

Marx Before Marxism, by David McLellan. New York: Harper & Row, 1970. \$6.50. Pp. 233.

Here is another addition to the vast literature devoted to the young Marx and his relationship to the mature Marx of *Capital*—a subject which has agitated academic Marxism during the last decade. McLellan offers as justification for his book the claim that previous interpretations of Marx's early writings suffered from one or another bias, whereas his own exposition is presented "as neutrally as possible." He presents these writings "in their historical context," which has of course been extensively dealt with by other authors as well and which does not release him from answering the question of whether there is a decisive difference between the young and the old Marx. He concludes in the end that there is no difference because Marx remained a Hegelian throughout his life, as demonstrated by his *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*.

McLellan offers us, once more, the social and cultural conditions under which Marx grew up, his family relations and his early intellectual pursuits, particularly his conversion to Hegelianism. From this conversion, and with the aid of Feuerbach, Marx soon turned into a critic of Hegelian philosophy, a process which began with the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, the contributions to the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, and *The German Ideology*. After the last-named work Marx shifted his interests from philosophy to political economy, as dictated by his historical materialism, which had grown out of his criticism of both Feuerbach and Hegel, and out of his own observations of social reality.

This shift from philosophy to the critique of political economy has strangely been interpreted as a sacrifice of the humanism that characterized Marx's early writings in which he concerned himself with the nature of man as such, with man's self-alienation and the requirements for recovering his human essence. This concern soon made room for the consideration of historical, class-determined men, the exploitation of labor by capital, and the proletarian revolution. His philosophical humanism became practical humanism, to be realized in a classless, non-exploitative society. In this sense, there is, of course, continuity between the young and the old Marx in that the latter was able to express clearly and concretely what the young Marx had set forth vaguely and abstractly. The choice between the young and the old Marx is thus an impossible one, even though Marx's later writings are clearly preferable to his early ones.

In recent years the emphasis has nonetheless been on Marx's early writings, not on his scientific analysis of capitalist society. McLellan assumes that this is due to the fact that some of Marx's economic and po-

litical predictions had lost their validity through the "progressive integration of the working class into the social order." Still, people remained unhappy and attempts to explain their dissatisfactions led to a return to the unsolved problem of man's alienation. The gap between ideology and reality in Eastern Europe, too, showed that the humanist side of Marxism had been neglected and that a return to Marx's early concerns might be a way to improve conditions in the socialist states. What appears as essential in this explanation is a change in the attitudes of men as a precondition to a betterment of their social conditions. And the new concern with man's alienation in existing societal forms thus reflects the present inability or unwillingness to alter these forms. It is a return to an idealist position, precisely to the position of the early Marx still engaged in the process of freeing himself from Hegelianism. But the answer to this trend must be derived from the Marxism of Marx, not from the Marx before Marxism.

This leads to the question of the relation between Marx and Hegel and here, according to McLellan, "Marx always remained in some sense a Hegelian." The question is only in what sense? McLellan points to Lenin's remark that "It is impossible to fully grasp Marx's *Capital*, and especially the first chapter, if you have not studied or understood the whole of Hegel's *Logic*"; he also cites Hegelian terminology employed by Marx in the *Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*. In a recent article in the magazine *Encounter*, McLellan describes the *Grundrisse* as the newly discovered "missing link" which restored continuity and inner harmony between the writings of the early and the late Marx. In this connection, he finds it particularly "noteworthy that . . . throughout the *Grundrisse*, the agent of transformation—the revolutionary activity of the proletariat—is never alluded to."

The *Grundrisse* are exactly what their name implies, a first attempt (*Rohentwurf*) in preparation for the contemplated *Capital*. They were not considered ready for publication, but were the product of fifteen years of study and self-clarification and, therefore, did not need to contain the obvious, such as alluding to the proletariat as the agent of social change which had already been established ten years earlier in the *Communist Manifesto*. For McLellan, however, the *Grundrisse* is Marx's "basic work"—of which the *Critique of Political Economy* and *Capital* are "only partial elaborations"—because in the *Grundrisse* "the Hegelian categories in which Marx forms his thought are obvious," and because "questions that were prominent in Marx's 1844 writings—such as the nature of labor and the resolution of the conflict between the individual and the community—are taken up again and filled out with a wealth of detail." Marxism does not, however, concern itself so much with the true

nature of labor and relations between the individual and the community, as, quite specifically, with the nature of wage-labor and the relations between labor and capital.

Although Hegel's philosophy formed Marx's starting point, he soon realized that the idealistic dialectic was a mystification of the actual dialectical process of social development. It was not Hegel's philosophy which led Marx to an understanding of capitalist society but the relatively independent understanding of the latter which made him recognize the "rational kernel" contained in the mystical shell of Hegelian philosophy. In this limited sense, he remained a Hegelian, that is, he understood that Hegel expressed in an ideological-philosophical form an actually-occurring process, which found its concrete expression in the political economy of capitalism. Marx's dialectic is thus to be found in *Capital*, not in the philosophical writings, even though he could use Hegelian categories interchangeably with those of political economy, as was the case in the *Grundrisse*.

McLellan himself points out that Hegel's philosophy emerged out of the ideas of the French Revolution, the writings of the English economists, the growth of industry, and the economic war of all against all. Yet it turned an actual historical development into an absolute philosophical system, in which the former lost its practical meaning and therefore its revolutionary nature. If it is true, as McLellan says, that Marx's "early writings contain all the subsequent themes of Marx's thought and show them in the making," it is also true that the progress made by Marx from his early philosophical writings, via the *Grundrisse* to *Capital*, commits present-day Marxism, as it committed Marx, to stress not his philosophical starting-point but the underlying capitalist production relations in their capitalist appearance as economic categories.

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Beethoven: Biography of a Genius, by George R. Marek. London: William Kimber, 1970. £4.20. Pp. 640.

1970, the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's birth was, as might have been foreseen, a year of vast outpouring of material—musical, visual and literary—about the composer. Not only was 99 per cent of his enormous output played, recorded, broadcast, televised, all over the world, but every shade of every aspect of Beethoven's life and work was written up and distributed by mass and other media.