

A CRITIQUE OF MARX'S THEORY OF ALIENATION

by

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submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the subject

POLITICS

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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September 1999

Abstract

This dissertation is a critique of Marx's theory of alienation with emphasis on how Marx constructed his definition of man and consciousness. The main premise of the theory is that private property caused alienation but the hypothesis of this dissertation is that because the theory defined man and consciousness in an erroneous manner alienation was not possible, and that the conditions observed by Marx were exacerbated by landlessness.

Key terms

Marxist theory, alienation, nineteenth century England, nineteenth century France, enclosure, land ownership, wage-labor, Marx's theory of alienation, political theory, agricultural studies

Dedication

This work is dedicated to Otto and Mabel Peterson.

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Acknowledgement

Special thanks are due to D. Giordano and M. Smith who have shared time to engage in fruitful conversation and reading material for rumination, and D. Kotze who patiently critiqued my critique.

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CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

"A genuinely materialist theory cannot make how I feel about my circumstances-whether I feel they accord me dignity, respect, self-respect, work that matters to me or to others-the primary motor of my behaviour, for these states of feeling are of course (valuational) states of consciousness." (Loftson 1995:130)

Marx's Theory of Alienation

This dissertation is a critique of Marx's theory of alienation as described in the "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844" with emphasis on how Marx constructed his definitions of man and consciousness. The main premise of the theory is that private property caused alienation but the hypothesis of this dissertation is that because the theory defined man and consciousness in an erroneous manner alienation was not possible, and that the conditions observed by Marx were exacerbated by landlessness. This theory negated that man was also an agriculturalist and, by defining man and consciousness only in relation to industrial production, it treated man in a one-dimensional manner.

According to Marx, alienation, separation of the worker from himself, his species, fellow human beings, labor and the product of his labor, is inversely proportional to ownership of the means of production. One premise of this theory is that wage-labor creates surplus value that is the source of private property. Private property, in turn, causes alienation (Marx 1990:57, Marx 1993:117) and was defined as owned income

producing objects (Russell 1980:90, Loptson 1995:136). This was the basis of the rationale for the proletariat to have appropriated the means of production.

Marx wanted to solve the problem of alienation through communal ownership of the means of production but his theory of alienation is physically untenable and thus his solution to alienation was wrong in large part because of this. LeRoy wrote "La questione ha un'importanza vitale perche la nostra analisi delle cause determina la nostra scelta del rimedio" (Aptheker 1973:7). [*Translation: The question has a vital importance because our analysis of the cause determines our choice of the remedy.*] Reciprocally, if Marx's analysis was wrong, so were his solution, premises and conclusion.

Private property is also the result of thought and invention. It could be a cow, a plot of land, a loom or anything that could create surplus value. It has more sources than Marx acknowledged. It is proposed that what Marx observed was not the result of private property but the result of the intentional limiting of survival options. The industrial sector in England was guaranteed labor because peasants were forced off the land. Contrary to Shaw's conclusion, eviction of peasants was not a general characteristic of the transition from feudalism to capitalism (Shaw 1978:145), as in the case of France. Due to the inaccessibility of land the British wage-laborer was caught in a prison of limited survival options and, contrarily, the example of France is used to show how land access leveled more the dynamics of power between labor and industry.

Further reference to alienation in this thesis should be understood as reference to the concept as Marx defined it. It is not suggested that conditions of the British laborer, or the unemployed, were in general healthy, rather it is proposed that private property

could not have caused what Marx called alienation and that the conditions of nineteenth century England observed by Marx were exacerbated because land was inaccessible.

One argument for resolving Marx's perception of alienation could be stated as "the solution to the alienation caused by relative dispossession is not the total suspension of all possession but the optional extension of possession in terms of concrete requirements" (Louw 1998). Was the ultimate cause of alienation private property or lack of private property? It was not sufficient to say laborers did not own private property and were therefore alienated without considering that ownership of private property, in the form of land, was denied to them in the first place. When discussing the Molpah revolts in India of nineteenth century, Varghese described what happened when land was withheld from the Molpahs. Resisting British land laws in nineteenth century India, they did not discuss how they felt instead they met the invading force with an equal force required to protect their right to survive (Varghese 1970). They reversed British land policies not by engaging in an artificial debate about cultural definitions or whether they should own land but by forming the power to force the satisfaction of their survival needs. Had they not done so, perhaps the Molpahs would have become urban refugees like nineteenth century British.

The contradiction posed to the theory by the incidence of land occupation in France at the time Marx wrote is discussed. Land acquisition is treated as behavior showing whether laborers had access to alternative means of survival. Marx wrote about the conditions of the laborer in England after the Industrial Revolution but did not consider that a contributing factor to destitution was lack of access to land, blaming capitalism instead of the reason that the urban areas contained bloated supplies of labor.

He did not examine why many workers in France went from wage-labor to land ownership, while their counterparts in England did not. Checkland noted "The German worker...was much less interested in rushing to the towns than was his British counterpart, because he was anxious and able to acquire a small piece of land" (Checkland 1966:184). Marx's theory of alienation did not consider all labor activities and the reason it should have is because Marx wanted to apply his theory in general to all of humanity not just the industrial worker.

His theory is about "self-estrangement" and thus the approach used here emphasizes the individual, not a class. A "class" is reducible to the individual entities that comprise it and Marx is thus held to providing an accurate definition of man, the individual entity. For the purpose of this dissertation, discussing manifestations of individuality is not necessary. All wage-laborers did not have the same experience during the nineteenth century, not every economic sector had the same success, not all wage-laborers were denied land. Thus, the wage-laboring "class" should not be treated as if it were one homogeneous unit. Marx does not discuss "class" consciousness in his theory of alienation, rather he writes of "species consciousness" as will be discussed later.

An inquiry is also made into ancient history and primitive economies because Marx and later theorists erroneously trace the conceptual and historical roots of alienation to the Jewish religion. Although this error is not central to the critique, it is addressed because it is blindly accepted in the literature and distorts our understanding of man and human history.

Our approach is to examine Marx's definitions, compare the activities of France and England in preserving or destroying opportunities to access land, and analyze

statistics from both countries to illustrate how land access may have been related to social well being. Data culled from various sources suggests the propensity of land acquisition in France, during the nineteenth century, contradicts Marx's theory of alienation, his belief in capitalism as an alienating production system and private property as the source and result of alienation.

Marx assumed the economic conditions of his time, the validity of his definitions of man, consciousness and purpose of labor, a correct interpretation of historical facts and his observations, all of which he used to explain the conditions of the laborer and human experience. His method of observation was field observation, and he performed research on secondary resources. He inquired into the processes of trade, industrial production, monetary exchange, human habits of consumption and mode of existence and inferred that the entire history of man was a result of nature transforming labor that created man's consciousness.

A factor which interfered with his conclusions, and which he did not consider about the economic conditions and man of his time, was access to land. This is unusual considering that Marx was adamant about understanding man as being shaped by the conditions of his time. Even Engels in his searing description of the industrial revolution, in "The Conditions of the Working Class in England", never once called for the redistribution of land (Engels 1993). Indeed, he even suggested that the origin of the two great classes lay "clearly and palpably in purely economic causes" and that "Bourgeoisie and proletariat both arose in consequence of a transformation of the economic conditions, more precisely, of the mode of production. The transition from manufacture to large-scale industry, with steam and mechanical power, had caused the development of these

two classes" (Engels 1996:51-52). A "mode of production" could hardly force peasants off the land. That expulsion was a selfish act of men and had little to do with the social interests of the country. Engels revised his work in 1887, still without mentioning the land factor, and in 1903 the Land Purchase Act was promulgated in Ireland creating more than 250,000 landowners within a seven-year period (Peacock 1974:251). Making land available is a choice, it is not fulfillment of an economic law.

Marx's neglect of the land factor is repeated in the literature. Ollman, when elaborating on Marx's dialects, does not mention land ownership as a factor of change (Ollman 1993) but Mandel and Novack do (Mandel 1976:20). That Marx was not interested in land reform suggests many things but his disdain for the peasant that so overwhelmingly characterized Marxist practice is evident in his theory. A lack of reverence for the tiller of the soil permeated the Marxist approach to agriculture. Under communism the peasant suffered the most, often starving while the produce of their labor was used to feed the consuming engines of industrial development or left to rot in government granaries. According to Marcuse "Control of the productive process by the "immediate producers" is supposed to initiate the development which distinguishes free men from the prehistory of man" (Marcuse 1964:41). It can hardly be said that socialist policies in general had this respect for the immediate producer in the agricultural sector.

Marx believed a perfect relationship between mankind and labor existed yet applied Marxism was destructive to agriculture. Agricultural production is not highly regarded in Marxist thought, indeed, Marx considered peasants to be too individualistic (Russell 1980:85) and socialist policies often reorganized this sector with disastrous results. Examples are Tibet experiencing famine after the Chinese occupation;

Tanzanians being moved onto communal farms which left large tracts of land uncultivated; Russian agriculture falling to disarray; and after Mao there were a thousand or so varieties of rice remaining when before him there were ten thousand. Marxist and quasi-Marxist policies perpetuated Marx's belief in a natural relationship to particular forms of labor and it is proposed the theory was biased against the agriculturalist.

Motivation for the research and Objective

This research was carried out because there is a need to understand how Marxist theory was biased against the peasant and what the effects were of Marx denying "tribal, traditional and agricultural society in favour of civil, urban and industrial society" (Louw May 1998).

Research plan

The research was propelled by an approach that microscopically examines the definitions and premises of the theory. This work is based on a desire to know what is true and no specific body of work is built upon as the theory of alienation appears not to have been dissected in this manner before. To examine Marx's definitions and premises, three axioms are utilized to ferret out the accuracy of Marx's definitions and the method by which they are derived. The axioms are:

- "that which is, is"

- we exist "possessing *consciousness*"

- "to be is to be something, to have a nature, to possess *identity*" (Peikoff 1991:406).

It is shown that Marx was very arbitrary about generating his definitions and the above axioms aid in determining his accuracy. Many problems are encountered in Marx's analysis and spill over into the literature. Two major ones are Marx's definitions of man and consciousness. Others are historical accuracy and arbitrary or non-existent methods of logical verification of concepts. Marxist literature reviewed for this thesis rarely questions the veracity of Marx's premises.

A comparison of nineteenth century France and England is made to suggest how detrimental land was to social welfare, and to show that the conditions Marx observed were not a necessary result of capitalism. It is not of major importance here to distinguish between land owners and agricultural workers since it is the access to land, or the potential to own it, which take precedence since an agricultural worker or industrial laborer could have become a landowner through land redistribution or purchase. The two countries were chosen because they industrialized in a capitalistic manner, their populations, territorial size, and the extent of their technological progress were sufficiently during the nineteenth century to provide a basis for comparison of how differently two capitalistic countries treated the agricultural sector. It will be shown that denying land was not a consequence of a capitalistic economy but the result of the purposeful denial of a survival option.

Marx's theory of alienation has a physical basis, meaning that it refers to, for example, existing entities, the application of power and labor and their actual consequences or results, manifestations of thought and man's actions. Therefore, of particular concern is how accurately Marx presented and defined these entities and actions.

Contribution

This thesis contributes to the field of analytic political theory by examining the structure and logic of Marx's concepts in his theory of alienation and the contradictions that arose from them. Also, a contribution is made to the subfield of political science that examines the effects of political theory on the agricultural sector.

Overview of chapters

Chapter one introduces the topic of the dissertation. Chapter two examines Marx's definition of man, his perception of how consciousness develops and the four main aspects of alienation. The literature is reviewed and the historical roots of alienation as Marx deduced them are presented. In Chapter three a comparison is made of the occupation of land by number of owners, and the treatment of the agricultural sector in France and England during the nineteenth century. Chapter four summarizes the goals of the dissertation, discusses the applicability of the theory and illustrates the continuing demand for land with current events.

CHAPTER 2 – Marx’s Definition of Man, Consciousness and Alienation

“The Marxian model of a human being is someone without national, ethnic, or tribal passions, comfortable in and with his or her body, finding creative satisfaction in both physical and mental work, egalitarian in spirit-which means, in part, undisposed to hero-worship, without desire for commercial competition or advantage, and having a measure of fellow-feeling with the rest of humanity...Marx's conception of human nature will not allow that a human being could be genuinely well with himself or herself, yet fail to correspond to the above characterization. They would, necessarily, be at least somewhat alienated, adrift, anomic, victims (or guilty) of false consciousness, or deluded, and certainly less than a fulfilled, truly thriving human being can be.” (Loftson 1995:135)

Marx's definition of man

Marx's definition of man is without adequate foundation on man's actual nature and because of this he assigned value to labor and life based on an arbitrarily chosen form of productive expression. As a result, the greatest portion of the population of our world fails to comply with his standards of what it is to be human, as it did at the time he wrote. In this chapter Marx's definition of man, the development of consciousness and the four aspects of alienation are examined.

This theory conceived of man only in terms of his relationships not in terms of his nature that it presumed does not exist prior to productive activity and, more specifically, a certain form of productive activity. This inspires two questions: what are we before we become producers, and, do those people who never engage in the production of objects have a nature? If man cannot be identified as having a nature, then man cannot be distinguished from other entities and, therefore, Marx should not have used the word "man" when discussing this entity. For the purposes of this dissertation, man is that entity distinguished from other entities by a unique capacity of reasoning. This does not negate other characteristics of man rather it emphasizes the fundamental characteristic by which we differentiate man from other entities.

An accurate definition of man is important because if one does not exist then theories about man cannot be constructed nor can we know the conditions under which man should be allowed to live. Without a definition we fail to understand the entity of our discussion and this leads to arbitrary and temporarily relevant conclusions. Marx's definition of man affects his theory significantly and the practical application of his theory affected man often adversely. If his definition of man was erroneous, then it was not alienation that he observed affecting man; if alienation did not occur then private property was not its cause; if private property was not the cause of alienation then Marx's theory was defunct.

What is man?

After a materialist investigation of history, Marx concluded that man is an existent distinguished from animals by the production of his subsistence needs (Marx and

Engels 1993:42) whose essence is the ensemble of his social relationships (Marx and Engels 1993:122). The term "man" is used here in the unisex sense that Marx used it. There are three axioms of his materialist method that he called "aspects of social activity": human existence, satisfaction of needs, and procreation. The first "fact" he discovered by his method was the physical organization of humans and "their consequent relation to the rest of nature" (Marx and Engels 1993:42,48-49). This is the first indication that Marx used man's relationships, not man, as a cornerstone of his theory. Marx's theory of alienation uses two concepts of import: objectification, defined as the production of the worker and objects through the transformation of nature (Marx 1993:108-9), and consciousness, defined as a product of objectification (Marx 1993:48). These two concepts determined how Marx valued and deduced the purpose of labor and human relations.

Marx's definition of man incorporated the error of not identifying the fundamental characteristic of the entity man and the same error continuously surfaces in the literature with the same deficient results. It is not enough that Marx defined man as a social being, a product of social relations, or different from animals because he produces his subsistence needs. In this way a glut of descriptions about man is available and the need to identify the essential characteristic becomes arbitrary or is lost. That man is a rational entity whose reasoning capacity depends on consciousness is not a proposition in Marx's definition and this eventually leads him to primacy labor over thought. His definitions of man are based on postulates which do not identify man's fundamental characteristics and his observations of man do not verify his speculation about man's essence or distinguishing characteristics, rather, both assume man's nature cannot be

known outside of the context of his activities or relationships. An analogy is believing we have understood the essence of a lion by knowing it has produced cubs, by watching it sleep, kill its food, or observing its pride. None of which explain why a lion is essentially different from a man.

If man wants to survive certainly he must secure the means to do so, but animals do the same and thus Marx did not give a relevant distinguishing characteristic. Animals also perform labor and have social relationships often hierarchically and strictly structured. If he wanted to theorize about the conditions which man should labor under and exist, he should have established the nature of man. Instead he started with social relations that are human constructs and not an inevitable or natural fulfillment of economic laws or productive activity. These constructs are made and changed by man. If he had said it is in man's nature to reason, and thus should live under those conditions that allow him to reason freely, this would be a basis for understanding human nature and formulating theories about man.

Marx attacked any approach that posited man as an individual that could exist separately from society and other men. In his scathing analysis of the Declaration of the Rights of Man (Tucker 1978:42), he considered the Declaration to erroneously confirm a definition of man as an individual yet it is impossible to prove that man is *naturally* a member of a group. Since he defined man by his relationships, Marx could not answer the question "what is the entity man?" For this reason he had to make even consciousness a product of social activity. In fact, Engels noted that he and Marx had neglected to study "the manner and mode of how ideas come into being" (Fromm

1973:22). One reason for neglecting the issue of the origin of ideas could be because they could not argue the existence of a communal brain.

Ollman says "Concepts, or ideas about the world which find expression in words...are best grasped as the property of the individuals concerned" (Ollman 1976:24). Here is a contradiction in the Marxist perception of man's socially productive activities: if man is a social product, how can Ollman say concepts can be the property of an individual? A further problem is if the next step after conceptualization is manufacturing the idea, then whose property is it that is produced? This is a problem discussed in a political theory seminar the author attended at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in the spring of 1994 (Murphy 1994). The question under discussion was "ownership of ideas" and Marx-inspired students claimed ideas were communally owned but then could not explain why they agreed a student should be kicked-out of the university for plagiarism. Nor could they explain, in non-dictatorial terms, what should be done with people who refuse to share their ideas. Nor could they explain why Marx's writings bear his name. Ollman's description of capital is not even tokenly related to thought. Indeed, he states "Value, commodity, capital, money, etc., could only be grasped as forms of labor..." (Ollman 1993:43) and does not mention their possible origin in thought, much less land.

Consciousness and objectification

Marx claimed "Life is not determined by consciousness but consciousness by life" (Marx and Engels 1993:47), meaning productive activity or objectification inspired consciousness. If it is true that the results of productive activity are the transformations of

nature and the development of consciousness, then beavers should qualify for being classified as human. Their labor raises water tables making barren areas lush, green oases and their activities that induce the growth of what they need are beneficial to the survival and well being of many species, encompassing behavior which Marx classified as human. He believed men "distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence" (Marx and Engels 1993:42) but that humans recycle nature like animals is not a relevant differentiation. What animals do not do is launch satellites, an activity that not only recycles and transforms nature also but requires a unique method of conceptualization, a human method of reasoning.

There exists a gap between when consciousness begins and when man begins to be productive and create social relationships and institutions. Marx believed social and political structures and thought were the product of material production and that the extent of production influenced the evolution of abstract thought (Marx 1993:46-47) but for this hypothesis to be true the primacy of labor over thought is required. Marx perceived production as having formed a connection between men, evolving over time through various forms with consciousness being the result. He believed consciousness developed out of necessity for communication between men, eventually separating from reality becoming pure theory and any contradiction between theory and reality he treated as a result of contradictions between social relations and the forces of production (Marx 1993:52). Certainly theoretical work often seems unreal but social realities can hinder the development of ideas because scientific observations and conclusions are often so far removed from the conceptual grasp of society as to be considered heretical (Boyer 1991).

Since Marx makes labor the launch pad of consciousness, objects of labor then acquire a prime position in the life of man. They play a central role in his perception of the purpose of man's existence, the deprivation of which is treated as unnatural. This means those who choose to live without objects do not confirm their lives but are, in Marx's words, a nullity. "A being which has no object outside itself is not an "objective being" it is a nullity" (Marx 1993:182). If we hold Marx to his perception of purpose, he would have found it difficult to justify his own mode of existence that was, by his own definition, non-productive and therefore inhuman. Possibly Marx unconsciously wrote of his own self-loathing.

Marx's theory defined the entity man inaccurately, gave an inaccurate description of the development of consciousness, created false distinctions between men and labor by placing the value of productive labor above that of non-nature-transforming labor and primacy of labor over consciousness and reason. The theory did not use a physical basis for understanding man but secondary activities such as man's relationships, and denied the existence of man's volition and preference by suggesting man must possess and produce objects to be human.

Marx did not prove that what he believed to be unalienated labor actually reflected man's "species being". For instance, does a farmer truly see the specific nature (Kahn 1995:215) of his individuality when spreading manure? Does a woman see her specific nature when peeling potatoes? In fact, for four plus billion human beings to fulfill their species-being and verify their specific natures requires an immense freedom not a paternalistic theory which claims to have scientifically deduced the activities they

should engage in and the purpose of their life and labor. Purpose belongs to man to discover for himself.

The ambiguity of his definition neglected many axiomatic aspects of man's nature that we need not try to defend, such as the capacity to reason, volition and preference. When claiming man and consciousness are products of his social relations, Marx denied that man was a creature of reason who, being a conscious entity, develops the capacity to reason before becoming productive.

The four main aspects of alienation, alienation from the product of labor, the labor process, the species, and man from man, and the physical problems we find when they are compared to the necessary characteristics of labor for survival are discussed in the next section. From the four premises, it will be apparent that many problems in this theory are definitionally based and lead to contradictions.

The four aspects of alienation

According to Marx, alienation was inversely proportional to ownership of the means of production, and wage-labor created surplus value that was the source of private property. Private property, being owned income producing objects, in turn caused alienation (Marx 1990:57, Marx 1993:117) and acting upon this conclusion the proletariat was to appropriate the means of production.

Marx did not say "destroy" the means of production, instead he used the word "appropriate". This means that after the act of appropriation, the act of labor should no longer have been alienating. Marcuse said the "transition from capitalism to socialism was a political revolution: the proletariat destroys the *political* apparatus of capitalism but

retains the *technological* apparatus" (Marcuse 1964:22). The power relationship was supposed to change under communism not the process of production, but in effect production continued as usual and alienation was carried over into communism because the process itself was not destroyed. The process had to be continued in order to continue production. Mandel noted that alienation would be inevitable and still exist after such appropriation (Mandel 1976:33) and, with Novack, attempted to understand the failure of Soviet communism to 'disalienate' labor. In fact, all four aspects of Marx's concept of alienation remain if the process of production is not changed.

Alienation from the product of labor

Based on the "fact of private property" and by following the path or "material process" of private property, Marx concluded that labor was alienated since it did not own what it produced. The product, or objectification of labor, is lost to the laborer and the laborer becomes poorer the more objects he creates because they take on a life separate from the worker who has no control over them. The worker merely plays out his role in order to reproduce himself so that the production process may continue so that he can survive. Thus the worker becomes a slave to what he produces: if he does not produce, he starves; if he produces he is barely kept alive by what he earns, and, at minimum cost, reproduces the next generation of labor. The workers production of surplus value for the owner of private property may surpass the value returned to him. Kolakowski calls this non-equivalent exchange "exploitation" (Kolakowski 1978:279) but Marx conceived of this as one aspect of man's estrangement from the object of labor.

The owner of private property manages to benefit from this in three ways: he makes a profit at minimum cost, the worker and its successive generation becomes a

commodity to be bought and maintained at minimum cost, and he controls the objects produced (Marx 1993:106-109). Ollman claimed this process "accounts for the power that money has in capitalist societies, the buying of objects which could never have been sold had they remained integral components of their producer" (Ollman 1976:135). A trite and ridiculous comment considering the long history of trade and commerce prior to capitalism. Producing objects for trade or sale has been one of man's main occupations throughout history and to suggest that capitalism somehow changed the basic nature of this activity is incredulous.

For Marx to suggest that the laborer should own the product or the means of production was to promote appropriation of what the laborer did not create, the same type of appropriation for which he condemned capitalism: that it appropriated the objects produced by the laborer. The distinction must be made between the activities of creation and production. Marx erroneously fuses the two activities together and this will be discussed in more detail later. By "create", it is meant to say that the laborer did not necessarily design the machinery it used to make products, design the product itself, or conceive of the production process.

Marx stated "the product is...but the summary of the activity of production..." (Marx 1993:111, Ollman 1976:141) but ignored the intellectual origin of products and the production process. If the laborer enters the scene most often when the product is ready to be produced, then, whose product is it that labor produces? Certainly not the laborer's, who voluntarily participates in its production and earns for himself a wage. It can be called forced participation if, by design, such labor is the only option available to secure one's survival. Such a situation of forced labor did not occur in England as a result of an

uncontrollable economic event, and the conditions Marx observed need not have been as atrocious had the government protected the survival rights of its citizens by making land available. Denying access to land was a deliberate choice and the effects of it were well documented by the powers that ruled Britain in the nineteenth century. Nineteenth century British and, thereafter, people living in socialist societies, were denied the right to pursue a very traditional and intimate livelihood when they were expelled from, or denied, land.

Alienation from the labor process

Marx deduced alienation from the process of production from his belief that the laborer was estranged from himself when work became only a means to perpetuate his existence. This left him with only his "animal functions" to aid the satisfaction of his potentiality and allow him to feel "freely active" (Marx 1993:110-111, Marx 1990:716,799). This constraint sacrificed the worker for the sake of production from which he barely benefited and disassociated him from the act of his labor.

There are problems with these conclusions. Labor cannot be conceptually or physically separated from the actor just because it is convenient for Marx's theory. It is often and for many reasons for the satisfaction of needs external to the laborer and cannot be equated with the loss of an individual's selfhood since such loss can only occur when a person is dead. The idea that individuals can lose their selfhood implies individualism, or particularism, and this contradicts Marx's premise about the universality of man. Ollman agrees with Marx that, under capitalism, laborers only work because they are forced to (Ollman 1976:138, Marx 1993:111). With slight effort one can imagine that only special individuals could perform repetitive tasks every day of every year and not, at the very

least, contemplate being free from such dull work. People might work in factories if their options are limited but, even if other options exist, the desire not to labor is far older than capitalism (Garraty 1978).

"Political economy conceals the estrangement inherent in the nature of labor by not considering the direct relationship between the worker and production" (Marx 1993:109). Marx believed that labor should own the means of production so not to be alienated but to be consistent he should have promoted destruction of the process that he claimed deformed the laborer (Marx 1993:110). The process of production for survival does not change just because of communal ownership, since the same repetitive tasks must be performed to produce the same products, unless a different mode of production is engineered. Thus the "productive life of the species" and its relation to nature would not change dramatically as a result of such ownership. Repetitious labor is a necessary characteristic of most survival tasks: someone prepares meals every day, in every family, every month of every year; someone plants, weeds, and harvests the rice, wheat and oats we eat, every year. Repetition is nothing new to capitalism. Indeed, it is a necessary characteristic of labor for survival.

Alienation from the species

Marx deduced the cause of alienation from the species life of humans from the prior two aspects of alienation. The man who creates objects from nature, participating in the productive life of the species while free from need, fulfills his definition of the "conscious species being". Subsequently, a relationship to labor determines consciousness and for the fullest expression of species life, or free conscious activity, labor should engage directly with nature for it's own benefit, not the capitalist's. Marx

concluded that under capitalism man became separated from his body, the species, and the purpose of species life. Instead man should have treated himself as a universal, free being living on inorganic nature, participating in objectification of the species life which is the whole point of species existence (Marx 1993:112-114).

"In creating a *world of objects* by his practical activity, in *his work upon* inorganic nature, man proves himself a conscious species being..." (Marx 1993:113). A careful parsing of this quote clearly shows Marx attempting to fuse the activities of creating and producing. These are very different activities and this argument of Marx's cannot be used to support appropriation of the means of production because the producer and the creator are rarely the same. Marx did not address the discrepancy between creation and production in his theory. He did not define man and thus could not state who owned man's mind and the product of man's mind. Does the laborer own what it produces merely because it participates in production? Deciding who will benefit the most by being a creator, producer, or owner has often been a matter decided by convention or power. What changes the equation for the individual is the option to be a creator or producer independently, an option protected by convention or power but reducible to the axiom that in order to survive man must secure the means to do so.

From this axiom of survival, the means must then be determined. Since man is a rational creature, he probably knows by what means he wants to or can survive and whether or not he wants to share the output of his mind. From this point forward power external to him may decide what are his options. In the world of the nineteenth century, man was still primarily an agriculturalist. Agricultural labor was still the predominant survival option available to him, except in England. The primary means by which

nineteenth century British civilians were allowed to secure their survival was wage-labor. The two major means by which the nineteenth century French civilians were allowed to secure their survival were land ownership and wage-labor. The problem was not that man was separated from species life since he was separated from the object he produced, indeed, production of objects for sale or trade has been one of man's primary activities throughout history. This is not something new to capitalism. The problem was that survival options were purposely limited as a result of land enclosure and expulsions for the stated purpose of large-scale agricultural production which in fact led more often to personal aggrandizement of property by the aristocracy for whom land ownership was tied to voting rights. For this reason of voting rights, the Anti-Corn Law League was most concerned about increasing the number of landowners in England.

To return to the creator-producer discrepancy, because Marx was ambiguous about this matter he left the non-creative laborer between a rock and a hard place. How the non-creative laborer managed to get involved in this theory is a mystery.

Marx used the concept of species to explain why the act of making nature the direct means of life, and the object and instrument of his activities, makes man a member of the species. Thus, divorcing man from nature (i.e. objects he has produced) is to deny man his humanness, making him an individual, a particular. The productive life of the species, and not that of the individual, is non-estranging and engaging in "free conscious activity" is man's species character (Marx 1993:113). For Marx, since the laboring man was the force of history, any activity that did not transform nature was not truly human activity. A man alienated from his product is necessarily alienated from the act of production.

A mathematician does not consume her equations, but she may publish them and allow everyone to use them, voluntarily separating herself from her intellectual work. True, she is not an industrial worker and one may say Marx never intended to discuss non-industrial labor activities. Nonetheless, because he generalized about man and the purpose of labor, and privileged one form of labor over another, it is important to remember that his generalizations were intended to touch all human activities. Those who do not interact with nature by transforming it, yet find satisfactory ways of living, do not meet his standard of leading a species life. This privileging of one form of labor over another is to suggest human beings are not creatures of preference and differing ability. Marx defined the species life of man as if all of mankind was one industrial unit operating for one purpose and privileged his understanding of purpose over that of other particular understandings. All men did not then and do not now treat themselves as universals and to connect the term "universal" with the term "free being" is contradictory. He forged a theory of a social purpose of labor using inaccurate definitions of man and labor.

According to his understanding of the physics of wage-labor, wage-labor gives labor an external existence not owned by the laborer; it gives objects "alien" and "hostile" characteristics; it denies man life and makes man unhappy; it ruins man's body and man's mind. Thus, a man divorced from his labor performs labor under conditions of coercion and his labor is not then for the satisfaction of his needs but for the maintenance of his functional needs of food, drink and sex, which, when they become ultimate ends, are "animalistic" (Marx 1993:108-110).

This analysis does not have a physically accurate basis: objects are independent and external to the person producing them, however they are produced. Perhaps if we grew things on or in our bodies then we would say that objects are truly dependent and internal to humans. Also, labor cannot instill in objects human characteristics (i.e. objects cannot be classified as hostile). We may call an object human-like and it may have characteristics that make it act as if it has volition, and we may create objects that have the capacity to be destructive, but they are not destructive without our command and instruction. Objects do not act freely.

Wage-labor cannot deny man life because it does not have the power to do so. Man denies man life and man's labor can only be coerced if there are no other survival options available. It can be said that in nineteenth century England man was often coerced to perform wage labor because land was inaccessible. Lastly, if a person decides that food, drink and sex are all they desire, then who is so brave to say, in the light of man's volitional nature, and of the fact that man has preferences, that such desires are wrong?

Marx's attempt to create a dichotomy within the concept of labor was not successful. He posited wage-labor as alienating without promoting actual change in the method of production. He saw wage-labor as confining, boring, and merely for the sake of putting enough food in one's belly until the next working day but, in fact, labor for survival often has these characteristics. A question to answer is who is responsible for securing our survival. If it is the individual's responsibility, then options for doing so should remain open. Since survival cannot be adequately accomplished haphazardly, it is not surprising that humans and animals have applied structure, routine and redundancy to

their labor. This is not an attribute peculiar to Western culture, it is an attribute of any culture or individual securing its survival in a methodical manner.

Lastly, food, drink and sex are not superfluous to our existence and their making normally requiring intense social interaction which are not easily replaced by activities like the forced political re-education sessions Chinese people had to endure. Who needs to be told through re-education that a lack of power makes one's life miserable when the same thing can be accomplished with a kilo of *jiaoza* (stuffed dumplings), a few shots of *bai jiu* (rice whiskey) and a great *pengyou* (friend).

Alienation of man from man

The effects of this aspect of alienation on the laborer are twofold. Firstly, because the laborer does not own the product the product becomes an alien power over the laborer. Because the product belongs to someone else, this someone else also becomes an alien, hostile and independent power over the laborer. Secondly, because of the lack of ownership, the laborer creates and perpetuates the domination of someone else over him (Marx 1993:115-116). Man is alienated from man because his relationship to labor creates his relationship to the owner of private property.

What needs to be clarified is Marx's definition of "owner" and this is tricky since either he did not want to, or could not because it was not theoretically convenient, state who owned ideas. If the owner is the creator of the idea that is eventually the object produced, then we have found a contradiction in Marx's premise that "an unowned product is an alien power". Thus, an object is not the property of the laborer, and an object is not alien to the owner since the object is the owner's. The existence of patent and copyright laws that protect owners, and reprisals for plagiarism, should be of no

surprise to the Marxist. The originator of ideas is the owner and the laborer voluntarily enters the production process at a very late stage in the life of the idea. If such labor activity is not voluntary, then we are not discussing a free-labor market but an abusive use of man.

If the originator of ideas is not man, as an individual, or a group, then where do ideas come from? Marx claims man's self-consciousness is objectified if and when man acts like "species" man: it is the product of man's mind which proves man is an "objective natural being" (Tucker 1978:115). This said, then who owns man's ideas? For it is not the idea from the mind of the laborer that is most often produced, it is the product of the person(s) who invented the object. Therefore, Marx's definition of "species" man takes on a new characteristic: species man is really the inventor, which, unfortunately, still leaves the laborer between a rock and a hard place.

What we have shown in this section is that Marx's theory of alienation did not consider all forms of labor, all forms of capital and its formation, all forms of survival activities, nor discussed the consequences of the lack of survival options. His conceptualizations about labor and life, consciousness and man are biased against non-transforming, non-industrial labor. Marx's four aspects of alienation are shown to be physically impossible and it was shown that he erroneously assigned characteristics to labor under capitalism which must, of necessity, be present if man is to secure his survival successfully. Regardless of the century, the economic system, or the prevailing political philosophy of the day, man necessarily performs labor in a routine manner so not to survive in a haphazard manner.

A literature review of contemporary alienation theorists follows. It will be shown how Marx's errors of definition were perpetuated and elaborated upon with similar, if not worse, results. The views of these philosophers not only perpetuate Marx's errors but also contradict Marx. Emphasis on the Marxist definition of man is continued in the review.

Literature Review and Analysis of Modern Theory

According to Peikoff, definitions should “state the feature that most significantly distinguishes the units; it must state the fundamental. "Fundamental" here means the characteristic responsible for all the rest of the units' distinctive characteristics...The definitional principle is: wherever possible, an essential characteristic must be a fundamental" (Peikoff 1991:99). As will be shown below, the conceptual hurdle of determining man's distinctive characteristic was far too awkward for Marxist theorists to overcome. Fromm, Mészáros and Ollman have written about Marx's understanding of man's essence and attempted to enlarge the discussion.

For them, man's relations were the starting point for their understanding of man. They had no interest in using a rigorous definition of man and this is adequately exemplified by some of their statements. Such as: the "equality" of men is more important than the "nature" of man (Mészáros 1970:40), the "nature of man" as a concept has fictitious roots (Mészáros 1970:42), and man's nature is not "open to direct kinds of evidence" (Ollman 1976:xiii). Despite that Marxists produced tomes using a methodology they attempted to pass off as scientific, they could not be bothered to actually define man. What stopped them? We must know what man is in order to use the concept of equality in reference to man. They give us the definition of private property, capital, objectification of labor, but the whole point of all of this is what happens to man because of these secondary concepts. The protest of this glaring neglect cannot be made strongly and often enough: a theory that does not define its prime object of consideration cannot be digested, nor understood. One suggestion of why they do not define man is

because doing so means they can no longer cloak their work in ambiguity. Despite being comfortable with these errors, they eventually contradict themselves. For example, Ollman bemoans the lack of evidence to determine man's nature or essence but then claims that Dietzgen rendered "significant service" to Marx by describing the way man "systematizes, classified or ordered" the "sensuous world" in forms digestible for consumption (Ollman 1976:38-39). This process of ordering and classifying that which exists is the "first step of knowledge" and the next step is "...to view things as units" (Peikoff 1976:73). "Without the implicit concept of "unit," man could not reach the conceptual method of knowledge. Without the same implicit concept, there is something else he could not do: he could not count, measure, identify quantitative relationships; he could not enter the field of mathematics" (Peikoff 1976:76). Then, if Ollman could see that Dietzgen identified the manner in which man thought, he should not have said that there were no "direct kinds of evidence" to describe man's nature. The word "man" specifically identifies an entity that has been distinguished from other entities and this cannot occur without evidence. Marxist theorists must return, if even unconsciously, to the axiom that man is a conscious, reasoning entity and that this characterizes man's essence.

Fromm noted that Marx's method of investigation was characterized by studying the economic and social aspects of human existence and the manner in which this affected man's thoughts and feelings, but that it was never Marx's intention to inquire about how man constructed ideas (Fromm 1973:9-11). This is regrettable since further inquiry into man's conceptualization process would have helped him define man better. Ollman tried to save Marx on this point by stating that Marx's "scattered descriptions" of

man's productive activity could only be grouped together under the header of "rational" activity with consciousness an element of this activity. He claims Marx refrained from using the word "rational" because it was "alien to his system" (Ollman 1976:112-113). Not only was it alien, it completely changes the sequence of the stages of the development of consciousness as per Marx's conception of it. Ollman betrayed Marx's theory in a significant manner. To say man is rational and then productive, suggests that prior to productive activity man is a conscious agent. For Marx, prior to productive activity man is not human, has no essence and is not conscious. Contrarily, Engels claimed man was "endowed with consciousness" (Engels 1996:48). This is not an insignificant contradiction: if man is endowed with consciousness then the entity man is inherently a conscious being prior to being a productive agent, of whatever type and, hence, social relations of production do not create consciousness.

Mészáros claimed to have stripped man to his essence "without prejudicial assumptions" by defining man's essence in terms of needs and powers (Mészáros 1970:165-6), which is different from Marx's definition and the more significant of his definitions because its implications are more serious than others. Ollman defined the "powers" of the natural man as "labor, eating and sex" seen "everyday in all animals" (Ollman 1976:81) and the needs as "desires" (Ollman 1976:75-77). Man as species man is "self-consciousness" (Ollman 1976:82) and man's species powers are, according to Ollman, the five senses, thinking, awareness, wanting, activity, sensing, procreativity, sex, knowing and judging. He explains that the transition from what is natural to what is species occurs when behaviors are humanified by being conceived of as unnatural, as human (Ollman 1976:84). Thus sex is animal-like until it is conceived of as human-like.

This is ambiguous and this ambiguity is precisely where Marx's method of differentiation between what is natural and what is species behavior leads to conceptual problems by duplicating concepts and creating false dichotomies. For example, we now have two concepts of man: natural man versus species man. We have two concepts of sex: natural sex versus species sex. Two concepts of labor: labor versus unalienated labor. Two concepts of eating: natural eating habits versus species eating habits (Ollman 1976:90). The falseness of these dichotomies lies in the fact that a concept cannot be its opposite. Thus man cannot be non-man, sex is sex, animal mating is animal mating, labor is labor. To be non-human is to be something other than human, so, either man, as an entity, is human or is not. The concept man cannot be left to contradict itself. Marx's dialectics creates false dichotomies of concepts.

Ollman claims that natural powers become species powers when species powers become the means whereby man expresses himself (Ollman 1976:84). Marx's definition of human describes an object-producing, object-owning, appreciator-of-art. Anyone who falls outside of this category is not human, is a nullity and therefore is not capable of living the "species" life and not capable of Ollman's idea of humanified activities. Marx and Ollman do not give us a definition of what humanified sex is other than to say that it is simply not animal-like (Ollman 1976:84). It is interesting to note that Mészáros differentiated between primitive and human (instead of natural and species) needs by the fact that human ones are "socially" mediated (Mészáros 1970:171). On the contrary, Shaw defines sex as a material relation and, according to him a material relation is one type of a relation of production which governs the process of labor. This means that sex must necessarily be for the purpose of production, that it contributes to man's "action on

nature” and regulation of his “mutual access to the productive forces and, as a consequence, to the products of production" (Shaw 1978:28). Interesting topics for future research could be how someone could develop an interest in mediated sex, and how many people perceive this activity as regulating their access to the products and forces of production. Although not without its humorous side, it is a pity that sex is discussed in Marxist literature not just because it is discussed poorly but because volition and preference, two driving characteristics of sexual activities, are absent from Marx’s understanding of man.

Partiality and Universality

Mészáros describes dialectical formalism as tricky unless it is understood that it is not contradictory for Marx to say that man is both human and natural, rather than one or the other or for there to be unity in opposites. He also chastises theorists for not understanding man as the "universal being of nature", because man is the "specific being of nature whose unique specificity consists precisely in its unique universality as opposed to the limited partiality of all the other beings of nature" (Mészáros 1970:13). It quickly becomes apparent why such obfuscatory language inspires confusion. His analysis is a conceptual jungle. To say "as opposed to the limited partiality of all the other beings" assumes that entities contain natural deficits and superiority rears its head in the phrase "limited partiality". For example, in what way is a lion limited? It is what it is, it has the characteristics it has, it is classified as a lion and all entities sharing characteristics of lions we call lions. A lion is not limited because it is not human: it functions within its nature of being a lion.

It is incorrect for Marx to say man as an entity is universal because man is not a characteristic but an entity with characteristics. Grey stones have the universal characteristic of being grey but may have individual/particular characteristics such as different shapes. The stones are not universal the color is and would be the defining characteristic by which we would group, if it desirable, grey stones. Thus to say "specific being of nature whose unique specificity consists precisely in its unique universality" is meaningless.

The error of "unity in opposites" is that characteristics cannot oppose themselves or unite. An entity can have more than one characteristic but it is, most often for humans, a matter of volition to choose which characteristics to express. A good man contradicts himself by being evil, but evil and good as concepts do not have power to oppose each other or the power to combine forces. This requires an actor.

Consciousness and Productive Activity

Mészáros' trinity of fundamental terms of the theory of alienation that he claims are vital for understanding human essence are: man, nature and industry. He says industry, or productive activity are the cause of the "growing complexity of human society" through the creation of needs and the "means of asserting the supremacy of man" (Mészáros 1970:103-104). Here supremacy acts as an agent of partialization and this conception of the industrial man as supreme overlooks the value of non-industrial activities and cultures. While some philosophers may claim a particular type of reasoning allows man to function differently from other creatures, Mészáros claims "productive activity is the source of consciousness" and "the mediator between man and nature"

(Mészáros 1970:81), thereby providing us with a false origin of consciousness. Productive activity cannot possibly be the source of man's consciousness because man is born with the capacity of consciousness. Man is a conscious being prior to productive activity. The mediator between man and nature is man's capacity to reason, without which nothing could be produced or comprehended. If, as Mészáros claims, the results of productive activity are the "transformations" of nature and then the creation of consciousness (Mészáros 1970:79), then beavers should be quite conscious creatures.

Ollman suggests that man's consciousness "in capitalism" is directed towards staying alive because "such concentration is necessary if he is to be successful" (Ollman 1976:152). Again, this is not a characteristic of man under capitalism, it is a characteristic of Bedouins looking for water, women changing diapers, fisherman repairing their nets. A reading of the literature suggests that Marxists, perhaps from lack of direct experience, do not appreciate that the average person is quite cognizant of the fact that they may sweat, get dirty and necessarily work long hours to stay alive.

In Marxist theory the primacy of action over thought is continuously encountered. It is repeated throughout Mészáros' analysis leading directly to his conclusion that idealization of an unmediated (non-transforming) relationship between man and nature produces the contradiction that from it "not a single feature of the dynamism of human history can be derived" (Mészáros 1970:105). Idealization cannot create this contradiction and Mészáros merely points out that not all human activities contribute to technical or intellectual progress, like his book. His approach overlooks the many virtuous qualities of non-technical cultures and activities in a jarring and ignorant manner. He decided that he knew the value and purpose of labor and in one swoop

denied the value of geriatric-care, and child-care, to name two tasks which do not transform nature and, depending on the skill of the laborer, may not necessarily have consciousness-raising effects. These are activities that do not involve the production of objects, they simply must be done and do contribute to the "dynamism of human history" if done well.

It would have served Mészáros well to study Eskimo culture which has survived six thousand or more years (Fruechen 1951) by recycling nature without necessarily transforming it. They had strict division of labor (Marx ascribed this to a capitalistic economy), and no private property or wage labor. It is not the only example of a people who have lived on the delicate edge of survival without transforming the world around them through industrial production. Mészáros absorbed Marx's opinion that a man who merely satisfied his natural powers is an entity without intellectual ability or self-awareness (Ollman 1976:80). Ollman noted that Marx considered such people to be incapable of reproducing nature or creating objects of beauty (Ollman 1976:80). Are Eskimos lacking of intellectual ability, self-awareness and the capacity to create beautiful objects? Of a people who have brazenly faced nature and forged their existence under hazardous conditions for centuries, it trite to presume that the fact of their enduring survival is insignificant.

Mészáros' disdain of an immediate relationship with nature hinders him from truly elaborating a "genuinely" human account of history and, in the manner of Marx, calls a life dedicated to abstract ideas "inhuman" (Mészáros 1970:171). The industrial revolution would never have happened without the human preoccupation with abstract thought. Kahn falls into this conceptual bog when stating there must be "an external

material for the application of labour", basing his statement on Marx's belief that labor produces nothing without nature, and that man and nature are only united through labor on physical materials (Kahn 1995:210). Thus they deny that there are many forms of labor activities, of which thought is one.

Marx had an exclusive view of history as man's natural history, as a documentary of the process of man's "coming to be" through productive activity. It takes little to ferret out the value Marxism accords to those men who have not "come to be": "The nature which comes to being human history...is man's real nature...hence nature as it comes to be through industry, even though in an estranged form, is true anthropological nature" (Mészáros 1970:171). Here we find a clue about Mészáros' disdain for men living in a manner that does not transform nature for built into his analysis is the superiority of the productive-industrial man, the transformer of nature whose productive activity equals human fulfillment (Mészáros 1970:167). Yet, productivity is an act of man that requires not only reflex. Man's power of reasoning can change the way he produces but if it is material productivity that changes man's nature, then those who engage in abstract, intellectual activities should be, intellectually, like babies. He would also have to explain why he thought education, essentially abstract, was the only way out of the crises he perceived in the 1970s (Mészáros 1970:21).

This object-object reciprocity of need is supposed to create in man human appetites and human tendencies, and cause man to develop a human nature "as it comes to be through industry" (Mészáros 1970:171). This ignores non-industrial cultures whose human appetites and tendencies can be far more civilized than industrial ones. Ollman notes that under communism "As communist objects, human beings possess those

necessary attributes which enable others to achieve complete fulfillment through them" (Ollman 1976:107). Here, the definition of man changes again to being an object appropriable, useable, by other humans, similar to Roberts' claim that under "communism the individual is exploited by the community rather than by individuals" (Roberts 1983:80). Both of which comments are highly irregular considering that Marx was adamant about freeing the individual from exploitation.

Thus, to abandon objects like a minimalist or Buddhist is to confirm one's alienation. "'Self-consciousness" that divorces itself from the world of objects...does not oppose alienation but, on the contrary, confirms it. This is why Marx scorns the abstract philosopher who "sets up himself...as the *measuring-rod*" of the estranged world (Tucker 1978:110). The objectivity of this philosopher is false objectivity, because he deprives himself of all real objects" (Mészáros 1970:171). Mészáros claimed that self-consciousness is not an individual matter and is not chosen freely and he must believe this because according to Marxist analysis it is a result only of productive activity. Self-consciousness cannot oppose the "world of objects" (Mészáros 1970:171) because then it would be opposing its progenitor which is productive activity. For Mészáros, there are only two options: relinquish objectivity of the natural being, or insist on objectification as the only mode of existence for a "natural being" (Mészáros 1970:172). Naturally, Mészáros adheres to the second principle, but the cost is to deny relevance, value and a right to be included in human history of all peoples who do not fit into Marx's conception of human. Indeed, Marx claimed that an "objectless subject" cannot properly be called human (Mészáros 1970:177).

Marx perceived objects as products of "sensuous human activity" (Fromm 1973:11) and ignored the value of those activities which are not object-producing or object-consuming. The need of objects does not distinguish man from other entities, nor can Mészáros prove that entities exist for the purpose of confirming man's "essential powers" as he claims (Mészáros 1970:169). It is simply not verifiable. How does one prove that the sun exists for the flower? One cannot. According to Marx "A being which is not itself an object for some third being has no being for its object; i.e. it is not objectively related. Its be-ing is not objective. An unobjective being is a nullity - an un-being" (Marx 1993:182, Tucker 1978:116). This assumes that the sun has a purpose, when in fact it is simply a star burning out, like millions of others. We do not say that stars have purpose for they exist regardless of how we chose to interpret their existence or the effects of their existence: they simply exist. Marx artificially assigned relationships between entities that cannot be verified. He chose to perceive man only in terms of his relationships and hence Mészáros would conclude that an entity cannot have an essence, it can only have a "specific objective relation" to other objects (Mészáros 1970:169). Marx made objectification axiomatic but there are physical problems with this:

- it assumes all men need, want and use the same objects;
- it assumes all men have the same powers, needs and wants;
- it assumes objects exist and necessarily have counterparts;
- if it is true that entities have no essence, than it means objects are indistinguishable from one another.

There are problems with the conclusion that entities do not have an essence. Scientifically, according to Giordano, the need to differentiate between entities is

problematic and not always necessary (Giordano 1997) but physically it is impossible to state that entities can exist without having an essence for "to be is to be something, to have a nature, to possess identity" (Peikoff 1991:6). If we state that entity A has an objective relationship to entity B then we are claiming that both exist and we cannot ignore that an agreed upon process has been established whereby we define entities and, in order to define them, we must have determined their essence.

Although Marx deduced the concept of alienation from man's proximity to ownership of the means of production, he ultimately traced it to Judaism. The next section inquires into the historical roots of the concepts of alienation, partialization and commoditization as used by Marxist theorists. This gives us another example of the arbitrary manner in which Marx constructed his theory and definitions but, more importantly, it shows how the concept of "partiality" is a false problem.

Historical roots of alienation

Although Marx derived the concept of alienation from man's proximity to ownership of the means of production (i.e. man's experience under capitalism) he ultimately traced it to Judaism, and Mészáros and Fromm support this linkage. On the other hand, Mandel and Novack cite alienation as rooted in capitalism, not in history prior to it (Mandel 1976:7) and they state that Marx's first understanding of alienation was that of the individual resigning their rights to the state (Mandel 1976:14). Kahn also questions Marx's use of this religion as the origin of alienation (Kahn 1995:27).

Critical of the connection between the "money system" and Judaism, Marx does not explain why many Jewish people became involved in this sector. Nor does he do

justice to historical facts proving that money and commoditization existed before the religion started by Abraham, whose existence has been questioned (Roth 1969:11-12). The Code of Hammurabi (King 1915) refers to capital, rent, credit, debt, and contractual relations, which are concepts pre-dating the existence of the Jewish religion. And what is trade but the result of commoditization? The Egyptians were engaged in trade of haemitite, granite and alabaster in 4000 B.C.E. (Mazar 1990:87).

Meltzer notes that during the Middle Ages Jewish people had been forced out of the farming sector because they were not allowed to own Christian slaves due to a fear that they would convert them (Meltzer 1993:224). If they were ostracized from certain economic sectors, which resulted in their developing skills in finance, Marx makes no mention of it. Although Hobsbawm notes they were officially discriminated against and were left to the sectors of commerce and finance in the eighteenth century (Hobsbawm 1996:195).

Central to Mészáros' analysis is what he calls the Judeo-Christian idea of partiality derived from the concept of "chosen people", a concept he believed negated "structural relations of class society". For Mészáros, any understanding of alienation which does not have class relations as the pivot of inquiry is inevitably incorrect, as are those approaches which perceive alienation and partiality as determined by nature (Mészáros 1970:38). The question arises of why Marx, Mészáros and Fromm began with this religion ignoring history anterior to it? For evidence of partiality they could have read about the priest class in Egyptian history for even older records of the existence of a class society (Rawlinson 1993:56-62). Indeed, the problem of partiality is moot as we are all individuals, partials, or particulars whose existence encompasses all our

characteristics, such as our personalities. We are physically individual beings, as opposed to being physically attached to other entities and to suggest otherwise is to create a false concept of "person" which is necessary, though, if Marx is to convince us of the logic of his theory. Individualism is axiomatic and amenable to be empirical verification and thus the problem of partiality is a false problem.

Equating, in a bizarre manner, the "spirit of Judaism" with the "spirit of capitalism" (Tucker 1978:50), Mészáros suggested that the former was the "internal principle of European social development culminating in the emergence of a stabilization of capitalistic society". Also, that Judaism and Christianity "express the contradiction of "partiality versus universality" which is an internal contradiction of the spirit of capitalism (Mészáros 1970:30). Garraty, on the other hand, connects the "spirit of capitalism" with the Puritan ethics regarding work and the pursuit of wealth (Garraty 1978:39). Perhaps Marx would have replied that Puritan ethics were merely manifestations of Judaism operating covertly (Tucker 1978:52).

Ollman says that the "organic and historical movements of the capitalist mode of production "begin in feudalism" (Ollman 1993:16) and this contradicts Marx, Fromm and Mészáros. Since contradictions are one of the four relations examined in dialectics, it actually should be used by Marxists to examine their own theory. Ollman claims dialectics is of critical importance because it focuses attention on historical causation and, yet, Marx could not have been more wrong in placing the origin of capitalism on the Jewish religion. Historical starting points in Marxism are grossly arbitrary. A reading of Abu-Lughod shows that Marxists more than over-looked history, in fact they did not even bother to do their research (Abu-Lughod 1989).

Universality succeeds because "partiality is suppressed" (Mészáros 1970:30). Here, the characteristic of universality has developed a new twist: man was unique because of his universality (Mészáros 1970:13) but now universality involves suppression, thus for man to be defined as universal necessarily means particulars, partials, must be suppressed, meaning man suppresses himself. In answering the question of how a particular evolves, Marx and Mészáros claim the Judeo religious concept of "alienation of man from god" was secularized through the concept of "saleability" whereby everything is converted into a commodity and sold (Mészáros 1970:35). Prior to Judaism, Davies claims that between 9000-6000 B.C., cattle and plant products were used as money, which is over 5000 years before the Jewish religion existed (Davies 1996:41-44). The Code of Hammurabi, written before the existence of this religion, refers to concepts and social relations far more complex than buying and selling, as noted above. Hammurabi conquered the Sumerians, a non-Semitic people, who had already an established class society, system of interest rates and credit, slavery, the cuneiform of writing, and a criminal justice system (Meltzer 1993:9-15).

It is appropriate to note that the Semitic ethnicity of the Jews was not the object of Marx's criticism, it was their religion. If Marx was anti-Semitic, that would mean he was also anti-Arab, which is not the same as being anti-Islam since not all Arab people follow the religion of Islam.

For Mészáros, people are "reified" under capitalism, converted into commodities, and are isolated individuals pursuing their own particular goals "in servitude of egoistic need make a virtue of their selfishness in their cult of privacy" (Mészáros 1970:34-35). The vehicles of usury and Christianity severed the

"species-bonds" of man and created a world of "atomistic, antagonistic individuals" (Mészáros 1970:29). Here Mészáros introduces the concept of "usury", which as we have already shown predates the religious group he discusses. He does not even mention when or how the concept of banking developed.

"According to the Code of Hammurabi loans repaid in silver carried an interest of 20%, while if the loan was repaid in barley, the rate was 33%" (Dalton 1968:282). In 2000 B.C. while interest was being paid on loans in Babylon, Abraham, the father of this religion was not born yet, if even he existed (Meltzer 1993:37). Usury did not commence from within the Jewish religion since this religion was non-existent when Hammurabi was charging extremely high interest rates. The literature debates the dates of Hammurabi but overwhelmingly places Hammurabi's existence prior to the Jewish religion.

Mészáros' citation of the Jewish concept of alienation as the source and inspiration of commoditization neglects to consider that over three thousand five-hundred years span the time between this concept and the formation of capitalism, not an insignificant detail. Although not constrained by facts, his use of Judaism as starting point neglects history. Other examples prove the Judeo starting point is arbitrary. For example, the concept of humans as commodities is found in human experience prior and external to Judaism. Not much effort is required to find supporting evidence:

- in Malabar and Travancore India, slavery was abolished in principle in 1843 and 1855 respectively (Varghese 1970:42-46);
- a quote from Ibn Saud, the first king of Saudi Arabia, while he was visiting Egypt: "This country is full of beautiful women and I would like to buy some and take them back home. How about £100,000 worth of them?" (Aburish 1994:32);

- "Documents from around the time of 2000 B.C. show that a healthy male slave was worth about eleven silver shekels" (Meltzer 1993:12);
- Hammurabi's Code of Law details the legalities of slave ownership (Meltzer 1993:5, King 1915);
- in Babylon (2000 B.C.) "the principle differentiation of money-objects was firmly established...rents, wages, and taxes were paid in barley, while the standard of value was universally silver... "1 Shekel of silver=1 gur of barley" (Dalton 1968:188);
- in the 4th Century B.C. the Wei, the ruling Chinese tribe of the moment, used state slaves for cultivation (Gernet 1986:191).

Those who follow someone who starts a new religion and engage in trade, should not be unjustly charged with engaging in normal human activities which have existed for eons by, as Dalton says, institutionalizing "exchanges of material items and services within communities" (Dalton 1968:xv). This is precisely the mediation Mészáros praised and used as proof man's becoming civilized.

Alienation and commoditization, as per Mészáros' definitions, had more than one incubator, not just a "religious shell". Millenia before European capitalism, and far more prevalent than he disclosed, there existed an "affirmative attitude" of viewing people as commodities. Liberty, says Mészáros, is a "religious glorification of the secular principle of "universal saleability" (Mészáros 1970:33). Telling a slave that the physical realization of his liberty would only mean his labor would be alienated in another way, through "contractual abdication" of his freedom (Mészáros 1970:34), is contradictory since the word contractual implies agreement.

Instead of viewing wage-labor as alienating, Marx could have perceived it as progressive under other conditions. Slavery continues to plague humanity and to have developed a paid, eight-hour, working day appears highly evolutionary. Banerjee states that under capitalism there is no "inherent satisfaction or supreme purpose in labor" (Banerjee 1995:7) and quotes Mészáros and Dunayevskaya blaming capitalism for the development of "mediating institutions", for making labor a "monotonous grind" and for "preventing the fulfilment" of man's potential (Banerjee 1995:4). Polanyi has also shown how, from ancient to modern times, communities have formed "mediating institutions". This is not a characteristic of only capitalism (Dalton 1968). Banerjee appropriates the ideas of the two when stating uncritically that labor under capitalism is "neither a stable nor a predictable source of survival, even though it is the worker's only source of survival" (Banerjee 1995:5). In fact, labor, or more specifically, employment, is never completely stable or predictable unless, for example, you can employ yourself on your own land. If land had been available during the time Marx wrote about the conditions of the laborer in Britain, wage-labor need not have been the only source of survival. Garraty makes it explicitly clear what happens when laborers lack opportunity and how, from ancient to modern times, the problem has been managed (Garraty 1978). And to Kahn's comment that "...man is from the beginning a natural and socially active being that seeks to satisfy the totality of its needs through labor..." (Kahn 1995:193), Garraty has a rather stinging rebuttal.

It must be asked who is responsible for assigning to an act of labor the value of satisfaction or purpose? Some women like their reproductive capacity to determine their role in life, therefore, children can be a source of satisfaction. This example defies

Banerjee and Mészáros' conclusions that capitalism alone "conflates human essence with biological human nature" (Banerjee 1995:7). Assigning value to labor is the prerogative of the laborer who may just decide to be a bum (Garraty 1978), or a unionized prostitute (Hobson 1990:x), or a mother. Marx's ideal state of being was man hopping from one activity to another, never specialising in anything, manifesting what Banerjee calls "free and spontaneous labor" (Banerjee 1995:7). They were enamoured by man's capacity for industrial achievement, a capacity that requires precision, dedication, specialization and perseverance, and thus contradicts their theory that suggests man should not specialize in an activity.

Of course labor activities have evolved in content and form. But Banerjee, like Mészáros, makes large chronological jumps, especially when suggesting that the division of labor that disturbed the cooperative production of early collective societies "led to the birth of class societies which, after the Industrial Revolution, divided labor between mental and manual labor..." (Banerjee 1995:8). This is like saying that humans learned how to make a fire and then three thousand years later they categorized civilians as firemen and non-fireman.

According to Mészáros, when relating Marxism to historical moments the analysis becomes situation-specific and there are no axioms only "irreducible elements" which may or may not be relevant. To know that axioms cannot be merely relevant, one need not look far for verification. Assuming Mészáros traveled by airplane, then he benefited from the science which made a "fetish" [his word] (Mészáros 1970:132) of the laws of aerodynamics. Laws which are either true or they are not, regardless if the year is 1955 or 1997, regardless of the economic system under which they are studied and

regardless of who studied them. If these laws are not true airplanes will not fly regardless of the "situation". It is much worse even for man to be subjected to social and political theories that treat him as if he cannot be known, as if he is temporarily relevant, as if he has characteristics that are temporarily relevant, as if there were nothing about his nature that is axiomatic.

Mészáros, like many theorists, wrote from the luxury of an academic life. Most theoreticians do not dirty their hands while promoting the reorganization of society and, often, are not around when the dead must be buried. It is estimated that a minimum of 30 million Chinese people died between 1958-1962 in a horrifying, man-made, and unnecessary famine. The Chinese government party line proving that starvation was not what caused so many people to suffer and die was: "...because proteins, fats and carbohydrates are inter-convertible during metabolic processes, the people of China do not suffer any nutritional loss in consequence of their diet's deficiency in fats and proteins" (Becker 1996:200). In line with Mészáros' logic of relevance, fats and proteins became irrelevant and the human metabolic system was conveniently redefined. Yet, when the starving eventually ate proteins, fats and carbohydrates they lived. Where was Mao during the famine? Li said he was often in bed suffering depression having given up eating meat to show solidarity with his starving countrymen (Li 1996:339-340).

Curiously, Coleman and Salt, when writing about the conditions of the poor in eighteenth century Britain stated that death due to starvation "seems to have been rare in Britain". Then they say, with strange logic, "Improved diet would have reduced death rates primarily because well fed people are better able to fight off infectious diseases"

(Coleman 1992:51). Which is a nice way to say British people did not starve, they just succumbed to the consequences of not having enough to eat.

When Mészáros says that unless the "elements" are relevant they do not exist (Mészáros 1970:23), his logic becomes logic of convenience. Logic of convenient relevance leads to disposability of facts, a fatal possibility when life and the planet become disposable. A quote from Mao, in discussion with Nehru, is an example of this: "China has many people. They cannot be bombed out of existence. If someone else can drop an atomic bomb, I can too. The deaths of ten or twenty million people is nothing to be afraid of" (Li 1996:125). This portrays well the Marxian principle of "essence varying according to purpose" (Ollman 1993:45) for on one hand Mao wanted 600 million dialecticians (Ollman 1993:v) and on the other, dialecticians or not, his countrymen were essentially expendable.

The "dialectical concept of partiality prevailing as universality" (i.e. egoistic driven economic activity), which Marx used to explain the contradiction of capitalism and produce a plan for the transcendence of alienation, spurred Marx to divorce man from his ego which he defined as a materialistic condition (Mészáros 1970:33). Despite writing with disdain of "crude, individualistic self-interest", Mészáros does not examine the other side of this conceptual coin: if individuals are ego-less, that leaves the predator of the day, the tyrant, the dictator to suppress and dispose of them at will, without opposition. Egoism is a protective condition not necessary to transcend but to cultivate.

If as Mészáros claims, egoistic partiality (man for himself) is raised to a level of universality (all men laboring for their own purposes) through the "capitalist self-interest turned into the ruling principle of society" it must be asked when men have ever desired

to neglect their own interests. Marx wanted to enable a character of man that he envisaged, a man free of "self-interest" (Mészáros 1970:32). But, it is not in man's nature to be free of self-interest because man is a creature of thought, preference and volition, the expressions of which can determine everything from the creation of new technology to mating.

Contradictions that pained Marx were the benefits of mass production and satisfaction of a multitude of needs versus inequitable remuneration, poor housing and poverty versus great riches. Some of these have existed under many different conditions throughout human history regardless of how those in power have defined man, the structure of a particular society and the willingness of the participants to participate in these contradictions. Although he claimed his premises were men in "their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions" and that this approach was the beginning of a "positive science", it is not scientific to try to understand man by only observing his activities. Understanding man also requires an understanding of the method by which man comprehends.

Ollman concluded that it was not a priority for him to concentrate on the origins of Marx's ideas until they are "well enough" known so that "what does and does not count as origins" can be determined (Ollman 1976:xvi). The opposite view is taken here because it is very important to know if Marx's theory is based on true premises before using the premises and corollary premises of the theory as he does, to discuss the theory, its applicability and its veracity.

Mandel, Novack, Ollman and Shaw attempt to lay at the door of capitalism age old ills such as crime (Mandel 1976:25), "inequalities, irrational waste of people and

resources, blatant biases" and "sickening hypocrisies" (Ollman 1993:2), and the pursuit of profit and property (Shaw 1978:146) as if these were new phenomena. What could better illustrate the above ills than a reading of history prior to capitalism? This historically blind approach permeates alienation literature. Bright notes that in 2400 B.C. "reforms of Urukagina of Lagash" were directed at putting a stop to the exploitation of the poor (Bright 1959:35). Apparently, there is nothing new under the sun.

Although Ollman wanted to instruct his readers on how dialectics ensures that change and interaction are understood and not distorted (Ollman 1993:24), he suggested the above are characteristics only of capitalism. Clearly the use of capitalism as a "jumping-off point for an examination of anything that takes place within it" is a historically ignorant method (Ollman 1993:12). Contradicting himself, he claims that dialectics attempts to explain everything that happens in capitalism by the process through which it came to exist.

Conclusion

Marx transferred to labor a special status that is not natural or objective. From the "standpoint of labour", instead of thought, Marx understood society as developing through the laborer which he considered a historical force (Mészáros 1970:64). This special-ness, one may be tempted to say "chosen-ness", is arbitrarily assigned and does not consider what the wage-laborer would have labored over were it not for thought and, more than that, someone else's. For Mészáros, Marx's "historical novelty" is that his theory is

- based on a "necessity" of human existence (i.e. labor),

- took a universal point of view of labor, and
- critiqued society through the material conditions of the laborer (Mészáros 1970:65).

The "novelty" of the theory is questionable considering that many people survive without laboring as per Marx's definition and that material conditions of laborers were, even when Marx wrote, drastically different in various sectors of the economy, in different countries, for different reasons.

In the next chapter, a comparison is made of nineteenth century France and England. The two countries were chosen because they both industrialized in a capitalistic manner, their populations, territorial size and extent of technological progress were sufficiently similar during the nineteenth century to provide a basis for comparison of how they treated the agricultural sector.

CHAPTER 3 – Private Property and Social Well Being

"It is frequently stated - chiefly by those who do not believe in peasant proprietary, or are prejudiced against it - that there is no demand for small holdings. The favorite phrase is "there is no land hunger" among the people of this country.

After ages of successful efforts to squeeze the peasantry off the land and to destroy every link that connected them personally with the soil, there is a fine irony in the statement that there is "no land hunger in England." It is a statement which, if true, is a sad proof of the completeness with which the work has been done." (Collings 1906:205).

Marx neglected to consider the role of land ownership in social well being. Data are presented in this chapter to suggest that social well being in France, in the nineteenth century, was enhanced by land access and that the denial of private property in England, as capital in the form of land, was devastating.

Number of Landowners in Nineteenth Century France and England

According to the HM Land Registry office, the responsible government office for recording land registration, there have been "very few general surveys of land ownership in England (Historically landowners have been hostile to such surveys)." In

1998, the Registry office also stated "there is still no published information on the number of landowners in England" though seventy percent of the land is registered (Mayer 1998). Due to a scarcity of information, Table 1 presents few data but shows that the number of landowners in England remained low throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century while in France the figure continued to rise.

YEAR	FRANCE	ENGLAND
1789-1801	4.0 million owners (Doyle 1992:192)	
1821-1824	6.2 million owners (Dupeux 1976:107)	
1848		4.0 thousand owners (Hobsbawm 1996:150,325)
1851	7.8 million owners (Probyn 1881:292)	
1871		4.0 thousand owners (Hobsbawm 1996:150,325)
1873		7.0 thousand owners (Mayer 1998)
1881	8.0 million owners (Probyn 1881:292)	

Table 1: Landowners in France and England in the nineteenth century.

Table 2 illustrates the movement of labor from the rural sectors and government expenditure on social security. Social security expenditure in France included health, social security, and pensions and in England it included social security, public health, housing and education (Flora 1987:382-449). Social security expenditure is used to operationalize the concept of social well being, or the absence of alienation, since the response to poor health and unemployment was the necessary raising of taxation and government spending. An anticipated result is that the higher the percentage of the population engaged in the agricultural sector, the lower will be expenditure on social security. Although the data does not appear to show great disparity between the

expenditures, it is interesting in reference to the respective number of landowners and percentage of the population engaged in the agricultural sector. The expenditure of England always surpassed that of France in the nineteenth century. This situation begins to change and fluctuate in 1900, but by 1921 the percentage of the population engaged in agricultural labor was one-seventh of that of France and the percentage of government expenditure on social security was almost double that of France (Flora 1987).

France in 1896, as can be seen in the table, for apparently the first time gathered information on the percentage of "out of work" and "unknown" elements in the agricultural sector (Flora 1987:498). This may partially explain the labor force increase in the sector.

It is suggested that one way to illustrate the extent of well being, or the absence of alienation, is by observing what a government must spend on those who may not "own" a means of survival. In comparing France and England of the nineteenth century, it appears that where more owners existed, in our case landowners, social security expenditure was lower.

Year	France			England				
	Population size	% Labor force in agric. sector	% Central Gov. exp. on social security	Number of Landowners (from Table 1)	Population size	% Labor force in agric. sector	% General/Central Gov. exp. on social security	Number of Landowners (from Table 1)
1790		75.0 ^c					8.7 (general)	
1801				4.0 million	10.5 million	36.0		
1803								
1811					11.9 million	33.0 ^b		
1815		75.0 ^c						
1821				6.2 million	20.9 million	28.4		
1822			2.3					
1830		70-73.0 ^c						
1831					24 million	24.6 ^b		
1832			3.4					
1840							9.4 (general)	
1841					26.7 million	22.2		
1842			4.1					
1848		50.0 ^d						4.0 thousand
1851	35.8 million			7.8 million	27.4 million	21.7 ^b		
1852			5.2					
1861	37.4 million				28.9 million	18.7 ^a		
1862			4.8					
1866	38.5 million	49.8 ^c						
1871					31.5 million	15.1 ^b		
1872	36.1 million		4.4					
1873								7.0 thousand
1880			6.0					
1881	37.4 million	39.1		8.0 million	34.9 million	12.6 ^a		
1886	37.9 million	41.4						
1890			7.4				9.8 (central), 20.9 (general)	
1891	38.1 million	40.3			37.7 million	10.4		
1895							12.8 (central), 25.3 (general)	
1896	38.3 million	44.9						
1900			9.4		41.4 million		7.4 (central), 18.0 (general)	
1901	38.4 million	41.8				7.7		

Table 2: Government expenditure on social security and statistics on the agricultural sector. Data derived from Flora, P. "State Economy and Society in Western Europe, 1815-1975" Volumes I and II, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt, 1987, and ^a Coleman 1992:31, ^b Chambers 1966:208, ^c Price 1981:168, ^d Dunham 1955:160

In France the agricultural sector retained a robust percentage of the total population until the middle of the twentieth century. It is proposed but not proven that what may have kept the government expenditure of France lower than that of England was the fact that land ownership in France remained a survival option. Small-scale farming provided employment and certainly was a source of food. Thus is not surprising that the literature often states the French were healthier than the British during the nineteenth century.

The availability of land in France and England in the nineteenth century is discussed below.

Land availability in England

The need to redistribute land to alleviate poverty and give the "agricultural laborer some real interest in the soil" (Brinton 1962:223) was recognized by philosophers who did agitate for land reform. Poverty was encouraged by the lack of land and the Speenhamland Law that allowed the farmer to pay laborers less than a living wage (Bell 1956:30) with the result that the laborer became a "pauper even while he was in full work!" (Trevelyan 1973:468) It also created more poverty in rural areas than in urban. Because destitution was so rampant, poverty was considered by the majority to be an "inexorable law of nature" (Plumb 1951:153-4). That there was a time when destitution was not pervasive is illustrated by Trevelyan's comment "In the past, poverty had been an individual misfortune, now it was a group grievance" (Trevelyan 1973:466).

Quigley wrote about the five-hundred year history of the English Poor Law and never once questioned if homelessness was a result of landlessness (Quigley 1998).

Arthur Young, promoter of enclosure and large-scale agricultural production (Medley 1890:30), heavily criticized the Poor Law for encouraging "tippling" (Garnier 1895:233) but German economists concluded that drunkenness in England was largely due to the fact that the rural population was for the most part landless (Medley 1890:31). It was not enough that land was inaccessible, in addition the poor were forced to wear badges indicating their poverty and their parish of domicile (Garnier 1895:280). Slater implied a relationship between rising poor rates and the practice of enclosure of common fields (Slater 1907:102) but did not perform a detailed analysis.

By 1881, French peasants were not an impoverished class but instead rapidly rising in the economic and social life of the country (Probyn 1881:302). This was not the case in England and in 1905 it was observed that there was "not another civilized country in Europe in which the contrast between "penury and wealth" was as great as in England (Collings 1906:410). The problem of the social conditions of the poor and the wage-laborer in nineteenth century England was not capitalism, it was a government which did not take any interest in the welfare of its citizens.

Ruskin, a philosopher of the time, had his own compassionate ideas about what to do with the poor and unemployed. "...but that being found objecting to work, they should be set, under compulsion of the strictest nature, to the more painful and degrading forms of necessary toil, especially to that in mines and other places of danger" (Ruskin 1970:24). In other words, the poor were to be punished for being poor. Denied land, the people became fodder for industry. The feudal notion that the soil belonged to the nation and was assigned to individuals (Watkins 1796:v) was eroded as the aristocracy abandoned their responsibility to their countrymen and began to enclose the land.

Between 1760 and 1830, Hobsbawm noted no less than five thousand Enclosure Acts, and Turner 5250 (Turner 1984:16) that left land monopolized by a few owners (Hobsbawm 1996:31, 153), leaving millions of acres uncultivated (Gaskell 1836:46).

In 1789, by the time the Industrial Revolution began in earnest, England became a net importer of food, less than fifty percent of the population was still working on the land and practically all arable land had been enclosed (Coleman 1992:29-30). This contradicts Coleman and Salt's own claim that at this time England "coped with the demands of the growing population with almost no recourse to imports" (Coleman 1992:48). The Netherlands was thirty percent more agriculturally productive than England in 1802 (Rudé 1996:11) even though the soil of the Netherlands was poorer for cultivation than the soil in England (Collings 1906:201). At this time the Netherlands "shipped a good deal of grain to England. She furnished more wheat in famine years of 1800-1802 than the combined shipments from Ireland, France, Norway and Denmark, and she continually exported more rye to England than any other one country" (Adams 1932:22). Again, Coleman and Salt appear to be wrong.

They state that the greater acreage available meant more food could be produced (Coleman 1992:48-49) but neglect to say that prices were kept high due to protectionism and hence many people could not afford to buy proper and sufficient food. The Anti-Corn Law League protested this protectionism. They also do not mention the encumbrances on large estates in England that led to neglect and lack of improvement (Probyn 1881:302) nor the little of knowledge many landlords had about farming (Adams 1932:176).

It is claimed that by the end of the eighteenth century the British economy was so developed that less than one-half of the population still worked on the land (Coleman 1992:30). In fact, and more true, land was no longer a survival option by the end of the eighteenth century and this had nothing to do with a developed economy. "The rural population of Britain was not one of peasants bound to the land. Instead...the market in labour kept the population on the move" (Coleman 1992:25). In fact, labor had to keep moving because it had no place to stop.

Enclosure caused the small tenant to suffer the worst (Jones 1967:102). Slater said of the enclosure process: "The policy of the legislature and of the Central Government, expressed in the Enclosure Acts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though it claimed...that it effected an immediate and great increase in the country's agricultural produce...was nevertheless essentially a policy directed towards the enhancement of agricultural rents, the building up of large and compact landed estates, the establishment of capitalist farming, the uprooting of peasant proprietors and of small holdings together with the common use of land and the multiplication of the class of landless agricultural labourers" (Slater 1907:vi). Not only was the enclosure process vile, but hunting game became illegal except for a few aristocrats: "...the starving cottager who went out to take a hare for the family pot could be transported for seven years if caught with his nets upon him at night" (Trevelyan 1973:507).

A study by Bateman (Offer 1992:105) concluded that seven thousand landowners controlled eighty percent of the land by 1873 and thus it is difficult to agree with Offer that the "distribution of capital values" is a more precise and significant manner in which to test Bateman's figures. If in 1811 land represented fifty percent of

the national wealth, and that the emergence of industrial capital was slow before 1870 (Napier 5), then it is significant to know how many landowners there were and not who leased land, nor the rent value of that land. It is difficult to agree with Offer that his definition of "landed interest" as "middle class users and owners of buildings" (Offer 1992:129) is appropriate to describe those with interest in land because they only represent those with interest in rent. The history of France proves that owning with the option to engage the land in a variety of ways is far more profitable for the owner, big or small. Offer's conclusion, based on the "value" test is "Instead of sixty percent being concentrated in the hands of the very rich only some thirty percent are now identified in upper-class or wealthy hands" (Offer 1992:106). The reason this "test" is wrong is because the value of land is not only determined by rent but also by the investment, such as labor, to make it cultivable.

Land considered useless in England was in France often made cultivable and thus valuable through labor (Collings 1906:201). Offer responds to this by stating that "The reason the land was unploughed (to the extent that it was) is that it had low value. The French could make it pay because they had protective tariffs for grain, while the British stuck with free trade, and domestic farmers could not compete with food imports. This is what depressed the value of land and made it unprofitable to cultivate. In any case, agricultural land was only a small fraction of all land uses" (Offer 1998). Offer overlooks that the British did not engage in free trade during the early nineteenth century. If they had, the activities of the Anti-Corn Law League, which agitated until 1846 for repeal of the Corn Law of 1815, would not have been necessary (McCord 1975:204). Also, huge tracts of land were often unploughed because landowners did not till them not

because they were of low value. Lastly, after enclosure the number of domestic farmers was depleted to such a negligible extent that they could not have been competitive had there truly been free trade.

Rubinstein and Thompson, in a rather trite debate, discuss whether or not wealthy British businessmen purchased land during the nineteenth century. Thompson claims the wealthy did purchase land and supports his evidence by gleaning data from the records of the deceased “super wealthy” of which he claims there were no more than one hundred and eleven members. Rubinstein claims they did not for two reasons. First because the purchase price of land did not increase substantially during the nineteenth century (“prima facie evidence that there was no significant increase in demand to bid up the price” of land). Secondly, though there were wealthy people with the means to buy land they never “realized” their “potential for land purchase” (Rubinstein 1992:354). On both accounts it is sufficient to conclude that whatever potential this class had to purchase land their actual possession of it was limited since, by 1873, eighty percent of the land was already owned.

Land availability in France

Unlike in England, industrial development in France was not characterized by the denial of access to land. Rather, land was a factor that empowered labor and, although rural labor was a major industrial asset, it often refused to be pried off the land. The agricultural sector was very prosperous between 1815-1848, the period of France's Industrial Revolution. It not only prospered, but it grew in number (Dunham 1955:183). In 1893 the rural French laborer was described as "well-fed, well-housed and well-clad"

and "thanks to the savings he can make, can easily go through the greatest crisis in agriculture" (Collings 1906:191).

Collings and Rudé both noted that peasant proprietorships existed before the Revolution (Collings 1906:200, Rudé 1996:70) but after 1789 the number of peasant landowners increased even more by fifty percent (Hobsbawm 1996:154). One reason being the Civil Code of Napoleon of 1804 that insisted estates be divided equally among sons (Rudé 1996:233). The code broke feudal bonds that had enslaved the peasants (Collings 1906:200). "Facts showed that the principles of the Code, so far from producing the evils named, were rapidly adding to the agricultural prosperity of France, by attracting to the land the resources and energies of the nation. As to the social effects - the Code had sensibly reduced the number of the poor and of the unemployed" (Collings 1906:189).

This Code affected every country in which it was applied and feudal agrarian social structures were abolished throughout western and central Europe (Hobsbawm 1996:24). The small land-holding peasant, Young's "little farmer" of no effect (Adams 1932:12), the small-shop keeper, and small-time craftsmen, would forever remain what Hobsbawm called an "impregnable citadel" in France (Hobsbawm 1996:69-70). Marx found this peasant smallness too isolated, too self-sufficient, too lacking in political influence, and too close to nature to make enough transactions with society (Marx 1994:123-124). But this approach afforded the French peasantry protection from forced wage-labor, control over their time and relief from low paid work. Troglodytes or not, in France the passion to possess land was stronger than the interest to perform wage-labor.

In France many wage-laborers accumulated capital and used it to purchase land (Rudé 1996:70). Capital was more distributed in France than in England: "It follows that the subdivision of the French soil, which has been the subject of sincere regret and pity on the part of many eminent English writers and speakers, as well as of much ignorant contempt on the part of prejudiced politicians, is really both a cause and an effect of the increased wealth of every class of the population - the seller and the buyer of the land, the landowner, the farmer, and the labourer, the country and the town. Instead of being, as has been supposed, a cause of low wages, it has been a consequence of high wages, which have enabled the labourer to become a land-buyer - and even a cause of high wages by diminishing the competition in the labor market, and placing the labourer in a position of some independence in making a bargain with his employers. Instead of diminishing agricultural capital, as many English agriculturalists urge, it is, in the language of Adam Smith, both cause and effect of "the frugality and good conduct, the uniform, constant and uninterrupted effort of every man to better his own condition, from which public as well as private opulence is derived, and which is frequently powerful enough to maintain the natural tendency of things towards improvement" (Probyn 1881:297).

Some effects of land ownership on industrialization were:

- industrialization occurred slowly (Dunham 1955:5, Hobsbawm 1996:155, Kemp 1976:78);
- peasant labor was available if it had the time (Dunham 1955:122);
- encroachment upon agricultural land by industrialists was protected against by law (Dunham 1955:146);

- there existed a scarcity of willing, unskilled labor (Dunham 1955:135);
- peasants preferred to work at home and thus the factory system could not compete against the domestic system (Dunham 1955:5,306).

As noted, the predilection of the worker to own land was a major factor in the speed of the industrialization process of France. Land ownership meant industry could not always entice labor to stay (Dunham 1955:3-4) and because labor was hard to keep it was difficult and expensive to continuously train. Dunham suggests this was one reason why wages were low since wages and prices were the first to be cut to accommodate competition and appease the problem created by the lack of capital needed to acquire new technology (Dunham 1955:185). Thus, contrary to Shaw's analysis, production does not always "continuously" reproduce the relations of production (Shaw 1978:49).

As the industrial revolution slowly unfolded in France, it never matched the effective trading techniques of England which had established colonies, banking and credit operations all over the world and supported these interests by military force. England established these links before the French industrial revolution even began. Since the French had control over Piedmont, Lombardy, Prussia and Belgium, Dunham claims they had not worried about establishing external trade links (Dunham 1955:5-8). Following the method of England in doing so would not have been appreciated anyway. For example, England forced upon China missionaries and the opium trade (Emerson 1901:951, 987, Plumb 1951:176, Hobsbawm 1996:107), and thus China financed in part the operations of the East India Company in India whose purpose was to continue the expansion of British imperialism (Plumb 1951:175-176). France's industrial development followed a route such as this: the high cost of coal and its transportation lead to the high

cost of production, which meant wages were lowered to maintain competitive advantage. Low wages did not encourage peasants to leave their land thus production levels remained low leading to low profits, leading to low investments in the company, causing a slow embrace of new technology which kept production levels down.

Despite that the rural populations did not embrace industry, they would go on to own the largest portion of government stock and be referred to as the financial power of France (Collings 1906:204). A reading of Kemp's description of the French peasants leads the reader to believe that French peasants really were a "built-in obstacle" to rapid industrialization, that the British practice of land enclosure really was "advantageous", that a subsistence survival really was abnormal for the nineteenth century peasant, that a large section of the French peasantry was "pinned to an agrarian sector" unwillingly, and that "European agriculture was not adequate to serve the demands of a growing population" (Kemp 1976:43-79). In fact, Kemp was not concerned about where industrialization occurred first but merely found it interesting that "the breakthrough came first in Europe" because of "productive relations distinctive of the new economic order" (Kemp 1976:11). He never asked "At what cost?" Mitrany suggests enclosure did not represent "victory of the better system in free competition" progress of scientific production or better productivity (Mitrany 1951:11).

Kemp mistakenly generalized about Europe. Agrarian conditions were distinctly different in different countries, and he was more mistaken to write as if a society must industrialize by drastically reshaping the agrarian sector (Kemp 1976:44), code words for denying access to land as a survival option. That France industrialized slowly can hardly be considered the fault of the peasantry since the French government protected the

agrarian sector. England did not protect its citizens and can never claim, as may the French, that its small farmer prospered in the nineteenth century (Probyn 1881:306).

From the literature it appears highly unlikely that French agrarian officials would have agreed with Kemp that small peasant plots were economic obstacles. Rather, Probyn noted in 1881 that "The increasing demand for and rising prices of the produce of a *la petite culture* make it more and more a profitable investment of the peasant's savings and labour; and those very rising prices, and the rising wages, which also follow the development of the resources of the country, put both the small tenant and the labourer in a condition to become buyers in the land market" (Probyn 1881:310). Even Geary, a British economist stated that "if labour had a firm hold on the land at the time of the Industrial Revolution, the new system would have grown up very differently. There would have been no starving crowds ready to work in factories for a low wage..." (Geary 1925:128).

Conclusion

After comparing the nineteenth century experience of France and England, of primary importance was the extent of the availability of land and the way the agricultural sector was treated. While agricultural opportunities were not available in England because the will to make the life of the poor better did not sufficiently exist (Collings 1906:203), in France the improvement of agriculture and property was accounted for by government protection of a system of cultivation: a system of ownership (Collings 1906:203). A government that secures land access also provides employment. "The French land system gives the small buyer of land the benefit of being able to raise capital

and unexceptional security, and that by a process which creates no impediment to its subsequent sale. And such a system, so far from tending to increase the encumbrances on land, tends necessarily, in the first place, to bring land into the hands of those who can make most of it, and secondly, to enable them to develop its resources by additional capital” (Probyn 1881:302).

Clearly land played a greater role in social welfare than Marx considered. In England, a few landowners benefited from trade protectionism that allowed them to profit while their countrymen starved, were landless and jobless, and they along with a growing middle class grumbled because of taxation to benefit the poor yet did nothing to give them survival options.

Wage-labor was one means of employment and Marx had little interest in discussing other forms of labor. According to Mitrany, Marx never considered the actual condition of any group of peasants anywhere: "His way had been to formulate a general theory and simply sweep them into it, never considering them as a subject fitted for a special plan of reform. It was a sentence without trial. All his life, not only as an economist but also as a townsman and revolutionary, Marx was filled with undisguised contempt for the peasant" (Mitrany 1951:25).

CHAPTER 4 - Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine Marx's theory of alienation and determine if it was accurate in its description of man and applicable to the conditions Marx observed. One goal was to describe the errors of the theory and illustrate how they affected Marx's understanding of man and purpose of labor, another was to examine how the theory was biased against the agriculturalist by the way it defined man, consciousness and labor.

The literature review described how Marx's theory of alienation was and continued to be biased against considering land as a factor causing “alienation”. Marxist theory did not accommodate both private farming and industrialization, which are two very different modes of production. France did theoretically and practically manage this convergence and the French, more than their British counterparts, had more than one survival option.

A comparison was made of France and England to illustrate how the conditions of nineteenth century England observed by Marx were exacerbated by the fact that land ownership was not a survival option for most citizens in England. Since Marx based his theory on the physical and practical, not psychological, aspects and results of labor it was important to know if other survival and employment options were available in general and to the laborer. In England land access and ownership were not protected as forms of employment but they were in France. The concept of social well being was operationalized through government expenditures on social security. This expenditure

was compared to the number of landowners and the rate at which the agricultural sector lost labor. It was found that, in general, as the agricultural sector lost labor government expenditure on social security rose but as the number of landowners increased that expenditure rose slower. The number of landowners increased in France and government expenditure rose slowly; the number of landowners remained low in England and government expenditure surpassed that of France, even when the population of France was higher than that of England.

As already mentioned, the literature often states that in the nineteenth century the French were healthier than the British and this comparison may give an indication why. By proposing ownership of the means of production as the solution to alienation, Marx adopted the philosophy of British imperialism: making the state the largest landowner. It would have been far more radical, and should have been dialectically obvious, for Marx to promote the redistribution of land. A century and a-half later, and despite industrial and technological development, land is still a precious and desirable source of survival.

The argument could be posed that Marx never intended to theorize about non-industrial labor but land has never, before nor after Marx, ceased to be important to social well being and so his neglect of it is surprising. Agricultural labor was man's prime survival securing activity and in many countries it is still. In China, after collective farming was abandoned in 1978 farm incomes did not just rise, they "soared" and after farm incomes rose, the "number of those in poverty fell by twenty-five percent" (Economist 1997:21). In Zimbabwe, white farmers hoping to stave off total repossession of their land offered President Mugabe a plan for the redistribution of 300,000 hectares of

land when he was preparing to repossess five million hectares (Herald 1998:3). The current action of landless Zimbabweans repossessing land themselves, preceding their government's intention, is a clear signal that land hunger has not been satisfied in many places of the world.

Professor Agarwal, in her book "*A field of one's own*", describes how land is still "the most significant form of property in rural South Asia" and a "critical determinant of economic well-being, social status, and political power" (Agarwal 1994:xv). She did not find a sympathetic ear in the Marxist camp when it came to the land hunger of Indian women (Agarwal 1994:9) which is not surprising since land ownership or possession was not regarded as consequential in Marxist theory.

In the state of Minnesota, USA, a state homesteading program was still operating until 1989, thirteen years after the federal program was stopped (Koochiching County 1994). Of course, the historical conditions in the USA that allowed land to be "given" to immigrants and potential farmers was at the expense of the original inhabitants. When land is not available people migrate and encroach on the soil of others, that this happened in the USA did not set an historical precedent. Nonetheless, Hibbard claims that since land was available "the laboring men not only could, but in significant numbers did, look upon the possibility of farming on the frontier as a way of escape from unfavorable conditions of employment on a wage basis. They did leave now and then on the occasion of strikes, or other troubles, and the effectiveness of such a termination of the controversy in controlling the situation cannot be doubted...There was, both theoretically and practically, enough reality to the possibility of leaving the city for the

frontier to serve as a mitigating influence of no small importance in labor disputes" (Hibbard 1965:558).

Marx wrote at a time when the world economy was even more agriculturally based and he overlooked the agriculturalist much to the misfortune of those who suffered the application of his ideas. Land possession for agricultural production is still viable for the individual in many countries and, as current events in Zimbabwe show, it is a matter of private initiative and political will to take land or make land accessible.

It is not our purpose nor is it desirable to categorically state what labor activity man should engage in to provide individual satisfaction, such pretentious theorizing overrides individual preference, capability and volition. What is important is that survival options are protected even if such protection affects only a small percentage of the population. This research was concerned with how Marx's theory of alienation defined man in such a way as to negate, almost purposefully, that one of man's main occupations is agricultural labor. The British experience, on which Marx based his theory, shows that limiting survival options in blatant disregard of land availability resulted in diminished social well being. Nineteenth century living conditions in England have been well documented as often having been horrific, but this does not mean that Marx's theory of alienation accurately explained their cause. Nor has man's experimentation with Marxism adequately alleviated suffering.

From the beginning to the mid-nineteenth century, the "working class" as a group was numerically negligible throughout the world, except in England (Hobsbawm 1996:301). Interestingly enough, in England land was inaccessible to the working class. The fact that individuals purposefully pursued land, before and after the time Marx wrote,

signifies that Marx's neglect of the land factor did not coincide with man's aspirations. Marx based his theory on the experience of one small group of people existing under the conditions of limited survival options and a capitalistic economic system. He generalized that this economic system created private property that in turn necessarily caused alienation. He concluded that alienation would be overcome through collective ownership of the means of production. The experience of France was used to illustrate how this generalization was wrong in assuming alienation was an inherent characteristic of capitalism. The French of the nineteenth century existed under a capitalistic economic system but wage-labor was not the only survival option available to them. Their experience suggests that the accessibility of private property in the form of land enhanced their well being and, as a consequence, leveled the dynamics of power between the worker and the employer.

Nineteenth century Molpals in India and laborers in France knew exactly what they wanted when they fought for or bought land. Twentieth century Irish knew exactly what they wanted when more than a quarter of a million became landowners between 1903 and 1910. Why the British tolerated their landless state is a topic for future research but the literature clearly describes their poverty and powerlessness, to which agriculturalists (of different levels and degrees) were reduced over an extended period of time, that was sufficient to debilitate their capacity to fight for land rights. In England "The capitalist was blamed for low wages and the bad conditions in the factories, but it was the power of the new land monopoly that was providing him with his cheap labor..." (Geary 1925:128).

Marx's theory is not sufficient to explain the conditions of wage-labor in England and enough evidence exists to prove that his theory is not applicable as a general law. He did not explain the anomaly of those that moved out of wage-labor and purchased land, nor did he explain how protecting survival options is a political choice not an economic accident.

The history of France shows that the industrial revolution occurred at a rate set by the laborer who often refused to be separated from the land much to the frustration of French industrialists (Dunham 1955:5). By the time Marx wrote about the conditions of the wage-laborer in England the option of an agricultural existence had been obliterated there but in France the agricultural sector was dominated by peasants and continued to achieve economic success (Dunham 1955:183). Leslie noted in 1869 that, on the continent, the accessibility of land made the farmers and laborers serious competitors in the land market (Leslie 1870:263).

Based on the example of France, it has been shown that it is a conceptual mistake to apply the theory to a society different from the one Marx studied, in particular, one where more than one survival option is available to the wage laborer. In addition the theory has limited usefulness because it employs inaccurate definitions of man and consciousness. For future studies, this research provided a theoretical and empirical basis for inquiring into the nature of an approach to the agricultural sector, and the agriculturalist, that had little interest in either.

It is expected that this theory will never be applicable to man.

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