

socialist

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GOD'S LAST STAND

**AN ATTACK ON THE MYSTIFICATION
OF SCIENCE**

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Arthur Scargill and New Labour

Arthur Scargill has, more than any other working class leader in Britain, earned the right to have his views listened to with respect. The miners' leader won this honour by his leadership of the epic 1984-85 strike for jobs which brought the full force of the state down upon the union's head. Despite some serious political and theoretical limitations, Scargill often expresses the feelings and aspirations of countless militant and class conscious workers who want an end to capitalism and a socialist future.

Scargill's consistent denunciation of the capitalist system has earned him many enemies. Chief among these are the TUC and Labour Party bureaucrats for whom collaboration with the ruling class is a way of life. For them, Scargill is the opposite of what they crave, namely acceptance at every level by the capitalist class and its state institutions.

For these reasons alone, it is important to analyse the significance of Scargill's decision to leave the Labour Party led by Tony Blair and launch the Socialist Labour Party (SLP). He is the first senior trade union leader to break with Labour in this way.

Already the SLP has attracted support from half of the leadership of the rail union, the RMT. This is a result of Blair's refusal to pledge a future Labour government to re-nationalise the railways. Their defection is an indication of the conflict with the trade unions that Labour will face if it is elected.

Scargill has argued that the abandonment of Clause 4 of Labour's constitution, committing the party to public ownership, the embracing of market economics, the erosion of the block vote and the assumption of vast powers by the party's machine signifies that Labour is no longer a socialist party. It is, he says, bound to become a capitalist party along the lines of the Democratic Party in the United States.

To his credit, Scargill has dared to say what is: that we are not witnessing a "swing to the right" by Labour but a totally new phenomenon. Scargill has said in public what many Labour MPs, fearful for their membership or with one eye on a ministerial

position, whisper in private. Labour under Blair is, as *Socialist Future* has argued for some time, transforming rapidly into its own opposite, becoming a party which openly endorses the fundamentals of free market capitalism.

Blair's group rejects many of the post-war gains of the working class, such as free state education and state benefits, in favour of "civic virtues" like "rights and responsibilities" laced with a heavy dose of corporatism in the shape of concepts such as "stakeholding".

The Tories and the right-wing press recognise this change. Indeed, they are often outflanked by Blair's policies. Rupert Murdoch hosts conferences where Blair speaks in praise of Margaret Thatcher. Even the *Daily Mail*, which backed Hitler and Mussolini in the 1930s, is contemplating whether to back New Labour at the forthcoming general election. Perhaps Blair's populism and supra-class rhetoric makes the paper nostalgic.

HISTORICAL MISTAKES

While the SLP rightly rejects the capitalist road that New Labour has taken, there is no real attempt to analyse how this happened. To maintain, for example, that Labour was a socialist party while Clause 4 remained part of its constitution is historically inaccurate.

Firstly, the Labour Party was formed from the Labour Representation Committee, convened in 1900. Although the Independent Labour Party, established by Keir Hardie 1893, played a key role, the LRC's success was due to backing from the TUC. Until then, the trade unions had relied on the Liberal Party to defend their interests in parliament. The Taff Vale judgement of 1901, which opened unions up to claims for damages, gave the LRC a real impetus, leading to the formation of the Labour Party in 1906 with the aim of giving the unions a voice in Parliament. Not all unions rushed to back Labour- the miners were among the last, only breaking from the Liberals after World War One.

Clause 4 was introduced into the party's constitution only in 1918 under the pressure of the Russian Revolution. Although it remained a dead letter thereafter, Clause 4 expressed clearly what the socialist goal was. Its presence reflected the contradictory nature of the Labour Party, whose right-wing leadership could not survive or get elected without the support of the militant working class and the trade unions.

Blair's fracturing of this relationship does not start but rather concludes a process of change which began almost 20 years ago. The Wilson/Callaghan government of 1974-79 became an openly anti-working class regime. It used troops against the firefighters' strike and was in the grip of the International Monetary Fund. In the end, Callaghan was brought down by the struggles of the low-paid public sector workers.

END OF REFORMISM

That government marked a definite end to the period when Labour could come to office and offer a few crumbs off the capitalist table in the shape of reforms. The weakness of British capitalism amid a world economic slump signalled the end historically of that type of reformist government.

Labour under Neil Kinnock and John Smith was to some extent trapped by their past in the party. They weakened the old relationships, but were unable to break them. Yet the ground was laid, and a new generation in the shape of Blair has seized its chance to refashion the party completely.

Globalisation of the world economy, which coincided with the break-up of Stalinism, has shattered all the old social, political and class relationships in every country. It has produced a crisis for the ruling class as well as for the working class movement.

In Britain, the same Tories who were ready to take on the miners threaten to disintegrate. Their identity crisis is encapsulated in a torrid relationship with the European Union. Thus Blair sees the possibility of Labour replacing the Tories as the ruling class party.

He is counting on the support of vast numbers of the middle class who initially benefited from Thatcherism only to see their dreams vanish into a sea of negative equity, job insecurity and crumbling public services.

Socialist Future believes that anyone who seriously opposes Blair's project deserves unconditional support, while reserving our right to criticise the alternative political perspective offered.

We reject with contempt the position of the Communist Party of Britain and its wretched paper,

the *Morning Star*. Stalinism is finished as a social formation, but its ideas live on in the shape of one Mike Hicks, the party's general secretary. His attack on Scargill for endangering some spurious "left unity" by launching the SLP, is a reactionary cover for Blair, whom the *Morning Star* praised to the hilt after his speech in Brighton last autumn.

The weaknesses of the SLP lie not in the timing of its launch but in the limitations of its outlook and organisation. Its commitment to the parliamentary road to socialism flies in the face of historical experience. Marxists have long established that the institutions of the capitalist state can never serve the interests of working people. Its function is to uphold the rule of private property. Trust in parliament is trust in capitalism. While not rejecting parliamentary activity, Marxists understand that capitalism cannot be reformed out of existence.

That this wrong view holds sway in the labour movement is in no small part due to efforts of professional reformists and Stalinism. Workers breaking from Blair, at a time when capitalism and its institutions are in profound crisis, need to be imbued by revolutionary traditions of Chartism rather than the left-centrism of the reformist SLP.

Challenges posed by the transformed international political landscape require all socialists and Marxists to engage in an open debate and struggle for their ideas. The SLP's decision to block other organisations from affiliation or membership hinders this process. Its logic is a ban on factions inside the SLP itself.

DESIRE FOR CHANGE

Support for the SLP from trade unionists, and its respectable showing in the Hemsworth by-election, are signs that class conscious workers want a political change. But the vast majority still support Labour and will vote for Blair at the next election just to remove the Tories. The pent-up of frustrations of millions of people will come into conflict with a Blair government from day one, however.

Marxists have a responsibility to prepare for struggles against New Labour in and outside parliament, and to support those, like Scargill, who oppose Blair. *Socialist Future* is prepared for united front activity with the SLP and supporters of the Labour Party who reject Blair.

We are confident that fresh forces will emerge to construct a revolutionary leadership, with an international perspective based on an analysis of the new world disorder. The struggle for socialist power is a millennium project worth working for! □

Paul Feldman

God's last stand

This paper was presented to the American Philosophical Association's annual conference in New York last December, at a session devoted to the centenary of Frederick Engels organised by James Lawler, President of the Society for the Philosophical Study of Marxism

Frederick Engels opposed, especially in *Anti-Dühring*, the idea of a philosophy that stood above the sciences. He saw that the revolution in the theoretical natural sciences would bring the dialectical character of natural processes to the fore.

*"That which still survives, independently of all earlier philosophy, is the science of thought and its laws - formal logic and dialectics. Everything else is subsumed in the positive science of nature and history."*¹

We set out to show how the philosophical approach developed by Engels is both verified and enriched by the revolutionary advances of modern science. Our paper seeks to outline directions for Marxists to develop dialectical logic in the light of work in the fields of quantum mechanics, astrophysics and consciousness studies. This work, in our opinion, is a prerequisite to counter contemporary critics of the materialist world outlook, such as Paul Davies.

Anglo-Australian scientist Davies is a key figure in the current debate about the relationship between science and religion. He was born in England and emigrated to Australia during the Thatcher years. Aged 48, he has written 17 books in the last 22 years. Davies first made his name as a scientist working on time asymmetry, but is best known for championing the idea that the most effective road to religious belief is through science. In May 1995 he was awarded the \$1 million Templeton prize for "progress" in religion. This 25-year-old award is bigger than the Nobel Prize. Previous recipients include Billy Graham and Mother Teresa.

The rise of Davies as a populariser of the

convergence view of religion and science is not merely a British phenomenon. He is a leading exponent of an outlook which is a major influence on young people in society today, especially in the USA, Britain and Japan.

They experience a powerful technology, derived from complex scientific theories dominating the world in which people live. This co-exists with the greatest uncertainty about individual survival, as well as life on the planet. Consumer society turns people into mere targets for selling products and services. Science and technology are made into scapegoats for capitalism's destructiveness. It is against this background that Davies and others find a response to ideas which give "soul" to an apparently pointless existence, and which offer a rationalisation for the idea that "life is a lottery".²

The German professor against whom Engels wrote his polemical book, *Anti-Dühring*, was a philosopher, economist and professor of mechanics who lived between 1833-1921. Unlike Davies, he was not religious. Eugen Dühring was active in the German Social Democratic party. He was attacked by Engels for his attempt to impose his particular "system" on science.

The result of Engels' negative criticism of Dühring was, as Engels himself said, "an exposition of the dialectical method and the communist world outlook" of both himself and Marx. Our criticism of Davies is not so much to attack the idea of religion, but to examine his ideas in so far as they reveal deeper currents within today's historical process.

The mushrooming of popular and semi-technical books written by scientists about their own work is

evidence of an internal need to theorise about it, to expand concepts and to relate to the social world outside science, not forgetting the very lucrative side of publishing! All these books express views about the meaning of science.

Davies' misuse of science is in many respects a revival of the 19th century Roman Catholic doctrine of Neo-Thomism.³ This recognises God as the prime cause of being and the foundation of all philosophical categories. Religious interpretation of contemporary natural scientific theories holds a central place in Neo-Thomism.

After the Second Vatican Council of 1962-1965, certain propositions of contemporary philosophy were synthesised with the principles of 13th century Dominican scholar, St Thomas of Aquinas. Davies takes this process further, but with one important difference. Instead of incorporating existentialism and notions current in the 1960s, he is eclectically selecting half-baked ideas from the science of the 1980s and 1990s. The essential conclusion, however, is the same. "The process of history depends on supernatural forces, which govern every individual's behaviour. By this any possibility of man's active influence on world history is actually excluded," as a study by GDR philosophers put it.⁴

MATERIALIST SCHOOL

The religious-mystical tendency, of which Davies is not the only exponent, finds its opposite in a strong school of scientists who believe that science can penetrate every unknown area. They firmly oppose the injection of God as a substitute for an explanation for things that are hard to grasp.

It can certainly be said that there is a "materialist school". Possibly some might object to this description, but many British and American scientists and a few philosophers too, take materialist positions, though not necessarily dialectical ones. These include Peter Atkins, Richard Dawkins, Freeman Dyson, Susan Greenfield, Stephen Hawking, Carl Sagan, Stephen Weinberg, Lewis Wolpert, Roger Penrose, John Barrow, Gerald Edelman, Oliver Sacks, Francis Crick and Daniel Dennett.

Within this group there is a spectrum of tendencies, from strong atheists such as Peter Atkins, Lewis Wolpert and Richard Dawkins, to those who leave the question more open, tending to Laplace's view that "they have no need for this hypothesis".

On the other side of the divide between science and religion are Paul Davies, the Reverend John Polkinghorne, John Gribbin, Sheldon Glashow,

Russell Stannard, Marcello Gleiser, Karen Armstrong and Frank Tipler.

All these people, whether pro- or anti-religion, or agnostic, are prominent in fields including astronomy, physics, mathematics, biology, genetics, neuroscience and physical chemistry and the history of science and religion.

ENGELS' METHOD

Engels' writings, especially *Anti-Dühring*, can clarify the historical significance of today's controversies within science and the questions of method which arise. To assess Davies and his opponents, the theoretical basis of materialist dialectics needs to be considered.

In the form of a polemic against Dühring's formal metaphysics, Engels sets out the essential principles of materialist dialectical logic. Underpinning his approach is the materialist outlook pioneered in close collaboration between Marx and Engels in the *Holy Family* of 1845 and other writings of the 1840s and 1850s, in the build-up to *Capital*.

Anti-Dühring, which was written between 1876 and 1878, popularised many of the ideas contained in Marx's *Capital* and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. In *Anti-Dühring*, Engels concludes for the first time that Marx's discovery of the materialist view of history and the theory of surplus value made scientific socialism possible.

Engels' book sums up the essential features of Marxist method, not simply in terms of political economy, but in relation to all scientific thought. He formulates and demonstrates the thesis that "the unity of the world consists in its materiality".

Engels' great contribution to dialectics is his advancing of the intrinsically correct concepts of the Greek ancient philosophers about the nature of matter and motion. These are viewed as an indivisible unity and conflict of opposites. Motion is the mode of existence of matter. Above all, Engels, in line with Heraclitus and Hegel, shows that motion is existent objective contradiction.

Flowing from this is the understanding that all natural phenomena in their multiplicity are various forms of motion and the development of matter. Thus thought has come out of a long evolution of human beings, through history. The laws of dialectics, Engels writes, must be discovered in nature and abstracted from it.

Anti-Dühring explains the intrinsic contradiction within matter through its self-relationship with motion: "Motion is the mode of existence of matter." He stresses the unquiet, restless side of universal movement, in which equilibrium and stability are

relative to constant change. Space and time are understood as fundamental forms of all being.

Engels puts forward the fundamental dialectical laws as the unity and conflict of opposites, the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa, and the law of negation of negation. Essential categories in dialectical logic are contradiction and negation, including negation of negation as a law of development of nature, history and thought.

SELF-RELATED OPPOSITES

These categories contain within themselves the self-related opposites of identity/difference, quantity/quality, necessity/chance, semblance/essence/appearance, freedom/necessity. Formal logic and dialectical logic are self-related opposites, expressing the movement of human cognition (including identity/difference).

In writing *Dialectics of Nature*, which he began before *Anti-Dühring*, Engels elaborated the integration and unification of dialectical laws which govern the totality of processes.

In opening, he writes: "The general nature of dialectics [is] to be developed as the science of inter-connections, in contrast to metaphysics." This assertion is followed by a second requirement:

"It is, therefore from the history of nature and human society that the laws of dialectics are abstracted." ⁵

For Marxists dialectical laws are to be discovered in and abstracted from all the unified processes in nature, society and thought, not imposed upon them in the manner of Dühring's revival of earlier idealist world schematism.

Through the example of his own work, Engels demonstrates the need for a concrete knowledge of science. Engels' contribution to the Marxist world outlook, and to the revolutionary politics in the First and Second Internationals, cannot be separated from his brilliant studies of natural sciences to demonstrate the operation of dialectics.

To emulate Engels today might seem an impossible proposition. The march of science might suggest that no single individual can have an integrated grasp of all scientific processes. To try do so may seem a kind of Hegelian fantasy or like the dream concept of David Hilbert, the German mathematician.

But if we work with Engels' concept that the dialectical laws are to be discovered from within nature, then nature can provide us with the answer to this problem. And it does, because contemporary science has seen not only great specialisation, but also the rise of new inter-disciplinary research

especially in the 1980s and 1990s. Engels' definition of dialectics as the **science of inter-connections**⁶ provides a conceptual framework for this multiplicity within unity and unity within multiplicity.⁷

In the notes and fragments for *Dialectics of Nature* Engels writes: "Dialectics, so-called *objective* dialectics, prevails throughout nature, and so-called subjective dialectics, dialectical thought, is only the reflection of the motion through opposites which asserts itself everywhere in nature, and which by the continual conflict of opposites, and their final passage into one another, or into higher forms, determines the life of nature."⁸

A contemporary theory of materialist dialectics needs to elaborate a logic from the principles set out by Engels, which are not formally set out as a recipe, but rather spread through his writings. When Engels wrote *Anti-Dühring* between 1876-1878, the chain of discoveries which eventually led to the 20th century revolution in science was only just beginning.

The primacy of matter, the unity of nature, human society and thought are set out as the ground through which laws of dialectics perform. Engels shows concretely through the different sciences, the operation of the three general objective laws.

It is in the discoveries and progress of science that Marxists can expand their understanding of matter and its relation to mind, and human practice. The key issue is to go beyond the unscientific (in terms of history and philosophy) *ideologising* of science by people such as Paul Davies and actually discover which aspects of contemporary science must be integrated into an advanced dialectics of nature.

"THE MATTER MYTH"

In *The Matter Myth*⁹ Davies, with co-author John Gribbin, proclaims that: "Quantum physics undermines materialism because it reveals that matter has far less 'substance' than we might believe." Thus, because matter has been shown to be insubstantial, not lumpy, the new physics has blown apart the central tenets of materialist doctrine". (We have searched throughout Marx, Engels, Lenin and others but failed to find them asserting that matter has to be "lumpy" in the materialist view!)

In his popularisation of science, Davies implies that matter has somehow disappeared. Yet in his purely scientific writings, a totally different picture is painted. Physics, even the new physics, he has to admit, is about "the investigation of matter". Davies is a little like someone who has had too much to drink but still takes care in crossing the road.

In the opening section of a scientific book called, *The New Physics*¹⁰ which Davies edited, he outlines the new theories and discoveries of some of the world's leading physicists, such as black holes, subatomic particles, novel materials and self-organising chemical reactions.

Despite his contempt for materialism and his self-appointed role as God's spokesperson, when he deals with natural processes, matter comes back to haunt him. He describes the universe as a law-governed whole, which can be understood by human thought.

"The physicist," he writes, "believes that the laws of physics, plus a knowledge of the relevant boundary conditions, initial conditions and constraints, are sufficient to explain, in principle, every phenomenon in the universe. Thus the entire universe, from the smallest fragment of matter to the largest assemblage of galaxies, becomes the physicists' domain - a vast natural laboratory for the interplay of lawful forces."

No materialist, it would seem, could argue with this. It is hard to believe that Davies could come up with claims like "God is in the laws of physics" and that "these laws provide evidence of divine intelligence". His road to mysticism, one might think, is due entirely to his eclectic method on the one side and on the lucrative aspect of it on the other. It is said that he made a personal decision to win the Templeton prize and wrote his books with that aim in mind.

The "interplay of lawful forces" in this century's science operates, not in a linear fashion but through the movement of mutually exclusive opposites. Only this concept, which is the essence of dialectics, can explain the apparent paradox of quantum theory, in which light has both wave and particle properties, which are mutually exclusive in scientific observation and measurement.

"LUMPY" MATTER

The concepts of wave and particle themselves developed within the "Newtonian world view" which causes Davies so much heartache and which he conflates with materialism as a whole. A particle was a "lump" of matter, which could be viewed at rest to observe its static properties and then propelled into motion. Matter and its motion could be separated. Classically, the trajectory of such a particle could be envisaged by considering a series of "instantaneous" properties - position, momentum, energy - which could be attached to the moving "lump", which was reduced to a mathematical point. A wave was a periodic motion in some continuous medium, the medium being necessary to support

such independent motion, but left unaffected by its passage.

But the discoveries of quantum mechanics showed that such a restricted notion of the world is inadequate for dealing with sub-atomic particles. Instead, as foreseen in Engels' dialectical materialistic approach, matter and motion proved to be inseparable. According to Paul Dirac, whose *Principles of Quantum Mechanics* is a key book in setting out the form of the new physics, the quantum mechanical "state" or "wave function" of no motion is the state of no particle. The wave-particle dual nature of matter flows from this; the particle is not a lump of matter isolated from motion, but the very medium essential to the existence of the wave motion.

NO MOVEMENT FROM NOTHING

Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle is a consequence of the "wave equations" used to describe the quantum mechanical particle. In its restriction to position and momentum - "you cannot know the position and momentum of a particle exactly at one and the same time" - the uncertainty principle both demonstrates the limitations of applying "classical" concepts derived from Newtonian particles to the subatomic level, while showing that quantisation defines minimum extensions to these wave-particle entities. The lumpy point-like particle may have disappeared, but more subtle properties of matter are revealed.

Cosmology is the arena in which Davies has chosen to "prove" the existence of God. He does this against the background of a huge extension of the scientific understanding of the universe.

In the 1960s observations made possible by modern instrumentation led to a range of discoveries about the large-scale structure of space-time, including the structure of black holes. This included the existence and structure of black holes as points in space time where space-time curvature becomes infinite, defined as "singularities". By 1970, British mathematician Roger Penrose joined with Hawking to put forward the possibility of a big-bang singularity.

In 1979 Soviet astrophysicists Zel'dovich and Novikov confirmed with computer calculations that primordial blackholes are the size of subatomic particles. This, Hawking explains in *A Brief History of Time*¹¹, makes them subject to quantum effects. By 1988, Hawking concluded: "If the universe is really self-contained, having no boundary or edge, it would have neither beginning nor end. It would simply be. What place, then, for a creator?"

It is in reply to Hawking and others, who find no need for God, and indeed start to draw the conclusion that there is no place left for God, that Davies spun his web of religious mysticism with his book *The Mind of God* published in 1991. The day after he received his Templeton award on May 4, he wrote in the London *Guardian*: "Modern cosmology suggests that time itself came into existence with the big bang. There was simply 'no before' for a God, or anything else, to form in." This sums up Davies' "free lunch" pseudo-theory of cosmology.

NO CREATION FROM NOTHING

Many cosmologists and physicists such as Sagan, Weinberg and Hawking (to name only a few) do not share this view. Hawking refers to the boundary conditions of space time, which "implicitly assume that the universe is partially infinite, or that there are infinitely many universes". "At the beginning of time," he says, "there would have been a point of infinite density and infinite curvature of space time."¹² Davies himself describes the black hole singularity as infinite gravitational force and density of material.¹³ Thus, quite the opposite of "nothing", there was an *infinite amount* of energy and matter.

It is possible to fall into the trap of thinking that perhaps Davies is right about "creation from nothing", because, he claims, "the quantum factor allows events to occur without causes in the subatomic world". In the same breath Davies says: "Quantum gravity suggests we might get everything for nothing." But this so-called "nothing" does after all contain "something": an *infinite amount* of gravitational force! So why does Davies continually, in all of his many books, insist on "creation from nothing"? It seems he has allowed the views of St Augustine of Hippo (354 to 430A.D.) to override the arguments of today's physics at this point.

But we cannot dismiss the argument too lightly. The idea that there can be movement from nothing requires examination from a dialectical standpoint. The problem of *being* and *nothing* does present a paradox. It was not by accident that the concept of motion is at the heart of both *Anti-Dühring* and *Dialectics of Nature*. Contained within it is the problem of understanding the essence of any given movement.

The arising of any process or object, including the universe itself, is through its identity in the external world, which arises out of any given objective movement of contradiction. This identity of any given, randomly selected thing or event, reflects through sensation into the sentient subject. The identity contains, *in itself* its own difference, its

opposite in the world beyond thought. Thus, we have being AND nothing. Relative to its negation into the subject through sensation, the original object ceases to exist, since that moment of time has disappeared. The transition from being to nothing is *becoming*, the first moment of coming into being, through external reflection into self.

The space-time singularity of the big bang is the initial moment of *identity* of the universe, described as infinite curvature of space-time, when space and time, matter and anti-matter are identical. But that addition of equal amounts of "plus" and "minus" which adds up to zero - "nothing"- is not an "empty nothing". The *identity* of the initial moment, the "before" of the big bang, contains its own *difference* within itself. This initially undetectable difference between the reactions of matter and anti-matter is currently the subject of intense scrutiny in the KTeV experiment at Fermilab near Chicago.

The movement from identity to difference, like that of being and nothing, involves the unity, conflict, interpenetration and transformation of opposites. It is law-governed. It is here that the asses' ears of Davies' metaphysics poke through. He can grasp all kinds of complex and paradoxical questions in physics, but the logical essence of movement entirely escapes him. Because he is **opposed to contradiction as an objective logical category**, Davies is FORCED to introduce a mystical fog at every point where the essence of movement appears.

MOTION IS CONTRADICTION

Engel's dialectic, unlike the Kantian view, shows that what appears as a paradox is only an expression of the mind's difficulty in apprehending movement. This is because: "*Motion itself is a contradiction: even simple mechanical change of position can only come about through a body being at one and the same moment of time both in one place and in another place, being in one and the same place and also not in it. And the continuous origination and simultaneous solution of this contradiction is precisely what motion is.*"¹⁴

In Davies' shotgun marriage of religion and science, the material relation of opposites in nature cannot be developed. He discusses categories such as possibility and reality, chance and necessity, causality and interaction but makes them into fixed absolutes which arise as a result of differing objects or processes, instead of as a result of their own interaction - from internal self-relation.

His match-making constantly leads him into self-contradiction. He has to recognise the real opposites

that exist in nature and its reflection in thought. But his trump card is always the mystification of the relation between the two. "It would be foolish," he admits somewhat sheepishly, "to deny that many of the traditional religious ideas about God, man and the nature of the universe have been swept away by the new physics."

THE JUPITER MISSION

The investigation of the world of micro particles and the exploration of outer space continuously reveals that the quantum laws of the micro also operate in the infinitely vast expanses of the universe.

Having confirmed that physics – even the "new" physics – is about "the investigation of matter", Davies then suggests that there are "three ultimate frontiers of physics: the very small, the very large and the very complex". Marking out the areas of the small, the large and the complex, Davies without knowing it, suggests a basis for the dialectical law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa. In the relationship between the very small and the very large, cosmology is today used as a giant laboratory for high energy particle physics.

Davies recognises that the discovery that the laws of the micro hold true for the macro is one of the most pleasing confluences of science: "it marries the very small with the very large." The investigation of the world of micro particles which has taken place alongside exploration of outer space, has revealed that quantum laws of the micro operate in the infinitely vast expanses of the universe. Astronomers today use quantum theory in the study of the origins and structure of the universe. Conversely, in the world of nuclear and plasma physics and optics, knowledge of the quantum mechanical laws is necessary for research into the properties of matter.

What Davies describes as a "pleasing confluence" is in terms of dialectics a totally unconscious recognition of the essential unity of all matter in motion, and that the objective dialectical laws can be discovered at all levels of organisation. This is in fact verified by the third division Davies suggests – the complex: the ability of matter to self-organise.

The astrophysicist looks through the telescope at events millions of years in the past, connected by the light and radiation emanating through the light-years between him/her and a distant star. In the same way all reception and processing of information by human beings, and all practical activity, takes place in the present as part of a space-time continuum. And, as David Finley, who works in the US National Radio Astronomy Laboratory, has said: "We are physically connected to stars because we contain the

same elements - we are made of star stuff."

Realisation of that fact led maverick astronomer Fred Hoyle to postulate a special state of the nucleus of the carbon atom, to overcome the difficulty of forming it through a process which required three helium nuclei to combine simultaneously. Hoyle's method was an object lesson in dialectical thinking, in approaching the past from the standpoint of understanding the requirements of the present. Hoyle reasoned that the existence of carbon-based life-forms capable of thinking about life meant that it must be possible to form carbon by nuclear synthesis within the centre of stars.

The only way he could see this happening was if the carbon nucleus has a special state or "resonance" which enabled it to soak up the extra energy that three – rather than just two – colliding helium nuclei would have at the temperatures which prevail deep in stellar interiors. Discovery of Hoyle's carbon resonance won American physicist Willie Fowler and his team the Nobel Prize.

Closer to home, in December 1995 the Galileo spacecraft arrived at Jupiter, receiving information from a probe launched into the dense Jovian atmosphere. Although studying the giant planet as it exists today, space scientists involved in the project were particularly excited that they would also be examining material left over from the primordial nebula out of which the whole solar system formed some 4.6 billion years ago.

WATER AND LIFE

One crucial question, in this instance, is the potential existence of a layer of water ice clouds beneath the normally visible layers of Jupiter – water being vital to the evolution of life on Earth, and – potentially – elsewhere. According to some planetary scientists Jupiter holds the key to this question. It is supposed to have played the role of a great provider, throwing water in the form of comets into the path of the infant Earth after it had lost most of its original complement. (Nowadays, Jupiter plays a much more protective role, minimising the likelihood of life-threatening impacts between Earth and space debris.) The results of the Galileo probe's descent into Jovian hell are eagerly awaited as providing answers into just how the conditions for the development of the solar system and the life it supports were established.

These two examples both illustrate the way in which knowledge advances through understanding naturally dialectical processes in a dialectical way which enables the inner laws and processes to be revealed. In contrast, Davies adopts a teleological

approach to such questions. Why is it that we can discover laws in nature? Because they were written into the Universe by some agency. Why does mathematics prove such a powerful tool, at least in the physical sciences? Because this agency has written the laws mathematically. And why can we understand nature in terms of mathematically describable laws? Because the said agency has designed an entire Universe so that we humans might evolve mathematical brains and discover it through its laws. And for want of a better word for this agency, God will do.

SELF-ORGANISATION OF MATTER

The discovery that chaos and chance are as inherent in nature as order and necessity, furthers the understanding of the essential unity and interconnectedness of all matter as self-related opposites with moments of discontinuity and leaps. Davies, who calls this "the liberation of matter", claims that it destroys materialist philosophy, which he associates with "lumpy" matter.

But in reality the objective existence of chance and indeterminism have been discovered by scientists as an extension of earlier discoveries of the laws of thermodynamics. The study of the propensity of matter and energy to self-organise in non-linear systems has expanded into a new branch of physics, called the study of "far from equilibrium systems". This science makes concrete the dialectical concept of self-movement through "the division of a unity into mutually exclusive opposites and their reciprocal relations."¹⁵ The origin of organic movement – life – is not through some external source, but through the internal contradictions within inorganic matter whereby matter begins to self-reproduce as in the formation of proteins. What it reveals is that the older concepts of organic and inorganic have become outdated, not because they were wrong, but because further study has revealed them to be not fixtures, but mutually transformable opposites.

The dialectical concept of negation provides an accurate description of this process: the "structure of the higher" contains in a new form, the properties of the lower.¹⁶ The innate ability of matter to organise also helps to explain the formation of the first life on the planet, the transition of the inorganic to the organic.

The dialectical movement of negation – whereby the new simultaneously *cancel out and preserves* the old – reveals that the structure of the higher and more complex contains (in a negated form) the properties of the lower.

From the standpoint of scientific method, we should note that the objective nature of chance and indeterminism and its relation to its opposite were discovered by scientists such as Ilya Prigogine as an extension of earlier discoveries of the laws of thermodynamics. It apparently contradicts the earlier understanding of thermodynamic law which produced the view that the universe is running down amid spiralling entropy.¹⁷ But the emergence of "order out of chaos" arises because self-organising systems are parts within a whole, predicated on an environment which is outside them. Thus the "excess entropy" can be exported through the principle that energy is not destroyed, but transferred into another form.

What Prigogine demonstrated is the objective nature of chance and indeterminism as a necessary consequence of the laws of thermodynamics and a logically determined extension of those laws. This is despite the fact that self-organisation appears to contradict the earlier interpretation of these laws.

NECESSITY AND CHANCE

Edward N. Lorenz first demonstrated in 1961 that a system can be both deterministic and yet unpredictable, due to that system's "extreme sensitivity to initial conditions". While the interaction of chance and necessity in complex systems is different from quantum uncertainty, as a principle of movement and change through the unity and conflict of opposites it reveals the changes of different forms of matter through dialectically structured self-movement.

Not only does this prove the objective existence of "necessity and chance" as objectively existing *contradictions* in nature, but recent science has shown how the interaction of the opposites of chance and necessity is at work both deep within the structure of matter in the micro-particle world as well as in the formation of the universe.

The innate ability of matter to organise out of "disorder" also helps to explain the formation of the first life on the planet, the transition of the inorganic to the organic. The arising of order out of chaos, the ability of a system to move from equilibrium to chaos and to a new and more ordered phase, has crucial implications from a revolutionary Marxist standpoint.

Such problems are being studied in physical chemistry. It remains for Marxists to integrate them into a flexible concept of social and political processes, for example, the break-down of social formations such as the USSR. Does this mean that all the previous history suddenly vanishes, as some

crude impressionists have suggested? Surely it shows the need for a more complex and dynamic understanding of the process of historical negation enriched by new concepts, such as Prigogine's.

CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

Davies hopes that there may yet be another outpost to refute his crude designation of materialism – the mysteries of the human mind. “The existence of mind,” he believes “as an abstract, holistic organisational pattern capable even of disembodiment, refutes the reductionist philosophy that we are all nothing but moving mounds of atoms.” Here again, Davies tries to separate matter from its properties, in the Neo-Thomist fashion.

Perhaps unfortunately for Davies, a new science of consciousness studies is rapidly moving into an area previously considered thought to be the reserve of those who believe in UFOs, ESP, table-knocking and “mind over matter”. Rather than being the province of those seeking an afterlife, or the supernatural, it has become a research area for some of the most rigorous scientific minds of the 1990s.

Current research in neuroscience is aided by new instrumentation such as positron emission tomography (PET), nuclear magnetic resonance (MRI) and magnetoencephalography (MEG). Work by neurologists such as Susan Greenfield and Gerald Edelman now offers an astonishingly rich picture of the human brain. It is now generally agreed that there is no single area in the brain which gives rise to individual consciousness. Neurologist Oliver Sacks, who has learned much from Soviet psychologists Vygotsky and Luria, has proposed a theory of mind which is both materialist and dialectical. “It will have to be grounded in biological reality, in the anatomical and developmental and functional details of the nervous system; and also in the inner life or mental life of the living creature, the play of its sensations and feelings and drives and intentions, its perception of objects and people and situations, and, in higher creatures at least, the ability to think abstractly and to share through language and culture the consciousness of others.”¹⁸

This is a beautiful concretisation of the dialectical concept of how the universal finds its expression within the individual. Within the development of each individual mind is expressed not an abstract universal, but “a universal which comprises in itself the wealth of the particular, the individual, the single”.¹⁹ Advances in knowledge of brain structure, however, have not simply produced a new theory of mind functioning. Sacks talks of a crisis in scientific understanding, arising from an “acute

incompatibility between observations and existing theories”.

Gerald Edelman, who shared the Nobel prize in 1972 for his discovery of a selectional mechanism in the body's immune system, after 1987 began to put forward the Theory of Neural Group Selection (TNGS), which can account for the rapid emergence of higher order consciousness in an astonishingly short space of time. Instead of the many millions of years usually needed for evolutionary change, brain development has evolved over only tens or hundreds of thousands of years.

This develops concretely Engels' observation about the exponential growth of science and human knowledge. But more than that. The selection process suggested by Edelman involves the activity of perhaps 100 million primary neuronal units in the brain, each of which containing about 50 to 10,000 neurones, or nerve cells.

The properties of the neural microworld have shown an extraordinary capacity for adaptation in the human brain. The development of conscious thought involves “populations of nerve cells” whose special property of flexibility appears to be their non-specialisation. As Oxford neurologist Susan Greenfield explained in a lecture: “There is no magic ingredient for consciousness. It is not a particular quality but the quantity, and the structuring of the neural units which is crucial”. The consideration of how millions of undifferentiated units act in concert needs to be considered in relation to the movement of social classes, in particular the working class.

Experience in the TNGS theory, Sacks rightly says, “is not passive, a matter of ‘impressions’ or ‘sense data’ but active, and constructed by the organism from the start. Active experience ‘selects’ or ‘carves out’ a new, more complexly connected pattern of neuronal groups, a neuronal reflection of the individual experience of the child...”

PART II COMPUTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

In the 100th year since the death of Frederick Engels, the necessity for “dialectics as the science of universal inter-connection” has begun to be realised on a world scale, most obviously in the technological realm, in the explosive growth of the Internet.

In his outline of the general plan for *Dialectics of Nature*, Engels sets out the main laws of dialectics: “Transformation of quantity and quality – mutual penetration of polar opposites and transformation into each other when carried to extremes – development through contradiction or negation of

negation – spiral form of development.”

In studying the development of the technologies which have made the Internet possible we enter theoretical and practical territory unavailable to Marx and Engels.

OVERCOMING LIMITATIONS

In seeking to overcome limitations in the deployment of computing and telecommunications, specialists in information sciences (a sub-division of the science of cognition) are obliged to take advantage of advances in all of the specialist branches of the natural sciences (of which information science is a servant). They study the nature of processes and objects in the most general terms, and, in particular, to develop an understanding of the subject-object relation, the essential contradiction in the dialectics of cognition.

The “philosophy” or “paradigm” of “object-orientation” (OO) is sweeping through all parts of the industry, superseding all earlier technical approaches. Bill Gates’ entry into the Internet market through Windows 95 is founded upon this highest form of software development. At the heart of OO (originally formulated in the 1950s in the SIMULA language) are included: the process of abstraction, the identification of an object through the properties it has which differentiate it from all others, the reciprocal relations of this object with itself and with all others, the events in the life of the object which change its state (cause-effect).

The development of computing and telecommunications technologies in a haphazard, chaotic, anarchistic fashion became a problem for a capitalism driven by company mergers and take-overs. The use of different and incompatible hardware architecture, computer languages, database management systems, communications protocols, but above all different but frequently undefined systems of concepts meant that data could not easily - or even at all - be transferred between hitherto stand-alone systems. This limited the potential to overcome the reduction of surplus-value arising from the introduction of machinery (which increases the ratio of constant to variable capital) through greater socialisation of production.

The era of the mainframe stand-alone computer was ending as the proliferation of stand-alone PCs was beginning. By the mid 1980s major corporations had begun to attempt to build networks linking all the computers operated by a single company. In the 1990s the more advanced thinkers began to see the benefits of linking in their suppliers and customers. The Internet originally developed as part of the US

military and security communication system. Then it became a way of linking, predominantly, Computer Science Departments in Universities, mostly in the USA.

Just as the development of imperialism created the demand for new technologies and for more advanced forms of transportation and communication, so today the globalisation of the economy demands full exploitation of the communication media revolution.

Global communication establishes a **technologically mediated collective practice of cognition** which reveals the need for global standards establishing the scientific laws governing cognition as a social process. But the necessity for international standardisation offers two paths: co-operation, collaboration and collective action among all parties realisable in a socialist society, or in a continuing profit-driven capitalist society, subjugation to competition between companies, with Microsoft the front runner, and its owner already richer than most of the world’s countries.

In attempting to overcome the tendency for the rate of profit to fall, capitalism has had to encourage the scientific study of the process of cognition as the basis for a new division of labour and a further round of reduction in the amount of labour power necessary for the production of commodities. A new industrial revolution in the means of production affecting mental labour demands an objective analysis of the processes involving it analogous to that of physical labour (work-study, Taylorism) which was necessary for the initial introduction of machinery into capitalist production. This study is well advanced in university departments and in a myriad of small companies, working on the exploitation of these maturing technologies.

QUANTA AND MIND

Approaching the science of consciousness from another angle is mathematician Roger Penrose. He is concerned, like Sacks, with the development of theoretical frameworks which will take forward human understanding of the world. As a mathematician who made a major contribution to cosmological theory, he is looking for a way to integrate the theory of quantum mechanics and the classical Newtonian laws which explain cause and effect in the observable world. Penrose is trying to resolve the contradiction between these two law-governed systems through his deeper research into the functioning of the mind. He believes that microtubules within the brain may be an interface between the quantum and classical worlds.

In his view, the integration of the quantum

mechanical world view with classical physics will give rise to another revolution in human perception of the physical world. This would truly involve a negation process, whereby the older concepts are not mechanically separated from the newer quantum mechanics, but rather, preserved and sublated.

Penrose's theoretical challenge is a brilliant way of posing the problem of scientific method, especially for Marxists, since the laws of materialist dialectics hold true, as we have seen, in both the Newtonian world of classical physics and for quantum physics. The science of the future requires theories in which dialectics, instead of being revealed by the spontaneous process of scientific discovery, become a conscious instrument. Realising such a possibility requires a quantum leap for Marxists.

CONCLUSIONS

Engels wrote in *Dialectics of Nature*: "The development of the sciences proceeded with giant strides, and it might be said, gained force in proportion to the square of the distance (in time) from its point of departure. It was as if the world were to be shown that henceforth, for the highest product of organic matter, the human mind, the law of motion holds good that is the reverse of that for inorganic matter."

Human development in the 20th century has verified this observation to such an extent that it requires a qualitative leap in the science of dialectical logic.

Genuine scientific discovery itself is politically neutral. Scientists have little control over the social application of what they do. As Hawking has noted, criticising Wittgenstein, 20th century philosophers have failed to keep up with the advance of scientific

theories.

In the spirit of Engels, dialectical logic has to incorporate, for example, the laws of quantum mechanics and their proof that the subject changes the object under consideration. The significance for Marxism here is that the activity of the subject under certain conditions is decisive.

A key issue for Marxists is the development of consciousness in the working class movement. It is all too easy to fall prey to impressions of passivity, indifference and apparent acceptance of bourgeois propaganda. Concepts emerging from the study of far-from-equilibrium systems can help us to understand how class society can undergo sudden changes whereby stability gives way to "chaos". Recent events in France are a good example.

The Paul Davies viewpoint resurrects the fundamentalist absolutes of religion by dressing them up in scientific clothing. Post-modernism, and the convergence view, are polarities expressing the crisis within bourgeois philosophy.

Marxism has nothing to fear from science and everything to gain from the new discoveries. For Marx and Engels, the progress of science was a constant source of revolutionary optimism.

We cannot apprehend the complexity and speed of movement of modern capitalist society without negating from science concepts which enable logic to represent the new world disorder.

The end of Stalinism has dealt a devastating blow to those who turned Marxism from a method of discovery into a prescriptive dogma. This process provides ideal conditions for Marxists in the former Soviet Union, the USA, Britain, Japan, Cuba and many other countries to produce a revolutionary development in materialist dialectics. □

NOTES

1. Marx-Engels Collected Works (MECW) Vol.25. p.26. Lawrence and Wishart. 1987.
2. From the December 1995 issue of the London University student newspaper: "Science is heading towards the necessity for people to believe. Faith is belief unaffected by evidence. 'Theories of everything' are akin to this idea because they too need belief, as they can no longer be verified by observation....It is claimed that science is the new religion."
3. Neo-Thomism, as defined in *The Dictionary of Philosophy*, Progress 1984, English edn.1987.
4. *Philosophical Problems in Physical Science*, GDR, 1978. English ed. Marxist Educational Press, Univ. of Minnesota, 1980.
5. MECW, Vol. 25. *Dialectics of Nature*. p.356.
6. MECW, Vol 25. *Dialectics of Nature*. p.62.
7. Much of the material for this section is taken from MECW, Vol. 25.
8. MECW, Vol 25. *Dialectics of Nature*. p.492. Notes and Fragments.
9. *The Matter Myth*, P.Davies and J. Gribbin. Penguin. 1991.
10. *The New Physics*, ed P. Davies. CUP 1989.

11. *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*, Stephen Hawking. Bantam 1988.
13. *The Mind of God*, P. Davies, p.49. Penguin 1992.
14. MECW. *Anti-Duhring*. Part 1: Philosophy, P.111. See also Lenin's study of Hegel: "Something moves, not because it is here at one point of time and there at another, but because at one and the same point of time it is here and not here, and in this here both is and is not." Both Hegel and Engels re-phrase Heraclitus famous fragment: "We step into the same stream and yet we do not: we are and we are not." *Lenin's Collected Works*, Vol.38, p140. Progress Publishers.
15. Lenin Vol.38 Op Cit p 360.
16. See *On the Content and Correlation of the Concepts "Negation" and "Continuity"*, V.A.Ignatiev. Yearbook of the Philosophical Society of the USSR for 1986. English translation in *Marxist Monthly*, July 1988.
17. The second law of thermodynamics states that heat cannot be transferred from a colder to a hotter body within a system without net changes occurring within other bodies within that system. (Collins, 1994).
18. *Nature's Imagination*, Ed. John Cornwell. OUP 1995.

Globalisation - a crossroads for capital

Socialist Future is publishing this article as a contribution to a discussion about the globalisation of the world economy. The author demonstrates how this process has revolutionary implications. *Socialist Future* would not agree however, with his assertion that capitalism is only now reaching maturity or that the Soviet experience was a "detour".

The current malaise in political and economic affairs is often attributed to the global nature of the world economy. The "end of history" has even been reached for some. In order to understand this current conjuncture in history, however, we first need to understand the historical development of the prevalent economic system of the day – capitalism – and fully appreciate current as well as future developments in the organisation of the economy.

Changes in the modern organisation of work have facilitated both a broader and deeper international division of labour and we need to examine contemporary changes in the labour process and the globalisation of production. Linked with this, we also need to analyse the reasons for the collapse of "command socialism" in the former USSR.

As a first step, however, we need to understand how social change operates within different spheres of society in general. To do this we can use the conceptual distinction between the three main spheres of society or, if you like, "moments of social reproduction". These three spheres are the economy, the state and civil society.

As we know, the economy refers to those social relations dealing with the production, distribution and consumption of goods. In a capitalist market economy, the key roles we play are as producer and consumer, in aggregate, as it were, the "supply and demand" categories of bourgeois economics. In class based society, production is exploitative and based on unequal ownership of resources. Under capitalist social relations, labour power is commodified. In Western Europe, capitalism arises out of the more primitive forms of accumulation of simple commodity production. The commodification of

economic life leads to the development of commodity economic principles of work organisation and allows one to model determinate tendential laws.

In most Western European societies in the past three centuries, capitalism has arisen from the shell of simple commodity production. Private property, has been legitimised through such a metamorphosis. Capitalist market relations and capitalist private property relations have thus arisen within a system of economic trade conducive to such development. Hence capitalist social relations have been instilled with a much greater legitimacy than elsewhere.

The state, in those societies where the monopoly of physical coercion is held by a separate set of agents operating on behalf of the "social interest", covers those social relations dealing with the interaction between governed and governors, of the state élite and the population in general. This includes a range of political activities, from formal voting to withholding passive consent, formal protest and rebellion. As we all know from a range of perspectives: "To do nothing is a political act."

The state is premised on possession of the monopoly on physical coercion, but this is itself based on consent. Consent and coercion are linked dialectical opposites. Broadly speaking, we consent to our own coercion.

In Western Europe, then, capitalist social relations have enjoyed a real hegemony in both the economy and civil society, such that the coercive power of the state is rarely needed to maintain social order. As Gramsci implied, the "mature" capitalist state has been in the past century or so, as it were, hegemony armoured by coercion.

Civil society refers to those social relations outside

the state and the economy proper. From the family to the Church, interests and activity groups proliferate with the greater development of society. In the late 20th century struggles around sexuality, gender and race have played a significant role. With man no longer simply distinguishing himself from nature but actually "controlling" nature on a global scale in order to produce ever more commodities, it is hardly surprising that "green" politics has become one of the dominant themes of our age. Under modern capitalism the value system of civil society is under siege as commodity-economic principles expand into all areas of civil society, in perhaps the greatest form of "pollution" of them all. Human values of trust, honesty, sincerity and community become prey to the specifically capitalist notions of private profit, personal gain and unthinking material acquisition.

SOVIET RUSSIA

The first real attempt to operate an anti-capitalist model of socialist economics followed the lines laid down in Soviet Russia. As the name implies, the command economy was in essence an economic system designed for war, a permanent arms economy. Given the history of 20th century Russia and the Soviet Union, which needs no further elucidation here, it was quite understandable that the first socialist state should develop in this way as a virtual siege economy. This fortress mentality, however understandable, would in itself lead to a distorted allocation of resources towards the defence industries and give the nomenclatura within this sector unrivalled economic and political power.

From the beginning, then, the fusion of economic and political structures within the technostucture created a dual state, of party and planners, which operated, at best, in an uneasy alliance. As we are all well aware, the weaknesses of such an economic system were legion. The centralism implicit in such a system stifled the entire economy. The existence of the bureaucracy helped insulate planners from popular pressures, whilst Moscow and Leningrad were spatially remote from many centres of industry. The lack of development of a viable consumer goods sector and the concentration on military hardware in many ways forced people into illegal distribution - a feature conducive to the current Mafia capitalism on offer in Russia.

The burgeoning black market illustrated that market relationships would distribute goods which the state planners failed to. Corruption became endemic. Nevertheless the central ministries attempted to regulate everything - without success. Command socialism was originally to be based on

ownership by the people. Yet in practice state ownership became an ownership on behalf of the people. The same happened under the Morrisonian model of nationalisation. Rather than enfranchising the workers in ownership, they were effectively excluded from ownership - a feature not unattractive to the bourgeois elements within the labour movement in Britain and elsewhere. With no vested interest in the ownership of the firm, and no say over the means by which the product of their labour would be produced and sold, workers had little direct stake in improvements in the firm. Command socialism freed the working class from any stake in production at all, such that the management of firms became an exercise in atrophy and negativity, whilst all sides paid lip-service to the principles of communism.

This perverse mixture of paternalistic social engineering combined with grotesque corruption by a separate élite was nowhere more evident than in production. Within the systemic corruption of the state, the genuine commitment to full employment often had unanticipated effects. Distrusting both management and the centre, and fearing that any surplus that was produced would invariably be appropriated by the centre anyway, the ability of workers to maintain their existing working practices meant that new innovations in technology and working practices were difficult to implement. Without any lasting extra-economic imperative to improve efficiency, the system failed to grow at rates comparable to the West and fell into a backward spiral of decline.

CENTRAL RULE

In the sphere of the state, the old Tsarist inheritance was clear. Central rule in St. Petersburg and Moscow was replicated after the revolution. The stifling nature of the ministries and the civil service lampooned by Gogol and other writers, was apparent after, as much as before, the revolution. The substitution of an economic class by a political élite was a decisive mistake. Set above everyone else, and set apart to maintain equality for everyone else, they themselves assumed the privileges of a self-perpetuating élite.

The revolution was not simply the beginning of the overthrow of capitalism - serfdom was only formally abolished in Russia in 1863 - but took place in a country in profound crisis. The revolution was not, as many felt, the start of the revolution against capitalism but that of a defeated country with an archaic political structure discredited by the war and riven with conflicts produced by the

unpopularity of its own ruling class. This conjuncture was brilliantly taken advantage of by Lenin. The absence of simple commodity production in Russia provided infertile soil for the widespread development of capitalist market relations. In a country based largely on agrarian values, communal property interests in the villages combined with an unpopular feudal hierarchy, private property had no immediate or universal legitimacy. The expropriation implicit in capitalist market relations was practised over a much shorter time period with obvious consequences.

The bureaucracy of the command economy stifled enterprise. All decisions were referred through the planners. Similarly, firms faced only soft budget constraints with few incentives to innovate. Glasnost and perestroika were an attempt from within the state élite to liberalise this straitjacket, but political reform from above would always threaten a dismantling rather than a loosening of the system.

STATE REGULATION

Under fear of Western incursion, even after World War II – the “highpoint” of Soviet society – the state attempted to regulate all activities. The Church was carefully tolerated and monitored and non-party youth culture was often state sponsored to act as a safety valve to prevent political protest.

Newer social movements in the West – gay rights, the womens’ movement and the like – were treated with suspicion, indifference and even outright hostility. The embryonic green movement in the Soviet Union was seen as akin to treachery. The lack of development of civil society in the Soviet Union demonstrates the futility of the state trying to regulate all aspects of life.

This does not mean the USSR was without merit, nor does it imply that all the problems it faced were easy to anticipate or resolve. What is clear is that predictions of capitalism’s rapid demise in 1917 were premature. In trying to be supportive to an abortive and bastardised model of socialism, nevertheless, socialist thought willingly ran into a conceptual cul-de-sac. The problems of providing a genuine and lasting alternative to capitalist society have not diminished with the passage of time but the clear failure of command socialism has graphically illustrated which roads to socialism are paved with good intentions but little else.

The fear of Eastern Europe undoubtedly led capitalist interests to cede influence to the defensive demands of trade unions and social democratic parties under the New Jerusalem of welfare capitalism. Growth in the world economy allowed

trade unions more influence at the point of production as the next long wave of growth began.

Nevertheless, the often radical rhetoric of labour movements in the 1960s and 1970s could not disguise their essentially defensive tactics and objectives. The eclipse of the USSR and the globalisation of capital now means that the stalemate between capital and labour has been broken for good to the decisive advantage of the former. The Soviet experience provided only a detour rather than an alternative terminus in history.

Capitalism is premised on a commodity economic system. This does not mean that all market relationships are necessarily capitalistic. Capitalism is one form of market system in which the means of production are themselves owned by a small minority of the population and labour power has become a commodity. It is premised on a system of free wage labour: the mass of the population are free to sell their labour and not free not to sell their labour! In Western Europe, capitalism developed from feudalism via simple commodity production, the combination of a yeoman peasantry in the countryside and a skilled artisan workforce in the towns. Unlike in Asia, capitalist private property grew out of this system organically and, in some areas even developed through evolutionary rather than revolutionary means.

The first circuit of capital M-M¹ is better known as usury. Originally outlawed by religion and the state in the Middle Ages, there was a gradual change in the attitude of the state towards usury. In order to finance the costs of war in the early modern period, the state needed to borrow money from private financial interests. Finance is perhaps the most “footloose” of the three circuits of capital and hence the most easily internationalised. By the mid-20th century, financial crises could no longer be contained in any one state and, as the 1929 Crash demonstrated, nor could the negative by-products of accelerating financial internationalisation. By the 1990s, the financial markets of the world were truly globalised across national boundaries and different time zones.

Financial deregulation by the state was ostensibly the means by which each state would compete for a larger share of this “footloose” business in foreign exchange, derivatives and bonds - to name but a few products. The securitisation of all financial products and services followed closely, but as the Exchange Rate Mechanism debacle of 1992 illustrated, globally deregulated speculators and markets do not like flawed and partial attempts by nation states to re-regulate. Some speculators felt that they alone could not only move mountains but markets too, as

the Baring's experience illustrates. It would not be unreasonable to talk about truly globalised financial markets and firms being an achievable vision within a decade.

Indeed the securitisation and globalisation of financial markets has allowed the unprecedented growth of fictitious capital. The objective basis of value, which is labour power, often seems to be the poor relation in the apparent dominance of subjective value by finance. In a sense, though, it is the true destiny of capital to invert the real economic relation into a virtual world of ostensibly subjective derived commodity values characterised by the permanent revolution of permanent volatility.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The second circuit of capital – merchant capital – is generally characterised as the buying cheap and selling dear of commodities. This form of capital became critically important during the early modern period in Western Europe. Merchant capital had, of course, been present in most civilisations to a greater or lesser extent. In international trade, mercantilism gradually became the order of the day, with certain key goods such as textiles being traded internationally. Trade between nations had been an important purveyor of ideas and culture for thousands of years. Only by the 20th century, however, did the percentage of goods traded internationally reach anything like a significant amount for the leading capitalist states.

The internationalisation of the firm has, however, facilitated a truly global trade in resources. The old international division of labour was based on the asymmetric specialisation of “first” and “third” worlds trading manufactures for primary products. This is being broken up by a new international division of labour and the globalisation of commodity trade within the internal division of labour. Rather than simply reflect the older imperialist vision of a civilised “core” and uncivilised “periphery”, the new international division of labour reflects the conscious economic planning and imperialism of the multi-national firm operating against the backdrop of the international “anarchy” of production and commodification.

Global firms plan on an international scale; the economic anarchy of this scale of production makes it impossible for this process to operate in an even way. The law of uneven development operates on an ever wider scale at an ever more frenetic pace. The overwhelming majority of items that we consume are commodified and the majority of them are traded internationally. The first two circuits of capital are,

to all purposes, almost completely commodified under capitalist market relations. One or two goods remain non-commodified and still more remain, as it were, simple commodities; but these are largely relics of days gone by.

The third circuit of capital, that of capital as a productive form, is undeniably the most important. The first two circuits can be present in pre-capitalist social formations; indeed they may well accelerate the break-up of previous modes of primitive accumulation. With the onset of a capitalism as a productive form, the development of capital is complete. The agricultural revolution freed the population from the land through enclosure, to become the workers of early industrial capitalism. This was, however, a social rather than a technological revolution, though technological improvements and the gains in productivity that go with them made this process far easier to legitimise.

The historically progressive nature of capitalism witnessed the rapid development of technology related to the organisation of work. Richard Arkwright would become famous for a number of reasons, but for our purposes he is perhaps the first key proponent of machine-paced production and the deskilling of craft labour. The power of the master craftsmen was broken. The cumulative division of work and the continuing break up of skills into jobs and thence jobs into discrete tasks would then proceed apace. Taylorism codified such principles into the science of work organisation.

TIME MANAGEMENT

By the start of the 20th century, Fordism allowed the machine pacing of work and mass production on an unprecedented scale. “Time management” became crucial to all leading capitalist enterprises as the time expended in production of commodities – the ultimate source of all value – could increasingly be mediated, if not controlled, by capital.

The development of computer-based production in the late 20th century, however, marked the decisive shift in the capitalist management of resources. Until this century, most labour had been subject to only rudimentary control by capital and virtually all conceptual or white collar labour subject only to personalised and highly fragmented supervision. The old petit-bourgeoisie, traditionally safe in professional occupations, would zealously guard the bastions of their autonomy. With the advent of “computerfactory”, virtually all conceptual workers are subject to the clinical and comprehensive control of capital. Similarly, all will be amenable to competition from the international trading of

conceptual services.

Now all white collar occupations are under threat of radically different working conditions and employment prospects. All white collar work can be broken down into constituent elements, and gradually acquired as an asset of the firm. The skills that the Luddites feared were being destroyed by the new industrial mechanisation of the 19th century were real enough. Now the virtual world of cyberspace and the Internet will be the medium by which the destruction and transfer of conceptual skills to capital takes place. Computer based scientific management will allow, moreover, the machine pacing of white collar operatives on a scale once considered inconceivable. The decisive shift in the management of white collar work is taking place.

MONITORING THE WORKFORCE

Many companies are now developing tracker devices in order to systematise the location of all personnel at all times. This allows every second of every hour of every day of every worker to be monitored. Software is being developed to scientifically monitor the performance of personnel and move towards individualised contracts and performance related pay. Tasks requiring personal interaction can be accomplished through video conferencing facilities rather than sales representatives. Teaching could be accomplished in the future through individual work stations in any environment – the key technical obstacle being, at the moment, the lack of an oral interaction between user and tutor. The booking arrangements of the largest British airline for most domestic flights in the UK are carried out in India via a satellite link.

Computers are of course capable of measuring the quantitative performance of every operative to a micro-second, and can log every mistake – for life. Skills can, moreover, be used in parallel – such as computer aided design – a clear technological improvement. Skills can, however, also be transferred to computer memory and the conceptual labour dispossessed in a manner akin to the work of the Luddites in the 19th century. On the horizon - at the moment - lies the prospect of the computer assembly line, CAL, and computer paced work. The automation of conceptual work, through simulation and intelligent replication, becomes a real prospect.

The first signs of this revolution in white collar labour are now with us and being developed apace. The proletarianisation of such work has already been well developed in a number of professions, most notably and ironically the public services. This is currently being extended throughout the financial

services sector, with casualisation and delayering the operative words of the day. Temporary and segmented work does not need permanent contracts. Modern capitalism, through the control of work, no longer needs middle management. Scientific management has, ironically, been applied to management too! The “tall” corporate hierarchies of the 1960s and 1970s have, in their own time, given way to the flatter hierarchies of “lean production”. The present development of multi-media interactive materials and the information super highway will revolutionise virtually all white collar jobs in the next two decades.

GATT has liberalised trade in services and there is every reason to assume that the trading of conceptual services on the Internet will rapidly accelerate. Every conceptual labourer in every part of the globe will potentially be linked up and each and every one of them will be capable of being “undercut” by someone else. Structural unemployment will no longer be the prerogative of the uneducated and poor. In a world of asymmetric spatial inequalities and global capitalist interests, the progressive “equalisation” of living standards will of course be a levelling down rather than a levelling up. The present young generation in the OECD countries will be unlikely to achieve the standard of living achieved by their parents. This is truly a qualitatively new phenomenon. The implication is that in many ways the current age in which we live is the highpoint of the old order, the hubris before the nemesis, the *fin de siècle* of an age of exploitation.

UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

These structural changes in the organisation of work are riven with contradictions. For each phase of capitalist development, whether it be the revolution in power in the post-Napoleonic period, or the development of heavy industry in the Mid-Victorian depression, or the growth of the car industry in the 1930s and the development of computers and computerfactory in the present recession, capitalist accumulation is never stable and steady but a contradictory process proceeding in an uneven way. The increasing of the organic composition of capital of the new sunrise industries removes living labour from the production process and replaces it with the dead concretised labour of machines and, more recently, computers. The speed with which labour is shed from the old industries is never replicated in the new. The skills required in the new sectors have rarely been conducive to the transfer of old labour to new jobs. In most cases, new industries grow up in spatial areas separate from the old. In this way,

capitalist growth and decline proceeds in an unplanned and contradictory way.

Looking at the labour process from the opposite vantage point – that of capital – it is clear that we are reaching the highpoint of capitalist organisation. Public corporations and services, mutual societies and co-operatives all perform functions over and above those required by the strictly commodity economic principles of profit maximisation. But it is equally clear that the rapidly globalising and deregulated economic environment of late 20th century capitalism is infertile soil for such institutions.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRM

The concentration and centralisation of capital has developed production and exchange beyond national confines and frontiers on an ever-increasing scale. From 1985 to 1989, asset value of mergers and acquisitions rose from \$300 billion to \$1,000 billion. Past attempts at regulating the vagaries of the capitalist market within national boundaries and regulations are, themselves, increasingly fraught with contradictions. The development of the firm, as the basic unit of capital, has proceeded apace in the past two centuries. The creation of limited liability and the joint stock company liberated firms from dependence on one particular owner. The divorce between ownership and control of capital distanced the interests of the owner from the actual running of the firm and allowed the full professionalisation of organisation and the use of the key techniques of scientific management.

Recent developments in work organisation have applied scientific management to the process of management itself such that the real subordination of both manual and conceptual labour is almost with us. The globalisation of the firm, similarly, freed the firm from regulation by the state and allowed a globalisation of the division of labour within the planned confines of the firm. Production for profit now enjoys a truly global span, beyond the control of any one nation state with powers of control beyond those ever dreamt of by the founding fathers of bourgeois economics. The history of capitalism is thus one as much of cyclical crises as much as structural decline. The phase we are witnessing and are part of now is one in which the structural components of the present crisis overshadow the cyclical nature of capitalist crisis.

The total world dominance of capitalism as a system is indicative that capitalism is now enjoying its highpoint. All three circuits of capital are, to greater or lesser extents, globalised. The total

commodification of labour, skill and labour time will mark the high water mark of capitalism in its own relative time. The firm, as an institutional bearer of capital, has metamorphosed into the modern global corporation.

The logic of this is inexorable. Spatially footloose capital no longer needs expensive and skilled labour in the first world. This ends with the globalisation of the industrial firm and the role of new technology. A new global spatial division of labour has been internalised within the firm. A new international division of labour (NIDL) has arisen. New technology frees production from technological and spatial constraints. The deskilling has become absolute, as it were, and the application of the organisation of capitalist principles to work universal. Hence it is clear that the existence of full employment, so long taken for granted in Western Europe, is increasingly under question. The changing division of labour around the world means that full employment at a standard of living conducive to human dignity is no longer tenable in the developed world.

The shift towards deregulation of labour markets makes the former “family wage” earned by one “breadwinner” laughably anachronistic; the “iron law of wages” resurfaces on an international level. Most developed economies have unemployment of around 10 to 15% - although the means by which such figures are calculated differ widely. The continuing application of new technology to manual and conceptual labours will only accelerate this still further. We are now entering an age of permanent structural unemployment. Indeed the forces and relations of production are now coming into clear conflict. The private ownership of the means of production is incompatible with full employment for the majority of the working population.

CONTAINING STRUGGLES

For the first time in perhaps several centuries, future generations cannot automatically expect to attain their parents' standard of living. This decisively upsets the equilibrium of commodity economic principles. Capitalism's stability has been premised on the ability of a commodity based economy to contain sectoral and syndicalist struggles within the point of production. In a commodity economy, very few exist off the product of their own labour. The product of our labour is mediated by exchange and we all consume the product of each other's labour. The social division of labour introduces the principle of specialisation, the basis of modern economics.

By the same token, however, this simple fact has

crucial implications for sectoral struggles, for each of us operates in the economic sphere as both consumer and producer. These two roles often contradict one another. It is not unreasonable for as workers, to assume that we will maintain our craft or "professional" autonomy. Our instincts are undoubtedly "producer-led" – we prefer high wages and good working conditions. But as consumers, we prefer to buy cheaper goods.

CONSUMER POWER

Capitalism, through deskilling and reducing the amount of living labour in commodities, exploits the worker but, by making products cheaper, enhances the consumption power of consumers.

Struggles by individual groups of workers to prevent the adoption of new technology, like containerisation in the docks, or to raise wages like the car workers in the 1970s – can have a major impact on the government of the day but such struggles rarely activate the working class as a whole. That is because such struggles themselves are invariably not anti-systemic struggles but usually defensive rearguard operations mounted against often inevitable change. Such trade union consciousness is only partially socialist, and in the UK, influenced by sentiments of paternalism, sexism, racism and even Victorian liberalism.

Workers in struggle have failed not only because of betrayal from above by the bureaucracy of trade union structures, but also because, under a capitalist commodity economy, all branches of the social division of labour are subject to the pressure of the law of value. There can be no islands of syndicalism within a sea of capitalism.

Only in exceptional cases is the coercive arm of the capitalist state needed to quell disruption. At times of periodic crisis, where mass unemployment results from the expulsion of living labour from a number of sectors of production, a significant minority of the working classes can be radicalised. At these times the armour of coercion is present, but this is the exception rather than the rule.

This equilibrium between our contradictory interests as both consumers and producers is now being undermined in a major way. Large sections of the "developed world" can no longer anticipate living standards to rise automatically. To attain the previous generation's living standards will be success indeed. The existence of permanent structural employment will undermine the previous stability of the past half century. The term "underclass" is already widely spoken. The proletarianisation of the middle layers and the

globalisation of labour markets will make any "culture of contentment" a transitory phenomenon indeed. One can no longer understand the future through the eyes of the past. We are at a crossroads in history and nearing rapidly a revolutionary rupture in real historical time.

In civil society, too, capitalist rationality has achieved a cultural hegemony unparalleled by any previous social system in any previous civilisation. The application of modern technology through mass communications has brought the intrinsic values of capitalism to the hearth of every household. From the cradle to the grave, the children of the new millennium are subject to an incessant cultural conditioning. The ideas of the ruling class are, everywhere, the rationality ruling the vast majority in practically all societies. The Hobbesian dictum of "omnium contra omnes" – the war of all against all – has, when transposed to the economic sphere, become the *raison d'être* of all economic life.

So it would seem capitalism enjoys an unprecedented hegemony in both civil society and the economy. Such a society hardly needs the armour of the state to guard the vested privileges of the bourgeoisie. In a purely capitalist society, in the abstract, the sole functions of the state are to provide a secure basis for the safeguarding of property rights and the intergenerational transfer of property. The actual historical development of capitalism has occurred within the framework of powerful and competitive nation states based as much on ethno-linguistic communities as upon economic and specifically class relations.

SUPERFLUOUS STATE

The nation state is, at the present time, neither necessary, nor even functional for, capitalism. In many ways the nation state is a dinosaur. The state rests on formal control of the means of physical coercion but this in itself requires the consent of the mass of the population. Both non-commodity and simple commodity relationships need a set of legal safeguards – based around the law of contract – for production to occur. Non-economic and non-class relations between individuals and groups in civil society have, similarly, spawned huge areas of both civil and criminal law. Capitalist relations inject a different set of legislative inputs into this legal web and assert an ever more powerful "spin" on events.

Capitalism's hegemony has only rarely been threatened in the past. This is hardly surprising given that it is only now reaching "maturity". Yet its apparent strength is also, however, its own weakness. The old politics is dying. Indeed the

boundaries of the old nation state are no longer coterminous with economic boundaries. Within this situation exist two concurrent and partially contradictory processes.

First of all, the globalisation of production and exchange, as we have seen, has proceeded apace. Most financial markets and products are almost entirely globalised. The overwhelming majority of the production of use values has been commodified and, of this, the overwhelming majority is traded internationally. The deregulation and privatisation of old state monopolies has been enshrined in the philosophy of GATT/WTO and has been gradually extended from manufactures to services and intellectual property.

COSMOPOLITAN ÉLITES

The élites of most major transnational firms are themselves highly cosmopolitan and the mass media have facilitated an ever greater homogenisation of tastes through advertising. Global products and brands, albeit a minority of total consumption, are now a daily reality for most consumers. In this sense, capitalism has performed a historically progressive role in breaking down the barriers to internationalisation. Countries that trade heavily with one another, which co-own industries, are unlikely to declare war upon one another.

The eclipse of the nation state has been only too apparent in a number of spheres. In the economic sphere, the shift of focus has been towards the rise of the trading bloc. A United States of Europe, the Pacific Rim, US, Canada and NAFTA and the old Comecon countries are possible candidates. Of course there are contradictions between different elements and sub-groupings in these larger agglomerations but as conceptually discrete units, the era of the trading bloc is undoubtedly with us today.

The globalisation of trade enhances the contradictions both between and within trading blocs. The continuing US deficit with the Pacific Rim and the migration of capital from Europe to the "Little Dragons" are manifestations of the former. The rising levels of unemployment within Europe and the heightening fears over crime and social tensions are manifestations of the latter. Such phenomenon may well stimulate calls for protectionism from labour/non-cosmopolitan capital, but their influence on the state is highly muted, as evidenced by the recent NAFTA deal.

In a world of powerful and competing trading blocs, there is always the fear that economic rivalry will result in neo-imperialism. Globalisation and

regionalisation exist, within the economic sphere, in an uneasy tension. Such tensions in the economic sphere might well give rise to more extreme sentiments within civil society and the state. Indeed the centralisation of economic power can generate the desire for the localisation of political power.

The centripetal economic effects of the world market are generating and reopening powerful sentiments focused on local community politics. Many of these developments are contingent on the concrete mobilisation of sentiments into political movements. In the long term, however, the political reflects the economic. Hence the change in the form of the state is inevitable. A broader European super-state is inevitable in the next century, though it might well be achieved in a haphazard and contradictory manner. Separate national customs in civil society perhaps remain the main barrier to a rapid realignment. A single currency will prefigure attempts at the introduction of a common economic policy.

In those areas of the world economy most deleteriously affected by the shift in production and technology, such as the UK and US, the decline in production/employment (in addition to cuts in defence spending in the US) has generated major problems for the state. Recessions generate a cyclical reduction in revenues and an expansion in the expenditure of the state, resulting in a net decline in public finances. There is much evidence to support the contention that the switch to deregulated labour markets has introduced a significant structural element of fiscal indebtedness into this equation. Low wage and temporary contracts generate low tax revenues to the state. Regressive tax switching policies act as a disincentive to spending, whilst concentrating higher disposable incomes within the ranks of the affluent third tends to reduce the multiplier effect of national income injections.

CUTTING TAXATION

Attempts by market liberal governments to reduce the marginal direct tax rates results in lower tax receipts. In Britain, public borrowing remains at over 5% of GDP. Although welfare spending in the UK is lower as a percentage of GDP than in other leading European states, the absolute burden of expenditure on social security cannot be ignored. Indeed the percentage spent by the state is still as high as ever, largely to contain crisis tendencies implicit in a rapid contraction of state expenditure. And the next item on the New Right agenda is to abolish and/or privatise the welfare state, the

corollary of the last 20 years of policy.

This return to the classic liberal night-watchman state is necessitated by dictates of the global market place. In an era of the globalisation of capital, and growth of the firm beyond the boundaries of the nation state, capitalist interests are increasingly dominant in all spheres. In an often abortive attempt to attract the re-capitalisation of declining areas, nation states have deregulated and privatised swathes of industry, consigning yet more former activities of state to the dictates of the market and private profit. From Moscow to Madrid, the last two decades has witnessed the virtual convergence of all state policies towards this model.

In order to legitimise their remaining functions with the general public, however, most states have found it increasingly difficult to entirely remove all the social protection and legislation of the past 50 years. The functions of the nation state are clearly over-determined and the nation state in crisis.

EUROPE AND CONVERGENCE

At the moment, within Western Europe, most social democratic parties are trying to take refuge in a contradictory mix of limited social protectionism combined with a "tight" monetary policy. Controlled by the Bundesbank – the future "independent" Central European Bank – the contradictions between this eclectic cocktail will become increasingly apparent after the convergence criteria for a single currency are met. Even at the present time, it is quite clear that the Social Chapter is the sweetener for the more substantive bitter pill of permanent monetary deflation. In a sense, the move towards a common Europe is historically progressive and undoubtedly inevitable, but, under a dominant capitalist dynamic, such a development will contain the seeds for consequent disunity.

To the left of this grouping lie calls for a co-ordinated European-wide reflation to reduce the 15 million of so unemployed in Europe. The dominant assumption held here – that unemployment is broadly the result of a deficiency of aggregate demand – is oversimplistic, if not erroneous. The structural changes at work in the world economy cannot be ameliorated indefinitely by a resort to the bankrupt prescriptions of neo-Keynesian demand management. The structural forces at work on the supply side of the economy are qualitatively different in scope and breadth from all previous economic revolutions. Indeed in the UK, since 1992, a (forced) competitive devaluation through expulsion from the ERM and an average growth rate of over 3% per annum has resulted in an accelerating

decline of full-time permanent employment. By ILO definitions, over 3.7 million are unemployed in the UK. Even in growth sectors such as telecommunications are experiencing a rapid shake-out of labour. Jobless growth is now a structural feature of the world economy. Keynesian prescriptions cannot cope with such a world in which the link between aggregate demand and aggregate employment has been severed almost completely.

It is becoming clear that our present economic system is incompatible with full employment. Keynesianism at best could only deal with cyclical demand deficient employment. Today's crisis is one of structural unemployment throughout the Western world, caused by changes in the international division of labour, new forms of technology and new patterns of work place subordination. Beset by the collapse of a bastardised form of socialism and of the apparent success of modern capitalism, socialist parties in the West have renewed their Labourite convictions through recourse to bourgeois ideology. The death of Clause IV marks the end of both state communist and welfare capitalist options.

The ruling ideas of the bourgeoisie have become the ruling ideology of the entire political spectrum and parliamentary government is more than ever the "ruling executive of the bourgeoisie".

This would, of course, be a premature obituary for socialism though. Indeed the future prospects for socialism have never been better. The current real and apparent strength of capitalism is the product of 300 years of development. Capitalism's own commodity economic principles have reached their absolute limit both in spatial, institutional and organisational terms. Capitalist rationality is omnipresent but capitalism is far from omnipotent. Its current success will, undoubtedly, accelerate the development of its own internal contradictions as never before. □

Driving jobs to destruction

Expensive television advertisements, with their production costs running into millions, belie the underlying state of the automotive industry. Even the mighty German industry is in trouble and the European car industry as a whole is in crisis.

Just one day after the German government announced a 50-point action programme to increase investment and create new jobs, the powerful German motor industry association (VDA) announced that 100,000 jobs could be lost in the car and components industry by the end of the decade. Unemployment is expected to break the 4 million threshold - more than 1 in 10 of the workforce.

Erika Emmerich, president of the VDA, has called on the government to cut social costs for companies. Early retirement, which has wrecked the finances of the Federal labour office and the state pension scheme, are the employers' targets in their bid to reduce high labour costs.

Within the last few months conglomerate Daimler Benz has broken up AEG, cut thousands of jobs at its aerospace division, Dasa, and pulled the plug on Fokka, the Dutch aircraft manufacturer, of which it was the major shareholder. Mercedes Benz is one of the corporation's few remaining profitable sectors. But even the luxury car market is not without its difficulties; as chairman Helmut Werner noted, the industry is "heading into a very difficult year".

Against a background of poor growth prospects Fiat has also warned shareholders of a difficult year ahead. They blame political uncertainty for holding back European demand. As with other big European manufacturers, Fiat is internationalising production and preparing to take on the unions in the coming pay negotiations to hold down wages.

The Japanese car industry, though world leader in developing automated production techniques, is also facing difficulties. Japanese companies, whose investment strategies were driven by the need to placate trading partners and avoid high production costs, are now looking toward emerging markets in Asia and Latin America. Their home market is

depressed by debt and financial insecurity.

Ford Chief Executive Alex Trotman, has postponed his "Ford 2,000" project. It was to turn Ford into the first truly global company, but with the US and European economies slowing and consumers on both sides of the Atlantic worried by debt and job insecurity, there is little chance of sales picking up.

The huge cost of launching the Mondeo (known as the Contour in the US) and the high-tech, high-cost Taurus, has hit Ford's profitability. The Mondeo, the company's first "world car", as they call it, cost \$6 billion to develop and the Taurus around \$3 billion. Shareholders are not impressed.

The company had to fight hard for every sale of the new models, offering massive \$600 discounts. The cost of launching new models and off-loading old models is spiralling out of control, and the market place is becoming increasingly cut throat. It is a buyers' market, with every company offering an ingenious array of financial incentives and leasing schemes to get consumers to part with their money.

To add to the industry's miserable outlook, more and more manufacturers, particularly from the newly industrialising nations, are aggressively entering the global market. Daiwa, the South Korean industrial conglomerate, is the most successful. It has dispensed with expensive networks of dealerships, which enables it to compete aggressively on price.

Sales of Korean cars soared by 69% in 1995 and Malaysia's Proton brand also increased its share of the market. Daiwa already has a sizeable manufacturing presence in eastern Europe where labour costs are considerably lower than in the west.

In response to this threat, manufacturers from the advanced industrial nations have begun to cut jobs and production costs. Ford plans to reduce the number of its suppliers 2,300 to 800 and, following the Japanese example, is developing stronger ties with those that remain, to "influence" them to cut their "costs", by which they mean jobs.

Argentina and Brazil have recently announced a regional trade deal that will open up their economies

and fulfil an ambition to become "a world centre of automobile construction" as Dorothea Werneck, Brazil's trade and industry minister, put it. They are seeking to expand locally-based manufacturing industry by putting in place protectionist measures that will limit imports from countries outside their Mercosur customs union. Critics of the deal argue it will blackmail multinational vehicle makers into setting up locally-based manufacturing plants. Competition will be so tough that domestic companies, such as Argentina's Sevel, will be wiped out. Sevel is now threatening to pull out of Argentina altogether.

Brazil, with a population of about 160 million has only one car for every 11 people, compared with one for every 1.3 people in the US. The huge potential for growth is tempting the big international companies to the area. Sales will, of course, depend on the country's economic performance as a whole.

Undeterred, many foreign vehicle manufacturers, including Ford, Volkswagen, Renault, General Motors, Fiat, Chrysler, Hyundai and Toyota, have already announced plans for \$13 billion investment.

Britain is trying to prise open the huge Chinese market. The Department of Trade believes China will be the world's biggest automotive parts market by 2005 and they have recently negotiated a deal there worth \$30 billion by the end of the decade.

Increased use of robots in production lines has proved of limited success in driving down production costs. The cost of setting up an automated production line is enormous, and they are less flexible than human labour power when adaptations are needed for new models. Britain's manufacturers are increasingly turning to low paid,

temporary workers and short term contracts as a part of their strategy to "improve" workforce flexibility. The number of temporary workers has almost doubled in the last five years, increasing by 350,000 (30.2%) between 1990 and 1995.

As production methods become increasingly more efficient, under the pressure of competition, and more manufacturers enter the global market, the problems of massive over-production make further rationalisation and job losses inevitable.

That the industry has escaped wholesale rationalisation, through mergers and acquisitions, is to the credit of the working class. Governments and manufacturers have resisted addressing over-capacity "because of fears of labour unrest, and governments have exerted pressure to minimise politically sensitive redundancies", says Haig Simonian in the Financial Times [15/2/95]. He goes on to say that "tough job protection laws in many continental countries means that the UK has borne the brunt of redundancies".

The big three Japanese companies, Toyota, Honda and Nissan want to increase their share of the European market, to 650,000 vehicles a year by 1999. Rising levels of car production across the world economy are unsustainable in terms of both natural resources and environmental pollution.

The car industry is one of the most important to national economies because it accounts for as much as one sixth of a country's gross domestic product and is therefore a major provider of jobs. But continuing private ownership means that over-capacity will produce huge job losses and the pauperisation of those families dependent on the earnings of car workers. □

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The road to Kurdistan

The legitimate struggle for self-determination of the Kurdish people is brutally opposed by the Turkish state with the support of the major powers. A recent offer by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) of a ceasefire and a political solution has been ignored by the Turkish regime. The author traces the origins of the PKK as a national liberation movement.

In World War I the Ottoman Empire collapsed and a large part of its territory was occupied by Allied Powers. After 1918 Armistice the Allied Powers and the Turks disputed the future status of Kurdistan. The Turkish bourgeoisie, having taken over the state apparatus left by the Ottomans, took control of a large part of Kurdistan. The British occupied and controlled the whole of south Kurdistan including the oil rich area of Mosul and Kirkuk. Antep, Urfa and Maras were occupied by the French.

The Treaty of Sèvres in 1920 provided for the creation of a state of Kurdistan but Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the Turkish leader, refused to ratify it. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, signed by Turkey, Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia, omitted Kurdistan altogether. It carved Kurdistan into four parts. Eastern Kurdistan remained in Iran, southern Kurdistan went to Iraq, south-west Kurdistan to Syria, and middle and north-west Kurdistan, the largest part, covering 250,000 square kilometres, in the new Turkish Republic.

The Kemalist state denied the existence of the Kurdish nation, a policy inextricably linked to the *Turanianism* and Pan-Turkism - the principle of "one people, one market".

All Kurdish sources of reference were destroyed, and the Kurdish language was banned; even the word Kurdistan was illegal. The Kurdish people were dispersed throughout Turkey and their land expropriated by the Forced Residency Act of 1930.

This situation was further aggravated by the "Turkish History Theses" of Ataturk which attributed to the Turkish race the origin of all civilisations and relegated the Kurdish people to the status of "mountain Turks" whose Turkish ethnicity had been deformed.

The occupation of Kurdistan took ferocious forms. Massacres and expulsions became part of everyday life. There were 27 revolts and attempts at resistance between 1920 and 1940. The Dersim uprising in 1937-38 was crushed in a particularly bloody way.

The PKK's history goes back as far as 1973. At

that time Abdullah Öcalan was studying political science at Ankara university researching the Kurdish issue and world developments.

Other Kurds were also studying the same subjects. Some were in Turkish political parties, others met in the group "Associations of the East". What they had in common was a belief that the Kurdish question could be resolved through reforms. Their efforts were limited to cultural activities. By contrast, Öcalan approached the question from a historical and political point of view. He put the Kurdish question on the agenda in a 1972 lecture on constitutional problems courageously entitled *In Turkey there is not one nation; there is also the Kurdish nation*.

The Turkish Left tried to stop this Kurdish-based offensive. There began a massive ideological battle. The PKK fought for the liberation of Kurdistan but rejected national chauvinism and racism.

Group members held a meeting in the Dikmen district of Ankara which 25 people attended. This group agreed to begin political work in Kurdistan, starting in the larger towns. The first activities were amongst the youth in schools. Since there was very little written material, political ideas were spread by word of mouth. The work amongst the youth had an big impact on the workers and peasants.

In 1977, at the premises of the Union of Architects and Engineers, the results of this work were assessed at a meeting with 100 Kurdish representatives. Other left-wing organisations were also invited as observers. After this meeting the leading cadres were sent to various towns in Kurdistan.

The Turkish state and the secret service watched the group's activities with great concern. The Turkish secret police, MIT, set about the assassination of the group's leaders. On 15 May 1977, Haki Karer was killed in Antep by a member of the secret police posing as a revolutionary. This political assassination had a profound effect, showing that the Turkish state would not allow any constitutional and legislative reforms in relation to

Kurdistan. With the murder of Antep, the Turkish government started the war.

In the autumn of 1977 Öcalan published the manifesto *The Road to the Kurdish Revolution* which became the ideological framework of the PKK and the basis of its struggle to build the national liberation movement. The work carried out under the name of "Revolutionaries of Kurdistan", had an ever-increasing influence on the Kurdish people.

This was when the attacks by the Turkish state and the fascist organisation, the MHP, which was in league with the state, began. At the same time the feudal Kurdish landowners, whose power was undermined by the growth of the organisation, also tried to destroy it. On 19 May 1978, Halil Cavgun, a much-loved Kurdish leader, was murdered by a group of thugs hired by the landowners. This led to an intense struggle against the local landowners which gained a lot of support.

FOUNDING CONGRESS

On November 27, 1978 the founding congress of the PKK was held under extremely difficult conditions in Fis, a village in the Lice district of Diyarbakir province, attended by 25 people. The programme was adopted and central and regional organisational structures established. Öcalan became general secretary.

The founding of the PKK was a beacon of hope for the people of Kurdistan, who had no organised representatives and suffered under heavy colonial repression. That is why the Kurdish people rallied round the PKK in such a short time and participated in its activities. As its mass base rapidly expanded, the Turkish state continued with military attacks. To protect themselves against colonialist state terror, the PKK launched a limited armed struggle.

At the beginning of the 1980s Turkey faced a serious economic and political recession: the state's resources were drying up. The poverty of the majority of people increased. Politically the country found itself incapable of electing a president. Parliament was unworkable. These conditions led to a military coup in September 1980 when the Turkish army, led by five generals, and supported by the US, seized power for the third time.

The growth of the party and its membership on the one hand and the increased attacks by the Turkish state on the other, put the party leadership under pressure. The party organisation experienced difficulties in trying to respond to new developments. There were problems in educating the cadres. Öcalan recognised these problems and in the summer of 1979, he went abroad. In Syria and the

Lebanon he made contacts with the Palestinians. Later one group began to organise in Lebanon.

After the military coup the junta launched a wave of repression. Tens of thousands were arrested, thousands were tortured in prisons and many summarily executed. The PKK recalled part of its cadre, a tactical retreat which did not mean leaving the country but was a temporary measure to facilitate preparations on a larger scale.

At this time many Turkish left-wing groups and Kurdish reformist groups went abroad, mainly to Europe. All these groups have, in the course of time, forsaken their own country and been assimilated into Europe. The PKK, in contrast, made its preparations in an atmosphere of struggle, in the Middle East.

The PKK held its First Congress between 15 and 25 July 1981. After the conference extensive political and military educational projects were initiated. Whilst the PKK made these preparations, the relationship with the local revolutionary forces was strengthened. In July 1981 the Israeli army attacked Lebanon. All PKK units in Lebanon joined the struggle and 11 PKK members were killed.

During this period the PKK was also developing its theoretical work. Many books and reports dealing with various problems of the revolution in Kurdistan were published. At this time, the prison in Diyarbakir became the centre of resistance when PKK prisoners refused to capitulate and started to organise. Over a period a total of 31 PKK prisoners were murdered in prison.

Armed propaganda units were to establish contact with the local population and organise bases for guerrilla struggle. The first actions were launched on August 15, 1984. On that day units at the HRK (Liberation Units of Kurdistan) attacked and occupied the towns of Erub and Semdinli. These attacks signaled the start of the guerrilla war. The authority of the Turkish army in Kurdistan was shaken and the actions drew international attention to the Kurdish question. The struggle spread to the provinces outside the Botan region.

Following these actions the state intensified its policy of "Special Warfare". Under the "village guard" system 40,000 Kurdish people were paid to carry arms against the guerrillas. That is how the policy of "let the Kurds be destroyed by the Kurds" materialised in practice. Two thirds of the army were equipped with the most modern weapons and up-to-date technology, including combat tanks and armoured vehicles from Germany and fighter-bombers from the US, and sent to Kurdistan.

Psychological warfare became another weapon of the Turkish state against the PKK. The entire propaganda apparatus of the state and its kept media

was used to slander the PKK as a "terrorist organisation". In response, a mass organisation, the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan (ERNK), was founded in March 1985. A further decision was the founding of the ARGK, the Peoples Liberation Army of Kurdistan.

International attacks against the PKK were stepped up. The German state tried to criminalise the PKK and in 1987 its democratic activities in Germany were suppressed by the police. On the basis of fabricated statements by false witnesses, many PKK members were arrested. In February 1988, 20 Kurdish activists were arrested on trumped-up charges. Their trial started in October 1989 and did not end until March 1994. Charges against 16 defendants had to be dropped. Two of the remaining four were released and two were sentenced to 16 and 20 years in prison. The Turkish government rewarded Germany with a number of new contracts.

In November 1993 Germany banned the PKK and ERNK but this has not prevented the Kurdish people organising in Germany. In June 1994, 150,000 Kurds marched in Frankfurt. Despite the ban, the participants showed their support for the party leading the national liberation struggle by carrying pictures of Abdullah Öcalan and ERNK flags. The German government did its best to prevent people reaching Frankfurt, stopping thousands of people at the borders. But the march, the biggest ever seen in Frankfurt, was the perfect answer from the Kurdish people to the attempt to criminalise their struggle.

After its Fourth Congress in 1990 the PKK powerfully extended its membership. The Kurdish *Intifada* called *Serihildans* (Uprisings) spread to all the cities. The people acted in response to every repressive action of the Turkish state with demonstrations and boycotts.

After the October 1991 elections in Turkey a coalition government of Demirel (DYP) and Inönü (SHP) took power. It wore the mask of democracy to try to win Western support, but its strategy was to step up the dirty war, destroy the mass support with military operations and isolate the PKK.

For this reason the Turkish state used the Newroz festival of 1992 as an excuse for massacres and murdered over 100 peaceful demonstrators. Taking a cue from the fascist attacks on foreigners in Germany, the Turkish state encouraged attacks on Kurds in Turkish metropolitan areas.

During 1992, ARGK (Peoples Liberation Army of Kurdistan) units inflicted heavy casualties on the Turkish army and made important military gains. By establishing command and control centres in the provinces they were able to spread the war to new

areas. Another important development in 1992 was the elections to the Kurdistan National Parliament when 300 people from the four parts of Kurdistan and from abroad were elected as MPs to the National Parliament. This was an important step on the road to building a national government of Kurdistan.

The Turkish state sought ways to curb the growing influence of the PKK. In the autumn of 1992 the army launched a major offensive against the guerrilla forces based in the Behdinan area on the Turkey-Iraq border. They were helped by the forces of the Kurdistan Front – Massoud Barzani's KDP and Jalal Talabani's PUK. This was another black page in the Kurds' history of fratricide.

POWERFUL RESISTANCE

But the heroic resistance of the ARGK guerrillas shocked both the Turkish army and the PUK and KDP forces. After a month of heavy fighting, during which all sides suffered heavy casualties, an agreement was signed between the PKK and the KDP and PUK to end hostilities. On March 16, 1993 general secretary Öcalan announced a unilateral ceasefire at a packed press conference in Lebanon's Beka'a Valley, attended by Talabani and other prominent Kurdish leaders. Öcalan called for a peaceful solution to the conflict in Kurdistan saying: "I hope it will be a beginning of a process of peace, friendship and historic brotherhood between Turks and Kurds." However, the Turkish military goes on arresting villagers, burning their homes and crops, and attacking the guerrillas. The ordinary Kurdish villager is suffering from this scorched earth policy.

Ever since its inception the Turkish state has tried to resolve the Kurdish question through violence, and has not succeeded. Armed struggle was never the aim of the PKK, but a political tactic necessary to defend itself against the onslaught.

The PKK is militarily and politically stronger than ever. It is in control of large areas of rural Kurdistan and its guerrilla army consists of over 20,000 fighters including many women. If the PKK wished, it could increase these numbers three or four fold. Kurdish people in all four regions of Kurdistan and in the diaspora increasingly see the PKK as their organisation, because it is the only party with a coherent vision of a united, democratic, independent Kurdistan.

International pressure is needed to make the Turkish state call a halt to the war. Governments, parliaments, political parties and human rights organisations must step up demands for a peaceful and negotiated settlement unreservedly recognising the Kurdish right of self-determination. □

Focus on Gaza

The Tale of The Three Jewels
Directed by Michel Khleifi, Produced by
Omar Al-Qattan

With his film, the first ever to be made in Gaza, award-winning director Michel Khleifi again shows his remarkable ability to make films entirely in tune with the political and psychological lives of Palestinians living under occupation.

In a recent interview he explained how his earlier film *Canticle of the Stones*, made before the start of the *Intifada*, showed the transfer of the struggle from the old to the young generation. It was also, he says, about the inevitable advance to a political settlement between Israel and the Palestinians.

The *Three Jewels* uses fairytale and myth to portray the lives of children in war. It shows how the imagination of children seeks a release from the heavyweight responsibilities imposed on them by life under occupation, and how their psychology struggles to recover from the trauma of sudden and shocking violence.



All the wealth of Gaza - Mohammad Nahhal as Youssef, hiding in a crate of oranges.

The acting is superb throughout, with the children holding their own against some of the most distinguished Palestinian actors. Khleifi uses the shock realism of news TV to portray events of the *Intifada* combined with a lyrical, pastoral mood for the children's world.

Where the two intersect the film most effectively portrays the situation in Gaza today - the longing for a better life, combined with the knowledge that the struggle must continue and the search for new forms. □

Life at the Crossroads: A History of Gaza

By Gerald Butt, published by Rimal/Scorpion Cavendish, price £16.95

Reviewed by Ray Harrington

Former BBC Middle East correspondent Gerald Butt has written a history of the forces that have shaped the Middle East, the Palestinian people and Gaza, one of the world's oldest cities. He chronicles events from the time of the pharaohs to the present day, perhaps too ambitious for a small book.

The turmoil that has engulfed Gaza through the ages is a result of its strategic importance. Situated on the south-eastern Mediterranean, it prospered through international trade in spices and other luxury goods in Roman times. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, it became first a Christian then a Muslim city.

During Ottoman rule, Arab nationalism began to emerge as a political force and this period also saw the beginnings of British machinations in the eastern Mediterranean. Britain first supported the Ottomans against the French, but later exploited discontent with Turkish rule to further her interests in the region. The British mandate in Palestine began in 1920, and Sir Herbert Samuel, a British Jew, was made High Commissioner in Jerusalem. The British

government had promised independence to the Arab people, in return for their assistance in defeating the Turks but at the same time issued the Balfour Declaration supporting the creation of a Zionist state in Palestine.

The people of Gaza were among those most violently opposed to the policies of the Zionists and the mandate authorities, says Butt, but reminds us that Jews had lived peacefully in Gaza from time immemorial. Throughout the Israel occupation, Gazans resisted, culminating in the *Intifada*. This was not just a protest, but a revolution which shook the Zionist foundations of the Israeli state. It was the young people, the *shabaab*, of Gaza who provided energy and will to sustain it.

Gerald Butt points out the weaknesses of the current peace settlement - that Israeli troops still surround Gaza and much of the best land is in the hands of settlers. But the Palestinians have successfully challenged the legality of the occupation and established in principle the right of Palestinian self-determination. □

The challenge of Cézanne

Cézanne at the Tate Gallery, Millbank.
Until April 28
Reviewed by Corinna Lotz

Over 200 oil paintings, water colours and drawings provide much food for thought: love him or hate him, it is hard to be indifferent.

Museums in three countries have collaborated in the current exhibition at London's Tate Gallery. It is the first time for 60 years that the entire range of Cézanne's work has been displayed. The last similar occasion was a retrospective, held in Paris in 1936.

In 1988-89, the artist's controversial early work could be seen at the Royal Academy in London. Now, eight years later, we can see the whole picture. And what a contrasting view it is!

The tortured young man from Aix-en-Provence loved Baudelaire, Delacroix and Wagner. He wanted passionately to measure up to his heroes. His frustrated emotions are laid bare.

INFINITE DEDICATION

Cézanne was acutely aware of how hard he had to work. He was talented but not supremely gifted. He knew that only infinite dedication and agonising concentration would lift him to greater artistic power. He tried to give painterly expression to his deepest feelings, but sometimes stumbled and made a fool of himself.

At school he became a close friend of Émile Zola. His friendship with the writer and critic was decisive in his artistic formation, since Zola was the first to champion Manet and the Impressionist school.

The young Cézanne rebelled against his bourgeois family, rejected the legal career chosen for him by his father. He preferred to dream about Delacroix and "think dangerous thoughts", especially about women, with whom his relations seem to have been troubled throughout his life.

He painted landscapes, still lives and later, his own

son bathing, but for some reason never drew the female body from life. His last great paintings of bathers, have a strange coldness and distance, despite their apparently sensuous subject-matter.

Cézanne's combination of youthful turmoil and talent resulted in a group of early canvasses. Some of them are remarkable, others extremely awkward and some simply poor quality. Amongst them are three powerful images: *The Negro Scipion*, *Young Girl at the Piano – Overture to Tannhäuser* and *Portrait of Achille Emperaire*.

The Impressionist painters Monet and Renoir were Cézanne's close contemporaries – they were born within three years of each other. Camille Pissarro, who was seven years older, became a father figure to him, and introduced him to Impressionism.

Pissarro and Cézanne painted together between 1872-1874. The new discoveries of the Impressionist school made a decisive impact on the younger man. As an artistic language, Impressionism provided him with a way out of the stylistic crisis he had reached.

He shared with the Impressionists their rejection of academic dogma. He embraced their insistence on painting directly from nature, and the contemporary human beings rather than regurgitate the outworn "heroic" historical subjects which dominated the official schools.

The themes selected as subjects by Cézanne, apart from a brief youthful fling, are safe from any political radicalism or even interest in contemporary events. Unlike Manet, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro and even his friend Émile Zola, who had anti-establishment and generally socialist/anarchist views, Cézanne steered clear of any involvement in politics. It was technique more than subject matter which most interested him in Impressionism.

He sought to express himself totally in his art, not in any social or political ideas, concentrating on a

few select subjects. These were landscapes (without people), still-lives with fruits and a few household objects, a few portraits, group pictures of peasants and, late in his life, bathers.

After his strange early period, Cézanne appears as a totally “visual” painter, who concentrates totally on the object before him, rather than trying to “illustrate” an abstract idea. Nonetheless, paintings such as his *Bather with Outstretched Arms* (1878-80) have an enigmatic use of gesture which has aroused much interpretation. One arm reaches for the sky while the other pushes away the ground, in a classic Tai-Chi position.

ABSENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

In his concern to create something “solid and lasting, like the art of the museums” as he put it, he eventually arrived at a more “classical” art. But his classicism, a concern for formal values, carries certain dangers with it – the absence of the individual and the particular. There is often a chill austerity in his paintings, not unlike that to be found in two other great French classical painters – Poussin and David.

It takes time to fall in love with Cézanne. Nothing in his painting came easy to him – and the strain shows again and again. Nor does he find it possible to express the spontaneous joy in visual perception which delights us in Monet and Renoir especially.

Even the most richly “visual” and sensuous still lives, portraits and landscapes, are highly artificial constructions. In his anxiety to create the perfect composition, “to express his artistic temperament” as he would say, Cézanne’s devotion to “nature” became subordinate to a greater force.

The Château de Médan (1880), for example, is a landscape painting showing a river, buildings, trees and sky. But it is built up so carefully, with interlocking horizontal and vertical forms, counteracted by strong, repeated diagonal brushstrokes, so that it looks like an inlaid parquet patterned floor.

The most purely orchestrated works by Cézanne are the still lives he painted between 1888 and 1900. They are haunting because their apparent permanence and monumentality is created through an impossibly fragile perching and balancing of objects, colours and vibrating edges.

The Kitchen Table (1888-1890) has a delightfully rustic basket poised, ready to fall off the humble table Cézanne uses again and again. An improbably huge pear sits lumpishly in front of it, while a table leg seems to be exiting stage right. Taken separately the objects lack logic, but as a whole they breathe a

dynamic life of their own.

The stunning *Still Life with Curtain and Flowered Pitcher* (1899) from the Hermitage museum in Leningrad shows the same table, now leaning forward, wanting to show you its burden of apples. The napkins are carefully arranged, one thick and heavy, the other transparent.

Another composition of apples and oranges of the same year has a luxurious richness of shapes and colours, achieved through an apparently irrational arrangement; we do not know exactly where in space the objects stand. They are three-dimensional but at the same moment tumble across the canvas in an anti-spatial complex network of forms.

In all the paintings of the 1890s, Cézanne is dominated by a pervasive blue light, which lends a contemplative, ethereal quality to his solid forms, whether they are kitchen objects, portraits or bathers.

In this respect he held faith with the optical principles of the Impressionists, who had excluded black from their palettes, and sought to express dark and light through the colours they found in nature.

Simultaneously, in his use of colour and form he looked forward to his successors – Picasso and Braque – who were to shatter painterly dogmas still further within a few years of Cézanne’s death in 1905. In this great exhibition we can see how Cézanne’s often lonesome struggle in the small Mediterranean town of Aix-en-Provence finally reached its climax. But even at the end of his life, and after major recognition by critics and fellow painters, he felt he was only beginning to succeed. His honesty as a painter lay in part in his lack of pretension and fidelity to his provincial origins.

BEWARE THE HYPE

A note to the unwary: The Tate Gallery does him no favours with their blockbuster money-grubbing mega-hype. Those who manage to brave the long queues and unprecedentedly high admission price (£7) will no doubt discover the artist behind the silly images projected by plastic carrier bags and the “Cézann-wiches” invented by a fast-food shop. Despite its price (£28), the catalogue has grossly distorted colours – in which Cézanne’s exquisite blues are green. Nor does it offer a serious assessment of his role in art history, historical or political background.

Instead there are endless extracts from critics over the last 100 years, most of which can be found in good art historical libraries and probably some computers, plus a long “Chronology” with ludicrously insignificant trivia, such as “Cézanne lets his beard grow”. □

The politics of Soviet art

Nonconformist Art, the Soviet experience 1956-1986, published by Thames & Hudson in association with Jane Voorhes Zimmerli Art Museum. Reviewed by Fred Scott

This book was published in conjunction with an exhibition of the collection of Norton and Nancy Dodge, which had been given to the State University of New Jersey.

For 30 years, from the time of Khrushchev's secret anti-Stalin speech to glasnost, the Dodges acquired some 10,000 works by more than 900 unofficial Soviet artists working outside of the prescribed state style of socialist realism. The accumulation of the collection, through numerous visits and clandestine meetings is in itself extraordinary. It documents the guttering progress of painting and works on paper without the support of critical appraisal and in an atmosphere of state censure.

The 17 essays analyse and document the movements and events of the period, although the very variety of their titles give a lie to the title of *collection*, with its implication of structure and order. In particular, the essay by Michael Scammell, *Art as Politics and Politics as Art*, vividly tells the story of the thaw at the end of the 1950s and start of the 1960s, which was so abruptly curtailed.

The attack on the cult of personality provoked some attempts to re-assess socialist realism by the art establishment, albeit rather tentatively. For instance Impressionism was partially rehabilitated, being conceded that it had made a "technical" contribution to the history of painting. An exhibition of Picassos owned by the state but previously held in storage was opened in Moscow in 1956 and moved to Leningrad the next year. In a series of Youth Festivals, and in an exhibition organized by the Archives of American Art in the late 1950s, Soviet artists saw for the first time the works of the American abstract expressionists. In this period there was a growing interest in the new art by the scientific community, particularly in relation to abstract art.

All this ended at the first semi-official showing in Moscow of non-conformist paintings. Khrushchev, visiting the show, exploded with indignation, "...are you pederasts or normal people?...we aren't going to give a kopek for pictures painted by jackasses...The people and the government have taken a lot of trouble with you, and you pay them back with this crap."

Did Khrushchev know, as we know now that the CIA was financing American abstract expressionists as a weapon in the Cold War? Would it have qualified this outburst? The prejudice by Soviet officialdom against experimentation in the visual arts is a curious thing; it would seem to have been even more deep seated than that against the written word. This was at the time when Yevtushenko and to a lesser extent, Solzhenitsyn were tolerated.

This is an interesting rather than an inspiring book. It has the air of a trawl through the Russian unofficial contemporary art world, with an accompanying feeling that several big fish have avoided the net. The collection of paintings and works on paper represented are of undoubted historical importance, but the huge variety in the work illustrated and the diversity of the essays give an impression of a lack of curatorship, an absence of an ordering intelligence and discrimination. The impression is of collection for collection's sake. Consequently it is difficult to judge, despite the many tales of suppression and persecution, exactly what was the impact of this underground activity on the official art world.

It may be simply nostalgia on the part of the reviewer to be surprised by so little reference in the works to the previous great achievements of the Soviet art of the 1920s, or it may be better explained by a commonly-held belief among the artists that any idea of common programmes such as those which informed the Suprematists and Constructivists would inevitably align the work with the purposes of the state. In its stead, non-conformist Soviet art is marked by a restless need for self-expression and individualism.

One can understand from this book that the creative spirit in painting can survive in the most oppressive environment, but equally one can read the difficulties of persevering in the absence of recognition and critical context. Art is necessarily a collective experience, and interestingly, Ilya Kabakov, the artist who has received the greatest acclaim outside of the Commonwealth of Independent States, has used the communal experience continuously as a basis for his work. □

The shame of the Rostov house

The KGB's Literary Archive by Vitaly Shentalinsky, published by Harvill, price £18.00.
Reviewed by Penny Cole

Vitaly Shentalinsky is one of that historically important group of Soviet intellectuals who grabbed the opportunity offered by Gorbachev's glasnost period to set about rescuing the historic truth of Soviet history from the archives.

In early January 1988 he dropped into the Writers Club, a handsome building in the centre of Moscow which also housed the Union of Soviet Writers. He had not been in to meet friends for some time, as he had been finishing a book. *"Where have you been? It's not the time to sit quietly at home. The Moscow writers are going to hold a general meeting any day now. Without an agenda, without a presidium - for the first time a free and open discussion. We're going to talk about our future,"* said a fellow writer.

"What did we need now, more than anything else, I asked myself as I walked home through the gusts of fine snowy dust. Our history had been stolen from us and what we knew was grotesquely distorted. Yet without the past there could be no future. Now we must shake off this amnesia. The same was true of literature. In the war the Soviet regime had waged against society, the writer belonged to one of the most repressed professions. How many authors had been shot or had perished in the camps and prisons?"

But the writer, Shentalinsky muses, lives on after his death, through his work. Perhaps manuscripts lay hidden in the KGB files which had never been seen except by the interrogators? So he wrote an appeal to the Moscow branch of the Writers Union, calling for the setting up of a commission to investigate the files of some 2,000 writers arrested during the Stalin period. He quotes the poet Anna Akhmatova: "I would like to recall them all, name by name, but the list has been taken, there's nowhere to find out."

He found himself in the office of Zhukov, the secretary of the Communist Party branch in the Writers Union, who was "listless and irritable", an excellent description of the anti-glasnost forces at this period! Zhukov recommended discussing the proposal in a plenary session of the publications

board (censorship board), rather than the general meeting. Obfuscation and delay ensued.

In the end an intervention from above by Alexander Yakovlev, Gorbachev's closest adviser, ensured the commission was permitted and files from both the Procurator General's office (civil courts) and the KGB archive were opened.

Shentalinsky describes the struggle to set up the commission and his dealings with the KGB, brilliantly; he is of course a writer and not some dry historian. Throughout the book we are struck by his voice, almost as much as by the voices he conjures from the depths of the Lubyanka prison.

The commission called itself "the Anti-Troika", a pun on the so-called "Troikas" – the three-man commissions who sentenced Soviet citizens without trial during the Stalin period.

As soon as its existence became public a torrent of letters, memoirs and manuscripts, some kept hidden at great risk for many years, arrived on Shentalinsky's desk. People travelled thousands of miles to deliver precious papers in person.

Shentalinsky submitted a list of 13 writers' names to the KGB and received first the file of Isaac Babel. Anyone not clear that justice rests on the right to silence, or why the prisoner of war gives only name, rank and number, should read this book.

The first thing the prisoner at the Lubyanka was made to do was write a statement saying why he or she had been arrested. This statement became the cornerstone of an edifice constructed by the interrogator to an agenda transmitted from the Kremlin to the Lubyanka. Crimes were conjured up out of the prisoner's own words, and embellished under torture to include the required names and activities..

Babel was the author of a novel *Red Cavalry*, about the Red Cossack Corps – "the Trotskyist cavalrymen" as the interrogator called them. In his file were notes he made to help him write his "confession".

About his relations with the Red Cavalry officers he writes: "They told me about their private lives and I followed them with interest, considering that the trajectory of their exceptional biographies offered invaluable material for a writer. I knew of their Trotskyist views in 1924-27 but not one of them murmured a word about the crimes they were planning... We were attracted to their demonstrative bravery, recklessness and uninhibited comradeship and struck by the levity with which they treated things we were accustomed to regard with respect."

Thus Babel sends us down the years a literary description of the personality of the Civil War hero – dashing, brave, contemptuous of bureaucracy and full of comradeship. They were amongst the first victims of the Stalin terror.

Red Cavalry was published in 1923 in *Krasnaya Nov*, edited by the noted revolutionary critic and editor Alexander Voronsky, a member of the Bolshevik Party since 1904. Babel's testament says of him: "Voronsky's basic idea was that the writer should create freely and intuitively, giving the most vivid reflection in his books of his own unrestrained individuality..."

AGAINST SOCIALIST REALISM

By 1928, Voronsky had been sacked from *Krasnaya Nov* and was sent into exile. Babel then became the focus of the struggle taking place in the arts. Art, the Stalinists said, must be subordinated to the Party and must portray Soviet types. Individualism and imagination were debunked as "formalism" and the pseudo-theory of "socialist realism" was developed.

"My reputation for literary independence and as a fighter for quality attracted those who were inclined to formalism," Babel writes. "What attitudes did I encourage in them? A disregard for the organisational form of writers' associations (the Union of Soviet Writers etc.), the idea that Soviet literature was in decline, and a critical attitude to such Party measures as the struggle with formalism and the approval of things that were useful but of limited artistic value..."

On the eve of his trial Babel retracted large parts of his testimony to try and protect friends. He was shot in 1937 as were Voronsky, Pilnyak and the theatre director Meyerhold.

Mikhail Bulgakov, who died in 1940, is Russia's best-selling author today. In 1935 he wrote to Stalin a famous letter, begging to be allowed to work or to emigrate. Stalin liked his romance about a family of White Russians, and got him a job at the Moscow Arts Theatre, though not one play was performed.

In Bulgakov's book *The Master and Margarita*, the Master despairingly burns his novel. The devil returns it to him (in the course of his riotous visit to Moscow) and tells the astonished Master "manuscripts don't burn". Those words must have been in Shentalinsky's mind when the KGB handed him a diary confiscated from Bulgakov in 1926. He had called it *Under the Heel*, referring to a long surveillance by the OGPU. The diary was, it is said, handed round the Stalin leadership for secret reading. It is written in the same satirical spirit and with the same aristocratic tone as *The Master*, scoffing at "fusty, servile, Soviet riff-raff". It was a tone that appealed to Stalin – he preferred aristocrats to communists certainly – and it may have kept Bulgakov alive, though it was a kind of living death.

From the files, Shentalinsky reveals the enormous courage and horrifying torture of the revolution's leading novelist Boris Pilnyak, also shot in 1937; of the poet Osip Mandelstam, who died in a transit camp in 1938; and of other writers less well known in the West.

One thread which runs right through his research is the shameful role of the Union of Soviet Writers. Little wonder that Bulgakov made the devil's main activity during his Moscow visit to expose, humiliate, drive insane and even murder, some founding members of this dynasty of stifling bureaucrats, informers and mediocrities.

There is a scene in *War and Peace* where the rich are described stuffing their costly possessions into carts, preparing to flee before Napoleon's advancing army. But the Rostov family abandon their carpets and furniture and instead load the waiting carts with wounded soldiers from the battle of Borodino. It is a defining moment of humanity and self-sacrifice triumphing over panic and greed.

Ironically, the headquarters of the Writers Union in Moscow is the Rostov house, or at least it is the house Tolstoy used as his model. Inside its walls a great struggle was conducted throughout the years of perestroika and glasnost. For the bureaucrats, the exposure of their predecessors as cheap informers, who would condemn fellow writers to death with a critical review and send anonymous denunciations to the KGB, was unbearable.

It is not surprising that the officials of the 1980s were "listless and irritable" as Shentalinsky describes Zhukov. Whilst nobody believed they held their posts through any literary merit, at least before people were too scared to say so.

In his final chapter, Shentalinsky describes how the "listless and irritable" were galvanised back to life during the attempted coup of 1989. He arrived at the Rostov house to find the "chauvinist writers

burning an effigy of the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko in the courtyard”.

After the destruction of the Soviet Union, a new organisation with a leadership of chauvinists and anti-Semites was set up, and at this point the other side of the ruling contradiction of Soviet life was revealed. For though the Writers Union attacked and censored many great writers, as a parasite on the body of literature it had also to keep literature alive. Soviet writers enjoyed the luxury denied in the West of being paid to write regardless of market forces. Though thousands of dissenting voices from the nations that made up the Soviet Union were repressed, the Writers Union also preserved national culture and languages.

After the Soviet Union was broken up, Shentalinsky writes: "The pillage of the Rostov house began. Rooms, money, archives, telephones, typewriters and secretaries were fought over. Doors were broken down and new locks added. Letters were intercepted and opened, documents stolen. Papers, journals and books belonging to previous inhabitants were thrown out into the courtyard by the new masters. In this way an invaluable collection built up over many years, of literature in other languages of the Soviet nations was destroyed."

This time those fleeing the Rostov house took the costly carpets and left the wounded. Soviet literature was abandoned to the Booker prize committee and the censorship of the dollar. □

REVIEW

Defiance amid death in the camps

Against All Hope: Resistance in the Nazi Concentration Camps
by Hermann Langbein, translated by Harry Zohn
Published by Paragon House, New York, price \$29.95
Reviewed by John Eden

This outstanding book recalls the individual and collective courage of all those interned in the Nazi concentration camps. Langbein's 502 pages are a monumental study, exhaustively documenting resistance.

The camps were an extension of German capitalist industry, run with slave labour. Prisoners were worked to death or kept barely alive if they had some useful skill. Others were simply exterminated. Jews, gypsies and Slavs were killed to make room in their native lands for "pure Germans".

Resistance in the camps took many forms, including organised or spontaneous escape attempts and acts of sabotage against the German war effort including the German V rocket production at the notorious Dora concentration camp. These were usually carried out individually. It also took the form of trying to influence SS camp officials and doctors

to be more lenient. Officials were openly threatened with violence. Sometimes civilian workers were asked to pass information about the camp commandant to outside partisans, especially in Poland, who sent this on to London. The names of these commandants were read out on BBC radio and threatened with retaliation. This had some effect, particularly in the last days of the Reich when the SS knew the war was lost, but nevertheless continued to butcher all inmates so no witnesses would remain.

But all acts of resistance in the camp, if discovered (and they usually were, through informers and stool pigeons) were met with the most extreme savagery, often involving mass executions. For these reasons, most actions and camp resistance organisation remained unknown to the inmates, survivors and those who died.

The author, without doubt a very brave and

courageous fighter, was a member of the Austrian Stalinist-dominated Communist Party. He is a veteran of the International Brigade which fought in Spain and a resistance leader in Dachau and Auschwitz. Today he is secretary of the International Concentration Camps Committee.

A striking feature of the book is how the SS was able to use the political, national and religious conflicts between the inmates of the camps – Poles, Russians, Germans, French, Jews, gypsies, etc, to divide them, to create self-rule among the inmates through “Capos” and senior block inmates. Some of them became extensions of the SS terror machine. Nothing is said about the role Stalinism played in these disputes.

Many Communists like Hermann Langbein survived the concentration camps. Many, of course died, murdered for their courageous anti-fascist resistance. The author explains how the Communist Parties organised in the camps to look after their cadres, to survive to the day when National Socialism would be defeated and they could carry on their struggle for socialism. By the time Langbein was sent to Dachau in 1940, many Communist inmates had already been in camps, from 1933 if they were Germans, from 1938 if they were Austrians.

ILLEGAL WORK

Communist Party members tried to gain places of influence in camp “self government”. In Buchenwald, for example, such inmate camp administration was called the “Camp Defence”. Many Communists were skilled workers essential to the German war effort. Some had been involved in illegal party work in Germany and Austria. They knew each other well. Some had fought in Spain together. They were able to keep up each other’s morale.

This was especially important during the first weeks of imprisonment, when constant SS beatings and the seemingly hopeless situation in which people found themselves broke many morally, destroying their will to live and resist. The author remarks that under these conditions, many people quickly passed away, exterminated.

The Communists were better organised than anyone else. When Dachau was liberated in 1945, 800 German Communist Party (KPD) members had survived. There were no figures in the book for Austrians and Communists of other nationalities. The fact that people survived the camps was later used against them. Thirty-seven members of the Yugoslav Communist party, 30 of them Slovenes,

were tried and framed up by political opponents in Yugoslavia in 1948. The so-called “evidence” against them was that because they had survived Dachau – therefore they were said to be fascist agents. Eleven were executed.

This also happened in other East European countries after the war, and in the Soviet Union Stalin had many returning concentration camp inmates murdered. Their Communist training had enabled them to survive the fascist enemy’s treatment, but not the reception by their “Communist friends”.

RUSSIAN CHAUVINISM

The great Russian chauvinism that characterised Stalinist foreign policy, though not mentioned in this book, contributed greatly to the divisions amongst the inmates, which were so eagerly used by the SS to split and rule. This was particularly true of the Poles, who saw their country divided between the Germans and the Soviets in 1939 by the Stalin-Hitler pact.

And yet the only major theoretical work done in a Nazi concentration camp was on the national question, undertaken by an Austrian Communist on behalf of the Austrian Communist Party to counter the KPD’s servile adaptation to Hitler’s “greater Germany” which meant the annexation of Austria.

Another important division was between the camp inmates, the KPD and the SPD (the Social Democratic Party of Germany). The KPD still maintained in camp discussions that the SPD was the party responsible for the rise of Hitler. They maintained the Stalinist position (though again not mentioned by Langbein) that the SPD were “Social Fascists” and the main enemy of the German working class rather than Hitler’s fascists. This policy had, of course, divided the German working class and prevented united front action to crush fascism.

The glaring contradiction that emerges from Langbein’s account is the following. Communists were in fact Hitler’s main enemy, and earliest target for arrest and imprisonment. Ironically, however, without the collaboration of many Communist Party members, the Nazis would have been unable to run and maintain their camps. However, it is hard to condemn those already at the mercy of their executioners.

As Langbein explains, once you were a prisoner in the Nazi camps, there was almost no choice. That macabre reality was due in the first place to the policy of the Communist Party leaders in Moscow and Germany who facilitated Hitler’s rise to power. □

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