KARL MARX ON FREEDOM AND JUSTICE: A CRITIQUE

(ABSTRACT)

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(ABSTRACT)

In the first chapter, 'Introduction', I have discussed some of the basic issues pertaining to Marx's views on morality. Different thinkers are of the view that Marx had no ethics. Richard Miller, for example, says in his analysis of Karl Marx's philosophy that Marx rejects morality as human basis for resolving political conflicts or assessing social institutions and practices. But others claim that Marx did have some kind of ethical views which was simply added to his scientific views. There is some grain of truth ~~for~~ in both of these claims. I have tried to point out that the contemporary literature in the combined areas of philosophy and social sciences is giving more and more evidence that morality in any concrete sense can neither be fully understood nor defined without taking proper cognizance of the economic and socio-political forces with which Marx was concerned. It is within the framework of these forces that man struggles for his moral rejuvenation.

In the second chapter, 'Freedom', I have analyzed the Marxian concept of freedom. I have divided different interpretations of Marx's views on freedom into two groups: Those who interpret freedom in the form of self-realization and those who do not interpret it in the form of self-realization. Those who hold the first view say that Marx calls man's freedom 'the positive power to assert his true individuality'. This 'true individuality' is man at the height of his power and needs, thoroughly and intensively cooperating with his fellows, and appropriating all of nature. Free activity consists in the fulfillment of such powers. But those who hold the second view say that freedom is an ethical quality bound up with the cooperative working of goods. It is the right of an individual to choose among various actions within limits determined by social necessity. However, I have shown that none of these accounts of freedom have succeeded in giving us a plausible and detailed account of freedom as a moral notion, which is identifiable across the whole of Marx's writings.

Freedom, from the general point of view, means the power or right to act, speak or think free, the power of self-determination attributed to the will. For Marx, 'morality is based on the autonomy of the human mind' and freedom is 'the generic essence of all spiritual existence'. To understand Marx's ethics, we have to first understand his concept of essence and how it is linked with freedom and the state. Moral good, for Marx, is the realization of freedom. For Marx, freedom demands three things: (1) that the individual be self-determined by universal and rational principles, (2) that the laws and institutions of the state be rational so that in obeying civil laws you obey the laws of your own reason, and (3) that the feeling and custom have been moulded so as to agree with and support these rational laws. I have also highlighted that Marx's account of freedom is different from other thinkers who belong to the tradition of European individualism and liberalism. Take for example, the views of John Locke and Hobbes. According to John Locke, individuals are by nature free from the jurisdiction of others. The human essence is freedom from any relations other than those a man enters with a view to his own interest. The individual is proprietor of his own freedom for which he owes nothing to the society. He is freed to alienate his capacity to labour, but not in his whole person. Society is a whole series of relation between proprietors. Political society is a contractual device for the protection of proprietors and the orderly regulation of their relations. For him, individual freedom is limited. To Hobbes, an individual is free in a government where peace, comfort, security of persons and property are granted. Such a government is justified. In this connection, I have pointed out that in the Hobbesian scheme of things, freedom is confined only to those individuals who have at least some property. It is not extended for those who do not have any property. When they do not have any property, freedom is an empty slogan for them. In other words, Hobbesian concept of freedom is applicable only to property owners and not to non-property owners. Hegel's account of freedom is different from both. He is of the view that freedom must be understood as a social phenomenon, a property of the social systems which arises through the

model development of the community. It is less an individual than a status which is important to the individual through legal and ethical institutions that the community supports. In consequence, it cannot be equalled with the self will, or the following of private inclinations. Hegel further says that the rights and liberties of the individual are those which correspond to the duties imposed by station in the society.

For existentialism all the important possibilities of human life are bound up with the fact of human freedom, so that to lament the absurdity of existence is in a way odd. But what this lament does reflect is the ambiguous attitude of existentialists to human freedom. If any single thesis could be said to constitute the doctrine of existentialism, it would be that the possibility of choice is the central fact of human nature. Even the thesis that existence precedes essence often means no more than that men do not have fixed natures that limit or determines their choices, but rather it is their choices that bring whatever nature they have into being.

I have also discussed Marx's account of freedom as the basic virtue by which people ought to live. As such, Marx's ethics of freedom is an ethic of virtue. By this, I mean two things. Firstly, Marx is concerned with a certain state of being, a set of dispositions and character traits, which a person must have to be free. Freedom does not mean simply the demand that we act in certain ways according to some principle which may serve as the criterion for those acts. Secondly, Marx does not understand freedom to consist in a set of rights and obligations which its acceptance imposes on people. Freedom is not to be understood as an ethics of duty. Thus, his ethics of virtue differs from self-realizationists interpretation of freedom who hold the view that we have a moral obligation to determine the rules by which we live or that the imperative to realize ourselves involves the fulfillment of various moral duties. Marx's view of freedom also differs from non-self realizationists interpretation of freedom such as Schaff's, who explicate freedom by means of rights and obligations. Moral

obligations, duties and rights are not part of Marx's ethics. Indeed, he condemns them as central and deficient features of bourgeois morality.

I have also discussed Marx's view of freedom as self-determination that one is free to the extent that one essentially determines the concrete totality of desires, capacities and talents, which constitute one's self-objectification. Self-objectification, for Marx, signifies that man, given his various desires, capacities and talents objectifies or creates himself in his activities, his relations and in the systems of thought he constructs by which he understands himself. Marx's discussion of self-objectification is concerned with human labour and work, with factories, farms, and the like. Again Marx's view is compared with the bourgeois view of freedom. The bourgeois view is that the free person may fulfill which ever desires and potentialities he has, and to the extent he wants, in so far as fulfilling them does not harm others. Marx rejects this view and says that no one can develop 'fully' all his desires and capacities, since some of them will conflict. In this connection, I have shown two steps required to explicate the way in which Marx might restrict or envision limits to their development.

Firstly, Marx might object to the implicit understanding of fully 'develop' which has been used in the preceding discussion. It would be more in line with the Greek and Hegelian influences on Marx's thought, as well as other aspects of his view of freedom, to assume that by 'fully develop' he meant the greatest development or realization of one's desires, capacities and talents which was compatible, or harmonious, with certain limits set by one's own determination of the hierarchy of one's needs and interests. Plato, for example, maintains that each aspect of oneself is to be developed only within certain limits. Similarly, Hegel condemns as 'bad infinity' the notion of endless development. Surely Marx too did not mean by 'all-sided development' that one endlessly developed one's desires and potentialities. He recognized that people differ in their desires, capacities and talents in various ways.

A second consideration indicates not merely other ways in which Marx is not committed by his concept of freedom to the limitless development of human desires and potentialities, but also why he does require a certain level of development of one's desires, capacities and talents. The bourgeois concept of freedom is a political concept. As such one is free or not independently of questions about man's relation to nature. Marx's concept of freedom, we have pointed, is much broader. One cannot be free, according to Marx independently of certain relations to nature. According to Marx, nature 'first confronts man as a completely alien all – powerful and unassailable force'. Because of man's undeveloped mastery of nature, nature dominates man. Marx maintains that individuals can be self determining only after they have mastered the forces of nature. Later he claims that communism requires 'the advanced stage of modern productive forces'. Nevertheless, it remains true that the development of the forces of production was absolutely crucial to Marx's views. We can, however, in general indicate the degree of control which man must be able to exercise over nature by pointing to several conditions of self-determination which such control would fulfill. Marx clearly assumes that fulfillment of these conditions does not require a total mastery of nature. On the other hand, he also assumes that fulfillment of these conditions would require a significant development of each individual's desires, capacities and talents. Firstly, man must be able to control nature to the extent that his basic needs may be satisfied. Secondly, freedom requires that man must be able to control nature to the extent that he can reduce to a minimum the labour he must perform to fulfill those needs. Thirdly, man must have the degree of control over nature which would allow the abolition of social institutions such as private property, the division of labour, the state and classes – institutions which have hitherto acted as constraints on human action. Thus, self-determination implies a knowledge and understanding of the nature of one's life conditions and relations, how they arose and how they operate. Those who live under capitalism may believe that they are self-determining and free, but in reality they are not. Marx is quite clear that freedom is not to be identified with the emancipation from the flesh, rather it is to be identified with one's self-

determination, something one may realize more or less completely in different parts of one's daily life.

Marx's account of self-determination, then, so far as we have discussed is uncommon. Marx's treatment of freedom is best understood as the characterization of a kind of life, a way of being, which we morally ought to realize. Some may object that the preceding account of freedom is empty for it fails to provide a person with guidance as to how he ought to act. But this is quite in line with the view defended here that Marx's ethics is an ethic of virtue.

In the course of discussion, I have shown that Marx's concept of freedom is also intimately connected with the concept of 'necessity'. Freedom is understood in relation to necessity, and it is the knowledge of necessity that gives rise to freedom. To read Maurice Cornforth, "on the contrary, with communism there will have taken place, as Engels expressed it, 'Humanities leap from necessity to the realm of freedom'. And that means that elemental conflict characteristic of the realm of necessity will give place to changes controlled and planned." The notion of necessity can be explicated with the help of the following example. It is a fact that by nature man cannot fly. This means that man is handicapped in this respect. It is not possible for men to fly. But then, the knowledge of this, 'necessity' taught him to overcome his incapacity. Man invented machine to fly with. Thus, it is the knowledge of necessity and hindrances that gives rise the way to freedom. The notion of necessity is also intimately connected with the notion of accident, and it is through a series of accidents that necessity manifests. "Where on the surface accident holds sway, there it is always governed by inner, hidden laws and it is only a matter of discovering these laws." "There discovery does not, however, eliminate the conception of the accidental. Rather it reveals that the necessary feature of things manifests itself through a series of accidents, and the accidental on the other hand, is always governed by the necessary." Thus, the very notion of necessity is connected with the notion of accident. It can be properly said that they are all interconnected, in a dialectical manner. It is only because things are

subject to laws and objective necessity can be said to exist in nature and society, that we are able to decide upon definite actions and carry them out. This is the condition of human freedom and that freedom is realized in proportion as we extend our knowledge and consequently, our ability to make decisions on the basis of knowledge and so to carry them to effect.

Marx's concept of freedom is not an abstract concept. It is a concept which has a number of ingredients in it. To think of freedom is to think of human being and the concrete situations in which he lives. Man cannot be thought of independent of his environment. The social structure in a way determines everything of man. On the face of it, it all seems to be quite spontaneous, but in reality this is not the case. This is what the penetrating mind of Karl Marx did expose to the world.

In the third chapter, 'Justice', I have concentrated on the question whether Marx appealed to a principle of justice and criticized capitalism for injustice, or this is just a mistaken interpretation as others have claimed. In this connection, I have discussed the nature of the relations of production which constitute capitalism and which would be the object of a critique on the basis of justice. Capitalism is a system for the production and exchange of commodities. Marx begins *Capital* with a study of commodities.

Let us now turn to Marx's views on the justice or injustice of this system. There is a point of general agreement on Marx's views concerning capitalism and justice which is this. Marx allows that various particular injustices do occur under capitalism to the extent that these injustices can be judged by the principle of justice which obtains under bourgeois society. For example, if a particular capitalist attempts to pay some workers less than the full value of their labour–power, these workers are treated unjustly. One way in which this occurs is when the capitalist tries to extend the working day beyond what it takes to reproduce the labour–power of these workers. This has the effect of shortening the life-time labour-power which these workers can sell and hence of lowering the value

which they can receive in return for their commodity which they have to sell. Such cases can be said to be the cases of injustice according to Marx which the worker suffers under capitalism.

There are two reasons which might be given why capitalism could not, theoretically, be a just system, even on the basis of the principles of justice which develop under capitalism. The first reason is this, Marx assumes that the principle of justice which obtains under capitalism requires that each commodity be paid for its full value. The second reason has to do with the appearance and reality of wage labour.

There are people who insist that Marx did not condemn capitalism as unjust or advocate socialism because it is more just than capitalism. On Robert Tucker's interpretation of Marx, "the only applicable norm of what is right and just is the one inherent in the existing economic system. Each mode of production has its own mode of distribution in its own form of equity, and it is meaningless to pass judgement on it from some other point of view." Allen Wood in his article defends the view that juridical practices and principles are "rationally valid" if and only if, they correspond to the prevailing mode of production. Consequently, justice is not a standard by which human actions and social institutions can be measured. It is a standard by which each mode of production measures itself. This means that slavery is necessarily just in a slave society and unjust in feudal or capitalist societies. Capitalist exploitation is necessarily just in a capitalist society and unjust in non-capitalist societies.

Marx's discussion of justice in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* needs special attention. In it, Marx examines several models of distributive justice. He begins by telling us that the present day distribution of the proceeds of labour is the only fair distributive on the basis of the present day capitalist mode of production. There are two forms of distribution. The first and most crucial, is that of 'the condition of production themselves'. This distribution is logically tied to the mode of production. The second distribution, that of the means of consumption,

is a 'consequence' of the first distribution. Principles of justice thus, are relative to the particular modes of production.

I have argued that the view that Marx criticizes capitalism for being unjust on its own grounds is unacceptable. If capitalism is to be faulted, it must be for the violation of freedom which its productive relations institutionalize. However, such freedom is a non-capitalist freedom, a Marxist freedom, and hence requires that we appeal beyond the standards of bourgeois morality. Marx does not have a universal principle of justice.

In the last chapter, 'Conclusion', I have examined the relationship between the concept of freedom and the concept of justice in Marx's ethics. There is a particular view of freedom which is the characteristic of bourgeois society. It is with this view of freedom in mind that Marx claims that the idea of freedom itself is only the product of social condition based upon free competition. He goes on to say that "By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying."

An initial significant difference between justice and freedom has to do with difference in their relation to the mode of production. In the case of justice, a particular mode of production gives rise to a particular distribution. In the case of freedom, there is an intervening factor, viz., the effect of the mode of production on the individuals and society in which it is found. The issue here relates to Marx's views on practice. Specifically, the way in which people fulfill their needs and wants creates not simply the means and distribution of their livelihood, but also the people themselves.

In this connection, there are two objections to this view which are worth considering. Firstly, it might be claimed that, though justice does indeed concern the distribution of social goods, freedom is itself a social good. Then what is wrong with capitalism is that, it constitutes an unjust distribution of freedom. The capitalist makes the decisions, the worker executes them. The capitalists enjoy

freedom but do not allow the workers to enjoy freedom. Thus, capitalism, in giving the worker less freedom than the capitalist, violates the worker's freedom, does him an injustice. On the one hand, this objection mistakenly portrays the nature of Marxist freedom. Such freedom is not simply another 'social good' which must be distributed. Rather it is the human good, the way in which all people ought to live. On the other hand, the objection mentioned above is correct because what the capitalist can do the worker cannot. But this is not the point of Marxist critique. Marx's ethics of freedom says that the capitalist himself also lacks freedom in the significant Marxian sense. Furthermore, the freedom in the bourgeois sense, that the capitalist does enjoy were granted to him by the free and voluntary decision which the worker made in selling him his labour-power. Thus, if one appeals to the bourgeois sense of freedom, there is no basis for bourgeois or proletarian to complain of a lack of freedom which the other has. On the other hand, if one appeals to the Marxist sense of freedom, neither bourgeois nor proletarian are free. Hence, again there can be no legitimate complain of one being less free than the other. Thus, the first objection seems to be groundless.

Secondly, it might be objected that, independently of who has more or less freedom, the interference with one's freedom is itself an injustice. One of the classical sources of such a view is found in Kant's philosophy. According to Kant, "anything that is unjust is a hindrance to freedom according to universal laws" or again as a commentator has put it, "according to the universal law of justice, it is juridically wrong, or unjust for anyone to interfere with the lawful freedom of anyone else". Now the basis for this claim is to view that individuals have a moral right to exercise their freedom. The interference with one's freedom is, then the violation of one's moral right. And since the violation of one's rights is an injustice, the interference with one's freedom is an injustice. Accordingly, since capitalism constitutes an interference with the freedom of human beings, it stands condemned as unjust. This objection too is unfounded.

According to Kant, to have a moral right to something is to have the authorization to coerce others to behave in certain ways. Now Marx believes that

the proletariat is justified in using coercion and force to bring about communism. To this extent, it seems he has committed to holding that people have a right to freedom and hence, any violation of that right is an injustice. But Marx's concept of freedom is not explicated in terms of rights that people have, but rather in terms of a certain kind of life which people ought to live. Accordingly, Marx rejects Stirner's view that 'in communist society there can be a question of 'duties' and interests since these are two complementary aspects of an antithesis which exists only in bourgeois society.'

What I have attempted to show is that Marx condemns capitalism and does so on the basis of his views on freedom. Now if capitalists lack of fulfillment of this Marxist freedom is in some broad sense an injustice, then this might be maintained if one identifies justice and morality. However, I have argued that it is unjustified. In any case, what is worth noting here is that such an injustice does not constitute a separate principle of justice, but is simply the lack of fulfillment of Marxist freedom. One could just as well say that it is wrong, mistaken and unjustified not to fulfill such freedom because an injustice occurs when it is not fulfilled.

The position defended above seeks to show that Marx's critique of capitalism is not a critique based on the mal-distribution of goods under capitalism. Thus, the answer to the question, 'Isn't Marx really concerned with justice since he is talking about the distribution of the means of production? is no. He is talking about the nature of these conditions. It is not that private property is morally acceptable, but we have to distribute it differently. It is that the institution itself has to be eliminated and be replaced by social property. 'Redistribution' suggests rearranging what is already there. Marx seeks to change radically what was existing at that time and bring about a new order.

It might be contended that Marx have built justice into the notion of freedom. Freedom, as explicated in Chapter II, involves harmonious relations with others. The harmonious relations Marx foresees under communism are

based on a growth of the productive forces as well as a change in the nature and consciousness of people which will eliminate the conditions which have been traditionally required for a principle of justice. Hume comments that justice is required only where there is a scarcity of goods, where people must compete for goods. If this condition does not obtain, then justice is not required. Again, Hume commented that even if there were scarcity, if people related to others in non-competitive ways, etc., then justice would also be superfluous. But the harmonious relations Marx projects would seem to constitute such a situation. Thus, it does not seem to be correct to say that Marx embeds a principle of justice in his account of freedom. Rather he seems to exclude the conditions which call for such a principle. He could not have a principle of justice whereby he condemned capitalism for being unjust.

Like Rousseau, Marx was profoundly interested in exploring the inequalities of men because he shared his belief that there can be no democracy as long as there are inequalities and special interests. According to the Marxist scheme of history, mankind has gone through three major modes of production since an initial golden age of primitive communism: an ancient slave society, feudalism and capitalism. Capitalism, the last form of society torn by a class struggle, represents the peak of human development so far. On the one hand, it has created and accumulated unprecedented wealth, which if used rationally, could assume the material well being of all mankind. Again, while it has promoted constitutional government and the rights of man, the formal rights and equalities of liberal regimes are vitiated by actual inequalities and dehumanization. Thus, Marx has correctly noted that man has been converted into a commodity, whose labour-power, talents and personality are for sale in the free market. The resolution of these contradictions will be produced by capitalism itself. Its own economic laws not only produce chaos and crisis but also narrow the social basis of capitalism by casting the masses of the population into the proletariat. At a crisis point the exploited will rise in revolution, expropriate the

ruling class, replace commodity production with an economy based on national planning and abolish all class divisions in society.

Supporting the optimistic pragnosis of revolutionary Marxism is the image of the proletariat as the "chosen people" who because of their place in society, their state of organization and their spontaneous grasp of reality can be expected to rise above all narrow interests, loyalties and ideologies and liberate mankind forever from the curse of property and class.

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I, Bendangrenla, hereby declare that the subject matter of the dissertation is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form the basis of award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institution.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The nature of Marx's Views on Morality has been a matter of considerable dispute. Different thinkers are of the view that Marx had no ethics. Richard Miller, for example, says in his analysis of Karl Marx's philosophy that Marx rejects morality as human basis for resolving political conflicts or assessing social institutions and practices.[1] According to him, the relation between Marx and philosophy has been almost wholly antagonistic, until very recently. Analytic philosophers have tried to show that Marxian philosophy fall short of proper clarity, plausibility, scientific justification of explanatory adequacy because of which they say it is a waste of time to investigate his theories empirically or to derive their philosophical implications. Miller maintains that this antagonism should be replaced by cooperation. He believes that Marx's ideas "shed light on leading problems of philosophy, issues that are important not just for Marxists but for everyone."[2] Miller for starters, takes it to mean that Marx develops a critique of morality. He criticizes those central categories of moral understanding and appraisal, "justice, equality and the moral point of view, as bases for judging social arrangements."[3]

Miller argues that in a political context, the moral point of view does not, and rationally speaking should not in class societies, reign supreme. It

is not a point of view which either is or should be always overriding. Rather our fundamental evaluations, in such context, should be made from another point of view which Miller describes, not without paradox, as being non-moral but still humane. Such a radical critique of morality, though in importantly different ways by Nietzsche and Freud, should be something that anyone thinking seriously about morality and the foundations of morality, very much needs closely to examine, particularly given what we know about contemporary culture, about the indeterminacy of foundational claims in moral philosophy and what we know about the pervasiveness of ideology and the mystification that usually goes with it. Marx makes us to face what is both a fundamental theoretical question and a question of great human importance for anyone who with integrity wants to be serious about the world in which he lives. We need, of course, to ask whether Miller has got the right view of Marx. If he has got the right view of Marx, even then the question arises: Is Marx's view a coherent view which we ought to accept? If it is not a coherent view, it has to be rejected. The most central question is whether this is the right way of viewing things, the best way of judging institutions, for a thoroughly informed non-evasive person who is also humane. There is a possibility that Marx was so indeterminate on these topics that it is difficult to evaluate his views in terms of right or wrong. What is important is the adequacy in their own right of these projective re-constructions of Marx. Whatever they reveal or fail to reveal,

about the real Marx, what they say themselves should be thought about on its own. The central point is that such a critique of morality, a possibly adequate reconstruction of Marx, should be of vital interest to moral and social philosophers.

Marx's historical materialism is a significant example of a holistic and systematic empirically grounded social science which, if it hangs together and is empirically adequate, would be both of very considerable theoretical interest and have considerable human import. Miller remarks that as social philosophers we should explore and assess such a holistic view. Beyond that, philosophers of science should find Marx's theory of history of particular interest for providing, as Miller puts it, "a model kind of legitimate theory that positivist philosophy of science excludes..."[4] The philosophy of science can use such a holistic social science as a model in sketching the logical structure of a post-positivist but non-relativist philosophy of science.

Besides throwing light on leading problems of philosophy, Miller finds Marx's thought important in another way. Miller believes that philosophers can use Marx's writing to make a positive contribution to the social sciences. He remarks social and political philosophers and philosophers of science are now separated from social scientists. Lack of

appropriate training, information and professional rewards, philosophers today, quite unlike their most eminent predecessors, find it hard to contribute to actual debates over the nature of social reality. Yet many social scientists suspect that distinctive possibilities of analysis and explanation are being missed as a result of the easy assumptions and the confusions that philosophical reflection should challenge. As the most powerful explanatory framework outside the mainstream, Marx's social theories often yield such alternatives, if reconstructed with the clarity and conceptual resourcefulness of contemporary analytic philosophy.[5] Miller, thus, argues that Marx's account provides a powerful explanatory framework in contemporary social science.

Miller's own way of using Marx's writings to make a positive contribution to the social sciences come in the middle sections of analysing Marx where he talks about political power. But he remarks that similar analyses of Marx's ideas might have a liberating effect in other domains as well. Miller also contends that analytic philosophy has an important contribution to make to Marx interpretation and to Marxist social theory. In making a case for this, Miller starts by remarking that interpreters of Marx are confronted by two very different kinds of passages; general formulations that are highly condensed, fragmentary or metaphorical, and discussions of particular phenomena that are richly

detailed, often quite plausible and utterly contrary to natural readings of the general formulatios.[6] Faced with this, there are two corresponding temptations and most interpreters succumb to one or the other. These temptations are especially powerful in the three areas that is, morality, political theory and history. Either Marx has one grand general argument to offer against morality, that moral ideas are shaped by social interests and hence are ideological. Or he was simply claiming that contemporary moralities placed too great an emphasis on property rights or social harmony. Either he regards politics as a passive reflection of economic necessities or he merely warns us to be sensitive to the influence of economic interest groups on political decision making. Either he takes the desire to produce more efficiently as the driving force of history or he regards the economic factor as an important and often underrate aspect of large scale change. The neglect of Marx has partly resulted from a situation in which such choices dominate sympathetic Marx interpretation. Most people, reflecting upon the realities of social change, find the grand statements implausible, the modest ones truistic What miller had in mind is that statements about general kinds of social processes must be vague to be true and must be applied to particular events with unpredictable provisos, specifications and hedges. Miller says once we are aware of this we can come to see that analytic philosophy offers a promising style of interpretation, since it demands clarity, tolerates abstraction and

complexity and responds to the impact of contexts on what people mean. He thinks with that technique we can extract plausible but distinctive theories from Marx's texts.[7] We need not fall back on either grand but implausible general statements, such as 'all morality is ideology' or on common sense truisms such as economics is important.

Using this style of philosophy, Miller hopes to give both accurate and significant analysis of Marx's account of morality, his theory of the state and for his theory of history. Consider Marx's account of history and Marxist readings of it. Miller, in trying to show how analytical philosophy can do good work in the service of social science, wants to replace one very influential conception of Marx on history with another. He wants to replace what he calls, the invisible hand conception which is more political. The invisible hand conception thinks of the mature Marx as being in "a special but important sense anti-political". By this, it means, it is our pursuit of independent economic self-interest that changes and shapes society.[8] Politics, as a guest for power, has on such a conception, a subordinate role in social change. It is not class struggle but the building up of the productive forces through the efficient pursuit of individual self-interest, that is, the motor force of history. Behind this economistic 'invisible hand' reading of Marx lies some confused conceptions about how Marx was an economic determinist. In certain ways, that is given a certain

understanding of the notion, Marx was an economic determinist, but in certain ways that are important for a proper conception of the role of politics in social life, he was not. Miller expresses that the most important features of a society are ultimately determined by its mode of production, that is the relations of control, the modes of cooperation and the technology that govern material production. More specifically, while a society is stable, the system of political and ideological institutions and the climate of respectable ideas are such as to serve the function of maintaining the dominance of the economically dominant social group, the group who mainly extract the surplus from those directly engaged in material production. Because of the nature of the mode of production, processes that initially maintained the old relations of control eventually give a non-dominant group the ability and the motivation to destroy the old system of relations and dominate a new one. In the ensuing struggles, the crucial alliances are determined by people's class situations, their locations in that network of relations of control. This clearly treats the mode of material production as primary and this is what rationalizes calling Marx an economic determinist. But to use that term here is misleading. Marx does not believe that the pursuit of immediate economic self-interest spontaneously produces radical social changes. He does not believe that political organization with large-scale social goals is unimportant. He does not hold the economistic thesis "that economic developments make

political revolution superfluous". He does not think, in typical situations, that deliberations over one's political commitments are pointless. And he does not think that the pursuit of more efficient production is the basic mechanism for change. These beliefs of Marx all count. Miller maintains against calling him an economic determinist and the last claim counts against calling him a technological determinist as well.

A failure to recognize these things stands in the way of appreciating Marx's insight in moral philosophy and political theory. We should recognize that systems of control, as in relations of control in the mode of production, are in a broad sense political as well as economic. The subordination of the political to the economic, if that is the right word for it, is simply but importantly, the main features of separate political institutions *are explained as due to the need of the economically dominant group to* maintain their dominance, alliances in revolutionary periods are primarily explained on the basis of class situations. Miller believes that the correctness of his claim that Marx was not an economic determinist or a technological determinist will be important, if not decisive, for what he wants to say about what he takes to be Marx's criticisms of morality as a basis for social choice. The important of Marx's critique of Morality and the replacement he gives for morality in political life cannot be properly understood or its force appreciated, if Marx is supposed to have

subordinated conscious political deliberations to the pursuit of immediate economic interests. Further more, the later itself cannot be understood as having much force, if technological determinism is not assumed. But to assume technological determinism here is to assume that Marx regards the pursuit of material efficiency as the engine of social change. Against this, it is Miller's fundamental claim that the "more political Marx is more accurate as exegesis, more useful as social science and more illuminating as a resource for philosophy".[9]

Marx sought firm intellectual foundations for morality in the nature of man, in the principles of social life and its institutions. In so far as he derives his moral absolutes from the concept of equality, freedom and dignity of man, we can call his ethics as humanistic in character. Humanistic ethics is a system of reflections about man recognizing him as the highest good and concerned to create a better world for the welfare of the whole humanity. The essence of ethical humanism is based on the principle of reverence for life.

The first premise in Marx's ethics is the idea of man as a being in the world. To make such an obvious and simple statement is to assert this truth against any reduction of man to a mere epistemological ego, that is, just a subject which stands outside the world and contemplates it from

without.[10] Marx does not mean that man simply happens to be in space and time, but rather that being in the world is a basic condition which follows from human reality. He becomes what he does through actualization of his potentialities. In fact, his very concept of philosophy springs from this very image of man. Philosophy for Marx, as we know, is thinking about man and his position in the world, and since man is a historical being and his situation is constantly changing, the only kind of thinking that can interpret his reality is socio-historical thinking. But this thinking itself is subject to change and cannot, in the nature of things, transcend a particular epoch.

According to Marx, ethical values do not spring from the heart of cosmos or any divine being. Man in his view can experience the eternal life as it were, not in a future heaven or a paradise but in his transitory existence on earth through the affirmation of his self as a social being, seeking ultimate freedom within the framework of the empirical realities of space and time not only for himself but for the whole humanity. There is a boundless concern in his ethical philosophy for the suffering of humanity and an endless urge for the unity of mankind and for an egalitarian order of society.

Marx has brought about a renaissance of human values. This he has done by rejecting the traditional concept of human existence and formulating it afresh in naturalistic and socialistic frame of reference instead of a theistic one. Like ethical categories of moral consciousness, moral responsibility and moral action, human existence itself was conceived in the medieval period as a creation of God. But for Marx the point of departure for an ethical theory which concerns itself with the life, destiny and value system of man could inevitably be the existence of man himself without any regard to the possibility of God's existence. And the purpose of man's individual and social existence is the moral elevation of all men and eventually the moral perfection of the whole mankind.

However, the question as to how this perfection comes about leads us to the consideration of social change from the ethical point of view. It is very significant to note that Marxian ethics consists in the ultimate analysis of the ethics of social change. In fact, philosophy for Marx, means a philosophy of action and change itself. He says, "Philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change."[11] He praises Feuerbach for his deduction with regard to man's relation to man and for establishing the consciousness of the fact that men in reality do need and have always needed each other. But he criticizes him for being like the other theorists in producing merely the correct consciousness about an

existing fact "whereas for the real communists, it is a question of overthrowing the existing state of affairs."[12]

Marx's reaction had begun as a recognition of material conditions or as a "correct consciousness about an existing fact" as he calls it. His concept of correct consciousness is based upon an examination of the real facts which he found in socio-economic reality "with a glance that pierced through the random irregularities of the surface down to the grandiose logic of things historical,"[13] made him elbow aside the legends of religious and metaphysical character. But he also realized the necessity to bring philosophy to its completion in action over and above theory. By completion he meant the abolition of all speculative philosophy as abstracted from reality and thus full of illusory notions and fetishism "abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties,"[14] predominantly prevalent in commodity societies. Marx in this sense attempts to change moral ideas by first changing the very conditions on which these ideas are based.[15] He calls for concerted moral action and struggle to achieve the moral ends for the realization of a morally better society.

Marxian philosophy of social change presupposes the promethean conception of man and rests on the glorification of material achievement.

The materialist faith that the world is real is an essential part of the promethean image of man, a man who recognizes obstacles, removes them and creates the possibility for a better, fuller and richer human existence. As such, Marxian ethics is a promethean ethics of human liberation and of the supremacy of man.

Marx had looked for ethical principles which are naturalistic rather than super-naturalistic. He, like Rousseau, had sought a basis for the moral right of each individual to equality and freedom. According to him, no individual is inherently superior to other individuals. In Marx's ethics categories like freedom and equality played the major roles. He had seen how shamelessly a concept like 'freedom' could be twisted for the benefit of a particular class in the name of universal morality. He advocated freedom for all mankind and not a particular section of humanity, in action and not in words. Reflecting on the bourgeois morality, Engels writes, "we are merely saying that this economic fact is in contradiction to our sense of morality."[16] The ultimate and explicit aim of Marx's philosophical works was unquestionably ethical. It was to discover in what human perfection and human freedom consist, to explain the difficulties which prevent men from realizing them and to show the way which they must follow if they sought to attain freedom. We cannot do justice to Marx without recognizing the sincerity of his purpose, his love of facts and his burning desire to help

the oppressed which made him fully conscious of proving himself in deeds and not only in words. The incomparable stature of Marx is due to the fact that in him the man of ideas was indissolubly bound up with the man of action and the two mutually complemented and supported each other.

Marx's ethical views have been influenced not only by Hegel but even more so by Aristotle and Kant. Marx draws away from Hegel's concept of essence towards one in some ways more like Aristotle's and he operates with a concept of universalization similar to that found in Kant's categorical imperative. At the same time, Marx's task is to reconcile these Aristotelian and Kantian elements. Marx's doctrine of historical materialism leads him to abandon these elements and indeed to reject all morality as ideological illusion. Marx does not accept many of the assumptions in Kant's discussion of the categorical imperative as it appears in Kant's ethical writings – the *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*. There Kant focuses primarily on what it means to be moral and he seems to assume that morality has exclusively to do with the individual. The individual is free and thus should act morally, no matter what.[17] But these are not Kant's assumptions in his writing on politics and philosophy of history. In these texts things are not just left to the individual. Individual choice is not enough to produce morality. The historical development of culture and social institutions is a necessary

presupposition for the possibility of morality for acting in accordance with the categorical imperative. This is where we find the similarity between Marx and Kant. Marx is seeking a historical agent that will make possible the realization of morality and in doing so is influenced by what Kant has to say about this sort of agency.

Marx's main concern is not simply to explain what morality is but also to show how it can be realized in the world. To understand his views we have to first know what morality means for Marx. And that is possible only when we examine several concepts and the way in which they are connected to each other, i.e., his concepts of freedom, justice and the state. Then and then alone we will be able to understand his concept of morality and can judge how it is like Kant's concept of a categorical imperative. For Marx, the state should be an organic unity which moulds its members and institutions. It transforms individual aims and particular interests into general aims and universal moral concerns. It transforms 'natural independence into spiritual freedom, by the individual finding his good in the life of the whole, and the whole in the frame of mind of the individual'.[18] Morality for Marx, as for Hegel, Aristotle and others, only arises in a state, and moral theory is inseparable from social and political theory.[19] Morality involves obeying universal rational laws, but it is not enough that these laws be subjectively rational, that is, based upon the

rationality of the individual. These laws and their rationality must be objective. They must be the public laws of the state, and reason must be objectified in the state's institutions. Only in this way can freedom be objective. It is only the state which is 'the great organism, in which legal, moral and political freedom must be realized, and in which the individual citizen in obeying the laws of the state only obeys the natural laws of his own reason, of human reason'.[20] For Kant, the individual is free, in fact, morality is based upon freedom. But it is individual subjectivity alone that is free, the individual will decide its action in accordance with reason. The individual is not necessarily free to realize the moral action.[21] But for Hegel and Marx, freedom is realized only when the objective external world and our feelings fit and support the subjective rational freedom of the individual. Laws and institutions, feelings and customs, as well as the rationality of the individual, must form a single organic unity. Scholars in the recent years are increasingly getting interest in the problems of morality that challenged Marx. The contemporary literature, in the combined areas of philosophy and social sciences, is giving more and more evidence that morality in any concrete sense can neither be fully understood nor defined without taking proper cognizance of the economic and socio-political forces. For it is within the framework of these forces that man struggles for his moral rejuvenation. So, to understand the full

significance of Marxian ethics, it is essential to understand Marxian thought in itself as well as within the context of history of ideas.

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CHAPTER II

FREEDOM

Freedom, from the general point of view, means the power or right to act, speak or think free, the power of self-determination attributed to the will. For Marx, "morality is based on the autonomy of the human mind" and freedom is "the generic essence of all spiritual existence".[1] To understand Marx's ethics, we have to first understand his concept of essence and how it is linked with freedom and the state. Moral good, for Marx, is the realization of freedom. For Marx, freedom demands three things: (1) that the individual be self-determined by universal and rational principles, (2) that the laws and institutions of the state be rational so that in obeying civil laws you obey the laws of your own reason, and (3) that feeling and custom have been moulded so as to agree with and support these rational laws.[2] The importance of freedom in Marx's thoughts has been recognized by different thinkers. We can divide different interpretations of Marx's views on freedom into two groups: Those who interpret freedom in the form of self-realization and those who do not interpret it in the form of self-realization. Those who hold first view says that Marx calls man's freedom "the positive power to assert his true individuality". This 'true individuality' is man at the height of his power and needs, thoroughly and intensively cooperating with his fellows, and appropriating all of nature. Free activity consists in the fulfillment of such powers. In other words, Freedom is the

condition of man whose human powers are fulfilled. It passes beyond the absence of restraint to the active unfolding of all his potentialities.[3] But those who hold the second view says that freedom is an ethical quality bound up with the cooperative working of goods.[4] It is the right of an individual to choose among various actions within limits determined by social necessity.[5] There are, however, significant difficulties in rendering such an account of Marx. Indeed, to my mind none of these accounts of freedom have succeeded in giving us a plausible and detailed account of freedom as a moral notion, which is identifiable across the whole of Marx's writings.

Marx's account of freedom is different from other thinkers who belong to the tradition of European individualism and liberalism. Take for example, the view of John Locke and Hobbes. According to John Locke, individuals are by nature free from the jurisdiction of others. The human essence is freedom from any relations other than those a man enters with a view to his own interest. The individual is proprietor of his own freedom for which he owes nothing to the society. He is freed to alienate his capacity to labour, but not in his whole person. Society is a whole series of relation between proprietors. Political society is a contractual device for the protection of proprietors and the orderly regulation of their relations. Individual freedom in his view, is limited. He says that men do 'sacrifice'

their freedom either by entering into relations with others or permitting others to enter into relations with them exclusively for mutual gains.[6] But in any case, he argues that the individual does not owe anything to the society. To Hobbes, an individual is free in a government where peace, comfort, security of persons and property are granted.[7] Such a government is justified. But I wish to point out in this connection that in the Hobbesian scheme of things, freedom is confined only to those individuals who have at least some property. It is not extended for those who do not have any property. When they do not have any property, freedom is an empty slogan for them. In other words, Hobbesian concept of freedom is applicable only to property owners and not to non-property owners. Hegel's account of freedom is different from both. He is of the view that freedom must be understood as a social phenomenon, a property of the social systems which arises through the model development of the community.[8] It is less an individual than a status which is important to the individual through legal and ethical institutions that the community supports. In consequence, it cannot be equalled with the self will, or the following of private inclinations. Freedom consists rather in the adjustment of inclinations and individual capacity to the performance of socially significant work or as F. H. Bradley puts it, "finding my station and its duties". Hegel further says that the rights and liberties of the individual are those which correspond to the duties imposed by station in the society. In

short, what Hegel says is that one must perform his duties for the society, duties those are desired or prescribed by the society. In Hegel's scheme of philosophy, an individual has to be content with what he is expected to do for the society, which becomes his 'freedom'. Blind obedience to whatever may be told to an individual becomes freedom for him. Given this scheme of things, a soldier too is a free man whose moustaches are also being patterned by a set of rules.

For existentialism all the important possibilities of human life are bound up with the fact of human freedom, so that to lament the absurdity of existence is in a way odd.[9] But what this lament does reflect is the ambiguous attitude of existentialists to human freedom. If any single thesis could be said to constitute the doctrine of existentialism, it would be that the possibility of choice is the central fact of human nature. Even the thesis that existence precedes essence often means no more than that men do not have fixed natures that limit or determines their choices, but rather it is their choices that bring whatever nature they have into being.

Marx's account of freedom is not an account of a principle of freedom such as Mill, for example offered, but rather an account of freedom as the basic virtue by which people ought to live.[10] As such, Marx's ethics of freedom is an ethics of virtue. By this, I mean two things.

Firstly, Marx is concerned with a certain state of being, a set of dispositions and character traits, which a person must have to be free. Freedom does not mean simply the demand that we act in certain ways according to some principle which may serve as the criterion for those acts. Secondly, Marx does not understand freedom to consist in a set of rights and obligations which its acceptance imposes on people. Freedom is not to be understood as an ethics of duty. Thus, his ethics of virtue differs from self-realizationist interpretations of freedom who hold the view that we have a moral obligation to determine the rules by which we live or that the imperative to realize ourselves involves the fulfillment of various moral duties. Marx's view of freedom also differs from non-self-realizationist interpretations of freedom such as Schaff's, who explicate freedom by means of rights and obligations.[11] Moral obligations, duties and rights are not part of Marx's ethics. Indeed, he condemns them as central and deficient features of bourgeois morality. Thus, an ethics of virtue has an advantage over other interpretations of Marx's moral views because it does not involve an acceptance of those moral concepts which Marx explicitly rejected. The development of one's powers and talents is important for Marx's ethics of freedom. The self-realizationist view is so far correct. But Marx's view does not require the realization of literally all of one's powers and talents. Marx's view of freedom escapes problems from which self-realizationist views suffer. Marx's view does not imply the

existence of two different selves within us: a false self and a true self. Marx's account of morality is a normative account but it is not an ethics of duty. He did not prescribe which particular action a person ought to perform and which one not. His answer instead was 'Be free, and then do what you please'.[12] Such interpretation takes into account Marx's condemnation of rights, moral obligations and duties, and yet still shows how a moral thrust lies behind Marx's critique of capitalism.

The first aspect of Marx's view of freedom as self-determination is that one is free to the extent that one essentially determines the concrete totality of desires, capacities, and talents, which constitute one's self-objectification. Self-objectification, for Marx, signifies that man, given his various desires, capacities, and talents objectifies or creates himself in his activities, his relations, and in the systems of thought he constructs by which he understands himself. That is, neither an individual nor mankind itself is, in the beginning, a finished product. Man is not at birth programmed to live in certain ways, only requiring some time to unfold and passively reveal these various characteristics. Rather, humans are various collections of needs, desires, and capacities which require activity and contact with others and nature in order to create the characteristics each person manifests. In Hegelian fashion, man only comes to know himself for what he is, and only comes to be what he can become through his

active interrelation with other people and nature. This active interaction creates both himself and his world. Thus, Marx comments that 'the history of industry and the established objective existence of Industry are the open book of man's essential powers, the perceptibly existing human psychology.'[13] This kind of intimate interrelation of man and his surroundings is not typical of bourgeois freedom. It implies for Marx the much greater and different significance for human freedom of one's relations to other people and to nature. Indeed, if one's work and relations to others are part of the process by which a person is created, then one can understand the importance Marx attaches to the nature of one's work and human relations. Marx's discussion of self-objectification is concerned with human labour and work, with factories, farms, and the like. The reason for this emphasis, it should be obvious, relates to Marx's views on historical materialism, not to his views on objectification. That is, Marx's concept of self-objectification is not limited to productive labour in this narrow economic sense. Thus, on the one hand, Marx holds that a life is possible in which people will be significantly freed from labour for necessary economic ends. In such a life they could work on other projects which would be more immediately connected with that objectification of themselves they would choose. One the other hand, Marx seems willing to expand his notion of productive labour so that it and objectification become

essentially the same. Accordingly, he notes that 'religion, family, state, law, morality, science, art, etc., are only particular modes of production.'[14]

Self-determination, then, occurs when a person essentially directs and controls the form his self-objectification takes. Self objectification, we have seen, is the development of individuals through the active fulfillment and development of desires, capacities, and talents. As such, one's desires are not inherently opposed to one's self determination or freedom. There are other views that might also be contrasted with Marx's view. Plato saw the desires as rapacious and dangerous, as forces ever in need of restraint and limitation. Even Bradley, who held a self-realizationist ethics, spoke of 'the crude material of the natural wants, affections and impulses, which, though not evil in themselves, stand in the way of good, and must be disciplined, repressed, and discouraged.'[15] Marx, on the contrary, ever insists on the positive role which desires, capacities, and talents play in man's self objectification and self-determination. Man's desires and needs are in themselves neither alien nor compulsive forces, nor are they forces standing 'in the way of good'. Thus, the fact that in self-objectification, one acts to fulfill certain desires and needs does not compromise one's self-determination. What general guidelines can be given we will discuss below when we consider the relation of self-objectification and nature. Two points, however, should be urged here.

Firstly, self-determination is not necessarily compromised by the fact that we act according to our desires or needs. The ends or purposes of such desires and needs are ours, not of intruders. Only when such desires or needs become 'abnormal' due to insufficiently developed material circumstances would one's self-determination be compromised. Secondly, Marx does not conclude from the preceding as some self-realizationist theories have concluded, that we must speak about a false or bad self against which our good or ideal self must struggle. The mere fact that we may find ourselves struggling against an imperious desire of ours does not imply that we must distinguish two antagonistic selves in a person.[16] Self-determination and self-objectification, or the fulfillment of one's desires, capacities and talents, are thus, inherently connected for Marx. However, freedom as self-determination requires more than a person's control and direction of his self-objectification. It also requires that in self-objectification one develops his desires, capacities and talents. Again Marx's view is compared with the bourgeois view of freedom. It is compatible with bourgeois freedom that one did nothing, that one remained alone, tranquilly sitting on a stool looking at a blank wall. Such a person would be doing what he wanted, which was doing absolutely nothing and would not be harming anybody. The question is whether he is free, of course he is free, if one judges solely by the bourgeois definition. Accordingly, if freedom is indeed linked with self-determination as the bourgeois concept

of freedom itself allows, then the development of one's desires and capacities does seem plausibly to have a place in an account of freedom. Marx's notion of freedom openly recognizes and incorporates this point. It is for this reason that we find passages such as the following in Marx:

> Tranquility appears to Adam Smith as the adequate state, as identical with 'freedom' and 'happiness'. It seems quite far from Smith's mind that the individual, 'in his normal state of health, strength, activity. skill, facility', also needs a normal portion of work, and of the suspension of tranquility. Certainly, labour obtains its measures from the outside, through the aim to be attained and the obstacles to be overcome in attaining it. But Smith has no inkling whatever that this overcoming of obstacles is in itself a liberating activity and that, further, the external aims become posited as aims which the individual himself points. Hence, as self realization, objectification of the subject, hence real freedom.[17] Freedom or self-determination, then, is not incompatible with fulfillment of one's desires, capacities, and talents. It is, however, incompatible with their non-fulfillment. But which desires and potentialities is the free person to fulfill as part of his self-objectification? To what extent or degree must they be developed or fulfilled? The bourgeois view is that the free person may fulfill whichever desires and potentialities he has, and to the extent he wants, in so far as fulfilling them does not harm others. Marx rejects this view. The

self realizationist account of Marx is quite different. Its answer seems to be that we must fully develop all our desires and potentialities. And doubtlessly it is correct that Marx himself of never tries of urging man, as part of his self-determination, to develop fully all his desires, capacities and talents. According to Ollman, Marx holds that under communism, i.e., when man is free, he will be able to concentrate harder and longer, he will do all work with the case of an expert, and he will be the master of all trades.[18] However, such a view is preposterous, romantic and silly. Even if one could really maintain such a view with a straight face, there are a number of obvious problems. One such problem, it would seem, which such a view must confront is that no one can develop 'fully' all his desires and capacities, since some of them will conflict. Further, simply the time and energy which the development of some potentialities requires will exclude the development of other potentialities. It is hard to imagine a person fully developing not only his potentialities as a pianist, but also his potentialities as a nuclear physicist, under water explorer, not to mention those of father or mother and community leader. Finally, since one cannot develop all of one's capacities and talents one would have to employ some (moral) criterion to determine which ones to fulfill. It was just such a task, however, that the self-realizationist criterion was supposed to supply. Hence, the self-realizationist interpretation of Marx's view of freedom is not to be embraced. Marx does not believe that each person should

indiscriminately develop simply any and every desire, capacity, or talent he has. For example, one's capacity to harm others is not to be developed. Thus, Marx must indicate the basis on which we may decide which characteristics of humans are or are not to be developed, as well as how we may interpret the notion of 'fully develop' so as to be plausible notion. There are two steps required to explicate the way in which Marx might restrict or envision limits to their development.

Firstly, Marx might object to the implicit understanding of 'fully develop' which has been used in the preceding discussion. It has been assumed that 'fully develop' implies the unending, ever extendable fulfillment or development of a desire, capacity, or talent which one might have. But why do we assume that Marx held such a view? It would be more in line with the Greek and Hegelian influences on Marx's thought, as well as other aspects of his view of freedom, to assume that by 'fully develop' he meant the greatest development or realization of one's desires, capacities, and talents which was compatible, or harmonious, with certain limits set by one's own determination of the hierarchy of one's needs and interests. Plato, for example, maintains that each aspect of oneself is to be developed only within certain limits.[19] Similarly, Hegel condemns as 'bad infinity' the notion of endless development. Surely Marx too did not mean by 'all-sided development' that one endlessly developed

one's desires and potentialities. He may well recognize that people differ in their desires, capacities, and talents in various ways. Individuals may have certain talents and abilities which may be of predominant interest to them. Thus a person might wish to concentrate on these, relating his other abilities and talents to those which are more central to himself, or more highly valued by himself. Marx opposes, it is true, the narrow development of humans due to the division of labour. He did expect that people when freed of the coercion, the lack of freedom, which typified their lives would developed themselves more widely and more generally than they previously had been able to do. Marx's comments on the all-sided development of individuals are directly correspondent with this point. The concrete totality of one's desires and potentialities which are realized in one's self-objectification is to be one's own determination. Thus, that which counted as 'fully developed' on the above interpretation might be counted as 'over-developed' on Marx's actual view. Consequently, Marx need not be understood as urging the impossible development of the various aspects of a person.

A second consideration indicates not merely other ways in which Marx is not committed by his concept of freedom to the limitless development of human desires and potentialities, but also why he does require a certain level of development of one's desires, capacities and

talents. The bourgeois concept of freedom is a political concept. As such one is free or not independently of questions about man's relation to nature. Marx's concept of freedom, we have pointed, is much broader. One cannot be free, according to Marx, independently of certain relations to nature. According to Marx, nature 'first confronts man as a completely alien all-powerful and unassailable force'.[20] Because of man's undeveloped mastery of nature, his undeveloped material conditions, nature dominates man. Marx maintains that individuals can be self determining only after they have mastered the forces of nature. Man must develop his desires, capacities, and talents in this basic realm in order to be self-determining and free. Thus, the extent of one's self-objectification is not simply a matter of capricious desire. The implicit criterion is one of the determination and control of one's objectification. Later he claims that communism requires 'the advanced stage of modern productive forces'.[21] No where he claims that the self-determination, or freedom, which will characterize communism requires extravagant, impossible, advances in the mastery of nature. Nevertheless, it remains true that the development of the forces of production was absolutely crucial to Marx's views. We can, however, in general indicate the degree of control which man must be able to exercise over nature by pointing to several conditions of self-determination which such control would fulfill. Marx clearly assumes that fulfillment of these conditions does not require a total mastery of nature.

On the other hand, he also assumes that fulfillment of these conditions would require a significant development of each individual's desires, capacities and talents. Firstly, man must be able to control nature to the extent that his basic needs may be satisfied.[22] Self-determination and freedom do not rest well on an empty stomach. The lack of normal satisfaction of desires we have seen, to be one reason for desires becoming imperious and dominating a person. Indeed, a fundamental reason for the social, political as well as religious constraints which have until now restricted human freedom and self-determination relates to the lack of satisfaction of basic human needs. Secondly, freedom requires that man must be able to control nature to the extent that he can reduce to a minimum the labour he must perform to fulfill those needs. Thus Marx refers to the free development of individualities, and hence the general reduction of the necessary labour of society to a minimum which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific, etc., development of the individuals in the time set free, and with the means created, for all of them.[23] Thirdly, man must have the degree of control over nature which would allow the abolition of social institutions such as private property, the division of labour, the state and classes – institutions which have hitherto acted as constraints on human action.[24] Thus, self-determination implies a knowledge and understanding of the nature of one's life conditions and relations, how they arose and how they operate. Self-determination cannot

be measured in terms of just any purposes the individual might fix for himself, since the individual might be falsely conscious of himself and his relations. Those who live under capitalism may believe that they are self-determining and free, but in reality they are not. This is true not only of the proletarian but also the capitalist. Since communism, on the other hand, will supposedly offer to people practical everyday relations which are 'perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellowmen and to nature', communism allows for individual self-determination.[25] Further, since under communism social relations will be under the joint control of the members of society and since nature will be controlled to the extent this is necessary, man will be self-determining and free. Freedom, Marx is quite clear, is not to be identified with the emancipation from the flesh, rather it is to be identified with one's self-determination, something one may realize more or less completely in different parts of one's daily life.

Marx's account of self-determination, then, so far as we have discussed is uncommon. Firstly, its broad view of those things which may impinge on one's self-determination, e.g., nature, the division of labour, and private property, distinguishes it from the bourgeois concept of freedom. Secondly, though freedom for Marx, has connections with traditional views of freedom from constraint or coercion, it differs from such

accounts in that it emphasizes the importance of self-control, of rational self-control, over one's affairs. Thirdly, Marx, account of freedom is richer than other accounts because it goes beyond the requirements that there be no obstacles to doing what one wants. It implies the development of one's own peculiar totality of desires, capacities and talents. There is simply no credible evidence in Marx to suggest that he identified freedom with one's mental or spiritual life or with the emancipation from the flesh. Fourthly, freedom also requires one's participation in a community and hence the joint determination of what it is that one does. Freedom is not simply a personal matter but also a social affair. Marx's account of self-determination is a part of his account of the concept of democracy. The social relations and relations of authority which are part of such an account do not compromise one's self-determination or one's freedom. Thus, certain limits on one's self-determination must be accepted. Fifthly, freedom is the cardinal virtue of Marx's ethics. It is not simply a power or an ability to do certain things, nor is it a principle of action or set of rights. Rather, Marx's treatment of freedom is best understood as the characterization of a kind of life, a way of being, which we morally ought to realize. He urges us, at this historical juncture, to 'be free'. This requires one's self-development or self-objectification to an extent determined by one's own desires within the constraint that this development enables one to rationally and essentially direct one's activities with and relations to

other people, social institutions, and natural forces. It is a mistake to regard Marx's ethics as a self-realizationist ethics. Finally, how significant is the preceding account of self-determination as an aspect of freedom and Marx's ethics in general? Some may object that the preceding account of freedom is empty for it fails to provide a person with guidance as to how he ought to act. Those such as Ollman and Kamenka who hold that freedom is a descriptive notion for Marx would supposedly not be disturbed by such an objection.[26] Accordingly, one would expect his moral views to offer some guidance. Now, in one sense, it is true that the present account of freedom as self-determination does not provide one with guidance how one should act. But this is quite in line with the view defended here that Marx's ethics is an ethic of virtue.

Marx's concept of freedom is also intimately connected to the concept of 'necessity'. Freedom is understood in relation to necessity, and it is the knowledge of necessity that gives rise to freedom. To read Maurice Cornforth:

> On the contrary, with communism there will have taken place, as Engels expressed it, 'Humanities leap from necessity to the realm of freedom'. And that means that elemental conflict

> characteristic of the realm of necessity will give place to changes controlled and planned.[27]

It will not be out of place to quote the following from Maurice Cornforth in this connection.

> When knowledge advances to the stage and inner knowledge, which grasps the essence and inner connections of things, then we begin to understand the aspect of necessity which belongs to phenomena of both nature and society. We call that necessity which from the nature of the case could not be otherwise.[28]

The notion of necessity can be explicated with the help of the following example. It is a fact that by nature man cannot fly. This means that man is handicapped in this respect. It is not possible for men to fly. But then, the knowledge of this, 'necessity' taught him to overcome his incapacity. Man invented machine to fly with. Thus, it is the knowledge of necessity and hindrances that gives rise the way to freedom. The notion of necessity is also intimately connected to the notion of accident, and it is through a series of accidents that necessity manifests.

> Where on the surface accident holds sway, there it is always governed by inner, hidden laws and it is only a matter of discovering these laws.[29]

> Their discovery does not, however, eliminate the conception of the accidental. Rather it reveals that the necessary feature of things manifests itself through a series of accidents, and the accidental on the other hand is always governed by the necessary.[30]

> Necessity and accident are present in everything. In general, it is certain over all characteristic of events, and the over all character of their outcome, which are necessary. On the other hand, the details, the particular details of individual events, and the consequent detailed, particular features of their outcome are not necessary, but accidental. It is in this sense that what is necessary is composed of accidents.[31]

It is thus, quite evident from the above quotation that the notion of necessity is conceptually connected with the notion of accidents. In other words, we know necessity only through a series of accidents those are patterned in a given way. It is the patterned repetition of those accidents

that gives them an order, and a law of their own. Their construction, and relationship is what reveals itself as necessity. Necessity and cause are interconnected. Discoveries in nature and society are bound up with discovery of cause and the laws governing the relationship of cause and effects. What is necessary is so because of the operation of causes. If there were things that came into being without causes, if there were events that took place at random and without operation of causal laws, then there could be no necessity discoverable in such things and events. As Maurice Cornforth puts it:

> To get to understand the necessity inherent in event is to reach a profound knowledge of the causal process operating them.[32]

At the same time, the knowledge of causes also enables us to understand the accidental features of a thing. Thus, the very notion of necessity is connected with the notions of accident, and cause. It can be properly said that they all are interconnected, in a dialectical manner. It is only because things are subject to laws and objective necessity can be said to exist in nature and society, that we are able to decide upon definite actions and carry them out. This is the condition of human freedom and that freedom is realized in proportion as we extend our knowledge and

consequently, our ability to make decisions on the basis of knowledge and so to carry them to effect. "Men can learn to apply them", said Stalin, "With full understanding, utilize them in the interest of society, and thus subjugate them, secure mastery over them."[33]

Marx's concept of freedom is not an abstract concept. It is a concept which has a number of ingredients in it. It is a very rich concept. To know of necessity, accidents and causality and to know about their dialectical interrelations, and at the light of this knowledge, then to secure mastery over them, means to secure mastery over nature. This is the way to freedom, rather the first step towards freedom. To think of freedom is to think of human being and the concrete situations in which he lives. Man cannot be thought of independent of his environment. It is pointless to think of freedom of man without taking into account the total situation in which he lives, or is bound to live. Man, to a large extent, is the product of the circumstances. The social structure in a way determines everything of man. On the face of it, it all seems to be quite spontaneous, but in reality this is not the case. This is what the penetrating mind of Karl Marx did expose to the world. Unlike early philosophers, Marx does not speak of freedom and leave it in the air. He envisaged a situation where it is really possible for man to become free, and that is communism. Today, it is possible for one to practically perceive and experience such conditions

and see people living in freedom in the proper sense at least in some part of the world.

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CHAPTER III

JUSTICE

Capitalism is a system for the production and exchange of commodities. Marx begins *Capital* with a study of commodities. A commodity is a product which has been produced with the intention of selling it to other people. As such, it must have a use value, that is, it must be able to satisfy some wants that other people have or they would not bother to buy it. A commodity also has an exchange value which is the proportion in which various commodities are to be exchanged. The capitalist produces such commodities or rather has them produced not with the intention of fulfilling the wants or desires of various people in society. He produces such commodities with the sole or at least primary intention of producing a profit for himself. The basic problem which Marx sets himself in the first volume of *Capital* is to explain the source of the capitalist's profit. Marx argues that this profit does not come from the capitalist's purchase of various raw materials which go into the creation of the commodity. Neither does his profit come from the circulation itself of the commodities which have been produced. Marx assumes that each commodity is exchanged for its full value. This means that when the capitalist takes his particular commodity to the market, he gets for it either in the form of money or some other commodity, exactly the same value as

the value of the commodities he brings to the market which is the amount of value which has been put into this commodity in its production.

With this brief description of the relations of production which characterize Capitalism, let us now turn to Marx's views on the justice or injustice of this system. There is a point of general agreement on Marx's views concerning capitalism and justice which is this. Marx allows that various particular injustices do occur under capitalism to the extent that these injustices can be judged by the principle of justice which obtains under bourgeois society. For example, if a particular capitalist attempts to pay some workers less than the full value of their labour power, these workers are treated unjustly. One way in which this occurs is when the capitalist tries to extend the working day beyond what it takes to reproduce the labour-power of these workers. This has the effect of shortening the life-time labour-power which these workers can sell and hence of lowering the value which they can receive in return for their commodity which they have to sell. Such cases can be said to be the cases of injustice according to Marx which the worker suffers under capitalism.[1] Analogously, the capitalist can also be treated unjustly by the workers when they withhold some of the labour-power which the capitalist has purchased. This kind of injustice is not a problem in the interpretation of Marx's views since it is an injustice which can be measured by the principle of justice valid under

Capitalism. So far, Marx can surely go in seeing injustice in the capitalist system. But, clearly, to see such injustices is to say nothing about the essential justice or injustice of the capitalist system itself. Otherwise, it might be supposed that such injustices could all be eradicated and hence capitalism become a perfectly just system of productive relations. It is at this point that the two main questions, which we shall discuss in this chapter, concerning the justice or injustice of capitalism arise.

There are two reasons which might be given why Capitalism could not, theoretically, be a just system, even on the basis of the principles of justice which develop under Capitalism. The first reason is this, Marx assumes that the principle of justice which obtains under capitalism requires that each commodity be paid for its full value. The full value of the worker's labour-power is that labour-power which it would take in a normal working day to replace this labour-power. The value of labour-power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production, and consequently also the reproduction, of this special article. If the owner of labour-power works today, tomorrow he must again be able to repeat the same process in the same conditions regarding health and strength. His means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain him in his normal state as a labouring individual.[2] However, capital is a restless search after surplus value. It is ever devising

ways to gain greater surplus value. By its very nature, capital ever seeks to derive more labour from the worker than a normal working day would justify. Consequently, since capitalism ever seeks to transgress what the labourer has come to him according to its own principles of justice. Capitalism is inherently an unjust system. Now it might be thought that the self-interests of capital in preserving its workers would encourage it to curb its desire for surplus value. And indeed in such cases Marx does say that the wages the worker usually receives suffice for the reproduction of his labour-power.[3] Nevertheless, Marx also says that capital is always able to find enough workers available to it so that it does not have to care for the fate of the source of the surplus labour which it so greedily accumulates.[4] That is, given the labour theory, there does not seem to be any inherent necessity that capitalist be concerned about whether the labour-power be produced and reproduced in this or that particular human being. The value of something is the amount of socially necessary labour-time which it takes to produce it. But any particular person is simply a vessel in which labour-power may be produced. If another vessel can be found in which the same amount of labour-power can be produced but for a lesser value, this should be the source of the labour-power the capitalist seeks. Thus, capitalist society cannot even theoretically be said a just society since the nature of the underlying force in capitalist society always seeks to exceed

the bounds of justice, that is, by its very nature capitalist tries to demand more from the labourer than the normal working day would allow.

The length of the working day depends on various circumstances such as:

> The average amount of skill of the workmen, the state of science and the degree of its practical application, the social organization of production, the extent and capabilities of the means of production, and by physical conditions.[5]

However, ultimately, the extent of the working day is established by the class struggle between the capitalist and the working class:

> The determination of what is a working-day, presents itself as the result of a struggle, a struggle between collective capital, i.e., the class of the capitalists and collective labour, i.e., the working class.[6]

This means that when the working class is weak, the workers separated and divided from each other, the normal working day will be longer, grinding period of labour. The quality of such labour will tend to be very

low. Nevertheless, to the extent that the workers receive means of subsistence sufficient to sustain them at this low level they receive their just wage. On the other hand, when the working class is strong, the quality of the labour-power renewed will be higher since the working hours will be shorter. But, still, the worker will receive what is the full value of his labour-power.

It is possible not only theoretically but also practically that capitalist society could be just in spite of the nature of capital itself. Given the manner in which the normal working day is decided, the worker seems to receive what is just given the principle of justice in capitalist society. This does not mean that the individual capitalist will not seek new and different ways to extract more surplus value. To do otherwise would be to act contrary to his nature. Still given the manner of determination of the normal working day there would be pressure on such a capitalist to come back into line with the social norm. And it is the fulfillment of this social norm which is the measure of the justice. We are assuming here that the principle of justice which is at issue is the one which obtains under capitalism. Whether Marx has, or could have, any other external moral principle of justice we have yet to find out.

The second reason has to do with the appearance and reality of wage labour. The worker is paid for the value of his labour. For example, he is paid for the full twelve hours of his labour.

> On the surface of bourgeois society the wage of the labourer appears as the price of labour, a certain quantity of money that is paid for a certain quantity of labour.[7]

This is supposedly demanded by the principle of justice that is used in capitalist society. The practice of paying the labourer less than the value of his labour conflicts with the principle which requires that he be paid a wage equivalent to the value of his labour. This kind of practice is unjust. Since it is this principle which the agents and apologists of capitalism use to appraise capitalist practice. Capitalism is unjust by its own standards.[8] There are people who insist that Marx did not condemn capitalism as unjust or advocate socialism because it is more just than capitalism. On Robert Tucker's interpretation of Marx:

> The only applicable norm of what is right and just is the one inherent in the existing economic system. Each mode of production has its own mode of distribution in its own form of

> equity, and it is meaningless to pass judgement on it from some other point of view.[9]

Allen Wood in his article defends the view that juridical practices and principles are "rationally valid" if and only if, they correspond to the prevailing mode of production. Consequently, justice is not a standard by which human actions and social institutions can be measured.[10] It is a standard by which each mode of production measures itself. This means that slavery is necessarily just in a slave society and unjust in feudal or capitalist societies. Capitalist exploitation is necessarily just in a capitalist society and unjust in non-capitalist societies.

This view of justice, Wood and others have aggressively defended as a correct interpretation of Marx. The passages on which this interpretation of Marx are based are primarily of two sorts: (1) those in which he asserts that the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist is no injustice to the worker, and (2) those in which the thesis that one cannot use juridical concepts to criticize the entire system of which it is a part is stated in abstract general terms.[11] Turning to the first group of passages, we find Marx claiming the following of the capitalist and worker as buyer and seller of labour-power in capital.

The circumstance, that on the one hand, the daily sustenance of labour-power costs only half a day's labour, while on the other hand, the very same labour-power can work during a whole day, that consequently the value which is used during one day creates, is double what he pays for that use. This circumstance is, without doubt, a piece of good luck for the buyer, but by no means an injury to the seller.[12] The capitalist maintains his rights as a purchaser when he tries to make the working day as long as possible, and to make, whenever possible, two working days out of one. On the other hand, the peculiar nature of the commodity sold implies a limit to its consumption by the purchaser, and the labourer maintains his right as seller when he wishes to reduce the working day to one of definite normal duration. There is here, therefore, a contradiction, right against right, both equally bearing the seal of the law of exchanges. Between equal rights force decides.[13] Let us ignore for the moment the possible contradiction between these two passages in which the first asserts that the nature of the relation between capital and labour is "by no means an injury" to the worker, and the second indicates that the relation is an injury to the worker because the worker's right is violated by this relationship. Let us now look at few passages that make clear the general principle behind Marx's refusal to condemn capitalist production relations as unjust. In *Critique of the Gotha Program*, he claims that "right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development

conditioned thereby".[14] This claim is further explicated in the third volume of *Capital*, where Marx claims that the content of the rules governing economic exchange:

> ... is just whenever it corresponds, is appropriate to the mode of production. It is unjust whenever it contradicts that mode. Slavery on the basis of capitalist production is unjust likewise fraud in the quality of commodities.[15]

How seriously we should take Marx to be making a normative moral claim as opposed to a factual, empirical one is the key consideration here. While Tucker, Wood and others see him as making a genuine normative claim by disallowing the claim that capitalism is unjust on these grounds. This seems to be extremely dubious. It seems to me that rather than taking a normative position here, Marx is really taking an internal point of view with respect to capitalism, but an external point of view with respect to his own standards, and then reporting certain facts about how capitalism is to be judged from its own operational normative standards. He is really simply pointing out that by the rule of the game it has set up, so to speak, capitalism is not unjust.

Marx's discussion of justice in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* needs special attention. In it, Marx examines several models of distributive justice. He begins by telling us that the present day distribution of the proceeds of labour is the only fair distributive on the basis of the present day capitalist mode of production. Any distribution, whatever of the means of consumption, is only a consequence of the distribution of the conditions of production themselves. The latter distribution, however, is a feature of the mode of production itself. The capitalist mode of production, for example, rests on the fact that the material conditions of production are in the hands of non-workers in the form of property in capital and land, while the masses are only owners of the personal condition of production, of labour power. If the elements of production are so distributed, then the present day distribution of the means of consumption results automatically. If the material conditions of production are the cooperative property of the workers themselves, then there likewise results a distribution of the means of consumption different from the present one. Vulgar socialism has taken over from the bourgeois economists the consideration and treatment of distribution as independent of the mode of production and hence the presentation of socialism as turning principally on distribution.[16] Marx is not simply saying that principles of justice have a certain genetic basis, a certain causal origin. Instead he claims that principles of distributive justice are tied to particular modes of production. In fact, there are two forms of

distribution. The first, and most crucial, is that of 'the conditions of production themselves'. This distribution is logically tied to the mode of production.[17] The second distribution, that of the means of consumption, is a 'consequence' of the first distribution. The crucial principles of distributive justice, thus, are those that relate to the distribution of the conditions of production. These are part and parcel of the mode of production itself. Hence, given the capitalist mode of production, one gets the system of bourgeois distributive justice. Accordingly, the view that Marx has an absolute concept of justice can only be maintained by denying or avoiding Marx's views on ideology. Moral conceptions such as justice arise in certain epochs under particular modes of production, and are intelligible only within those conditions. Capitalist private property and relations of production depend on the meaningfulness of distinguishing between various individual proceeds of labour. These individual proceeds of labour are appropriated by the capitalist. When this is done in such a way that the workers receive full payment for his labour-power and the capitalist receives the full use value of the worker's labour-power, then justice obtains under capitalism. But:

> Within the cooperative society (i.e., communism) based on common ownership of the means of production, the producers

> do not exchange their products ... The phrase "proceeds of labour" ... loses all meaning.[18]

Thus, one of the bases of justice in the transactions of capitalism is undercut and not in the sense that it is shown to be unjust, but in the more radical sense that it becomes meaningless. Principles of justice, thus, are relative to the particular modes of production.

The objection may be that Marx did speak of the surplus labour the workers yields to the capitalist as 'unpaid labour', as labour of which the capitalist robs the worker. In short, for some of his labour, the worker receives no equivalent.[19] Do not these statements indicate that injustice was really part of Marx's attack on capitalism? There are three reasons why the answer is 'no'.

Firstly, it should be noted that Marx held that an exchange without equivalent occurred in many other forms and places under capitalism. That is, the capitalist does not pay for a number of the 'things' which he requires in order to survive. The capitalist does not pay for the benefits he derives from the division of labour, the scientific powers he uses, for the growth of the population he requires.[20] Further, he does not pay for the extra force that comes from many workers working together, or for the preservation of

the value of the instruments of labour in the new product.[21] Nevertheless, all of these are productive forces necessary to derive surplus value. Thus, we should not simply think that 'the exchange without equivalent' is unique to the case of the wage the workers receives in exchange for the labour-power he offers to the capitalist. Furthermore, since it is implausible to say that the capitalist is acting unjustly when he does not pay for the scientific powers he uses, for the benefits of the division of labour, or for the growth of the population itself, we should not hastily conclude that it is unjust in the case of the worker and his wage.

Secondly, the use of the phrase 'unpaid labour' is itself suspicious. The 'value of labour', the notion of buying, selling, or paying for labour is an irrational expression, a meaningless expression. The value of labour is only an irrational expression for the value of labour-power.[22] But the labour-power has been fully paid. So what does Marx mean by the phrase 'unpaid labour'? He means that the fully paid labour-power of the worker produces values which are in excess of the value which he was paid and which constituted a fair exchange. It is not that some of his labour is unpaid, since, in reality, he is paid for none of it. Nor is it that he is not fully paid for his labour-power. Rather it is that there is a difference between the value of his labour-power and the value of the products his labour-power can produce. Thus, Marx's use of the phrase 'unpaid labour' is unhelpful

and confusing. These are not literal descriptions of what occurs. Marx's own account shows that this is mistaken. Rather they are provocative phrases which should lead us to think – why would people work in such a way that they yield part of the values they create to another person to use as he sees fit? The answer Marx gives, as we have seen, is that they are forced to, they must give this tribute, in order to secure the work to create their own means of livelihood. The force may be hidden or open, the coercion may be explicit or implicit. But in any case, the objection that Marx holds against such a system of production is that its basis rests upon a ground of threats, force, coercion, and violence. In short, what Marx saw, and it underlay his objection to the 'exchange without equivalent', was the violation of one's freedom.

Finally, what about Marx's comments that the appropriation of surplus value is robbery?[23] Marx held that capitalism was historically based upon robbery as well as a series of other forceful acts: In actual history, it is notorious that conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, and force play the great part in the primitive accumulation of capital and wealth.[24] Thus, the present relations within which people live and work in capitalism are the result, at least in part, of a period of robbery, fraud, etc. Now the sense of 'robbery' here is straight forward. Certain people took that which did not belong to them from other people. This was even

recognizable as robbery under capitalist morality. However, capitalism holds to a statute of limitations. Thus, even if at the beginning of capitalism, capitalist morality might be forced to admit that its origins involved robbery and immorality, it protects itself from its origins, and proclaims the justice of its present relations. Now Marx concurs with this assessment of capitalism judged by its own standards its present relations are just. The individual relation of the worker and the capitalist involves no fraud or injustice. The present capitalist took no part in the early phase of capitalism; neither he nor his agents force this or that worker to sell his labour-power to him, further, he pays the full value of the labour-power. Thus, if Marx's use of 'robbery' does reveal that he views capitalism as unjust, it does not do so on the grounds or standards of capitalism itself. Such a charge could be supported only on the basis of a principle which transcends capitalism.

We may, thus, conclude that the view that Marx criticizes capitalism for being unjust on its own grounds is unacceptable. If capitalism is to be faulted, it must be for the violation of freedom which its productive relations institutionalize. However, such freedom is a non-capitalist freedom, a Marxist freedom, and hence requires that we appeal beyond the standards of bourgeois morality. Marx does not have a universal principle of justice. His condemnation of capitalism is not and cannot be a condemnation of it

for its injustice, at least in so far as its holders follow the standards of bourgeois justice.

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CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

It is quite evident from the foregoing discussion that there is some sort of contrast in Marx's thought between justice and freedom. Marx rarely uses the word 'justice' in his discussions of capitalism and whereas when he does speak of capitalism using the word 'justice', he says more often than not, that capitalism is not unjust.[1] Marx is much more open and frequent in his discussions and his condemnations of capitalism using the word 'freedom'. Marx says that this kind of individual liberty under capitalism is the most complete suppression of all individual liberty and total subjugation of individuality to social conditions which take the form of material forces and even of all powerful objects that are independent of the individuals relating to them.[2] Marx never says such things about capitalism or bourgeois society using the word 'justice'. He never claims that individuals under the bourgeois are subjected to a complete suppression of justice. The reason why Marx criticizes capitalism for the deficient freedom is that there are a number of underlying asymmetries between freedom and justice in Marx's views. Principles of justice relate to the distribution of various goods, honours, conditions of production, etc. These patterns of distribution vary from society to society and are themselves bound up with the modes of production in each society. Similarly, views of freedom also correspond to the modes of production. There is a particular

view of freedom which is the characteristic of bourgeois society. It is with this view of freedom in mind that Marx claims that the idea of freedom itself is only the product of social condition based upon free competition. He goes on to say that "By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying".[3] He continues, this talk of free selling and buying, and all the other 'brave words' of our bourgeoisie about freedom in general have a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted selling and buying, with the fettered traders of the middle ages but have no meaning when opposed to the communistic abolition of buying and selling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeois itself.[4]

An initial significant difference between justice and freedom has to do with the difference in their relation to the mode of production. In the case of justice, a particular mode of production gives rise to a particular distribution. The two are tied, more or less closely together. In the case of freedom, there is an intervening factor, viz., the effect of the mode of production on the individuals and society in which it is found. The issue here relates to Marx's views on practice. Specifically, the way in which people fulfill their needs and wants creates not simply the means and distribution of their livelihood, but also the people themselves. The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the

nature of the actual means of subsistence they find in existence and have to reproduce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the production of physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part.[5] Accordingly, the development of the modes of production through various historical epochs is itself the development of the potential and actual powers of individual and society. Further, it is this development of man, his capacities and abilities, through his productive forces and relations towards a conscious mastery and control over these forces and relations, particularly those of his own creation which constitutes freedom. That is, freedom is linked with the development of the productive forces and relations through the mediation of the development of the powers and abilities of individuals. It is this, we have seen, that serves as the basis of Marx's critique of capitalism on behalf of freedom. Capitalism restricts such freedom to individuals.

There is no comparable basis for justice. Justice concerns either the pattern of distribution of goods or some set of rules for distributing goods regardless of the resulting pattern. In either case, justice concerns the ordering imposed on social goods, etc., not the state of development of those goods. Further, this ordering is only a consequence of the

distribution of the conditions of production themselves. This distribution is in turn a feature of the mode of production itself.[6] But, again, a society is not more just simply because it possesses a more highly developed mode of production. There is, then, given Marx's views on ideology, no basis for transcultural appraisals of justice. Freedom, however, is different. There is a basis for appraisals of freedom, as opposed to appraisals of justice, in the ontological dimension which attaches to freedom. Freedom too, like justice, is not autonomous, some ideal which Marx imposes on society. But as opposed to justice, freedom is not simply an outgrowth of, but to be appraised in terms of, the development of the forces and relations of production upon which all societies are based. The basis of freedom is the self-development of man and society through the development of the productive forces of society. No similar basis exists for justice.

There are two objections to this view which are worth considering. Firstly, it might be claimed that, though justice does indeed concern the distribution of social goods, freedom is itself a social good. Then what is wrong with capitalism is that it constitutes an unjust distribution of freedom. The capitalist makes the decisions, the worker executes them. The capitalist enjoys freedom denied to the worker. Thus, capitalism, in giving the worker less freedom than the capitalist, violates the worker's freedom, does him an injustice.[7] The answer to this objection is relatively

uncomplicated. On the one hand, this objection mistakenly portrays the nature of Marxist freedom. Such freedom is not simply another 'social good' which must be distributed. Rather it is the human good, the way in which all people ought to live. Though one society may more fully realize such freedom than another society on a different historical level. Marxist freedom is not something which can be unjustly distributed as an income, wealth and the like. Marxist freedom is a characterization of the nature of the relations within which people live, rather than of the distribution of particular goods which individuals receive under those relations. Hence, it is mistaken to treat freedom as one among many social goods which require distribution. On the other hand, the objection above is correct because the capitalist can do things the worker cannot. But this is not the point of Marxist critique. Marx's ethics of freedom says that the capitalist himself also lacks freedom in the significant Marxian sense. Furthermore, the freedom in the bourgeois sense that the capitalist does enjoy were granted to him by the free and voluntary decision which the worker made in selling him his labour-power. Thus, if one appeals to the bourgeois sense of freedom, there is no basis for bourgeois or proletarian to complain of a lack of freedom which the other has. On the other hand, if one appeals to the Marxist sense of freedom, neither bourgeois nor proletarian are free. Hence, again there can be no legitimate complain of

one being less free than the other. Thus, the first objection seems to be groundless.

Secondly, it might be objected that, independently of who has more or less freedom, the interference with one's freedom is itself an injustice. One of the classical sources of such a view is found in Kant. According to Kant, "anything that is unjust is a hindrance to freedom according to universal laws".[8] Or again, as a commentator has put it, "according to the universal law of justice, it is juridically wrong, or unjust for anyone to interfere with the lawful freedom of anyone else".[9] Now the basis for this claim is to view that individuals have a moral right to exercise their freedom. The interference with one's freedom is, then the violation of one's moral right. And since the violation of one's rights is an injustice, the interference with one's freedom is an injustice. Accordingly, since capitalism constitutes an interference with the freedom of human beings, it stands condemned as unjust.

This objection too is unfounded. The general relation between capitalism and communism (Marxist freedom) is not that the former restricts the latter, but that the former is a necessary stage in the development of the latter. Capitalism develops the necessary productive forces without which communism would be an idle hope. Only when

capitalism is fairly advanced Marx does speak of its productive relations acting as fetters, restraints or limitations on the growth of the productive forces. Capitalist productive relations hinder the development of its productive forces as well as the transition to communist productive relations. Now, in as much as freedom has been linked with the development of the productive forces of individuals and society, such restrictions can be said to constitute interference with freedom in the Marxist sense. Can this fact then serve as the basis of claiming an injustice done to people living under capitalism? It could if one simply identified justice and morality. Then it would have to be conceded that the violation of one's freedom is an injustice. However, this would be to solve the present problem by conceptual legislation. Such a solution carries little weight, since it seems more plausible to hold that not every action or situation which is morally justified involves justice or, conversely, not every unjustified situation, condition or action is or constitutes an injustice. Some philosophers, such as Plato and Kant, have tended to identify the whole of morality with justice. Nevertheless such an identification is unjustified. There are actions, for example, cowardice, incest, etc., which though morally wrong are not questions of injustice. Aristotle was clear on this: That there is such a thing as justice which is only a part of virtue or morality is indicated by the fact that while the man who exhibits in action the other forms of wickedness acts wrongly indeed, but not graspingly, for

example, the man who throws away his shield through cowardice or speaks harshly through bad temper or fails to help a friend with money through meanness, because when a man acts graspingly, he often exhibits none of these vices nor all together, but certainly wickedness of some kind and injustice. There is, then, another kind of injustice which is a part of injustice in the wider sense and a use of the word 'unjust' which answers to a part of what is unjust in the wider sense 'contrary to the law'.[10]

We must distinguish, then, between the whole of morality in which some actions and character traits are justified or unjustified and just or unjust. The question is, then, does the interference of capitalist productive relations with the advent of communism, Marxist freedom, constitutes an injustice on Marx's view?

Whether or not it constitutes an injustice depends on whether Marx holds that people under capitalism have a moral right to Marxist freedom. The answer to this question might be positive for the following reason. To have a moral right to something is to have the authorization to coerce others to behave in certain ways, according to Kant as well as many other philosophers. Now Marx believes that the proletariat is justified in using coercion and force to bring about communism. To this extent it seems he

has committed to holding that people have a right to freedom and hence, any violation of that right is an injustice. But Marx's concept of freedom is not explicated in terms of rights that people have, but rather in terms of a certain kind of life which people ought to live.[11] So, the question here is whether he is committed to holding that people have a moral right to such freedom. However, freedom itself is to be explicated.

The reason to think that Marx did not believe himself to be so committed is that Marx will have nothing to do with rights in his ethics of freedom. Thus, Marx speaks of "the faith of individuals in the conception of right, which they ought to get out of their heads".[12] The realm of rights is a realm of individuals divided and separated from one another, a realm in which rights authorize coercive and forceful crossings into the private territories of others. Thus, Marx maintains "right arises from the material relations of people and the resulting antagonism of people against one another".[13] But communism transcends such antagonism. The moral life is not one in which we defend ourselves from each other by various rights. The moral life is not, as Kant viewed it, an eternal struggle of the conflicting desires of oneself and others, on the one hand, and the universal law, on the other hand. Accordingly, Marx rejects Stirner's view that "in communist society there can be a question of 'duties' and interests since these are two complementary aspects of an antithesis which exists

only in bourgeois society."[14] The moral life, if such there be, is one in which, having eliminated the sources of conflict, we experience a harmony of interests. Hence, notions such as right and justice, in as much as they are bound up with the notions of coercion and antagonism, are themselves overcome in communism. Accordingly, it seems misdirected to claim that Marx's ethics of freedom which, being violated by capitalism, leads him to condemn capitalism as unjust. This is not to say that Marx held that there was no place or role for appeals to rights. That is, appeals to right are or may be made before the occurrence of communism. They play a tactical, instrumental role in uniting the proletariat. This is intelligible since during this time capitalism still reigns, with its concepts of right and justice, with its underlying class antagonism. However, these concepts are used to transcend not only capitalism but the concepts themselves. In medieval times the political expression of the medieval mode of production was privileges, in modern times the political expression of the modern mode of production has been rights.[15] With communism, rights will disappear just as with capitalism privileges disappeared as the basis of the system. But then any basis upon which capitalism could be said to be unjust will also disappear.

What I have attempted to show is that Marx condemns capitalism and does so on the basis of his views on freedom. Now if capitalism's lack

of fulfillment of this Marxist freedom is in some broad sense an injustice, this might be maintained, if one identifies justice and morality. However, I believe this to be unjustified. In any case, what is worth noting is that such an injustice does not constitute a separate principle of justice, but is simply the lack of fulfillment of Marxist freedom. One could just as well say that it is wrong, mistaken, unjustified not to fulfill such freedom because an injustice occurs when it is not fulfilled.

The position defended above seeks to show that Marx's critique of capitalism is not a critique based on the maldistribution of goods under capitalism. Thus, the answer to the question, "Isn't Marx really concerned with justice since he is talking about the distribution of the means of production?" is 'no'. He is talking about the nature of these conditions. It is not that private property is morally acceptable, but we have to distribute it differently. It is that the institution itself has to be eliminated and be replaced by social property. 'Redistribution' suggests rearranging what is already there. Marx seeks to change radically what is there and bring about a new order. If private property were simply theft, then one might try to take it back from the capitalist and give such (private) property to the proletariat. That would be redistribution in an intelligible sense. But Marx does not consider doing this.

It might be contended that Marx have built justice into the notion of freedom. Freedom, an explicated in chapter II, involves harmonious relations with others. This is, it might be claimed, implicitly to embed a principle of justice in freedom. The answer to this objection is that the harmonious relations, Marx foresees under communism, are based on a growth of the productive forces as well as a change in the nature and consciousness of people which will eliminate the conditions which have been traditionally required for a principle of justice. Thus, on the one hand, the productive forces will be so developed under communism that competition will become superfluous.[16] But if competition is superfluous, then it is doubtful that a principle of justice is required. Hume comments that justice is required only where there is a scarcity of goods, where people must compete for goods. If this condition does not obtain, then justice is not required. On the other hand, the consciousness of people will be so changed that again justice does not seem required. Again, Hume commented that, even if there were scarcity, if people related to others in non-competitive ways, etc., then justice would also be superfluous.[17] But the harmonious relations Marx projects would seem to constitute such a situation. Thus, it does not seem to be correct to say that Marx embeds a principle of justice in his account of freedom. Rather he seems to exclude the conditions which call for such a principle. He could not have a principle of justice whereby he condemned capitalism for being unjust.

What, then, does Marx say of the interference of capitalism with freedom? What is the moral situation of the proletariat under such fetters as capitalism has come to constitute? Marx would and does maintain that the proletariat is historically and morally justified in overthrowing capitalism. The justification is based on the notion of the life which the transcendence of capitalism will bring about. That is, it is justified by the establishment of the realm of freedom. Justice or injustice of capitalism does not play a role in this condemnation of capitalism. Accordingly, when Marx speaks of the exploitation of the worker, he does not use the word 'exploitation' to connote an instance of injustice. So far as the word 'exploitation' carries a negative moral connotation, it relates to the lack of freedom the worker experiences. He is forced to work in situations and in various ways which are not of his choosing and which do not promote his development. He is not free in the Marxist sense. Like Rousseau, Marx was profoundly interested in exploring the inequalities of men because he shared his belief that there can be no democracy as long as there are inequality and special interests. According to the Marxist scheme of history, mankind has gone through three major modes of production since an initial golden age of primitive communism: ancient slave society, feudalism and capitalism.[18] Capitalism the last form of society torn by a class struggle, represents the peak of human development so far. One the one hand, it has created and accumulated unprecedented wealth, which if

used rationally, could assume the material well being of all mankind. Yet, by virtue of its own laws of operation, capitalism cannot utilize its means of production rationally but must match the accumulation of capital with the accumulation of misery and chaos. Again, while it has promoted constitutional government and the rights of man, the formal rights and equalities of liberal regimes are vitiated by actual inequalities and dehumanization. Thus, Marx has correctly noted that man has been converted into a commodity, whose labour-power, talents and personality are for sale on the free market. The resolution of these contradictions will be produced by capitalism itself. Its own economic laws not only produce chaos and crisis but also narrow the social basis of capitalism by casting the mass of the population into the proletariat. At a crisis point the exploited will rise in revolution, expropriate the ruling class, replace commodity production with an economy based on national planning and abolish all class divisions in society.

Supporting the optimistic pragnosis of revolutionary Marxism is the image of the proletariat as the 'chosen people' who because of their place in society, their state of organization and their spontaneous grasp of reality can be expected to rise above all narrow interests, loyalties and ideologies and liberate mankind forever from the curse of property and class.

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