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(1889–1960)

PROBLEMS OF PSYCHOLOGY IN THE
WORKS OF KARL MARX*

Psychology is not among the disciplines which — like political economy — were systematically developed by Karl Marx. There are no psychological treatises among the collected works of Marx. But in a number of his works, one finds a series of remarks on various questions of psychology. Although not externally systematized, these remarks evidence, nevertheless, an internal unity. As one develops their content, these fragments begin to form a single, monolithic whole that permeates the entire worldview of Marx.

Therefore, in the field of psychology, Marx must not be treated as a great representative of the past, to be studied merely historically or philologically. We must approach him as we would approach the most contemporary of our contemporaries, to confront his thought with the most modern problems. It is on these that psychology must concentrate; for Marx supplies us with the most crucial of psychological insights which, elaborated in the light of Marxist-Leninist methodology, serve us as guide in the construction of psychology.

It is well known that contemporary psychology abroad is in crisis. This crisis that coincided with a rapid growth in experimental research is — like the crisis in physics that Lenin described in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* — a methodological crisis. It reflects the general ideological conflict that is going on in contemporary science and that manifests itself in a fundamental methodological crisis in a number of disciplines, beginning with contemporary mathematics. In psychology this crisis has led to the formation of schools that are fighting one another. It has become so bad that the leading figures in psychology have been unable to ignore it. A number of leading psychologists have written about the critical nature of this period for psychology and this question has repeatedly come up at psychological congresses.

At the Twelfth Congress of German Psychologists in Hamburg in 1931, K. Bühler referred in his opening statement to the serious need¹, for rethinking of the bases of psychology. In his own book on the “crisis

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in psychology” he advances the same thesis.² At the Tenth International Congress of Psychology in Copenhagen (August 1932), W. Köhler warned that “if we do not find the connecting links within psychology soon, we will be atomized”.³

Even if one rejects Bühler’s suggested solution to the crisis, one has to agree with him that the problem was revealed in the tensions between introspectionist, behaviorist and spiritualist psychologies. We cannot go into these in detail here, as our present task is to delineate clearly the components of the current crisis and then to show how Marx’ contributions can help toward a solution in the context of Marxist-Leninist psychology.

The dominant understanding of the psyche, flowing from an introspectionist psychology, identifies it with phenomena of consciousness. According to this conception, the task of psychology is to study the phenomena of consciousness within the individual consciousness, where they are immediately given. The being of the psyche consists totally in its being given in conscious experience. In contrast to the search for essence that one finds in the other sciences, psychology seemed doomed to remain in the Machist position of phenomenalism: essence here coincides with appearance (Husserl). Marx had noted that if the internal essence of things coincided with their external form, then all science would be nugatory. On this reading, psychology would be the useless science, “discovering” what is already immediately given.

Analysis of this position shows that it is based on the assumption of the immediate givenness of the psychic. Introspection aims to distinguish the psychic from all objective mediations. This is, of course, a radically idealist position: everything that is material, external and physical is mediated through the psyche; the psychic is the primary and immediate given. In its immediacy it shuts itself up in an internal world that is purely personal. To every subject are given only the phenomena of his consciousness and these phenomena are given only to him. They are, as a matter of principle, not available to any other observer. Even indirect objective knowledge of the other’s psyche falls by the wayside. At the same time, however — and this is the heart of the matter — even the experiencing subject cannot have objective knowledge of the psyche. Radical introspectionists claim that the data of introspection are absolutely trustworthy.⁴

This means that the data of consciousness cannot be thrown into doubt by anybody, but this also means that nobody can confirm them. If the psyche is immediately given, without any objective mediations, then there is nothing objective available to controvert introspectionist data on it. Neither the subject nor any other observer can distinguish knowledge from belief. Psychology is no longer possible as objective knowledge, i.e., as a science.

Nevertheless, it is just this conception of the psyche that is adopted by the — Russian and American — opponents of introspectionism, the behaviorists.

The whole argumentation that one must exclude consciousness from psychology in favor of behavior is based on the contention that the phenomena of consciousness are available only to the subject and “are not subject to objective verification and, therefore, cannot be the object of science”.⁵ The behaviorist argument against consciousness is based on the introspectionist view that one must either accept the data of consciousness completely or exclude them completely; one cannot change the concept of consciousness. On the basis of this — introspective — understanding of the psyche, combining idealism and mechanicism, behaviorism reduces man to the set of his responses to the environmental stimuli.

Behaviorism first isolates man’s practical activities in the “psychological” form of responses to stimuli by the subject as the concrete historical person. Behaviorism tears human activity away from its roots in human consciousness. Further, in a second operation, behaviorism isolate’s human activity from its products and results, it tears human activity away from its social environment and runs the risk of reducing psychology to physiology.

The anti-psychologism of the dominant philosophic trends of the twentieth century — whether Husserlian or Rickertian — opposed the logical and ideological (in the form of concept and value) to the psychological and thereby contributed to the mechanistic trend. The effort to rescue the ideological component through a “psychology of the soul” or *eigentliche Psychologie* (e.g. with the *Sinnbänder* of Spränger) failed and psychology found itself in three pieces: behaviorism, introspectionism and “psychology of the soul”.

The first effort to emerge from this (by Bühler in the West and

Kornilov in the Soviet Union) consisted in trying to treat these three as complementary aspects of a unitary psychology. This effort was doomed from the outset as it merely forced idealism and mechanicism together — a summing up of errors, capable of clarifying nothing.

The basic approach has to be not a “synthesis” but a “fight on two fronts”, in order to eliminate rather than combine errors accumulated by different schools. The error of introspectionism did not lie in taking consciousness as its object, but in how it did this; and, behaviorism’s concentration on behavior was not false but wrongly done. Therefore, the solution lies in ignoring neither the psyche nor behavior, but in radically reconstructing the understanding of both human consciousness and human conduct in their inseparable continuity. This, we claim, is exactly the path that can be clearly inferred from Marx’ statements. He provides us with the opportunity to construct Marxist-Leninist psychology as a “really concrete (*soderžatel’nyj*) and actual⁶ science”.

The point of departure for this reconstruction is to be found in the Marxian notion of human activity. In the *1844 Manuscripts*, using a Hegelian terminology, Marx defines human activity as the dis-objectification of the subject, which is simultaneously an objectification of the object. “The great thing in Hegel’s *Phenomenology* and its final result — the dialectic of negation as the moving and productive principle”, writes Marx, “is simply that Hegel grasps the self-development of man as process, objectification as disobjectification, as alienation and transcendence of this alienation; that he thus grasps the nature of *work* and comprehends objective man, authentic because actual, as the result of his *own work*”.⁷ All human activity, for Marx, is man’s objectification of himself; or, in other words, the process of objective revelation of his “essential powers”. Analyzing work in *Capital*, Marx asserts very simply that in work the “subject becomes the object”. Thus, man’s activity is not a reaction to external stimuli, nor is it the operation of a subject on an object; it is “the subject becoming the object”. Thereby we find the link not only between the subject and his activity but also between the activity and its products. The very understanding of activity as objectification already includes this notion: Marx stresses this when — analyzing work in *Capital* — he says that “activity and the object mutually penetrate each other”. To the extent that human activity is objectified, its objectification — or the transition from subject to object

— is revealed in the objects of his activity (included are his feelings and consciousness), since the objective being of industry is an open book of essential human powers, concretely laying before us human psychology.⁸ Therefore, “A *psychology* for which this book, that is, the most observably present and accessible part of history, remains closed cannot become an actual, substantial and *real* science.”⁹

What is more, the activity of man reveals not only the link from subject to object but also that from object to subject. Objectification is not a “transition into an object” of a ready-made subject who is isolated from his own activity. It is not just a projection of a given consciousness. It is in objectification as transition to the object that the subject himself is formed. “Only through the objectively unfolded wealth of human nature is the wealth of the subjective *human* sensibility either cultivated or created — a musical ear, an eye for the beauty of form, in short, *senses* capable of human satisfaction, confirming themselves as essentially *human* capacities. For not only the five senses but also the so-called spiritual and moral senses (will, love, etc.), in a word, *human* sense and the humanity of the senses come into being only through the existence of *their* object, through nature *humanized*.”¹⁰ And, further: “Hence the objectification of the human essence, both theoretically and practically, is necessary to *humanize* man’s *senses* and also create a *human sense* corresponding to the entire wealth of humanity and nature.”¹¹

In this way, by objectifying himself in the products of his activities, man is formed — “in part generated, in part developed” — both in feeling and in consciousness, according to the famous statement of *Capital*: “. . . in changing external nature, man simultaneously changes his own nature”. It is not in penetrating into the depths of inert immediacy, but in active labor transforming the world that man’s consciousness is formed.

One further link is needed finally to demarcate the thought of Marx on the self-generating subject from that of Hegel.

When I objectify myself in my activity, I am simultaneously involved in an objective context that is independent of me and my will. I am inserted into objective social relations and the objective results of my activity determine social relations — the products of my activity are the products of social activity. “Activity and satisfaction (*Genuss*), both in

their content and *mode of existence*, are *social, social* activity and *social* satisfaction.”¹²

This applies not just to my practical activity in the narrower sense, but also to my theoretical activity. Every idea that I formulate takes its objective meaning and sense in the social usage which it acquires in relationship to the objective situation in which I formulate it, and not depending just on the subjective intents and convictions with which I use it, just as the products of my practical activity and their objective content are products of social activity: “Social activity and satisfaction by no means exist *merely* in the form of an *immediate* communal activity and immediate *communal satisfaction*; i.e., not just in reality and spirit, experienced . . . in *actual association* with other men. . . . Even as I am *scientifically* active, etc. — an activity I can seldom pursue in direct community with others — I am *socially* active because I am active as a *man*. Not only is the material of my activity — such as the language in which the thinker is active — given to me as a social product, but my *own* existence *is* social activity; what I make from myself I make for society, conscious of my nature as social.”¹³

Therefore, the human being is not the Hegelian self-generating subject; for, if my consciousness is formed in my activity through the products of this activity, it is objectively formed through the products of social activity. In its intimate essence, my consciousness is mediated by the objective bonds which are established in social practice and in which I include every one of my acts, practical and theoretical. Every one of my acts is linked to me by thousands of bonds, spun by the historically accumulating culture that mediates my consciousness.

This central Marxian notion of the formation of the human psyche via the mediation of these products cuts through to the main problem of contemporary psychology and opens the way to an effectively new solution to the question of its object, over which the contemporary schools have been quarreling.

In response to the basic idea of introspective psychology on the immediacy of the psychic (immediate experience as the object of psychology), in Marx we find clear assertion of the objective mediation of consciousness. For, only “thanks to the (concrete) objectively developed richness of the human essence” is achieved the wealth of human subjective sensibility. All of Marx’ statements on psychology

carry this idea of the objective mediation of the psyche. For Marx, language is “practically existing for other people and therefore, for myself, real consciousness . . .”; “only through his relation with Peter the man, similar to himself, does Paul the man come to relate to himself as man”, and so on. Thereby is opened a path to objective study of the psyche. The psyche is not subjective and it is not mediated only by consciousness; it can be indirectly known through human activity and the products of this activity since it is, in its being, objectively mediated. On the basis of this conception, introspection itself cannot be excluded but has to be reconstrued. The psyche and consciousness can be the object of psychology, which is concrete and real. Objectivity is achieved in psychology not by breaking contact with the psychic but by basically transforming the understanding of human consciousness and activity.

The Marxian analysis of human consciousness and labor in the form “that constitutes the unique status of man”, shows forth in all clarity in what this reconstruction consists, how radical it is, and how it opens the path to objective knowledge of the psyche.

Marx’ basic statement on consciousness is well known: “Consciousness (*das Bewusstsein*) can be nothing other than conscious being (*das bewusste Sein*) and the being of people is the real process of their lives”¹⁴; i.e. consciousness is a reflection of being, to use the expression of Lenin. We have to add that “My relationship to my milieu is my consciousness”¹⁵, since — unlike the animal which relates to nothing — man’s relations to others are given to him; language is consciousness existing for other people and because of that also for myself. These two assertions form the core of the Marxian notion of consciousness. The essence of consciousness consists in the fact that my relationship to my milieu is given in human consciousness as a relation, i.e. the real relation of man to milieu is mediated through its ideal reflection which is practically realized in language. Language is the plane on which I fix the being reflected by me and the processuality of my operation. In this way, the ideal plane is included in the situation which I know, as are the operations I use to change the world — and this has to include the structure of these activities. Mediation through the ideal plane frees action from exclusive dependency on the immediately given situation. As Lenin writes¹⁶, the “conscious man” thereby excises himself out of nature and sets himself over against the world of things. Man ceases to

be a slave of the immediately given situation. His mediated actions are called forth not just by immediate stimuli but also by goals and plans that lie beyond the immediate. He becomes imaginative, goal-oriented and able to will. These last are what distinguish the human from the animal. "Work as establishing the unique status of man" has two main traits: (1) "The process of work ends in a result that was present in man already at the inception of the process, ideally": the real act contains the ideal, and (2) "the form of given nature changes, as does his own nature as he defines goals that obligate his will".¹⁷ The presence of the ideal plane is involved in the changing character of the activity itself.

This description of the specificity of the human forms of knowledge and activity in their interconnections is brilliantly confirmed in animal experiments and by pathological cases. In the research of Köhler, two traits emerge as marking primates that are close to humans: (1) the lack of *Darstellungsfunktion* of speech i.e. the lack of the power of verbal representation but the presence of affective speech, and (2) the dependency of these primates on the immediately given situation. One has to become aware of the internal bonding of these two aspects. They are negative confirmation of the Marxian assertions. No less telling are the results on aphasia and apraxia, obtained by Head, Jackson, Gelb and Goldstein, where absence of the ideal plane is connected with the impossibility of purposeful, goal-directed behavior.

As a precondition of the specifically human form of activity — labor — human consciousness is also its first result. In its essence, consciousness is formed by and in transformatory activity. Such a penetrating and "from the inside" formative social activity is the decisive element in Marx' conception of the formation of human consciousness. Some contrasts will make this clear. Henri Bergson also stresses the role of practice in the formation of intellect; the latter is formed for the needs of practice in order to act on the material world. From this postulate, however, Bergson concludes that the intellect does not express consciousness in its interior essence but only characterizes the contours of matter as disassociated for purposes of practice.¹⁸ The psychologist and philosopher must, therefore, go beyond this surface turned to the material world and penetrate into the "immediate data of consciousness", since practice only reforms, but does not form the internal world of consciousness. The French sociological school of Durkheim also

talked about the social nature of consciousness, but then they reduced psychology to ideology (Lévy-Bruhl) or separated the psychological and social (Ch. Blondel) or excluded consciousness from the domain of psychology (H. Wallon).¹⁹

Finally, Freud did recognize some social components to the “I” but found the driving forces in the unconscious, which is seen as antagonistically and externally related to consciousness.

In this way, decisive for the Marxist-Leninist notion is the overcoming of the opposition between social and individual, external and internal, accomplished in the primitive conception of the formation of the interior nature of human consciousness in the process of human action on the external world, in the process of social practice, and in the formation of the subject through the products of social practice.

Central to these notions is the assertion of the *historicity* of consciousness. One grows along with the other. “From its very beginning, then, consciousness is a social product”, writes Marx, “and will remain such as long as there are people.”²⁰

We sometimes find in the Soviet Union the view that recognition of the historicity of consciousness, and even recognition of the genetic viewpoint in general, is specific to Marxist-Leninist psychology. This is not the case. It is enough to refer to the principle of development in Spencer’s view of evolution; but the matter is not in the idea itself but in how it is understood.

What is decisive here can best be detected in a contrast between Marx and Lévy-Bruhl. The latter held for a not just quantitative but qualitative transformation of the psyche in the process of social-historical development — changes not only in content but also in forms and structures. He saw the historical development of consciousness as not reducible to changes on the individual plane and as bound up with changes in social formations. He had a, so to speak, dialectical view and recognized the social nature of psychic development. However, Lévy-Bruhl reduced sociality to a mere matter of ideology which, in turn, he reduced to psychology. Social relations, on his account, remain at the level of social consciousness. Social being here becomes a matter of socially organized experience. Sociality loses all real link to nature, to the objective world, and to any real activity of human practice.

Consequently, study of the historical development of the psyche

turns not on what happens in the sphere of practice, but on what is given in ideology. Psychology of man at earlier stages in his development appears to reflect only his religious-mythological representations. Lévy-Bruhl defines “primitive man” solely in ideological terms. Consequently, all his thought is pre-logical and mystical, unsuited for practice and insensitive to contradictions. Man at these early stages supposedly lacks even the elements of intellect that Köhler attributed to his apes. There is a *caesura* between the early cognitive and the intellectual. Continuity here becomes impossible. This basically false and politically reactionary stress on differences shows the outcome of ideological mysticism. As a result of this idealist treatment, the social relations lose their character of driving forces of social consciousness, and social formations become static structures.

Marx’ idea is different in its very foundation; for here people’s social relations are not counterposed to their relations to nature. “Work is above all a process occurring between man and nature . . .”²¹; and it is the basic social category. Social relations are, above all, real relations of production among people, accumulating in the process of their acting on nature. Only the correct understanding, provided by Marx, of the relationship between nature and the social essence of man can lead to a sufficiently profound and basically correct understanding of the historical development of the psyche.

Marx’ view on the relation of man to nature was clearly formulated. “*Man*”, he writes, “is a *natural being*.”²² “*Man* is the immediate object of natural science”, “*nature* is the direct object of the *science of man*. The first object for man — man himself — is nature, . . .”²³ Hence, “even history is an *actual* part of the *history of nature*, the establishment of nature by man”.²⁴

Essential to correct understanding of this “establishment of nature by man” is a correct understanding of how *Aufhebung* in Marx is different from that in Hegel. On the Hegelian notion, Marx declared that this “is the root of Hegel’s *false* positivism or of his merely *apparent* criticism . . .”²⁵ — that positivism for which “the real is rational”, leading to justification of the Prussian monarchy. The *Aufhebung* in Hegel is a purely ideal operation — a transition from lower to higher is combined with a dialectical understanding of this lower form as “untrue”, imperfect, lower. But, after this *Aufhebung*, the lower form remains intact under the higher form. “Having recognized that man leads an external-

ized life in law, politics, etc., man leads in this externalized life as such his truly human life.”²⁶ “Thus after transcending religion, for example, and recognizing it as a product of self-externalization, he yet finds confirmation of himself in *religion as religion*.”²⁷

For Marx, *Aufhebung* is not just an ideal operation, but a process of real change, needing not just “critique” (of the left Hegelians) but revolution. In the process of development — including the psychological — the emergence of new, higher forms is linked not with perception of the untruth or imperfection of the lower forms, but with their real reconstruction. The development of man, in this way, is not a process of building a superstructure over the nature of human social being, but it is a process of “establishing nature by man”. This development “thus indicates the extent to which his *human* essence has become a *natural* essence for him”²⁸, “the extent to which his *human nature* has become *nature* to him”.²⁹ Relative to the psychological development of man, the historical development of the psyche does not reduce to a superstructural “realm of the spirit” over the sensual and instinctual levels. It is not exhausted in the fact that over the primitive animal instincts are built “higher spiritual feelings”, i.e. thought built over the “lower drives”. The process of development is deeper than this; what were needs of man become over history human needs.

Human senses develop and are thereby included in the whole of historical development: “. . . the development of the five senses is a labor of the whole previous history of the world”³⁰; and, with one stroke, Marx shows the essence of this development: “The *senses* have therefore become *theoreticians* immediately in their *praxis*. They try to relate themselves to their *subject matter* (*Sache*) for its own sake, but the subject matter itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man . . .”³¹ This Marxian remark succinctly states a key question in the contemporary view on the historical development of perception — liberation of perception from the embrace of action and from the fixity of the lower forms, their “categorization”, is the precondition of the higher forms of human activity. . . . Marx stresses the historicity of this process, showing how changing social-historical conditions affect the relationship of “things for their own sake”. When a mineral becomes a commodity, it no longer appears to the human eye in its beauty, and ceases to be for its own sake.³²

Thus, even elementary feelings and instincts — the whole human

psyche — are included in the process of historical development, uneven as it might be. Consciousness is not in even and continuous development, but it does participate in the process of historical development. This is how the process of “establishment of nature by man” is to be understood, i.e., as the psychological development of man, penetrated to a greater depth than ever before.

Looking at this process of development and change, Marx showed how it is subject to social-historical conditioning. He showed in a very concrete way how the different divisions of labor conditioned the human psyche, as well as the effects of private property on the human psyche. In this conception of development, revolutionary practice follows with natural necessity from revolutionary theory. If the psychological nature of man is dependent on twisted social relations, then the latter have to be changed. In place of the frequent bourgeois notion of unchanging social structure based on unchanging human nature, we have the notion of the changing nature of all. Also falling by the wayside is the idealist understanding of change of consciousness as a mere changing of one’s mind, happening spontaneously and becoming decisive for the historical process. Only in actual socially reconstructive practice — in labor — are found the internal contradictions which incite human consciousness to develop.

All the politically necessary changes we face under socialism — the restructuring of people’s consciousness, and the overcoming of remnants of capitalism not only in economics but also in people’s heads — find their theoretical grounding in Marx’ notion of how consciousness develops historically under the influence of transformatory social practice. Itself the product of historical development, consciousness becomes the precondition of this same historical development — its free but essential component.

“Human consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but also creates it”³³, wrote Lenin. A shift in consciousness — and its form and content are inseparable — is a not insignificant element in the historical process; it is no more epi-phenomenal than physiological processes.

Being determines consciousness. But changes in consciousness are changes in being that signify changed conditions for the effecting of the activities of people who are conditioned — to a great extent through their consciousnesses — by objective conditions. The Leninist problem

of the spontaneous and conscious (cf. *What is to be done?*³⁴) falls, of course, outside psychology, but the transition from one to the other is a profound psychic change.

The *problem of the person* is central to these psychological considerations of Marx, and is also critical to the crisis in modern psychology since introspectionism reduces man to internals and behaviorism reduces him to externals.

On the contemporary scene, the person is viewed from a “depth psychology” perspective of Freudianism or from a personalist perspective (W. Stern), both of which are foreign to Marxism. Symptomatic of the situation of psychology in the USSR is the fact that our psychology — a psychology that wants to be Marxist — has been treating the problem of the person only from a Freud-Adler or Stern viewpoint.

Of course, within Marxist-Leninist psychology the problem of the person should be central and should receive a totally other treatment. Outside of its links with the person, one cannot understand psychological development because “people who are developing material production and material communication are thereby changing their reality, as well as their thought and the products of their thought”³⁵.

The forms of consciousness do not develop autonomously in some sort of autogenesis; they are the attributes or functions of the real whole, to which they belong. In abstraction from the person, any account of consciousness can only be idealistic. To this approach that begins with consciousness, Marx opposes another that “begins with the actually existing individuals and considers consciousness only as *their* consciousness”.³⁶

Therefore, Marxist psychology cannot be reduced to an analysis of impersonal processes and functions. These very processes or functions are, for Marx, “organs of individuality”. “Man”, writes Marx, “appropriates to himself his manifold essence in an all-sided way, thus as a whole man.” In this participates each of his “*human* relations to the world — seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, perceiving, sensing, wishing, acting, loving — in short, all the organs of his individuality . . .”.³⁷

Without such an approach, one cannot activate the basic Marxian conception that human consciousness is a social product and that everything psychic is socially conditioned. Social relations are those

where one meets not just isolated sense organs or psychic processes, but man as a person. The determining influence of social relations and work is exercised only through the person.

But, inclusion of the person in psychology should not lead to psychologism. The person is not identical with consciousness or with self-consciousness, as is asserted in spiritualist psychology.

In his analysis of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, Marx cites among the errors that of taking the subject always as consciousness or self-consciousness or, more exactly, as abstract consciousness.³⁸ But, although they are not identical to the person, both consciousness and self-consciousness are essential for the person. Both the person and its relations with others depend on consciousness which — since it is a property of matter which can be either conscious or not — is a property of the human person, without which it would not be what it is.

But the essence of the person is to be a set of social relations.³⁹

In a special investigation devoted to the history of the word "*persona*", A. Trendelenburg notes that it came from an Etruscan source and indicated a social function. Bühler notes that this meaning has been subverted so that the word now designates an internal essence (*Wesensart*) and raises the question as to the extent to which how one fulfills one's social role belongs to one's essence. Evidently for Bühler the person's essence and his social relations are external one to the other, and the term "person" indicates now one, and now the other; it comes closer to the Etruscan sense, i.e. "mask"⁴⁰, than to interior essence. The series of social functions that a man has to fulfill in bourgeois society remain exterior to his person.

The human person in general is formed only through his relations to other people. Only in my relations with other people do I form myself as a human being: "Only through his relation with Peter the man, similar to himself, does Paul the man come to relate to himself as man. At the same time, Paul as such, in all his Pauline corporeality, is for him an instance of the species 'man'."⁴¹

In counterpoise to the ideas prevalent in contemporary psychology and psycho-pathology — where biological conditioning appears as the primary immediate given, as the absolute, self-sufficient ego, defined by the depths of biologically determined constitutional peculiarities, independent of social bonds and mediations — for Marx the person and his

consciousness are mediated by social relations and its development is mainly determined by the dynamics of these relations. However, just as rejection of psychologism is not rejection of the psychological, so rejection of biologism is not rejection of the biological. Psycho-physical nature is not overcome or neutralized, but mediated by social relations and, voilà, nature becomes man!

A revolution in psychological understanding of man was also occasioned by Marx' notion of human needs.

The concept of need, in contrast to that of instinct, must enjoy a higher place in Marxist-Leninist psychology. Lack of attention to needs in the context of human conduct leads necessarily to idealism. "People are inclined", writes Engels, "to explain their actions through their thoughts, instead of through their needs (which, of course, are reflected in the brain) and, in this way, over time arose the idealist worldview which took over, especially at the end of the ancient world."⁴² With use of the notion of need, the whole doctrine on the motivation of human conduct acquires a wholly new interpretation different from that based on instincts and inclinations. In contrast to rationalist notions, needs express the claims of human "nature" and of the human organism. Although needs are often brought into context with instincts and inclinations, they are not the same. The mediational social relations are a product of history, while instincts are only physiological.

The notion of need is beginning to acquire a significant place in contemporary psychology. As noted in his address to the Tenth International Psychology Congress, A. Katz was concentrating on hunger and appetite in the context of a "psychology of need".⁴³ E. Claparède⁴⁴ and K. Lewin⁴⁵ reported along similar lines. . . . It appears that in the course of historical development not only are new needs built on the original instincts but these latter are themselves rebuilt in function of the ever-complexifying social relations — to use Marx' words, the needs of man become human needs. Therefore, in the place of abstract idealist conceptions of need we find human conduct, but also in opposition to a biologicistic theory of these needs: the key lies in history, over which these needs are experienced.

In this way, the emphasis on needs over instincts provides for the historicity of psychological motivation. This supplies a rich picture of the basic motivations of human activity and overcomes the temptation

— e.g. in Freudian pan-sexualism — to look for one single source. The wealth and variety of historically accumulating needs provide for the ever-widening circle of motivations of human conduct, the meaning of which depends directly on concrete historical conditions. “We saw”, writes Marx, “the importance under socialism of a *wealth* of human needs, both a *new sort of production* and a new *object* of production: there is a new manifestation of essential *human* forces and a new enrichment of human essence.”⁴⁶ “Under the dominance of private property”, stresses Marx in view of the social conditioning of this assertion, “we observe the opposite”: every new need creates a new dependence. But, on the “hypothesis of socialism” this wealth of historically developing needs — ever varied and developing on ever higher planes — opens the path to rich, full and dynamically developing stimuli for human activity.

In addition to these ideas on motivation, there is Marx’ understanding of interests as socially and historically conditioned driving forces of human activity. The historicity of needs is connected by Marx with the idea of historically variable talents. “Differences among *natural endowments* in individuals”, writes Marx, “is not only *cause* but also *effect* of the division of labor.”⁴⁷ Marx writes in *Capital* that industrial production requires individuals with certain talents and, in turn, develops those talents that are needed for production.⁴⁸ This means that the natural gifts of the workers are the ground of the emergence of the division of labor, but this division also influences the natural gifts that are not given in a fixed form, but vary over history, especially in the emergence from primitive to developed forms of capitalism.⁴⁹ In fact, the division of labor leads to the formation of specialists who bear only “part of a social function . . .”⁵⁰, and the further development of automation forms individuals who are but aggregates of unintegrated social functions.

The psychological nature of the person is concretised in his needs and talents. This nature is in essence conditioned and mediated by the same social-historical conditions, in which they are formed. This dependence of the person and his structures on the social-historical formation is acutely described by Marx in his account of the reign of private property. Even Proudhon’s Communism objectively confirms the power of private property, through its attempt to abstract from

individual talents.⁵¹ Denial of the person is, essentially, “only *one way* of reference to the fact that private property tries to affirm itself as *positive sociality*”.⁵²

The products of human activity that are “concretized” objectifications of human essence (of the essential powers) are, thanks to their objectivity, alienated under the domination of private property. As a result every new need that can be the source of new human wealth becomes a new dependency and, as these accumulate, alienation occurs. Only the overcoming of this alienation — not ideally and metaphysically, but actually and concretely through revolution, i.e. by establishing Communism — can guarantee the full development of the individual. “The overcoming of private property means therefore the complete *emancipation* of all human senses and aptitudes (*Eigenschaften*), but it means this emancipation precisely because these senses and aptitudes have become *human* both subjectively and objectively.”⁵³

Only the accomplishment of true human relations in the collective guarantees the development of the human person. The wealth of actual relations to people is not the actual, spiritual wealth of man, and the strength of the individual is to be found in that of the collective. The tendency toward levelling and impersonality is foreign to genuine Communism. Marx pursued the question of the levelling of talents in his polemic with Lassalle in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*. Lenin further developed these ideas when discussing the rights of vagabonds in *State and Revolution*. The current campaign against “wage-levelling” and for care in appreciating the gifts of each worker are practical realizations under socialism of this theoretical assertion of Marx.

Only in the collectivity did Marx see the individual as able to develop fully his gifts; only in the collective is the person free. When Marx talks of “personal freedom” he is consciously departing from the meaning that term has in bourgeois society, where the person is free as a bird — free to die of hunger!

Freedom can be formal and negative or concrete and positive: the former asks ‘free from what’, while the latter asks ‘free for what?’ Marx shows that only the collective can guarantee freedom in the second sense since it opens the path to full development of the individual. In the *1844 Manuscripts* Marx describes the true collectivity: “*Communism* as *positive* overcoming of *private property* as *human self-alienation*,

and thus as the actual *appropriation of the human* essence through and for man; therefore as the complete and conscious restoration of man to himself within the total wealth of previous development, the restoration of man as a *social*, that is, human being. This Communism as completed naturalism is humanism, as completed humanism it is naturalism. It is the *genuine* resolution of the antagonism between man and nature and between man and man; it is the true resolution of the conflict between existence and essence, objectification and self-affirmation, freedom and necessity, individual and species. It is the riddle of history solved and knows itself as this solution.”⁵⁴

We have in this article, of course, not resolved the wealth of ideas which psychology can gain from the works of Marx. We have only lightly touched upon some mentions by Marx that are relevant to central problems, including that on the object of psychology (the problem of consciousness and of its relations to human existence), and that on development and on the person. But even this rapid scan shows us that Marx provides psychology with a complete system of ideas. In the context of the foundations of Marxist-Leninist methodology his ideas trace the basic lines of a psychological system and point toward the path along which psychology can become “a contentful and *genuine* science”.

A serious task now stands before Soviet psychology: to use concrete research work in order to actualize the potentialities, by accomplishing the unity of both methodology and the factual material, both in theory and in practice, to strengthen its methodological position and conscious service to the construction of a classless society which is under way in the USSR, where we students of Marx and Lenin are carrying on what was central for the whole life of Marx.

NOTES

* Originally published in *Sovetskaja psichotehnika*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1934. On Rubinštein's life and career, see Ted Payne, *S. L. Rubinštein and the Philosophical Foundation of Soviet Psychology*, Dordrecht, Reidel, 1968.

¹ Cf. *Bericht über die XII Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie*, hrsg. von Kafka, Jena, 1932, S. 3–6.

² Cf. K. Bühler, *Die Krise der Psychologie*, Jena, 1929. (Izd. 2-e. Cf. s. 1–2 and 27–28).

- ³ Cf. *Zeitschrift für Angewandte Psychologie* 1933, 1.
- ⁴ In Russia, this position was taken by Nikolai Grot, a Wundtian.
- ⁵ Cf. J. B. Watson, *Psychology from the Standpoint of Behaviorism*, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1924.
- ⁶ K. Marks i F. Engel's, *Iz rannich proizvedenij* (From the Early Works), M., Gt., 1956. str. 595. (English: L. D. Easton, Kurt H. Guddat (eds), *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, Anchor, 1967. p. 311).
- ⁷ *Ibid.* str. 627. (English: p. 321)
- ⁸ *Ibid.* str. 594. (English: p. 309)
- ⁹ *Ibid.* str. 595. (English: p. 311)
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* str. 593–594. (English: 309)
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* str. 594. (English: 309)
- ¹² *Ibid.* str. 589. (English: 305)
- ¹³ *Ibid.* str. 590. (English: 306)
- ¹⁴ K. Marks i F. Engel's *Soč.* t. 3, str. 25.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.* str. 29 (note 2).
- ¹⁶ Cf. V. I. Lenin, *Poln. sobr. soč.*, t. 29, str. 85.
- ¹⁷ Marks i Engel's, *Soč.*, t. 23, str. 189.
- ¹⁸ Cf. H. Bergson, *Evolution créatrice*, Paris, 1911.
- ¹⁹ Cf. H. Wallon, *Le problème biologique de la conscience*, Paris, 1929. (Wallon later abandoned this position)
- ²⁰ Marks i Engel's *Soč.*, t. 3, str. 29.
- ²¹ *Ibid.* t. 23, str. 188.
- ²² Marks i Engel's, *Iz rannich . . .*, str. 631. (English: p. 325)
- ²³ *Ibid.* str. 596.
- ²⁴ *Loc. cit.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.* str. 634. (English: 329)
- ²⁶ *Ibid.* str. 634. (English: 329)
- ²⁷ *Loc. cit.*
- ²⁸ *Ibid.* str. 587. (English: 303)
- ²⁹ *Loc. cit.*
- ³⁰ *Ibid.* str. 594. (English: 309)
- ³¹ *Ibid.* str. 592. (English: 308)
- ³² *Ibid.* str. 594. (English: 309)
- ³³ V. I. Lenin, *Poln. sobr. soč.*, t. 29, str. 194.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, t. 6, str. 28–53.
- ³⁵ Marks i Engel's *Soč.*, t. 3, str. 25.
- ³⁶ *Loc. cit.*
- ³⁷ Marks i Engel's, *Iz rannich . . .*, str. 591. (English: 307)
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, str. 625.
- ³⁹ Marks i Engel's, *Soč.*, t. 3, str. 3.
- ⁴⁰ A. Trendelenburg, 'Zur Geschichte des Wortes "Person"', *Kantstudien* 1908, 13, S. 4–5.
- ⁴¹ Marks i Engel's, *Soč.*, t. 23, str. 62 (Note 18).
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, t. 20, str. 493.
- ⁴³ See his address 'Hunger and Appetite' (*Bericht über den Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie*, hrsg. XII von Kafka, 1932, S. 285) and his book on the same theme.

⁴⁴ Cf. E. Claparède, 'La psychologie fonctionnelle', *Revue philosophique* 1933, 1–2.

⁴⁵ Cf. especially K. Lewin, *Versatz. Wille und Bedürfnis*, Berlin, 1926.

⁴⁶ Marks i Engel's, *Iz rannich . . .*, str. 599.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* str. 611.

⁴⁸ Marks i Engel's, *Soč.*, t. 23, str. 361.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* (Notes to Chapters 12 and 13).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* str. 499.

⁵¹ Marks i Engel's, *Iz rannich . . .*, str. 586.

⁵² *Ibid.* str. 587.

⁵³ *Ibid.* str. 592. (English: 308)

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* str. 588. (English: 304)

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