

humanized sensation), man's conceptual thinking, concept and judgement (including inference), the system and method of the special sciences (including hypotheses, experiments, statistics, etc.) and, finally, the most general philosophical system and the most general philosophical and logical method (incl. the all-round practical check-up and the impressive socio-revolutionary experience).

All these forms of scientific knowledge taken in their diversity and in their superior dialectical unity, are what we have already called 'the supreme form' of man's thinking, i.e. a unity of forms or a form of man's thinking, i.e. a unity of forms or a form of man's scientific thinking, one in its diversity; only when this thinking is given precisely in this essential form, is it 'truth in its full scope'.

This is the dialectical materialistic definition of truth, further clarified and specified.

Truth as such is a dialectical unity of the objective and the subjective, the abstract and the concrete, the absolute and the relative. It is a socio-historical and individual creative effort and in a class society it is determined by class and party positions.

ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE CHARACTER OF TRUTH

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Absolute truth has often been conceived only as an ideal, which is infinitely distant from us, although we always strive towards it and get closer to it.

This conception has nothing in common with the dialectical materialistic conception of Engels and Lenin about absolute truth.

Dialectical materialism does not consider absolute truth as a truth which has encompassed, reflected and fully exhausted the entire world reality, taken in all its diversity and infiniteness in space and time. Dialectical materialism does not call this simply absolute, but 'absolute truth of the last instance'. This is the 'absolute truth' of the metaphysicians-idealists, but not that of the dialectical materialists.

How does materialistic dialectics solve this problem?

In the first place, insofar as in the content of the cognitive image there are always elements or aspects which do not depend either on man or on mankind and insofar as knowledge is a process of coincidence between the idea and the object itself such as it exists by itself, only that much truth – in its objectivity – is always the absolute truth about things. In this sense Engels and Lenin connected the question of absolute truth with the question of objective truth.

Lenin strongly criticized Bogdanov for having failed to bear in mind precisely this aspect of the problem. Bogdanov confused absolute truth with 'truth of the last instance', and in so doing abandoned all possibility of arriving at the absolute truth and sank into the quagmire of relativism. 'To be a materialist,' Lenin wrote, 'means to accept objective truth, i. e. the truth which does not depend upon mankind; it means to accept absolute

truth in one way or another.* Bogdanov, Lenin wrote elsewhere, has confused this question with the question of 'whether man's notions, expressing subjective truth, can express this truth all at once, fully unconditionally, absolutely, or only approximately, relatively? **

We have already pointed out that no specific subject, acting under specific socio-historical and natural conditions, is able to know the truth wholly and all at once. Objective reality itself eternally and continuously moves, changes and dialectically develops. Man himself as a subject of cognition (and of action) also eternally and continuously moves, changes and dialectically develops. It directly follows therefrom that the individual subject (and even social consciousness) can never encompass wholly, unconditionally, exhaustively and once and for ever the infinite and diverse objective reality; he can do this only conditionally, partially, approximately and relatively.

It does not follow from this, however, that, first, man's thinking as a whole in all its infinite development is incapable in principle of cognizing objective reality in the unity of its infinite diversity. Here there is and there can be no place for scepticism and agnosticism. It does not follow either that every relative, approximate and conditional knowledge does not contain a particle of absolute truth as well in one form or another, and to one degree or another.

Lenin wrote: 'N.B. Among other things subjectivism (scepticism, sophistic, etc.) differs from dialectics, among other things, in that in objective dialectics the distinction between the relative and the absolute is also a conditional (relative) one. Objective dialectics holds that the absolute is contained in the relative, while subjectivism and sophistic consider the relative to be only relative and to exclude the absolute. ***

This profound thought of Lenin's is a concretization and a further development of the well-known thought of Engels about absolute truth being an infinite sum-total of relative truths. At the same time Lenin, agreeing with Joseph Dietzgen's proposition that we do cognize absolute truth, but not wholly and not all at once, adduced (and agreed in principle with) the following

* V.I. Lenin, Works, Vol. 13, 3rd (Russian) edition, p. 108

** Ibid., p. 100

*** V.I. Lenin, Philosophical Notebooks, Gospolitizdat, 1947, p. 328

thought of Dietzgen as well: 'We can only relatively know Nature and its parts; because every part, though it is only a relative part of Nature, contains the nature of the absolute, the nature of the natural whole in itself.* Lenin criticized Dietzgen for his contention that this knowledge is 'inborn', but otherwise he fully agreed with the proposition.

This proposition is indeed an exceptionally profound and fruitful dialectical thought. Because it is a fact that the part never exhausts its whole, but as a part of its own 'natural' whole, it bears in itself its innermost, most essential and fundamental 'nature', that is its quality, property, law, force, essence. In this case every particle or manifestation of the natural whole bears in itself its most characteristic, most essential features as a whole or, to put it in other words, as unity, i. e. its materiality. Even consciousness as the most intricate and superior form of the intensive and dynamic aspect of matter bears in itself the 'nature of the natural whole', i. e. represents a property of matter and not a spiritualistic or a divine and mystical property.

It follows therefrom:

First, the one 'natural whole' manifests itself in the infinite multitude of its 'parts', 'forms', 'aspects', etc. Outside of them and without them it would be an empty, frozen, dead abstraction and not a real, living, viable and developing concrete reality. It directly follows that the unconditional, the unlimited (being and knowledge) does not exist and is not possible without the conditional and the limited (being and knowledge). The absolute (being and knowledge) does not exist and is not possible without the relative (being and knowledge). The absolute does not exist outside of, but only in and through the relative.

Second, every part and every individual form or manifestation (hence, every relative being and knowledge as well) are possible only as parts, forms, manifestations of their own one natural (material) whole. Only in it and through it can they be and actually are real parts, forms and manifestations, without turning into empty and absolutely dismembered, dead and motionless abstractions. The relative (being and knowledge) is possible and exists only in and through the absolute and not outside of it.

The absolute and the relative in their living and dialectical contradictory unity give us the real scientific truth, which is

* Ibid., Works, Vol. 13, Third (Russian) Edition, p. 110

always objective, concrete and absolute, while also being subjective, abstract and relative.

The theory of relativity proves that space and time are also relative, but at the same time Einstein affirmed (contrary to his own Machist statements) that the relativity of time and space was not an obstacle to the recognition of their objectivity and, therefore, to the establishment of an absolute scientific truth about things. This thought (until recently insufficiently appraised by many, including myself) is a brilliant confirmation of the dialectical materialistic teaching on the unity of absolute and relative truth. And if Einstein was familiar with the dialectical theory of reflection and consciously applied it, in his person we would have undoubtedly had not only one of the greatest physicists of our time, but also a great philosopher – dialectical materialist, a fact which would have exerted a tremendous and most fruitful influence upon the further development of 'relativistic' physics and of all modern physics.

Finally, it is not difficult to realize that the dialectical materialistic teaching on the unity of absolute and relative truth is also confirmed by the universal historical development of human ideologies, world outlooks and methods of thinking.

If we consider truth not as an individual judgement but as a socio-historical process of subjective reflection of the objective truth in men's social consciousness, it is not difficult to realize that in actual fact every social and historical group in a given formation and epoch has its own truth, its more or less objective true and exact knowledge of the natural, social and spiritual phenomena. And we can boldly say that every one of these historical social truths have, each in its time and in a certain sense, represented the absolute truth which the human mind could attain under the prevailing conditions.

Suffice it to recall, for example, the words of Engels that even slavery in its time was a step forward along the path of progress and that the whole further social and cultural evolution of mankind would not have been possible without it. For this reason the 'truth' of the slave society, the 'truth' of Democritus, Heraclitus, Aristotle and Lucretius was absolute for its time or, rather, a particle of the absolute truth at which they could possibly arrive at that time. The same can be said in principle of

the feudal, the bourgeois-capitalistic and the proletarian-socialist truth.

However, the slave-holding, feudal and capitalist relations of production, which to a certain extent were historically necessary and progressive for their time, inevitably had, by virtue of their own dialectically contradictory development, to reach – and actually reached – the limits of their further evolution at which this evolution was not only arrested but also obstructed by the production, political and other forms of man's social life, which had already lost their progressive and socially necessary character. Precisely at such moments objective truth was superseded by purely subjective and reactionary 'truths', science was displaced by religious or other anti-scientific 'ideas', knowledge became relative, i. e. it ceased to be absolute (objective) as well. At such moments human history was faced with the dilemma: either a complete disintegration and collapse of society and culture, or a removal of the obstacles in the name of a new society and culture, of a new consciousness and a new truth. This new truth, rejecting all that was negative in the heritage, critically mastered all that was positive and viable in it in order further to develop it, absorbing it into a qualitatively new social, cultural and scientific system.

All this would not have been possible if the truth of every socio-economic formation and epoch had been only an absolute or only a relative truth, only objective or only subjective. In both cases truth would not have been a powerful instrument in the hands of man for his orientation in the objective environment and his influencing it. Truth (scientific knowledge) could neither emerge nor be transmitted, criticized, supplemented, rejected, modified, or further developed. Insofar as this is an incontrovertible fact up to this day, it follows that:

First, the truth of every socio-economic formation, epoch, group, class, estate or nation does in fact represent a unity of the absolute and the relative, the objective and the subjective, the abstract and the concrete.

Second, the forms and degree, the role and the significance of the absolute and the relative, the objective and the subjective, the concrete and the abstract are defined and further preserved (in a 'sublated' form) or are rejected by historical development, depending upon the progressive or reactionary objective and subjective

condition and tasks of each concrete socio-historical formation in a concretely given country and in a concrete epoch or period of history.

Third, the acceptance or the rejection, the accumulation or the dilapidation of the heritage of the past differ in the different cases, depending upon the greater or smaller forces, the progressive character and the activity of the succeeding socio-economic formation or group.

And fourth, insofar as in the sphere of life and theory we have an undoubted progress, an undoubted advance and not a turning back (taken on a broad historical scale), the truth of every new and superior socio-economic formation or progressive social class implies new steps forward along the path of the achievement of objective, absolute and concrete truth. In other words the truth of the newest, most progressive, most active and most creative social class is the most superior objective, concrete and absolute human truth, possible under the given conditions.

The fact that this truth is not devoid of abstract, relative and subjective elements proves only one thing: that it remains a human truth, but this fact in itself cannot destroy the first one, viz. that it is the most superior objective and concrete absolute truth, which can be and is arrived at under the prevailing conditions. It is precisely as such that in the hands of man it becomes an ever more powerful more exact and invaluable instrument, helping him not only to interpret but also to change the world.

Truth is not only the mirror of man, it is his strength, pride and glory. It is his supreme freedom and his supreme self-satisfaction. It is the highest expression of his innermost creative nature or essence.

It follows from everything said so far (here and in the Chapter on the forms of scientific thinking) that truth never is, nor can it be, merely a knowledge taken as a result of scientific thinking, that it can never be and is not merely a system of objective, concrete and absolute individual concepts, judgements, theories and hypotheses.

Truth taken as a living, all-sided and dialectically contradictory 'process of coincidence' of the idea with the object, of the objective and the subjective, the abstract and the concrete, the

absolute and the relative, should always be and is a method of knowledge as well. Marxism-Leninism teaches us that when truth is immobile and when it does not further evolve, no matter how objective, concrete and absolute it may have been of a given time, it turns into a frozen, ossified dogma, it grows emaciated, fades and finally withers away, turning into its opposite – into a purely subjective abstract and relative untruth, deception, lie.

Truth is indeed truth only when and insofar as it is live, mobile, further developing and creative scientific truth. It is indeed truth only when and insofar as it is not merely an already achieved result (knowledge), but also motion, striving, tendency and penetration into the innermost essence of things.

Truth as such has its own, inner, immanent law of motion, of 'becoming' and development – and precisely this law is already its method.

We know that the method of knowledge is the form of motion of the subjective images of objective things and that it is neither metaphysically identical with, nor metaphysically distinct from, the law of the objective development of the objective real things themselves. Subjectively reflecting the objective dialectics of things, the method of genuine scientific thinking qualitatively differs from the objective natural and social laws but, at the same time, it is also given in an eternal process of coincidence (concordance) with them. Precisely this turns it into a powerful and invaluable weapon both for man's correct orientation in objective reality and for a humanly correct, i.e. subjective and progressive influence on it.

It is no accident that for this very reason the classics of dialectical materialism always emphasized the first-rate, exceptional and even decisive role and importance of the scientific method – 'the soul of Marxism'. How, indeed, can one grasp and define the scientific Marxist truth if it is deprived of its 'soul'?

The scientific definition and characterization of truth cannot fail, therefore, to include its method as well – something, which only those fond of 'eternal', frozen 'truths' and 'systems' do not want to admit.

If this is properly grasped, then it is easy to understand the errors of those logicians and philosophers who considered or consider that truth can be comprehended and properly defined without bearing in mind its law of motion and evolution, i. e. the

method of true thinking. Whoever has failed to realize or does not realize this, has always failed to realize and will not realize what is truth, taken simultaneously as an objective and subjective, abstract and concrete, absolute and relative image-idea of reality, one in its infinite diversity and its eternal motion.

Yet, when in this particular case we say 'image-idea' and not simply 'idea' or only 'idea in general' we thereby also stress the importance of the scientific system. However important the scientific method may be, it cannot be properly and consistently developed and applied when the system with which it is connected is scientifically wrong and abounds in absurd contradictions (both internal and connected with experience). This contradiction is particularly salient when the method is a dialectical one and the system is idealistic and metaphysical. In such cases, while the method invariably leads us forward and revolutionizes our thinking, the system drags it backwards, arrests it and conserves it, thereby transforming the dialectical absoluteness of truth into a metaphysical one: in other words, the real absoluteness (objectivity) of truth is replaced by the 'absolute truth of the last instance' which, as we know, implies the death or the end of every scientific truth, of every scientific development.

This is just what happened to *Hegel*. Because his dialectical method was based on the false premises of his doctrine of the idea not as a reflection of reality but as its demiurge, in the final analysis the method proved a vain one, deprived of concrete theoretical content, while Hegel's philosophical and encyclopaedical system ended in its own glorification and in the glorification of feudal and monarchist Prussia, doomed by history to inevitable collapse. Yet it was proclaimed by Hegel as the final and supreme incarnation of the self-developing Absolute Idea i. e. as an 'absolute truth of the last instance'.

Hegel was punished already in his lifetime for betraying his own principle, while after his death both these 'final and supreme' demonstrations of the Absolute Idea 'disintegrated' and died a most inglorious death under the blows of the dialectics of socio-historical reality. On the other hand, the attempts of well-known German and Italian philosophers and politicians-ideologists to resurrect him and to exploit him for their own ideological and political ends collapsed in a highly instructive way before our very eyes; as has always happened in such cases,

instead of the living resurrecting and using the dead, the dead drags the living into the grave.

For the moment we shall confine ourselves to what we have said so far on these questions. The chapters on the so-called primary and secondary properties of things and on the unity of philosophy and physics contained a number of examples and explanations which are sufficient for a proper understanding of the dialectical materialist teaching about truth, taken as a unity of system and method, of the objective and subjective, the abstract and the concrete, the absolute and the relative.

Let us again draw attention to the examples which confirm the thesis of Lenin and Engels that, however kindred the relative and the subjective may be, they are not identical and that a given property can be relative while remaining objective. Moreover, objectivity itself is impossible and inconceivable if it is not given and does not exist by itself as a unity of relative things, and properties. We also reiterate that the dialectical materialist recognition of the presence of elements of relativity in the process of all scientific thinking as well as in its results does not at all imply a lapse into relativism.

SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND INDIVIDUAL-CREATIVE
CHARACTER OF TRUTH

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When dialectical materialism maintains that in essence consciousness is 'social consciousness', it does not in the least deny or underrate individual creative thinking. On the contrary, real human society does not consist of faceless beings but of real human individuals. Real human 'social consciousness' is not a function of some social brain (there is no such brain in Nature), but of the brains of human individuals, organized and manifesting themselves in the social whole. And every human individual, precisely by virtue of the socio-historical necessity and tasks of each concrete society and epoch, manifests himself as a human individual in his proper place within the social system. The more important the place he holds, the more consciously and successfully he performs his functions (individual in form but social in content) - the more he manifests himself both as a human individual and as an aggregate of social relations, i.e. the more he stands out as a prominent and, under certain conditions, as a great historic personality.

The fact that we find no signs of personality even in the most superior animals can be explained by the fact that animals do not lead a real social, production and labour life. And vice versa, the fact that we always find the greatest, most brilliant and most outstanding personalities in societies and in epochs of great social progress is sufficient to make us accept the thesis of dialectical materialism to the effect that the strength and greatness of a personality are directly proportional to the strength and greatness of the socio-historic formation (class, estate, people, nation, mankind) of which this personality is both the necessary product and the true proponent, leader, organizer and active creator.

Once this personality is born, however, once it has assumed its social position or role, he also contributes to the common efforts and tasks (and to the ways of setting and solving these tasks) something of its own, something individual and unique in human history. Every personality, manifesting himself in his own sphere, also has his own personal 'standards', he acts according to his own way of 'assimilating the world', he leaves upon the common effort the imprint of his personal (individual) abilities and aspirations, but always in the spirit of his society and time and not in contradiction with them. Should the personality enter into an antagonistic contradiction with his society and time, he inevitably ends up in failure, he perishes in a tragic or comical way. On the other hand, if he develops in harmony with them, he increasingly stands out, in some cases so much that he becomes the decisive personality of his time. Classical examples in this respect are the great historic personalities of all societies and epochs and especially the classics of dialectical materialism Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as their loyal followers (in Bulgaria: Dimiter Blagoev and his disciples and comrades-in-arms: Georgi Dimitrov, Vassil Kolarov, Georgi Kirkov and others).

In *General Theory of Art* (vol.I) we demonstrated that it is not sufficient to define a work of art merely as a direct concrete and sensorily perceptible image (as an 'aesthetic reality'), or merely as an 'aesthetic reality' imbued with ideal and spiritual content. The images may be directly sensory and imbued with specific ideas (expressing specific ideas) while the work still may fail to qualify as a genuine work of art. To be a work of art it must comply with another condition: the artistic criterion (not in the sense of a material measure, but in the sense of a dialectical 'measure' in the sense of what Marx says about the 'measure', viz. that man differs from the animal by his measure in the practical and theoretical mastering of the world). If the artist is a collective (as in the case of folk-songs and other works of art), he introduces into the aesthetical image imbued with ideal content the 'measure' of the collective, the soul of the collective, the specific collective world outlook in general, the specific way of mastering the world. If, on the other hand, the artist is an individual (a creative personality), as a social personality he introduces into his artistic work, first, the measure of his society

and time and, second, his own personal and individual measure, his personal and individual way of orientation in the world and of influencing it. Moreover, this measure leaves its imprint on the work of art not only in the sense of an individual approach to the application of a given method (say, the naturalistic method or the method of socialist realism), but also in the sense of an individual choice of the artistic content, naturally, within the framework of the art currents, determined by the socio-historical conditions of a given epoch. In other words, however close the notions of artistic measure and artistic method may be at first glance, it would be wrong to identify them. The measure is the introduction of something coming deeply from the artist's very living essence (whether collective or individual) into the method and the content (we might say, into the system) of the arts of a given society and epoch. Finally, the measure is not identical with the originality of the work of art, because the latter, as this has been shown in detail in *General Theory of Art*, is determined by a series of objective and subjective conditions (including the measure), while the measure is determined by the specific nature (character, creative temperament, etc.) of the creative artist and, of course, by the nature of his readers or audience.

The measure is this factor in the creation and perception of the work of art which, by attributing a profoundly intimate and unique character to it, greatly contributes to its concreteness. This transforms the work of art not only into a true or exact reflection of the things and ideas of a given society and epoch, but also into a true, exact, typical and at the same time highly vivid socially and personally spiritualized reflection of the reality of a given society and epoch, which just because of this is quite concrete and effective. Precisely then the work of the artist is not only a true and most original reflection of reality, but also a highly aesthetic, ideological and expressive one. Only then is it a genuine and sometimes a great work of art.

While the scientific work of genius 'grasp' the innermost, the most general and, at the same time, the most concrete and most effective truth in a given socio-economic formation and in a whole historic epoch, the talented scientific works do not wholly grasp this truth, do not reproduce it in full and in its entire concreteness and effectiveness but only partially, conditionally and relatively. In other words, there is nothing mystical and super-

natural in the difference between a genius and a talent, as this has often been claimed. However, there exists between them not only a quantitative but also a qualitative difference, determined by the fact that every whole as such is always distinct from its parts not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. It is so because as a whole it always has its own qualitative determinateness (let us once again recall the thought of Dietzgen and Lenin about the 'nature of the natural whole').

At the same time, however, this supreme qualitative determinateness of the whole as such does not fall ready-made from the sky; it is not the manifestation of some transcendental force or cause, but is always given in a dialectical connection with the parts of the given whole. It follows that the efforts and achievements of numerous talented scientists and artists are necessary conditions for the emergence of scientists and artists of genius. But precisely because this is so and because the latter generalize and develop the most fundamental, the deepest and the most concrete and effective truth of their society and time, they become the historically conditioned spiritual leaders of their time; moreover, they not only bear the deepest imprint of their epoch but, in turn, leave their individual creative imprint on it; the imprint of their individual creative measure.

This always finds an expression in the form and the pace of the further socio-historical (scientific and artistic) development, but, of course, the content and the historical frames of this development cannot substantially change, because they are determined by the socio-historical necessity of the given social reality of a given epoch.

Summing up all that has been said so far, to the already given characterization of truth we may also add that, by its very nature, it is not only always objective and subjective, abstract and concrete, absolute and relative but that - in order to be such - it must also be determined both socially and historically, and individually and creatively. Only then can truth completely fulfil its role as an instrument serving not only to interpret the world, but to change it creatively as well.

CLASS PARTY AND UNIVERSAL CHARACTER OF TRUTH

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Insofar as it is the proletariat which fights for universal ideals and insofar as it is also the subject of real scientific knowledge, i.e. insofar as the future, purely human truth is born out of the present proletarian truth; insofar as the proletariat does not fight and think only for itself, but also for the freedom and happiness of man in general - universal truth is not somewhere beyond the nine seas and mountains, but is given to us today in the form of proletarian revolutionary truth.

We already know that this form of truth is not accidental. It is necessarily proper to it, i.e. it is its essential form. In the dialectical process this form is distinct from its content and becomes identified with it.

And while in the truth of all the revolutionary and progressive classes in the past there have always been certain elements of universal truth, by its very dialectical materialistic nature proletarian truth is the most objective truth known so far.

Finally, let us point out the erroneousness of a fairly common view, according to which dialectical materialism emerged exclusively from a generalization of the special natural sciences.

There is no doubt that Marx and Engels generalized scientific experience, nor that philosophy develops and must develop in profound dialectical unity with the special sciences. This, however, does not exhaust the question.

The point is that the bourgeois natural scientists, for example, while they are dialecticians in their method, remain idealists in epistemology. And those who are not idealists are either mechanists-materialists or, if they think dialectically, their dialectics is spontaneous in character. In order to criticize both and properly to sum up the results of natural sciences, the classics of dialectical materialism had to have a broader and more promising

theoretical basis. The same applies to the critique and the generalization of the results of German classical idealistic philosophy (Kant, Hegel and others), of British political economy (Ricardo, Smith and others) of French socialism (Fourier, Saint-Simon and others) and of the British and French materialists and of L.Feuerbach.

Marx and Engels managed to do this big job, because they always and invariably proceeded from the life of the proletarian class, i.e. because they found their qualitatively new theoretical basis precisely in proletarian social-revolutionary life, dialectically developing by itself. And they became the founders of the proletarian revolutionary world-view (and method) not because they were dialecticians and materialists, but because they became the daring and true champions of the interests of the proletariat and of its great historical cause. For this reason they were able to create their materialistic and dialectical philosophy, i.e. they were able to formulate the fundamental principles of the scientific world outlook of the proletariat.

That is precisely why they were able to avoid the shortcomings, inconsistencies and errors not only of Hegel, Feuerbach, Saint-Simon, Ricardo and others, but also of Lamarck, Darwin, Newton and of the natural sciences, sociology and philosophy in their time which were primarily either dialectical but idealistic, or materialistic but not dialectical or, at best, spontaneously dialectical and materialistic.

The philosophical and special scientific thought of the proletariat is, therefore, to the utmost, not only materialistic, but also dialectical, and not only dialectical, but also materialistic, i.e. dialectical-materialistic. For this very reason it is both systematized and continuously developing, it is a supreme scientific result, as well as profoundly objective, creatively subjective, abstract and highly concrete, highly absolute and relative, class and party-minded, as well as individually-creative and universally effective and significant.

We may therefore say that scientific thinking, taken in its fullest scope and infinite internal motion, i.e. taken as truth in the strictest, fullest and most precise meaning of this word, is proper to the proletariat in the highest form and to the highest degree yet attained in human history.

That is why every leading and responsible personality in the

Communist Party (which is the leading, the best organized, the most disciplined, most conscious and most active detachment of the class which plays the role of a historical hegemonic force in contemporary social and cultural development) is both an organizer and leader of the Party and of the class struggle, and a necessary product of the development of the Party and the class, outside of which and against which he loses his real historical force and significance.

In other words, while it is true that Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as every consistent disciple and comrade-in-arms of theirs, is more or less (depending upon the place, the time and his abilities) a champion of the great proletarian and class cause, it is no less true that they all, without exception, are champions of the needs and interests of their class.

Dialectical materialism does not deny the role of the personality, because, as we already know, it is the persons who constitute the social whole and who actually think, cognize, formulate scientific theories and hypotheses and experiment. But they think, cognize, act as socialized persons, i.e. as concrete individuals, bearing deep in themselves the nature of their concrete socio-historical whole. Once detached from this socio-historical whole, they become theoretically empty and sterile, lose their actual image of men and turn into slaves of biological inherited instincts and external contingencies.

And *vice versa*: if a given society reaches a stage when every personal initiative and creative thinking become impossible for the majority of its members, it ceases to be a human society and reverts to a gregarious state with its characteristic subordination to blind necessity and external fortuities.

It directly follows that the working class and the Communist Party are historically obliged and interested in promoting, supporting, respecting and following their leaders; they are also historically obliged and interested in continuously watching over their development and behaviour. And *vice versa*: while the leader and the leading activists are historically obliged and interested in heeding the needs of the masses in order to be able most comprehensively to grasp their real possibilities, immediate demands and goals, they are also historically obliged and interested in pointing out to the masses their errors which must be removed

and corrected in good time and rationally in the interest of the common historical cause.

In conclusion, we can formulate the general deduction from the whole exposition of the Marxist-Leninist theory of reflection as follows:

Both the proletarian class as a whole and the Party of the proletariat, as well as everyone of its functionaries, have no reason (practical or theoretical) to fear criticism and self-criticism.

'The attitude of a political party towards its errors,' Lenin wrote, 'is one of the major and truest criteria of its seriousness and of the practical implementation of its obligations towards its class and the working masses. Openly to admit an error, to detect its causes, to analyse the situation which gave birth to the error, carefully to discuss the means likely to correct the errors - these are the features of a serious Party, that is the type of fulfilment of its obligations that we have in mind, this is how the class and thereafter the masses are educated and trained.'*

In this way criticism and self-criticism do not present themselves to us as something external and accidental, but as a fundamental feature organically inherent to the most objective, most concrete and most absolute of all truths at which man's mind has arrived throughout its evolution.

For this very reason criticism and self-criticism on the part of the working class and of individual workers have acquired, and are increasingly acquiring, a completely new role and significance especially under the conditions of socialism, already built in the USSR and in the people's democracies.

And precisely because all this is so, i.e. because Marxist-Leninist criticism and self-criticism have become (in the USSR) and are becoming (in the people's democracies - Bulgaria and elsewhere) a new socio-historical law, they do not and they cannot have anything in common with the blind, dogmatic, purely subjective and mystical faith in the infallibility of one's own teachings, organizations, institutions and leaders.

The working class which has ceased to be a 'class in itself' and has become a 'class for itself' does not know and does not recognize any dogma. It considers theory only as a highly progressive 'subjective reflection of objective reality' and its own organizations and leaders acquire their natural, incomparable

* V.I.Lenin, Works, 3rd edition, Vol.25, p.201 (Russian edit.)

and highly necessary prestige only in one way: by loyalty, selflessly and unflinchingly serving the historical ideal of their social, historically progressive class and by strictly, systematically and constructively mastering and applying its scientific theory.

Authentic criticism and self-criticism should, therefore, in no case play a destructive and reactionary role tending to turn back real development or to surrender in the face of the enemies of science and of general social and cultural progress. Such 'criticism' and 'self-criticism' are not authentic, but wicked fault-finding and betrayal of the cause of general social and cultural progress. And the more progressive, more conscious, more disciplined, more active and more creative a given socio-historic force (society, class, party) is, the less place is there for that type of 'criticism' and 'self-criticism'.

And vice versa: the socio-historical force (society, class, party) which makes proper use of real criticism and self-criticism and which, generally speaking, skilfully operates with materialistic dialectics — this incomparable and invaluable human instrument — can be quite confident of the complete realization, in spite of all obstacles, of the behest of the founder of materialistic dialectics:

'The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the task, however, is to change it.'

*'Everything in the name of man, for the good of man'
From the Programme of the CPSU*

Man has been adapting himself to nature and adapting nature to himself or, as Marx put it, he has been humanizing nature, by means of technology, by the use of different tools of labour, machinery, chemicals and biological agents. It is common knowledge today that without a proper development of technology it is impossible to build socialism and communism, just as at the time capitalism would have been unable, but for the then novel technology, to vanquish and supersede feudalism. As we know from Soviet experience and from our own Bulgarian experience, no accelerated development along the road to socialism and communism is possible without accelerated technical progress at its present ever higher level.

Mathematical computers and cybernetic machines, automatically and telemechanically controlling entire plants, as well as the economy and other spheres of life, have been developing of late ever more rapidly and comprehensively. For instance, by imitating the forms, organization and functions of neurons in the neuro-cerebral system of animal and man and by utilizing the achievements of modern electronics, successful attempts have been made to build cybernetic machines of more compact, even microscopic dimensions, and to use them in the dispensation of functions resembling human memory and logico-formal thinking. Recently a special branch of technical cybernetics called bionics, has been developed on that basis.

Cybernetics and bionics face prospects of development that are truly stupendous. This is especially true under the conditions of socialist and communist society, where technology, harnessed to serve all society in the name of man and for the good of man, encounters no objective or subjective obstacles. In capitalist society the progress of technology and science, harnessed for