

I Trotsky on Stalin during Moscow Trials
 II Lenin and Trotsky as Revolutionaries
 III The Class Nature of Russian State is Leadership, Leadership, Leadership

The Evolution of the Political Attitudes of Leon Trotsky in his Later Years

Lecture delivered for the Russian Circle, University of Chicago, 4/30/59, by Raya Dunayevskaya.

Our point of departure tonight, the development of Trotsky's thought, divides itself into three main categories: Because of the heroism of the mold of the former Commissar of War, the rigors of exile when Stalin won the struggle for power, and the tragedy of Trotsky's murder at the hands of a GPU Assassin, much that has been written about Trotsky's later years has a subjective air about it. His last years seem to have provided a field day for psychological approaches & even on the part of political analysts. Recently, a novel has been published which imputes to Trotsky a change in political outlook which, allegedly, he was unwilling to admit. Only people who have no thoughts of their own can so misconstrue the thoughts of others.

Leon Trotsky at no time let the subjective factor enter into an analysis of a situation, whether he was a creator of that situation or only its victim. Quite the contrary. I remember one incident during the Moscow Trials, when all the "General Staff" of the Revolution was killed off by Stalin, and Trotsky himself made to appear as guilty of the most heinous crimes. The Russian bureaucracy had the state power, Luddite and all the money, the brutality, the total disregard for history and, most of all, the time--a whole decade and more of time--in which to fabricate this greatest frame-up in all history. But what Gula Khrushchev is not saying is that the Mexican press would hold open two columns of space for Trotsky to answer the charges. He had only a couple of hours in which to do this. He never knew what the accusation would be, what the year he was alleged to have done this or that. Moreover, the Trials had come at a time of the greatest personal grief in the Trotsky household, for the long arm of the GPU had reached out to kill the only living son of Trotsky, Leon Sedoff. It was a predetermined, insidiously planned feat of a master intrigant, calculated to give Trotsky the blow that they hoped would render him incapable of answering the accusations against himself, that they knew would come in two short weeks.

Indeed, the death of Leon Sedoff inflicted the deepest wound, and in the most vulnerable spot. Leon Davidovich and Natalia Ivanovna locked themselves into their room and would see no one.

For a whole week they did not come out of their room, and only one person was permitted in--the one who brought them the mail, and food, of which they partook little.

Those were dismal days for the whole household. We did not see either L.D. or Natalia. We did not know how they fared, and feared the consequences of the tragedy upon them.

We moved typewriters, the telephone, and even door bells to the guard house, out of sound of their room. Their part of the

house became deathly quiet. There was an oppressive air, as if the whole mountain chain of Mexico were pressing down upon this house.

The blow was the harder not only because Leon Sedoff had been their only remaining living child, but also because he had been Trotsky's closest literary and political collaborator. When Trotsky was interned in Norway, gagged, unable to answer the monstrous charges levelled against him in the First Moscow Trials (August 1936), Sedoff had penned Le Livre Rouge, which, by brilliantly exposing the Moscow falsifiers, dealt an irreparable blow to the prestige of the GPU.

In the dark days after the tragic news had reached us, when L.D. and Natalia Ivanovna were closeted in their room, Trotsky wrote the story of their son's brief life. It was the first time since pre-revolutionary days that Trotsky had written by hand.

On the eighth day, Leon Trotsky emerged from his room. I was stupefied at the sight of him. The neat, meticulous Leon Trotsky had not shaved for a whole week. His face was deeply lined. His eyes were swollen from too much crying.

Without uttering a word, he handed me the handwritten manuscript, Leon Sedoff, Son, Friend, Fighter, which contained some of Trotsky's most poignant writing.

One passage read: "I told Natalia of the death of our son-- in the same month of February in which, 32 years ago, she brought to me in jail the news of his birth. Thus ended for us the day of February 16, the blackest day in our personal lives.... Together with our boy has died everything that still remained young within us...."

But even this great grief did not dim Trotsky's ardor for the revolutionary cause. The pamphlet was dedicated "to the proletarian youth." If the GPU counted on this blow to disable him, they counted on the wrong man.

The following morning, the morning papers carried the announcement of the Third Moscow Trials (March 1938).

Trotsky labored late into the night. One day he was up at 7 a.m. and wrote until midnight. The next day, he arose at 8 a.m. and worked straight through to 3 a.m. the following morning. The last day of that week, he did not go to sleep until five in the morning. He drove himself harder than any of his staff.

Leon Trotsky ~~was~~ wrote an average of 2000 words a day. He gave statements to the NANA, the UP, the AP, Havas Agency, France, the London Daily Express, and to the Mexican newspapers. His declarations were also issued in the Russian and German languages.

The material was dictated in Russian. While transcribed the dictation, the other secretaries checked every date, name, and place mentioned at the trials. Trotsky demanded meticulous objective research work, for the accusers' ~~hand~~ to be turned into the accused.

*for the 1950s
had written
memoirs
I have since
in 1905 days*

So unused to subjectivism was this revolutionary that he was deeply incensed when the papers printed "rumors" that Stalin had at no time been a revolutionist but had always been an agent of the Tsar and was now merely wreaking vengeance.

When I brought L.D. the newspaper that carried this explanation of the blood purge, he exclaims, "But Stalin was a revolutionist!"

"Wait a moment," he called to me as I was leaving the room, "We'll add a postscript to today's article."

He dictated: "The news has been widely spread through the press to the effect that Stalin supposedly was an agent-provocateur during Tsarist days, and that he is now avenging himself upon his old enemies. I place no trust whatsoever in this gossip. From his youth Stalin was a revolutionist. All the facts about his life bear witness to this. To reconstruct his biography ex post facto means to ape the present Stalin, who, from a revolutionist, became the leader of the reactionary ~~the~~ bureaucracy."

Again, when the Dewey Commission had brought in the verdict of not guilty, and a press conference was called, Trotsky was asked: "Do not pessimistic conclusions in regards to socialism flow from the Moscow Trial and the verdict of the Commission?"

Trotsky replied: "No. I do not see any basis for pessimism. It is necessary to take history as it is. Humanity moves forward as did some pilgrims: two steps ahead, one step back. During the time of the backward movement, all seems lost to skeptics and pessimists. But this is an error of historical vision. Nothing is lost. Humanity has developed from the ape to the Comintern. It will advance from the Comintern to actual socialism. The judgment of the Commission demonstrates once more that the correct idea is stronger than the most powerful police force. In this conviction lies the unshakable basis of revolutionary optimism."

Optimism, no more than subjectivism, however, is at the root of political attitudes. It is theory, or the philosophical premise for it, which is decisive. To this end, we turn to contrast Lenin and Trotsky.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was, at one and the same time, the revolution in the fullness of time, and the Great Divide, both with the past and world Marxism, as well as with the theories of Russian and world Marxism.

The two men - Lenin and Trotsky - who were at the head of this revolution had creased very differently to meet destiny this day, not because there was any fundamental difference between them as revolutionaries, but because they were fundamentally different as thinkers. On the face of it, that seems a reversion of facts since, as thinkers, they were both Marxists, whereas as revolutionaries they each belonged to a different party. Leon Trotsky was, first, a Menshevik and then belonged to neither tendency within the Russian Marxist movement, and finally, July 1917, joined the Bolsheviks. Lenin, on the other hand, was the theoretician, organizer and founder of Bolshevism from its origins in 1902-03 until his death in 1924. Despite all that-- and paradoxical as it may sound--Lenin was the more flexible and

inference from GM.

*What he
likely received
is GM's own ideas
on Lenin's
theory*

Trotsky the more intransigent one, once the Russian Revolution succeeded, and the party and state became synonymous.

Dialectic logic takes its own toll, and theory, original theory, is so hard a taskmaster, and so ~~in need of reality~~ as well as an philosophy as ~~its~~ sources of life, that no brilliant prognostication can substitute for what Hegel called "the labor, seriousness, patience, and suffering of the negative."

Take Trotsky's theory of "the permanent revolution." Surely no more brilliant prognostication has ever been made of an historic event. When no Marxist, let alone other theoreticians, projected for Tsarist Russia anything but a "bourgeois democratic revolution," Trotsky -- at the time he was a young man of 26, and already the head of the St. Petersburg Soviet of 1905, elaborated a theory which stated that the revolution in Russia would continue "in permanence," that is, go over from the bourgeois to the proletarian or socialist stage.

Yet this sweeping statement -- ~~the~~ elaborated in various articles during the years 1905-06 -- remained like a bolt out of the blue, with no development of any sort for the entire period of 1905 to the 1917 Revolution. ~~For~~ did he use it as a theoretic foundation for the development of any independent political tendency, grouping, or party. On the contrary, he considered himself "above" all factions of the Russian Social Democracy, trying to bring about the unity of Menshevism and Bolshevikism. *prediction theory* *as he himself admitted* *this theory of permanent revolution was his outstanding feat in that period.* World War I and the collapse of the Second International had not called for this in him a re-examination of the foundations of established Marxism. Of course, all revolutionary Marxists shouted, "Traitors," at the German Social Democracy that had voted its credits to the Kaiser. But ~~there~~ there they stopped.

Lenin alone was dissatisfied, not merely with the traitors, but with himself. Lenin alone proceeded to analyze the betrayal, not only as a point of departure in action, but in thought.

Since Marxism is not a dogma, but a method of thought and analysis, each generation of Marxists must interpret Marxism for itself. Confronted with the appearance of counter-revolution with the revolutionary movement, Lenin was driven to search for a philosophy that would reconstitute his own reason.

Lenin's attitude was a dual one: 1) why did they betray? and 2) what was ~~there~~ *similar* in their thinking and mine, that I did not foresee the betrayal? For a revolutionary to admit that the contradiction is in oneself takes some deep digging! Lenin did not flinch:

"None of the Marxists," wrote Lenin in his Philosophic Notebooks, and the emphasis of the plural is his, "for the past half century have understood Marx!" since it was "impossible to grasp CAPITAL.... if you have not studied through the whole of Hegel's LOGIC."

His rereading of Hegel's Science of Logic formed the Great Divide in Marxism, not only between traitors and loyalists, but between Hegelian Marxism and any one who did not fully grasp the dialectic for then

they cannot, said Lenin, be "fully Marxist." He said this in his WILL of no less a person than a leading Bolshevik theoretician--Nikolai Bukharin.

Reminds
His Philosophic Notebooks (in ~~RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH, translated for the first time, as an Appendix~~) show how completely he reorganized his conception of the relationship between the economic forces, and the human forces, the relationship between sciences and human activity. "Intelligent idealism," he wrote, is rarer to intelligent materialists than is stupid materialism. *Subjectivity*

The ~~one~~ dialectical principle that became the basis of all his analysis in that period was "transformation into opposite." Just as free competition had become transformed into its opposite--monopoly--so, a stratum of the proletariat--the aristocracy of labor--followed. This was at the root of the betrayal, and now Marxists must go "deeper and lower" in the proletariat and there find "new passions and new forces" for the reconstruction of society on new beginnings.

Altho in action, in 1917, Trotsky became reunited with Lenin, Trotsky never made any such philosophic preparation to meet destiny in the Russian Revolution. Nor did he do it when, shortly after Lenin's death, the struggle between Stalin and himself ended in the victory of Stalin. Lacking this methodology, he could not fathom the ~~one~~ phenomenon of the workers' state being transformed into its opposite--a state capitalist society.

Reminds
He denied the fact. He denied the theory. He denied the world reality of the movement ~~from~~ from monopoly to state capitalism. The struggle against Stalinism had the air of self-defense, however, not because he was subjective, but because, objectively, he saw nothing fundamentally new in world capitalist development. Nothing had changed since the decade of 1914-1924--except the leadership. Stalin was the "organizer of defeats"--and he could organize victories--if the proletariat followed him.

Reminds
This is not meant sarcastically. He certainly was a leader of the only victorious proletarian revolution in history. Whether as Chairman of the Military Revolutionary Committee, which had planned the actual insurrection, builder of a Red Army, out of raw civilian recruits, that nevertheless withstood all counter-revolutionary attacks from Tsarist generals and other professionals, Commissar of War or Foreign Minister, history will not deny him his victories.

Reminds
But that is ~~not~~ the mark of a Marxist theoretician whose philosophic perspective charts the course of actual historical development on the basis of the most profound analysis of what is. The two poles of this ~~are~~ the new stage of capitalist development which brings with it a new form of workers revolt, ~~in~~ the specification of which strata in the population are the most revolutionary forces. Lenin, for his day, specified the one as monopoly capitalism, and the other as the deeper and lower strata of the proletariat and poor peasantry.

Reminds
Trotsky, confronted with the ~~unseen~~ phenomenon of Stalinism, looked for objective roots for this in production. To him, the "property forms"--(all limited by new to stratification, for the early production conferences had gone, and soon the trade unions themselves were incorporated in the state)--were what made Stalinist Russia inviolate as a workers state.

"though degenerate", and the features of the bureaucracy purely limited to a "policemen" arrogating to himself a greater share of wealth as a result of his "distributive function." Since he saw no class distinction involved in his struggle with Stalinism, the struggle was of necessity reduced to the question of leadership.

III. Class Nature of the Soviet Union as Leadership, Leadership, Leadership

In Trotsky's DIARY for the year 1935, which has just been published, you will find the following quotation:

"After his (Rakovsky's) capitulation there is nobody left...and still I think that the work in which I am engaged in now, despite its insufficient and fragmentary nature, is the most important work in my life. More important than that of 1917. More important than the period of the Civil War, or any other."

"For the sake of clarity I would put it this way: Had I not been present in 1917 in St. Petersburg, the October Revolution would have taken place on the condition that Lenin was present and in command. The same can, by and large, be said of the civil war period.... Thus I cannot speak of the indispensability of my work even about the period from 1917-21."

"But not my work is indispensable in the full sense of the word. There is no arrogance in this claim at all. The collapse of the two Internationals has posed a problem which none of the leaders of these Internationals is at all equipped to solve. The vicissitudes of my fate have armed me with important experience in dealing with it. There is now no one except me to carry out the mission of arming a new generation over the heads of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals. I need at least five years of uninterrupted work to insure the succession."

IF ONLY TROTSKY HAD DEVELOPED A THEORY THAT MEASURED UP TO THE CHALLENGE OF THE TIMES, EVEN IF THE CADRE DIDN'T!

Take the question that Trotsky himself considered the keystone to all others--the class nature of the Soviet Union. He considered it a workers' state no matter how the workers fared in this state, no matter whether the leadership was a bureaucracy with "Com Stalin"--his phrase--at its head or not; whether foreign policy envisaged a Hitler pact, or otherwise; and even if the Moscow Frameup Trials killed off the "General Staff of the Revolution." As I lay dying, the heritage he left his cadre--the Fourth International--was still "Defense of the Soviet Union."

What methodology of thought led him to such a conclusion? Here, his own words, from "The Revolution Betrayed" (247-48):

"The first concentration of the means of production in the hands of the state to occur in history was achieved by the proletariat with the method of social revolution and not by capitalists with the method of trustification."

Lenin had fought hard against transforming the reality of the workers' state which ~~was~~ its bureaucratic deformations into a theoretic abstraction. In the trade union dispute with Trotsky, in 1921, he warned that the state was transitional "either to socialism or to a return backwards to capitalism." But to Trotsky, ~~as late as~~ World War II, the fact that state property had ~~historically~~ appeared as workers' state property was sufficient when the New Economic Policy continued apace after Lenin's death, he did warn against a restoration of capitalism on the installment plan but

after such well known events as the Depression in America & Germany the States of the private capitalist world, ~~and~~ from the President in America & Germany

Vertical handwritten notes on the right margin, including "M. L. Trotsky" and other illegible text.

the minute national planning was instituted, he went back to transforming, statified property into a fetish.

The theoretical axis of Marx's greatest work, CAPITAL, is the despotism of capital vs. the cooperation of freely associated labor. He states that what appears as plan is, in actuality, the authority of the capitalist. He predicted that if the law of motion of capitalism--the concentration, and centralization of capital, went on unhampered, it would end in the centralization of capital in the hands of a single capitalist or capitalist corporation without, in any way, changing the general absolute law of the unemployed army and the collapse of capitalism. He did not live to see Russian state capitalism with its ubiquitous state, forced labor camps, secret police, terror of the mind and body, in a word--totalitarianism. But he would have had no difficulty in recognizing it as the ultimate development of capitalism, from free competitive through monopoly, to state.

Marx predicted as much when he fought the planners of his day. He said to Proudhon as early as 1845, in his "Poverty of Philosophy," that to introduce Plan when the basis of production is the factory system would only mean introducing into the market what exists in the factory--the despotism of capital. Just as he would have nothing to do with distribution theories--all varieties of under-consumptionism of his day--so he would have nothing to do with planners. He warned that the result could only be "one single master."

Because the Russian Revolution, and not the hypothetical development of capitalism in a straight line, had brought about the nationalization of the means of production and the state plan, state property and workers state became synonymous in Trotsky's mind. Lacking Lenin's methodology, he looked not to a different kind of planning, different tempos, different leadership, different anything but a different methodology. Not even the fact that the workers had lost all their original rights of control of production, factory conferences, unions incorporated in the state, and the increasing means of production at the expense of means of consumption--exactly as in capitalist states--could free him from the fetishism of "nationalized" property, and plan equals workers' state.

Like all fetishisms, the fetishism of state property blinded Trotsky from following the course of the counter-revolution in the relations of production. The legitimization of the counter-revolution against October--the Stalinist Constitution of 1936--Trotsky viewed merely as something that first "created the political premise for the birth of a new possessing class." As if classes were born from political premises! Because to him Stalinist Russia was still a workers' state, he thought that the Moscow Trials weakened stalinism. Actually, they consolidated the rule. But to Trotsky, the macabre Kremlin surges only proved that "Soviet society organically tends towards the ejection of the bureaucracy!"

Concl Under the circumstances his "appeals to the world proletariat" were rather hollow. Indeed, the duality between his concept of world revolution, and the concept of Russia as the workers' state that must be defended, was too contradictory a burden to bear for any "cadre" to be able to carry and win adherents.

12626

This, despite ^{Trotsky} ~~the~~ name of "the Man of October", as he was affectionately called by his adherents, despite all the sweat, blood, and manifestos that went into some underground work in Russia, at least in the early years after his expulsion.

All to no avail--not because it "failed" but because it did not unfurl a theoretic banner to win the minds of men in the manner of Marx, 1843-83, and Lenin, 1903-23.

Lenin had discerned ^{Trotsky} ~~an~~ "administrative mentality," during the trade union debate, when he wished "to shake up the trade union leadership", as Trotsky put it, instead of following the creative energies and aspirations of the workers who asked for their democracy to be given back to them. ^{Trotsky} ~~It~~ ^{was} again when he first proposed the Single Plan. ^{Trotsky} ~~It~~ ^{is} this administrative mentality which made him the prisoner of the plan and kept him from seeing that Stalin was ^{Trotsky} ~~the~~ ^{the} representative of the new class of state capitalist rulers. Instead, he kept attributing to Stalin mere ignorance and lack of theoretical acumen.

Stalin was not the mediocrity Trotsky made him out to be. It was Stalin who made Trotsky argue on his ground, his fantastic notion of "socialism in one country." It was he who made Trotsky's permanent revolution appear as an immediate adventuristic scheme that was out of all bounds for the exhausted Russia of the 1920s. Stalin, it is true, wasn't playing intellectual games; he was out for power. ^{With your permission, I will now read from Marx in my Free World (p. 243):}

Once the Russian people, "to a man," did not run the economy and the state; once the German Revolution too was defeated; once world capitalism regained its breath and the vortex of the world market had full sway, the logic of the Russian development was startling, unforeseen, but inevitable. The Revolution then found the really serious counter-revolution inside itself. Stalin was the perfect representative of that counter-revolution, not only because his personality suited the task so well, but, above all, because he did come from the Revolutionary Party and did have command of the Marxist "language." So corrupt and outlived is capitalism that it cannot hope to win except by pretending to be other than it is. Hitler, too, knew how to call his fascism, National Socialism. Stalin was Hitler's superior by far, because his functionaries came from the working class.

In Stalin's zigzags, and lack of theoretical acumen, was the straight line of development of the newly-emergent world phenomenon of state capitalism. It now had a personality, a totalitarian personality, armed with a theory of totalitarianism called the "monolithic Party."

^{Chaitin} ~~To~~ struggle against this theory and ideology of Stalin's totalitarianism, more than courage, more than optimism, more than good intentions, more than a chance of leadership were necessary. But lacking a new theory to fit the new times, Trotsky was compelled to reduce it to a question of leadership. Indeed, he imposed that attitude, not alone on the Russian, but on the world situation. The very first sentence of his programmatic statement for the Fourth International of 1936 reads:

"The world political situation, as a whole, is chiefly characterized by an historic crisis of the leadership of the proletariat." He further makes the crisis of proletariat leadership ~~become~~ become crisis in mankind's ~~cultural~~ culture which can be resolved only by the Fourth International.

Indeed, that has always been Trotsky's weakness in leadership and he measured Lenin by it too: "For Lenin's slogans to find their way to the masses there had to exist cadres.... The vital mainspring in this process is the party, just as the vital mainspring in the mechanism of the party is its leadership."

But that was exactly what the vital mainspring of Lenin's philosophy was NOT. On the very eve of the revolution, he threatened to resign from the leading committee of the Bolsheviks, and, as he expressed it, "go to the sailors" who better represented the revolutionary will of the masses than did his "vanguard party." To Lenin, a vanguard party was vanguard only if it represented the revolutionary will of the masses, and in action, theory, and practice proves it at great historic moments, and every day of its life. *g.w.p.H.*

Marxism is a theory of liberation or it is nothing. Where Marx was concerned with the freedom of humanity, and with the inevitable waste of human life which is the absolute general law of capitalist development, Russian Communism rests on the mainspring of capitalism--saying the worker the minimum and extracting from him the maximum.

They dub this "the Plan." Marx called it the law of value and surplus value, "the fatal formula of wage slavery."

To the extent that Trotsky clung to the Plan, to that extent--despite his constant criticisms of the "tempo"--he was in actuality a prisoner of Stalin's Plan. In the process, the very concept of socialism was reduced to the concept of State Plan.

The proof is in Trotsky's own words--in nothing less fundamental than the Manifesto of the Fourth International on "Imperialist War and Proletarian Revolution":

"To turn one's back on the nationalization of the means of production, on the ground that, in and of itself, it does not create the well-being of the masses, is tantamount to sentencing the granite foundation to destruction on the ground that it is impossible to live without walls and a roof."

The "Man of October" couldn't have fallen any deeper into the mire of the ideas and methodology ~~of~~ of the Russian bureaucracy which, instead of theory, was presenting an administrative formula for minimum costs and maximum production--the true gods of all class rulers. ~~Since getting into the class distinction~~

The dialectic of logic takes its own toll of theory & theoreticians.

TR
to P.H.

Concluding Remarks

This is what I meant when I referred to the fact that Lenin and Trotsky had prepared differently to meet destiny in 1917. Because Lenin was there, it was not clearly seen then how different were their theoretic weapons. When Lenin died, however, it was clear how the methodology of Lenin was absent entirely from Trotsky's approach. The most Trotsky could think of was repeating what was, in 1917, while his analysis of what is in his time was, at best, a journalist, a revolutionary, brilliant, journalist, full of critical acumen and wit--but a journalist is not an original thinker, a theoretician who interprets for his generation the task of that generation, except in sweeping generalizations.

No more sweeping generalization for his or any other period could match in lustre and emptiness, if you'll pardon the harshness where theory demands it--of the theory of permanent revolution. Consider the following: 1) When he first elaborated that theory--1907-08--it could have been, not merely a brilliant prognostication, but an original theory. If it had been followed up with what Hegel calls the "labor, patience, suffering and seriousness of the negative." That is to say, was spelled out in terms of what class forces, what parties, what relationship between theory and practice was called forth by each specific stage of development of capitalism, and each concrete form of workers' revolt. This, Lenin did, so that, when April 4, 1917, came, and he saw the "democratic dictatorship of proletariat and peasantry" as having come to actual life in the form of the Kerensky regime, he could move straightway to the socialist stage, even then not forgetting the peasantry as revolutionary, as the indispensable ally of the proletariat. Trotsky just joined Lenin's party, and then, with Lenin's theory in other's hands, his actions were historic. 2) In 1935, in the Diary, which I quoted previously, he recognizes that the Russian Revolution could have happened without him because action does not substitute for theory, but goes hand in hand with it. In any case, he admits that nothing, and that includes the theory of permanent revolution, (was indispensable that he did) but now he alone remains. But when 1938 comes, in his Preface to Isaacs' "Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution," he suddenly steals in the theory of the permanent revolution under that thesis, and "therefore" (sic) can say it "guaranteed" the victory of October. Lenin left these questions (as to dictatorship of proletariat, RD) unanswered up to his famous Theses of April 4, 1917... Such was, in broad outline, the essence of the conception of the permanent (uninterrupted) revolution. It was precisely this conception that guaranteed the victory of the proletariat in October. 3) Then why not in the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution, when Lenin was not there to spell out an April 4th, (not a permanent revolution, thesis) Trotsky insists that it proved itself "in defeat." The fact that Stalin was wrong--as he most certainly was--does not prove Trotsky right in the question of the Chinese Revolution. If anything proves right the charge of "underestimation of the peasantry" against Trotsky, it is not the Stalinists, but Trotsky himself. Listen to him, as late as 1938, reviewing the 1925-7 Chinese Revolution: "Agrarian backwardness always goes hand in hand with the absence of roads, with the isolation of provinces, with 'medieval' particularism, and absence of national consciousness." You mean China was ready for a proletarian revolution and did not even have "national consciousness"? How can you fly in the face of reality? One thing for Mao--he capitulated to reality as a state capitalist, but it is reality he saw--the role of the peasantry--and he saw that as far back as 1927, and here is Trotsky, writing in 1938, not even mentioning Mao's name, and treating "Red China" as a myth invented in the Kremlin. Trotsky, the pamphleteer, would certainly have had something to say about non-theoretical acumen had Stalin written that. The bourgeois journalist, Edgar Snow, saw more (and also less) than did Trotsky the Marxist. That is how hard a taskmaster theory is, and how correct Hegel was in his condemnation of the romanticists, and therefore reactionaries, of his age--Schelling and Jacobi with their bolt out of the blue, and jump to the Absolute without that "labor, patience, suffering, and seriousness of the negative."

Marxists are fond of saying that abstractions help only the enemy, and this abstraction, nationalized property equals workers state, most certainly helped the enemy--the Stalinist counter-revolution--and disoriented a whole generation of Marxists. No wonder the Trotskyists, not grasping state capitalism, have become

only the left face of state capitalism both in Russia and presently in China.

The dialectic of logic has its own way of measuring men.

1906
1919
1938
D

that of

that