

early sixties, but have since bounced back to 47 per cent of the total in 1968/69—a position of equality matched nowhere else in the world. The number of women as a percentage of students in higher technical educational establishments makes the USSR by far the world leader (p. 16).

Most of the minority non-Russian nationalities also increased as a percentage of the total enrollment in institutions of higher education between 1960–61 and 1966–67. The exceptions were the Estonians, Latvians, Georgians, Jews, Ukrainians and Tadzhiks—of which all but the latter two nationalities were already represented in greater proportion than their percentage of the total population. It would thus seem that Soviet education is playing some role in equalizing remaining differences between the various nationality groups.

Public health is another area where the Soviet system appears to be working especially well. According to Mark Field, “one might say that in the area of the health care system, particularly in human and material resources, the Soviets have every reason to be satisfied with their accomplishments, at least quantitatively, and would thus have little reluctance to publish the data.” But even here, the data pertaining to health resources are more generous than those relating to morbidity. Some indication of the latter may of course be inferred from a look at the expansion of hospital beds by specialty (p. 114). One particular area of expansion is the number of beds assigned to psychic diseases, which have more than tripled over the past two decades. In contrast, the beds designated for skin-venereal diseases have expanded by only 50 per cent during the same time span. Incidentally, medicine—despite its only average compensation—ranks very high in terms of occupational preferences of high school students, right below physics and mathematics.

The labeling of Tables A.6 and A.6a seems to be transposed, which is surprising since no less than five experts cooperated in the preparation of this section. Perhaps this is another case of too many cooks spoiling the broth.

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Theories of Value and Distribution Since Adam Smith: Ideology and Economic Theory, by Maurice Dobb. Cambridge University Press: New York, 1973. \$12.50. Pp. 295.

According to Marx, the vulgarization of classical bourgeois economy was unavoidable. In France and in England, he wrote in the preface to *Capital*:

The bourgeoisie had conquered political power. Thenceforth, the class-struggle, practically as well as theoretically, took on more and more outspoken and threatening forms. It sounded the knell of scientific bourgeois economy. It was thenceforth no longer a question, whether this theorem or that was true, but whether it was useful to capital or harmful, expedient or inexpedient, politically dangerous or not. In place of disinterested enquirers, there were hired prize-fighters; in place of genuine scientific research, the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetic.

A hundred years later, in contrast to Marx, some modern Marxists have discovered that there is more to bourgeois economy than just apologia. Besides performing this function, it also occupies itself with realistic political-economic problems, which may have some meaning for the opponent of capitalism. It is not enough to speak merely of the vulgarity of bourgeois economy; it is necessary to distinguish between its ideological and its practical functions.

Maurice Dobb concerns himself with this question of ideology and economic theory, from the time of Adam Smith to the present. His book is essentially a history of economic thought and as such—because of its continuity and knowledgeable—has special usefulness, despite the great abundance of economic histories. However, Dobb seems inclined to give the devil more than his due, thereby reflecting his versatility as well as his close connection with academic bourgeois economics. He speaks with the voice of the economist, not that of the revolutionary, even though he approaches bourgeois theory from a Marxian point of view. He sees clearly that there cannot be a “neutral” economic science and that attempts in this direction merely deprive theory of any relevance to the actual economic processes. Still, with other Marxists, he assumes that there “are general statements, even ‘laws,’ that apply to all modes of production,” so that some analytical methods evolved by bourgeois economics may also be valid for other social systems. In this connection, he deems it necessary to differentiate between analytical economic tools and the ideological content of bourgeois economics.

Using the examples of Smith, Ricardo, and Mill, Dobb demonstrates the historical conditioning of economic theory and the impossibility of turning it into a “pure” science. Being essentially an applied science, it cannot deny its normative elements. Although it has always been difficult to separate the “positive” from the “normative,” attempts in this direction have been made nonetheless by means of highly formalized techniques of analysis. Dobb shows, however, that apparently “neutral” techniques affect economic interpretations and their empirical implications in an ideological direction. The introduction of analytical methods and the mathematization of economics were, of course, instrumentalities of bourgeois ideology as economic theory, not mere methods of inves-

tigation and accountancy, such as may be found useful in any economic system.

Dobb shows that the impoverishment of bourgeois economics through its increasing formalization, via the rise of marginal utility and general equilibrium theory, led unavoidably to a crisis of economic theory, reverberating through what he calls "a decade of high criticism." The current questioning of all the assumptions of neoclassical theory is accompanied by a partial return to its starting point, that is, to objective value theory and the Ricardian theory of distribution. There is increasing recognition that the elimination of the distribution problem through the reduction of economic theory to the exchange process and a general system of price relations resulted in the loss of its plausibility and therewith its ideological function.

Dobb sees in the return from economics to political economy a kind of progress within the field of bourgeois economic theory. This return, already foreshadowed in another form in the so-called Keynesian revolution, is, however, also a return to Marx's point of departure from classical economy. Although he knows him to be a critic of Ricardo, Marx remains for Dobb a classical economist, who merely added to his analysis of capitalism a general concept of historical development. Actually, political economy was for Marx the false consciousness, or ideology, of the capitalist mode of production, hiding its underlying exploitative class relations. The economic categories of classical economy, including the labor theory of value, were for Marx fetishistic categories, bound up with the specific relations of capitalist production and valid only for these relations. He recognized that the destruction of bourgeois economic theory presupposes the destruction of capitalist society itself.

Until Marx, it was deemed sufficient to study capitalist development on the basis of its contradictory fetishistic determination, without seeking to determine the system's fundamental laws of production and distribution. Only by seeing in capitalism the "natural" and only possible mode of production—that is, on the basis of ideology—were the classicists able to attain a degree of objectivity regarding the economy. It was this which enabled Marx to destroy bourgeois economic theory by a thoroughgoing critique of the classical economists. To return at this late date to classical theory, that is, to accept the exploitation of labor by capital, to draw attention to the consequent forms of distribution, and therewith to the irrelevance of modern price theory and "positive" economics, may be regarded as a sign of the times, but it is not a step beyond bourgeois economic theory. Another step is necessary, namely, the step Marx made by his criticism of political economy.

This is not to say that one should not pay attention to the evolution

of economic theory, reflecting as it does the changing situation of capitalism itself. But this attention must remain critical, must be based on a total rejection of all capitalist economic theory, which, despite various modifications, can only serve capitalism. The past "decade of high criticism," so eloquently described by Dobb, remained within the confines of bourgeois theory; thus it could lead only to an ideologically more adequate theory of capitalist production than that provided by the now bankrupt neoclassical theory. Attempts are continually being made, on an international scale, to find a reconciliation of "Marxism" and bourgeois economic theory. It is not totally excluded that "Marxism" will become the last refuge of bourgeois theory, and the return to the classical economists will be a station on the way to this goal.

Apart from these considerations, and notwithstanding Dobb's sympathetic attitude toward the whole body of bourgeois economic theory, his book will prove an asset for any student of political economy. It clearly brings out the essential differences between the various proponents of the objective theory of value; their united opposition to those, who, since the "Jevonsian Revolution," subscribed to a subjective value theory; the adventures of the latter within the neoclassical doctrine; and the transformation of economic theory into a mere technique of "adapting scarce means to given ends." It brings to the fore all the problems which presently agitate the academic world and shows their relation to those that preoccupied their predecessors.

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A Grain of Mustard Seed: The Awakening of the Brazilian Revolution, by Marcio Moreira Alves. New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1973. \$1.95. Pp. 194.

A Grain of Mustard Seed is a work which should help bridge the gap between fantasy and reality in the popular understanding of Brazil. Directed to a North American audience, it is an unusual fusion of personal political autobiography with perceptive analysis of life under the military regime. The book is frankly partisan. Alves offers no apologies for his hatred of the current government and his advocacy of revolutionary change. His partisanship, however, is thoroughly non-sectarian. He avoids the shrill and frequently juvenile parochialism of much left-wing writing. He provides a systematic critique of the military dictatorship, and his perspective includes sympathy for all oppositional groups of his country.

A major feature of *A Grain of Mustard Seed* is the portrayal of the