

9/30/84

Dear Comrade Mahomad:

Outside of the shock of the title as, The Communist Ideal in Hegel, which is softened by the addition of, and Marx, and such allegedly original discussion of the state as "external" state, nothing much is lost by the fact that I must be brief and am limiting myself to the final chapter since that is really the one on Dialectic and the Rational State where the author, David MacGregor, so misrepresents both Hegel and Marx and Lenin and Marx's assumes that the fallacy of his views aimed at being original on the dialectic method becomes quite obvious.

The very 1st sentence of that final chapter 8 (p.236) "If the Trinity is the principal mystery of Christianity, the dialectic is the chief mystery of modern western Marxism.", shows up everyone of his errors. Thus, not only is that not a mystery of genuine Marxism, but the one he calls to prove his point (the citation is of Sidney Hook) is no Marxist, western or otherwise, and even when he was one way back in the 1930s (as against this 1978/1984 work which is long after he became cold war warrior) Sidney Hook was a mechanical "Marxist", and it was long before any distinction was made (a term Merleau-Ponty "invented" to describe German Marxists who denounced Stalinism at least at first--Lukacs and Korsch) on the basis of geography to describe dissidents. Thus, that sentence is at once followed by an attack on Marx who certainly did not consider himself a "Western Marxist" as founded a whole new method of thought and of revolution (AND REVOLUTION IS HARDLY A WORD THAT ROLLS OFF EASILY FROM MACGREGOR'S LIPS.) for the whole world. Thus, he further identifies Marx with Feuerbach whom he claims Marx accepts uncritically where, in fact, the very 1st essay Marx published in those decisive first years of breaking with capitalism, 1843-4, he separated himself from Feuerbach narrow materialism and praised Hegel's dialectic, specifically "negation of negation" as being vastly superior in method, in purpose, in making it not only possible to follow the "law of motion of capitalism to its collapse", but creating ground for the "new Humanism" (Marx's) to transform that revolution in philosophy into a philosophy of revolution.

All this is in that 1st par. of the 1st p. of his climactic chapter. He proceeds on the next (p.237) to identify Hegel's ideality with Marx's "revolutionary practice" though that practice will show (if he allowed Marx to speak for himself) that all of Marx's aim to establish a totally new form of "worker's rule" than the bourgeois state, much less the monarchic one, which Marx calls for smashing, root and branch, so that the Paris Commune become the form even of the transition to fully new human relations. And he tries to relate that, of all sources, to Marx's Grundrisse which Marx calls for "absolute movement of becoming". Not "being" but "becoming" and if there is an absolute movement of becoming in human development, that is Marx's "revolution in permanence", the continuous development Marx's Promethean vision saw the very 1st year he broke with capitalism, 1843, which Marx "celebrated" by criticizing that "Rational State" MacGregor is trying to foist on him, i.e. the critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. And, again, the "authority" for Marxism is the famous Trotskyist economist, Mandel, in the very

Sidney Hook
1978/1984
Bureau of...

accepts 'Humanism'
Lukacs
p.254

2-237

"8-21"

perverse introduction to a new English translation of CAPITAL, where Mandel dares leave out Marx's "freely associated" labor from the expression "associated labor." The other expert he depends upon, Althusser, is not only anti-Hegelian dialectician but ANTI-MARX'S HUMANISM.

MacGregor proceeds (p.241) to define "three aspects or moments of the dialectic method" which not only shows that the author has once more returned to "trinity", Christian and otherwise, evidently not the least aware of the fact that the dialectic is ~~not~~ not any sort of triplicity; the whole of the dialectic starts ~~with~~ Hegel showed the 3 attitudes to objectivity--faith, empiricism/Kantianism, and the retrogression with Jacobi, to first then devote the entire work (to the 4th? or isn't just giving up the idiocy of following a mathematical numbering game instead of self-development, self-activity, self-transcendence which Marx called historic transcendence but in all case INTERNAL, FROM OUT OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT. Whereupon MacGregor continues not only to be a Kantian, not a Hegelian dialectician, but to attribute Kantianism to Hegel without the slightest awareness of where, as Hegel put it, Kantianism "stopped dead": "It will always remain a matter for astonishment how the Kantian philosophy knew that relation of thought to sensuous existence, where it halted, for a merely relative relation of bare appearance, and fully acknowledged and asserted a higher unity of the two in the Idea in general, and, particularly, in the idea of intuitive understanding, but yet stopped dead at this relative relation...." (Science of Logic II, p.226)

Instead, MacGregor proceeds to his climax, the subsection on "Dialectic Exposition of the Rational State" as if "exposition" is either the abstract "negation of negation" or the concrete revolutionary smashing up of the state as the "executive committee of the ruling, exploitative class", and reaches the Key Error (p.254) "But the rational society Hegel envisions ~~envisions~~ has nothing to do with the abstraction of the 'withering away of the state.' The notion that the state in communist society must eventually disappear is based on the bourgeois conception of the external state...In communist society therefore the state does not wither away..."

Let the state-capitalists calling themselves Communist quickly embrace this fellow traveller, be it from the "Christian world"---or Khomeini for that matter....

Enuf of that idiocy!

Yours,