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BEING A MARXIST

Active subjects move into focus with “bM”, the object of this article. The political thus appears in the personal. It is not bare conditions that are Marxist, but people. The ethical dimension of their action and their forbearance comes into the field of vision. Objectivism finds itself restricted to their conditions. To give an idea of historical situation and generational affinities, the Marxists cited in this article who came of age in the 130 years after **MARX’S** death will be introduced with their birth years. The way they expressed the characteristics of their specific forms of existence is the material. The same thing can be said of this which has been said of how Wolfgang **HEISE** (b. 1925) approached the ideas collected in his library: that through them he “could fully make present, at the very least as foreign thinking, even those ideas which are not overtly conveyable, which perhaps cannot even be conceived of in one’s own words” (**RESCHKE** 1999, 16). Precisely for this reason, and in the expectation of uncomfortable truths, “renegades” too are carefully listened to.

Innumerable people have considered themselves Marxists. At the high point of the revolutionary struggles of the twentieth century they counted in the millions. There are fresh influxes, depending on the historical constellations, from ever new generations and regions of the world. There are good reasons for this, “but the reasons are guiding rather than forcing ones”, in Norman **GERAS’S** (b. 1943) words, and, at

play here “is a sort of existential choice one makes” (2011, 5). Nevertheless, and unlike in the question of being a socialist or communist, it is seldom and usually only incidentally that there is theoretical reflection on bM, its driving forces and practices, its contradictions and crises, its productivity, and its manifold forms.

As long as “state socialism” asserted its claim to sole representation of Marxism, whose name was overwritten with Marxism-Leninism, it reproduced its own growing gap between claim and reality as the external antagonism between the “ideal-socialist” counter-world of unorganized bM and “actually existing socialism”, or rather, as Johannes **AGNOLI** (b. 1925) was fond of gibing, the “nominal-socialist countries” (in **MANDEL/AGNOLI** 1980, 17). The collapse of these European countries and the integration of the non-European people’s republics dominated by party communism into the capitalist world market has excised the basis for this antagonism. Out from the shadow of the CP and its claim – still affirmed in 2010 by Hans Heinz **HOLZ** (b. 1927) – to be “the sole [...] locus of historical truth”, bM has come forward again as a *historical form of identity* in its own right. Whether organized or unorganized, it contributes its intellectual practices of analysis, discussion, and communication in a multi-faceted social engagement. The “post-communist situation” (**HAUG** 1993), in which bM has to shape itself from now on, is determined by the neoliberal emancipation of capital from the fetters of the social compromises won in conditions of inter-system competition and by the demolition

of the nation-states' protective shields against the world market within the accelerated transition to transnational high-tech capitalism. Its crises, accompanied by new war scenarios, is keeping the world in suspense. This situation is overdetermined by the fact that capital, as Georg FÜLBERTH (b. 1939) has noted, "is constantly revolutionizing society: through technological innovation and the mobilization of consensus, in which the masses, through their desires, contribute to the further development of capitalism", a process that can be characterized as a "passive revolution": "the lower classes accept the hegemony of capital and themselves consolidate it through their own mobilization" (2013). In this situation, FÜLBERTH sees Marxism, with its core content historical materialism and the critique of political economy, in danger of becoming "academic, if it does not indeed completely disappear" (ibid.). Yet the theoretical and scientific aspect of bM is not limited to academics or academic apparatuses. Together with the claim affirmed by Louis ALTHUSSER (b. 1918) "that a Marxist cannot fight, in what he writes or in what he does, *without thinking through the struggle*" (*Is it Simple*, 1990), bM implied, from its very first appearance, a historical materialist shift of perspective in the direction of social relations. Antonio GRAMSCI'S (b. 1891) concept of the "organic intellectual" – which he rescued from academic confinement as well as from its confiscation in the form of the 'free-floating' literati and instead derived from socialising practice [*Vergesellschaftungshandeln*] – is well-suited to express this aspect of bM.

At the same time, bM appears as a political-ethical form, since it confronts individuals with the responsibility for the social world and its relations with nature. The activity-orientation towards the “*categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, contemptible being*” (MECW 3/182) and towards the challenge to “hand it [the globe] down to succeeding generations in an improved condition” (C III – MECW 37/763) has its price. Franz MEHRING (b. 1846) was one of the first to go on record as realizing that “the profession of historical materialism demands a high moral idealism, since it invariably brings with it poverty, persecution and slander, whereas every careerist makes historical idealism his cause, since it offers the richest expectations of all earthly goods, of happiness, of fat sinecures” (1893, 442). Bertolt BRECHT (b. 1898) has raised awareness that individuals adhere to bM indeed for ethical reasons, but not to be selfless, for bM brings something decisive to their own lives. “Whoever is incapable of being angered by a private injustice done to him will be little able to fight. Whoever isn’t capable of getting angry over injustice done to others won’t be able to fight for the Great Order.” (BRECHT, *Me-Ti*, 165). Lucio LOMBARDO RADICE (b. 1916) advises it is not enough to answer the why-question of bM. One would “also have to try to explain *how* one is a Marxist”; in so doing, he continues, it becomes “clear that there can no longer be a question of ‘Marxism’ as such without making distinctions” (1978, 219 f). However, it is not differences in direction that are at

stake but the opposition between two modes of bM, specifically the “decisive, methodological boundary between conservative and progressive revolutionary Marxism”, freely adapted from **GOETHE’S** invocations of the „eternal living action...”, “to take what’s made and then re-make it, to find rigidity and break it, with effect to make creation new, its weaponed rigour soon enough undo” (“One and All”, CW 243). However, this challenge to create anew, to open up sedimented Marxism, to help bring it into a changed reality, unavoidably leads to conflicts not only with conservatives who seek protection in ossification but also with those who are openly looking for new paths. Consequently, it is necessary to think “the living and lived contradictions, that is, the dialectic” of M (**LEFEBVRE** 1959, 683), but also inner-Marxist conflicts, not only those of M in the bourgeois-capitalist environment.

1. M’s genealogy leads back to anti-Marxism. It was the opponents of **MARX** within the left, who dubbed his adherents “Marxistes” in order to isolate them. Jules **GUESDE** (b. 1845), according to **ENGELS**, “in matters of theory [...] by far the most lucid thinker amongst the Parisians, and one of the few who takes no exception at all to the German origins of present-day socialism”, was defamed as “**MARX’S** mouthpiece” (to Bernstein, 15 October 1881, 46/147). After the publication of the French translation of *C I* (1872-75), those thus stigmatized in France began to repurpose this epithet. That **MARX** distanced himself from it is attested by **ENGELS**. To Eduard **BERSTEIN’S** (b. 1850)



“reiterated assertion that in France ‘Marxism’ suffers from a marked lack of esteem” **ENGELS** replied on 2 and 3 November 1882: “Now what is known as ‘Marxism’ in France is, indeed, an altogether peculiar product – so much so that **MARX** once said to **LAFARGUE**: ‘Ce qu’il y a de certain c’est que moi, je ne suis pas Marxiste’” (46/356). In the same year – he was to live another six months, and was taking the cure in French-ruled Algeria fearing deportation by the political police if his presence were to come to the government’s attention – **MARX** spoke of “the ‘Marxistes’ and ‘Anti-Marxistes’ having, at their respective socialist congresses at Roanne and St-Étienne, both done their damndest to ruin my stay in France” (to Engels, 30 September 1882, 46/339). But at the same time he seems to have gradually warmed to his comrades, use of the term “Marxists” in view of the fact that the hostile “innuendo, ‘Marx is a “German”, alias “Prussian”, hence French “Marxistes” too are traitors’, could no longer cut any ice with anyone, nor yet dare make itself ‘heard’, even for a moment. C’est un progrès” (ibid.). That there were also “anti-Marxist” tendencies among the German socialists is attested a year after **MARX’S** death by Karl **KAUTSKY’S** (b. 1854) 16 July 1884 letter to **ENGELS** to whom he wrote that by writing articles for *NZ* he had “incurred the accusation of ‘Marxist one-sidedness and intolerance’” (*Engels’ Briefwechsel*, 134).

The founding of the Second International (1880) brought with it bM’s institutional breakthrough, whatever the individual level of theoretical and political depth may have been. Looking back at the struggle

with the “anarchists” for hegemony in the labour movement, **ENGELS** wrote to **MARX**’s daughter Laura **LAFARGUE** (b. 1845): “we have proved to the world that almost all Socialists in Europe are ‘Marxists’ (they will be mad they gave us that name!)” (11 June 1889, 48/338). We seem still to be hearing hesitation when in 1896 in the case of Antonio **LABRIOLA** (b. 1843), often called “Italy’s first Marxist”, “the critical communist, that is, the sociologist of economic materialism, or, as he is commonly called, the Marxist” emerges (*Essays on the Materialist Conception of History* (**LABRIOLA** 2005, 222). Still in 1928, after the great split in the labour movement, Otto **BAUER** (b. 1881) said: “Socialist ideology: In practice there is practically no other than Marxism, nor can there be” (*Klassenkampf und Ideologie*, WA 9, 199).

“BM” soon opened up career opportunities in the rapidly growing organizations and press of Marxist social democracy. In the process **ENGELS** noted “the relative weakness – and this also applies in the field of theory – of the younger generation” (to Bebel, 15 November 1889, 48/404). He was disquieted at the young academic intellectuals’ arrival “just in time to take most of the editorial posts in the new papers that were then proliferating” (28 August 1890, 49/21). He wrote to Paul **LAFARGUE**: “These gentry all dabble in Marxism, albeit of the kind you were acquainted with in France ten years ago and of which **MARX** said: ‘All I know is that I’m not a Marxist.’ And he would doubtless say of these gentry what **HEINE** said of his imitators: ‘I sowed dragons and I reaped fleas’” (ibid. 22). This disquiet is still echoed a generation later

when Rudolf **HILFERDING** (b. 1877) wrote to **KAUTSKY** that soon "'Marxists' and 'anti-Marxists' would equal each other in their total ignorance of **MARX'S** ideas and method. A pity that we did not register a trademark for 'Marxism' early on" (IISG Amsterdam, Bequest Kautsky; cited from Krätke 1996, 73, fn. 5).

From the opposed viewpoint Rosa **LUXEMBURG** (b. 1871) reflected on the crippling shadow that **MARX**" was in danger of exerting as "a somewhat restrictive influence [...] upon the free development of theory in the case of many of his pupils" (**LUXEMBURG**, 'Stagnation and Progress' 143). This danger and this concern point to a problem that was to accompany bM in its historical development. Just as being a Christian is conceived in early modern theology as *imitatio Christi* (**THOMAS A KEMPIS**), so in ascendant social democracy, but at first negatively, the growing intellectual bM was thought of as an imitation of **MARX**, who had by then died. In what followed, bM, from the positive point of view, meant on the one side individual Marx discipleship, on the other side the collective commitment to the social movement that saw itself as "Marxist" believing that "an historical act can only be performed by 'collective man', and this presupposes the attainment of a 'cultural-social' unity" (**GRAMSCI**, *SPN*, Nb. 10.II, §44, 349). On the whole, a twofold requirement of theoretical competence and practical engagement is posited. It is in this that **MARX'S** ambivalence reproduced itself undetected: inwardly because the claim can only be partially recovered; in another way outwardly, because for its part the antagonisms continue to characterize

the Marxist way of thinking in the tension between external perception and self-conception in a hostile or rivalrous environment. And as Marxism, as a concrete-historical movement, arose from the connection between the labour movement and the critical theory of capitalism shaped by **MARX** and **ENGELS**, and fortified by **MARX** with the backbone of *Capital*, so bM was and still is conditioned by a tension-filled double affiliation, which is not necessarily organizational even if it is grounded in the insight that it is insufficient to analyse the world critically but that “the point is to *change* it” (*ThF* 11, 5/5)

Comment. – It should be noted that in German the adjective “Marxist” (“*marxistisch*”) and the noun denoting the actor “Marxist” (“*Marxist*”) are, in contrast to neighbouring languages, different words and that particularly in Anglo-Saxon there is often no distinction made between “*Marxsche*” (Marxian, referring to words and ideas written or expressed by Marx) and “*Marxistischen*” (referring to the Marxist characteristic of ideas and people other than Marx). – On the spread of the terms “*Marxista, los marxistas, marxismo*” in Spanish-speaking areas see the article of the same name at *Proyecto Filosofía en español*.

2. *Motivations and paths of becoming a Marxist.* – Henri **LEFEBVRE** insists that it is first necessary to come to an understanding regarding the phrases “being a Marxist, being a communist”. “One has imagined Marxism and communism in an ontological sense (Being) instead of the way in which **MARX** understood it as Becoming and Movement” (1959,

683 f). “It is not that you *are* a Marxist”, in Lucien **SÉVE’S** (b. 1926) words, “you *become* one. And in reality one never reaches an end point with this becoming. For bM means not completing a prescribed programme but continuously inventing a position and a practice” (2014). Here a permanent mode of being is set forth. But what about the initial Becoming?

2.1 *Resistant paths.* – One of the models is the transformation of a Saul into a Paul, of a persecutor into an ardent adherent. For example, **MEHRING’S** transformation from vitriolic critic to one of the most important theoreticians of Marxism at the turn of 19th century. Still in 1879 he pulled to pieces the “international fraud” (cited in **HÖHLE** 1956) of social democracy and painted a nightmare scenario of the “victory of the international communist **MARX** [...] over the traditions of the national-oriented socialist **LASALLE**” (74 f). In 1893 he published, as an appendix to *The Lessing Legend*, the first concise presentation of historical materialism and in 1902 the first collected works *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels und Ferdinand Lassalle*. This four-volume edition “had the greatest significance. In a time of heated ideological and political conflicts between Marxists and Revisionists, **MEHRING** made valuable, long forgotten writings of the classics available again to the German workers and in so doing decisively contributed to the deepening and consolidation within the party of the revolutionary body of thought of undistorted and undiluted Marxism” (**HÖHLE** 1956, 297).

A letter of Vera ZASULICH's (b. 1849) speaks to the same experience through which an initial critic can become an especially resilient and independent-minded bM. "Most of our young friends, our comrades, and indeed the best," have taken up the study of the Marxian-socialist literature "with a view to refuting our arguments and have ended by accepting our ideas" (to Engels, 3 April 1890, III.30/226). This model is repeated in the case of TROTSKY (b. 1879). In *My Life* he recounts how as a young man he felt "repelled" by Marxism (1929/2007, 99) and had written "a polemical article for a populist periodical in Odessa, taking issue with the first Marxist journal. The article had more epigraphs, quotations and venom than it had content" (101). In his prison cell in Odessa he "read with delight two famous essays by the old Italian Hegelian-Marxist, Antonio LABRIOLA, which reached the prison in a French translation" (119). However, it was only in exile (1900) that TROTSKY became a Marxist. "Since 1896, when I had tried to ward off revolutionary ideas, and the following year, when I had done the same to Marxist doctrines even though I was already carrying on revolutionary work, I had travelled far. At the time of my exile, Marxism had definitely become the basis of my worldview and the method of my thought" (127).

This path from critic to champion has been repeatedly taken. Two generations after TROTSKY it was trodden by the theologian Helmut GOLLWITZER (b. 1908) who saw himself "as an anti-Marxist [...] after his experiences in Soviet imprisonment [...] until the 1960s" (REHMANN

1994, 9). For him, a key moment in his transformation “from an exceptionally well-informed critic of *‘the’* Marxist worldview into a pioneer of an operational Marxism within Christianity, who at the same time was active as a Christian pioneer within Marxism” (17), was an encounter at the World Conference for Church and Society within the Ecumenical Council of Churches in Geneva in 1966, where a cleric from Mozambique said in essence “You are not my brother as long as you cannot extricate yourself from your involvement in the First World’s exploitative system” (see **KELLER** 1988, 20). This transformation was fortified by the experience with a “non-state/nonofficial Marxism that was critical of domination” in the extra-parliamentary opposition in the then Federal Republic of Germany (**REHMANN** 1994, 14).

2.2 Intellectual paths. – **LABRIOLA** describes himself as someone who “for many years had struggled with abstract philosophy and precisely through philosophy slowly arrived at socialism” and then even participated in “practical propaganda” (to Engels, 3 April 1890, III.30/231). Here, to the astonishment of his bourgeois contemporaries, was a “scholar” who “from the heights of **KANTIAN** moral philosophy, by way of **HEGEL’S** philosophy of history and **HERBART’S** Völkerpsychologie, arrived at the conviction that he should publicly advocate socialism as his specific profession” (ibid.). Certainly, it was not philosophy alone that brought this about: “A long and continuous journey towards the real problems of life, a disgust at political corruption, and contact with

workers, have gradually made the scientific socialist in the abstract into a real social democrat" (ibid.).

Like BRECHT, who forty years later did not arrive at Marxism through pity for the proletarians but as a reader of Karl MARX'S writings" (MAYER 1996, 39), his contemporary Herbert MARCUSE (b. 1898), one of the defining figures of Critical Theory, became a Marxist on a path that led through theory. As a student he had turned to HEIDEGGER in his search for a "concrete" philosophy of time but then realized "that this concretization was quite false" (1978, 125). During all of this time he "had already read MARX [...]. Then the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* appeared. This was probably the turning point. Here was, in a certain sense, a new MARX, who was really concrete and at the same time went beyond the parties' petrified practical and theoretical Marxism" (125). MARCUSE'S understanding of Critical Theory articulates the idea that "up until the end Marxist theory itself was the integrating force that prevented, for example, economic problems from being treated solely as discipline-specific problems" (129). His work on Soviet ML that he published in the US in the 1950s (published in 1964 in German) became "very valuable" for the autonomous-intellectual Marxists of the student movement "for the critical assessment of the Soviet Union, indeed from a wholly new standpoint, neither that of Trotskyism nor of the Comintern" (DUTSCHKE in Marcuse 1978, 136).

Iring FETSCHER (b. 1922) describes as "the deepest impression" of his period in Paris his encounter with Alexandre KOJVE (b. 1902) whom he counts as "one of

the rare convinced Hegelians of our century [...] who was at the same time a convinced Marxist" (1983, 11), and whose commentary on the *Phenomenology of Spirit* he translated into German (1958). Through reading of "LUKÁCS's Hegel book that had to be published in Switzerland in 1948 because it appeared insufficiently orthodox to his comrades" (ibid.), but also the works of MARX and ENGELS, FETSCHER was prepared for KOJVE's Hegel interpretation, all the more so that "through contact with Dresden, from where my mother settled in the West in 1948" he "had come to numerous Marxist publications and had already read with great interest works by MARX, ENGELS, PLEKHANOV, Georg LUKÁCS, and Ernst BLOCH, which had been published there" (ibid.). He describes his relationship to Marxism as "both critical and engaged. [...] In view of widespread ignorance and one-sided defamatory polemics I regarded as an important task to work out the far-reaching differences, indeed antagonisms, between the humanist critique of the early MARX and Stalinist Marxism's dogmatic doctrine of justification" (11 f).

Rudi DUTSCHKE (b. 1940), who had grown up in the GDR, was at first shaped by Christian socialism, and was part of the democratic socialist opposition to repressive state socialism, which barred him from university; he repeated his university-entrance diploma in West Berlin, settling there in 1961 to study philosophy and social sciences. Here he transformed himself into a Marxist – through thorough readings of the Marxist classics, starting with the young MARX. Drawn into the growing student movement via

Situationist influences, he accomplished a second transformation to become its best-known leader, which is how he is remembered. – At approximately the same time and through partially identical readings the theologian Ton (Antonius) **VEERKAMP** (b. 1933) came to bM in the Netherlands, and this in a practical perspective and in a situation which heralded the '68 movement: “November 1965, Reading Room of the Library of the Theological Faculty in Maastricht. I read through a collection of writings of the ‘young **MARX**’ specifically ‘The German Ideology. Feuerbach’. At the time the political climate in the Netherlands was shifting, towards the left. The ‘young Marx’ was an insider tip among us. [...] I [...] saw myself confronted with an approach to history that [...]

“...the profession of historical materialism demands a high moral idealism, since it invariably brings with it poverty, persecution and slander, whereas every careerist makes historical idealism his cause, since it offers the richest expectations of all earthly goods, of happiness, of fat sinecures”

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began to clear away the whole phantom of the history of ideas and of salvation. Ever since I have been a student of **MARX**, without becoming a doctrinaire Marxist” (Letter to W.F. Haug, Dec. 2013).

“The inadequacy of traditional science, the impossibility of anchoring it in personal life”, “produced” in the art historian Jutta **HELD** (b. 1933) “a diffuse tendency to opposition”, which in the 1960s “drove” her “not only into the ranks of the protesting demonstrators but also led me to take up

Marxist theory, which soon proved to me to be the only alternative" (1988, 48). As with many others, this meant the beginning of "a self-organized 'second doctorate', in which – though with difficulty, heated conflicts and painful farewells, yet accompanied, as a whole, by euphoria – everything was reordered and re-dimensioned. Our science began to become more human and concrete. We no longer perceived artistic phenomena in isolation but learned to see them integrated within the dialectic of forces and relations of production" (ibid.).

Helmut PEITSCH (b. 1948) calls into question "the widespread periodization" that derives becoming Marxist from the '68 movement, using the example of three of the younger generation of West German literary historians – Thomas METSCHER (b. 1934), Helmut LETHEN (b. 1939), and Gert MATTENKLOTT (b. 1942) – since these scholars had already "declared themselves to be Marxists" (2000, 127) in 1964 (METSCHER in *Das Argument*), or 1966 (LETHEN in *Alternative*, followed by MATTENKLOTT in 1971), and already from 1961 "a specific shift in the direction of Marxism [had] taken place, which was evidenced in the editorials of *Das Argument* in an evolving theory of the intellectual" (133). Marxism provided space for a self-conception of critical-scientific praxis, and through historical materialism it consolidated the delegitimation of the intellectual post-fascism which continued to exist in universities and especially in German language and literature studies.

2.3 The party trajectory. – Ilya EHRENBURG (b. 1891), who came from a comfortable Jewish family, heard “from older Gymnasium students, for the first time” at the age of 14 during the First Russian Revolution (1905) “about historical materialism, surplus value and many other things that appeared extraordinarily important to me and changed my life radically” (1962, 91). In the following turbulent year, “I was pulled towards the Bolsheviks, to the romance of the unromantic. I had already read essays by LENIN” (93). He became a militant Bolshevik and went into the underground and regarded the six-month jail time he served at the age of 17 for this engagement as “a kind of graduation” (107).

After the experiences of the First World War the thunderbolt of Russia’s October Revolution pulled millions of people worldwide into the gravitational field of the parties of the newly founded Communist International and thus towards a MARX represented by the new CPs and interpreted by LENIN. Ernst BLOCH’S (b. 1885) pronouncement is emblematic here: “ubi Lenin, ibi Jerusalem” (*PH*, 610) – “where Lenin is there is Jerusalem”. This dictum was a response to Moses HESS’S communist utopia of the New Jerusalem alluding to John, *Book of Revelation* 21, though not as a new vision descending from heaven but as an earthly one, a vision of which BLOCH said that HESS “would now no longer locate his imagined Jerusalem in Jerusalem, in the age of the Soviet Union and the movement towards Soviet Unions” (609 f). Looking back in 1970, Georg LUKÁCS (b. 1885) was no longer certain “whether the First World War

and the completely negative effect of my personal war experiences would suffice to change my attitude [...]. In any case, it was the Russian Revolution and the ensuing revolutionary developments in Hungary which made me into a socialist. And I have remained one ever since" (W 18, 431).

In the following epoch bM largely became a matter of being a communist, the relationship to bM itself often being secondary. To be sure, not immediately and not everywhere to the same extent. A significant phenomenon between the two world wars was Austro-Marxism, which claimed to be continuing Marxist social democracy as shaped by **ENGELS**. Furthermore, there were individual differences within the 'organic composition' of the motif of organized action whose principal theoretical motif was bM. Wolfgang **ABENDROTH** (b. 1906), for example, appropriated Marxist theory in order to transmit it in left milieus; he learned in order to teach (and learned through teaching). The Communist Youth to which he belonged and which saw itself as a "non-party-oriented educational community" (**HEIGL** 2008, 37) wanted "systematically to carry out Marxist schooling, to work through and disseminate Marxian literature [...]. We wanted to promote Marxist thinking on a broad level among the youth – and in so doing we became systematically schooled" (**ABENDROTH** 1976, 28). The organizations and groups that arose within the tide of a Marxist-oriented labour movement functioned literally as "schools [...] in which people learned to become Marxists" (**HOBBSAWM**, *Storia*, XVIII). To teach meant to learn in this context. This

experience, though at a certain distance from the labour movement, was massively repeated in the late 1960s among university and gymnasium students and apprentices in the course of what is too narrowly known as the student movement, an experience to which the origins of the HCDM ultimately go back. For the generation of the Second World War resistance to fascism became an important driving force. Wherever a Communist-led resistance movement fought against Nazi occupation being-a-Communist “appeared earlier – and more often – than bM” (SÈVE 2014). Gajo PETROVIĆ (b. 1927) “became a Marxist and Communist as a gymnasium student [...] during [...] the Nazi-fascist occupation of Yugoslavia”, which in practice meant that he participated “in the liberation struggle through illegal activity in the occupied territory”. He came to the conviction “that Marxism is the [...] theory that best sees the problems of human life and of contemporary society and is therefore also the best basis for the struggle not only against Nazi-fascism but against all forms of inhumanity and for a truly human, free society” (1978, 195 f). In Italy, Lucio LOMBARDO RADICE found his way to MARX as an “anti-fascist-oriented twenty-year-old” (1978, 214 ff). He wanted to fight against dictatorship. In his search for organized resistance he came upon the PCI, which was seeking to unify all anti-fascist forces in accordance with Popular Front policy established by the Seventh Congress of the CI in 1935. Coming from a Liberal family he sought to understand why the Liberals opposed this. He found the answer in the *Communist Manifesto*, which for him was reinforced

by LABRIOLA's *Essays on the Materialist Conception of History*: behind ideas there were class interests. The group with which LOMBARDO RADICE discussed MARXian texts was carrying out a prolonged philosophical and philological debate: 'Does the base *determine* the superstructure or just *condition* it?'" Aldo NATOLI (b. 1913) and LOMBARDO RADICE were "inclined to be anti-dogmatic and anti-mechanistic" and got hold of "the writings of the Marxist classics in German in order to find out whether 'bestimmen' [determine] or 'bedingen' [condition] was the key word". In this path "from a critical idealism to a critical Marxism [...]" LENIN did not play as great a role [...] as MARX and ENGELS, on the one side, and LABRIOLA, and later GRAMSCI and TOGLIATTI, on the other". Even more, in view of the "enormous difference between the basic conditions of Russia in 1905-1917 and Italy in 1935-1945" LOMBARDO RADICE and NATOLI were clear that "just as LENIN had accomplished a revolution against [MARX'S] *Capital*" (in GRAMSCI's words) they had to "bring about a revolution against [LENIN'S] *State and Revolution*". As far as STALIN is concerned, LOMBARDO RADICE describes his own attitude and that of his comrades as a divided one: to stand behind the Soviet Union – and with it also STALIN – was "an absolute necessity of life in these tough years", while at the same time "the continually more dogmatic and conservative Soviet Marxism, which was platitudinized in quotations, repetitions and 'eternal truths'", was impossible for them. Besides, STALIN "followed the same principle of a double truth" that they did, in that he "supported [their] struggle for freedom and democracy" (218). Perhaps this is

the reason why **LOMBARDO RADICE** counts him, despite everything, “among the great Marxist thinkers”.

Rossana **ROSSANDA**, eight years younger (b. 1924) also came first into the ranks of the CP through her engagement in the Communist-led Resistance and then secondarily arrived at Marxism. What she read of **MARX** was his concrete political-historical writings, while she still “dropped” *Capital* at that time “as if it were not so urgent” (2007, 92).

The intellectual and anti-fascist paths were contingent on each other in the case of Robert **HAVEMANN** (b. 1910). In 1931 – while he was still an apolitical student of the natural sciences who was revolted by the Nazis’ anti-Semitism – a girlfriend had given him **ENGELS** to read. He could “at first not understand it at all, but every evening I had to study ‘Anti-Dühring’ because it contained so much on the natural sciences [...]. I thus suddenly began to be interested in a movement with an extraordinary intellectual depth” (1978a, 36). He became involved in the CP and transformed himself “within a year [...] into a passionate politically engaged person” (37 f).

Darko **SUVIN** (b. 1930) relates how, later, during the height of Nazism: “**MARX** hit me like lightning and stayed with me.” That he had already read the *Manifesto* as a schoolboy and had entered the Communist Youth League he ascribes to “the existential experiences” of a youth of bourgeois Jewish origins whose family fled from German-occupied Zagreb to Italy where his father joined the Resistance in 1943 and he himself and his mother were brought by Communist partisans by boat to

safety in liberated Bari. “Anti-fascism was the decisive experience that caused me to become and remain a Communist and then a Marxist” (2014).

In the countries in which the Communist-led resistance movement played a part in the liberation from fascism many paths led to bM via the CP also in the immediate post-war years. Thus with **ALTHUSSER** communist engagement came first and bM at first took second place. “I was already a Communist [1949-50], and I was therefore trying to be a Marxist as well – that is, I was trying, to the best of my ability, to understand what Marxism *means*” (*Is it Simple*, 205). For him theory was a dimension of membership. – The eight-years-younger **SÈVE** “wanted passionately to change life; the Communists taught me that to do this one had to change the world” (2014).

In the Soviet-occupied part of Germany, in view of the “unparalleled radical dimensions of the collapse and of the enormity of the criminal evil that the Germans visited upon the world and upon themselves”, it was not hard for the historian Fritz **KLEIN** (b. 1924) to opt for the SED and the construction of socialism in the GDR; “in both respects the immense size of the tasks that lay before those who now wanted to do something different and finally better – all of this favoured simple thinking in terms of a few, absolutely understandable categories. The big No, which was so irrefutably necessary, was inseparable from the big Yes to the alternative that promised a radical new construction” (2000, 8f).

2.4 *Paths of movement.* – The path to bM often leads through a rising and vibrant social movement. Where this occurs self-elaborated theoretical bases and political-ethical principles often have decisive weight. That Clara ZETKIN (b. 1857) “came to MARX through LA[s]SALLE ” (letter to Kurt Eisner 27 June 1918) had to do with the latter’s having embodied the element of movement within historical materialism. It was the same for MEHRING and LUXEBURG who defended LASSALLE against MARX’s criticism. In LUXEBURG’S eyes LASSALLE had “led the working class in a double-quick step, through an abbreviated and boldly taken byway [...], onto the same great historical path on which it is henceforth being led under MARX’S flag” (GW 1/2, 156). August BEBEL (b. 1840) emphasised that it was not Wilhelm LIEBKNECHT who “made him into a Marxist”, as had been claimed, but that he “had [...] to read LASSALLE’S writings in order to know what they [MARX and LIEBKNECHT] meant” (1910/1946, 116), and it was thus that in the 1860s, “like most of us who then became Socialists, I went from LASSALLE to Marx. LASSALLE’S writings were in our hands before we knew anything of MARX and ENGELS” (1912, 78). In 1864 BEBEL had a try at MARX’S *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* but could not understand it. “The first work of MARX which I really understood and enjoyed was his ‘Inaugural Address’ advocating the formation of the ‘International Working Men’s Association’” (79); in 1866 BEBEL joined the IWA. “It was at the end of 1869 that I first had enough time and peace – in fact in prison – to thoroughly read the [...] first volume of *Capital* by MARX” (ibid.)

It is often an inclination to contradict, combined with a keen desire for freedom and justice, which leads individuals towards bM. Leo LÖWENTHAL (b. 1900), for example, depicts himself as a “rebel” from his early youth, “and everything that was then oppositional, that is, to quote BENJAMIN, on the side of the losers in world history, attracted me as if by magic” (1987, 25). The early years of the GDR philosopher Heinrich TAUT (b. 1907) followed a similar trajectory. Already rebellious as a boy, he felt a “tempestuous” attraction to Marxism as a student in Heidelberg in 1928 – to the horror of his famous father, the architect Bruno TAUT, who prescribed a cure for him in the form of a semester in England, which however resulted in Heinrich getting to know the theory of imperialism in 1929 at London’s India House; in 1931, after a thorough reading of LENIN – above all *What Is To Be Done?* – and TROTSKY, on his own initiative, and supplied only with a recommendation from the architect Ernst MAY, he set out on a dangerous journey to Russia in order to “prove or disprove the theory I had read” (TAUT 1995, 183 f). He later recognized the state of mind he had been in when he read the Russian writer Lev KOPELEV’S (b. 1912) autobiographical depiction of the state of mind “of those selfless, earnest, authentic – often murderous and not seldom suicidal – emotions that agitated and inspired our youth” (ibid.)

The road towards bM became a mass phenomenon in the course of the ‘68 movement, as “the most active parts of university youth in Western Europe and the USA [became] Marxist or quasi-Marxist almost

overnight" (NOLTE 1994, 54). Fritz TOMBERG (b. 1932) experienced these students as "having been almost naturally drawn into the maelstrom of the rebellion that reached its height in 1968. And it was almost equally natural for these rebellious students, after an initial anti-authoritarianism, to turn towards Marxism" (1988, 71). Hans-Jürgen KRAHL (b. 1943), one of SDS's charismatic leaders, describes his journey – characteristic of many of his contemporaries – from the most reactionary circles through several stages until he "finally arrived at Marxist dialectics, which also marks the educational trajectory of many whose class position did not require them to ascribe to the praxis of the proletariat [...]. I experienced for the first time in SDS what solidarity meant: namely to create forms of association that free themselves from oppression and subjugation by the ruling class" (1969/1971, 21f).

Similar experiences in this period provided the stimulus also for established scholars. Examples are Ute OSTERKAMP (b. 1935) and Klaus HOLZKAMP (b. 1927). "The first encounter was rather defensive, in reaction to challenges from students, which one could face or from which one could withdraw. This involved an inversion of the relationship between teachers and learners. We sat in the student reading groups and were delighted if we could avoid writing the minutes because at first we could not understand a word" (OSTERKAMP 2013). With the students they plunged into the project of the *Schülerladen Rote Freiheit* (an anti-authoritarian cultural development project for working-class children). In the following semester



**DAS
KAPITAL**

breaks “everyone systematically re-read *Capital* on his or her own and in so doing caught fire or were ‘gripped’, in the fullest sense of the word, by a thinking that had at first been largely impenetrable for us” (ibid.).

In particular, the protest against the US’ Vietnam War, which shaped the ‘68 generation, brought many to Marxism. One such was the psychiatrist Erich WULFF (b. 1926) who came from the phenomenological school. He was collaborating in the framework of a partnership between the University of Freiburg and the Medical Faculty in Hue (South Vietnam) on the construction of a psychiatric department there. When he accidentally came into contact with Marxist ideas during a stopover in Cologne the pieces of the puzzle of his trans-cultural experience fell together. At a carnival party he came into contact with “an SDS activist”. He told her about Vietnam under the US-financed Catholic dictator NGO Dinh Diem, “of the poverty of the peasants, of the arbitrariness of the Diemist militia, of the resistance organized by the Communists, of the arrogance and egoism of the rich and the powerful. His discussion partner [she was Frigga HAUG (b. 1937)] easily put all of this into relation with the Marxist logic of class” (WULFF 2001, 359 f). She impressed on him that he must read MARCUSE and “already gave him on the day after a stack of old issues of *Das Argument* with several articles of MARCUSE to read which did not fail to have an effect on him” (ibid.).

For the Protestant theologian Dorothee SÖLLE (b. 1927) everything began with a discussion in which

WULFF "told her how the Americans [in Vietnam] though they did not practice torture themselves nevertheless stood with a tape recorder next to the torturers from other Asian countries and recorded the forced confessions of the Vietcong" (1995, 88). In the following years her involvement "with the liberation movements, with imperialism theory, with knowledge of what was actually occurring in the Third World [...] helped me to also reinterpret my own history: With Auschwitz, Auschwitz was not over, it continued to exist – that was the lesson. It never left me" (ibid.). In 1968 she had her first close acquaintance with a communist, Fredi **HÜLSER**. When he recounted how, in prison, the Nazis had broken his ribs it became "suddenly clear" to her that she was a socialist. "There had already long since been a preparation for this, and naturally big Karl from Trier had a part in it" (84). From all of this there "grew the 'political evening prayer' that we have been doing in Cologne since 1968; out of this there arose the European section of 'Christians for Socialism'" (88 f). **SÖLLE** later recounted how she "often became impatient when believers asked me 'Are you a Marxist?' The best reply that occurred to me was to ask 'Do you brush your teeth? I mean after the toothbrush was invented?' – How can we read [the prophets] Amos and Isaiah and not **MARX** and **ENGELS**? [...] Should we not use every analytical tool that makes the causes of injustice understandable and at the same time identifies the victims of injustice as the possible forces for change, and that breaks the spell for both, perpetrators as well as victims?" (95)

3. *Motives for remaining a Marxist.* – **LABRIOLA** recorded the experience of people turning away from bM during the “crisis of Marxism”, which appeared for the first time after **ENGELS’S** death: “Some people are leaving us, others are weakening along the path. We want to wish the former a good journey and give the latter a shot in the arm” (quoted from **LUXEMBURG**, GW 6, 265). He himself promised the boost for the wavering by making conscious what lies “behind all this hubbub”: “feverish, mercurial, hasty hopes that one harboured some years ago, these expectations with all too sharp details and contours” remain, in view of the difficulties, “stalled and derailed in mid-path” (264 f). He was convinced that in the then given situation the “assertion of the fundamentals” above all by **LUXEMBURG** against **BERNSTEIN** “is not a matter of doctrinaire obstinacy but the very life of the organism; that this organism is kept alive through these fundamentals that have become its flesh and blood; and that it defends through them its criteria, its basic principles, its mode of action, in one word its very existence” (263). However, if it is left here it remains an empty principle. “To bring *intellectual* time (that is, patience and the sense of observation) into harmony [...] with the *time of things*” requires the capacity to draw the “individual ability to think and act” even from “the most complicated barriers of economic relations” and “the most convoluted difficulties of the political world” (265). Seeking the reasons for remaining a Marxist one happens upon its “productivity”. It easily hides itself under the cloak of supposed “selflessness”, as indeed

the fate of the weak and oppressed is also a powerful motive for those not directly affected. The core of commitment to others is formed in its fusion with self-realization within the social materiality of time. Neither career nor an increase in ruling power can achieve this; where these two predominate as the driving motive bM is diluted and becomes a façade. What is decisive is the growth of one's own possibilities for development and "cultural" productivity in the mode of solidarization. On this depends the question of what relations of force are formed between the various and partly antagonistic driving forces within individuals. Because the "individual" is a "dividual", as BRECHT says "echoing NIETZSCHE and the ideas of quantum mechanics, and absorbing the psychology of Kurt LEWIN inspired by the latter"(HAUG 1996/2006, 19), "a multiplicity more or less rocked by struggle" (BRECHT, GA 22.2, 691). His/Her Self-Being is determined in a manifold and contradictory way. The productivity released by bM and experienced as a growth of capacity to act and think (SPINOZA'S *potentia agendi & cogitandi*) conditions which determinations prevail and perhaps also why in a concrete case neither the private-economic nor the restricted corporate "class interest" gains the upper hand – instead there is a kind of "working itself upwards" (*l'elaborazione superiore della struttura in superstruttura nella coscienza degli uomini*), viz. into the form of the general interest that is capable of hegemony (GRAMSCI, Quaderni, 10.II, §6, 1244 [SPN, 366]). The latter's political-ethical mooring is found in MARX'S chief work at the centre of the critique, for

MARX's critique of political economy is consistently worked out from the viewpoint of what is general or at least bears generalization. It is in particular labour that presses towards this generalization because individual labour time would be shortened through its real generalization and liberated from its antagonistic form. [...] In the VOS, NON VOBIS, which **MARX** quotes(31/119)from Vergil's *Epigrams* and which can be translated as "you labour, but not for yourselves", the NON indicates the rule of special interest. The negation of this negation is the positing of the general as the determinate negation" (**HAUG** 1972/2006, 257). Everything of general benefit is in this perspective experienced, to the extent possible, as released from the restraints of particular interests.

Thus for Wolf-Dieter **NARR** (b. 1937), what is "fascinating about wanting to behave as a Marxist [...], without hopeful rewards and positions", consists "in its human authenticity, indeed truth. That which one wants on the level of society, which one intensely and joyfully advocates, can be grounded downright categorically in humanity's history of suffering, in currently suffering people, and be practicable, in the most convincing way conceivable, in the sense of a practical epistemology. In this sense bM requires a materialist theory-practice commensurate with human beings, which demands the whole person, at the same time self-creating this person with a view to the transformative goal" (2014). Wolfgang Fritz **HAUG** (b. 1936) analogously experiences "the productive capacity" of bM: it "unleashes intellectual productivity and connects it at the same time to a diagnosis of

dangers and to a project that gives it meaning. This is a this-worldly connection that yet transcends the condition of the world" (2013a, 679).

3.1 What bM brought wage dependents at the end of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth is expressed by Eugène **POTTIER** in the line of the *Internationale* (1871): "Nous ne sommes rien, soyons tout" ("We have been nought, we shall be all!"). Fidel **CASTRO's** (b. 1926) revolutionary strategy was built on this potential: "Many people who were part of the masses might be anticommunist; beggars, hungry people, and the unemployed might be anticommunist. They did not know what communism or socialism was all about. However, I could see that the masses were suffering from poverty, injustice, humiliation and inequality. The people's suffering wasn't just material; it was moral, as well. [...] you feel constantly debased and humiliated as a human being, because you're treated like dirt, as if you don't exist, as if you are nothing" (**CASTRO/BETTO** 125).

What **CASTRO** says of the masses of people and his own role as one of the academically educated intellectuals in the run-up to the Cuban Revolution also applies mutatis mutandis to the class of wage workers. "Without the cooperation of the intelligentsia it is only with difficulty that [it] can free itself from the cultural influence of the petite bourgeoisie", Leszek **KOLAKOWSKI** (b. 1927) wrote, and he does not fail to add that, on its side, "the intelligentsia [...] cannot free itself of its intellectual dependency on capitalism without tying its life to the fate of the working class" (1967, 41).

For wage workers bM, where it is collectively absorbed, means the transformation of competitors into comrades and of individual powerlessness into class power. They experience themselves at the same time as being called to cooperate in self-socialization and, through historical-materialist answers, catapulted towards the fundamental questions of philosophy, as articulated by **KANT**, into the advanced consciousness of the epoch. The emphatic self-commitment to solidarity is expressed in the fact “that henceforth no one can be a socialist, unless he asks himself every minute: What is the proper thing to think, to say, to do, under the present circumstances, for the best interests of the proletariat?” (**LABRIOLA** 1897, *Socialism and Philosophy*, III, 41). – Reading **MARX**, could, it is true, “only be dealt with collectively [...] by the working class in their educational associations since 1860. [...] So, even politically interested people have to take laboriously small steps in order to understand something” (**EISLER/BUNGE** 106).

3.2 That the appropriation of **MARX'S** work can impart something decisive to bourgeois intellectuals, according to their class position, is attested to by no less than the British dramatist George Bernard **SHAW** (b. 1856). He described himself as “a nobody full of resentment and feelings of shame until he read *Das Kapital*. ‘Karl **MARX** made a man out of me’, he said” (quoted in Constenla 2013). – Two generations later, **ROSSANDA**, the Chief Editor of *Il Manifesto* who won international fame through her lead articles and commentaries

there, described herself as an initially “lacklustre girl” (2007, 54) before she read some writings of **MARX** (18.B, *Class Struggles*) and **LENIN** (SR) in an Italy suffering under fascism and a world war and was pulled out of her retreat “into the religion of culture [and] the personal” (1985/1994, 145 ff). These readings gave her “a consciousness that could tolerate no further deferment. I continuously established connections between words, silence, events that I had wilfully blindly bypassed. I read everything, some things several times. [...] My former unaffectedness was over, farewell to a sober, lukewarm future, commendable ambitions, farewell to innocence” (2007, 92). She describes her “being Communist” as “complex, rich, living; in some moments of encounter with my comrades it even made me happier than I had melodramatically depicted myself” (1985/1994, 148).

An analogous experience can be seen in the development of the Spaniard Alfonso **COMÍN** (b. 1933) who came to Marxist activism as “a child of the victorious Francoist bourgeoisie in the heyday of national Catholicism, though without losing my Christian belief” (1978, 244). Since “*communism was the only really effective force in the underground struggle and in the resistance*” (227) and the Liberals of **COMÍN**'s own background rejected anti-fascist resistance, he changed, as did many other “children of the victors of the Civil War [...] with their whole burden and with a new conception of Christian belief, to the side of the vanquished. They sought their connection to Marxism [...]. There they found

the *organized people*. And this people operated on a Marxist basis" (229).

Alongside its practical importance, **LUXEMBURG** emphasised the theoretical fecundity of **MARX'S** "materialist-dialectical conception of history". Far from being the basis of a closed orthodoxy it "only represented a *research method*, a couple of genial guiding ideas that permit a vista into a whole new world" (1903, GW 1/2, 364). To the high school student Carl Henrik ("CeHo") **HERMANSSON** (b. 1917), later chair of Sweden's Left Party (Communists), these basic ideas – with which he had become familiar through the work *Materialistisk historieuppfattning och klasskamp* (1908) of the linguist and left social democratic politician Ernst **WIGFORSS** (b. 1881) – gave him a feeling of happiness "at having found in Marxism a compass that would help me to find my way in the unjust and dangerous world of the 1930s" and "could explain" to him "how everything is connected and everything can be changed" (W. **SCHMIDT** 2005, 33). Developing his own thinking in order to help others to find their own way was a matter of meaning for his life.

BLOCH puts his experience with the use of Marxism in a nutshell: "If one is a philosopher, then in order to be a philosopher one has either to be Marxist or an ideologue of the ruling class, whether one wants to or not" (1975, 139). That this also holds for other disciplines has determined the road taken by the psychologist Klaus **HOLZKAMP**. The *Capital* readings initiated by the '68 movement led him to found Critical Psychology. "Then and there we were introduced

to cognitive processes through an encounter with *Capital* that were so transformative that they led to a restructuring not only of our psychological concepts but of our entire life practice. [...] A person who works the way through *Capital* changes in appropriating it or has not understood" (1976/2014, 204). **MARX'S** concept of "forms of thought which are socially valid, and therefore objective, for the relations of production belonging to this historically determined mode of social production, i.e., commodity production" (*C I*, Fowkes 1976, 169), provided **HOLZKAMP** with the insight that the inquiring subject, which "relates cognitively to social reality is already always a part of what is to be cognized" (1976/2014, 204). This grounds the critique of bourgeois psychology, which is "caught up in the objectivist illusion as if social reality is simply an external object confronting the scientist that he can apprehend from a 'standpoint outside of it' as if uninvolved" (205).

At the end of the 1930s the historian Eric **HOBBSBAWM** (b. 1917) read "enthusiastically due to its pedagogical simplification" the philosophical part of **STALIN'S** *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union / Bolsheviks – Short Course (DHMat)*. "It corresponded pretty much to what I, and perhaps most of the British intellectual reds of the 1930s, understood to be Marxism. We considered it 'scientific' in a sense rather more typical for the nineteenth

"However, this challenge to create anew, to open up sedimented Marxism, to help bring it into a changed reality, unavoidably leads to conflicts."

Wolfgang Fritz Haug

century" (2002, 96). What made Marxism so "irresistible" for him was its all-encompassing horizon. "Dialectical materialism, it is true, did not offer a 'theory of everything' but at least a 'framework of everything' in that it connected inorganic and organic nature to human affairs, collective and individual, and a guide to the nature of all interactions in a world in constant flux" (97).

Under the different circumstances of the post-war period there were different criteria. Leo **KOFLER** (b. 1907), who "after heated exchanges with the SED when he was a professor in Halle (actually as the first 'dissident'), left the GDR" (1988, 54) and went to the West, nonetheless remained a lifelong Marxist. Coming as he did from Austro-Marxism, he ascribes his attitude to "the excellent [...] theoretical and political education we young people got in 'Red Vienna'", and, as an objective reason, to the productivity of historical materialism "in thinking about the process of the dialectical transformation of manifold individual actions [...] into the objective social process" (ibid.) – What enabled the philosopher **HEISE** to carry out his work and be effective for others within the contradictions of bM in the GDR "in a convinced way, without intellectual self-betrayal" (**THIERSE** 1999, 12), was the way in which he used **MARX** – "incontestably the focus of **HEISE'S** thinking" – as an intersection "in which Enlightenment thought, western cultural and intellectual history and European social thought came together and united in a philosophical approach that as such made the dynamic of permanent self-criticism and its test by

means of praxis into the criterion of its legitimacy. From this perspective the only kind of philosophy possible for him was a critical one" (RESCHKE 1999, 13). Thus, Heise at the same time offers "an example of the richness, diversity, contradictoriness, and development of Marxist thinking in the GDR" (THIERSE 1999, 6). The theologian VEERKAMP was helped "by MARX and the new Marxism based on him [...] not only in better understanding history but also in reading ancient texts (the Bible, Greek texts) so that they became comprehensible to me and to others. And it still helps me today to see through capitalism, which determines our life" (2013). And, not least, it helped him as the pastor of the Protestant Student Community of Berlin's Technical University in being an indefatigable aid and source of inspiration regardless of the students' religious denomination. – If Adam SCHAFF (b. 1913) still remained a Marxist after the erosion and then collapse of Communist-dominated European state socialism, this was because he felt Marxist theory to be "the best theoretical basis for the thinking of the new left" (1997, 117).

3.3 For many creative artists, among them some of the most important of their generation, M opened up a relationship to reality in their works that helped their productivity on to historical effectivity. Amidst the horrors of his century the statement by the poet philosopher Bertolt BRECHT – "when I read *Capital* I understood my plays" (GW 15, 129; GA 21, 256) – registers this experience with his own political and aesthetic capacity to act and think. Brecht came to

Marxism “via a different route from that of his friends of the same age”, as the composer Hanns **EISLER**, born in the same year (1898) recounts (1986, 211), who himself became a Marxist as a result of his own “involvement with the organization of the ‘Socialist High School Pupils’ [...], where we read the easier texts by **MARX** and **ENGELS**”, and finally as a result of “the First World War” (**EISLER/BUNGE**, 183). **EISLER** remembers **LENIN**’s critique of empirio-criticism (published in 1922 in German) as “the first nourishment after which we started to read **MARX** anew”: “There we began to think differently. After the Great War, we had Social Democracy in our heads, or rather some sort of foggy utopianism” (127 f). **BRECHT**, by contrast, had “first taken the definitive step towards Marxism during the Great Economic Crisis of 1929” (**EISLER**, *ibid.*). Although **BRECHT**’s path led through **MARX**’s critique of capitalism, **EISLER** did not want to see **BRECHT** nailed down “to a man like **MARX**, who is mainly in people’s consciousness today because of economics [...]. Many people call themselves Marxists. To do so is meaningless today” in comparison to “the kind of correction of Marxism that **LENIN** made” (1986, 130). He overlooks that **BRECHT**, despite his closeness to **LENIN** the practical dialectician and revolutionary, had implicitly turned against his “neutral” conception of ideology and pursued **MARX**’s anti-ideological dialectics congenially as few others did and pulled back in horror from the “silting up and metaphysicization” of “generally accepted Marxism” (to Korsch, 23 January 1937, GA 29, 7).

“Having grown up in a state that seemed to him – in contrast to the western Federal Republic – to be the

‘other, better Germany’”, for the playwright Heiner MÜLLER (b. 1929), a generation after BRECHT, “the utopia of Marxism was the decisive motive of his life to which he tried to hold as long as possible, actually until his death in 1995. The fact that there were also disillusioning setbacks, that indeed this utopia receded to an ever greater distance in the course of the demise of the GDR and finally the so-called Wende of 1989/90, although it altered his subject matter, his style, and his directorial work, never led him – despite all bitterness – to become a repentant renegade and go over to the camp of the triumphant Wessis” (HERMAND 2015, 216).

For the sculptor Alfred HRDLICKA “ENGELS and LENIN [were...] very important, I also avidly read LUKÁCS and feel drawn to MARX’s polemical anger; nevertheless it is still an open question as to whether I am a Marxist and what moves me to declare myself a Marxist” (1978, 175). Like Heiner MÜLLER, he describes his relationship to bM as relationship to the material of his artistic existence – “questionable metamorphoses – into the CP, out of the CP, sympathizing with the revisionists, sympathizing with the Stalinists” (ibid.).

For the composer Hans Werner HENZE (b. 1926) there initially were “impulses to break out of the artistic isolation that is expected of artistic activity in our civilization” (1978, 169). To understand why art “has to be degraded to become entertainment and a hobby and, after this assessment, to be able at least to contemplate the possibility of alternatives” he felt was “only possible in the context of Marxist practice

and theory" (170), without however expecting the prescription of rules indicating "how one should paint, compose, or write poetry" (171). He describes his becoming a Marxist as a "road paved with learning difficulties, with hesitation, misgivings, spontaneous decisions, and moments of regression and reversal", spurred on by the desire for clarity "about the connections between the social misery of the masses in the Third World and the moral immiseration of individuals in the system of the technologically highly developed centres of capital" (169). BM gives artists the task "of understanding themselves in the contradictoriness of their difficulties, of embedding these difficulties in their work and in daily work, [...] to project their work onto the new reality and a new combativerealism and to prepare it, in its content, for this future. Marxism is struggle, future, a new idea of life" (172) .

The Italian painter Renato **GUTTUSO** [b. 1911] experienced his first political socialization in his native Bagheria, a village near Palermo, where anti-fascism and opposition to the Mafia had led to the formation of a Communist group. This was followed by the experiences of resistance and persecution. Italy's post-war reality compelled him and his comrades "to clarify the direction of our work" (1978, 166). After an initial idealist formation under **CROCE's** influence, "readings of the works of **GRAMSCI**, [Arnold] **HAUSER**, and **LUKÁCS** [...] opened up new levels of reflexion. For us, for me, the artist who only followed his own intuition made no more sense" (**GUTTUSO**, *ibid.*)

BM had special significance among architects and the

connected design professions. Here it was a question of attempts to make Marxism or bM become practical in the form of the objectual-spatial environment. A paradigmatic figure here is the Swiss architect Hannes MEYER [b. 1889] in whose constructions (among them the 1928-30 Trade Union School in Bernau near Berlin and the famous, though not built, design of the League of Nations Building in Geneva) Karel TEIGE saw “the high point of the development of modern architecture” (WINKO 2005, 22). In 1928 Walter GROPIUS pushed through his appointment to become his successor as Director of the Bauhaus, where MEYER came upon the contradiction “of a ‘cathedral of socialism’ in which a medieval cult was practiced” (1930/1980, 68), and by contrast pursued a “functional-collectivist-constructivist” orientation (to Gropius, 28 January 1927). Confronting the hostility of the right as a declared “scientific Marxist” (SCHNAIDT 1982, 258), and at the moment of the Great Economic Crisis and rise of the Nazi movement, he was dismissed in 1930. Together with seven students he accepted an offer from the SU, where he taught at the Moscow School of Architecture and Civil Engineering (WASI) but faced difficulties for his divergence during the intensifying Stalinist witch hunt and returned to Switzerland where he had no work opportunities until he was called to Mexico in 1939 to direct the newly founded Instituto de Urbanismo y Planificación.

4. *Theory and practice.* – The theories of MARX, ENGELS, and their followers could and can still “only become a ‘historically potent’ (or more

modestly: practically relevant) political force" to the extent that they are "received, translated, and recognized as, so to speak, 'emancipation theory' by large social and political movements" (DEPPE 1991, 27). This connection lifts Marxism above the level of a mere current of thought and requires of the Marxist individual to act in both areas – scientific theory and class struggle. The "unity of theory and practice" is thus among the fundamental requirements of bM through which it becomes filled with a series of contradictions. The experience that scientific theory and political (organized) practice do not fit seamlessly but in part follow different rules has accompanied Marxism from its very beginnings.

Even for MARX and ENGELS, where theory and practice, as the two poles of bM, seem embodied in the same person, the difference is felt. It flares up in a letter of Victor ADLER's (b. 1852), the founder of Austrian social democracy, in which he writes to ENGELS "how we in Austria all are connected to you and [...] steeped in that for which we have you to thank. In a sense more, or we could say, differently from MARX: politics and tactics. Application of the theory in corpore vivo" (21 January 180, III.30/169). MARX stands primarily for theory, ENGELS for practice.

In this approach the relation of theory and practice is disassembled into the relation between "theoretician and politician", whose identity, as LUKÁCS recorded it, "represents a quite extraordinary phenomenon". "The first labour movement certainly was lucky that MARX and after him ENGELS, and after him LENIN, were men who united in themselves the capacities of great

theoreticians and outstanding politicians. [...] Today nobody can say whether there will ever be another time in our movement in which the political leaders are at the same time also the personalities who lead the teaching of the movement. [...] Therefore we must [...] consciously concentrate our attention on the 'dualism' [of theory and practice] [in order] to call forth in the interest of the movement optional cooperation between the politicians and the theoreticians present in each party" (LUKÁCS, W 18, 378). From GRAMSCI we can learn that in LUKÁCS's presentation, from behind, a problem shift has taken place. Now, with him it is the tactical relationship between two leading departments of intellectuals which comes into focus and overlies the strategic problem of the relation between 'the simple participant' and the intellectuals, or between 'rank-and-file' and leadership, as well as the managing of the theory/practice contradiction in the bM of each individual.

4.1 In 1847 the *Manifesto* heralds bM – which would come into play a generation later – in the clothing of bourgeois "class betrayal", something that has misled people into overlooking a fundamental contradiction: "In times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour the process of dissolution going on [...] within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie,

so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole" (6/493 f).

Precisely that which functions here as the theoretical understanding "of the historical movement as a whole" contains the seed of a phenomenon that in the future was largely identified with "Marxism": Marxist theory abstracted from praxis anchored in a movement and its organization. That theory, taken *for itself*, contradicts itself, becomes scattered in this mistakenly self-evident fact.

This goes hand in hand with a second contradiction. Theoretical education as a condition brings into the bM of non-theoreticians a factor of alienness – incompetence mixed with subordination. According to **ENGELS** it is "the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, [...] and constantly to keep in mind that socialism, since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, that is, that it be studied" and "spread with increased zeal among the masses of workers" (1874, 23/631). Thus the labour movement feels 'insecure' in the face of theory, which is repeatedly visible as ambivalence and can grow into hostility to intellectuals accompanied by the opposite extreme of a cult of leaders. Respect and contempt for intellectuals, especially among the militant industrial workers, frequently go hand in hand.

In ambivalence from the opposite angle, the late **ENGELS** looked at "some younger writers" who

“unfortunately [...] all too frequently believe they have mastered a new theory and can do just what they like with it as soon as they have grasped – not always correctly – its main propositions” (to J. Bloch, 21-22 September 1890, 49/36). The occasion for this observation was what **LENIN** a good decade later, and then again two decades later **GRAMSCI**, were to criticize as the false road of economism, in which “more weight” is attributed “to the economic aspect than is its due” (ibid).

In so far as bM demands of individuals the utmost scientificity they are capable of, regardless of the fact that science is a foreign world for most of them, it contributes to the monopolistic concentration of theoretical-scientific competence in the top leadership of organizations and/or in the accredited authorities of the past. Reacting to this in 1934, Karl **KORSCH** (b. 1886) proclaimed the opposite extreme of “ruthlessly” putting to the test “of present-day practical utility” all “the elements contributed by **MARX** and the Marxists in more than 80 years making up the whole of a revolutionary theory and movement” (Korsch 61f). What distinguishes Marxist from Hegelian dialectics, he wrote, is that it “*subordinates all theoretical knowledge to the end of revolutionary action*” (70). But how then does this differ from what **LUKÁCS** criticized as the advent of “a manipulated direction” in the ML of **STALIN’S** period? (W 18, 349). Against Hans Heinz **HOLZ**, who wanted to recognize **STALIN**, “despite all of the alienating features” (ibid.) as a great theoretician, **LUKÁCS** insists “that the great leap that occurred between **LENIN** and **STALIN** consists precisely

in [...] the general theory being downgraded to become a garnish, a superstructure, an adornment”, a “supremacy of the tactical over the theoretical and the principled”, which sealed the downfall of both (349 f). How then is the right balance to be found in this contradiction?

4.2 There are, first of all, inherent, indeed constitutive reasons why bM requires the unity of theory and practice. “What counts in analysis”, **ALTHUSSER** wrote in 1985 in a reversal of what he had rescinded earlier as his “theoristic deviation” (*Self-Criticism*, 1970/1978), “is not theory – but (a materialist and Marxist basic principle) *praxis*” (*L’avenir*, 160). **SÈVE** was to agree with him in accentuating praxis but without the exclusive antagonism to theory: “This is the main difference between the Marxist and the Marxologist for whom

“It is not that you are a Marxist, you become one. And in reality one never reaches an end point with this becoming. For bM means not completing a prescribed programme but continuously inventing a position and a practice.”

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MARX’s work, however learned he may be in relation to it, nevertheless remains a *dead letter*. The chief characteristic of bM: it is not mere knowledge; it is what I call a historical form of individuality, a practical mode of life, as it is defined in the eleventh Feuerbach Thesis: ‘to change the world’ and in the same movement to change life” (2014).

Maurice **MERLEAU-PONTY** (b. 1908) sees the “profound

philosophical meaning of the notion of praxis is to place us in an order which is not that of knowledge but rather that of communication, exchange, and association" (1955/1973, 50). "In the communist sense, the Party is this communication; and such a conception of the Party is not a corollary of Marxism-it is its very center" (51). For **GRAMSCI** this occurs "through the collective organism through 'active and conscious co-participation', through 'compassionality', through a system which one could call 'living philology'" (*SPN* Nb 11, §25, 429). By contrast **SCHAFF** considers it "more correct to use the expression 'Marxist' to designate certain theoretical convictions and positions and to use other words to designate practical engagements, that, for instance, of a 'communist'" (1978, 237). **LUKÁCS** said, with somewhat of a shift of emphasis, that he was "completely aware that by distinguishing theory and practice in Marxism, I am no orthodox Marxist" (1965, W 18, 367). **MERLEAU-PONTY'S** argument is, on the other hand, that in making such a distinction "one makes another dogmatism" of something whose untruth is to be seen in the fact that in the end it always denies constitutive partisanship and thus the subjective and practical moment in bM. The Marxist conception of history is, in his view, due to the "development of partial views that a man situated in history, who tries to understand himself, has of his past and of his present. This conception remains hypothetical until it finds a unique guarantee in the existing proletariat and in its assent, which allows it to be valid as the law of being" (1955/1973, 51). **LUKÁCS**, on the other

hand, says of himself that he “first seeks answers to questions of objective historical research even if I also know that each answer is that of a historical subject”, and “in any case no doctrine could give a more creative and satisfactory answer to my questions than historical materialism” (W 18, 367).

The divergence of these two dimensions of bM, that can grow to be an antagonism, is understood by **SCHAFF** as the basis for “a truly dialectical relation as in a textbook example”, a dialectic that “unfortunately is mostly ignored” (1978, 231). This escalates because “both functions of Marxism, due to their relative autonomy, [...] are represented by two equally different groups [...]: by the theoreticians (the scientists) and the practical ideologues (the politicians)” – in (continually rarer) ideal cases both functions can coincide in the same person, but normally a division of labour prevails (ibid.).

LENIN embodied the unification of both functions in his person, but the manner of this personal combination ominously tore them apart. This was registered by Angelica **BALABANOFF** (b. 1869). Coming from a well-to-do Ukrainian Jewish family, she was “one of the great revolutionaries and polyglot orators of the early twentieth century” and with Alexandra **KOLLONTAI** and Nadezhda **KRUPSKAYA** one of the three “female faces of the Revolution and of the young Soviet power” (**SCHÜTRUMPF** 2013, 7). As an organizer of the Zimmerwald movement of internationalist socialists against the First World War, which was inspired by **ZETKIN**, and later Secretary of the new Communist International, and active in many other functions,

BALABANOFF was increasingly at odds with the “cynical dichotomy” (1959/1964, 143) between words and deeds of the Bolsheviks (1959/2013, 156). In 1921, after the crushing of the Kronstadt Rebellion and the change of course to the “state capitalism” of the New Economic Policy, she left the SU. In working closely with **LENIN**, she experienced how the caution he had exercised in applying his ill-considered “principle [...] ‘the end justifies the means’” (1959/1964, 102), which he endorsed “in both theory and practice”, gradually disappeared: “the means became the end” (1959/2013, 166 f). From her last conversation with **LENIN** (end of 1921/beginning of 1922), **BALABANOFF** had the impression that he “had to admit that he had contributed to the destruction of his work, of his hopes” (177). For her “the greatest and most dangerous misunderstanding” was the “identification with Marxism” of the “monstrous caricature of what **MARX** and **ENGELS** understood by communism” as a result of this “principled unprincipledness” (173).

4.3 *The intellectual factor of bM and the question of intellectuals in Marxism.* – One of history’s lessons is “that the nexus of science and politics can only exist as a relationship of tension and not as the direct translation of one into the other” (**LEISEWITZ/REUSCH** 1991, 23). Each area obeys different logics, and their communication is in each instance conditioned by the social division of labour. This is in turn overdetermined by diverse class positions. Consequently, this relation is very complex. In addition, discussion is in the hands of

intellectuals who normally do not have a Marxist conception of themselves that comprehends their tasks and limits and confers Marxist legitimacy on them. In the first three internationals as well as the Trotskyist one, the absence of a positive Marxist understanding of the status of their intellectuals is connected with the lack of a theory of leadership. The monster of the absolute leadership, flanked by anti-intellectualism, bureaucratism, and violence arises out of reason's slumber that fails to reflect this double absence. **GRAMSCI** was the first to fill this disastrous gap, and only years after his death has his work been received in successive waves. He points to the intellectual factor in all bM with the statement that destroys common-sense assumptions: "all men are intellectuals", followed by the conceptual bridge: "but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals" (Nb 12, §1; *SPN*, 9). It follows from this "that, although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist"(ibid.). "But the relationship between efforts of intellectual-cerebral elaboration and muscularnervous effort is not always the same, so that there are varying degrees of specific intellectual activity." (§3, ibid.)

According to the degree to which they become conscious, all social classes form their own intellectuals. **KOLAKOWSKI** highlighted the specific function of communist intellectuals in the 1960s, above all, with a view to the state socialist countries. They create the theoretical basis for the political movement and have constantly to accommodate

to the most recent state of science, so that theory “always [...] corresponds to the current situation. The intellectuals who create the theoretical bases for political action are therefore not merely ‘helpers’ of the labour movement but an indispensable condition of their existence” (1967, 40). Their “theoretical work, which is to scientifically ground the political action of the communist movement corresponding to the present moment, can only be a collective work of communist intellectuals” (45). In order to be able to fulfil this indispensable task “for the rebirth of the party” (46) they are required first of all to “take up the struggle for the secularisation of thinking, the struggle against a pseudo-Marxist mythology and bigotry” (45). In contrast to **GRAMSCI**, whom he neither names, nor probably yet knew in 1967, the concept of intellectual in **KOLAKOWSKI** retains the narrower meaning of a social stratum. Ten years later, after he rejected bM, he maintained that for **GRAMSCI** “‘intellectuals’ [meant] approximately the same as ‘intelligentsia’” (1979, 264) and in so doing used the code customary in ML. In the process, the intellectual factor understood by **GRAMSCI** as a point of departure in all bM dropped from sight. After his “conversion” in the 1970s **KOLAKOWSKI** claimed “that the unity of theory and practice, the unity of deeds and values is nothing other than the primacy of political engagement over intellectual values” (328), but this only describes the form rightly castigated by **LUKÁCS**. In fact, the affiliation to **MARX** requires of all those who claim it to develop their “intellectual” capacities and their political-ethical judgement. What is decisive for

bM is the emphasis on a theory-permeated analysis of reality in a practical-emancipatory perspective. By contrast, being-a-communist in its party sense, where it is not understood merely as a fundamental ethical stance, lays more stress on the organizational affiliation of the “comrade”. And the theory-practice question accordingly varies for these two forms. BM places the greatest emphasis on theoretical and emancipatory integrity, being-a-communist on effective means of organized praxis. For the historical self-estrangement of Marxism in the theory and practice of the party state and its ML, **MARX** was a disturbing factor and Marxism an occupied territory. Leo **LÖWENTHAL** could therefore object to those who reproached him and his co-thinkers of Critical Theory for having “completely cut themselves off from Marxism and lost sight of reality” by replying: “We had not abandoned praxis; rather, praxis had abandoned us” (1987, 61). In so doing he was alluding to the “great trauma represented by the developments in the Soviet Union and the Communist Party” (61) and that compelled them to keep their distance precisely because “the most crucial feature [of our thinking] was a reflection on the relation of theory and praxis” (62).

5. *The antinomy of bM.* – For **LUXEMBURG** the twentieth anniversary of **MARX’S** death was not only the occasion for praise but for reflection upon the fate of his theories in Marxism. In the same year her two articles appearing in Berlin’s *Vorwärts* in 1903 constitute what is probably the earliest reflection on

contradictions of bM. LUXEMBURG perceives these, on the one hand, in the “scrupulous endeavour” of many of MARX’ pupils “to keep their thinking ‘within the bounds of Marxism’” (GW 1/2, 364). On the other hand, she notes as a “premise” of “the historical transformation formulated by the Marxian theory” that it “becomes the form of consciousness of the working class and as such itself *an element* of history” (377). At the same time, however, the “needs” of the labour movement “do not suffice to evaluate Marx’s thinking”, which “as a scientific achievement represents a gigantic whole in itself” (368). LUXEMBURG calls this discrepancy the revenge “of the proletariat’s social conditions of existence that MARX revealed [...] on the destinies of MARX’S theory itself” (ibid.). The movement’s trailing behind in relation to MARX had at that time its basis in “revolutionary” “proletarian realpolitik” (374). In the latter the movement goes beyond MARX in terms of practice. Here LUXEMBURG touches on an unavoidable contradiction of all Marxism, though without yet getting to the theoretical heart of the matter. At this point MARX has been dead for twenty years, ENGELS for eight; not only have the “born” leaders of the movement disappeared but increasingly the concrete conditions that they had observed are disappearing. The movement has thus been thrown into the water of history and has to learn to swim. Authentic bM is characterized by “not being only inscribed in the struggles that are occurring but by being able to think them through critically and change them” (SÈVE). This state of affairs brought an antinomy into bM. *To be* here means *to become*,

and it only remains if it changes itself. To remain faithful to **MARX'S** fundamental impulse means to go beyond **MARX**. Even the most faithful translation of this impulse in changed circumstances abandons – or betrays? – the original.

5.1 How to avoid betrayal? The question this poses as to an authentic connection to the founders habitually appears on the scene in the character mask of “orthodoxy”. What lies behind this is fundamentally ambivalent – it can cripple just as well as stimulate. Gabriel **DEVILLE** (b. 1854), to whom we owe the first French summary of *Capital*, had a low opinion of orthodoxy, “since to be a Marxist, that is to think that **MARX** gave modern socialism its scientific basis, does not mean a bias towards inalterable formulas: the only concern has to be to adjust as accurately as possible to the changing realities after one has penetrated the meaning of these changes” (1897). In his case adjustment meant that seven years later he left the Socialist Party in favour of a career in the bourgeois state. Still, he was the first to have formulated a basic problem. Actually, it is not enough “*toward* to be a Marxist, one has also *to be able* to do so”, that is, have a competence that “correlates genetically with the conceptions of **MARX** and his successors” (**SCHAFF** 1978, 221). But how to do this if “the classics did not foresee the situations and the new problems” (220)? Then each question is always posed anew. There is nothing that one must believe; rather one “has the right to verify this heritage and if needed modify it or

even reject it as obsolete” (222). Here the question appears of what constitutes a core collection of theses whose abandonment would mean one could no longer call oneself a Marxist (223). Does orthodoxy thus become a criterion of bM? The question as to the timeless principle that guarantees identity, however, knows “no unequivocal answer” (225) and may, under the mask of loyalty, in itself be a betrayal.

The unavoidable tightrope walk on the narrow ridge of the dialectic of loyalty and betrayal – the need to go away from **MARX** in translating **MARX’S** project into each present circumstance – makes being a “Marxist” a precarious identity. Self-image and being seen by others come apart especially here. If the African philosopher Paulin **HOUNTONDI** (b. 1942) could say that one is “always the ‘Marxist’ for someone”, then the “converse occurs in Marxism: There one is always the ‘non-Marxist’ for someone. The ‘in’ in critical theorizing ‘in’ Marxism is a precarious ‘in’, continuously on the edge of expulsion” (**HAUG** 2013a, 682 f).

If it can be said of **BRECHT** and **BLOCH** “that ‘Marxism’, when someone of this kind appropriates it, already begins not to be the same Marxism” (**HAUG** 2012, 254), this does not only apply to the historically empowered among Marxists, such as **LENIN**, **MAO** or **GRAMSCI** and **MARIÁTEGUI**, but generally. Every change breaks a taboo that lies over bM. It occurs in the dark, literally fishes in troubled waters with its demand for clarity and coherence. It threatens to make its subject momentarily “lawless”. Dutiful critique and change, as even the programme of the SED still required of



its members, are grounds for exclusion particularly in phases of general insecurity. Thus the US sociologist Alvin W. GOULDNER (b. 1920) as a person reflecting on Marxism in a Marxist way experienced himself as an "outlaw Marxist" (CHRISS 1999). PETROVIĆ considered MARX "the main starting point (not the exclusive one) of my thought and life", because he appeared to him to be "the most significant one [...] for the whole contemporary world" (1978, 210). 'Starting point' indicated something that could not be held on to unchanged; instead one had "to think in the spirit of MARX about the fundamental problems of the world" and at the same time inquire "into the not yet realized possibilities of Marxian thought" (1971, 9f). In this sense, the Marx from which PETROVIĆ started could not remain "identical with the factual MARX" (1978, 207), just as PETROVIĆ himself "was not always a Marxist in the same sense" (195). Aside from the struggles for power, markets, or influence that lurk everywhere, the ultimate explanation is found in the structural dialectic of the twofold transgression that underlies bM: To be able to struggle against capitalism, which permanently revolutionizes all relations, every established Marxism must be periodically transgressed in favour of a theory-practice conception that keeps its eyes trained on the conditions. All bM must prove itself in this dialectic. Always in danger of transforming its subject into the ludicrous form of the 'one-man party' or into the plague of a 'sect', the success of such creative translations into the present, in the form of the massive appropriation of what it has brought forth, is a "'philosophical' event

far more important and 'original' than the discovery by some philosophical 'genius' of a truth which remains the property of small groups of intellectuals" (GRAMSCI, Nb 11, §12, Note IV; *SPN*, 325).

If one does not succeed in remaining faithful to the founding impulses while changing their implementation and translating them into ever new conditions the inevitable effort will be tabooed. "It is therefore harmful to determine the boundaries a priori within which a discussion is permissible, for this carries with it the danger of making the words 'Marxism' and 'Marxist' into tools of blackmail and of substituting scientific polemic with administrative pressure" (KOLAKOWSKI 1967, 47). This pressure exploits the suspicion of revisionism. Thus SCHAFF found the meaning of the question of what bM means defined by the "complementary question" of "what it means to be a revisionist" (1978, 219). In contrast to what was still the case with LUXEMBURG, this category in the epoch of Stalinist-shaped ML in power no longer designated the abandonment of the emancipatory basic impulses and with them the goal criteria but could mean everything that contradicted a leadership or its ideological guardians. Serious bM became grounds for exclusion.

HAVEMANN countered this by turning the condemning word around and presented MARX as a "revisionist par excellence". "To be a scientist in MARX'S sense one has to always be prepared for revisionism. 'De omnibus dubitandum est' (everything must be doubted) was MARX'S scientific credo. It goes without saying that even all theories and ideas that come

from **MARX** are among the things that not only may be subject to doubt but must be continually doubted if Marxism is to remain alive and to become the generally recognized basis of the science of human society. And that it will become this, indeed thanks precisely to the work of its revisionists, of this I am firmly convinced. I am ready to be seen as a Marxist in this sense" (**HAVEMANN** 1978b, 33). The Stalinist turn away from the emancipatory core of the founding impulses put the "necessity of a 'reformation' of Marxism" (**ALBERS** 1983/1987, 47/34) on the historical agenda. The too belated attempt at a reformation of actually existing socialism under **GORBACHEV** proved its incapacity for reform and led to its downfall.

5.2 That **MARX'S** theory and concrete-political Marxism do not form a seamless unity is already attested in the last years of **MARX'S** life and then the "early years of Marxism" documented in **KAUTSKY'S** correspondence with **ENGELS**. After **ENGELS'S** death, **LUXEMBURG** was the first, in 1903, to attempt a historical materialist explanation of the substantial non-identity of **MARX** and Marxism: What is "most valuable" in **MARX'S** teachings lies largely "unused" because not meeting momentary needs of the labour movement and its socialist parties (GW 1/2, 364). What she still did not see at that time she experienced ten years later: The contributions of Marxists that would be most useful for the possible actualization of Marxism run the risk of being attacked for their distance from the original wording of this doctrine due to their actualizing its meaning. The reception of

LUXEMBURG'S chief work, *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913), the most significant continuation of **MARX'S** critique of political economy, offers a prominent example. She had dared to think for herself and, with all due respect, to criticize **MARX** and supplement his drafts on reproduction by taking into account non-capitalist demand with the thesis that the "so-called primitive accumulation", which **MARX** appears to treat in *C I* as a completed prehistory of capitalism (35/704-751) in reality accompanies capitalism along its entire lifespan. In her 1915 *Anti-Critique* **LUXEMBURG** says that in writing her book "a thought depressed me from time to time: all followers of Marxist doctrine would declare that the things I was trying to show and carefully substantiate were self-evident" (**LUXEMBURG/BUKHARIN** 47). To her surprise what happened was quite different. Her book, "purely theoretical and strictly objective, and directed against no living Marxist", became the object "of a high-handed action by the authorities"; a fate that "until now had never happened to any other party publication in all of its history" (48).

Fritz **STERNBERG** (b. 1895) considered **LUXEMBURG'S** Marx criticism excessive, since "every stone of **MARX'S** structure is determined by the realities of non-capitalist space"; "however, as much as the findings of this book contradict certain formulations of the *historical* **MARX**, it believes itself to be authentic Marxism, since it intends to give no less than the systematic inclusion of facts, neglected by **MARX** in the analysis of the capitalist process, their systematic inclusion through Marxist method" (1926, 8). Meanwhile, for **STERNBERG**

LUXEMBURG'S approach was also a model: "you will find not a word of literal philology here. For my part, I wish for the living MARX, the MARX in which the creative fire was so great, that he would have no hesitation in confessing mistakes" (ibid.).

What LUXEMBURG could not know was the beginning of BERNSTEIN'S "Afterword" to the new 1921 edition of his *Voraussetzungen*: "Seldom has the reception of the writings of an author surprised him in the way [...] as that of the current work has done" (259). He had, he wrote, anticipated contradiction but not that his book would "call forth a storm of indignation against me and [...] would be showered with all kind of adulation [...] in the bourgeois press". He had "early on been accustomed [...] to view debate with party comrades as the internal affairs of social democracy", which interested "enemy organs" at most marginally (ibid.).

BERNSTEIN stresses the "great influence tradition has on the evaluation of facts and ideas" (1899/1993, 189). "There is always a lapse of time before people recognise that tradition is so far distant from the actual facts that they are prepared to discard it. Until this happens [...] tradition is normally the most powerful means of uniting those not otherwise bound together by any strong and continuous interest or external pressure. Hence the intuitive preference which all men of action have for tradition, however revolutionary their objectives may be" (ibid.). Critique is "almost always destructive. When, therefore, the time comes to take important action, even criticism fully justified by the facts can be wrong and therefore reprehensible" (ibid.). That which is expressed here as

the distance between the “living” and the “historical **MARX**” touches the contradictory core of bM. In the fact that the advancement of history requires transgression of Marx and, even more, the revision of previous Marxism, Otto **BAUER** saw the origins of Austro-Marxism: “In the old Austria, shattered as it was by the struggles of nationalities” Marxists had to learn “to apply the Marxist conception of history to complicated phenomena that mocked any superficial, schematic application of **MARX’S** method” (*Autromarxismus*, 1927, WA 8, 11 f; see Hindels 1979, 13). For **TROTSKY** this gave rise to a “type of person which contrasted with the type of the revolutionary” (cited according to Leser 1968, 180, fn. 3). But this type too changes itself in the historical process. When **BAUER** returned from Russian war captivity to Vienna, Victor **ADLER** wrote to **KAUTSKY** that **BAUER** is “still a bit too Bolshevik” and needs to “first accommodate again to the old milieu” (14 November 1917, *Briefwechsel*, 646).

5.3 *Bourgeois persecution of Marxists.* – That bM is met with hostility from the capitalist side cannot be surprising as at its core it seeks to end “private ownership of the means of production” (**LEFEBVRE** 1959, 685), that is, to transcend the basis of bourgeois class rule. **LABRIOLA**, a distinguished professor of philosophy in Italy in the 1880s and 90s, was one of the first to report what he got himself into: When in 1886 he “for the first time” dealt with “the teachings of socialism from his Chair at the Royal University” it went “almost unnoticed”. In 1889, however, after he

appeared before the public with “speeches against **CRISPI**, against **BISMARCK**, and against the beloved German emperor, [...] and lectured on the French Revolution in oratorical style before a large audience [...] the students [...] came in droves to the University to boo me. My lectures were suspended for two months; and now I have returned to using a dry academic tone. My large audience has disappeared as well as my sweet dream of winning over the academic youth to the interests of the proletariat” (to **ENGELS**, III.30/232). Countless stories of this sort, many of them worse, followed this pilot experience in almost all countries. In Switzerland the communist art historian Konrad **FARNER** (b. 1903) was ostracized, and he and his family received threats, for his criticism of Cold War policies; he was barred from an academic career until a sociology of art lectureship was conferred on him shortly before his death thanks to student pressure. Still in 1968, theologians who had inaugurated the ecumenical “Political Evening Prayer” in Cologne had similar experiences. “The emerging proximity to socialism [...] naturally had consequences. [...] Neighbours stopped greeting us, conversations were broken off, friendships dissolved, business relationships receded. [...] There was repression. In our case the institutions were the two major churches, which were remarkably unanimous in their reaction: space was refused, there were false newspaper reports, verbal smear campaigns, pressure exerted on the mass media, transfers or non-appointments of young pastors” (**SÖLLE** 1995, 85). Only a small minority of Marxists, it is true, historically had an experience

such as the communists Hans COPPI (b. 1916), Hilde COPPI (b. 1909), and Arvid HARNACK (b. 1901) and the other members of the resistance group Red Orchestra suffered under German fascism “as the nakedest, most shameless, most oppressive, and most treacherous form of capitalism” (BRECHT, *Five Difficulties*, 1934 (1966), 137), and who “from their lofty goals were thrown into the deepest humiliation”, as Peter WEISS has it in *Ästhetik des Widerstands* (1983, vol. 3, 218), and bestially executed; however, Marxists of all generations have had to pay in one or another form for their resistance to the dominion of capital. When the Belgian Marxist Ernest MANDEL, born 1923 in Frankfurt am Main and later deported and interned by the Nazi state, was called to take a professorship in 1972 at the Free University of Berlin the West Berlin Senate refused the appointment, and the federal government imposed an entry ban. This and much worse fates have been met by critical-creative minds in all periods. “To think on one’s own feet always meant a cross to bear both inside and outside the communist parties” (FERNÁNDEZ BUEY 2010, XXXIV).

5.4 This potential for conflict became particularly aggravated when the post-’68 wave of the Second Women’s Movement reached the trade unions, churches, and organizations and institutions considering themselves to be Marxist. Wherever the women claimed their “half of heaven” or even altogether different gender relations in theory and organized practice there were either expulsions or splits, as in a series of European CPs, trade unions,

and some periodicals (for example, in *New Left Review*).

That there was a cross to bear even within the undogmatic Marxism of SDS at the time of the student movement was discovered by the Marxist-feminist women's movement that arose in its midst. In a SDS delegates conference the drama was played out in a spectacular way. The trigger was the reaction to a talk given by Helke SANDER (b 1937) there on 13 September 1968 on behalf of the Action Committee for Women's Liberation. Her assertion that women are a class was drowned by laughter from the delegates who had no idea that this idea came from MARX and ENGELS (see *GI*, 5/46). When things continued after this as if nothing had happened a then very pregnant Sigrid RÜGER threw tomatoes, which due to her circumstances she had with her along with other fresh vitamin-rich fruit at leading SDSers. SANDER remonstrated the SDS that its protest did not go deep enough as long as it omitted everyday life and the personal. Women therefore had to take action "because we are historically in the right [...]. We want to try to develop models of a utopian society already within the existing society" (quoted from Lenz 2008, 62 f).

The feminist adult education in Marxism is a protracted process. After a visit to Karl MARX'S grave Dorothee SÖLLE (1983, 122) versified: "and lest I have for a time forgotten my being-a-woman/in order to be a good socialist/I bring it out again/and bring it in/[...]/if we learn to think what is womanly/your ideas will we all/have to expand like skirts/because we ceaselessly/are in other circumstances".

5.5 *Socialist persecution of Marxists.* – From their own quarter, too, Marxists have not been safe from condemnation and persecution. Under “liberal” bourgeois conditions, alongside the gatekeepers who block all paths there are also the closed ears of the addressees if one acts with Heinz **JUNG** (b. 1935) according to the motto that one “can only be a communist or Marxist if one goes against the crowd and struggles to change their opinion” (1990/2006, 14). If it is a collective motto it can be that of an organization in danger of becoming a sect; when adopted individually it can for ‘independently thinking’ Marxists mean a twofold alienation: As Marxists they are alien in capitalist society, as autonomous intellectuals they are alien among Marxists. In the bourgeois environment they are suspect because of their engagement, and to their own comrades because of their autonomy. So it was with **GRAMSCI** in fascist imprisonment as he requested to no longer participate in collective fresh-air walks in the prison yard because he, the leader of the PCI, had to fear the aggression of his comrades due to his criticism of Comintern policy. The persecution of Marxists is analogous to that of communists, in which communists can be persecuted and persecutors. Fritz J. **RADDATZ** (b. 1931) says of the authors of his collective volume on the question *Why I am a Marxist*: “most of them [...] have at some point in their lives been threatened, jailed, deported, or exiled”; they share “a life against the times, against the acceptance of what exists, even if what exists is called socialism” (1978, 8). Particularly in the course of the Stalinization of the SU and the Comintern

parties “Marxism was (as were the more lively Marxists) the first victim of this process”, as **MANDEL** put on the record (in Mandel/Agnoli 1980, 41). As so many others who were entranced by the October Revolution, **GRAMSCI** in November 1917 praised the free way in which **LENIN** dealt with the difference between the historical **MARX** and the **MARX** who has a continuing effect in the present: “if the Bolsheviks reject some of the statements in Capital, they do not reject its invigorating, immanent thought. These people are not ‘Marxists’, that is all; they have not used the works of the Master to compile a rigid doctrine of dogmatic utterances never to be questioned. They live according to Marxist thought that never dies” (2000, 33; transl. corr.). Here “not being ‘Marxists’” exactly characterizes the Marxism actualized through Russia’s concrete situation. But on the other hand, what **GRAMSCI** praises contains the germ that brought death to Marxist thinking (and the majority of **LENIN’S** comrades) under **STALIN**. The contradiction between Marxism in the process of becoming and Marxism already historically objectified grows into an antagonism where, as in ML, a historically specific form is

“The ‘unity of theory and practice’ is thus among the fundamental requirements of bM through which it becomes filled with a series of contradictions. The experience that scientific theory and political (organized) practice do not fit seamlessly but in part follow different rules has accompanied Marxism from its very beginnings.”

Wolfgang Fritz Haug

institutionalized with a state party. In its organized form bM becomes an ordeal for individuals to the degree to which the organization and its leadership set out to tactically misuse theory. The appropriation and subjugation of Marxism by a power apparatus, “its reduction to the role of a conventional apologetic adornment that only has its place in the façade of society, ensures that instead of becoming the blood of intellectual life it turns into a poison for it”, as **KOLAKOWSKI** (1967, 52) says, echoing **LUKÁCS**. “The attitude toward **LENIN** as a revolutionary leader gave way to an attitude like that toward the head of an ecclesiastical hierarchy”, wrote **TROTSKY** (1929/1930, 404). It was seen thus in the SU from where it more or less spread to all state socialist countries. Once caught in the state-party-ideology trap, it is precisely the individuals who are politically-theoretically productive who pay for this with solitude in the collective identification that animates them. For one is and is not a Marxist alone. This effect cost the communist organizations their collective intellect. **BRECHT** tells it in this way: “But the associations [the CPs] outside Su declined. The members did not choose their secretaries, the secretaries chose the members. The slogans were decreed by Su and Su paid for the secretaries. [...] Soon they were no longer the best, merely the most compliant. Some good ones stayed the whole time because, if they had left, they would not have been able to speak with the members but, staying, they could only tell them what they thought was wrong. As a result they also lost the trust of the members and their own as well” (*Me-ti*,

145). The moral of this story is “merciless: whoever is no longer listened to at the end has no more to say” (HAUG 1968, 4).

Thus the poison had effect also outside the state socialist camp. Even in the Italian CP that invoked GRAMSCI there was a “hubristic know-it-all attitude in the face of everyone who did not share our concepts or did not follow the ‘party line’. ZHDANOV called it *partinost*: canonical. And *partinost* did not mean mere loyalty; it meant the ‘historical necessity’ of thinking like the leadership, which in turn was required to think like the leadership of the USSR” (ROSSANDA 1982, 14). The precondition for the Stalinist hyper-ideologization of ML was its canonization. If LENIN were to have been able to pursue the project of publishing his critique of empirio-criticism “under the title ‘Observations of a Simple Marxist on Philosophy’” (to Gorki, 25 February 1908, Briefe II, 141), this self-description would have become mortally dangerous seven years after his death. Mark Borisovich MITIN (b. 1901), STALIN’S philosophical assistant who remained in an influential position until his death (1987) initiated the expulsion of the MEGA editor David B. RYAZANOV thus: “Since the ‘famous’ words ‘I am not a Bolshevik, I am not a Menshevik, I am not a Leninist. I am only a Marxist, and as a Marxist I am a communist’, come from him one only wonders if Ryazanov still considers himself today to be an ‘only-Marxist’, a communist – but not Bolshevik, a communist – but not Leninist?” (MITIN 1931/1969, 338). With that said, the verdict was already pronounced: “As we now see, RYAZANOV has translated this formula into practice. The most

recent events have proven that he has sunk to the point of direct aid given to the counter-revolutionary Menshevik organization, for which reason he has been expelled from the party" (ibid.).

Karl **SCHMÜCKLE** (b. 1898) involuntarily participated in the forging of this weapon: "What these social democratic gentlemen, the 'interpreters' of the young Karl **MARX** strikingly but unintentionally demonstrate with this wild 'theoretical' struggle against Marxism, against Communism, against Leninism, is, among other things, the fact that in our time one can no longer be a Marxist without being a Leninist" (1933/2014, 151). However, the power to define who was a Leninist had been transferred to the power apparatus, which culminated in **STALIN**, and **SCHMÜCKLE** statement immediately turned its lethal double meaning against its author who was murdered in 1938 – three months after **RYAZANOV**.

The communist poet Peter **WEISS** (b. 1916) lent literary expression to the reflection on the hellish low point of 20th-century 'state-owned' communism in his *Ästhetik des Widerstand* through the example of the predicament of communist resistance fighters: He has them ponder whether their enemies sat not only in Berlin, in the Gestapo, but also in Moscow, among their comrades. "In the form of this power struggle, this scheming infighting, **WEISS** shows the enemy in one's own communist ranks. He shows the framers of heretics at work, the extinguishing of the historical contribution of the defeated rivals. He shows the eliminators and shows how they were soon eliminated themselves" (**HAUG** 1981, 37). Osip

PIATNITSKY (b. 1882), for example, declared in 1931, in the name of the ECCI, that **LUKÁCS** was “in his philosophical conceptions not a Marxist” (quoted according to Rokitjanskij 2001, 16). **LUKÁCS**, who was excommunicated from Marxism, narrowly managed to outlive the “Great Purge”. **PIATNITSKY** himself was executed in 1938.

5.6 *After de-Stalinization within state socialism.* – In the GDR – and here particularly after **STALIN’S** death and the cautious new beginning under Nikita **KHRUSHCHEV** (1956) – the state-ideological structure remained, even if sanctions were no longer immediately life-threatening. **BLOCH**, the most significant Marxist philosopher of the GDR, and altogether one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century worldwide, was forced to emigrate to the West in 1961. He found himself “driven into isolation, had no possibilities to teach, contact with his students was interrupted, [...] public media presence was forbidden”, as an attempt “to bury [him] in silence”; the closing of the borders through the construction of the Wall made it completely “clear [to him] that there was no more room for independent thinkers to exert any influence”, he wrote to the President of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR (August 1961). His great impact in questions of the ethical-philosophical substance of bM became fatal for him.

The case of the chemist Robert **HAVEMANN** is similarly significant. In post-war East Berlin he was “from the start involved in creating a new, better, socialist

university"; later, too, when his criticism of the policies of his party "became sharper", "all my efforts went towards positively influencing and carrying on the politics of the GDR, in order to pull them out of their dead end" (1978a, 11). With Kurt HAGER (b. 1912), the leader of the Scientific Department of the CC of the SED Politburo, HAVEMANN spoke of "the corrupted and superficial form of dialectical materialism that was represented in the university" (ibid.). The "cadre philosophers" which he held responsible for this became his enemies. The success of his course on philosophy and natural sciences led to disastrous consequences for him. In time his course developed from a marginal event with few students to a mass event in which he as a committed Communist and former resistance fighter uninhibitedly spoke out not only on questions of the natural sciences and the principles of ML but also on the problems of the GDR. Here Marxism could be experienced as something living and concrete. To say it with GRAMSCI, here an autonomous space of civil society arose for a discussion fundamentally affirming the GDR but which critically examined its condition and the policy of its leadership. As a result HAVEMANN was finally expelled from the SED under all sorts of pretexts with the votes "of all members of the party leadership with one exception, namely Professor Wolfgang HEISE" and was soon also condemned to house arrest and subjected to a communication ban (18).

Nevertheless, in the GDR, alongside the official party Marxism with the mere façade of lip-service Marxism, decreed and cultivated as it was via schools,

the FDJ, trade unions, and above all the party, as a precondition for career opportunities, and alongside the more or less dissident critical Marxists in the GDR, there was also some room for a primarily scholarly bM, as long as collisions with the state and party were avoided but also because its practitioners did share the broader consensus in the society. This could be the result of an obligatory retreat after a failed attempt at engagement as in the case of the historian Walter **MARKOV** (b. 1909) or of the jurist Hermann **KLENNER** (b. 1926); or it could simply be due to the professional work of scholars and artists who after initial resistance nevertheless caught fire through their intellectual involvement with the works of the “classics” forced on them by schools and the state environment, and in whom hopes of a democratization of socialism had been raised by the 20th Party Congress (1956) of the CPSU. Examples are the theatre director Adolf **DRESEN** (b. 1935) or the historian Wolfgang **KÜTTLER** (b. 1936). **DRESEN**, who joined the SED in 1956, accused **MARX** “of failing to recognize the role of competition” in an (only posthumously published) fundamental criticism of his economic theory (1976/2012, 89). Under conditions of a living Marxism, **DRESEN’S** critique, which was sparked by the state planned economy, would have flowed into the further development of Marxism. In 1976 he was expelled from the party group of the Deutsches Theater – only his own vote was opposed. “Since what he knew as Marxism excluded criticism, his criticism closed itself off to [...] any other Marxist form or even refoundation” (**HAUG** 2013b, 79). **KÜTTLER**, by contrast, already in

his study years came upon fruitful historiographical and methodological stimuli in the works of **MARX**, **ENGELS**, and **LENIN**. In the milieu of the historian Ernst **ENGELBERG** (b. 1909), who authored a standard work on **BISMARCK**, he could develop his studies on historical method, the history of science, formation theory, and Max **WEBER** according to scholarly procedure largely unperturbed. For people like him, the second part of the eleventh thesis on Feuerbach, that the point is “to change the world” referred “in the first place to ‘state-party socialism’ itself and only after 1989 to the directly experienced capitalism” (**KÜTTLER** 2014). In their approach to the antinomy of bM in state socialism the roads taken by Wolf **BIERMANN** and his teacher **HEISE** differed. Neither of them shrank back from necessary criticism of the GDR’s leadership. But while **BIERMANN** did this “aggressively and sought conflict”, what was important for **HEISE**, as also for Helmut **SEIDEL** and Lothar **KÜHNE** was “to have the long breath for changes in the country and the party and to be effective in bringing these about (through their thinking, writings, and above all teaching)” (**TREBESS** 2014). For instance in the GDR’s institutionalized ML **HEISE** lived the “simultaneous-non-simultaneous existence of criticism and orthodoxy” (**RESCHKE** 1999, 17), “orthodox” but not in the sense of ML but of **LUXEMBURG**, that is, of the forward-thinking affiliation to **MARX**. **SEIDEL** acted in exactly the same way in his 1966 habilitation dissertation, which, significantly, could only be published after the collapse of the GDR but then no longer in a historically effective way (2011).

Long after the demise of the GDR Hans Heinz **HOLZ** the bM of his dissertation supervisor **BLOCH**, who had been forced into silence there, somewhere between two poles: "Of course it is [...] not a matter of simply pigeon-holing Bloch as a Marxist; but it is equally impossible to classify him simply as a non-Marxist philosopher" (2010). On the other hand, **SCHAFF'S** experience was "curious: In Marxist circles I was frequently seen as 'heterodox' (revisionist); on the other hand, in non-Marxist circles I was taken for an orthodox Marxist" (1997, 96).

Not a few creative Marxists who had to suffer what Helmut **STEINER** analyzed as the kind of "Marxism expropriation" – anchored in the state-socialist power structure – finally turned away from Marxism. In Poland it was **KOLAKOWSKI** who had long worked for a "reconstruction of a Marxism adequate to our epoch, the epoch of the atom bomb, of imperialism in its current phase, of today's bourgeois culture and the existence of a camp of non-capitalist states"; in this he saw a task "whose solution" could "decisively influence the future of communism" (1967, 71).

In the 1960s he had analyzed the conversion mechanism to which he now gave in: "The dissidents of Stalinist communism easily became renegades since there was no significant force that could have kept their critique within the framework of socialist thought" (ibid.). The consequence was "that every criticism was forced into the standpoint of the real counter-revolution and taken over by the forces of obscurantism and clericalism, which wanted to restore capitalism" (73).

This was the case with **BIERMANN**, who was not locked in, that is, jailed, but locked out of the country by the GDR leadership, which contrasted with the approach of his friends **HAVEMANN** and especially **HEISE**, whose criticism of his attitude leading to a total break, indeed to a sheer hatred of all Marxism, **BIERMANN** retained as an inner voice; at his acceptance of an honorary doctorate, which he turned into a tribute to his teacher **HEISE**, who had died in 1987, he openly expressed this inner voice and so for a moment granted it authority(2008, 36 ff).

6. *Living in concrete utopia.* – On 16 September 1947, in a Russian prisoner-of-war camp, the then still anti-Marxist **GOLLWITZER** for the first time heard the phrase: “You have to see it dialectically!” He heard it from a young Russian – whom he

“The chief characteristic of bM: it is not mere knowledge; it is what I call a historical form of individuality, a practical mode of life, as it is defined in the eleventh Feuerbach Thesis: ‘to change the world’ and in the same movement to change life.”

Louis Althusser

described as an “honourable” Communist-Marxist – when he confronted him with the dark side of Stalinism.

GOLLWITZER comments in his diary: “This ‘seeing things dialectically’ helps them over any challenge that reality presents them with; it is the cushion that pads them from disillusioning blows” through a “marvellous capacity to live in the future and jump over the present” (1951/1974, 11 f). This living beyond time has

little to do with dialectics in the theoretical sense but it does have to do – mostly unconsciously – with that passive dialectic of the “living and lived contradictions” of bM whose making conscious **LEFEBVRE** assigned to Marxists (1959, 683). Not thinking this dialectic but instead depicting “the actual reality of communists in the mode of being and of an ontological participation in the future” (684) let time and again “the claimed exceptional quality become its opposite: discipline became weakness of will, freedom became dogmatism, and devotion careerism” (685). Against this fatal mechanism working behind the backs of those involved, **LEFEBVRE** reminds us “that the dialectic shatters everything that is absolute, everything that is unconditional, and that this is its *principle*. Only truth – which itself is always relative – has an ‘unconditional’ and absolute right” (685). Everything having to do with politics, state, and party must “be freshly relativized and ‘de-absolutized’”; communism was defined [by **MARX**] as in movement – not in ‘being’ – and as movement towards a distinct goal [...]: the end of the private ownership of the means of production” (ibid.). What does this Being towards a not-yet-being mean for bM?

6.1 BM, when referring to **MARX**, has its negative point of departure – or, in **LUKÁCS**’s language: its *terminus a quo* (1958, 28 and in other places) – in the struggle against oppression and exploitation. However, if the negation of such relations, indeed

if all Marxist critique, is not to turn into pseudo-revolutionary nihilism but rather become 'determinate negation' in the sense of a higher synthesis, then it has to be anchored in a *terminus ad quem*. In the succession to Marx this cannot be other than social relations in accordance with self-determination, solidarity, human dignity, and "the social guarantees of life" (LUXEMBURG, GW 4, 361, fn. 1) on the basis of a mode of production committed to these goals for all people. BLOCH brings the poles of repulsion and attraction into the image of a "cold stream" vs. a "warm stream" (PH, 205 f). The facing-towards-a-goal [Zielzugewandtheit] of BLOCH'S warm stream means that bM is anchored in a "Not-Yet Being" (ibid.). Striving beyond the factual given towards a not yet given is a general factor of being human. In bM it relates to the social relations as a whole. It shifts individuals into an "emancipatory target horizon", which Alfred SCHMIDT (b. 1931) characterizes as "de-domination", "de-reification", transcendence of alienation, "reharmonization of the people-nature relation", "implementation and cultivation of a culture of values and education that is in itself pluralist and humanist" (1971, 180 f). For critical theory this means analyzing "the existing condition from the perspective of its future mastery through solidary, acting individuals" (132, fn. 321). If bM thus derives its meaning from a goal whose achievability is uncertain then the transition "from utopia to science" (ENGELS) would seem to have been proclaimed prematurely. Alternatively, one might understand that blueprints from the nineteenth

century “have overtaken the twentieth century from the very start so that now they are, as the future in the past, waiting for the people of the 21st century” (HAUG 1999/2005, 123). Since, however, “no one has contributed so much and so far-reachingly to this kind of utopian transcendence of the given as Karl MARX [has] [...], the case of science and utopia in MARX has to be reopened” (ibid.).

6.2 BERNSTEIN was the first Marxist to have – in a Marxist sense – reopened this case and to have diagnosed “an actual survival of utopianism in Marx’s system” (*Preconditions*, 1899, 199; see 1921, 244). He saw MARX’S work streaked with a “dualism” of, on the one hand “being a scientific investigation and yet” wanting to “prove a finished thesis long before its conceptualization”. He believed he could read this from MARX’S having, in *Capital*, come back to the *Manifesto* (ibid.) – “that is, to the ultimate socialist goal!”, LUXEMBURG interjects here, and connects this to her observation that for BERNSTEIN “socialism has become only a ‘relict of utopianism’” (GW 1/1, 416). LUXEMBURG’S answer to the direct separation of reform and revolution is an orientation to “revolutionary realpolitik” (GW 1/2, 373), which Frigga HAUG understands as the task of striving for a realpolitik that maintains the “tension-filled mediations between short- and long-term objectives” (2007, 62). This “tension between path and goal” (63), the particular day and an uncertain future, runs through all bM. MARCUSE, who as the only one from the founders’ generation of Critical Theory to be captivated by

the '68 movement, then in turn to captivate it, saw in view of twentieth-century experiences no more possibility of connecting LUXEMBURG'S short-term and long-term goals. Instead of this he directed critical concepts "away from the existing whole and towards completely different possibilities" (HAUG 1968/1973, 97). His intuition of the goal of the "completely different" was to pilot individuals from the existing into the new mode of existence. This way of totally leaping over what exists towards the desired goal cuts the relation to that which MARX calls "the elements for the formation of a new society, [and] the forces for exploding the old one" (35/505) and becomes utopian in the sense of beyond reality.

BLOCH tries to bridge this dualism through the concept of "concrete utopia" (1975, 234). Since the utopian moment in bM was repressed in the name of an ideologically absolutized "scientificity" he had "great difficulties in the GDR" when he introduced this concept into Marxism (ibid.). Against class society's ideological expropriation of the people from their world – which MARX analyzed under the heading of alienation – he calls for a "transcending into this-worldishness" (ibid.). In so doing he frames the "enchanted, perverted, topsy-turvy world, in which Monsieur leCapital and Madame la Terre do their ghost-walking as social characters and at the same time directly as mere things" (C III, 37/817) as a "remarkable kind of pseudo-this-worldish otherworld" (HAUG 2014, 144). In fact, the Marxist critique is directed against the de-realization of objectively given social possibilities by the relations of domination,

and the fulcrum of the goal it sets is the unrealized *possibilities*. These can be understood as objective to the extent that their becoming effective is supported by the state of the productive forces but blocked by the relations of domination and property.

Does a Being in the tension of the Not-Yet and on the soil of the objective possibility along with the prevailing non-possibility then find its point of arrival shifted to utopia? "One cannot be a Marxist without being a utopian", the dissident GDR economist Fritz **BEHRENS** (b. 1909) would say, "for utopia is [...] the anticipation of what is to come, not the necessary but the possible!" (1992/2010, 234). He fails to differentiate between mechanical necessity and the practical-dialectical necessity (Not-Wendigkeit) that one has in mind when one says it is necessary to build dams against floods. **BEHRENS** vacillates in his judgement. At times he calls the "belief in a domination-free society an illusion" (225), then at another time he conceives of Marxism in the style of **BLOCH** as "the novum of a certain 'concrete utopia'" (235) in the sense of a "possibility, because the conditions are present, of realizing it" (234). In another sense, that of the lost state-supported historical agency, the theologian Dick **BOER** (b. 1939) speaks of the utopian character of socialism and hence also of bM. "Socialism has become utopian again, because there is no specific place for it any more. The 'fusion' of Marxist theory and revolutionary praxis in the modern labour movement was apparently unique– and perhaps not even that" (2012, 670).

6.3 But how was it in state socialism, where the conditions appeared to be present of realizing the objectively possible? It was seen to be not that simple. Only the *political* conditions were present and even these only abstractly because they were separated from society in the form of the state armed by force. In the SU the system of the mode of production based on command and administration imposed on society the curse of “bureaucratism and mismanagement, social apathy and lack of responsibility”, Mikhail **GORBACHEV** (b. 1931) said (1988; cited in **HAUG** 1989, 156). What the self-blockage of the authoritarian state did not accomplish through what Anatoli **BUTENKO** (b. 1925) decried as the “colossal corrosion of the human factor” (1988) was completed by the economic relations of force in a world that was increasingly integrated due to forces of production – not least the forces of communication – that ran straight through all separations. What was blocked was collective self-socialization, which is, however, the actual communist factor. “In this sense the idea of socialism is also a utopia, which in no way means that socialism is impossible”, **KOLAKOWSIKI** declared (1967, 23). Confronted with the chasm between facts and the long-term goal “utopia” organizes “hope for a realization of values in the social institutions” (ibid.). By contrast, everything in Lothar **KÜHNE**, a communist faithful to **MARX**, rebelled against the secular postponement of communism. He repudiated the idea of a future communism as “a present that has become ideal and relieved of its resistances” (1985, 16). Something of that future had

to begin immediately in the here and now. Since the distance to the long-term goal could not be eliminated KÜHNE banks on the “capacity of individuals and their drive to ceaselessly reset the contradiction of ideal and reality” (1981, 267). What he thus specifies as “the subjective condition of reproduction of communist relations” (ibid.) characterizes a basic feature of bM. ML in power legitimized itself through the goal and at the same time blocked its pursuit when this required a shifting of initiative back into society. The consequences for bM were fatal. Under the reign that operated as “Marxist-Leninist” the old division between *fides* and *confessio*, of conviction and lip-service, reappeared. This led in the GDR to the paradox that ‘actually existing Marxism’ had to emigrate from ‘actually existing socialism’. Such forced emigration could take on the form of a change of research focus from the present to antiquity as in the case of SEIDEL who was accused of pursuing the “philosophy of praxis”. Or it could mean emigration to the FRG, as with ABENDROTH, BLOCH, and KOFLER. A point was reached at which Marxist research and even praxis was more possible in capitalism – only of course where its state was restrained by liberal constitutionality.

The attitude of the comrades in power who were responsible for “governmentally prescribed Marxism” (HAVEMANN 1978b, 31), was determined by the twentieth century’s history of horrors. Because battle wounds and the martyrdom of persecution can also lead to the ossification of bM. Heinz JUNG describes this reversal towards a kind of conservatism that

is suffocating but whose “moral-political strength and legitimacy” is not easy to dispute. Here it is not participation in power or the securing of status that is at work; “this attitude here rests, rather, [...] on a [...] life spent in struggle, which is called into question through events and also the pressure of criticism” (1990/2006, 10). Alluding to **MARX’S** remark that scientific investigation into the modus operandi of capitalist property “summons as foes into the field of battle the most violent, mean and malignant passions of the human breast, the Furies of private interest” (35/10), **JUNG** adds: “Calling a life into question unleashes yet worse Furies” (1990/2006, 10).

6.4 As under capitalism *bourgeoisie* and *citoyenneté* separate from each other and clash, so, in bM, do private person and comrade. Actual everyday existence conflicts with identificational conviction, thus also with the political-ethical-intellectual life of solidarity. Under liberal-constitutional conditions bM first of all means a formal bourgeois existence with anti-bourgeois ideas and elements of corresponding practice.

Alexandra **KOLLONTAI** (b. 1872) experienced how the relation of forces of these opposing determinants can push back the ideal side under the conditions of the turn from war communism to the New Economic Policy in 1921. The mute force of the conditions working behind people’s back became strikingly clear to her. Answering the question of a young Communist as to whether after fulfilling all party instructions “one is free in one’s private life and

can live as one likes" (1922/1979, 67) she angrily named the reason for the current aggravation of this question: "We were all merged into one entity. [...] Now everyone is for themselves, and precisely the comrades who appeared to be 'heroes' at the moment of action are now, in the daily work of tedious construction, seen to be petty, self-seeking, vindictive creatures. They are ready not only not to help the others but also to act vulgarly towards comrades" (68 f). In order to keep together the private and the political against their division due to conditions, she urged "a new communist morality that keeps the collective together as a psychic, inner cement" (69). She designated as "bad Marxists" those who think "that evaluating actions from a moral point of view is a vestige of the bourgeois view of life" (71).

But how is it when **FETSCHER**, in his West-German post-fascist bourgeois existence, sets about the task of "working out the far-reaching differences, indeed contrasts, between the humanist critique of the early **MARX** and the doctrinaire justification of Stalinist Marxism" (1983, 12)? At the centre of his study on the relation of Marxism to **HEGEL** is, among other things, the attempt "to demonstrate that **STALIN'S** anti-Hegelianism only veils the actual conservative Hegelianism of his state doctrine and that in essence it is not **HEGEL** but the critical early **MARX** who is seen by **STALIN** as an 'enemy' and tabooed" (ibid.). For the writer Franz Xaver **KROETZ** (b. 1946), a member of the DKP, "my great Communist Party" (2009) there was no question in 1978: The Marxist intellectuals

not organized in the CP were “thoroughly elitist Robinsonades, know-it-alls, not giving a damn about the working class’s experience, fundamentally petty bourgeois characters”, for “Marxism has an enormous amount to do with learning, with subordination, with integration, with collective thinking, feeling, and behaviour” (*Warum*, 1978, 34 f). However, instead of a living bM **KROETZ** is here describing ML in power, or the CPs oriented to it outside the SU. By virtue of his party membership **KROETZ** saw himself as immune to the determining power of his bourgeois-economic form of existence.

Michael **BRIE** (b. 1954) analyses this split through the example of the standard **KÜHNE** set for himself, under conditions of the GDR, to start concretely from elements of communist practice. Using a formulation from Günther **ANDERS**, **BRIE** understands this as the impossibility “of his [**KÜHNE’S**]being able to simultaneously incorporate two absolutely different types of Being: while working behave as a ‘conformist’, and when ‘acting’ as a non-conformist – that he could therefore lead and withstand a schizophrenic life” (1956/1987, 292; cited in 1993, 53). **HEISE**, who shared **KÜHNE’S** antinomic situation but was able to find a productive balance within it describes **KÜHNE’S** tragedy: “He who was so able to analyse the path from the general to the particular, so precisely the relation of ideal and reality, could so sharply approach the mediation problem, wounded himself on the contradictions of socialism [...]. He who pressed forward so impatiently, exploded inwardly when he saw the situation idolized, the

achieved absolutized, and the political diehards confronting him in a new form – and he had to live with it. He who wanted to move in a practical way had to experience practice as a given fact and was limited to the theoretical. As much as he accepted the conditions for his efficacy, and became involved in them, his relationship to reality was made very tense through the complications of affirming and negating, which made him as productive as it ground him down” (1985/1988, 117). In November 1985 he put an end to his life.

7 If, in the words of Heiner MÜLLER, the post-communist situation made bM a matter for a “monastic order [...] that has a doctrine that now has to be buried” (1989/2008, 487), then, at the latest, the Great Crisis of High-tech Capitalism (2008ff) put it back on the agenda. The transformed conditions have imprinted their stamp on it. Gone are the times when intellectuals wrestled with the “temptation” to “eliminate by the stroke of a pen one of the most difficult questions of recognition for everyone” i.e. “the problem of material unity – the unity of matter containing *my Being* and *my Consciousness*” which “weighs so heavily on our individual consciousness” (Hans-Jörg SANDKÜHLER [b. 1940] 1975, 615) – , or when ALTHUSSER could reflect the drama of bM with his assertion (not supported by any source) that

“...if we learn to think what is womanly / your ideas will we all / have to expand like skirts / because we ceaselessly / are in other circumstances.”

Dorothee Sölle

“the whole intellectual evolution of **MARX**” must “be understood: as a long, difficult, and painful break in order to arrive from his petit bourgeois class instinct at the proletarian class standpoint, which he helped in a decisive way to define in *Capital*”, an “extraordinarily difficult but not completely impossible” struggle to win (1969/1973, 109). As far as we know, **MARX** struggled with censorship, the secret police, ideologues of every colour, financial difficulties, stupidity ...

Anything other than the “Marxism without guarantees” outlined in 1983 by Stuart **HALL** (b. 1932) is by now a matter for sectarians only. If it offers no guarantee, it is indeed an intellectual resource of knowledge that is at the same time a resource of resistance. It corresponds to the practical attitude of people who withstand contradictions and defeats, “who do not despair in the face of the worst horrors and who do not become exuberant with every silliness” (**GRAMSCI**, *PV*, Nb 1. §63, 172), whether this is by way of defiant taken-forgrantedness or of the *docta spes*, the “*comprehended hope*”, which – in the interpretation (*PH*, 7) of **BLOCH**, who coined the term – is disillusion-proof. The historical fusion of the labour movement with **MARX’S** theory and instructions for action has largely come apart. The call for the unity of proletarians of all countries falls on deaf ears. The working class has been newly fragmented and disassembled through the transnational *dispositif*, the outsourcing on the part of corporations active in the world market, and IT-shaped skills and forms of employment. Conversely, the “intellectualization of production” (*PAQ* 1987, 43) accompanying the

transition to a high-tech mode of production has changed the relation of the “automation worker” to theory and thus also to the “intellectuals” in the functional sense. Ever since industrial workers began viewing the computerized processes of production “through a raster of physical dimensions” it can be said: “The automation worker has to do with a *scientific information structure*” (43 f). The wage dependents, among them those who were already born – from 1970 on – into a world shaped by PCs and soon also the internet, are incomparably more information-skilled and in a certain sense “more intellectual” than any earlier generation. At the same time, however, they are more individualistic, further from class consciousness and class solidarity, and so more mobile in net-based “bargain hunting”. In the broad population crises and precarization of the conditions of work and life are fuelling a spontaneous anti-capitalism that is able to spread worldwide into mass protests such as the Occupy Movement in the shortest time but then soon disappears. – What kind of conclusions can be drawn from such epoch-making determinants in terms of the consistency and coherence of the theories and options that make up bM?

7.1 The collapse of European state socialism made clear to the West German communist Heinz JUNG that his imaginary living-in-the-other-Germany as a specific mode of living-in-the-future was over: “those implicit tracks toward socialism [...] can no longer be deployed to the ‘beyond’” (1990/2006,

17). That orientation was “moreover a state of affairs that did not need to be demonstrated because it was taken for granted by everyone. We were the party of socialism that saw its point of orientation in actually existing socialism” (ibid.). For Fritz BEHRENS in this situation it was “not a matter of whether a Marxist can still be a Marxist today but whether, if he wants to be a Marxist, he can still be a Leninist” (1992/2010, 231), which he answers in the negative. For the French Communist deputy André GERIN (b. 1946) “being a Marxist today” means “having the courage to think against the current and to say that conscience and class struggle exist. I am furthermore convinced of the relevance of the theoretical work of MARX and ENGELS. For me the working class in the extended sense still forms the main force of the resistance and of protest against the capitalist mode of production. And with it, together with the majority of the population [*l'ensemble du peuple*] we can maintain the perspective of a higher society, socialism, communism” (2007).

What makes the nearly insurmountable distance between high-tech capitalist society and that “higher society” difficult to bear for many is the disturbingly imaginary character of the solidarity and identification with the exploited and oppressed or with those held down while being fed and entertained by bread and television circuses, who in their great majority want to know nothing about those who champion them. It is hard for bM, with its commitment to historical materialist analysis, to deceive itself about this gap.

7.2 In his 1993 Riverside/CA lecture *Specters of Marx*, Jacques DERRIDA (b. 1942) encapsulates the reasons why precisely after the collapse of the SU it is objectively possible and moreover necessary to be a Marxist: First, capitalism, he points out, is reigning supreme for the first time as the global condition. Second, “never [before] have violence, inequality, exclusion, famine, and thus economic oppression affected as many human beings in the history of the earth and of humanity” (1994, 106). Finally, he writes, the prospects of the alleged victors of the Cold War, all the old models of the capitalist and liberal world, have never before been as dismal, threatening, and threatened. Now after the dogma machine and the ‘Marxist’ ideological apparatuses have disappeared there are, he points out, no more excuse, no more alibis, for shirking this responsibility. Without it there will be no future. In this sense DERRIDA spoke of the existence of a “new international” of those feeling responsible for this earth as “a still discrete, almost secret link, as it was around 1848 [...] without status, without title, and without name, barely public even if it is not clandestine, [...] without co-citizenship, without common belonging to a class”, something like “the friendship of an alliance without institution among those” who despite all “continue to be inspired by at least one of the spirits of Marx or Marxism– such as the ‘specter of communism’ (6/481) conjured up in the *Manifesto* (they now know that there is more than one)” (DERRIDA 1994, 106 f).

7.3 The disappearance of the ruling state party that under **STALIN** emerged from **LENIN'S** vanguard party has reduced many surrogate problems to their prosaic size: reducing the unity of matter to a question of intellectual curiosity, of the appetite for thinking and philosophical-scientific education; and reducing the problem of petit bourgeois class instinct to that of political ethics and the limits that market behaviour imposes on it. But, despite everything, the army of directly or indirectly dependent workers is still the addressee of Marxist theory and, conversely, as Roger **BEHRENS** (b. 1967) says, “a critical theory that does not start from **MARX** and **ENGELS** is void and is just as much a conceptual fraud as is Marxism without a critical-theoretical basic impulse” (2008).

The metaphysical transfiguration of the working class has not held up under historical materialist examination. Altogether, the post-communist situation of Marxists has “at last compelled” them, in a gruesome replication of the *Manifesto*, “to face with sober senses, [their] real conditions of life, and [their] relations with [their] kind” (6/487). A [religious] faith in progress and historical certainty of goal are gone. Yet the present has become what **MARX**, reaching far beyond his own time, diagnosed as “the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market, and with this, the international character of the capitalistic régime” (35/750), completed by that other net which brings individuals from all peoples, to the extent possible, in universal contact and has generated an immense knowledge commons – however ideologically penetrated and fragmented – and with it



has given a material basis to the Marxian concept of a “general intellect” of humanity (*Gr*, 29/91).

The forms of Marxist engagement amongst those born in post-communism have profoundly changed with the waning of the labour movement and the CPs’ loss of significance. For example, in the wake of the crisis **MARX** has experienced increased prestige among US liberals. Perhaps still more important, a new generation of intellectuals and internet journals understanding themselves as “Marxish”, similarly to the way in which **BERNSTEIN** once spoke of the “Marxischen System” – have made their voices heard. And as **BERNSTEIN** distanced himself from the “orthodox” Marxism personified by **KAUTSKY** after **ENGELS’S** death, so these intellectuals newly building on **MARX** mark a self-ironic distance to that which is commonly considered Marxism. Their “Marxish” signals a “more open positioning in the sense of ‘inspired by Marx’ or ‘in the tradition of Marx’s thinking’” (**MISIK** 2014). An example is Benjamin

“ML in power legitimized itself through the goal and at the same time blocked its pursuit when this required a shifting of initiative back into society. The consequences for bM were fatal.”

Wolfgang Fritz Haug

KUNKEL (b. 1972). After his novel *Indecision* (2005), in which he gives expression, among other things, to the change of mentality after 11 September 2001, made him famous overnight, and in view of the Great Crisis of 2008ff, he prescribed for himself several years of an “autodidact’s crash course on the unsustainability of global capitalism” (**WALLACE-**

WELLS 2014), to acquire an orientating framework. In contrast to BERNSTEIN, however, he does not want to eliminate the utopian element in MARX. The title of his 2014 collection of programmatic-political essays, *Utopia or Bust*, sets the tone. The concrete-utopian perspective calls for theoretical grounding. "If it would take a practical movement to lend plausibility to a theoretical program, so would left politics draw strength from visions of a post-capitalist world" (KUNKEL 2014). Otherwise, political engagement to overcome capitalism would resemble a "leap into the dark". The called-for historical work requires "a consideration that is probably especially important for would-be activists among the middle classes" (ibid.). Not the name but the goal is decisive for him, for which he makes use, as before him Nick DYER-WITHEFORD as well as Antonio NEGRI and Michael HARDT (2009), the name "commonism" by which he understands social relations "that establish just and efficient economies and substantive democracy on a durable ecological basis" (KUNKEL 2014). Even though he considers capitalism irreparable as a whole he advocates reforms if only because the left is never so strong as it is in social reformist phases. Thus LUXEMBURG's concept of "revolutionary realpolitik" unexpectedly turns up here under another name, and bM takes on the new incipient, tentative form of Being Marxist. The coincidence with the *Communist Manifesto* of MARX is no longer in the certainty that the "victory of the proletariat" is "inevitable" (6/496) but certainly in the idea that the alternative means the "common ruin of the contending classes" (6/482).

7.4 The crisis-driven permanent development of the productive forces of high-tech capitalism, which overturns modes of life as much as it does social relations and global constellations of political, economic, and cultural power and which requires of all members of society, lest they “drop out”, to be life-long learners, requires Marxists to remain in a process of becoming. It is possible that in the crisis-ridden world of global capitalism corroded by extreme inequality and corruption bM might, in the “empire” of the 21st century, be compared with Being Christians, Epicureans, or Stoics during the Roman Empire, as a form of individuality with a staunch readiness to serve the “commonalty” in the midst of a disintegrating society as locally active “patriots of humanity”, in the words of the Russian poet Yevgeny **YEVTUSHENKO** (b. 1932) (2014). Their stance would be distinguished by an ethos that encompasses the social relations of people together with their relations to nature. Their lives and actions would develop within that which is unfinished and uncertain, side by side with other political-ethical forces with their back against the wall, while, on the edge of the climate catastrophe, the old imperialist game would begin again, but now with the weapons of high technology. But ... the old mole of dialectic is good for surprises.

ABBREVIATIONS

CC = Central Committee

CI = Communist International, Comintern

CP = Communist Party/Parties

ECCL = Executive Committee of the Communist International

FDJ = Freie Deutsche Jugend (the official youth organization in the GDR)

Gr = "*Grundrisse*" – *Outlines of the Critique of Political Economy* (1857-58)

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Wolfgang Fritz HAUG has made countless contributions to a living, relevant and pluralistic Marxism. These include founding the *Historisch-kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus* (HKWM), currently supported by the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung (www.hkwm.de). He launched the Argument Verlag publishing house in West Berlin in 1959 along with what would go on to become one of the most important Marxist journals, *Das Argument*, which he continues to edit today. In 1980 he initiated the Berliner Volksuniversität, in 1990 he pioneered the German edition of the critical collected works of Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, which appeared in ten volumes from 1991 to 2002. He made a name for himself early on with his critique of "helpless anti-fascism" (1967) and his *Critique of Commodity Aesthetics* (1971, 1986 in English). Thousands of students attended his seminars and legendary Capital courses at Berlin's Freie Universität, out of which an introductory trilogy to Capital emerged. His more recent analyses of "high-tech capitalism" seek to test Marx's work against reality. He consistently seeks to mediate theoretical and political praxis, of course in productive exchange with his life partner Frigga Haug.

The Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung is currently translating crucial texts from the *Historisch-kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus* into English. Here, we document his HKWM contribution on "being a Marxist", in which he sketches out a dialectic of this historical form of individuality based on one hundred biographies.

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