Crucial on Book / 1953 as concept is experience

May 13, 1987

Talking to Myself

in a quite disorganized way, on several very different points that I somehow see as connected: 1) is the question of the 3/23/87 REB Meeting where I was very disturbed and raised the question about the projection of Marxist-Humanism and the dialectics of organization where there seemed to be a lack of clarity on the very wide gulf between the word concept as notion, as philosophy, as the universal, as if that was the question of the particular of [redacted] the paper as biweekly. 2), the May 12th discussion where the question of "the book" and its relationship to both the objective situation and the paper as well as the organization as a whole, was suddenly referred to as if that, as crucial as it is for next year, would be a particular, even though the very same individual gave a [redacted] creatively new interpretation of 53 as a [redacted] philosophic "experience" on a different level than the philosophic experience that Lenin had directly related to revolution and not extended to sharing that experience at that very time with the Bolshevik cadre. 3) The question of organization not only as organizational growth we're so

in need of, but the concept of organization as is projected for "the book", where it is inseparable from and dialectically integral with, the dialectics of philosophy. This organization of thought is altogether so new and so totally an untrodden ground that it is impossible to forseee a conclusion. In truth, the first so-called [redacted] shock (of recognition?) was when I began getting a lot of contributions of the aspects that we're all so concerned with--spontaneity of the masses at specific historic turning points which [redacted] produced new forms of organization--and saw that though the form of the [redacted] party and [redacted] spontaniety [redacted] were opposites; THEY WERE NOT ABSOLUTE OPPOSITES.

What happened at that point was that I re-read the 3/23/87 REB Minutes and found that on page 2, the top paragraph, there is a serious error on the quotation' because I was [redacted] using two different translations on a single sentence (Baillie and Miller) so that it turned out that, instead of clarifying that relationship

of organization as concept, i.e., philosophy and as form, managed to [redacted] shroud it. Specifically I am referring to the 6th line, where the quotation begins "the two together..."--the reference is to intellectually comprehended history and the form it takes in what Hegel considers a contingent way.

In any case, let me read you not what is on the page, which is Miller, [redacted] but the Baillie translation from which all the other quotations are from, though they also give you the reference to the Miller translation . "Both together, or History (intellectually) comprehended (begriffen), form at once the recollection and the Golgotha of Absolute Spirit, the reality, the truth, the certainty of its throne, without which it were lifeless, solitary, and alone." *

(* [redacted] Erinnerung, it is true, means both inwardizing and recollection, but it is not true and indeed kills the consistency that Hegel was expressing when in the same paragraph the word is translated as recollection and then just for stylistic purposes not to repeat the same word or whatever motivated Miller,

used the word inwardizing without telling the reader that Hegel used the very same word in the very same paragraph as recollection.)

At this point it would be good also if we pointed out that (becuase) History to Hegel was [redacted] contingency, he had to add "intelllectually comprehended", that is, begriffen, in order to show that he is talking about History not as contigency but Notion-ally, i.e., as Concept.

Absolute Knowledge in Baillie is pp. 789-808; Absolute knowing in Miller is 479-493.

When I referred in the Notes on Phenomenology to the last three pages I was referring to the last (half paragraph) on p. 805 ("While in the Phenomenology each moment...") which goes to p. 806, with its stress on "simple mediating activity as thinking", then the question is of releasing--a very important category in

Hegel: "This process of releasing itself from the form of itself is the highest freedom and security of its knowledge of itself." (p. 806, Baillie) And being Hegel, you immediately get the negative sideof the same so that on p. 807, the penultimate page 807, is when we get introduced to History as the process of becoming and the words of both [redacted] Erinnerung and [redacted] Insichgehen.

In a word, there is not doubt about his stressing inwardizing of [redacted] the various stages of consciousness and self-consciousness, Reason, Morality, Religion, Art; nevertheless, nothing is absolute until you get to Absolute, the consumation; so what happens to History? Though it is Spirit "externalized and emptied into Time"... the negative, [redacted] a [redacted] "way of becoming presents a slow procession and succession of spiritual shapes (Geistern), a gallery of pictures, each of which is endowed with the entire wealth of Spirit..."

It is at that point that we get into recollection (Erinnerung)and see on the final page, which is also the final paragraph, [redacted] that the goal is the Absolute Notion. Hegel however is actually trying to say two things at

the same time, 1) that History is just contigency, but when it becomes an intellectually [redacted] comprehended organization, "it is the Science..." Whether or not Hegel at that time got worried over the fact that History is thus [redacted] not just contingency, the point [redacted] is that he suddenly qualified the word Science by adding "of the ways in which knowledge appears", which Miller, p. 493, [redacted] translated as "in the sphere of appearance". But both Miller and Baillie then footnoted the expression regarding experience as Phenomenology, so that [redacted] both Science and recollection (or inwardizing) undergoe the Calvary (the Golgotha)

[redacted]

Heretofore the expression "the two together" or both together, was taken to mean practice as well as philosophy. IN FACT it isn't practice, it is Science as well as phil osophy, recollection as well as consummation, must undergoe the Crucifixion and be "born"anew. This is absolutely [redacted] phenomenal, and I don't mean phenomena.

Marx certainly [redacted] must have had something like this in mind when he wrote Freiligrath about organization

in the Historic as well as the ephemeral sense

Now then, to get back to organization as it was expressed in the May 53 Letters, on Absolute: 1st, when I refer to the Absolute Method as it relates to other philosophies, I put in parenthesis "parties to us", rather than theoretical tendencies, so that "the new philosophy or party and this new has been enriched 'concentrating itself upon itself'..." All of this refers to pp. 480-82, and 483; in a word, it is the place that leads me to the beginning of differences with Lenin in the Idea of Cognition but I do use the page number rather than the sub-title, "The Idea of Congition", because I immediately go to that last (half) paragraph in the Absolute Idea when I first contrast (ed our) problem with Stalinism to Lenin's problem with the Second International; I further very cautiously refer to U-P-I because of

seeing that the syllogism, (is) not only in the fetishism of commodities, but in the Accumulation of Capital, where Marx uses the Hegelian expression 'general absolute law', and where I say it is based on Hegel's Absolute Idea.

From there I go to Philosophy of Mind,

Actually, (in) the very first page, indeed the first paragraph I announce that "I [redacted] brazenly shout that in the dialectic of the Absolute Idea is the dialectic of the party and that I have just worked it out." Ahd the second paragraph specifies "I am not touching upon the mass party, the workers will do [redacted] what they will do. And until they do, we can have only the faintist intimation of the great leap...I am not concerned with spontaneity vs. organization...I am concerned only with the dialectic of the vanguard party of that <u>type</u> of grouping like ours, be it large or small, and <u>its</u> relationship to the masses."

The next page , referring to p. 477 in Science of Logic, I deal with the concept of Other: "Where Other turns out to be, not the proletariat outside, but the party itself."

My historic references [redacted] in the development of party, are 1903and 1920-23, which is exactly the final paragraph we've been talking about today, p. 808 of Phenomenology, which [redacted] evidently makes me see a connection at that point to the Logic, p. 466 and 467, but, wherein the Letters I go to Absolute Method and in that way see a relationship to forms of party and tendencies within party, this time there is no doubt of seeing that if Science itself [redacted] and not just the relation of form to content must undergoe Golgotha, the correct conclusion I make in 1953 about "the self-determination therefore and which alone the Idea is, is to hear itself speak"..." is correct but, the [redacted] emphasis is on "determined to appear" rather than Golgotha first. I think now that's because I still was, looking very closely to Lenin and a little bit of CLRJ and his Nevada Document.

At the same time I seem to be [redacted] chafing at the bit in so far as CLRJ is concerned and the fact that he evidently had said that Philosophy of M ind has nothing for us: "(Please, Hauser, can you get a hold of a copy of Philosophy of Spirit or [redacted] is it Mind? I am brazen enough to want to swim there too. I have an instinct that we couldn't get very far there when we tried it before because we equated Mind to party, but now that I believe the dialectic of the Abdolute Idea is the dialectic of the party, I feel that Mind is the new society gestating in the old, and I feel sure we could get a lot of very valuable dialectical developments there, and what is so significant about that also is the building of the new within the old makes it possible to stop jumping around from high point to high point but rather to follow concretely since this new is in the daily struggle.")

So it is Philosophy of Mind, i.e., the May 20 rather than the May 12 Letter, that completely frees me from CLR and from concern with party, [redacted] as with [redacted] the final three paragraphs of Mind, I end not with the form of organization, [redacted] but instead say, "we have entered the new society."

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As for the other seemingly unrelated subject that I nevertheless consider very integral, is of necessity as well as naturally, Marx's Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic, which is actually mainly the Phenomenology. That has been so vulgarized by Engels on, with its concentration on Feuerbach as if Marx were a Feuerbachian; the truth of course is that (it is) the sharpest critique of Feuerbach, precisely because he has declared him to be the only "serious, critical, relation to the Hegelian Dialectic", the truth is that that high compliment was relative to all of Hegel's epigones and the fact that he certainly did help all, including Marx himself when they were younger, not to be so overwhelmed with Hegel as to not immediately go with hammer and tongs at religion.

The fact that at once Marx called attention to negiation of the negation should have given Engels at least a healthy hint that he was going to have something very sharp against Feuerbach, even though at the beginning he merely cites the fact of how Feuerbach interpreted negation of the negation.

Next comes the fact that he singles out Phenomenology, though that does not appear in the title and thought the praise of Feuerbach as well as his own critique means to be aimed directly at the system itself. But as he put it, it's necessary to begin with Phenomenology, because, that is "the true source and secret of the Hegelian philosophy." (page 305, M&F). At which point he gives [redacted] an abbreviated and very telling contents page, which is miles clearer than all the details the English translation gave us. Marx then shows that the Encyclopedia instead begins with Logic.[redacted] And Marx defines Logic as "the money of the Spirit, the abstract expression of the speculative value of the thoughts of man and Nature. It has become completely indifferent to all actual determinateness..."

At once therefore, the whole [redacted] theory of alienation, mystification, pretensions of reality, philosopher as the yardstick, is attacked mercilessly and that's when (p. 308) he uses the word "inhuman": "What is regarded as the essance of alienation, which is posed and to be transcended, is not the fact that human essence materializes itself in an inhuman manner in opposition to itself but the fact that it materializes itself from and in opposition

to, abstract thinking. "...Hence, despite its thoroughly negative and critical character, and despite the criticism actually contained in it, which often far surpasses the later developments, there is already in the Phenomenology, hidden in embryo, the latest potentiality and secret of uncritical positivism and [redacted] equally uncritical idealism of the later Hegelian works--philosophic disintegration and resurrection of extand Empiricism."

Marx continued with his very sharp critique of the double error in Hegel, this time whowing inhumanity also in relationship to sensuousness, that is to say, that he talks about sensuous consciousness in so abstract a way that it's not a human being who has that sensuous consciousness, but just sensuousness consciousness in itself, and therefore cannot get "to true human actuality ... (that is) making it a spiritual essence."

This, however, is followed with the fact that hidden there is alienation, not as an abstraction, but the alienation of Man, even if we see Man only as a form of Spirit and "to that extent, all elements of criticism lie hidden in it and are often already prepared and worked out in a manner extending far beyond the Hegelian standpoint ..." and, of course, that's where Marx points to the greatest of all merits of Hegel, the dialectic of negativity. (p. 309-310)

By then proceeding at once to Absolute Knowledge he is actually, even when talking of that last chapter having in mind in Phenomenology, the whole Encylcopedia. Marx can do that because the opposition to thingness

to externalization, actually encompasses also Nature, with the result that "since it is not actual man, and likewise not nature, as such, -- man is human nature -- which is made the subject ..." thingness can only be externalized self-consciousness. Whereupon [redacted] Marx is counter-posing the truth instead of the mystification that Hegel presents us with, so that Marx concludes:

"We see here how thorough-going Naturalism, or Humanism, distinguishes itself both from Idealism and Materialism, and is, at the same time, the truth uniting both. We see, at the same time, how only Naturalism is capable of grasping the act of world history."

The whole question of Other Marx judges to be needed because of this mystification, and because the whole problem is with the question of knowledge. He concludes: " All the illusions of abstract speculative thinking are concentrated in this judgment." (p. 316) He thus probes into "negation of the negation", not just [redacted] in Phenomenology but in Philosophy of Right and the whole Encyclopedia. [redacted]

Marx considers that Hegel's "negation of the negation" "plays a peculiar role in which both negation, and preservation or affirmation, are united." (318) And it is precisely because transcendance is handled so abstractly and ahistorically that it appears only as appearance and everything from religion, the state, nature, remain dogmatisms.

Once again, however, just when Marx reaches the highest point of criticism of Hegel, it is when he singles out the greatest merits of Hegel , and here it is on the question of"transcendance, as objective movement, withdrawing externalization into itself. This is the inside, expressed within alienation ..." And of course this is the quotation we always rely on because it includes not only the transcendance of private property but communism, and ends with only then "does there arise positive Humanism, beginning from itself."

As Marx then proceeds to take up the Logic, he writes: "The definite concepts, the universal, fixed forms of thought represent, in their independence of nature and spirit, the necessary result of the universal

alienation of human essence and, hence, also of human thinking. And therefore Hegel has presented and collected them together as moments of the process of abstraction... The whole Logic is, therefore, the proof that [redacted] abstract thinking is nothing for itself, that the Absolute Idea is nothing for itself until nature is something." (pp 321-22)

Marx breaks off the essay as he gets to Absolute Mind, para. 384, "The Absolute is spirit; this is the highest definition of the Absolute." (p. 325)

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5/18/87

The above in completion of the 1844 Mss. is, approximately when he met Engels and, whatever he told Engels of this mss., the decision of both was to break off with all Left Hegelians, to declare that this association publically, and to create a differnet ground. Obviously, that ground was to be the Holy Family and each was to write a chapter. Then they would put together the mxx mss. and publish it as their manifesto. The very first sentence of that critique, dated Sept. 1844, states: "Real Humanism has no more dangerous enemy in Germany than spiritualism..."

As it turned out, The Holy Family was a 277-page work, of which Engels wrote 16 pages! Naturally, it isn't a quantiaative question, though the quantitative disparity reveals the absolutely unbridgeable gap between the depth of philosophy and the popularizer of others' ideas. The real philosophic mometn is 2-fold. One is the fact that critique never ends. The criticism Marx is always leveling at other ideas and actions, is the warp and woof of the dialectic. The second is that revolutionary internationalism, is never separated from the idea itself. resulting in the fact that the key critique against the Buaer brothers and their battle against the Frendh Revolution, is not just a defense of the French Revolution, but what its ideas were, and what type of organization it came from in 1789, and led to, in 1830:" The French Revolution brought forth ideas which led beyond the ideas of the entire old world system. The revolutionary movement which began in 1789 in Cercle social, which in the middle of its course had as its chief representaives Leclerc and Roux, and which finally was temporarily defeated with Baboeuf's conspiracy, brought forth the communist ideas, which Baboeuf's friend Buonarroti re-introduced into France after the Revolution of 1830. This idea, consistently developed, is the idea of the new world system."

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Whatever had been the immediate cause of the breaking-off of the 1844 Mss., clearly Marx never let go of Hegel's dialectic. And where he began on the Phenomenology of Mind, it wasn't merely a question of singling out method as if it was a tool to be appleid. Quite the contrary, just as Hegel himself had very different approaches to alineation and fetishism, the fact that originally it is as far as Hegel calling "Natural Religion" ...

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From "The Artificer" section of Phenomenology, p. 707 Baillie

"This inner being is still simple darkness, the unmoved, the Black formless stone.[1] (Footnote 1: "The Black stone of Mecca: a fetish still worshipped by the faithful".) ... The artificer, therefore, combines both by blending the forms of nature and self- consciousness; and these ambiguous beings, a riddle to themselves-- the conscious struggling with what has no consiousness, the simple inner with the multiform outer, the darkness of thought mated with the clearness of expression-- these break out into the language of a wisdom that is darkly deep and difficult to understand."[2] (Footnote 2: "Sphinxes".)