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Murray Bookchin
On Spontaneity and Organisation
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And we must know what we want lest we turn to means that totally vitiate our goals. Communism stands on the agenda of society today, not a socialist patchwork of 'stages' and 'transitions' that will simply mire us in a world we are trying to overcome. A non-hierarchical society, self-managed and free of domination in all its forms, stands on the agenda of society today, not a hierarchical system draped in a red flag. The dialectic we seek is neither a Promethean will that posits the 'other' antagonistically nor a passivity that reaches phenomena in repose. Nor is it the happiness and pacification of an eternal status quo. Life when we are prepared to accept all the forbidden experiences that do not impede survival. Desire is the sense of human possibility that emerges with life, and pleasure the fulfillment of this possibility. Thus, the dialectic we seek is an unceasing but gentle transcendence that finds its most human expression in art and play. Our self-definition will come from the humanised 'other' of art and play, not the bestialised 'other' of toil and domination.

We must always be on a quest for the new, for the *potentialities* that ripen with the development of the world and the new visions that unfold with them. An outlook that ceases to look for what is new and potential in the name of 'realism' has already lost contact with the present, for the present is always conditioned by the future. True development is cumulative, not sequential; it is growth, not succession. The new always embodies the present and past, but it does so in new ways and more adequately as the parts of a greater whole.

Murray Bookchin

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We are beginning to see that the most advanced form of class consciousness is self-consciousness. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that it opposes class consciousness to self-consciousness and denies the emergence of the self as 'individualism' — a self that could yield the most advanced form of collectivity, a collectivity based on self-management.

We are beginning to see that spontaneity yields its own liberated forms of social organisation. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that it opposes organisation to spontaneity and tries to assimilate the social process to political and organisational instrumentalism.

We are beginning to see that the general interest can now be sustained after a revolution by a post-scarcity technology. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that it sustains the particular interest of the proletariat against the emerging general interest of the dominated as a whole — of all dominated strata, sexes, ages, and ethnic groups.

We must begin to break away from the given, from the social constellation that stands immediately before our eyes, and try to see that we are somewhere in a process that has a long history behind it and a long future before it. In little more than half a decade, we have seen established verities and values disintegrate on a scale and with a rapidity that would have seemed utterly inconceivable to the people of a decade ago. And yet, perhaps, we are only at the beginning of a disintegrating process whose most telling effects still lie ahead. This is a revolutionary epoch, an immense historical tide that builds up, often unseen, in the deepest recesses of the unconscious and whose goals continually expand with the development itself. More than ever, we now know a fact from lived experience that no theoretical tomes could establish: consciousness can change rapidly, indeed, with a rapidity that is dazzling to the beholder. In a revolutionary epoch, a year or even a few months can yield changes in popular consciousness and mood that would normally take decades to achieve.

a whole, while also providing the guidelines for a viable, harmonised future utopia. For it is precisely ecology that validates on scientific grounds the need for social decentralisation based on new forms of technology and news modes of community, both tailored artistically to the ecosystem in which they are located. In fact, it is perfectly valid to say that the affinity-group form and even the traditional ideal of the rounded individual could be regarded as ecological concepts. Whatever the area to which it is applied, the ecological outlook sees unity in diversity as a holistic dynamic totality that tends to harmoniously integrate its diverse parts, not as an aggregate of neutrally coexisting elements.

It is not fatuity alone that blocks the socialist movement's comprehension of the ecological outlook. To speak bluntly, Marxism is no longer adequate to comprehend the communist vision that is not emerging. The socialist movement, in turn, has acquired and exaggerated the most limiting features of Marx's works without understanding the rich insights they contain. What constitutes the *modus operandi* of this movement is not Marx's vision of a humanity integrated internally and with nature, but the particularistic notions and the ambivalences that marred his vision and the latent instrumentalism that vitiated it.

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History has played its own cunning game with us. It has turned yesterday's verities into today's falsehood, not by generating new refutations but by creating a new level of social possibility. We are beginning to see that there is a realm of domination that is broader than the realm of material exploitation. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that, steeped in the past, it uses the methods of domination to try to 'liberate' us from material exploitation.

Introduction

There can be few words more misused in politics than the word 'spontaneity.' It is often used to denote something which seems to happen without obvious cause, without apparently being the result of previous preparation. In the sense of 'an effect without a cause' there is probably no such thing as 'spontaneity' — either in politics or life. Human behaviour is always influenced by previous experience. If a person is not *consciously* aware of *why* he is acting in a particular way, this does not at all mean that there are no causes for what he is doing. It only means that the causes elude him.

Murray Bookchin does not use the word 'spontaneity' in this crude and unreflecting way. It is important to stress this semantic point in this short introduction to his essay (first published in *'Liberation'* magazine early in 1972). In Bookchin's own words 'Spontaneity is not mere impulse' … It does not imply 'undeliberated behaviour and feeling'. 'Spontaneity is behaviour, feeling and *thought* that is free of *external* constraint, of *imposed* restriction'. It is 'not an uncontrolled effluvium of passion and action'. 'Insofar as the individual removes the fetters of domination that have stifled her or his self-activity, she or he is acting, feeling and thinking spontaneously'.

Bookchin here uses the word 'spontaneity' as we would use the word 'autonomy'. Literally speaking autonomous means 'which makes its own laws' and therefore, by implication 'which acts in its own interests'. With the advocacy of spontaneity, understood in this sense, we have no significant disagreement with Bookchin. Our own views on this matter are outlined in greater detail in our Discussion Bulletin *'Solidarity and the Neo-Narodniks*' (10p + postage).

Full autonomy has both organisational and ideological implications. Bookchin deals with both in some depth. He points out that 'spontaneity does not preclude organisation and structure', thereby nailing a very widespread leninist distortion of the lib-

ertarian case.[1] Bookchin stresses that spontaneity, in the sense in which he uses the term 'ordinarily yields non-hierarchical forms of organisation'.

We would go perhaps further, and stress that no collective autonomy is meaningful which does not have organisational repercussions. Autonomous activity and life — whether in the realm of practice or in the realm of ideas — is impossible in hierarchically-structured organisation. As Bookchin points out 'the tragedy of the socialist movement is that it opposes organisation to spontaneity and tries to assimilate the social process to political and organisational instrumentalism'.

The main impact of Bookchin's essay is however on the need for ideological autonomy, for breaking all the intellectual fetters of the past, for sweeping the cobwebs away that still clutter so much of the thinking of the left. His greatest insight is his statement of the need to eliminate domination in *all* its forms, not merely material exploitation.

He stresses 'the widespread erosion of authority as such — in the family, in the schools, in vocational and professional areas, in the Church, in the Army, indeed in virtually every institution that supports hierarchical power and every relationship that is marked by domination'. He takes the whole discussion into areas largely avoided by the left, and is not scared of challenging many of their most fundamental assumptions. In this his own writing is a vindication of his belief in a creative, conscious and coherent spontaneity. 'Consciousness', he tells us, 'has its own history within the material world, and increasingly gains sway over the course of material reality. Humanity is capable of transcending the realm of blind necessity, it is capable of giving nature and society rational direction and purpose'.

[1] A prime example of this kind of nonsense is to be found on p.143 of Tariq Ali's *'The Coming British Revolution'* (Jonathan Cape, 1972). Apparently *'Solidarity's* 'belief in spontaneously-generated political consciousness' leads us to 'deny the need for any organisation'. Both the premise and the conclusion are false. The 'argument', moreover, is a non-sequitur.

all, it is an outlook that interprets all interdependencies (social and psychological as well as natural) non-hierarchically. Ecology denies that nature can be interpreted from a hierarchical viewpoint. Moreover, it affirms that diversity and spontaneous development are ends in themselves, to be respected in their own right. Formulated in terms of ecology's 'ecosystem approach', this means that each form of life has a unique place in the balance of nature and its removal from the ecosystem could imperil the stability of the whole. The natural world, left largely to itself, evolves by colonising the planet with ever more diversified life forms and increasingly complex interrelationships between species in the form of food chains and food webs. Ecology knows no 'king of beasts'; all life forms have their place in a biosphere that becomes more and more diversified in the course of biological evolution. Each ecosystem must be seen as a unique totality of diversified life forms in its own right. Humans, too, belong to the whole, but only as one part of the whole. They can intervene in this totality, even try to manage it consciously, provided they do so in its own behalf as well as society's; but if they try to 'dominate' it, i.e., plunder it, they risk the possibility of undermining it and the natural fundament for social life.

The dialectical nature of the ecological outlook, an outlook that stresses differentiation, inner development and unity in diversity, should be obvious to anyone who is familiar with Hegel's writings. Even the language of ecology and dialectical philosophy overlap to a remarkable degree. Ironically, ecology more closely realises Marx's vision of science as dialectics than any other science today, including his own cherished realm of political economy. Ecology could be said to enjoy this unique eminence because it provides the basis, both socially and biologically, for a devastating critique of hierarchical society as

way, and it often happens that the most pedestrian writers are obliged to use the most poetic metaphors to deal with their material.

means accidental that the counter-culture turns for inspiration to Indian and Asian outlooks toward experience. The archaic myths, philosophies, and religions of a more unified, organic world become alive again only because the issues they faced are alive again. The two ends of the historic development are united by the word 'communism': the first, a technologically sophisticated utopia that could live in reference for nature and bring its consciousness to the service of life. Moreover, the first lived in a social network of rigidly defined reciprocities based on custom and compelling need; the second could live in a free constellation of complementary relations based on reason and desire. Both are separated by the enormous development of technology, a development that opens the possibility of a transcendence of the domain and necessity.

That the socialist movement has failed utterly to see the implications of the communist issues that are now emerging is attested by its attitude towards ecology: an attitude that, when it is not marked by patronising irony, rarely rises above petty muckraking. I speak, here, of *ecology*, not environmentalism. Environmentalism deals with the serviceability of the human habitat, a passive habitat that people *use*, in short, an assemblage of things called 'natural resources' and 'urban resources'. Taken by themselves, environmental issues require the use of no greater wisdom than the instrumentalists modes of thought and methods that are used by city planners, engineers, physicians, lawyers — and socialists. Ecology, by contrast, is an artful science or scientific art, and at its best a form of poetry that combines science and art in a unique synthesis.[15] Above

[15] 'Art' in the sense that ecology demands continual improvisation. This demand stems from the variety of its subject matter, the ecosystem: the living community and its environment that forms the basic unit of ecological research. No one ecosystem is entirely like another, and ecologists are continually obliged to take the uniqueness of each ecosystem into account in their research. Although there is a regressive attempt to reduce ecology to little more than systems analysis, the subject matter continually gets in the

If the mass of the population is to become the creative subject of history — and not just an inert object compelled to do certain things because of the conditions of its existence — this kind of message must be taken seriously and its implications thought out. For all those who, whatever their age, are not suffering from a hardening of the categories, Bookchin's views are an important contribution to an on-going debate.

'Solidarity' (London), December 1975.[2]

[2] Published by *'Solidarity'* (London), c/o 123 Lathom Road, London E. 6.

On Spontaneity and Organisation

This article elaborated a work I read at the Telos Conference on Organisation at Buffalo, New York, on 21 November 1971. Space limitations do not make it possible for me to deal concretely with my view that we have already developed the technological bases for a post-scarcity society or describe in greater detail the type of organisation that I think is appropriate to our time. For a more comprehensive discussion of these issues, I would refer the reader to my book Post-Scarcity Anarchism *(Berkeley: Ramparts Books, 1971), especially the essay 'Toward a Liberatory Technology' and the 'Discussion on "Listen, Marxist"'.*

1

It is supremely ironical that the socialist movement, far from being in the 'vanguard' of current social and cultural developments, lingers behind them in almost every detail. This movement's shallow comprehension of the counterculture, its anaemic interpretation of women's liberation, its indifference to ecology, and its ignorance even of new currents that are drifting through the factories (particularly among young workers) seem all the more grotesque when juxtaposed with its simplistic 'class analysis', its proclivity for hierarchical organisation, and its ritualistic invocation of 'strategies' and 'tactics' that were inadequate a generation ago.

Contemporary socialism has shown only the most limited awareness that people by the millions are slowly redefining

the early organic human community. The emergence of patriarchalism, of social classes, of the towns and the ensuing antagonism between town and countryside, of the state, and finally of the distinctions between mental and physical labour that divided the individual internally undermined this outlook completely.

Bourgeois society, by degrading all social ties to a commodity nexus and by reducing all productive activity to 'production for its own sake', carried the hierarchical outlook into an absolute antagonism with the natural world. Although it is surely correct to say that this outlook and the various modes of labour that produced it also produced incredible advances in technology, the fact remains that these advances were achieved by bringing the conflict between humanity and nature to a point where the natural fundament for life hangs precariously in the balance. The institutions that emerged with hierarchical society, moreover, have now reached their historical limits. Although once the social agencies that promoted technological advance, they have now become the most compelling forces for ecological disequilibrium. The patriarchal family, the class system, the city and the state are breaking down on their own terms; worse, they are becoming the sources of massive social disintegration and conflict. As I've indicated elsewhere, the means of production have become too formidable to be used as means of domination. It is domination itself that has to go, and with domination the historical legacy that perpetuates the hierarchical outlook toward experience.

10

The emergence of ecology as a social issue reminds us of the extent to which we are returning again to the problems of an organic society, a society in which the splits within society and between society and nature are healed. It is by no

and interdependencies — are all reassembled objectively in terms of command and obedience, superiority and inferiority, rights and duties, privileges and denials. This hierarchical organisation of appearances occurs not only in the social world; it finds its counterpart in the way phenomena, whether social, natural or personal, are internally experienced. The self in hierarchical society not only lives, acts and communicates hierarchically, it thinks and feels hierarchically by organising the vast diversity of sense data, memory, values, passions and thoughts along hierarchical lines. Differences between things, people and relations do not exist as ends in themselves; they are organised hierarchically in the mind itself and pitted against each other antagonistically in varying degrees of dominance and obedience even when they could be complementary to each other in the prevailing reality.

The outlook of the early organic human community, at least in its most harmonised form, remained essentially free of hierarchical modes of perception; indeed, it is questionable if humanity could have emerged from animality without a system of social reciprocities that compensated for the physical limitations of a puny, savannah-dwelling primate. To a large extent, this early non-hierarchical outlook was mystified; not only plants and animals, but wind and stones were seen as animate. Each was seen, however, as the spiritualised element of a whole in which humans participated as one among many, neither above nor below the others. Ideally, this outlook was fundamentally egalitarian and reflected the egalitarian nature of the community. If we are to accept Dorothy Lee's analysis of Wintu Indian syntax, domination in any form was absent even from the language; thus, a Wintu mother did not 'take' her infant into the shade, she 'went' with her child into the shade. No hierarchies were imputed to the natural world, at least not until the human community began to become hierarchical. Thereafter, experience itself became increasingly hierarchical, reflecting the splits that undermined the unity of

the very meaning of freedom. They are constitutively enlarging their image of human liberation to dimensions that would have seemed hopelessly visionary in past eras. In ever-growing numbers they sense that society has developed a technology that could completely abolish material scarcity and reduce toil to a near vanishing point. Faced with the possibilities of a classless post-scarcity society and with the meaninglessness of hierarchical relations, they are intuitively trying to deal with the problems of communism, not socialism.[1] They are intuitively trying to eliminate domination in *all* its forms, not merely material exploitation. Hence the widespread erosion of authority *as such* — in the family, in the schools, in vocational and professional areas, in the church, in the army, indeed, in virtually every institution that supports hierarchical power and every nuclear relationship that is marked by domination. Hence, too, the intensely *personal* nature of the rebellion that is percolating through society, its highly subjective, existential and cultural qualities. The rebellion affects *everyday life* even before it visibly affects the broader aspects of social life and it undermines the *concrete* loyalties of the individual to the system before it vitiates the system's abstract political and moral verities.

To these deep-seated liberatory currents, so rich in existential content, the socialist movement continues to oppose the constrictive formulas of a particularistic 'working class' interest, the archaic notion of a 'proletarian dictatorship', and the

[1] 'Communism' has come to mean a stateless society, based on the maxim, 'From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs'. Society's affairs are managed directly from 'below' and the means of production are communally 'owned'. Both Marxists and anarchists (or, at least, anarcho-communists) view this form of society as a common goal. Where they disagree is primarily on the character and role of the organised revolutionary movement in the revolutionary process and the intermediate 'stages' (most Marxists see the need for a centralised 'proletarian dictatorship', followed by a 'socialist' state — a view anarchists emphatically deny) required to achieve a communist society. In the matter of these differences, it will be obvious that I hold to an anarchist viewpoint.

sinister concept of a centralised hierarchical party. If the socialist movement is lifeless today, this is because it has lost all contact with life.

2

We are travelling the full circle of history. We are taking up again the problems of a new organic society on a new level of history and technological development — an organic society in which the splits within society, between society and nature, and within the human psyche that were created by thousands of years of hierarchical development can be healed and transcended. Hierarchical society performed the baneful 'miracle' of turning human beings into mere instruments of production, into objects on a par with tools and machines, thereby defining their very humanity by their usufruct in a universal system of scarcity, of domination and, under capitalism, of commodity exchange. Even earlier, before the domination of man by man, hierarchical society brought woman into universal subjugation to man, opening a realm of domination for its own sake, of domination in its most reified form. Domination, carried into the depths of personality, has turned us into the bearers of an archaic, millennia-long legacy that fashions the language, the gestures, indeed, the very posture we employ in everyday life. All the past revolutions have been too 'olympian' to affects these intimate and ostensibly mundane aspects of life, hence the ideological nature of their professed goals of freedom and the narrowness of their liberatory vision.

By contrast, the goal of the new development towards communism is the achievement of a society based on self-management in which each individual participates fully, directly, and in complete equality in the unmediated management of the collectivity. Viewed from the aspects of its concrete human side, such a collectivity can *be* nothing less

self's need exists exclusively for itself, without regard to the integrity (or what Hegel might well call the 'subjectivity') of the other, the other remains *mere* object for the self and the handling of this object becomes *mere* appropriation. But insofar as the other is seen as an end in itself and need is defined in terms of mutual support, the self and the other enter into a *complementary* relationship. This complimentary relationship reaches its most harmonised form in authentic play.[14] Complementarity as distinguished from domination — even from the more benign forms of contractual relationships and mutual aid designated as 'reciprocity' — presupposed a new animism that respects the other for its own sake and responds *actively* in the form of a creative, loving and supportive symbiosis.

Dependence *always* exists. *How* it exists and *why* it exists, however, remain critical towards an understanding of any distinction between domination and complementarity. Infants will always be dependent upon adults for satisfying their most elemental physiological needs, and younger people will always require the assistance of older ones for knowledge and the assurance of experience. Similarly, older generations will be dependent upon the younger for the reproduction of society and for the stimulation that comes from inquiry and fresh views toward experience. In hierarchical society, dependence ordinarily yields subjugation and the denial of the other's selfhood. Differences in age, in sex, in modes of work, in levels of knowledge, in intellectual, artistic and emotional proclivities, in physical appearance — a vast array of diversity that could result in a nourishing constellation of inter-relationships

[14] Music is the most striking example where art can exist for itself and even combine with play for itself. The competitive sports, on the other hand, are forms of play that are virtually degraded to market-place relations, notably in the frenzy for scoring over rivals and the egocentric antagonisms that the games so often engender. The reader should note that a dialectic exists within art and play, hence my use of the words 'true art' and 'authentic play', i.e. art and play as ends in themselves.

deepened into the Marxian theory of class struggle — in my view a grave shortcoming that denies consciousness the history of an *emergent* dialectic[11] — and the split between subject and object is never wholly reconciled. All interpretations of the young Marx's 'Feuerbachian naturalism' notwithstanding, humanity, in Marx's view, transcends domination ambivalently, by dominating nature. Nature is reduced to the 'slave', as it were, of a harmonised society, and the self does not annul its Promethean content.[12] Thus, the theme of domination is still latent in Marx's interpretation of communism; nature is still the object of domination. So conceived, the Marxian concept of nature — quite aside from the young Marx's more ambivalent notions — vitiates the reconciliation of subject and object that is to be achieved by a harmonised society.

That 'objects' *exist* and *must* be 'manipulated' is an obvious precondition for human survival that no society, however harmonised, can transcend. But whether 'objects' exist *merely* as objects or whether their 'manipulation' remains *merely* manipulation — or, indeed, whether labour, as distinguished from art and play, constitutes the primary mode of self-definition — in quite another matter. The key issue around which these distinctions turn is domination — an appropriative relation that is defined by an egotistical conception of need.[13] Insofar as the

[11] See my 'Dialectical Philosophy', to be published by Times Change Press in the autumn of 1972.

[12] One sees this in Marx's restless concept of practice and especially of material 'need', which expands almost indefinitely. It is also clearly seen in the exegetical views of Marxian theorists, whose concepts of an unending, wilful, power-asserting practice assumes almost Dionysian proportions.

[13] And 'need', here, in the sense of psychic as well as material manifestations of egotism. Indeed, domination need not be exploitive in the material sense alone, as merely the appropriation of surplus labour. Psychic exploitation, notably of children and women, may well have preceded material exploitation and even established its cultural and attitudinal framework. And unless exploitation of this kind is totally uprooted, humanity will have made no advance in humanness.

than the fulfillment of the liberated self, of the free subject divested of all its 'thingifications', of the self that can concretise the management of the collectivity as an authentic mode of *self*-management. The enormous advance scored by the countercultural movement over the socialist movement is attested precisely by a personalism that sees in impersonal goals, even in the proprieties of language, gesture, behaviour and dress, the perpetuation of domination in its most insidious unconscious forms. However marred it may be by the general unfreedom that surrounds it, the countercultural movement has thus *concretely* redefined the now innocuous word 'revolution' in a truly revolutionary manner, as a *practice* that subverts apocryphal abstractions and theories.

To identify the claims of the emerging self with 'bourgeois individualism' is a grotesque distortion of the most fundamental existential goals of liberation. Capitalism does not produce individuals; it produces atomised egoists. To distort the claims of the emerging self for a society based on self-management and to reduce the claims of the revolutionary subject to an economistic notion of 'freedom' is to seek the 'crude communism' that the young Marx so correctly scorned in the 1844 manuscripts. The claim of the libertarian communists to a society based on self-management asserts the right of each individual to acquire control over her or his everyday life, to make each day as joyous and marvellous as possible. The abrogation of this claim by the socialist movement in the abstract interests of 'Society', of 'History', of the 'Proletariat', and more typically of the 'Party', assimilates and fosters the *bourgeois* antithesis between the individual and the collectivity in the interests of bureaucratic manipulation, the renunciation of desire, and the subservience of the individual and the collectivity to the interests of the State.

3

There can be no society based on self-management without self-activity. Indeed, revolution *is* self-activity in its most advanced form: direct action carried to the point where the streets, the land, and the factories are appropriated by the autonomous people. Until this order of consciousness is attained, consciousness at least on the social level remains *mass* consciousness, the object of manipulation by elites. If for this reason alone, authentic revolutionaries must affirm that the most advanced form of class consciousness is self-consciousness: the individuation of the 'masses' into conscious beings who can take direct, unmediated control of society and of their own lives. If only for this reason, too, authentic revolutionaries must affirm that the only real 'seizure of power' by the 'masses' is the *dissolution* of power: the power of human over human, of town over country, of state over community, and of mind over sensuousness.

4

It is in the light of these demands for a society based on self-management, achieved through self-activity and nourished by self-consciousness, that we must examine the relationship of spontaneity to organisation. Implicit in every claim that the 'masses' require the 'leadership' of 'vanguards' is the conviction that revolution is more a problem of 'strategy' and 'tactics' than a social process;[2] that the 'masses' cannot create their own liberatory institutions but must rely on a state power — a 'pro-

[2] The use of military or quasi-military language — 'vanguard', 'strategy', 'tactics' — betrays this conception fully. While denouncing students as 'petty bourgeois' and 'shit', the 'professional revolutionary' has always had a grudging admiration and respect for that most inhuman of all hierarchical institutions, the military. Compare this with the counter-culture's inherent antipathy for 'soldierly virtues' and demeanour.

projects, materialises and verifies himself in the objects of his own labour. This conception of man's self-definition forms the point of departure for Marx's entire theory of historical materialism. 'Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like', observes Marx in a famous passage from *The German Ideology*. 'They begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence … As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and with *how* they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production.'

In Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit* the theme of labour is taken up within the context of the master/slave relationship. Here, the subject becomes an object in the dual sense that another self (the slave) is objectified and concomitantly reduced to an instrument of production. The slave's labour, however, becomes the basis for an autonomous consciousness and selfhood. Through work and labour the 'consciousness of the slave comes to itself …', Hegel observes. 'Labour is desire restrained and checked, evanescence delayed and postponed; in other words, labour shapes and fashions the thing.' The activity of 'giving shape and form' is the 'pure self-existence of [the slave's] consciousness, which now in the work it does is externalised and passes into the condition of permanence. The consciousness that toils and serves accordingly attains by this means the direct apprehension of that independent being as its self.'

Hegel transforms the imprisonment of labour in the master/slave relationship — i.e. in the framework of domination — with the dialectic that follows this 'moment'. Eventually, the split between the subject and object as an antagonism is healed, although as reason fulfilled in the wholeness of truth, in the Absolute Idea. Marx does not advance beyond the moment of the master/slave relationship. The moment is transfixed and

tion movement and the student movement. With its overblown pretentions, its dehumanising behaviour, and its manipulatory practices, the 'left' has contributed enormously to the demoralisation that exists today. Indeed, it may well be that in any future revolutionary situation the 'left' (particularly its authoritarian forms) will raise problems that are more formidable that those of the bourgeoisie, that is if the revolutionary process fails to transform the 'revolutionaries'.

And there is much that requires transforming — not only in social views and personal attitudes, but in the very way 'revolutionaries' (especially male 'revolutionaries') interpret experience. The 'revolutionary', no less than the 'masses', embodies attitudes that reflect an inherently domineering outlook towards the external world. The western mode of perception traditionally defines selfhood in antagonistic terms, in a matrix of opposition between the objects and subjects that lie outside the 'I'. The self is not merely an ego that is distinguishable from the external 'others', it is an ego that seeks to master these others and to bring them into subjugation. The subject/object relation defines subjectively as a function of domination, the domination of objects and the reduction of other subjects to objects. Western selfhood, certainly in its male forms, is a selfhood of appropriation and manipulation in its very self-definition and definition of relationships. This self- and relational definition may be active in some individuals, passive in others, or reveal itself precisely in the mutual assignment of roles based on a domineering and dominated self, but domination permeates almost universally the prevailing mode of experiencing reality.

Virtually every strain in Western culture reinforces this mode of experiencing — not only its bourgeois and Judeo-Christian strains but also its Marxian one. Marx's definition of the labour process as mode of self-definition, a notion he borrows from Hegel, is explicitly appropriative and latently exploitative. Man forms himself by changing the world; he appropriates it, refashions it according to his 'needs', and thereby

letarian dictatorship' — to organise society and uproot counterrevolution. Every one of these notions is belied by history, even by the particularistic revolutions that replaced the rule of one class by another. Whether one turns to the Great French Revolution of two centuries ago, to the uprisings of 1848, to the Paris Commune, to the Russian revolutions of 1905 and March 1917, to the German Revolution of 1918, to the Spanish Revolution of 1934 and 1936, or the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, one finds a social process, sometimes highly protracted, that culminated in the overthrow of established institutions without the guidance of 'vanguard' parties (indeed, where these parties existed they usually lagged behind the events). One finds that the 'masses' formed their own liberatory institutions, be these the Parisian sections of 1793–1794, the clubs and militias of 1848 and 1871, or the factory committees, workers' councils, popular assemblies, and action committees of later upheavals.

It would be a crude simplification of these events to claim that counterrevolution reared its head and triumphed where it did merely because the 'masses' were incapable of self-co-ordination and lacked the 'leadership' of a well-disciplined centralised party. We come here to one of the most vexing problems in the revolutionary process, a problem that has never been adequately understood by the socialist movement. That co-ordination was either absent or failed — indeed, that effective counterrevolution was even *possible* — raises a more fundamental issue than the mere problem of 'technical administration'. Where advanced, essentially premature revolutions failed, this was primarily because the revolutions had no material basis for consolidating the *general* interest of society to which the most radical elements staked out an historic claim. Be the cry of this general interest 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' or 'Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness', the harsh fact remains that the technological premises did not exist for the consolidation of this general interest in the form of a harmonised society. That the general interest divided again

during the revolutionary process into antagonistic particular interests — that it led from the euphoria of 'reconciliation' (as witness the great national fetes that followed the fall of the Bastille) to the nightmare of class war, terror, and counterrevolution — must be explained primarily by the *material limits* of social development, not by technical problems of political co-ordination.

The great bourgeois revolutions succeeded socially even where they seemed to fail 'technically' (i.e. to lose power to the radical 'day-dreaming terrorists') *because they were fully adequate to their time.* Neither the army nor the institutions of absolutist society could withstand their blows. In their beginnings, at least, these revolutions appeared as the expression of the 'general will', uniting virtually all social classes against the aristocracies and monarchies of their day, and even dividing the aristocracy against itself. By contrast, all 'proletarian revolutions' have failed because the technological premises were inadequate for the *material* consolidation of a 'general will', *the only basis on which the dominated can finally eliminate domination.* Thus the October Revolution failed socially even though it seemed to succeed 'technically' — all Leninist, Trotskyist and Stalinist myths to the contrary notwithstanding — and the same is true for the 'socialist revolutions' of Asia and Latin America. When the 'proletarian revolution' and its time are adequate to each other — and precisely *because* they are adequate to each other — the revolution will no longer be 'proletarian', the work of the particularised creatures of bourgeois society, of its work ethic, its factory discipline, its industrial hierarchy, and its values. The revolution will be a *people's* revolution in the authentic sense of the word.[3]

[3] The word 'people' (*le peuple* of the Great French Revolution) will no longer be the Jacobin (or, more recently, the Stalinist and Maoist) fiction that conceals antagonistic class interests within the popular movement. The word will reflect the general interests of a truly human movement, a gen-

it, that *prevents* them from turning to the problems of life — and then to revolutionary action. The rupture with the existing order will be made only when the problems of life infiltrate and assimilate the problems of survival — when life is understood as a precondition for survival today — not by rejecting the problem of life in order to take up the problems of survival, i.e. to achieve a 'mass' organisation made up only of 'masses'.

Revolution is a magic moment not only because it is unpredictable; it is a magic moment because it can also precipitate into consciousness within weeks, even days, a disloyalty that lies deeply hidden in the unconscious. But revolution must be seen as more than just a 'moment'; it is a complex dialectic even within its own framework. A majoritarian revolution does not mean that the great majority of the population must necessarily go into revolutionary motion all at the same time. Initially, the people in motion may be a minority of the population — a substantial, popular, spontaneous minority, to be sure, not a small, 'well-disciplined', centralised and mobilised elite. The consent of the majority may reveal itself simply in the fact that it will no longer *defend* the established order. It may 'act' by *refusing* to act in support of the ruling institutions — a 'wait and see' attitude to determine if, by denying the ruling class its loyalty, the ruling class is rendered powerless. Only after the testing the situation by its passivity may it pass into overt activity — and then with a rapidity and on a scale that removes in an incredibly brief period institutions, relations, attitudes, and values that have been centuries in the making.

9

In America any organised 'revolutionary' movement that functions with distorted goals would be infinitely worse than no movement at all. Already the 'left' has inflicted an appalling amount of damage on the counter-culture, the women's libera-

We may well ask if a 'mass organisation' can be a revolutionary organisation in a period that is not yet ripe for a communist revolution? The contradiction becomes self-evident once we couple the word 'mass' with 'communist revolution'.[10] To be sure, mass movements have been built in the name of socialism and communism during non-revolutionary periods, but they have achieved mass proportions only by denaturing the concepts of socialism, communism and revolution. Worse, they not only betray their professed ideals by denaturing them, but they also become obstacles in the way of the revolution. Far from shaping the destiny of society, they become the creatures of the very society they profess to oppose.

The temptation to bridge the gap between the given society and the future is inherently treacherous. Revolution is a rupture not only with the established social order but with the psyche and mentality it breeds. Workers, students, farmers, intellectuals, indeed all potentially revolutionary strata literally *break with themselves* when they enter into revolutionary motion, not only with the abstract ideology of the society. And until they make this break, they are not revolutionaries. A self-styled 'revolutionary' movement that attempts to assimilate these strata with 'transitional programmes' and the like will acquire their support and participation for the wrong reasons. The movement, in turn, will be shaped by the people it has vainly tried to assimilate, not the people by the movement. Granted that the number of people who are revolutionary today is miniscule, granted, furthermore, that the great majority of the people today is occupied with the problems of survival, not of life. But it is precisely this *preoccupation* with the problems of survival, and the values as well as needs that promote

[10] I would argue that we are not in a 'revolutionary period' or even a 'pre-revolutionary period', to use the terminology of the Leninists, but rather in a revolutionary epoch. By this term I mean a *protracted* period of social disintegration, a period marked precisely by the Enlightenment discussed in the period sections.

5

It is not for want of organisation that the past revolutions of radical elements ultimately failed but rather because all prior societies were organised systems of want. In our own time, in the era of the final, generalised revolution, the general interest of society can be tangibly and *immediately* consolidated by a post-scarcity technology into material abundance for *all*, even by the disappearance of toil as an underlying feature of the human condition. With the lever of an unprecedented material abundance, the revolution can remove the most fundamental premises of counterrevolution — the scarcity that nourishes privilege and the rationale for domination. No longer need *any* sector of society 'tremble' at the prospect of a communist revolution, and this should be made evident to *all* who are in the least prepared to listen.[4]

eral interest that expresses the material possibilities for achieving a classless society.

[4] The utter stupidity of the American 'left' during the late sixties in projecting a mindless 'politics of polarisation' and thereby wantonly humiliating so many middle-class — and, yes, let it be said: *bourgeois* — elements who were prepared to listen and to learn can hardly be criticised too strongly. Insensible to the *unique* constellation of possibilities that stared it in the face, the 'left' simply fed its guilt and insecurities about itself and followed a politics of systematic alienation from all the authentic, radicalising forces in American society. This insane politics, couples with a mindless mimicry of the 'third world', a dehumanising verbiage (the police as 'pigs', opponents as 'fascists'), and a totally dehumanising body of values, vitiated all its claims as a 'liberation movement'. The student strike that followed the Kent murders revealed to the 'left' and the students alike that they had succeeded only too well in polarising American society, but that *they*, and not the country's rulers, were in the minority. It is remarkable testimony to the inner resources of the counter-culture that the debacle of SDS led not to a sizeable Marxist-Leninist party but to the well-earned disintegration of the 'Movement' and a solemn retreat back to the more humanistic cultural premises that appeared in the early sixties — humanistic premises that the 'left' so cruelly ravaged in the closing years of that decade.

In time, the framework opened by these qualitatively new possibilities will lead to a remarkable simplification of the historic 'social question'. As Joseph Weber observed in *The Great Utopia*, this revolution — the most universal and totalistic to occur — will appear as the 'next *practical* step', as the immediate praxis involved in social reconstruction. And, in fact, step by step the counterculture has been taking up, not only subjectively but also in their most *concrete and practical forms*, an immense host of issues that bear directly on the utopian future of humanity, issues that just a generation ago could be posed (if they were posed at all) only as the most esoteric problems of theory. To review these issues and to reflect upon the dizzying rapidity with which they emerged in less than a decade is simply staggering, indeed unprecedented in history. Only the principal ones need be cited: the autonomy of the self and the right to self-realisation; the evolution of love, sensuality, and the unfettered expression of the body; the spontaneous expression of feeling; the de-alienation of relations between people; the formation of communities and communes; the free access of all to the means of life; the rejection of the plastic commodity world and its careers; the practice of mutual aid; the acquisition of skills and countertechnologies; a new reverence for life and for the balance of nature; the replacement of the work ethic by meaningful work and the claims of pleasure; indeed, a *practical* redefinition of freedom that a Fourier, a Marx, or a Bakunin rarely approximated in the realm of thought.

The point to be stressed is that *we are witnessing a new Enlightenment* (more sweeping even than the half-century of enlightenment that preceded the Great French Revolution) that is slowly challenging not only the authority of established institutions and values but authority as such. Percolating downward from the intelligentsia, the middle classes, and youth generally to all strata of society, this enlightenment is slowly undermining the patriarchal family, the school as an organised system of repressive socialisation, the institutions of state, and

not without grave risks, tragedies, and pain, but these are the risks, tragedies and pain of birth and new life, not of contrition and death. The affinity groups affirm that only a revolutionary movement that holds this outlook can create the so-called 'revolutionary propaganda' to which the new popular sensibility can respond — a 'propaganda' that is art in the sense of a Daumier, a John Milton, and a John Lennon. Indeed, truth today can exist only as art and art only as truth.[9]

The development of a revolutionary movement involves the seeding of America with such affinity groups, with communes and collectives — in cities, in the countryside, in schools and in factories. These groups would be intimate, decentralised bodies that would deal with all facets of life and experiences. Each group would be highly experimental, innovative and oriented toward changes in life-style as well as consciousness; each would be so constituted that it could readily dissolve into the revolutionary institutions created by the people and disappear as a separate social interest. Finally, each would try to reflect as best it could the liberated forms of the future, not the given world that is reflected by the traditional 'left'. Each, in effect, would constitute itself as an energy centre for transforming society and for colonising the present by the future.

Such groups could interlink, federate and establish communication on a regional and national level as the need arises without surrendering their autonomy and uniqueness. They would be organic groups that emerged out of living problems and desires, not artificial groups that are foisted on social situations by elites. Nor would they tolerate an organisation of cadres whose sole nexus is 'programmatic agreement' and obedience to functionaries and higher bodies.

[9] As the decline of fictional literature attests. Life is far more interesting than diction, not only as social life but as personal experience and autobiography.

8

Revolutionaries have the responsibility of helping others become revolutionaries, not of 'making' revolutions. And this activity only begins when the individual revolutionary undertakes to remake herself or himself. Obviously, such a task cannot be undertaken in a personal vacuum; it presupposes existential relations with others of a like kind who are loving and mutually supportive. This conception of revolutionary organisation forms the basis of the anarchist affinity group. Members of an affinity group conceive of themselves as sisters and brothers whose activities and structures are, in Josef Weber's words, 'transparent to all'. Such groups function as catalysts in social situations, not as elites; they seek to advance the consciousness and struggles of the larger communities in which they function, not assume positions of command.

Traditionally, revolutionary activity has been permeated by the motifs of 'suffering', 'denial' and 'sacrifice', motifs that largely reflected the guilt of the revolutionary movement's intellectual cadres. Ironically, to the extent that these motifs still exist, they reflect the very anti-human aspects of the established order that the 'masses' seek to abolish. The revolutionary movement (if such it can be called today) thus tends, even more than ideology, to 'echo' the prevailing actuality — worse, to condition the 'masses' to suffering, sacrifice and denial at its own hands and the aftermath of the revolution. As against this latter-day version of 'republican virtue', the anarchist affinity groups affirm not only the rational but the joyous, the sensuous and the aesthetic side of revolution. They affirm that revolution is not only an assault on the established order but also a festival in the streets. The revolution is desire carried into the social terrain and universalised. It is

precisely the Stalinists, on the other hand, who appealed to workers as 'proletarians' and maliciously stressed their 'social differences' with the 'bourgeois students'.

the factory hierarchy. It is eroding the work ethic, the sanctity of property, and the fabric of guilt and renunciation that internally denies to each individual the right to the full realisation of her or his potentialities and pleasures. Indeed, no longer is it merely capitalism that stands in the dock of history, but the cumulative legacy of domination that has policed the individual from within for thousands of years, the 'archetypes' of domination, as it were, that compromise the State with our *unconscious* lives.

The enormous difficulty that arises in understanding this Enlightenment is its invisibility to conventional analyses. The new Enlightenment is not simply changing consciousness, a change that is often quite superficial in the absence of other changes. The usual changes of consciousness that marked earlier periods of radicalisation could be carried quite lightly, as mere theories, opinions, or a cerebral punditry that was often comfortably discharged outside the flow of everyday life. The significance of the new Enlightenment, however, is that it is altering the *unconscious apparatus of the individual* even before it can be articulated consciously as a social theory or a commitment to political convictions.

Viewed from the standpoint of a typically socialist analysis — an analysis that focuses almost exclusively on 'consciousness' and is almost completely lacking in psychological insights — the new Enlightenment seems to yield only the most meagre 'political' results. Evidently, the counterculture has produced no 'mass' radical party and no visible 'political' change. Viewed from the standpoint of a communist analysis, however — an analysis that deals with the unconscious legacy of domination — the new Enlightenment is slowly dissolving the individual's obedience to institutions, authorities and values that have vitiated every struggle for freedom. These profound changes tend to occur almost unknowingly, as for example among workers who, in the *concrete* domain of *everyday life*, engage in sabotage, work indifferently, practice

almost systematic absenteeism, resist authority in almost every form, use drugs, acquire various freak traits — and yet, in the *abstract* domain of *politics* and *social philosophy*, acclaim the most conventional homilies of the system. The explosive character of revolution, its suddenness and utter unpredictability, can be explained only as the eruption of these unconscious changes into consciousness, as a release of the tension between unconscious desires and consciously held views in the form of an outright confrontation with the existing order. The erosion of the unconscious restrictions on these desires and the full expression of the desires that lie in the individual unconscious is a precondition for the establishment of a liberatory society. There is a sense in which we can say that the attempt to change consciousness is a struggle for the unconscious, both in terms of the fetter that restrain desire and the desires that are fettered.

6

Today it is not a question of whether spontaneity is 'good' or 'bad', 'desirable' or 'undesirable'. Spontaneity is integrally part of the very dialectic of self-consciousness and self-de-alienation that removes the subjective fetters established by the present order. To deny the validity of spontaneity is to deny the most liberatory dialectic that is occurring today; as such, for us it must be a given that exists in its own right.

The term should be defined lest its content disappear in semantic quibbling. Spontaneity is not mere impulse, certainly not in its most advanced and truly human form, and this is the only form that is worth discussing. Nor does spontaneity imply undeliberated behaviour and feeling. Spontaneity is behaviour, feeling and *thought* that is *free of external* constraint, of *imposed* restriction. It is self-controlled, *internally* controlled, behaviour, feeling, and thought, not an uncontrolled effluvium

The real proletariat resists this reduction of its subjectivity to the product of need and lives increasingly within the realm of desire, of possibility. As such, it becomes increasingly *rational* in the classical, not the instrumentalist, sense of the term. Concretely, the worker resists the work ethic because it has become *irrational* in view of the *possibilities* for a non-hierarchical society. The worker, in this sense, transcends her or his creature nature and increasingly becomes a subject, not an object; a non-proletarian, not a proletarian. *Desire*, not merely need, *possibility*, not merely necessity, enter into her or his self-formation and self-activity. The worker begins to shed her or his status of *worker*ness, her or his existence as a mere class being, as an object of economic forces, as mere 'being', and becomes increasingly available to the new Enlightenment.

As the *human* essence of the proletariat begins to replace its factory essence, the worker can now be reached as easily outside the factory as in it. Concretely, the worker's aspect as a woman or man, as a parent, as an urban dweller, as a youth, as a victim of environmental decay, as a dreamer (the list is nearly endless), comes increasingly to the foreground. The factory walls become permeable to the counter-culture to a degree where it begins to compete with the worker's 'proletarian' concerns and values.

No 'workers' group' can become truly revolutionary unless it deals with the individual worker's *human* aspirations, unless it helps to de-alienate the worker's personal milieu and begins to transcend the worker's factory milieu. The working class becomes revolutionary not *in spite* of itself but *because* of itself, literally as a result of its awakening selfhood.[8]

[8] A fact which was already clearly in evidence during the May-June events in France at the Champs de Mars gathering of students and workers on 12 May. Here, worker after worker stood before the microphone and spoke of his life, his values and his dreams as a human being, not merely of his class interests. Indeed, the extent to which broader human life issues emerged in the May-June events has yet to be adequately explored. It was

manity is capable of transcending the realm of blind necessity; it is capable of giving nature and society rational direction and purpose.

This larger interpretation of the relationship between consciousness and being is not a remote philosophical abstraction. On the contrary, it is eminently practical. Followed to its logical conclusion, this interpretation requires a fundamental revision of the traditional notion of revolutionary consciousness as class consciousness. If the proletariat, for example, is conceived of merely as the product of its concrete being — as the object of exploitation by the bourgeoisie and a creature of the factory system — it is reduced *in its very essence* to a category of political economy. Marx leaves us in no doubt about this conception. As the class that is most completely dehumanised, the proletariat transcends its dehumanised condition and comes to embody the human totality 'through urgent, no longer disguisable, absolutely imperative *need*…'. Accordingly: 'The question is not what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat at the moment *considers* as its aims. The question is *what the proletariat is*, and what, consequent on that *being*, it will be compelled to do.' (The emphasis throughout is Marx's and provides a telling commentary on the de-subjectification of the proletariat.) I will leave aside the rationale that this formula provides for an elitist organisation. For the present, it is important to note that Marx, following in the tradition of classical bourgeois political economy, totally objectifies the proletariat and removes it as a true subject. The revolt of the proletariat, even its humanisation, ceases to be a *human* phenomenon; rather, it becomes a function of inexorable economic laws and 'imperative need'. The essence of the proletariat *as* proletariat is its non-humanity, its creature nature as the product of 'absolutely imperative need'. Its subjectivity falls within the category of harsh necessity, explicable in terms of economic law. The psychology of the proletariat, in effect, is political economy.

of passion and action. From the libertarian communist viewpoint, spontaneity implies a capacity in the individual to impose self-discipline and to formulate sound guidelines for social action. Insofar as the individual removes the fetters of domination that have stifled her or his self-activity, she or he is acting, feeling, and thinking spontaneously. We might just as well eliminate the word 'self' from 'self-consciousness', 'self-activity' and 'self-management' as remove the concept of spontaneity from our comprehension of the new Enlightenment, revolution and communism. If there is an imperative need for a communist consciousness in the revolutionary movement today, we can never hope to attain it without spontaneity.

Spontaneity does not preclude organisation and structure. To the contrary, spontaneity ordinarily yields non-hierarchical forms of organisation, forms that are truly organic, self-created, and based on voluntarism. The only serious question that is raised in connection with spontaneity is where it is *informed* or not. As I have argued elsewhere, the spontaneity of a child in a liberatory society will not be of the same order as the spontaneity of a youth, or that of a youth of the same order as that of an adult; each will simply be more informed, more knowledgeable, and more experienced than its junior.[5] Revolutionaries may see today to promote this informative process, but if they try to contain or destroy it by forming hierarchical movements, they will vitiate the very process of self-realisation that will yield self-activity and a society based on self-management.

No less serious for any revolutionary movement is the fact that only if a revolution is spontaneous can we be reasonably certain that the 'necessary condition' for revolution has ma-

[5] Obviously I do not believe that adults today are 'more informed, more knowledgeable and more experienced' than young people in any sense that imparts to their greater experience any revolutionary significance. To the contrary, most adults in the existing society are mentally cluttered with preposterous falsehoods and if they are to achieve any real learning, they will have to undergo a considerable unlearning process.

tured, as it were, into the 'sufficient condition'. An uprising planned by an elite is almost certain today to lead to disaster. The state power we face is too formidable, its armamentorium is too destructive, and, if its structure is still intact, its efficiency is too compelling to be removed by a contest in which weaponry is the determining factor. The system must fall, not fight; and it will fall only when its institutions have been so hollowed out by the new Enlightenment, and its power so undermined physically and morally, that an insurrectionary confrontation will be more symbolic than real. Exactly when or how this 'magic moment', so characteristic of revolution, will occur is unpredictable. but, for example, when a local strike, ordinarily ignored under 'normal' circumstances, can ignite a revolutionary general strike, then we will know that the conditions have ripened — and this can occur only when the revolutionary process has been permitted to find its own level of revolutionary confrontation.[6]

[6] This is a vitally important point and should be followed through with an example. Had the famous Sud-Aviation strike in Nantes of May 13, 1968, a strike that ignited the massive general strike in France of May-June, occurred only a week earlier, it probably would have had only local significance and almost certainly would have been ignored by the country at large. Coming when it did, however, after the student uprising, the Sud-Aviation strike initiated a sweeping social movement. Obviously the tinder for this movement had accumulated slowly and imperceptibly. The Sud-Aviation strike did not 'create' this movement; it *revealed* it, which is precisely the point that cannot be emphasized too strongly. What I am saying is that a militant action, presumably by a minority — an action unknowingly radical even to itself — had revealed the fact that it was the action of a *majority* in the only way it could reveal itself. The social material for the general strike lay at hand and *any* strike, however trivial in the normal course of events (and perhaps unavoidable), might have brought the general strike into being. Owing to the unconscious nature of the processes involved, there is no way of foretelling when a movement of this kind will emerge — and it will emerge only when it is left to do so on its own. Nor is this to say that will does not play an active role in social processes, but merely that the will of the individual revolutionary must become a *social* will, the will of the great majority in society, if it is to culminate in revolution.

7

If it is true that revolution today is an act of consciousness in the *broadest* sense and entails a demystification of reality that removes all its ideological trappings, it is not enough to say that 'consciousness follows being'. To deal with the development of consciousness merely as the reflection of subjectivity of the development of material production, to say as the older Marx does that morality, religion and philosophy are the 'ideological reflexes and echoes' of actuality and 'have no history and no development' of their own, is to place the formation of ideology and thereby to deny this consciousness any authentic basis for transcending the world as it is given.[7] Here, communist consciousness itself becomes an 'echo' of actuality. The 'why' in the explanation of this consciousness is reduced to the 'how', in typical instrumentalist fashion; the subjective elements involved in the transformation of consciousness become completely objectified. Subjectivity ceases to be a domain for itself, hence the failure of Marxism to formulate a revolutionary psychology of its own and the inability of the Marxists to comprehend the new Enlightenment that is transforming subjectivity in all its dimensions.

Classical western philosophy in its broad, albeit often mystified, notion of 'spirit', recognised that reason increasingly 'subsumes' the material world — or, stated in a more 'materialistic' sense, that matter becomes rational and reason forms its own 'cortex', as it were, over natural and social history. Reason is ultimately nature and society rendered conscious. In this sense, it is insufficient to say that 'consciousness follows being', but rather that being develops towards consciousness; that consciousness has its own history within the material world and increasingly gains sway over the course of material reality. Hu-

[7] The young Marx in *Toward the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* held a quite different view: 'It is not enough that thought should seeks its actualisation; actuality must itself strive toward thought'.