

RESIDUAL MARXISM
OR
THE NEED FOR DEMARXISATION IN EASTERN EUROPE

by Pavel Hanes

In the beginning there was Marx

The heritage left behind by the Communist attempt to change the world is manifold and varied. Perhaps, the most conspicuous is the backward economy and in some places devastated countryside. But there is a more dangerous part to this inheritance, namely, that which has been left in the people's *minds* – Marxism, its official ideology. This Soviet version of the philosophic-economic-political theory was more precisely called Marxism-Leninism¹ and during the times, when the bright Communist future was being built, the whole population was systematically indoctrinated with it. After the Communist system fell, no one attempted to carry out any kind of general “demarxisation” – understandably because a democratic system expects/assumes everyone chooses his/her worldview freely and is not forced into it by official propaganda. Consequently, since this assumption of freedom of choice was present in the creation of a new democracy, there was no effort made to replace a Marxist worldview and something was left in the minds of people that we can call *residual Marxism*. Not to take it seriously is to forget that the attraction/appeal of Marxist theory grows in direct proportion to the (time or geographic) distance of its practice.

Demarxisation is necessary but difficult because it demands unraveling the Marxist system in which threads of science, religion, politics and ethics are confusingly intertwined. A full critique of Marxism is therefore possible only from the position of a fully developed worldview and this is not fashionable in these postmodern times. My contribution to “demarxisation” is given neither from a standpoint of religion (against atheism) nor of science (against the cosmological, sociological, economic or other Marxist theories) but is limited to a discussion of political and ethical attitudes lingering here as *residual Marxism*.

Marxism has given philosophical and ethical dignity and supposedly scientific validity to the vices and attitudes present in some measure in every human being. These need to be called by their right names and sent where they belong – among the unethical and unsound human characteristics of which people are (normally) ashamed. “Democracy and development are moral goals. They impose a new morality necessary to their achievement.”²

Residual Marxism that is torpedoing the attempt to rebuild Eastern European society can be seen mainly in three ideas. First, in the easily comprehensible Marxist ideology. It is difficult to replace a simple worldview with a more complicated one. Second, in revengeful indignation caused by exploitation of man by man. For a Marxist the enmity between classes is eternal. Third, in the absolute authority of scientifically discovered truth. Only Marxism is considered to be a scientific explanation of the laws of social evolution.

Marxist ideology was easy to understand

The first thing to be stressed and realized is that Marxism is not only an economic theory or a theory of social evolution. It is a complete worldview, a philosophical system answering every question under and above the sun. Marx was one of the last philosophers who attempted to show how all things in the universe relate to each other. Philosophy bearing/known under his name is a systematic arrangement of all human knowledge, it is a mental framework in which all important questions are or can be answered: the (non-)existence of God, the laws of nature, social change or a teleology of world history. “Only Marxists tried thoroughly to integrate into one theoretical construction all economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of the capitalist phenomenon.”³

Such a comprehensive/all inclusive worldview inevitably has the attributes of a religion. Marx was persuaded that an atheistic state built according to his philosophy would be a perfect realization of the essence of Christianity. (He insisted that “the perfect Christian state is an atheistic state”.⁴) Later, mainly Russian Marxists viewed Marxism in this way and tried to make of it a new religion. It was Lenin who strictly rejected all such efforts. In spite of all this, Marxism was effecting such a transcendent assurance of faith, and even leader-worship that in the psychology of zealous Marxists it became a substitute for religion.

It is not difficult to deduce from this that Marxism has left behind empty space, a worldview-vacuum of religious dimensions, and that a full critique of Marxism (“demarxisation”) cannot avoid discussion of religion. A serious problem to be considered is, which religion is going to replace Marxism... The only one that can answer Marxism

¹ The original version had been mixed by Marx and Engels, Lenin applied it after modifying it in Russia and Stalin, after further processing, enforced it in Eastern Europe.

² Novak, M.: *Will it Liberate?* p. 83.

³ BERGER, P. L.: *Capitalistic revolution*, p. 7.

⁴ Marx. *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*

exhaustively is Christianity because in doing this Christianity responds to its Marxist (mis)interpretation. This should be a challenge for Christians to point out the deformities of Christianity in the residual Marxism around us.

Marxism is not only an all-encompassing philosophy, it also has very attractive simplifications. All philosophy is simply divided into idealism and materialism. Idealism is given such attributes as uncritical, subjective, abstract, fideistic, mystical, fantastic, whimsical, blinded etc. Materialism is, on the contrary, scientific, progressive, realistic, objective, critical, dialectical or historical. The picture is very simple, indeed. Who would desire to be called an idealist after hearing this description? This kind of thinking led to a black-and-white division of people into progressives and obscurantists. Although the obscurantists might mean well, objectively they were supporting regression. If democracy is, as they say, an art of compromise, this kind of black-and-white division of people is fatal. Demarxisation means to convince those with residual Marxism in their minds, that reality is not black-and-white and an opposite view is always worth attention.

A very suitable supplement to this black-and-white division of philosophy is the Marxist doctrine of dialectical understanding of truth. Eternal truth does not exist (Engels says that maybe only in natural sciences) but Marxist dialectics is a tool that can bring absolute and relative truth together in such a way, that "absolute truth is composed of relative truths".⁵ In this way the dialectical method taken from the philosophy of Hegel becomes a useful tool for including contradictory statements (thesis and antithesis) in one system (synthesis). Marx's political analysis was always adapted to historical reality. In spite of the most flagrant contradictions (which he simply brushed away using ad hoc explanations) the theory remained valid as the central article of faith that cannot be doubted. Also, according to Lenin, one of the basic principles of dialectics is that there is no abstract truth – truth is always concrete. With a religious zeal, a Marxist may insist that he knows the absolute truth but he can change his view if it is proved to be "dogmatic" (a Marxist term of abuse) or "subjective" (a synonym of lie). Only dialectical materialism is able to infallibly divide truth into a subjective and an objective kind. The truth value of each proposition is decided according to its source – if the idea is of "bourgeois" origin by that same fact it has been proven as "untrue". P. Ricoeur very fittingly labeled Marx as one of the three "masters of suspicion" (Nietzsche and Freud are the other two). Every proposition must be explained by class interest, but only the class interest of the Marxists is objective.⁶ For this kind of thinking the key task is to separate what you see and feel from what is officially (by class) accepted as the explanation. The world of *experience* is completely overshadowed by the word of *explanations*. The residual Marxism is still making its victims easy prey to clever propaganda *despite experience*. Demarxisation must, therefore, consist in patient building of people's abilities to decide what is truth not by party ideology or by the origin but by critically assessed experience.

The peak of Marxist simplifications is the way it explains everything on the basis of economical relations. "The final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in men's better insights into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch."⁷ Here Marxism is using the *theory of reflection* according to which "the spiritual life of a society is the reflection of objective reality" (Stalin). The so-called "economic basis" decides what the superstructure will be like (culture, morality, and religion). That is why the economic reality is more fundamental than the power of politics, ethics of culture. Philosophically and psychologically, Marx's word *alienation* (taken from Hegel) is a very attractive term. Through this word Marxism becomes a tool for removing all problems of mankind. The alienation of man is created through the selling of his labor-power, because in this way "(I convert) my person into the property of another."⁸ The same thing happens in the division of labor or in the production of a commodity.⁹ This is why "in the higher stage of communism, commodity production will naturally cease".¹⁰ Alienation will be removed through the change of economic relations that create it in the first place – e.g. through removal of "the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor"¹¹ but mainly by the abolition of private property, which in Marxism is a sort of original sin. "When the means of production belong to the working people and the exploiting classes have been liquidated, the objectively conditioned aim of production is constant growth of the living standards of all members of socialist society."¹²

The result of this unlimited trust in the almighty economy was impoverishment of the inner life,¹³ popular anti-intellectualism and contempt for culture.¹⁴ After the Communist takeover these primitivistic theories were not

⁵ Collective: *Základy marxistické filozofie*, s. 327.

⁶ Marxist suspicion showed itself in a most conspicuous way in the Stalinist elimination of political opposition before it could sprout. It was a kind of *social prevention* to prevent *possible* contra revolutionary action. Solzhenitsyn gives evidence that for the communist system not personal guilt was essential but appearance of social threat.

⁷ Engels, F. *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, chapter 3.

⁸ Marx, K. *Capital I*, chap. 6

⁹ Marx, K. *Proces výroby...*

¹⁰ Collective: *Political economy*, p 559

¹¹ Marx, K.: *Critique of the Gotha Programme* chap. 1

¹² Collective: *Political Economy*, p 493.

¹³ „...“ (Tischner, J: *Marxism and Christianity*, p. 64)

confirmed in practice, so a great explanation concerning *why* began. Former Marxist L. Kolakowski described this era in the following words: *lying is the immortal soul of Communism*. Freedom of conscience proclaimed by Lenin in reality meant persecution of believers. The rights of citizens, guaranteed by the Constitution, were routinely violated by "class interpretations". Grand proclamations about the progress and success of Marxist leadership were being proclaimed vis-a-vis the gray and often bleak reality, although Marxists often took credit for the things they had nothing to do with (as if they had invented natural laws or created human inventiveness and industry). Paradoxically, people who lived under the Marxist propaganda have learned to distrust politicians but simultaneously they are ready to believe even the most glaring lie if it is simple and insidious enough

Marxist simplifications, right from the beginning, took the form of slogans. The Communist Manifesto declared that "...the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property".¹⁵ The simple equation of Lenin is well known: "communism = soviet power + electrification of the whole country"¹⁶ Solzhenitsyn wrote about Lenin: "Whenever he was thinking about a problem, ready-made slogans came into being – and the final reason for such thinking was exactly in the formulation of a slogan for the moment."¹⁷

Under Communism the whole country was infested with slogans. There are few who want them back but their marvelous simplicity has not lost its attractiveness and that can be seen in the success of politicians who do not argue – just proclaim their truth. Demarxisation cannot consist in new non-Marxist or even anti-Marxist slogans – these would only strengthen these attitudes in the residual Marxism. Honoring reality means that man has to come to terms with the fact that reality is complex and to know it means to patiently study it

Revengeful indignation over exploitation

Marxism has combined in itself some of the most powerful forces of human emotions: the power of compassion with sufferers, the desire for revenge for injustices against the defenseless and the power of envying the rich and wealthy. By its concern for the fate of the poor and its program of radical improvement, this atheistic system has won the hearts of many Christians (think of Liberation Theology!) By the promise of revenge it has mobilized an army of the robbed and disinherited. The Communist Manifesto declares: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win." Marxism is therefore not only a simple explanation of the world – it is at the same time a program of how to build a just world.

The Marxist expressions about the greatness of man and his misery are very impressive. Says Marx: "...man is the highest essence for man" ...it is "a categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is debased, enslaved, abandoned, despicable..."¹⁸ And again Marx: "Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that produces its own product in the form of capital."¹⁹ The Marxist state tried to rid society of the most glaring poverty. The beggars could not sit in the streets, everyone had to be employed and medical care was provided for everyone... To what measure it was an expression of compassion is doubtful. In Bolshevik Russia the workers were called *rabsila* (abbreviation for working power) and farmers were called *muzickoje syrio* (peasant raw material). Gorkij observed that Lenin "treats the working class is the same way as a metallurgist works with iron ore".²⁰ The theoretical classification of an individual wins the day even with the Christian Marxist Gutierrez, for whom not every poor worker is a proletarian. "If he does not avow the dictatorship of the party he belongs on the dump-heap together with the bourgeoisie, because for Gutierrez only those are the poor who are already actively involved in the revolutionary *praxis*."²¹ The real character of Marxist compassion is uncovered especially where the Marxist's watchword "so much the worse is so much the better" artificially aggravates the situation of misery in order to incite a revolutionary mood in the masses. To demarxise compassion means to make it apolitical. Politicians must move from the abstract interest in "masses" to real interest in the individual regardless of his class and political affiliation.

Marxism promises a just world. "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it"²² is a famous saying of Marx declaring war against injustice. According to the textbook of Marxist philosophy, with Marxism "...the time arrived when philosophy came from heaven down to the earth."²³ Polish critic

¹⁴ „Lenin is a passionate hater of educated people and this enmity has imparted to all of his movement“ (Liberda, V. *The Father of Totalitarianism*, p. 85)

¹⁵ The Communist Manifesto, ch. 2

¹⁶ Collective: *Political economy*, p. 730.

¹⁷ Solzhenitsyn: *Lenin in Zurich*, p. 23.

¹⁸ Marx, K.: *Deutsche-Französische Jahrbücher*, Introduction to the Hegel's philosophy of right.

¹⁹ Marx, K.: *Capital I*, ch. 25. Quotes Engels: *Anti-Dühring*, part III.

²⁰ Figes, O.: *People's Tragedy*, s. 723.

²¹ Novak, M.: *Will it Liberate?*, s. 148.

²² Theses to Feuerbach, thesis XI

²³ Collective: *Basics of Marxist Philosophy*, p. 94

of Marxism, Jozef Tischner, has written that “Marxism is first of all a philosophy of human labor”²⁴ and that “it was born out of the revolt of human beings against the exploitation of human labor.”²⁵ The historical accuracy of these statements may possibly be doubted. What is certain is that this is the way Marxism was viewed by the “working masses”. In this area Marxism has no competitor among the philosophical systems, and that gives it a kind of monopoly to lead the “working masses”. Human work gets really very exceptional attention here. Labor made man out of an ape;²⁶ labor is the reason man is different from animals; it is the source of his ability to speak and to create works of art. Labor is the only way to create value because value “is the labor of commodity makers embodied in the commodity.”²⁷ Labor in its ideal form (in future Communism) will be “not only a means of life but life's prime want.”²⁸

With the fall of the Marxist future the worship of (physical) labor has fallen as well. The attitudes of residual Marxism have not changed, though, and people still consider physical work more valuable than mental work. Demarxisation, therefore, has to put the rewards for physical work into reasonable relation to the rewards for mental work. This task is not enviable, to say the least.

The problem is that an employee in a capitalist enterprise, according to Marxist theory, does not work for himself. His work is *alienated* from him for the sake of capital. In this way an eternal and irreconcilable enmity between employer and employee arises. One of the theologians of liberation, Enrique Dussel, asserts that any relationship between employer and employee is a form of idolatry.²⁹ According to Marxist philosophy, any compromise or legislative measure cannot solve this contradiction. If a Marxist attempts any such thing, he will get a terrible label (in his view) – a “revisionist” who makes a “dead dogma” out of a living theory of Marxism. The only way out is that the disinherited take things in their own hands and defeat the capitalists. “To be a Marxist ... is not to recoil even before a guillotine”.³⁰ “We have no compassion and we ask no compassion from you. When our turn comes, we shall not make excuses for the terror.”³¹ This fight is not something new, because “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” according to the opening words of the *Communist Manifesto*. In this way, out of great love for mankind a great hatred was born that was directed against concrete people.³² The state, that is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another,³³ is for a Marxist an object of perpetual hatred - until it is in the hands of the proletariat.

Marxism, therefore, is colossal hatred and a program of fighting against the wealthy explained by “compassion” for the impoverished and the miserable. Under residual Marxism this irreconcilable hatred against the state, the employers and the ruling parties (and all their politics) survives. If the builders of democracy do not succeed in persuading these “Marxists” that the state is the common interest of all and the employer is not the irreconcilable class enemy of the employees, they must count on their boycotting of every economic and political program as only another reactionary method to pacify the masses. “Politics is no longer regarded as an empirical, prudential argument concerning means and ends, in which every person sees at least a portion of the truth. It is regarded as a field within which one side must prevail and the other be destroyed.”³⁴

The just revenge breeds the Marxist hope and so the Marxist struggle is being fought with the eschatological expectations of the arrival of the perfect classless society. This is a secular doctrine of salvation promising it not in

²⁴ Tischner, J: *Marxism and Christianity*, p. 31

²⁵ Tischner, J: *Marxism and Christianity*, p.83.

²⁶ “...Labour is the source of all wealth, the political economists assert. And it really is the source -- next to nature, which supplies it with the material that it converts into wealth. But it is even infinitely more than this. It is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself. (Engels, F.: *The Part played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man*)

²⁷ Collective: *Political economy*, p. 63.

²⁸ In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-around development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly -- only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs! (Marx, K.: *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, ch. 1)

²⁹ Novak, M.: *Will it Liberate?*, s. 52.

³⁰ Radzinskij, E: *Stalin*, p. 67.

³¹ Marx, K: *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, (Final edition)

³² Figs, O.: *A People's Tragedy*, s. 209.

³³ „In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the proletariat, just like the Commune, cannot avoid having to lop off at the earliest possible moment, until such time as a new generation, reared in new and free social conditions, will be able to throw the entire lumber of the state on the scrap-heap. (Marx, K. *Civil War in France*, Engels' postscript)

³⁴ Novak, M.: *Will it Liberate?*, p. 169-170.

heaven but here on earth. It is “good news” that the future belongs to those who are deprived now. That this is a parallel to Christianity there is little doubt. According to Marx, Christianity is the religion *kat exochen* and it is the essence of religion itself,³⁵ but this Christian religion has alienated man from himself and from nature. Marxist communism is the realization of Christian ideals in their unalienated form. In the ideal society there will be no classes (private property has been abolished³⁶), there will be no need for money and there will be no borders between states because the communist revolution will win the world.

The glowing descriptions of the Marxist future have left some dangerous elements in the residual Marxism. In the first place, there is the loss of an overall direction and meaning of life and work. A Marxist is an atheist so he does not cherish religious hopes and his party no longer guarantees the progress of society toward Communism. What can he do? To make money and become rich is still the result of exploitation – profit and capital are “dirty words”, but it is inevitable to adjust to reality – so he will possibly become an exploiter without scruples, because according to his former Marxist confession he cannot be otherwise. Demarxisation must at least challenge these Marxist-capitalists not to consider their employees as their class enemies.

The realization of the Marxist dream of a socialist state meant that the state, that had been the main enemy, overnight became the only source of justice, abundance and salvation. The differences between people were at least on the surface evened out,³⁷ and everything was leading to a communist future (when the state will not exist any longer). In this way the socialist state was the insurance that even malfunctioning socialism was in the Marxist way “leading to communism”. The residual Marxism has this attitude in the form of strong etatism, where the state is *both* the enemy *and* the only hope of a better future. The result is passivity in an individual because under socialism “...individual effort tends to fall to the level of the least productive; invention ceases, because it is not rewarded... entrepreneurial talent ...is repressed because it inevitably leads to differentiation and to inequalities.”³⁸ Passive waiting on the state's activity to do away with all social problems is a direct result of the Marxist divinization of the state. Demarxisation then means un-divinization of the state and the building of the dignity of an individual along with practical steps to permit his initiative.

The absolute authority of scientifically discovered truth

The simplified and radiant Marxist theory was communicated with the almost unbeatable authority of science. Marxism was proudly called “the scientific socialism” or “the scientific communism”.

Marx claimed his philosophy was natural science³⁹ in the era when the success of natural sciences was producing elated expectations of a golden future for mankind. He wrote that “where speculation ends — in real life — there real, positive science begins: the representation of practical activity, of the practical process of the development of men.”⁴⁰ This Marxist science of society draws its authority from the Hegelian *absolute* knowledge. For Hegel absolute knowledge is a result of the dialectical process and it is in the *self-consciousness* of the Absolute Spirit who is realizing himself in mankind. Marx took this Hegelian *self-consciousness* of the Spirit and said that in reality it was the objective social consciousness of man⁴¹ and the dialectics of Hegel placed in the real processes of nature. In this way he got the mark of precision that natural sciences demand and the sure knowledge (authority) of the immediate consciousness of man -- everything at one stroke. The Absolute Spirit of Hegel was changed into material laws and forces of nature and this renaming secured for his philosophy the divine authority in material form.

In reality Marxism does not tolerate empirical testing. “All versions of Marxism have one thing in common – they are a strange mixture of science and prophecy. ... The scientific part of Marxist theory cannot be empirically tested – it consists in *a priori* premises that (by definition) cannot be refuted.”⁴² In complete agreement with this line, in 1927 Soviet economist Strumilin declared: “Our task is not to study economics, but to change it. We are bound by no laws. There is no fortress which Bolsheviks cannot storm.”⁴³ Demarxisation may be helped by general failure of Marxist economic “science”, but the mystical materialist part of Marxism has not been touched. So people still talk about

³⁵ Christianity is the religion *kat' exochen*, the essence of religion, deified man under the form of a particular religion. (Marx, K. *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, §§ 278-279)

³⁶ the Marxists have got the statement “property is theft” from Proudhon.

³⁷ ...Equality under socialism does not mean equal opportunity but equal resulting situation. (Novak, M.: *Will it Liberate?*, p 183.)

³⁸ Novak, M.: *Will it Liberate?*, s. 168.

³⁹ The social reality of nature, and human natural science, or the natural science of man, are identical terms. (Marx, K.: *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, Private Property and Communism)

⁴⁰ Marx, K.: *German Ideology*, p 2.

⁴¹ Man is the world of man — state, society. (Marx, K.: *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Introduction)

⁴² Berger, Peter L.: *Kapitalisticka revoluce*, p. 8 (Translated from Czech)

⁴³ Overstreet, Harry and Bonaro: *The Iron Curtain*, p. 58.

“stages of the evolution of society” or about “culture being conditioned by economy” without giving one thought to the question of whether these are not tricks played by the residual Marxism.

In *historical materialism*⁴⁴ Marxism, with the assurance of a natural science, has discovered the savior of mankind – the proletariat, because “...in the fully-formed proletariat, the abstraction of all humanity, even the semblance of humanity, is practically complete... When the proletariat is victorious... then the proletariat disappears as well as the opposite which determines it, private property.”⁴⁵ To be on the side of the proletariat means to be on the side of science and the ultimate force of history. But the definition of proletariat says “...the proletariat is that class in society which lives entirely from the sale of its labor and does not draw profit from any kind of capital”.⁴⁶ This is why in Marxism truth always has a “class nature”. On the one hand, to accuse some theory of having a “bourgeois origin” is serious enough to refute it. On the other hand, what is true for the proletariat is always the norm for objective truth because “...only the proletariat, with the help of revolutionary intellectuals, can see the world in the proper perspective.”⁴⁷ (Proletarian logic is an expression of pure and simple logic that does not suffer from partial bias.) From that follows that no one, except Marxists, is able to critique social system because everybody’s thinking is determined by his/her class. At the same time, Marxists are never obliged to answer the arguments of those who oppose them – it is enough to attack their class (and personality). Demarxisation must lead people to understand that the status of “exploited” does not at the same time mean “privileged truth-owner”.

Morality according to Marxism is of a class nature as well. For “The proletarian is without property ...Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.”⁴⁸ Ethics is identified with politics because the highest ethical goal is the political goal of abolition of the exploitation of man by man. In this sense Lenin said, “...that behavior is moral which hastens the victory of socialism”.⁴⁹ Any alliance is ethical if it serves this goal but the same alliance ceases to be ethical if it stops serving the goal. Marxist ethics lack personal conscience that is replaced by the “party line”. Partiality, in any other ethical theory condemned, becomes the basic requirement of truthfulness! From all of this, the residual Marxism has kept politics devoid of ethical values – *justified by the theory*. If the success of a policy is simultaneously the highest ethical goal, it is necessary to subordinate everything else to it and that without any qualms of conscience.

Says Marx: “It is only in the order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that social evolutions will cease to be political revolutions. Till then... the last word of social science will always be: Le combat ou la mort... (fight or death).”⁵⁰ And says Engels, “A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon.”⁵¹ Further, according to Lenin: “They imagine that the grave political questions can be solved by voting! In reality when these questions become crucial they are decided by civil war.”⁵² This is why the residual Marxism still believes in violence and uses voting only from the position of weakness. Demarxisation must put the ability to reach agreement in controversy on a firm philosophical foothold. Otherwise political discussion will be constantly endangered by social Darwinism where survival of one means the extinction of the other.

Because the revolution of the proletariat was somewhat slow in coming and the conditions of workingmen even began to improve, Lenin produced the doctrine that the social-democratic consciousness must be imparted to workers by a Marxist party from the outside. At the same time “...the party of the proletariat must win away from the bourgeoisie the small proprietors who are duped by them, and the millions of working people who enjoy more or less petty-bourgeois conditions of life”.⁵³ This party of Lenin is ruled by what he called democratic centralism, what in theory means that democratically reached decisions are implemented from the center and allow no further opposition. In reality it comes to prohibition of factions because “...whoever brings about even the slightest weakening of the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during its dictatorship), is actually aiding the bourgeoisie against the proletariat”.⁵⁴ By the ban of factions Lenin got rid of discussion within the party and Stalin made it into the infallible guardian of the sacred teaching of Marxism-Leninism. “The word *party* had received almost mystical sound. To lose the party membership card was a grave transgression and to doubt its truth was a crime.”⁵⁵ At the

⁴⁴ Lenin said, that “Marx's historical materialism was one of the greatest achievements of scientific thought” (*Three Sources & Three Component parts of Marxism*, in 1913) but he was quoted in the *Basics of Marxist philosophy* (1961), as having said “Historical materialism is the greatest achievement of scientific thought” (p. 347)

⁴⁵ Marx, Engels: *The holy family*, chap. 4.

⁴⁶ Engels, F.: *Principles of communism*, Intro (1847)

⁴⁷ Freedman, R.: *The Marxist System*, p. 73

⁴⁸ Marx, Engels: *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, chap. 1

⁴⁹ Tischner, J.L. *Marxism and Christianity*, p. 84.

⁵⁰ Marx, K.: *The Poverty of Philosophy*, ch. 2 (1847)

⁵¹ Engels, F. *On Authority*, (1872)

⁵² Lenin, V. I. *Elections to the Constituent Assembly and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*

⁵³ Lenin, V. I.: *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, (1916, preface 2)

⁵⁴ Lenin, V. I.: *Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder*, (1920, chap. 5.)

⁵⁵ Pachman, L.: *God cannot be expelled*, p. 31.

request of the party you had to affirm that black is white and white is black...⁵⁶ The Party is the supreme dispenser of rewards and punishments, the Party controls thinking and morality of its members. Reporting and exposure become not only a means of self-preservation but also a means of correction of the exposed. In the residual Marxism this attitude of docile submission is transferred to any party that has the trust of the mind cast in the Marxist mold. Demarxisation must demystify the term “political party” and put the morality, conscience and common sense of an individual above the anonymous “party line”.

The process of authority concentration from the proletariat to the Party continues by the exaltation of the Leader. According to Trockij, “Party organization takes the place of the Party; the Central Committee of the Party takes the place of the Party organization and, finally, the dictator takes the place of the Central Committee.” And really, “to be a Bolshevik meant to take an oath of allegiance to Lenin”⁵⁷ and later to Stalin. H. Arendt has called the totalitarian authority the “leadership principle” that is realized in structures purposefully kept indistinct where finally the “leader’s will” decides.⁵⁸ This also involves organizing a front of sympathizers who are not members of the party. This avoids the exact definition of lines between members and non-members. Totality is always interested in “movement”⁵⁹ in constant fight that, according to Stalin, even sharpens after the victory of the proletariat.

In the post-communist countries various “charismatic” leaders are thriving because they fulfill the ideals of the residual Marxism and they portray “teachers”, “father of the nation”, “great strategist” etc. Demarxisation of total trust in such leaders probably can only occur through building independent critical thinking because direct attacks on such leaders only strengthens their position. The alternative to totalitarianism was very well put by Ortega y Gasset: “Liberalism is a legal and political principle, according to which the public power – although it is all-powerful – makes limits for itself.”⁶⁰

Dangerous vacuum

It would be absurd to think that all the problems of Eastern Europe are consequences of the Communist experiment (as is often simplistically maintained). But not to take seriously those ideas, which were sown by it, is to ignore a (maybe implicit) worldview of a large part of the population. Peter Berger, in connection with the failure of the socialist experiment, warns that no idea can ever be definitively and finally discredited. Also he says the “capitalism is an inevitable but not sufficient condition of democracy.”⁶¹ In the new ideological vacuum under the influence of the residual Marxism, democracy is being built in the mood and attitudes of Marxism! To carry out demarxization is not enough to uncover the Stalinist Gulag or Djilas’ “new class”. It is necessary to show that the theory is wrong already in its ideal Marxist or Leninist form(ulation). The residual Marxism can explain all tragic deviation as aberration and remain faithful to the basic Marxist catechism about the progress by class struggle...

One thing must be added. In the western democracies some elements that were part of Marxism are quite popular (e.g. evolutionism, materialism, populism, egalitarianism, etatism) as part of the western worldview. Using this worldview in Eastern Europe is an insufficient alternative to Marxism. So before we invoke help from the West, we have to be aware of this and realize that if Eastern Europe inculcates this worldview it even aggravate some of the problems present in the residual Marxism.

⁵⁶ “...the Party is to be cast as the benign and single producer and distributor of abundance. There is to be no other source to which people can turn for goods and services...” (Overstreet, H. and B. *The Iron Curtain*, p. 88) Everything was ascribed to the merit of the Communist Party – baking of bread, building of roads, houses and factories, the crops of the fields as well as the abundance of water. Was not all of this the work of the Party?

⁵⁷ Figes, O.: *A People’s Tragedy*, p. 391.

⁵⁸ Arendt, H.: *Totalitarianism*, 502-3. In a totalitarian party each official is an embodiment of the leader. (Arendt: *Totalitarianism*, p 514)

⁵⁹ Totalitarian movement can keep power only until everything around it keeps in movement. (Arendt: *The origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 430)

⁶⁰ Ortega y Gasset: *Rebellion of Masses*, p. 95.

⁶¹ Berger, Peter L.: *Capitalist revolution*, p. 234.