

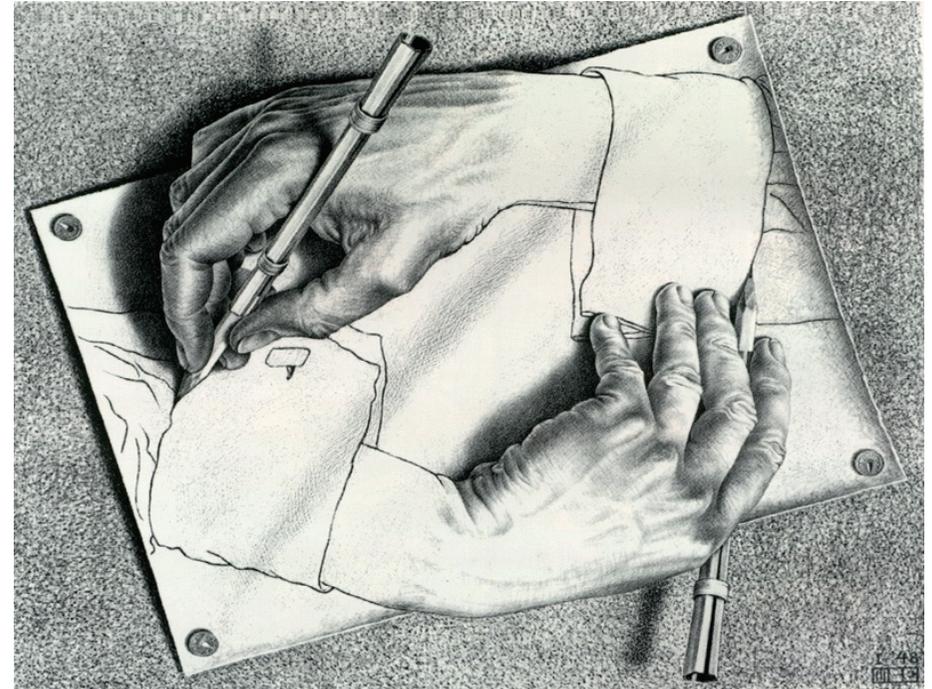
But the community from which the workers is *isolated* is a community of quite different reality and scope than the *political* community. The community from which *his own labor* separates him is *life* itself, physical and spiritual life, human morality, human activity, human enjoyment, human nature. *Human nature is the true community of men*. Just as the disastrous isolation from this nature is disproportionately more far-reaching, unbearable, terrible and contradictory than the isolation from the political community, so too the transcending of this isolation and even a partial reaction, a *rebellion* against it, is so much greater, just as the *man* is greater than the citizen and human life than political life.

Marx: Critical Notes on the Article: "The King of Prussia and Social Reform. By a Prussian"

## BARRICADE PAMPHLETS

Jacques Camatte

# The Democratic Mystification



Published by *Barricade Collective*

Website: [barricade.neezyl.com](http://barricade.neezyl.com)

E-mail: [shmintaka@yahoo.com](mailto:shmintaka@yahoo.com)

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## Capital and Democracy

The relevance of the text published below cannot be a question for all those who want to overcome the present weakness of the workers' movement, the loss of direction and the atomization of the working class. "Demand the impossible!" – shouted the slogan from the wall in May 1968, admitting that the communist world community turned from the programme of the struggle into an utopian fog for the masses of our class. If the community is an utopia then the lack of community is reality. Having been tossed on the ocean of democracy, the proletariat put in at Robinson's island.

In contrast to the former leftist rubbish which turned liberal (nowadays there's an overproduction of such), we don't regard this as a phenomenon which force us to change or abandon the revolutionary programme. It belongs into the advancing of capitalism, and it does absolutely not abolish those contradictions which prepare the outbreak of the communist revolution.

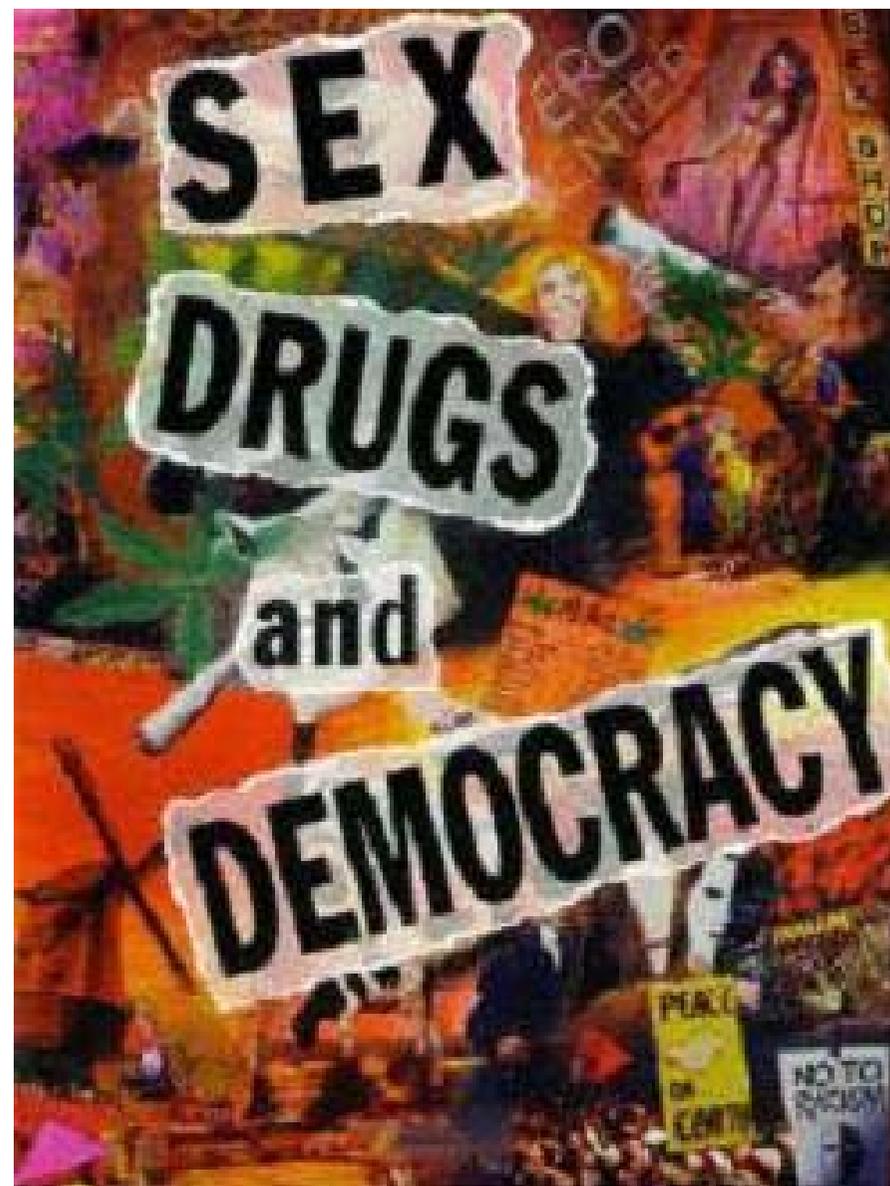
Marx shed light to the economic foundation of the capitalist society's everyday reproduction:

"Thus, what we called the constant value which appeared as a presupposition in the case of the individual capital is nothing but the presupposition of capital by capital, i.e. the fact that the different capitals in the different branches of industry posit one another reciprocally as presupposition and condition. Each of them regarded for itself can be resolved into dead labour which, as *value*, has become independent vis-a-vis living labour."

Marx: The Grundrisse. Notebook V. [Circuit and Turnover of Capital].

The dead labour's independence and its dominance over living productive activity – this necrophilia of capital – yields the present disgusting relationship between individuals and the loathsome ideology which adheres to it: the practice and the theory of bourgeois democracy.

"In the money relation, in the developed system of exchange (and this semblance seduces the democrats), the ties of personal dependence ... are in fact exploded, ripped up...; and individuals *seem* independent (this is an independence which is at bottom merely an illusion and it is more correctly called indifference), free to collide with one another and to engage in exchange within this freedom; but they appear thus only for someone who abstracts from



5.1.17 What is called here ‘middle class’ by Camatte, is the sum of those groups which operate the extensive social-economic functions of that state which is present in the here examined phase of capitalism. In the reality, these do not constitute a class, but they are a part of capital’s management apparatus. Camatte says about the extension of the state’s social functions, that it takes on a tinge of communism. This is a totally false, social-democratic interpretation of communism, which points towards Djilas...

5.1.19 It is false when Camatte calls the dictatorship of the proletariat “an ideal democracy”. He borrows the false scheme which was outlined by Marx in “The Critique of the Gotha Programme”. According to this, by the generalization the proletarian condition to the whole of society, on the “first stage of communist society”, the “law of inequality” dominates – because of the differences in individual abilities and capacities –, and – after the abolition of the division of labour –, when “labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want... only then then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!” But the dictatorship of the proletariat – as Camatte correctly says – is the destruction of democracy. And this means the immediate abolition of all bourgeois rights – so, communism has no different phases –, hence the unified human activity for the satisfaction of human needs arises at the same time as the communist world community. Moreover, such a justification of the citate from the Communist Manifesto (with which we also absolutely disagree) supports the survival of that false conception in the movement, against which the whole writing is directed. This dogmatism, this unacceptable uncritical Marx-apology leads to the fact that some movement militants are unable to go beyond the false theses of Marx from 1848, and they conserve the contemporary weaknesses of the movement.

the *conditions*, the *conditions of existence* within which these individuals enter into contact...”

Marx: The Grundrisse. Notebook I. The Chapter on Money (Part Two).

That is the key to the understanding of democracy. Democracy is the pseudo-community based on the illusory independence of the commodity-owner. So, contrary to the common bourgeois interpretation, it is not the political form mostly associated with the ancient Greek city-states and some modern societies, but “the behaviour of humans, the organisation of those who have lost their original organic unity with the community” (Camatte). Because of that, this kind of existence of atomized individuals is a characteristic of all class societies, which is maintained by the purulent everyday rotation of commodity production.

Democracy assumes different forms according to the forms of productive labour and the extension of commodity production. Ancient democracy was an inner affair of the ruling class, because only the free citizens were commodity-owners (namely owners of the land, the slaves and their products). In modern bourgeois democracy everybody is a commodity-owner, and the key commodity for the bourgeoisie – labour force – is put on the market by the working class. Hence, democracy is total now.

The bourgeois state power has given an official form to the relation between commodity-owners. The parliamentary form is the political expression of the impersonal power of capital (of the rule of dead labour). Capital needs state power because it has to secure itself against the revolt of the proletarians, it has to force them to sell their labour force to capital in order to obtain the means of their existence. The functioning of the parliament develops according to the varying balance of forces between the different capitals and according to the interests of the aggregate capital. It’s a dynamic form which is able to adapt itself to the changing economic conditions. The state can support the development of national capital by customs duties and allowances. In the parliament, the various factions of capital dispute with each other according to their interests.

The political parties – i. e. the parties of the bourgeoisie, including the social democratic parties –, have never represented more than the alternatives of the development of capital, that means, the interests of some groups of the ruling class. The democratic (parliamentary) principle was the guarantee, that the

political management would not separate from the interests of aggregate capital. Such politics which led to the slowing down of capital's development, failed – in the next elections at the latest. At the same time, democracy and suffrage are means to persuade the bearers of living labour to participate in the operating of capital on the political level as well. Since the human barrier – the resistance of the living against the dead – is the biggest obstacle for capital's development. So, the political process always has to be directed in such a way to avoid the revolt of the proletariat. During the elections, the working class declares which capitalist sphere's dominance is the most acceptable for it. The working class acts here totally as a part of capital, and its choice is a part of capital's self-management. The worker involved in politics by means of the suffrage, becomes a part of capital's pseudo-community. He/she internalizes the democratic behaviour.

Among the Carpathians, in this little brothel, but also in other parts of the world, a lot of members of the working class feel and see the total evacuation of local politics. But only a few of them move from here towards a conscious communism. Some weep for the former phases of capitalist order, others place trust in the international development, which “modernizes the backward regions”. In the reality, the thing is that capital has outgrown the frames of nation-state, and the politics in Hungary cannot do anything else than licking the ass of the international giant companies, because natural gas doesn't grow on Hortobágy and one cannot produce “our car” from the apple of Nyírség. European integration took place because the movement of capital (including variable capital: labour force) had to be intensified, the centralization of capital had to be accelerated. Capital destroyed the national boundaries, so there's scarcely any difference between the various managements of capital (the programmes of the political parties) because it is global capital which rules directly. Politics serve this global capital. Those exploited who expect something good from this process (liberals and social democrats) or think that it was avoidable within capitalism (conservatives, fascists), don't understand neither the functioning of capital nor the present stage of capitalism's development. They are the puppets of capital – they can shake hands with each other.

There is also another reason for politics' evacuation. (In order to avoid misunderstandings, we remark that politics have always been the means for managing the alienated relationships, so, in this sense, it couldn't have been emptied for the proletariat because it has always been empty. If we are still speaking about the evacuation of politics, we mean by this the fact that capital

democracy, which also implies the full use of the terroristic machine of the democratic state with its various forms. For that, for example, there is no organic change between the liberal and the fascist form of the state, but only a process of purification of the state in its tendency to reach the inaccessible democracy.”

5.1.11 The critique of this point can be found in the remark to the 5.1.15 point.

5.1.13 When the bourgeoisie achieves the political dominance in the bourgeois revolution, the masses of the proletariat fight often yet on the far-left of the bourgeoisie. The process in which the elements of the proletariat rupture with the bourgeoisie can also be seen in the disintegration of the bourgeois parliament's radical fraction. (See, for example, how the communist movement around Babeuf came into contradiction with the forces of bourgeois revolution. “Only the rich experiences which he gained during the French revolution – and, above all, the experiences of the Jacobin dictatorship – made it possible for Babeuf to make the next decisive step on the way of the forming of his revolutionary-communistic world-view. But communism – contrary to the statements of Albert Mathiez – wasn't merely an “external façade” for Babeuf before the revolution, because already in this period, the plans of the fundamental transformation of the society stood in the centre of his thoughts.” (V. Dalin)) But in the process of rupture and becoming communist, the proletarian elements recognized not only that they cannot make common cause with the party of the radical bourgeoisie, but also that they must reject its system of institutions – democratic parliament –, too. Hence, the proletariat can never use neither democracy, nor the parliament. The social-democratic and Bolshevik visions about their temporal usefulness must be swept away. When Camatte wrote his text, he hadn't yet finished with these visions totally, hence the tacticist political schemes of Lenin can be found in the essay.

5.1.15 The proletariat cannot enter into the state, it can only destroy it. The communist revolution does not create a new system of institutions – it creates the world human community. Because of this, the dictatorship of the proletariat doesn't mean a new (even transitional) state power. If the proletariat tries to seize the state power – whatever be the meaning of this –, in the reality, it becomes an enemy of communism. The practice of bolshevism has shown the counter-revolutionary nature of the flirting with the state power.

Property: because each one appears, in the world of exchange, as an owner of his merchandise and he can only dispose of what belongs to him.

As free and equal owners, all citizens contract relationships giving rise to a natural brotherhood, which is the lawful reflect that guarantees liberties, equality and the identical possibility for each man to own goods. Any buying or selling of merchandise is the result of a free will contract between men who, because of the merchandise, are owners, free, equal and like brothers.”

So, this kind of “liberation” of people is nothing else than the gradual self-fulfillment of capital’s democratic dictatorship through the expansion of commodity production.

After the reign of glammers, let’s see the real process.

“The seller of working force is a worker, whether he believes in god or in democracy. In the factory he is nobody's equal, he is free of nothing, owner of nothing, not even of what he manipulates. If he wants, the worker can imagine that his citizenship is only interrupted, that his qualities, liberties and properties have been left in the cloakroom and that he will get them back when he gets out. But he is completely wrong. In his eight (or more) hours of work, he consumes raw material and machines to produce usage values that remain property of the capital and in the other sixteen hours, during his holidays, he consumes food, beer, football or television to produce another usage value: his working force, which will be used only in valorizing the capital. Outside of the mystical and ephemeral paradise of circulation and of free elections, the worker remains a worker, whether he likes it or not; even when he fucks (whether by pleasure or to grow a family) he is only working force and valorization of the Capital. As such, he is neither equal, nor free, nor citizen, nor owner at any moment of his life. He is only a salaried slave. Even before he tries to organize himself to defend his worker's interests, he has already all equality, property and liberty against him.”

“The true liberty, property and fraternity of democracy implies therefore a permanent situation of anti-proletarian violence. Repression is one of the indispensable elements of imposition, reproduction and extension of democracy. A long time ago, Marx used to denounce the sacred trinity “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” as equivalent to “Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery”. Even more, the paradise of pure democracy – where no one would complain of these liberty, equality, property, fraternity – implies a higher level of realization of

needs the mediation of the state less and less for the organization of its reproduction, and if it does need it – in the case of a war, for example – then it can use this mediation practically without any problem.) As far as capital provided for the working class only the possibility of biological reproduction (this way also reproducing socially the destitute wage-worker), capitalism could be kept in motion only by means of direct and permanent police terror. But capital went beyond this phase, and today it is enough for it to keep the batons in store. Enormous mass of products comes pouring onto the working class which serve directly the capitalized human being’s needs: culture, entertainment, sex-industry, alcohol, Internet, world press, Coca-Cola, bicycle with 24 gears... And the advertisement-industry which supports the whole. The rubbish for the production of which the working class drudges in the factories and offices, comes from the opposite direction when it has left the workplace. And the working class is swept away by the flood of commodities. “Capital constitutes itself as material community and there are no more politics since it is capital itself which organizes men as slaves.” (Camatte)

When capital comes to a deep crisis, then it seems to break with the democratic principle. During the crisis, a huge mass of constant capital loses its value and is not able to function further as capital, to produce surplus value by absorbing variable capital. So the crisis of constant capital is also the crisis of variable capital, which manifests itself in the fall of (real) wages and massive unemployment. Capitalism is not able to handle such crises with the usual reconciliation of interests between capitals (parliamentarism) and the reconciliation of interests between capital and the working class (trade unionism). In such cases, the strongest representative of capital undertakes the task of capitalism’s re-structuring, for capital’s survival. The main elements of this are the destruction of those capitals which have lost their value and the destruction of the unnecessary labour-force – open or hidden war. Capital uses terrorist means against the proletariat not only because, facing the crisis, it attacks capital, but also because capital has to get rid of the labour-force which is needless for it. Facing this phenomenon, the leftists shout: “Capitalism betrays democracy! Capital is capable to sacrifice democracy for its own interests!” Some go so far that they try to prove theoretically that capitalism can never be democratic. In contrast to this, it is extremely important to emphasize that the “anti-democratism” of capital during the crises is an absolutely democratic phenomenon. The case is exactly that it tries to maintain the commodity-owner individuals, the private property. Capital is obliged to infringe the political rights proclaimed by capital itself (free press, assembly and

speech) if they hinder the process of capital's reproduction (production, circulation or both), and democracy between the people is the first precondition for this reproduction.

Revolutionary situation is the peak of capitalism's crisis. If a part of the working class refuses the further participation in the market as an owner of labour-force, and tries to hinder the movement of commodities using strike and sabotage, tries to maintain its life by looting, and it attacks the ruling class and its state violently, then the real negation of democracy steps on the scene with these acts. Against it, all components of democracy start to act with unified force. The last reserve of capital, the only massive force which it can now set in motion against the communist proletariat, is the democratic part of the working class: the police, the army and each worker who is still capable to exist within capital (see, for example, the role of the social-democratic workers in the crushing of the proletarian revolution in Germany after World War I). The role of these elements of the working class is not merely that they can be put into armed action against the communists, but even more, that they continue to keep capital in motion, that they produce day by day the negation of human community, that they enclose the revolution in a ghetto.

The revolutionaries who want to fight consistently against capitalism, cannot make any compromise with democracy. Democracy is the form of existence of those who have been alienated from human community, "of those who have lost their original organic unity with the community" (Camatte). Therefore the communist revolution which means the creation of human community cannot be victorious without the total destruction of this way of existence.

*Barricade Collective, 2006.*



5.1.3 Homeland (as a common property which in the reality is divided-up between the capitals of the given country) appears as a precondition for capitalist democracy as long as the productive forces of the given capitalist state are dominated by national capital. In the present phase of capitalism, it is international capital which dominates, so the concept of homeland is increasingly ideological, and the nationalist fractions of local small capital lean on it. It's enough to refer to the activities of the Eastern European (Slovakian, Hungarian, Polish) populist forces...

5.1.5 One can read the history of "gold's becoming a real power" in Jonathan Willams' "The History of Money". The communist description of this power's social and economic development can be read in Marx' "Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy".

5.1.8 Nature appears as a dictator, as a hostile power above the people when class society and private property have already been established, and man has been alienated from other people as well as from natural environment. Hence we cannot speak about the dictatorship of nature in primate communism, because nature is a part of the community.

5.1.10 The excellent article of the Internationalist Communist Group, entitled "Against the Myth of the Democratic Rights and Liberties" gives us a useful help to see clearly, how democracy's myth and reality works in capitalism. We cite some longer passages from this text.

"In the sphere of circulation of goods, there are no classes; everybody is a citizen, everybody appears as buyer and seller of goods, equal, free and owner. Even when we buy or sell our own manpower, we are in the paradise of human rights and liberties. Each one is aiming at his own private interests in the reign of equality, liberty and private property.

Liberty: because the buyer and the seller of goods (including manpower) do not obey to any other rule than to their own free will.

Equality: because in the world of merchandise, everybody is a buyer and a seller, and everybody gets a value to the value contained in the goods he is selling, exchanging equivalent against equivalent.

## Commentaries, critical remarks

Writing “The Democratic Mystification”, Camatte didn’t intend to create an independent article but a chapter of his essay entitled “The Communist Revolution” – that’s the reason for the way of numbering the paragraphs. (The whole work ultimately wasn’t finished.) We publish below our remarks for the different paragraphs – in the spirit of the communist programme’s further clarification.

*Barricade Collective*



Jacques Camatte:

## *The Democratic Mystification*

The proletariat's assault on the citadels of capital only has a chance of success on condition that the proletarian revolutionary movement finishes with democracy once and for all. Democracy is the last refuge of all disavowals and betrayals, because it is the first hope of those who believe in purifying and re-energizing the current movement which is rotten to its core.

I

### 5.1. The General historical phenomenon

“Social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which misled theory into mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.”

(Marx, Eighth thesis on Feuerbach)

1.1. Broadly speaking, one can define democracy as the behaviour of humans, the organisation of those who have lost their original organic unity with the community. Thus it exists during the whole period which separates primitive communism from scientific communism.

5.1.2. Democracy was born from the moment that there was a division between men and the allocation of possession. That is to say, it arose with private property, individuals and the class division of society, with the formation of the state. It follows that it becomes increasingly pure as private property becomes more general and as classes appear more distinctly in society.

5.1.3. It presupposes a common good which is divided-up. Limited democracy in ancient society presupposed the existence of the *ager publicus* and slaves who were not men. In modern society this common good is more universal ( touches a greater number of men ). It is also more abstract and illusory : the homeland.

5.1.4. Democracy in no way excludes authority, dictatorship and thus the State. On the contrary, it needs the State as a foundation. Who can guarantee the allocation, who can regulate the relations between individuals and between them and the common good, if not the State ?

In fully developed capitalist society the State also presents itself as the guardian of redistribution from two different angles : it prevents the proletariat from nibbling away the surplus-value and it guarantees the distribution of this surplus value as profit, interest, rent etc., among the different capitalist spheres.

5.1.5. Democracy thus implies the existence of individuals, classes and the State; with the result that it is simultaneously a mode of government, a mode of domination by one class, and a mechanism of union and conciliation.

Actually, in the beginning the economic processes divided men ( process of expropriation ) who had been united in the primitive community. Ancient social relations were destroyed. Gold became a real power replacing the authority of the community. Men were opposed to each other because of material antagonisms that could break up society and make it impossible. Democracy appeared to be a means of reconciling opposites, as the most suitable political form to unite what was divided. It represented conciliation between the old community and the new society. The mystifying form lay in the apparent reconstruction of a lost unity. Mystification was progressive.

In our day, at the opposite pole of history, the economic process has led to the socialisation of production and men. Politics, on the contrary, tends to divide them, to maintain them as simple surfaces of exchange for capital. The communist form becomes more and more powerful within the old capitalist world. Democracy seems like a conciliation between the past, still acting on our actual present, and the future -- communist society. Mystification is reactionary.

5.1.6. It is often said that the seeds ( or some even say the forms ) of democracy are to be found in the origins of the life of our species, in primitive communism. However it is a misunderstanding to see the manifestation of the seeds of a higher form appearing sporadically in an inferior form. This "democracy" appeared in very specific circumstances. Once these had ended, there was a return to the former mode of organisation. For example : military democracy at its beginnings. The election of the leader took place at a particular time and for specific tasks. Once these were accomplished, the leader was reabsorbed into the community. The democracy which appeared temporarily was reabsorbed. It was the same for those forms of capital which Marx called ante-deluvian. Usury was the archaic form of money-capital which could appear in ancient societies. But its existence was always precarious, because society defended itself against its solvent effects and banished it. It was only when man

The separation of powers requires their unity and this is always done by violation of a constitution. This violation is founded on a divorce between situation in fact and situation in right. The passage from one to the other being assured by violence.

The democratic principle in reality is only the acceptance of a given fact : the scission of reality, the dualism linked to class society.

5.1.21. Often some wish to oppose democracy in general, an empty concept, to a form of democracy which would be the key to human emancipation. Now what is a fact, whose characteristic is not only in contradiction with its general concept, but must be its negation ? In reality theorising a particular democracy ( proletarian democracy for example ) still evades the quantitative leap. Indeed, either the democratic form in question really contradicts the general concept of democracy, and thus is really something else ( why, then, call it democracy ? ), or it is compatible with this concept, and there can only be a contradiction of a quantitative nature ( for example that it includes a greater number of men ), and, because of this, it does not go beyond the limits of the concept, even if it tends to push them back.

This thesis often appears in the form : proletarian democracy is not bourgeois democracy, and one will talk of direct democracy to show that while the second needs a break, a duality ( delegation of powers ), the first denies this. The future society is thus defined as being the realisation of direct democracy.

This is only a negative negation of bourgeois society, and not its positive negation. It still wants to define communism as a mode of organisation that would be more adequate to various human manifestations. But communism is the affirmation of a being, the true Gemeinwesen of man. Direct democracy appears to be a means for achieving communism. However communism does not need such a mediation. It is not a question of having or of doing, but of being.

The communist revolution will begin again, by recognising these facts and granting them their full importance. The proletariat will reconstitute itself as class and thus as party, in this way superseding the cramped limits of all class societies. The human species will finally be unified and form a single being.

5.1.19. All historical forms of democracy corresponded to stages of development where production was limited. The various revolutions which followed one another were partial revolutions. Economic progress was unable to take place, and to advance, without the exploitation of a class occurring. We may note that since antiquity revolutions have contributed to the emancipation of an increasing section of humanity. From which arose the idea that we are moving towards perfect democracy, a democracy gathering together all men. As a result many are in a hurry to make the equation : socialism = democracy. It is true that it is possible to say, that with the communist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, a greater section of humanity than before enters the domain of this ideal democracy; and that by generalising the proletarian condition to the whole of society, the proletariat abolishes classes and achieves democracy (the 'Communist Manifesto' stated that the revolution is the conquest of democracy). However it is necessary to add, that this passage to the limit, this generalisation, is at the same time the destruction of democracy. Because at the same time, the human mass does not remain constituted with the status of a simple sum of individuals, all equivalents in right if not in fact. That can only be a reality for a very short moment of history, due to forced equalisation. Humanity will constitute itself in a collective being, the Gemeinwesen. This is born outside the democratic phenomenon, and it is the proletariat constituted as party which transmits this to society. When one passes on to future society, there is a qualitative change, and not merely a quantitative one. For democracy is "the anti-marxist rule of this powerless quantity, for all eternity, to become quality". To demand democracy for post-revolutionary society is to demand impotence. In addition, the communist revolution is no longer a partial revolution. With it, progressive emancipation finishes, and radical emancipation is achieved. Here again there is a qualitative leap.

5.1.20. Democracy is based on a dualism, and is the means to surmount it. Thus it resolves the dualism between spirit and matter, which is equivalent to that between great men and mass, through delegation of powers; that between citizen and man, through the ballot paper and universal suffrage. In fact under the pretext of the accession to reality of total being, there is a delegation of the sovereignty of man to the state. Man divests himself of his human power.

became a commodity, that capital could develop on a safe foundation, and could no longer be reabsorbed. Democracy can only really appear from the moment when men have been completely divided, and the umbilical cord linking them with the community has been cut; that is, when there are individuals.

Communism can sometimes manifest itself in this society, but it is always reabsorbed. It will only be able to really develop from the moment when the material community has been destroyed.

5.1.7. The democratic phenomenon appears with clarity in two historical periods : at the time of the dissolution of the primitive community in Greece; and at the time of the dissolution of feudal society in western Europe. It is incontestable, that during this second period the phenomenon appeared with greater intensity, because men had really been reduced to the status of individuals and the ancient social relations could no longer unite them. The bourgeois revolution always appears as the setting in motion of the masses. From which arises the bourgeois problem : how to unify them and fix them within new social forms. Hence, the institutional mania and the outburst of right in bourgeois society. The bourgeois revolution is a social revolution with a political soul.

During the communist revolution, the masses will have already been organised by capitalist society. They will not seek new forms of organization but will structure a new collective being, the human community. This appears clearly when the class acts in time as an historical being, when it constitutes itself as party.

It has been said a number of times in the communist movement that the revolution is not a problem of forms of organisation. For capitalist society, on the contrary, everything is an organisational question. At the beginning of its development, this appears as the search for good institutions; at the end as the search for the best structures to enclose men in the prisons of capital : fascism. At both extremes, democracy is at the heart of this search : first political democracy, then social democracy.

5.1.8. Mystification is not a phenomenon planned by the members of the ruling class, a hoax that they perpetrate. If so it would be enough to have a simple

adequate propaganda to eradicate it from men's minds. In fact it acts in the depths of the social structure, within social relations :

“A social relation of production appears as something existing apart from individual human beings, and the distinctive relations into which they enter in the course of production in society appear as the specific properties of a thing -- it is this perverted appearance, this prosaically real, and by no means imaginary, mystification that is characteristic of all social forms of labour positing exchange-value.”

( Marx – ‘Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy’, Collected Works Vol 29 p.289 )

It is thus necessary to explain in what ways reality is mystifying and how this simple mystification at the beginning, becomes greater and greater and reaches its maximum with capitalism.

5.1.9. Originally, the human community was subject to the dictatorship of nature. It had to fight against it to survive. The dictatorship was direct and the community in its totality was subjected it.

With the development of class society, the state presents itself as representing the community and pretends to embody man's struggle against nature. However, given the weakness of development of the productive forces, nature's dictatorship is always effective. It is indirect and mediated by the state and weighs especially on the most underprivileged strata. When the state defines man, it takes the man of the dominant class as the substratum of its definition. Mystification is complete.

5.1.10. Under capitalism, there is a first period when, although the bourgeoisie has taken power, capital only dominates formally. Many remainders of previous social formations persist, hindering capital's domination over the whole of society. This is the epoch of political democracy when there is the apology of individual liberty and free competition. The bourgeoisie presents this as a means of liberation for men. However this is a mystification because:

“In free competition, it is capital that is set free, not the individuals.”

( Marx ‘Grundrisse’, Collected Works V. 29 p. 38 )

full employment etc.. However by creating social security, while trying to maintain the full employment that it claims, capitalist society achieves the social democracy in question : that of slaves to capital.

With the development of the new middle classes the demand for democracy takes on a tinge -- only -- of communism.

5.1.18. What has been written above deals with the European/North American area and has no validity for the countries where the Asiatic mode of production for a long time predominated ( Asia, Africa ) or where it still dominates ( e.g. India ). In these countries, the individual has not been produced. Private property could appear but it could not autonomise itself; it is the same for the individual. This is related to the geo-social conditions of these countries and explains the impossibility of capital developing itself there, as long as it has not constituted itself as community. To put it another way, it is only when it has reached this stage that capitalism will be able to replace the ancient community and thus conquer immense zones. Only, in these countries, men cannot behave as in the West. Political democracy is necessarily avoided. One can have, at most, only social democracy.

This is why in those countries most racked by the implantation of capitalism we have a double phenomenon : a conciliation between the real movement and the ancient community, and another with the future community : communism. Hence the difficulty in dealing with these societies.

In other words, a whole immense section of humanity will not know the democratic mystification as it is known in the West. This is a positive fact for the coming revolution.

With regard to Russia, we have an intermediate case. We can note with what difficulty capitalism was established there. It needed a proletarian revolution. There too, western political democracy did not have a basis for development and we may note that it cannot flourish there. As in the contemporary West, we will have social democracy. Unfortunately over there also, the counter-revolution brought poison in the form of proletarian democracy and, for many, the involution of the revolution is to be sought for in the non-realisation of democracy.

“While the power of money is not the relation of things and men, social relations have to be organised politically and religiously.”  
( Marx )

Marx always denounced the swindle of politics and laid bare the real relations :

“Therefore it is a natural necessity , the essential human properties however estranged they may seem to be, and interest that hold the members of civil society together; civil , not political life is their real tie.”  
( ‘The Holy Family’, Collected Works Vol. 4 p. 120 )

“Precisely the slavery of civil society is in appearance the greatest freedom because it is in appearance the fully developed independence of the individual, who considers as his own freedom the uncurbed movement, no longer bound by a common bond or man, of the estranged elements of his life, such as property, industry, religion, etc., whereas actually this is his fully developed slavery and inhumanity. Law has here taken the place of privilege.”  
( ‘The Holy Family’, Collected Works Vol. 4 p. 116 )

The question of democracy only remains in another form as the false opposition between competition and monopoly. The material community integrates the two. With fascism (= social democracy), democracy and dictatorship are also integrated. It is a means for overcoming anarchy.

“Anarchy is the law of civil society emancipated from diverse privileges, and the anarchy of civil society is the basis of the modern public system, just as the public system in its turn its the guarantee of that anarchy. To the same extent that the two are opposed to each other they also determine each other.”  
( ‘The Holy Family’, Collected Works Vol. 4 p. 117 )

5.1.17. Now that the bourgeois class, which led the revolution which allowed the development of capital, has disappeared, and been replaced by the capitalist class which lives on capital and its valorization process, capitals domination has been assured ( fascism ) and because of this there is no longer a need for a political conciliation, since it is superfluous, but for an economic conciliation ( corporatism, doctrine of needs etc. ), and it is the middle classes which are adepts of democracy. Only the more capitalism grows, the more the illusion of being able to share management with capital vanishes. All that remains is the demand for a social democracy with political pretensions : democratic planning,

“Hence...the absurdity of regarding free competition as the ultimate development of human freedom, and the negation of free competition as equivalent to the negation of individual freedom and of social production based upon individual freedom. It is merely the kind of free development possible on the limited basis of the domination of capital. This type of individual freedom is therefore, at the same time, the most sweeping abolition of all individual freedom and the complete subjugation of individuality to social conditions which assume the form of objective powers, indeed of overpowering objects -- objects independent of the individuals relating to one another. To bring out the essence of free competition is the only rational answer to its glorification by the prophets of the middle class and to its anathematising by the socialists.”  
( Marx ‘Grundrisse’, Collected Works V. 29 p. 40 )

5.1.11.

“Democracy and parliamentarianism are indispensable for the bourgeoisie after its victory by force and terror because the bourgeoisie want to rule a society divided into classes.”  
( ‘Battaglia comunista’ no. 18, 1951 )

It required conciliation to be able to dominate for it was impossible that domination should endure solely through terror. After its conquest of power by violence and terror, the proletariat does not need democracy, not because classes disappear from one day to the next, but because there must no longer be any masking or mystification. Dictatorship is required to prevent any return of the opposing class. Moreover, the accession of the proletariat to the State, is its own negation as a class, as well as the negation of the other classes. It is the beginning of the unification of the species, of the formation of the community. To demand democracy would imply the need for conciliation between classes and that would amount to doubting that communism is the solution to all antagonisms, that it is the reconciliation of man with himself.

5.1.12. With capital, the economic movement is no longer separate from the social movement. The union took place with the purchase and sale of labour power, but it led to the submission of men to capital. Capital constitutes itself as material community and there are no more politics since it is capital itself which organises men as slaves.

Until this historical stage there was a more or less clear separation between production and distribution. Political democracy could be envisaged as a means

of distributing products more equitably. But when the material community is achieved, production and distribution are indissolubly linked. The imperatives of circulation thus condition distribution. However circulation is no longer something completely external to production but is, for capital, an essential moment of its total process. It is thus capital itself which conditions distribution.

All men fulfill a function for capital which fundamentally presupposes their existence. In relation to their execution of this function, men receive a certain distribution of products through the intermediary of a wage. We have a social democracy. Incomes policy is a means of achieving it.

5.1.13. In the period of the formal domination of capital (political democracy) democracy is not a form of organisation opposed as such to capital, it is a mechanism used by the capitalist class to attain domination over society. During this period all the organisational forms included in this struggle achieved this same result. That is why the proletariat can also for a certain time intervene on this terrain. On the other hand, oppositions can also occur within the same class, between the industrial and financial bourgeoisies, for example. Parliament is therefore an arena where these various interests clash. The proletariat can use parliament as a platform to denounce the democratic mystification and can use universal suffrage as a means to organise the class.

When capital arrived at its real domination, and constituted itself as a material community, the question was resolved : it seized the State. The conquest of the state from inside no longer poses itself because it is no more than :

“a formality , the haut goût of popular existence, a ceremonial. The estates element is the sanctioned, legal lie of constitutional states, the lie that the state is the people's interest, or that the people is the interest of the state.”  
( Marx, ‘Contribution to the Critique of Hegels Philosophy of Law’, Collected Works V. 3 p. 65 – the word people is substituted for nation to match the French translation cited in the original )

5.1.14. The democratic state represents the illusion of control over society by man ( that man can direct the economic phenomenon ). It proclaims man sovereign. The fascist State is the realisation of this mystification ( in this sense it can appear as its negation ). Man is not sovereign. At the same time, this is in fact, the real acknowledged form of the capitalist state : the absolute domination

of capital. Social unity cannot exist with a divorce between theory and practice. Theory said : man is sovereign; practice affirmed : it is capital. Only insofar as the latter had not come to dominate society absolutely, was there possibility of imbalance. In the fascist state reality subjugates the idea to make a real idea of it. In the democratic state the idea subjugates reality to make an imaginary reality of it. The democracy of capital's slaves suppresses mystification the better to achieve it. The democrats wish to highlight it when they believe it can reconcile the proletariat with capital.

Society having found the being of its oppression ( which abolishes the duality, the reality/thought imbalance ), it is necessary to oppose to it the liberatory being which represents the human community : the communist party.

5.1.15. Hence most nineteenth century theorists were statist. They thought that they could resolve the social facts at the level of the state. They were mediators.

Only they did not understand that the proletariat not only had to destroy the old state machine, but also had to put another in its place. Many socialists believed that it was possible to conquer the state from inside and the anarchists believed that one could abolish it from one day to the next.

Twentieth century theorists are corporatists because they think that it is only a matter of organising production and of humanising it to resolve all problems. They are immediatists. This is an indirect proof of the theory of the proletariat. To say that it is necessary to reconcile the proletariat with the economic movement, is to recognise that a solution can only emerge on this terrain . This immediatism arises from the fact that communist society is forever strengthening inside capitalism itself. It is not a question of reconciling the two, but of destroying the power of capital, its organised strength , the capitalist State, which maintains private monopoly when all economic mechanisms tend to make it disappear. The communist solution is mediate. Reality seems to evade the state, it is necessary to highlight it and, at the same time, to indicate the need for another transitory state : the dictatorship of the proletariat.

5.1.16. The development towards social democracy was discounted from the start :