikos - See "house".

"ontogenetic argument" - The thesis that the stages of religious
evolution parallel the stages of individual growth, as
conventionally understood. In this context, primitives and
their religion appear as child-like.

"oppressed" - All social groups (classes, layers) with an "objective
interest" in the overturn of capitalist relations, at least
as conjuncturally constituted. Though the working class is
included in this category, the two terms are not synonymous.

"orthodox" - Communists who employ the premises of the "rationalist
paradigm" as a theoretical lynch-pin of their interventional
practices.

"play" - In primitive/communist societies, labour obtains the logical
aspect of "play" when, in the context of a vertical "landscape",
the practical energies of communal members are considered
as components of the relevant "power grid" (i.e., as mythically
defined in a particular culture) and thus as being "released"
from their particularistic confines.

practices - Encompasses both the theoretical and the "material" sides
of activity (i.e., beliefs and acts).

"pre-history" - The eras that precede the dawn of "history", or,
primitive and civil societies, respectively.

"primary" (questions, alienation) - The region of social/natural
interchange that, strictly speaking, pertains to intra and
inter-species/cosmic boundary determination and to the regu-
lation of this process. Although always socially mediated,
"primary" interchange does not necessarily involve estrange-
ment. However, it does necessarily involve the posing and
answering of "life and death" (transition points) questions.
In civil society, "primary" questions become "primary"
lacerations and this region becomes assimilated to civil
interchange as a species of alienation.

primitive (society, religion) - Primitive society is the era of human
history that is characterized by an absence of class and
political relations, and, in general, by a low level of
technical development as well as a restriction of social life
to the bounds of the particular community.

"problem" - The operant need system, but does not necessarily imply
that an alienated condition of some sort exists.

"productivist" - The developmental privileging of the technical side
of the "productive forces".

"productive totality" ("productive") - The region wherein, in a given
society, labour-time forms a social aggregate. Includes
both the forces and relations of production. "Productive"
denotes labours that are socially recognized as contributing
to the constitution of a particular "productive totality".

"projection thesis" - The tracing of pictorial religious practices,
and, in some instances, religious practices per se, to the
psychological projection of human qualities onto an alien being.

"power grid" - The energy moment of the "landscape" of a given culture.
When viewed as a sum of interchanges within a particular
ecosphere, it is termed an "eco-metabolism".

practical bias - The typical form of one-sidedness that characterizes
          a given "pre-historical" era.

quality - The evaluation of a given era according to the constituent
          criteria of Marx's theory of communism.

"rationalist paradigm" (rationalism) - Since the seventeeth century,
          the complex of explicit/implicit assumptions/propositions
          regarding the natures of reality, man, and religion that have
          dominated Western philosophical discourse, and that:(a) conceives
          the universe as fundamentally mathematical or mechanical in
          character, in the broad sense of those terms; (b) restricts
          valid cosmic connections to abstract media (i.e., homogeneous
          units capable of measurement); (c) views science instrumentally
          (i.e., as a vehicle for the prediction and control of phenomena)
          and thus as involving the reconstruction of an object of
          investigation in a manner that facilitates this end; (d) either
          limits valid religious channels to abstract (measurable)
          connections or denies the legitimacy/necessity of extending to
          a transcendental deity cosmic status ; (e) restricts valid human
          identity parameters to "Newtonian" boundaries.

"rational religion thesis" - The classication of religious forms
          according to their epistemic sources. "Lower" or irrational
          religion denotes imaginative or pictorially inspired religion.
          "Higher" or rational religion denotes religious practices that
          stem from the rational faculties.

region (domain, "territory") -Logical, not historical signifiers,
          relating to the range of applicability of propositions.

"reality map" - See myth.

religion - A particular group of humans believe or act religiously
          when they attempt to make themselves through a purposeful
          hook up of their practices with a "transcendental" point
          of reference. As such, it constitutes a specific type of
          "house" building (demolition, maintenance).

religious science - The theoretical and practical sides of the
          religious dimension of anthropogenesis.

ritual (content, field) - The enactment of a mythic portrayal of the
          "transcendental" hook up in a given culture. The "ritual
          field" consists of the general practical context of this
          process. The "ritual content" consists of the actual
          identity boundaries and rules that are posited therein.

science - The determinately constituted theory and practice of human
          self-making.

"scientific socialism" - The theoretical stance that roots the realization of socialism in the metabolism of determinate social conditions (i.e., no "is-ought" dichotomy). For our purposes, synonymous with Marx's theory of the socialist transition.

"secondary" (questions, alienation) - Pertaining to the civil specific mediation of natural/social interchange.

"self" - Conventional usage, but without the "Newtonian" assumptions concerning boundary lines of agency.

socialism - Used synonymously with communism.

socialist democracy - A requisite historical stage in the transition to communism, usually initially organized at the level of the nation-state, but eventually necessarily reaching global proportions. This political form arises from the ashes of the ancien regime and is organically linked with the institutions that effected this demolition (e.g., workers' councils). Among its features: (a) a state apparatus whose institutional nucleus is constituted by organs that emerge from the "material" life practices of the "oppressed" layers and are controlled by the latter; (b) the qualitative and quantitative expansion of democratic freedoms in all spheres of social existence; (c) the de jure and de facto separation of the state apparatus and political parties.

"socialist revolution" - A long term social, economic and political process whose pivotal point consists of the seizure of state power by organs that are organically linked with the "oppressed" layers (e.g., workers' council, guerrilla armies), the conscious or unconscious effect of which is to lead (tendentially) to the overturn of capitalism as the determinant economic moment within a given society and its replacement by a planned economy of some form. For our purposes here, a "successful" "socialist revolution" is the triumph of this process at the level of state power alone, and we bracket consideration of subsequent developments.

substantive critique - The logically distinct side of Marx's critique of religion in which he criticizes religion on the basis of his assumptions concerning the meaning of religion.

"sympathetic" - Non-contiguous (i.e., in terms of the "five senses paradigm"), acausal (i.e., in the conventional sense of causality) cosmic connections, in principle encompassing all phenomenal forms, that involve the positing of correspondences/ linkages between two or more seemingly unrelated entities (i.e., according to conventional criteria) and the attribution/ postulation of qualities/predictions/explanations on this basis.

"terror theory" - The contention that pictorial religious practices,
        and, in some cases, all religious practices, stem from human
        powerlessness in the face of hostile natural forces, a condition
        that spawns terror and the psychological defense of imaginative
        practice (e.g., dreams).

"theoretical territory" - A logical demarcation of the range of applica-
        bility of propositions, as provisionally adjudicated.

"traditional" - Religions that do not explicitly place the "whole man"
        at the centre of their practices.

"transcendental" referent - A practical axis, constituting the
        differentia specifica of religious self-making, that: (a)
        stands outside the boundaries of ordinary reality, as conven-
        tionally defined; (b) lies at the centre of a given culture's
        "reality map".

transitional - In the main, refers to the communist transition.

"transitional communist religion" - The ideal typical religious form
        of the communist transition.

"true" - Marx's assessments (or derived therefrom), embodying both
        normative and historical conclusions. "True universality"
        applies to human aggregates that actually unify the "essence"
        and existence of their constituents. "Truly human" applies
        to practices or conceptions that actually conform to the
        "human essence". "Truly social" generally refers to the
        directly social control of the natural/social presuppositions
        of human existence. "True practice" denotes scientific
        practice both in the sense that it works and in the sense
        that it embodies "true" anthropogenesis.

"utopian socialism" - The theoretical stance that roots the realization
        of an egalitarian, classless society in a moral conversion or
        a shift of consciousness in subjects that are abstracted
        from their determinate, historical context (i.e., an "is-
        ought" dichotomy prevails). In the broad sense, we also
        use this term to refer to all socialist currents with a
        "holistic" bias in their strategic orientations.

valid - Theoretically admissable according to conventional criteria,
        but without subscription thereto.

vertical ("hunt for power") - The direction of religious practice that
        characteristically issues from the tendency of primitive/
        communist "landscapes" to unify, in a qualitatively un-
        differentiated "power grid", the practical energies of the

assorted ecospheric members (both human and non-human). In
this context, all divisions or identity markers reflect
quantitative power discrepancies. Thus, inter-zonal movement
or the "hunt for power" is either "up" or "down".

"zero-sum thesis" - The contention that pictorial religion, and, in some
cases, all religion, involves a zero-sum relationship between
the gods and humans (i.e., what is attributed to god must
be subtracted from man and vice-versa).

	INSTANCE OF PRODUCTIVE UNITY	"LANDSCAPE"	AGENCY	PRACTICAL BIAS	"MENTALITY"	MYTH & RITUAL	QUALITY
PRIMITIVE RELIGION	-directly social -low level of technical development -particular communal bonds	-vertical -unitary "power grid" -social/ecospheric continuum -no dualism	-objective individuality	-"expressive"	-"pre-operatory" -right hemisphere dominance -"non-Newtonian" identity demarcation	-depiction of unitary "power grid" -"ritual field--- •"eco-continuum" •labour becomes "play" •hunting="dance" -ritual content--- "expressive bias"	-false universality -false consciousness vis-à-vis delineation of identity lines
CIVIL RELIGION	-divided/indirectly social productive totality -relative to primitive society, higher level of technical development -more extensive social terrain	-horizontal -divided "power grid" -symmetry of social/ecospheric fractures -dualism	-class individuality	-"instrumental"	-"operatory" -left hemisphere dominance -"Newtonian" identity demarcation	-moment of discontinuity accented (sacred/profane dichotomy) -"ritual field"=the 'wounded land' -content---"instrumental" bias -salvation & purification	-"illusory community" -civil mystification =substitution of part for whole
COMMUNIST RELIGION	-directly social -planetary in scope -high level of technical development	-vertical -unitary "power grid" -social/ecospheric continuum -no dualism	-"free social individuality"	-none: equilibration	-"individuation" (e.g., synthesis of "pre-operatory" & "operatory", etc.)	-depiction of unitary "power grid" -"ritual field"--- same as primitive except for scope -ritual content--- no bias, thematic axis: "man"	-true universality -true consciousness
TRANSITIONAL COMMUNIST RELIGION	-emerges in bourgeois epoch (i.e., an indirectly social productive totality) -planetary in scope	-horizontal -divided "power grid" -symmetry of social/ecospheric fractures -dualism	-"communal individuality"	-"instrumental"	-ruptured psyche -"transcendental" identity orientation	-moment of discontinuity accented -"ritual field"=the 'wounded land' -ritual content--- "instrumental" bias but with true universality as object	-true universality as object of struggle -scientific foundation

Appendix   C

A "Chinese Box" Model of Religious Science

In the following notes, we outline, in a necessarily brief,
tentative and incomplete manner, our suggestions concerning how
historical materialism should be incorporated into a "Chinese box"
model of religious science and what this process entails in this period.
In so doing, we hope both to elucidate our approach in this thesis and
to provide a rough guide to future research in this area. We sub-divide
these proposals into three categories: A) general guidelines; B) a map
of religious science; C) concrete applications.

A)   General Guidelines

(a)   In part, to qualify as science, historical materialism must

exhibit a capacity for paradigmatic growth i.e., its theses

must not only be able to encompass growth in the social domain

proper, but they must also be compatible with empirical advances

in other areas insofar as these are relevant to the proletarian

self-emancipatory struggle.

(b)   Given that analogous forms of paradigmatic flexibility appear

to operate in all scientific domains, we suggest that the

capacity for knowledge growth in this manner constitutes a

general condition of science.

(c)   One aspect of this paradigmatic growth capacity is what we

shall metaphorically term the "Chinese box" moment of science.

This dimension denotes the type of logical clarification that

is necessary when concrete situations reach a sufficient

degree of complexity (i.e., involving overlapping propositions

usually applied to different types of phenomena, as convention-

ally defined) to require the classification and the causal

ordering of the different types of relevant propositions.

(d)   In general, the "Chinese box" dimension of science includes

the following characteristics:

(i)   it constitutes a provisional logical demarcation

(="reasonable judgement") of the range of applicability

(="theoretical territory") of different propositions or

different types of propositions (=domains) and of the causal

relation that obtains in this regard;

(ii)   it consists of a _variable_ holonic picture in which

each domain (or holon) is provisionally assigned an average

degree of causal determinativeness _vis-à-vis_ other relevant

domains. Differences in this regard are given on a logical

hierarchical scale in which propositions operant at "lower"

levels will supercede those at "higher" levels;

(iii)   the "territorial" discrepancies between propositions

generally correspond to differences in the way these propositions

are testable. Each domain, in other words, usually has a

distinct mode of evaluation. In general, the "lower" the

propositional domain, the broader or more long range its

"territory" and the less precise its conclusions. On average,

the "lowest" level propositions will simply set general limits

to conclusions that are reached at the "higher" levels. Con-

versely, "higher" propositions are generally subject to more

exact empirical testing than those "below". The former's

conclusions, however, must be advanced within the tendential

limits prescribed by the latter;

(iv)   it is always contextually specific i.e., the logical

map will vary both with the particular operative "problem" and

with the empirical information that is available in the rele-

vant domains. These specificities, for instance, may convert

a "low" level proposition, which ordinarily obtains only

tendential validity, into a quite concrete prohibition against

a specific conclusion, or they may modify the causal status

of a given domain's propositions or perhaps the boundaries of

the map as a whole.

(e)   The character of the contemporary capitalist crisis has made

the extension of the "Chinese box" moment of science to

historical materialism necessary. Accordingly, historical

materialism must now "expand its horizons" and selectively

incorporate, in a controlled manner, conclusions that have

been reached in what were previously regarded as external

research fields (e.g., physics, biology, psychology) and
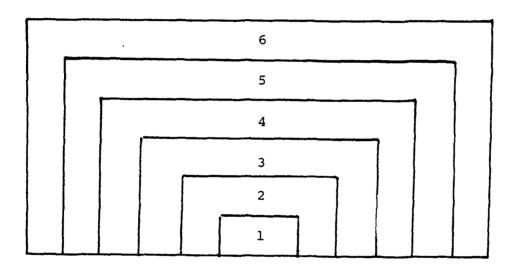
modify its orientation accordingly.

(f)   Notwithstanding these revisions, however, at the present

        historical point it is provisionally valid to posit the

        explanatory precedence of the fundamental principles of

        historical materialism vis-à-vis any scientific practice

        as an integral feature of any "Chinese box" logical portrait.

        Necessarily, the import of this precedence will be qualitatively

        greater in the field of social investigation than in the

        natural science per se.

(g)   In the social/historical sciences in particular, the explanatory

        precedence of historical materialism places three general

        limits on propositions in the present period:

        (i)   they may not be abstracted from the determinate

        (and hence variable), mediate character of social/natural

        interchange;

        (ii)   they must recognize the causal priority of the

        "productive" moment of human intercourse at the broad historical

        level;

        (iii)   they must be resolved into --albeit not reduced to--

        the proletarian self-emancipatory struggle.

(h)   In these domains, however, the explanatory capacity of historical

        materialism (i.e., at its most basic level) has proven to be

        quite broad to scope. In particular, it has proven markedly

        inadequate to explain the constitution of agency at the levels

        of both the "cultural totality" and smaller social units

        (e.g., the family). As a result, further specifications at

"higher" social scientific levels are required at this point.

(i)   Our dissertation represents one such endeavour in the area of
        religious studies. Accordingly, in Section B below we present
        a diagrammatical model of our tentative proposals for a "Chinese
        box" approach in this sphere, followed by a brief elaboration
        of the constituent "territories".

B)   A Map of Religious Science

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Key to "Chinese Box":

        1 - General Social Level

        2 - Definitional Level

        3 - Inter-epochal Periodization

        4 - Intra-epochal Periodization

        5 - Social Formation Specification

        6 - Further Research

(1)   General Social Level

Following Marx's methodological critique, in the first instance

religion must be addressed as a social phenomenon like any other.

In this context, religious study becomes the study of religious

change and broad religious changes are viewed as expressions

of general social changes, the "motor forces" of which are

ascertained through general historical materialist research.

In particular, long term religious shifts occur within the

limits set by changes within the "productive" region of a

given society. Valid conclusions concerning religion are

restricted to explanations of broad religious changes and

strict methodological controls are placed on extrapolations

from ambient conditions.

(2)   Definitional Level

Investigations at this level demarcate religious from secular

practice in a broad cross-cultural fashion, and, in so doing,

provide a basic theoretical grid to register broad religious

changes. At this level, conclusions are only testable on the

basis of their utility in this regard.

(3)   Inter-epochal Periodization

Here, at the epochal level (i.e., following the theory of

value's sub-division of human history into the eras of primitive

society, civil society and communism), researches elucidate

the variability of different life practices in relation to

religion. This task is achieved through the functional

correlation of social identity constitution (epochally) with

the representation and enactment of a "transcendental" hook-up.

In this framework, religion is conceived as a specific, variable

way in which humans constitute themselves as a social totality

within a particular ecosphere (="house" building, demolition or

maintenance) or as a dimension of anthropogenesis. This oikic

perspective is then used to illuminate the typical character-

istics of the various epoch, particularly vis-à-vis religion

(Appendix B). This periodic table is hierarchically organized,

with "higher" levels constrained by conclusions reached at

"lower" ones, and with each level featuring both distinct

fields of inquiry (e.g., particular domains necessitate the

assimilation of evidence from diverse disciplines), and distinct

modes of testing. The overall evaluation of these "house"

building strategies coincides with the theory of communism.

In addition to this epochal typology, the positing of general

"laws" of religious change at the epochal level is also

permissible.

(4)   Intra-epochal Periodization

Here, investigations concern the description and explanation

of intra-epochal patterns of religious change, particularly

at a cross-cultural level. Generally speaking, researches

conducted at this level are more concrete and more subject to

direct empirical testing than those conducted at "lower" levels.

At this level, examples of valid types of inquiry include:

studies of religious evolutionary patterns, particularly as
correlated with specific modes of production (e.g., seculari-
zation dynamics); religious typologies (e.g., millenarian
movements); cross-cultural "laws" of religious change (e.g.,
mutative limits of specific religious forms).

(5)   Social Formation Constitution

Here, investigations concern the location of specific religious
practices within the framework of a particular "cultural
totality" at a given point. The purpose of this research is
to assess the role and significance of religion in a specific
social formation, particularly vis-à-vis the dynamics of
change therein. At this level, religious studies must form
part of and be compatible with the results of all relevant
researches in other disciplines.

(6)   Further Research

These investigations may assume diverse forms and include many
of the traditional concerns of religious studies as convention-
ally conceived (e.g., researches into texts, individual/social
psychology of religion, the ideas of a particular thinker,
and the history/sociology of a specific religious organization/
movement). Each of these areas involves distinct fields of
inquiry and modes of testing. However, they are all constrained
by conclusions reached at "lower" levels of religious science
and may not be abstracted from them.

C)   <u>Concrete Applications</u>

To illustrate the utility of the "Chinese box" model, we shall now briefly outline its applicability to four "problem" areas noted in the body of the dissertation. These are: (a) the "instrumental" bias of scientific language; (b) regional emancipatory specification; (c) the relationship of "materialism" and "holism"; (d) the "entry" of external realms into the field of historical materialism.

(a)   The "Instrumental" Bias of Scientific Language

We deny that our theoretical opposition to the one-sidedness of the "instrumental" bias of civil culture in general and modern science in particular, combined with our use in this thesis of "instrumental" criteria and language to delineate a "new religious science", invalidates our approach. Rather, we suggest that this contradiction stems from the character of our ambient culture. This culture's "instrumental" bias leaves one with no choice but to describe science in these terms. Moreover, we fully accept the validity of the "instrumental" axis of science within certain limits and indeed insist on its inclusion within any comprehensive portrait of science now or in the future. Nevertheless, we contend that, in general, "instrumental" cultivation tends to lead --or at least to open the door-- to a recognition of its own limits, and, concomitantly, to a more "holistic" or all-rounded perspective. To a degree, this type of development has characterized advances in various domains (e.g., physics,

biology, psychology) in recent years and we suggest that it also applies to the social region. The point is that we do not reject "instrumental" criteria and language per se, and thus we have no problem using them for particular purposes, we simply argue that this approach is one-sided and science requires a more comprehensive framework at this point. At present, however, to clear the pathway for this advance, we must somewhat one-sidedly employ "instrumental" language.

(b)   Regional Emancipatory Specification

All emanicipatory problems involve healing specification, and confusion in this regard usually results from the inadequate or wrong determination of "what can be done?" in a given domain (e.g., socio-political, psychic, "spiritual") vis-à-vis other domains. Often, the form of these errors is reductionism. In general, the test of practice arbitrates these dilemmas. On this basis, it is possible to sketch a "Chinese box" model of emancipatory practice. For instance, in the present period, in the ordinary run of things, the test of practice indicates that "ecological liberation" must ultimately be resolved into --but not reduced to-- the crisis of capitalism, and, by extension, the proletarian self-emancipatory struggle. This general proposition, however, does not imply that either (i) no space is granted to individual action or to social reform in this arena, or (ii) a genuine socialist democracy is a sufficient condition for "ecological liberation". In both these respects,

the key is to clarify what is tendentially possible in these
different "territories" and in this way avoid confusion and
contradictory claims. We suggest that the "Chinese box"
approach constitutes the most useful way of theoretically
elucidating these types of dilemmas.

(c)   The Relationship between "Materialism" and "Holism"

Our territorial demarcation in this regard (See Chapter III,
conclusion), follows from our comments above. The test of
practice suggests the provisional utility of retaining the
conventional usages of "material" and "materialism" to dis-
tinguish (and thereby to assign differential causal weights to)
different types of activities/conditions under certain circum-
stances. This same test has assigned limits to these circum-
stances i.e., "materialist" denotations are valid insofar as
they apply to specific practical counterpositions involving
conventional alternative orientations (e.g., "material" force
versus the force of abstract ideas) and as causally located
at the level of broad social changes. They are invalid beyond
this point. For instance, "materialist" approaches have proven
woefully wanting in explaining the potency of irrational
sentiments to motivate individual or collective agents to
act contrary to their "material" interests. In this "material-
ist" no man's land, it is possible that "holistic" approaches
may prove more satisfactory than their "materialist" counter-
parts. If this were indeed shown to be the case, "holistic"
explanations would supplement, and not supplant, valid

"materialist" conclusions, and each region would enjoy distinct ranges of applicability. At present, however, there is no question that "materialist" studies occur at a "lower" level than "holistic" researches do, and thus the former obtains general causal precedence.

(d) The "Entry" of External Research into Historical Materialism

Though historical materialism has traditionally restricted its purview to the social domain proper, and has resisted the predations of external concerns, the test of practice ultimately decides what is internal and what is external to its compass. Regardless of these precise boundary determinations, in most cases of a "territorial" shift of this sort, it takes the form of the "entry" into the social domain of evidence gathered in areas conventionally considered as outside the purview of social deliberations proper. In these cases, "new arrivals" to the social domain must pass through the filter of social mediation and are incorporated as _social_ items. For instance, biological research that may be deemed relevant to the communist transition (e.g., information concerning biospheric degradation of such proportions as to place the habitability of the planet for human life in question) would not be biological _per se_, but rather would "enter" the agenda of historical materialism as a social concern, and its con-sequences would be social. Theoretically speaking, the result of this type of "entry" would necessarily involve a redrawing

of the "Chinese box" of "problem solving" in this area, with the external information compelling a re-plotting of domain boundaries and of their causal inter-relationship. Of course, this phenomenon is precisely what we suggest is occurring at the present point (See Chapter IV, section C).

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